

What an effort “to enter out”! Closures and resistances in the cultural sector

“It might be easy for you, but you cannot imagine how difficult is for us *to enter outside*”.

Few years ago, walking in the yards of Santa Maria Della Pietà, psychiatric hospital already closed, Thomas Lovanio, Franco Basaglia’s colleague, got these words from one of the guest of the hospital. He was referring to the difficulty of coming back into the city, a city that years ago had jailed and forgotten him. But now, just because someone have decided to close the psychiatric hospitals, this city has to absorb him again.

The articles in this issue reminded me those words. How difficult is for our artistic and cultural system to shape open and innovative relations with the environment and the urban space, and to generate an innovative and transparent management. These difficulties are surely a limit to innovation and an obstacle to the cultural growth of our country.

Urban studies have long observed that the most innovative systems are those capable of hybridizing different worlds.

In the Sixties, the architect Giancarlo De Carlo stated that the space for education and culture has not to be a gated island, but an integral part of the whole physical environment.

Doing so, this space has to be interpreted as dynamic structure, and not as a settled device, in order to articulate its continuous changes, “an unstable configuration always recreated by the direct participation of the community that uses it, introducing the disorder of his unpredictable expressions” (Giancarlo De Carlo, *Gli spiriti dell’architettura*, Editori Riuniti, 1994 p. 210).

This signal today is even more urgent. Cultural innovation arises from processes of production of knowledge inherently socialized. It is hard to isolate the innovator and pioneer from their natural context, from their relation with the scientific and cultural community of reference.

Innovation is a cultural product of the collective knowledge and the role of the subject is being re-shaped in relation with the community and the specific place. Similarly, places and cultural institutions could be generative only if they interact with a variety of places and activities. Today the closeness and the isolation of large cultural containers (expo, fairs, museums) do not match with fertile hybrid models. These models are able to create networks between actors and places.

The example of the *Salone del Mobile* and *Fuori Salone* in Milan – described by Federica Codignola – demonstrate the ability to integrate actors, spaces, with the creative resources of the environment. This model combines formal and informal resources, and mixes up diversified audiences in the same spatial context: an ability which produces interesting results of mutual benefit. High creative concentration in the same space rises the value of urban areas usually abandoned and leftover, and it reveals the unexpressed potentialities of the environment.

The *Fuori Salone* model, based on networks of initiatives “out of place”, is struggling to find its space in

other fields and to become a tool for the growth of new cultural networks. In addition, it must be clarify that usually, ended up the specific period of the event, it is impossible to maintain alive even some of these activities.

As illustrated by Mark Granovetter studies, we know that all human activities are rooted in grids of personal relations and in social structures based on trust and reciprocity.

These kind of relations can generate an enlargement of the motivations compared to the strictly utilitarian mean, in order to improve social relations with unexpected combinations of economic transactions and social interactions.

Opposite, short distance friendship and networks might become a pathogenic elements. For this reason, as noticed by Monti and Bernabe, we all need a new *culture of accountability*. The lack of accountability both in terms of strategy and management of the cultural sector – together with the lack of transparency, the unpleasant presence of political interferences, low-level corporate heritage- is today the biggest obstacle to innovation in all fields. A brake that cannibalizes the social worlds.

In a territorial perspective, rooting refers to all those processes that trigger locally and modify the growth of the city. This action will produce a development of local economies, a multiplication of public services, and a cultural innovation. These processes transform the physical space, change the dynamics of economies, generate social relations and common goods.

The contributions presented here will help us to reflect about the importance of creating new strong synthesis between individual practices, the culture of accountability and the rooting of place.



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