

Cultural organizations and social innovation:

The case of Bunker¹ (Slovenia)

Abstract: In the past 5 or 6 years countless numbers of academic publications, reports and statistics on European and international organizations have appeared discussing the role of innovation, culture or creativity in developmental processes. Culture is acquiring a growing functionality in the demands for the transformation of our political, social and economic system, not only because it has the capacity to catalyze innovation, but also because it incorporates a network of values that lead to a new ethical interpretation of social and economic exchanges. In the framework of the European project Sostenuto, the University of Valencia has designed a model that explains the emergence of new forms of economic and social organization and provides clues about how to reinforce the innovation capacity in the cultural sector. The experience of Bunker, a cultural organization, in Tabor quarter (Ljubljana, Slovenia) is useful as illustration of the links between cultural and creative activities and social innovation, urban regeneration and social cohesion.

Keywords: social innovation, cultural organizations, urban regeneration, creativity

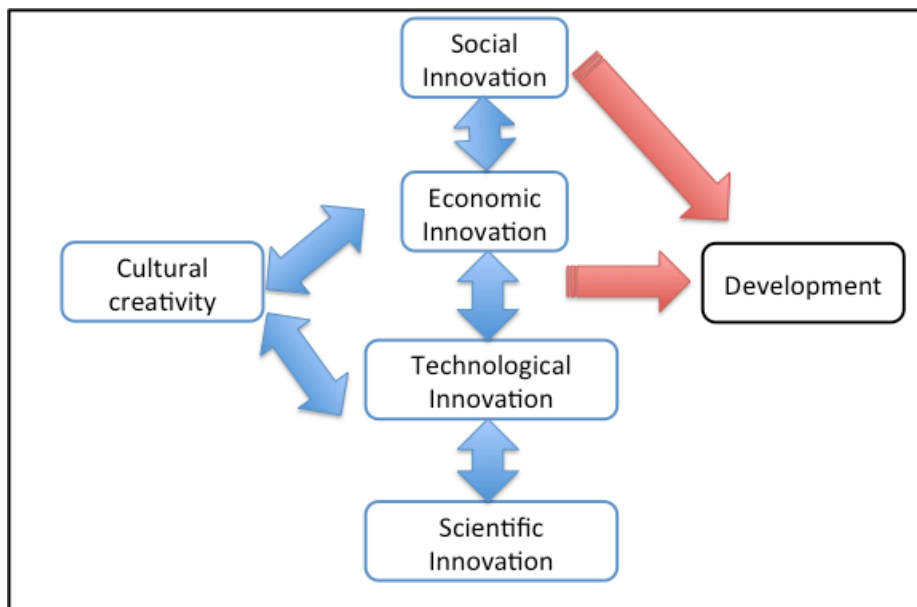
1. Some notes on culture, creativity, innovation and development

There is a growing recognition about how the combination of personal, cultural and creative skills, technical abilities and social relations can play a key role in stimulating development. As the Council of Europe itself recognizes, culture and creativity are closely interwoven. Creativity is at the very heart of culture, and this in turn creates an atmosphere that can enable creativity to blossom. For its part, creativity is at the heart of innovation – understood as being the successful exploitation of new ideas, expressions and forms – and as a process that develops new products, new services, and new ways to do business and new ways to respond to the needs of society.

Thus, moving away from the restrictive concept of development in the economic sense leads us to culture, which finally reveals its ability to harness innovation and set in motion processes of economic growth, and hence development. But in addition, cultural creativity also has an influence on other spheres of cognitive production, affecting scientific, technological, economic and social innovation as well.

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Figure 1. Cultural creativity and development



Source: Adapted from KEA (2009)

All these approaches coincide in the difficulty of defining creativity without specifying, (even in the sciences where such studies are the norm) whether it is an attribute or a process. In economic terms, creativity is a renewable fuel, which is constantly enhanced and replenished with use. Furthermore, rather than saturating the market, with creative stakeholders “competence” attracts and stimulates the participation of new producers (Fonseca, 2008).

The novel idea of re-adapting this concept is that cultural creativity also affects innovation processes, which when seen as simple mechanisms for the accumulation of human capital, social capital and relational capital, (Sacco and Segre, 2009) are in themselves development processes.

Expanding the sphere of innovation production means going beyond the idea that innovation concerns what is on offer and the ability to focus on the aspect that what eventually gives new things their value (whether they involve product or process or any other type of novelty), a certain degree of social consensus is arrived at, which accepts the fact that it is not only novel but that it also bears some kind of economic or social value. Furthermore, “social innovation” not only requires a particular creative process to be recognized as the result of a social construction process, but it also needs to have a use or value that can be appropriated by a social group.

To describe this reality, Jaron Rowan uses the expression “social creativity” with the idea of “Innovation in culture: A critical approach to the genealogy and uses of the concept” (YProductions, 2009). Social creativity is considered to be a new resource for development. The work of YProductions classifies the various approaches to social creativity, which are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Connections between the different types of innovation and the cultural sector

Types of innovation	Description and adaptation to the cultural sector
Creativity basins (Corsani, Lazzarato and Negri, 1996)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creativity basins contain a number of multiple subjects, ideas, knowledge, means of communication, sociability and values. These basins have a creative potential that goes far beyond the capacity of factories and businesses, emerging as a new resource. • Immaterial nature of cultural production. • Organizational models typical of networking setups. • Overlap between lifestyles and productive activity.
Creative classes (Florida, 2009)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This refers to the key role played by creative staff in bringing about innovation and three specific attributes of professionals in the industry that are particularly attractive: Technology, talent and tolerance.
Mass creativity and hidden innovation (NESTA, 2007; Miles and Green, 2008; Leadbeater, 2006)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leading to processes generating research and the production of knowledge within society. The influence of cultural organizations affects three basic areas: promotion of social dialogue (channelled through a critical transformative will typifying the mission of cultural organizations), widespread use of new technologies (promoting them using creative content) and the need to rethink the educational model (inclusion of artistic ability and creative skills). • All those types of innovation happening within society, but which, due to their reduced size and multiplicity, cannot be captured by traditional indicators of innovation. Open and shared production models, the Hacker ethic or the Pro-Am figure are three specific references for cultural and creative organizations associated with hidden innovation.
Consumer-driven innovation (Georghiou, 2007)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The interaction between production and consumption is an obvious risk facing cultural organizations from various standpoints: a role as avant-garde users with alternative lifestyles; the importance of culture being consumed for the benefit of production; the investigative role of cultural organizations and the experimental disposition that characterizes them.
Social innovation (Mulgan and Halkett, 2007)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “social innovation such as the development and implementation of new ideas (products, services and models) which aim to cover society's shortfalls” • As opposed to the other productive sectors, cultural organizations are characterized by a corporate mission and vision that is relatively more skewed towards social goals and critical dialogue with reality, along with greater involvement in the immediate vicinity (local development). These organizations’ scales of values are integrated in the dynamics of social change feeding such innovations.
Institutional innovation (Abeledo, 2010)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The role of culture in promoting institutional innovation is reflected in general programmes such as the international movement of Agenda 21 for Culture, and also in specific activities aimed at modernizing public services. Culture is presented as a resource for local development and its management and planning procedures.

Basically, culture has considerable potential for its exploratory nature in a context characterized by a new interpretation of the concept of innovation, in which it is seen as the creation of opportunities (Rodríguez, 2007). From this perspective, a concept tied to the science of forecasting is of particular importance: future scenarios. This concept refers to situations of likely or possible futures, highlighting their application both to innovation in products and services and also to alternative values and models of development. This reinterpretation of innovation means that economic science, and the determination of emerging trends and the future evolution of the markets, are cast in a new light. In this sense, legislation on intellectual property will have a crucial role to play.

2. Innovation and cultural organizations: Main factors for change

Bunker is a non-profit organization whose main aim is to organise and produce cultural events of the most diverse nature. Bunker produces and presents contemporary theatre and dance performances, organizes different workshops and other educational programmes, carries out various research methods in the field of culture and puts together one of the most well-known international festivals, the Mladi Levi.

The long historical trajectory of Bunker (since 1997) has generated a space of activity characterized by the promotion of artists' mobility in and outside Slovenia, artistic exchanges between disciplines and professional dialogue on best practices and innovative experiments within the framework of local development and global sustainability.

Between 2009 and 2012, Bunker has participated in Sostenuto, a European project in the framework of Interreg Med Programme. Through a series of different laboratories the cultural organizations involved in the project have contributed to provide evidence of the potentialities of creative and cultural activities in social dynamization and territorial development processes. These experiences include a creative business incubator in Marseille (AMI, France), an arts and crafts cluster in Chiusi (Citema, Italy), a set of territorial governance initiatives in Kotor (Expeditio, Montenegro) and Liguria (ZEP, Italy) and Bunker's non-monetary exchange system in Ljubljana. Through these pilot experiences and their own research University of Valencia provides a theoretical model of the placement of culture as a determining factor for social and economic change. The results of Sostenuto are very relevant at a time when the economic crisis is forcing Europe to redefine the traditional elements of competitiveness and reformulate its sustainable development model.

From the research of University of Valencia we can summarize the following key points according to the main specificities of the cultural organizations. This analytical framework is useful to consider the specificities of Bunker as an innovative organization and to analyze later the experience of its non-monetary exchange system in Tabor district.

Table 2. Links with innovation: Inputs

INPUTS	
PRODUCTIVE DIMENSION	LINKS TO THE INNOVATION
HUMAN RESOURCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• High levels of training of cognitive workers, higher than the economy's average.• Creative skills, talent and tolerance. Importance of divergent ways of thinking, critical skills and imagination.• Technical know-how and ability to integrate several disciplines and languages.• Leadership skills, independence and entrepreneurial attitude.• Greater capacity for teamwork and enhanced value of their important relationship capital.• Lifestyles integrated in professional activity.• High geographical mobility and higher international protection (networks)
SYMBOLIC RESOURCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The production of the CCIs is knowledge-intensive and intensive in the use of symbolic resources.• Symbolic production presents a growing value for competitiveness and differentiation strategies in companies that come under the framework of the knowledge economy.• High interaction between the aesthetic dimension of production and a company's marketing strategies and ethical values.
RELATIONAL RESOURCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Social capital wealth and increasing the value thereof in production processes.• The generation, interaction and use of social environments and physical spaces conducive to creativity.

Source: prepared by the author based on Yproductions (2009)

Table 3. Links with innovation in the productive processes

PRODUCTIVE PROCESS	
PRODUCTIVE DIMENSION	LINKS TO THE INNOVATION
VISION AND MISSION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social responsibility values: principles of equality, diversity, solidarity, sustainability, etc. • Basically, not-for-profit orientation (and beyond). • Territorial implication and action from proximity. • Artistic excellence criteria to promote continuous improvement through research and experimentation. • An educational function and promoting access to culture.
ORGANIZATION MODEL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisational values characterised by independence and autonomy at work, voluntary work and working for pleasure, and transparency. • Cultural entrepreneurship as a distinguishing feature. • Importance of organisational behaviour based on hacker ethics: focus on the individual and networking as support. • Open network cooperation through non-hierarchical structures. • Interactive hyper-connectivity as a characteristic feature: potential use of Web 2.0. • Clustering dynamics characteristic of the sector: concentration and territorial networks: effects on social innovation.
MANAGEMENT MODEL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SME entrepreneurial dimension as a characteristic. The shortcomings of entrepreneurial skills as a consequence. Management skills affected by such relevant issues as intellectual property. • Knowledge management is characterised by high levels of improvisation and very short-term planning, given the scenario of high uncertainty associated with cultural markets. • Models of human resource training characterised by the importance of lifelong learning through personalised and informal methods.
COMMUNICATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The communication function is a tool inherent to cognitive workers: the value of expression, of emotions, of producing meaning, etc. • Information network management, hyper-connectivity and the use of NICTs.
TECHNOLOGIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interaction between creative content and promotion of the use of the new technologies. • Favourable synergies between the organisational philosophy of the CCIs and the potential of Web 2.0: use of multi-platforms and free content. • Inefficient management of intellectual property rights and negative implications of digitalisation in terms of piracy.
BUSINESS AND FINANCING MODEL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not-for-profit and beyond-profit organisations • Entrepreneurship and innovative methods of funding: Crowdfunding, business angels, venture capital, etc.

Source: prepared by the author

Table 4. Links with innovation: Outputs and impacts

OUTPUTS	
PRODUCTIVE DIMENSION	LINKS TO THE INNOVATION
PRODUCTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The cognitive nature of production: experiential, informational, intangible goods; symbolic and emotional production, aesthetic values
SERVICES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spaces for creativity. Workshops on creative work methodologies. • Cultural (meta) research, thought and experimentation. Critical analysis. Promotion of spaces for divergent thought. • Educational and awareness-raising services. • Creative content and communication. • Cultural entertainment and social mobility (citizen participation). • Internationalisation and integration in territorial networks.
IMPACTS	
DIVERSE TYPES OF IMPACTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audiences: diversity of impacts related to human development (educational, cultural capital development, entertainment, aesthetics, etc.) • Promotion of self-employment through cultural entrepreneurship. • Territorial impacts: Branding, the use of the cultural resource in planning regional development, inter-territorial cultural cooperation, productive diversification, cultural tourism, promotion of creative environments (public spaces and participative spaces). • Development of mass creativity and hidden innovation (integration of artistic abilities in the educational model, promotion of social dialogue and use of the TICs). • Environmental sustainability: development of alternative consumer values and lifestyles. Development of consumer-guided innovation (cultural agents as avant-garde users). • Fight against social exclusion: Social cohesion, territorial identity and historical memory, cultural diversity, art as a tool for urban renewal and the integration of marginalised groups (crime prevention, promotion of healthy attitudes, etc.). • Institutional innovation and optimization of public services: Cultural participation can promote innovation in public services: promote attraction, communication and trust between the public and civil spheres; increase the involvement of groups in risk of exclusion; proximity and interaction with users; participative online systems for suggestions; creative methods of developing ideas; visibility of emerging problems; experimentation and pilot projects, etc. • Innovation services in other sectors of the economy: design, innovation in products and services; branding (communication of values; human resource management (creative skills).

Source: prepared by the author

According to the contents of Table 3, we can consider Bunker organization as a good illustration of the connections between specificities of cultural organizations and innovation: entrepreneurship and social values, alternative life-styles, creative competences, use of symbolic resources, charismatic leadership, international projection, mobility, social capital... Let's see them in detail.

Bunker's team is characterized by the leadership of its founder, Nevenka Koprivšek, who acquires different intercultural competences through her training in Paris (École internationale de Théâtre Jacques Lecoq) and later through professional development in New York. After returning to Ljubljana, she has successfully capitalized these international experiences in her managing job. For eight years, she was the artistic director of the first experimental theatre in Ljubljana, the Glej Theatre. Under her leadership, it became known as an innovative and fierce art centre. In 1997 she founded Bunker and the Mladi Levi festival, both of which she continues to direct.

Nevenka has either been involved in or co-founded many international networks and consortiums such as Junge Hunde, DBM, Balkan Express or Imagine 2020. She occasionally writes, researches, lectures and advises on topics like programming and cultural policy. In 2003, the City of Ljubljana gave Nevenka Koprivšek a major municipal award for special achievement in culture and in 2011 she was honoured by the Government of France as a Chevalier d'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres.

Bunker began its activity with limited investment and Nevenka's and her collaborator Mojca Jug's will to succeed. Thanks to their knowledge and experience in the industry, along with their eagerness, professional contacts and effort, the association developed until it reached its current status, with eight full-time staff members. Five of these workers have a regular contract and three have the status of a "self-employed cultural worker," which amounts to a monthly contract with Social Security contributions being paid by the Ministry.

Various issues can be highlighted with respect to the work team, in which most of the members are female. The competences required are characterized by the importance of the creative skills (alternative discourses), communicative skills (languages) and organizational skills (cooperative strategies). The administrative and economic tasks are also managed by specialized personnel. Working arrangements are heavily influenced by the philosophy and lifestyles of the organization, with a high degree of mobility, coordination and partnership in the distribution of tasks. All in all, we can describe Bunker as a mature organization with practically fifteen years of experience and a relatively young human resources team.

Another one of Bunker's features concerns the management of a unique space: the Stara Mestna Elektrarna – Elektro Ljubljana. This old power station has an important historical and artistic value, therefore being considered part of Ljubljana's cultural heritage. It has been refurbished as a technical monument by Elektro Ljubljana and the Slovenian authorities for cultural purposes. Bunker's programme at the Stara Elektrarna consists of contemporary theatre and dance productions, festivals, concerts and interdisciplinary events, as well as an educational and a rehearsal programme.

The annual contemporary arts festival Mladi Levi is one of the highlights of Bunker's activities. The festival started in 1998 as an international performing arts festival focusing on young emerging artists and new art genres (contemporary circus, documentary theatre, etc.). Nowadays, the focus of the festival remains the same, but the scope of the programme has broadened to include visual and public art, as well as many participatory projects, where international artists join efforts with local residents. From the very beginning, the Mladi Levi festival has also been the framework of a short residency in which the artists invited to the event meet and exchange ideas with local practitioners and producers.

3. The Social Innovation Experience: Non-Monetary Exchange Systems²

A Local Exchange Trading System (LETS) is an organization model in which goods and services can be traded without using traditional currency. These systems are based in the use of interest-free local credit facilities in which direct exchanges are not necessary. For instance, a member can obtain credit by baby-sitting for another person and then spending it on carpentry with someone belonging to the same network. Transactions are recorded in a central platform (physical or virtual) open to all members. Since credit is offered by members of the network for their own advantage, local exchange trading systems are considered to be mutual credit systems. Through the development of Local Exchange Trading Systems, the objective of Bunker has been to facilitate the territorial regeneration of Tabor quarter (Ljubljana), whose name takes after the neighbourhood where Bunker is located.

In this sense, Bunker's pilot experience is part of a long-term process: establishing a permanent connection with the neighbours and the local actors. A lot of activities and efforts in this direction have culminated in the creation of Tabor Cultural Quarter. Previous local studies have identified as Tabor challenges the lack of green public spaces, fragile social identity and minor sense of belonging. Considering that the spatial concentration of cultural subjects in Tabor is very high and the area has various interesting artistic and cultural spaces – including the Stara Elektrarna, Metelkova (a former military site reconverted into an alternative cultural centre) or the Slovene Ethnographic Museum – building the cultural quarter seemed to be the only natural choice to answer both the needs and wishes of the local population and the aspirations of cultural professionals from the same area who had expressed their will to create that kind of network. There are also not cultural but social or educational organizations that became part of the Cultural Quarter activities, because of their aspiration to work together on common issues and areas of interest. The local elementary school and the retirement home are good examples. The established Cultural Quarter Tabor is therefore a case of a “bottom-up” answer to the concrete needs of residents and local organizations, realized by Bunker through the use of inclusive problem-detection and decision-making methods.

The experience of the Bunker Lab was fully integrated in the so-called processes of social innovation. If we look at the six theoretical stages in which these processes can be divided (Murray, Caulier-Grice and Mulligan, 2010) (see Table 4), the Bunker lab can be linked to the first three stages. It should also be noted that the application already anticipated a concrete method of generating innovations through the LETS, so the second stage of the NESTA classification was predefined to a certain extent.

Table 5. Six stages of social innovation

1.	Diagnosis. Highlighting emerging problems
2.	Fostering creative methods to generate ideas and proposals
3.	Designing prototypes and implementing pilot experiments enabling ideas to be tested
4.	Achieving sustainability in the long term, making practice part of the routine
5.	Disseminating and generalizing large-scale innovation
6.	Causing systematic change

Source: Murray, Caulier-Grice and Mulligan (2010)

² This section has been written in collaboration with Nevenka Koprivšek, Bunker's director, and Samo Selimovič, project manager.

Bunker activity was focused on producing better pilot activities, developing social networking through activities such as the creation of platforms or the identification and integration of strategic players.

The initial Sostenuto plans envisaged the LETS as a tool that Bunker could use to find a method through which art and culture could tackle economic and social problems. This assumption was put to the test at the beginning of the project with “Street Exchange” and “Line No. 10: The Book.” The Street Exchange was an attempt to modify the classic local exchange trading system to address the challenges and faults we identified during the previous research phase. Bunker connected the idea of local exchange to a cultural event in order to mobilize more participants. Even though Bunker managed to involve a very large number of individuals in the exchange event (ca. 400), the subsequent analysis showed that a large percentage of the exchanges that took place remained unfinished. After several interviews, Bunker came to the conclusion that the “Street Exchange” project was welcomed by the different festival audiences, hence the high participation, but failed to persuade participants to carry out the exchanges until the end or participate in other exchanges. This fact proved the constraints already pointed out by other LETS researchers, namely the fact that the successful LET systems eventually disintegrate into informal networks of friends and acquaintances that exchange services and goods, while the unsuccessful systems, the ones that are not able to mobilize a sufficient number of people, end up disappearing. These constraints are also the main reason for the shift of experimental focus detailed in the next paragraphs.

Another early experimental project conducted in the framework of the local exchange trading system laboratory was “Line No. 10: The Book” (Proga10: Knjiga). The aim was to promote and standardize the free exchange of books in a specific context (the dead time spent waiting for a bus), arousing curiosity and enhancing people’s receptiveness. To this end, a free-exchange library system was set up at 23 bus stops of the public transport system in the capital. This initiative took advantage of UNESCO’s designation of Ljubljana as the World Book Capital 2010. The initiative was carried out with the collaboration of the Municipality of Ljubljana, the private company Europlakat, as well as institutes, publishers, libraries and other institutions. A broad selection of more than 20,000 books was made available to public transport users, who borrowed the books and (on a smaller scale than we hoped for) returned them after reading. These exchange activities were complemented with specific actions for the priority audiences targeted by BUNKER: namely, the youngest members of the reading public. Hence, a stand with a simpler and on-the-spot exchange was set up at the Metelkova Autonomous Zone to exchange books and promote values associated with this pastime.

Alternative exchange systems were also been introduced to high-school pupils through a series of workshops. During the workshops, in which the alternative exchange systems were compared to the existing ones, Bunker realized that once again they underestimate the possible contributions of the younger generation to the addressing of society’s problems.

Bunker has already mentioned some of the problems or deficiencies of the local non-monetary exchange. Because of them, the Bunker team searched for other approaches with which they could address local problems in an engaged way through artistic interventions.

The social challenges that were to be addressed were identified through previous diagnosis work. Bunker carried out two comprehensive studies about the local territory, its history, and the needs and aspirations of the local residents. The sociological study was focused on the identification of key issues in the local community and was implemented with the focus group method. This helped Bunker differentiate activities according to the specific characteristics of a certain age group. The most important findings of the study were the lack of green areas and community spaces, the lack of a sense of belonging and identity in the quarter, the alienation of residents and the general feeling of the

interviewees that all the different cultural subjects should collaborate in some way. The anthropological study was conducted through interviews and data-gathering and provided material and references for the content of the activities, as it was mostly dealing with the quarter's history, stories and symbolic heritage.

A large range of activities was carried out in the period between 2009 and 2011 in order to develop the workplan. Workshops, talks, events, happenings, and landscaping activities were all conducted with the collaboration of local and international experts and different stakeholders.

In 2009 the Bunker team decided to collaborate with the artistic collective *prostoRož*, designing a project called “*prostoRož09: Street*”. During the *Mladi Levi* festival, held in August 2009, the architects from the *prostoRož* collective stretched the boundaries of the public space in Tabor: 10 parking spaces were transformed into a space for leisure, recreation, play and different events from the cultural and educational field. The intervention addressed some of the problems that Bunker had detected in the study: the growing invasiveness of cars in cities, lack of public spaces and urban furniture and the lack of quality community spaces.

Several small-scale projects were produced with the intent of resolving minor local challenges with the help of cultural content. Four urban interpretation routes (*A Look by the Way*, *In Search of the Lost Garden*, *A Look from the Outside*, and *Wild Seed*) were organized in the local quarter with help from *prostoRož* collective, also with the aim of strengthening the identity of the local quarter. The aim of these routes was to work on the collective recognition of local problems and identify and discuss alternatives to solve them from different perspectives. It involved drawing attention to emerging conflicts (using creative and innovative methodologies such as *Walkscape*) and promoting alternative paradigms and values for development. National and international experts in innovative models of non-monetary exchange and solidarity economy were invited to participate in these activities, rethinking issues such as the role of the consumer in production processes, the role of the green areas as a public space, or the ways in which the living spaces are perceived. During the summer, young people have very few non-commercial activities in which they can engage. Photography, leisure and Dj-ing workshops were organized for children aged 10 to 16 from the neighbourhood. The closing party of *Mladi Levi* festival was an opportunity to introduce the results of the workshops. These are examples of the ways in which Bunker, besides providing quality art programs for young people, promotes long-term relationships between the festival and the local residents. *Paz!park* (artistic collective) carried out the *Paz!lonček* action, in which the youngsters made pottery and distributed it for free throughout the quarter in order to improve the atmosphere and facilitate interconnections between neighbours.

“*Beyond The Construction Site*” and “*Park Tabor*” are two of the activities that deserve special attention. In order to create new spaces that encourage collaboration between people in a broad socio-cultural context, Bunker tackled the transformation of deteriorated public spaces in Tabor district. As these challenges proved to be too large to be addressed solely by Bunker's staff, they were tackled in collaboration with *ProstoRož* and *Kud Obrat*. The regeneration of the degraded (and according to some local residents, also dangerous) areas through cultural (and other) activities was achieved in a relatively short period, answering needs for more communal activities and non-commercial content in the quarter.

Concerning *Park Tabor*, by the end of the summer, Bunker already had positive feedback from the local residents and observed changes were clearly evident in a very short time frame. A total of 48 organizations and individuals produced 455 events in 131 days. The local residents were able to take part in the transformation and beautification of their neighbourhood and discuss issues that interested them in both locations/projects, but no other project mobilized so many local residents and inspired so

much volunteer participation and joint efforts as “Beyond the Construction Site.” Lot of efforts were made in order to obtain an official permit for temporary land use from the Ljubljana Municipality. A degraded construction site was transformed into a collective community gardening area – the first of its kind in Slovenia. Apart from Bunker’s engagement and the involvement of Kud Obrat, which consisted of coordinating the activities at the site, local residents spent countless hours of work to transform the space from 2009 on. The municipal authorities, as well relevant institutions like the Network for Space and other local decision-making structures, acknowledged the importance of that kind of problem-solving approach in urban areas. The project is still ongoing. In addition, similar initiatives are emerging in other districts in Ljubljana and Slovenia. We can claim without a doubt that these two activities clearly demonstrate the effect that culture can have in society.

Finally, the organization of the “Ready to Change Forum” turned out to be a milestone for both the Sostenuto project and for the Bunker workplan. The purpose of this international meeting was sharing of knowledge and presenting the ways in which cultural actors are coping with social transformations, transformations of public policies and cultural and artistic practices. An open forum was held at the Stara Elektrarna venue (2-4 December 2010) with the participation of more than 200 cultural operatives, mostly from Europe but also from other continents. The forum’s programme was based on three pillars: *Open University*, *Exchange of Experiences* and *Manifesto*.

The *Open University*, which included lectures and debates among intellectuals, researchers, artists and professionals on topics as Social Changes and New Urban Realities, Cultural Rights, Economy and Biodiversity, etc. *Exchange of Experiences* included presentations of specific projects and programs dealing on these questions. The third component was workshops aimed at the collective writing of the final *Manifesto*: “Towards Transformational Cultures: Ljubljana 1.0.” Participants were invited to co-write the Manifesto and a draft was presented at the end of the Forum to a panel of representatives of civil initiatives and politicians. This draft version included points as proposals to rethink common goods, art as a critical process of production of meanings and symbols, freedom of expression, etc.

We can also highlight the use of New Information and Communication Technologies for the documentation and dissemination of the whole process. The majority of lectures and presentations are available at: <http://www.bunker.si/eng/sostenuto-lectures-and-presentations>.

Conclusions

Cultural and artistic activities serve as a basis for the fulfilment of Bunker’s commitment to connect different local stakeholders (cultural and others) in order to enhance the quality of life and provide the Tabor quarter with a cultural identity. The experimentation conducted through these activities has led to the emergence of a physical and symbolic space, providing a new (cultural) identity for the existing territory through numerous collaborations between different organizations and individuals. Participation and inclusiveness were both goals in themselves as well as the design of successful methods for choosing and implementing the envisaged solutions to local problems. All the projects were answering specific demands or observations identified in the two studies – be it the wish of some residents to spend more time with their neighbours, the absence of quality community spaces or green areas, the strengthening of solidarity amongst local residents or the strong will of the local professionals to collaborate in the creation of a structure that could habilitate the demands and initiatives of both professionals and residents.

Bunker continues to work with the local community, spreading examples of good practices to other areas, defining the conditions and looking for the resources necessary to continue developing the initiatives launched in the framework of the laboratory. The local territory has benefitted to a great

extent from these initiatives and now there is a critical mass of local participants enough to extend them. On the basis of the Sostenuto experience, Bunker is also starting similar projects in Maribor, the second largest city in Slovenia and is planning further actions of urban regeneration and social cohesion through artistic activities in Ljubljana.

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