

A Model of Cooperation between Art and Business

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Abstract

The article will examine the framework of reference within which art-business collaborations have developed in recent years and will attempt to trace the elements useful for the construction of a reference method for an art-based collaboration model that, starting from theoretical and empirical research, allows the innovative contents of the primary arts to be replicated in their collaboration with traditional industries.

Based on the qualitative analysis of more than 25 case studies of interaction between companies and artists, the paper aims to define the interactions and processes that are activated when an artist enters the corporate sphere to join a shared project. The main results and effects that artistic interventions can have on the internal and external structure of organisations and on the processes of artistic creation will be outlined.

Keywords: Artistic interventions in organizations, art-based approach, business, art thinking.

Subject classification codes: Z1, M1, 035

State of the Art

For over thirty years, processes of interaction between the creative world and business reality have been experimented on internationally (Berthoin Antal, Debucquet, & Frémeaux 2018): from the Artist Placement Group (APG), now called O + I (Organization and Imagination), up to the most recent experiments of Boston Cyberarts, Canon's ARTLAB, Olivetti (Cacciatore & Panozzo 2021). It was highlighted (Grzelec & Prata 2013) how the artistic experiences in the company, which began more extensively in 1983, developed around 2003, and reached their maximum increase around 2006, have become more frequent within organizations, with different objectives and modes.

Four main approaches by which to observe the *artistic intervention* have been identified (Sköldberg, Woodilla, & Berthoin Antal 2016): managerial discourse, aesthetic discourse, arts metaphors, and multi-stakeholder discourses. After having examined them in detail, the main limitations of the research developed so far on the subject will be exposed and a different overview of how and in what ways art can bring new values within organizations will be proposed.

Managerial discourse

The focus is on management and aims to demonstrate how the use of the arts can stimulate innovation and creativity and how there can be an analogy between the world of art and managerial reality. ((Barry & Meisiek 2010; Schiuma 2011; Austin & Devin 2003; Biehl-Missal 2011; Seifter & Buswick 2005).

Art adds value to management's work (Austin & Devin 2003) because it improves the capacity for innovation: managers should look to artists to create economic value, and how they structure their work. Artistic making, defined by the

authors as ‘artful’, requires management to have a creative attitude, as an artist and opens up a gaze that goes beyond traditional management models.

The performing arts and the social world of organizations have many characteristics in common: the metaphor of the organization as a theater (Biehl- Missal 2011) reflects how teamwork is essential for corporate well-being and, consequently, for the improvement of economic performance.

Aesthetic discourse

The aesthetic category of beauty is emphasized as inspiration to encourage leaders to broaden their value categories (Guillet de Monthoux 2004; Linstead & Höpfl 2000; Strati 1999, 2000; Adler 2006, 2010; Darsø 2014; Ladkin 2008).

The aesthetic dimension can allow judging the quality of a leader's performances ((Taylor & Ladkin 2009, 66; Ladkin 2008), and the relevance and effectiveness of his strategies. The term ‘leading beautifully’ expresses the aesthetics of a manager who can guide his organization beautifully.

In a society made up of constant and disruptive changes, creativity and improvisation are fundamental qualities for adequately managing a competitive organization. Companies and organizations try to improve by finding what is not working and then solving the problem they have found. Instead of focusing on weaknesses and problems, the alternative approach is to focus on increasing its strengths. Art supports leaders by transferring the idea of beauty to them, intended as a way to give their best - to use their strengths and aspirations, to effectively guide their organization (Adler 2006, 491).

Arts metaphors

Metaphorical discourse is related to the transfer of artistic concepts in management and

organizational theories (Barrett 1998; Hatch 1998, 1999; Vaill 1989; Hatch & Yanow 2008).

Improvisation has implications that suggest ways in which managers and executives can prepare organizations to learn and be responsive to critical situations (Barrett 1998, 620). To be innovative, managers, like jazz musicians, for example, should interpret vague clues, deal with unstructured tasks, develop incomplete knowledge, and yet act. Organizations are increasingly connected, fluid, constantly, and rapidly evolving. The use of metaphor, passing through the artistic medium, thus becomes a precious ally for the transfer of knowledge within the competitive organization (Hatch 1998, 8).

Using the arts in business contributes to activating analogies and metaphors useful for activating organizational change in reference (Darsø 2004). By using art in management, they can transform companies through internal and external relational dynamics, which transmit cognitive flows spontaneously.

Multi-stakeholder discourses

Through this approach, we consider the points of view of all the agents involved (artists, management, employees, and intermediaries) to analyze their direct experiences in organizational development practices or the development of learning theories (Johansson 2012; Styhre & Eriksson 2008; Berthoin Antal 2014; Berthoin Antal, Taylor & Ladkin 2014).

Creative people think in a new way and redefine problems by looking at them from other angles, tolerating their ambiguities, and also learning to take risks to solve them. They welcome their ways of thinking about aesthetic skills and qualities and can see beyond the narrow horizon of usefulness that limits many collaborators in

organizations. The interactions between artists and organizations have been experimented with in different disciplinary fields: from theater (Steed 2005), to painting, from dance (Biehl-Missal & Springborg 2015, 2; Chandler 2011, 871) to music (Sorsa, Merkkiniemi, Endrissatc & Islamd 2017; Barrett 1998, 605). Projects aimed at exploring common boundaries between different sectors have also been developed, such as example, between art, science, and organizations (Lee, Fillisb, & Lehman 2017). The use of artistic techniques can create unexpected opportunities and new ways of seeing science by introducing aesthetic, emotional, environmental, educational, and social values.

Organizational creativity (Nisula & Kianto 2017) can find a means of developing and involving employees in improvisation exercises to stimulate participants to behave differently from their daily routine (7), providing new perspectives and insights, as well as the opportunity to observe and rethink their behaviors.

Results and limitations of existing theories

The main advantages recognized by the use of different art forms in businesses (Lee, Fillisb, & Lehman 2017, 6) concern the creation of a set of values not previously experienced within the organizational environment. It is also a way for the companies involved to strengthen their public relations (7). The values identified reinforce the importance of promoting a stimulating aesthetic atmosphere, and the result of the creativity generated, which allows improving learning, and cultural benefits for the staff and the community of reference.

Workers in companies and organizations hosting artists should know the result of collaboration depends on their full involvement. Therefore, the domains of aesthetics and work must intersect significantly and productively. If the artists cannot put

themselves in the shoes of the collaborators of the companies, there can be only marginal learning and if the employees cannot offer themselves new practices of thought and action, there are perhaps few opportunities to exploit the creative potential of the workers (Styre & Eriksson 2008, 50). To appreciate the different ways of knowing and doing, the dissimilar logics and values, expectations and experiences of the artists, for the organization it is necessary that there be appropriate ways of involvement in planning and conducting interventions (Berthoin Antal 2014, 26).

The following results can be traced (Berthoin Antal & Strauß 2016):

- (1) Artistic interventions in organizations are mainly based on personal and interpersonal levels since it is on them that interactions act in a particular way;
- (2) Learning is generated in what is called *interspace*, where participants experience new possible ways of seeing and thinking compared to the usual ones;
- (3) The effects generated by artistic interventions can go beyond the personal and interpersonal sphere and disseminate to the organizational one;
- (4) The emergence of these effects at the organizational level occurs especially if the leadership actively supports the learning generated in the interspaces;
- (5) In some cases, unexpected positive effects have been noted that have extended beyond the boundaries of the organization and that have enriched relations with stakeholders.

Interspaces can be defined as “temporary social spaces within which participants experience new ways of seeing, thinking, and doing things that add value for them personally. In the interspace, doubt and organizational norms are suspended to enable experimentation. It is from experimentation in the temporary interspace that

values-added can flow out to influence processes and practices in the organization thereafter” (39).

The many pieces of research developed in the field define the different ways in which the artistic interventions are carried out within the organizations, and identify the perimeter and the main outcomes but do not identify how these collaborations are born, what are the reciprocal needs, and how interventions develop differently based on mutual needs and requirements. What are the stages of cooperation? In which of them does greater creativity develop and in which cases can this also be extended to the rest of the organization? Is the learning dimension always present? Do artistic interventions always have a positive outcome or are there cases in which they only partially reach the initial goal? This research tries to answer these questions that are still open, thanks to empirical studies carried out through the observation and analysis of many case studies.

A Model of Cooperation

This work is based on the study of some of the 68 cases carried out since 2016 by the MacLAB (Laboratory for the management of arts and cultures) of the Ca' Foscari University of Venice, one of the most important Italian research centers in the domain of organization and management of arts, cultural productions, and creative industries.

These interventions, developed in the context of various research projects, involved artists from the visual and performing arts sector on one hand, and companies belonging to different industrial sectors (steel, nautical, manufacturing, steel, printing, weaving, etc.). The definition of a model that can define how the meeting between the artistic and corporate spheres takes place and how from this union of intentions a virtuous interaction can arise on both sides was necessary to make these interactions less episodic and more structured from the point of view of their replicability.

Methodology

The scientific methodology adopted involved three phases:

- Theoretical research: analysis of the literature and state of the art on artistic interventions in organizations;
- Action research: every artistic intervention in the company envisaged the presence of a researcher who acted as an intermediary between the artist and the entrepreneur and, at the same time, observed and studied the whole process;
- Empirical research: qualitative analysis of the interventions carried out. This phase included a phase of in-depth interviews with the researchers/intermediaries who followed the interventions to systematize the results.

Furthermore, joint interviews were also conducted with the artists and company representatives who carried out the projects. This last phase was particularly important to test what was previously analyzed and to reconstruct the processes that occurred during the collaboration.

In detail, the case studies analyzed were the following:

[Table 1. Case studies included interviews with artists/researchers.intermediaries.]

[Table 2. Case studies included interviews with artists, researchers-intermediaries, and company representatives.]

A total of 22 semistructured interviews were carried out involving the artists and researchers/ intermediaries (in almost all cases, the two figures coincide) who followed the various interventions. The interviews were carried out separately, to be able to compare the different feedbacks and understand the different points of view on the same intervention. Finally, 4 joint interviews were carried out with artists, researchers/

intermediaries, and company representatives, who discussed the interventions with each other. All interventions were recorded, transcribed, and analyzed, then systematized based on common outcomes.

The case of D20 Art Lab and Electrolux

In this case study, the company management needed to make a video to celebrate the centenary of the Electrolux plant in Susegana, in the Veneto region. They involved the D20 Art Lab artists giving them great trust, thanks above all to the intermediation of the university within the Interreg Med SMATH project. Therefore, the business need was satisfied thanks to the possibility of communicating with the artists and understanding each other's needs. Time was crucial: in this case, there was a path of knowledge and deepening, full of reflection on both sides. The company was extremely involved in the process of its making, taking responsibility for what came out. "The artist must know what is expected", says Sergio Marchesini, artist "otherwise the final work ends up in a basement and without any importance for the company. The company needs to know what to do and what the artist can accomplish. Having in front an interlocutor who stays on board for the entire duration of the intervention was the most difficult thing in all the projects in which we have participated in the past. Establish clear rules, a definition of mutual objectives, available resources and understand together how art can serve and why it is essential" he continues. "If the decoding part is missing, art says nothing". The presence of the intermediary dictated the timing of the meetings and identified the artists as the most suitable for the company. "The difficult part is precisely the meeting", explains the company representative "and often the objectives do not coincide". The cultural background of the management is relevant because the need to introduce art into the company arises. "Art is another world" continue the company

representative “and it is the plant manager who decides what he wants to achieve and with what objectives” explains the company referent “so if he does not recognize in art a suitable language for this, it is difficult for something positive to be born”. “Art allows you to explore new ways to communicate corporate values, with different and unexpected points of view” she continues. “The artist has added value compared to a simple communication studio. He can build relationships, human relationships between things and people, he does not use stereotyped languages”. “It is necessary to try to unhinge the linguistic logic to say more”, explains Raffaella Rivi, artist “to try to change the rules by highlighting the strengths and criticalities of a situation, without embellishing or emphasizing it”. “The impact of art is much stronger and has different objectives than a communication campaign” reports the marketing manager. “Art undermines what is standardized, it revolutionizes it”. The company provided an idea, made a proposal, and the company representatives accompanied the artists on a shared path within the dimension of the factory. “Knowledge has become one choosing each other and then talking about the project together. Meeting, comparison, definition, and fine-tuning of the idea, as part of a path of involvement, was the development of the process”, explains Raffaella.

The origin of cooperation

The case study presented is emblematic and illustrative of how the artist-company relationship is built and how cooperation can shape meanings and values for both sides. Comparing the different types of answers obtained from the interviews and testing them with the four comparison case studies, it is possible to trace four main phases that lead artists and companies towards cooperation.

It is from the input phase that the interchange path between artists and businesses is born, then selected in the choice phase based on certain characteristics; in the phase of enucleation of the needs, it reflects on the real, respective reasons for the collaboration, giving life to the fourth phase of starting the real collaboration.

The *input of the collaboration* between artists and companies can arise from three instances: a scientific research project (universities and training bodies), a free initiative of the parties (in which the company and the artist come directly into contact), or a project/program of external financing (cooperation projects, European projects, etc.) in which the initiatives are experimentally financed. These approaches presuppose an interest of various types: from the study of business processes to the discovery of innovation opportunities for businesses to the experimentation with new artistic languages. However, the leitmotif remains the same: the belief that cross-contamination between two distant worlds can bring benefits to both sides.

The *choice of artist and company* takes place based on recurring or more verifiable characteristics: the artist has usually already had similar experiences of interactions in businesses, has an average career level that allows him to support himself with his work, and has a fairly dynamic artistic style, open to experimentation. The company, on the other hand, finds in art its value, contained in the company's mission and vision; moreover, it is often led by a very creative manager with an innovative spirit, who wants to open his own company to different stakeholders, modify products or business processes, find new markets.

The outcome of the collaboration will depend on the choice between the artist and the company: it, therefore, represents a crucial moment, to which maximum attention should be paid. It has been observed that the degree of innovation, which often also coincides with an optimal level of collaboration, is all the greater the more the artist

belongs to the core creative arts (visual arts, performing arts, poems, cinema, literature) and the more the company belongs to traditional sectors (manufacturing, construction, electricity, transport, etc.). The more physically distant the two universes, the more they have an interest in talking to each other and exchanging know-how. If, on the contrary, the company is already operating within creative contexts, there may be critical issues, especially in the definition of the project; otherwise, the collaboration could shift into the normal market relationship based on the firm-artist client.

The third moment is represented by the *phase of enucleation of the needs*, in which the mutual needs are defined, that is, the motive that pushes the two different entities to dialogue. As for the artist, there may be, as we have seen, a propensity towards experimenting with new languages, such as the possibility of having new professional opportunities and, consequently, different sources of funding. As for the company, the decision is more complex: on the one hand, we need to respond to specific needs, mainly related to the market and the search for new customers: in this case, we are looking for a process or product innovation, which can open up access to new market segments. However, a second requirement is the one most closely linked to the corporate image, in particular, the communication of the brand and the values of the company. In collaboration with the artist, therefore, we see a way to renew one's image, to communicate one's values differently and innovatively. In both cases, the collaboration with the artist is driven by a business need. The company sees in art the answer to needs within the organization and finds the medium in the artist to resolve internal conflicts, face organizational changes, train, and create harmony among employees. In this second case, we face an internal need within the organization.

When the interventions are mainly aimed at the *development of the organizational infrastructure*, the corresponding change concerns the aesthetic

properties of the organizational resources. Here, the forms and creative skills are absorbed within the company as assets for the creation of new products and communication methods.

[Figure 1. The phases preceding the art-based collaboration.]

If the company shows a mainly business motivation at the origin of its work interest with the artist, a *functional collaboration* will be configured; in the second case, however, we will face an *exploratory collaboration*.

It is possible to define a *functional collaboration* if the company asks the artist a simple question about what he intends to get from the cooperation. They perfectly integrated the interaction with the corporate marketing and communication offices and the context of reference within which they will place it. It practically represents the typical order. The company probably already has other suppliers on the market capable of providing such output, but the artist is a novelty element concerning the usual product/process design parameters. Here, the question is interesting: Why is the artist?

Instead, *exploratory collaborations* closer to Art Thinking (Whitaker 2016) are identified with a sort of shared path, in which the company's demand is more indefinite and neither the area nor sometimes the corporate sector of reference. An artist is involved and an exploratory path of research begins. There is, therefore, a dimension of discovery, exploration, and experimentation.

The cooperation process

Once the collaboration has been established, we can trace subsequent moments in it and its result.

Intermediary participation is fundamental for the success of the projects. He will have the role of consultant, catalyst, and mediator, working alongside artists and managers (Sköldberg, Woodilla, & Berthoin Antal 2016) and will be a hybrid figure, able to bridge the two worlds, the artistic and the entrepreneurial world, including values, codes, and practices of both universes (Berthoin Antal 2012, 46). Its main task will lie in creating a suitable environment for the interaction between artists and businesses, promoting the dissemination of what they have achieved, and possibly documenting the added value created by mutual interaction (Sköldberg, Woodilla, & Berthoin Antal 2016, 206). Its role is above all to encourage discussions and exchanges, to reveal the underlying issues (Barry & Meisiek 2016), the needs of the organization, and change normal points of view, including those provided by the artist.

The phase of *mutual understanding*, in which the artist and the entrepreneur meet, is extremely delicate, because different factors converge in it, such as those related to the psychological and sociological sphere: affinities, impressions, exchange of ideas, and perspectives.

As we have already expected, the *definition of the collaboration* type that is established between the parties is the most important moment: the entire evolution of the project will be subject to it. This phase depends only on the type of requirement that the company intends to convey to the art-based intervention, and is closely connected with the next phase.

Roles definition: in this phase, at the company level, the areas or organizational functions/divisions involved in the interaction are decided. If they orient the company towards a type of *functional collaboration*, more closely connected with market needs, the control it will carry out on the artistic work will be greater. Conversely, the company that will opt for a more *exploratory relationship* will leave the artist with

greater creative freedom and will be less inclined to follow the design and implementation phase in the future.

The *output definition*, a natural consequence of the previous phases, proves to be the most critical moment for the observed interactions. Its uncertain or non-definition risks jeopardizing the entire design process and, sometimes, entails the interruption of the collaboration relationship. The ideas for collaboration must arise from the meeting between the company and the artist to detail the process that could reach that goal. Some companies, because of their strictly defined organizational structure or for urgent needs, can independently define which aspect of their organization or activity requires intervention.

Output design: what should happen is the definition of a concrete, tangible, short-term need to which the company wants to respond through artistic intervention. The process carried out translates the tacit knowledge that is unique to the company into a more tangible and explicit form. Through the artist's interaction with the members of the company, the founding values, urgent needs, and prospects of each of them are shared with the group. The artists then elaborate on this knowledge through their external points of view, working out the problem and becoming familiar with it.

At the end of the intervention, this knowledge is returned to the community, either in the form of a tangible artifact or as changes resulting from the process itself. This allows the artist to enter the dynamics of the organization better than any consultant or designer, deepening, and discovering new opportunities. If the intervention is directed inward, the process will be perceived by those who share the company's organizational culture.

In continuity with what happens in the phase of enucleation of needs, the artistic intervention is part of three specific company dimensions:

- Communication area: the artist's work helps the company to communicate innovatively and differently;
- Business change management: artistic collaboration assists the management of internal business change processes, linked to changes in the organizational structure, expansion of the range/production line, opening towards new markets, and, in general, new strategic choices that involve a challenge for the company. In this case, the intervention is communicated less externally but has an important internal impact.
- Innovation in product/process: the artistic intervention serves to innovate the product and the process. The artist works alongside those who develop the product, and the artistic idea can materialize into a new artifact or a new service.

With these modalities, artistic thinking can penetrate corporate spaces and values and spread its tacit knowledge through tangible or intangible output.

Employee participation is relevant, as explained before, for several reasons.

Between the various phases, a continuous *interchange* between the parties is necessary, also to make the final output as shared as possible and to obtain the greatest satisfaction of both, the artist and the entrepreneur.

[Figure 2. The art-based collaboration phases.]

Some observe that the lack of sharing of some key passages during the *output phase* has resulted in the interruption of trust between artists and entrepreneurs or a lack of recognition of corporate values compared to what they express through artistic work.

While the type of cooperation is dictated above all by the different approaches provided to the interaction by the company, the operational phases of the process itself are mainly dictated by the design and output realization, i.e., by the time of the artist

and by the methods of execution of the final work. If the type of collaboration is functional, the company intervenes more within the project of the work, carefully monitoring its phases. If instead, the collaboration is exploratory, the entrepreneur relies almost completely on the artist, discovering with him a new way of looking at the organization.

The *final presentation* phase completes the collaboration project. It should be studied together and reflect the will of both the management and the creative side. It should be effectively communicated, both inside and outside the company, to strengthen the link not only between the company and artists, but also with employees, intermediaries, and anyone who has contributed to the success of the project.

Improving cooperation

From the analysis of the various case studies, and above all, by systematizing what emerged from the interviews with the researchers/ intermediaries who have followed the various projects over the years, ways have been identified that could help manage the artistic interventions more optimally. To make the collaboration between artist and company more effective, the aspects on which to intervene have been traced:

PHASE 1. INTERMEDIARY INVOLVEMENT: The salient characteristics linked to this role are above all the ability to advise and guide the parties towards the achievement of common objectives, the sharing of activities, the predisposition in favoring constant dialogue between the parties, managing and organizing the main phases of the project, listening and understanding mutual desires and needs.

PHASE 2. MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING: It is important that trust, understanding, empathy, and esteem are established between the parties, and that there are common interests and mutual curiosity.

PHASE 3. COLLABORATION TYPE: Regardless of the type of collaboration that will be established between the parties (functional or exploratory), management must recognize the value in the artistic work, the cultural content of the output, and the results achieved.

PHASE 4. ROLES DEFINITION: It would be better that there was extreme respect for the respective roles of the collaboration, a reduced interference in the respective work, an expectation, on both sides, adequate to the final goal, and the artist's ability to maintain his creative autonomy, and not, lastly, an acknowledgment of the mediator's role as a useful figure to improve collaboration.

PHASE 5. OUTPUT DEFINITION: It is the most delicate moment of the collaboration in which it is decided in what way the interaction between the parties will materialize. There must be maximum clarity about what you want to achieve and what precisely the company intends to invest in terms of time, space, and human and economic resources.

PHASE 6. EMPLOYEES INVOLVEMENT: It is important that there is an involvement of employees at various levels (from the company contact person to the worker), that there is maximum participation in the activities and support for the production of the output, and, above all, that the interaction takes place in a relaxed atmosphere and collaborative.

PHASE 7. OUTPUT DESIGN: In this phase, there must be an investment in terms of time and energy by both, and the ability to accurately manage the preparation times to return the expected output.

PHASE 8. INTERCHANGE: they must base the dialogue between the parties involved on the ability to compare, discuss the differences, get involved, and in relation, to

sharing the results, for maximum collaboration.

PHASE 9. OUTPUT REALIZATION: For the expected output to be carried out effectively, there should be direct involvement of the entrepreneur, who makes him take part as the first beneficiary of the intervention; it would also be better if there are internal spaces within the company for the construction of the work and that a company contact person takes charge of the decisions, minimizing the bureaucratic steps and the constitution of the delegation.

PHASE 10. FINAL PRESENTATION: The last moment should offer a fair recognition of the results achieved, also merging the harmony and harmony achieved by all the participants.

Main results and implications

From the analysis of the interviews carried out, it was possible to reconstruct, besides the main phases that build the art-based collaboration, also the major results recorded in the cases observed in terms of impact. We attempted to consider both perspectives, that of the artist and that of the company.

[Table 3. Main outcomes of art-based interventions.]

As for the main benefits received by the artist, these concern the strengthening of one's artistic identity, the experimentation with new materials, the contamination with different know-how and expertise, the possibility of interacting with new spatial contexts and different professional figures, the acquisition of new skills and understanding of different social and interpersonal dynamics, the acquisition of new languages and stimuli for artistic creation, the enhancement of one's work and company tasks, the reversal of one's point of view, the construction of a choral message, the

creation of coherence between artistic thought and organizational reality through metaphor.

For the company, however, the main advantages are above all the acquisition of new ideas for the development of the brand, the corporate image, the dissemination of know-how through new channels and methods, the dissemination of corporate values through art, team-building actions, transferring experience, corporate legacy, the dissemination of new values within and outside the organization, the development of latent ideas within the company, the strengthening of company image, the creation of new stimuli for management, the greater understanding of the interpersonal dynamics existing in the company context, innovative thinking.

These outcomes are largely achieved through the juxtaposition of different aspects, all linked to the continuous exchange between the parties, mutual listening capacity, to the enhancement of one's specific features. Something primarily linked the phases that make collaboration more capable of creating positive outcomes to the type of collaboration established between the parties; second, the definition of the respective roles and the expected output, the involvement of employees, and, above all, the continuous exchange between the parties, which allows artistic thought to 'permeate' the organization of intangible values and make them concrete through specific actions fielded by each for the realization of the final output.

As they found (Darsø 2004; Schiuma 2011) one of the main effects generated by artistic intervention lies in the ability to generate learning. This learning is carried out significantly as a diffusion of knowledge.

[Figure 3. The artist is a value driver.]

We can summarize the importance of art in management from two main perspectives: the arts can play the role of a learning platform (Darsø 2004, 31), or they can represent a tool or vector to influence the aesthetic and organizational dimension (Schiuma 2011, 39).

One of the major benefits suggested by entrepreneurs who have experienced collaboration with artists in their company is certainly that of spreading knowledge generated by the vision of the artist and his work in the company. For this to happen, it is necessary to create a dimension of mutual trust and affinity between the artist and the corporate figures involved in the collaboration. This area of trust can certainly come close to the concept of *interspaces* (Berthoin Antal & Strauß 2016, 39), i.e., physical and metaphorical places (Carè, Paolino, Smarrelli 2018, 97) from which value can emerge and spread in the organization, influencing business processes and practices. During the cognitive process, the artist absorbs the tacit knowledge of the company and returns it, first internally, through the production and diffusion of new artistic and cultural values, and then externally, through the same corporate body (the market and corporate stakeholders).

In the case of artistic interventions, the generated value takes the form of works of art, creation of a new corporate image, know-how, different manual skills in the production of artifacts, care and attention to detail, and new products. The cultural value is therefore transferred to the corporate dimension and, consequently, to its reference market, through a new aesthetic dimension, a new brand dimension, and a new meaningful dimension of know-how and expertise. The real challenge is, therefore, to make sure that this value manages to permeate the corporate body, to the point of being able to continue to manifest its effects even after the collaboration has ended, through the continuous generation of innovation and shared and shareable values.

Limitations and suggestions for future research

One of the major limitations of this work was that we were unable to immediately include in the first phase of the interviews the company representatives and entrepreneurs who participated in the various interactions. This was mainly due to lower availability and a basic difficulty in making the needs of scientific research coincide with those of corporate work. However, this aspect severely limited the points of view, allowing a partial data collection compared to the 22 case studies analyzed in table 1.

Therefore, it is advisable to always proceed with the systematization of results that include all the parties involved in such a way as to be able to consider all the variables that come into play in the different processes. One of the critical points found in the various interactions lies precisely in the difficulty of building common horizons between the different levels, and the difficulty of communication, as well as mutual exploration, is one of the main limitations of the interventions. Sometimes, the company has too narrow a focus on the output to be made and is unable to perceive the value inherent in the artistic creation process. Furthermore, what is commonly associated with art, that is the ability to excite the viewer and enjoy it, is hardly recognized among the outcomes of the interactions. This automatically implies that the final result is not perceived emotionally by the observer but rather as a mere product of the interaction.

Only in some cases, especially if the object of the collaboration provides for team-building actions in favor of employees, especially if they involve the performing arts, (for example, in the case of Fornace Orsoni and the director Mattia Berto, listed in table 1, who envisaged the involvement of employees of the company Oikos with the realization of the final show) there is a real emotional involvement on the part of the company.

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