The analysis suggests five primary findings — and invites ongoing research on this topic.

1. **Correlations between arts participation and the motivations and practices of civic engagement are substantial and consistent.** There are statistical correlations between arts participation of any kind, and volunteerism and social tolerance — two important indicators of civic engagement — in large-scale, representative databases.

2. **Art making experiences appear to encourage civic engagement more so than experiences as an audience member.** Multiple studies suggest that making art is likely to have more significant effects on civic engagement than attending arts events. While art making experiences are not the same as civic engagement, they are likely to open pathways of tolerance and interest in bridging divides between communities that make civic engagement possible and more likely.

3. **Some arts experiences in some settings generate social capital directly.** A deep study of art making outside the formal, professional arts found that this practice is itself a form of civic engagement that builds bonding capital within communities and often generates bridging capital across social boundaries.

4. **Arts experiences during adolescence are particularly influential.** Analysis of large-scale educational databases showed strong statistical evidence that young people who are “high arts participators” are more inclined toward community service, a reasonable proxy for civic engagement. The research suggests that the relationship is present during a period in young people’s lives in which they are busy shaping their identities.

5. **People who have built their identities around civic engagement often credit arts experiences as significant to their development.** A significant number of such people have informed researchers that arts influenced their development. Others indicate that the arts were a source of inspiration that sustained their civic work. Arts participants may gain confidence and important social skills and grow in their inclination to become more involved in community issues.

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