new times
NEW MODELS

Investigating the internal governance models and external relations of independent cultural centres in times of change.

Compiled and edited by Sandy Fitzgerald

Pekarna magdalenske mreže  2010

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Pojasnilo v skladu z zakonom o medijih:
Vsebina je zaradi ohranitve neposrednosti in avtentičnosti besedila,
in ker je besedilo zlasti namenjeno tujim bralcem, natisnjena v angleškem jeziku.

CONTENTS

All of the texts from named contributors in this book are edited presentations given at the NTNM conference at Pekarna in January 2010. The shorter presentations were delivered under the restriction of the Pecha Kucha format (20 images with 20 seconds explanation per image). The keynote was delivered by Phil Wood.

This book is ambitious. By using the example of governance models, which was the topic of a New Times New Models conference (January 2010, Maribor), it wishes to investigate limitations and criteria within cultural production and at the same time to connect the diversity of creativity and activities into a homogeneous organism, called 'cultural centre'.

By doing this, it brings to the attention a fundamental, but all too often overlooked, demarcation: in the case of independent culture, are we mostly talking about legal regulations, or - opposite to this - are we talking about content? And what is actually the difference?

The difference surely lies in its mission and engagement: does independent culture simply just satisfy the interests of its particular audiences and represent a kind of a marketing niche, or does it serve a much more daring purpose - the belief that it has to intervene into social reality and, following the path of insurgent and countercultural movements, expand the boundaries of possibilities? Is it above all a scene and crossroads of trends, or does it swear by its own production, creating, commenting, a changing of the social reality in all possible ways? Is it a manager that engages in economic calculations or is it a mediator that addresses, educates and encourages social initiative? Does its purpose lie in entertaining, or rather in the constant questioning of its own working condition and with that participation in matters that concern us all? Is it self-sufficient or does it strive to reach across the fences of its own city? Is it an anonymous crowd of consumers, or a movement of individuals with clear opinions?

The truth is that independent culture usually moves somewhere in between the two poles. But the gap is much too wide to simply abolish the mentioned dilemmas. On the contrary, we believe that such questions can be fundamentally solved or enhanced by the governance model. Is the model elastic enough to be able to react to the immediacies and dynamics of social life? Is it open and provocative enough to enable recognition and inclusion of not yet fully articulated or formed practices that can either grow into important 'players', or dissolve in the very next moment? Is it honest and determined enough to recognise the bluffers in its midst and deny them hospitality? Is it grounded enough to distinguish between community and business endeavours, and establish criteria by which the socially more important ones are privileged, even at the cost of conflict or economic risks? Is it courageous

enough to outline the policy of responsibility, which, in contrast to the restrictive policies of arranging internal relationships, is based on education and common decision-making? Is it self-reflective enough to clearly see the traps of the cultural industry, and the vicious circle of economisation of culture and culturalisation of economics? And, in light of all the aforementioned specifics, how to prevent it from becoming just some bureaucratic blot, stifling creativity and reactivity with a plentitude of orders and decrees? Where is the line that makes coexistence more human, and where does the speculative economy begin? Is the governance model conceived in a way that allows contemplation on all the above-mentioned dilemmas, and the application of findings of such contemplation to practice? Does its mission thus lie in following a goal that surpasses its provisional existence?

This book tackles questions like these. The answers can only be given when taking into account the specific local contexts that determine each centre, place, ambiance and idea. Therein lies its ambitiousness; it presents local contexts in the frame of global processes and at the same time, deliberately or not, speaks about the mission of cultural production. This must be directed against the havoc of the all-determining capital and its commandments on maximising profit, but at the same time, it mustn't buy into preconceptions of its own importance and the ensuing cultural (sado-) masochism. A difficult task. But not an impossible one!

Gregor Kosi, Pekarna  magdalenske mreže

ORGANISING PARTNERS

**Pekarna magdalenske mreže**, Maribor, Slovenia. A former military bakery, Pekarna was squatted by artists and activists in 1994. At 6,000 square meters, Pekarna has become the largest independent cultural centre in northwest Slovenia. The centre represents ideas of alternative culture, free society and a peaceful future and hosts public performances, workshops, studios, youth projects and international exchange.
Currently (2010) Pekarna is negotiating with the city authorities for the future of the centre, including its refurbishment.

**Alliance Operation City** (former Alliance for the Centre for Independent Culture and Youth), a Zagreb-based cooperation platform that gathers NGOs, art organisations, informal groups and individuals into one network. The main goal of the Alliance is to foster the development of the independent cultural and youth sector by organising various programmes, international conferences and regular public discussions. The Alliance initiated and, together with the City of Zagreb, founded the Zagreb Centre for Independent Culture and Youth, a public institution that provides basic services and manages infrastructure for programmes of independent cultural and youth groups. The Alliance has 32 organisations in its membership.

**Trans Europe Halles**, founded in 1983, a European network of independent cultural centres offering a dynamic forum for ideas, collaborations, and mutual support in the pursuit of intercultural exchange, understanding and artistic freedom. The network currently has 48 members and 9 Friend organisations in 26 European countries.

**Artfactories/Autre(s)pArts**, an organisation dedicated to research and action on cultural activities, centres, art projects and social creativity. Artfactories was founded in 2002 as a resource platform for culture. In 2007 Artfactories joined forces with Autre(s)pArts, a group of cultural activists exploring the relationship between people, art and society. Since that time, Autre(s)pArts and Artfactories have pooled their experiences and skills within a single organisation, namely Artfactories/Autre(s)pArts, in order to meet the needs expressed by cultural actors in different territories (artists, projects, institutions etc.)

**Institut des Villes** (Institute of Cities), a place for debates, exchanges, dialogue and proposals concerning the essential issues for the development of cities. The networking of the cities' various partners - especially the associations of elected local representatives - allows for a constructive expression of their diversity and the enrichment of an urban culture, creating a platform for the 21st century. Through the wider Institute of Cities network, France takes part in the elaboration of a European reflection on cities, thus helping to define the "Europe of cities". As a central resource open to all, the Institut des Villes is France's place of reference for urban policies, especially through its support of the programme 'New Territories Of Art'.

**New Territories Of Art**, a French Government initiative funded by two ministries, namely the Ministry for Culture and the Ministry for Urban Development, was established to research and develop strategies for better dialogue between independent culture and institutions. A national initiative but with an openness and interest in international trends and actions in the independent cultural field.

# NTNM INTRODUCTION

CONTEXT, HISTORY AND BACKGROUND

New Times New Models (NTNM) has its genesis in the struggles, both internal and external, of the independent cultural centre Pekarna. Located in a former military bakery near the centre of Maribor, Slovenia's second city, Pekarna (which translates as bakery) was occupied by young artists and activists in 1994. As was the case with many refuseniks at that time, all were seeking to construct a better future following years of Communist rule and devastating wars. But their struggle, along with many of their contemporaries in the region, was only beginning, as developers moved in to speculate with the land and assets in the emerging democracies. This meant confronting new issues, as powerful forces filled the space left by fallen regimes and collapsed systems. The building of new nation states, this time linked to international political interests and the global market, resulted in another kind of domination by those seeking contemporary myths and the creation of new elites. What followed in the Balkans, as the 1990s progressed, was a certain type of development that often excluded independent social, cultural and political  practices from the rebuilding of countries and communities, resulting in a weakened civil society and an exploitation of public resources in favour of property speculation, private investment and asset stripping. Many public institutions were explicit in this drive for modernisation/privatisation and were unhappy with opposition from the NGO sector to these policies, including opposition emanating from the independent cultural sector.  The front line for this policy clash was physical space, as the buildings squatted by cultural activists and pacifists in the early 1990s often sat on valuable urban sites. Equally, as state authorities were forced to engage with these cultural groups (and other civil society groups), it also meant a dialogue with citizens and a reevaluation of the role of a public body as broker between civil society and private enterprise. Often this was about supporting opportunities for young people to have a voice and engaging in future perspectives that included public developments that were not economically led. In short, that the public infrastructure was not just about commercial development and that the independent cultural sector had a valid contribution to make in the rebuilding of the Balkans.

As this fraught relationship with the authorities continued into the 21st century, independent culture realised that struggling for physical space was not enough to sustain it into the future. It also needed to develop its own operational practices, such as building new models of collaboration, networking and platforms, thus strengthening independent culture's policy position as a mature sector working towards a sustainable future through communication, collaboration and the exchanging of know-how and working together.

Two of the key players in this history, Pekarna magdalenske mreže and POGON - Zagreb Center for Independent Culture and Youth, formalised this initiative New Times New Models as a timely response to the maturing of the independent cultural sector in the Balkan region with a desire to move forward into the future with renewed confidence and specific goals. At the centre of the NTNM initiative are the buildings and the land occupied by independent culture: how they might be secured, recognised and developed in partnership with the state. But, in doing this, the issues of internal governance and external relations become paramount and looking to models of practice, both historical and new, is the agenda of NTNM.

What is interesting is that such occupations and struggles in the Balkan region are in keeping with a fifty-year history of similar occupations throughout Europe and for similar reasons. Since the 1960s, the baton of the independent cultural centre was taken up by successive generations in the hope of developing new ways to live, especially in cities - peacefully, collectively, freely, creatively, independently – always seeking alternatives to oppression, inequality and the institutionalised cultural hierarchy, that often excludes the voice of the young, the dispossessed, the marginalised.

While the initial actions by cultural activists, particularly young people, can be immediate and a reaction to the realpolitik, what emerges from this initial burst of energy is nothing short of new possibilities for organising society and innovations that contribute to democracy and civic life. With time and experience, these independent cultural centres become more than occupied spaces and emerge as important laboratories for urban regeneration, artistic innovation, education, international exchange and much more besides. In short, they are not just venues or 'hangouts', but places of real cultural development and of civic importance, as can be seen in every corner of Europe.

Pekarna is one such centre, which has developed over the years and is now embracing many questions around its future operation and role. NTNM is one attempt to investigate these issues, questioning why it is that Pekarna finds itself in continual crisis management mode, with constant internal and external pressures arising after some sixteen years of life. As Pekarna began to make contact with other independent cultural centres, both regionally and throughout Europe, it achieved some perspective on its own work but it also saw that its concerns were not unique. Yes, the context might change, but the issues of governance (how a centre is structured and managed) and external relations (with local authorities, state agencies and adjacent communities) were common flash points for most independent cultural organisations.

From this came the possibility of doing things differently; of looking at a wide range of experience and trying to come up with new models, not just for Pekarna but for the European independent cultural sector in general. Thus the project New Times New Models was born and, in partnership with a range of European colleagues, a process was initiated. Following initial workshops and meetings, February 2010 saw a NTNM conference take place in Pekarna, attended by more than 80 delegates from the Balkan region and from all over Europe. At this conference many relevant themes were explored and what you find in this book is very much influenced by the outcomes of this conference and the people who gave of their expertise, time and energy in trying for new ways of working and developing within the independent cultural sector.

The book begins by examining two main questions "Why Independence?" and "How Independence?" – followed by a closer look at models of practice and, finally, the outcomes of the process to date are presented.

This book is not the end of the NTNM project, but, hopefully will illuminate some of the issues and give direction to possible solutions, informing new models of practice into

the future. It is out of this self-analysis and the desire for a change within the context that independent culture finds itself in these changing times, which makes this process valuable and relevant to all concerned. It is not easy to change ways of working or to forge new types of relationships but NTNM is attempting to create a climate where the issues can be discussed, at the very least. In this respect, what the initiators of this project have to say about their own process is profound:

'*We are aware that the road from liberation to freedom is long, therefore Pekarna's fight for existence, as well as the process of its (re)invention, is taking place on a daily basis!*'

# WHY INDEPENDENCE?

INTRODUCTION

Before getting into the issues and looking at models of practice, it is worth reflecting on what this word "independence" means in terms of culture and why it needs dedicated centres in the first place. Independent of what? The ancient Greeks would have revered independence of the mind above all else and this approach led to what we now recognise as civilised society. Socrates died because he refused to give up this independence. Over the centuries, independence has become synonymous with freedom. Peoples have fought to overcome slavery, persecution and oppression. Being independent also means being free. If we fast forward to the 1960s, the core elements of the counterculture movement then were about creating philosophical, individual and communal space where people could be free to express their lives as they wanted. This also led to the creation of physical spaces where this freedom could be practiced. As most of the existing and historic civic or cultural space up to the 1960s was reserved for very conservative activities (religious worship, political institutions, financial institutions, museums), the young generation of the 60s created space for themselves in places no one else wanted. They took over post industrial sites and abandoned houses. More, the revolution of the 1960s was not led by politicians or soldiers: it was led by artists. Songs and poetry, theatre and film, books and music,  were the weapons of choice.

In the 1970s and 1980s the 'arts lab' of the earlier decade became the 'cultural centre' (or arts centre in the UK). These centres, after years of struggle to survive and be recognised, became, in the last years of the 20th century, established, with many supported by the state. At the same time new centres were opened, as new generations wanted to explore their own ideas.

In parallel to the independent cultural centre movements, the state itself began, from the early 1990s, to build their own version of the independent cultural centre, as it realised that these places were very effective 'loss leaders' for urban rejuvenation.

So, why is independence important? Because it is about creating space to debate, create and progress ideas as a cornerstone of freedom and civil development. True independent cultural centres are not just venues but places where the radicalism of freedom of expression connects with the responsibility to protect civil rights and to work for a sustainable future.

**Aleš Novak**
Culture and Youth Office, Maribor, Slovenia

In the Maribor cultural department we have been addressing this question of what independent culture is and how we should support it for some years now. And it is not only us here in Maribor, but the Ministry for Culture is also looking at this question, so this has a relevance for all of Slovenia and, indeed, beyond its borders. The fact that Maribor is European Capital of Culture in 2012 offers us an opportunity to develop a new cultural identity here and independent culture is very much part of this. The priority for such developments should be attached to projects that offer sustainable cultural projects in local communities. This presents a role for the local authority in supporting and promoting sustainable culture, at a local and a European level. These are structures for the involvement of citizens, for social inclusion, for innovative forms of culture. Our task at the municipal level is to raise funding for such initiatives. There is also the question of legislative frameworks and working within the law, while at the same time there are a lot of expectations around such developments. But the foundations for moving forward are mutual understanding and respect for many different concepts; freedom of expression on all levels; sustainable circumstances for development and cooperation. At the centre of this for us in Maribor is the rebuilding of Pekarna and this is a priority for the mayor in advance of the next election, as is establishing a cultural policy for Maribor.

**Gregor Kosi**
Pekarna magdalenske mreže, Maribor, Slovenia

From my viewpoint, the crucial thing about independent culture is its stance towards reality. We can distinguish between two types of independent culture. The first type serves the system by covering the not yet mastered fields of cultural production by providing new ideas, new trends and promoting and canonising new practice for the establishment. This is usually done under the guise of liberalism and without much concern about changing the society or making a contribution to it. The other type, which is more or less in opposition to the first kind of practice, is bound to the criticism of social conditions and sees its mission, not in the sense of pluralism, which means inside the official discourse, but as seeking change and is involved in consistent social engagement. My organisation, Pekarna magdalenske mreže, is practicing this second type of independent culture.

This is the theory but how is it in practice? The way we analyse this is to look at what the social effects are of what we are doing. And it is important to look at what we think we are doing and what we are really doing - what is called 'spontaneous philosophy and materialism'. Engagement means the successful removal of the gap between ideology and structure; the resolution of antagonisms by finding new ways out of the prevailing economic relationships and the realities we are living right now. If this is how to look at the theory of independent culture then, in order to get to practice, we must look at the history.

In our case, Pekarna, you have to know that in Slovenia the 1980s were marked by civil society movements reacting to the system and to official culture. Out of this meeting of alternative ideologies arose the demand for socialising spaces at the beginning of the 1990s. After a while, when the municipality gave lots of promises for space but nothing happened, some people took matters into their own hands and squatted the buildings that became Pekarna. We can see at this point that what we call ideology and structure have a very clear idea of what they want to do and it is done. People involved in this action took responsibility onto their own shoulders.

After these first moments of Pekarna, this first enthusiasm, this form of democracy broke down. After ten years people understood very differently what independent culture is and what radicalism means. This is Pekarna today. These days we have to apply for funding, adapt to official criteria and efficiency criteria, European demands, economic reporting and so on. All of this is completely against what we would really like to do because it leads to a hierarchical and professionally skills-based system. All of this debilitates us and goes against our ethics. As a result we have a huge amount of problems and all of this work and struggle is mainly hidden from the funders, who have their own criteria.

Our criteria for evaluating our work is different. We look at content, ways of organising the content and the type of management to do this. All of this should represent the character of our cultural production and should limit the possibility for authoritarianism and conformity and the necessity to be pragmatic.

**Emina Višnić**
POGON – Zagreb Centre for Independent Culture and Youth, Croatia

My personal view of independent culture is that the most important value it has is one of creating a social environment that you like and where you can develop new ideas. It is your life. Counterpointing this to official culture you can see the difference. I work in Zagreb and from the Croatian point of view, and this probably applies to the Balkans overall and other parts of Europe and the world, I would like to see the day when there is no differentiation between official culture and NGOs. That this divide exists means there is an inequality and unfairness already. In a democracy it would seem that there should be no centralised culture but we are far away from this model. Culture is still very centralised and the power lies with state-appointed boards and state-run institutions. If we go back to the 1990s in Croatia, all these cultural institutions fronted nationalism at a time of war. Independent culture was promoting a different perspective, fighting for human rights and peace. This is why independent culture is the opposite of institutionalised culture. The conflict of the 1990s finished in this region but somehow these cultural institutions remained without guilt and still receive a lot of funding for a programme that does little for the community or for a new society. Independent cultural represents openness and freedom and often turns on its head the understanding of culture. Independent culture is often socially and politically engaged and has an activist role. In Zagreb independent cultural organisations, youth organisations and green organisations are involved with the same issues: working for citizens' rights.

**Mikko Fritze**
Tallinn 2011 Foundation, Tallin, Estonia

As Director of the Tallin European City of Culture 2011, I represent an official project but I also have personal views on culture, views that one might discuss around a kitchen table. Both of these views can give an interesting perspective on this question of what cultural independence really means. To begin with, we have this balancing act between being really independent and, at the same time, needing official money and support. Within this we have to create a credible image, which is sometimes not easy. On the wider level, what does independent culture mean for society, and indeed, for culture in general? From my point of view, independent culture has an opportunity to deal with questions that really matter, in a space where people can be free, and every society needs independent cultural centres. It could be said that the more independent cultural centres you have, the more developed your society is. However, not-for-profit actors have to act responsibly and cannot be selfish. But once the officials give support, they should do it without interference. Publicly-funded culture needs to pay something back.

Then there is the question of the relationship between the independent sector and the state. How can this relationship be improved? To my mind this needs 'soft' elements. You need good informal contact between the actors. For instance, officials often do not feel comfortable in alternative spaces and alternative people do not go to the opera much. We have to change this. There must be at the beginning some understanding and respect for those entering into a relationship. People on both sides of this relationship need a lot of patience and trust.

**Chris Torch**
Artistic Director, Intercult (Stockholm, Sweden)
Vice President, Culture Action Europe (Brussels based platform for EU cultural policy)

My first question when addressing this question of independent culture is 'independence or interdependence?'. My life story includes being a member of an independent theatre company for fourteen years where we were paid no salary. We had a collective economy and functioned as a sort of model for independent companies in Sweden. We lived together and worked collectively. Later on I founded an organisation called Intercult in Stockholm. That was twelve years ago. We have become a hub and an institution with structural funding from the government, the county and the city of Stockholm, as well as from the European Union. This transformation during the twelve years of our existence as an organisation has continuously put forward this central question 'what is independence?' How am I independent? When am I free? I receive public money, tax money. Regardless of how used or misused it might be by our politicians or how degenerate the distribution methods might be, it is the money from my neighbours and from the school teachers of my children and it is also my own and therefore I have this sense of responsibility.

I also feel that it is important that Intercult does not have a permanent concert or theatre hall. We have a space called The Annex for meetings, debates and films. I believe very strongly that this is the next paradigm in terms of cultural development in Europe, the development of intercultural meeting places. Flexible, manageable. They can be public places, they can be private and they are most definitely interdisciplinary.

Culture is what we have created as human beings. One of the outcomes of this, in the 19th century, was the creation of national theatres, national literature, national epics. This struggle for national identity, which created mono-disciplinary houses: we have the museum of modern art, we have the museum of natural history, we have the museum of national art, we have the national theatre, we have the national concert hall, we have the national opera and lately, we have similar developments in the dance world. By doing all of this we are separating art from our daily lives.

This also means there is a certain exclusivity in the audiences that visit these places. If you like theatre you go to the theatre. If you like football you go to Camp Nou. And today if you talk about freedom of choice, which I separate from the freedom that we are talking about here, we have 500 TV channels available and if I like football I can watch football all day long. I really don't have to experience anything else. I don't consider this to be freedom; I consider this to be a way of keeping us all busy while the important business is being decided someplace else. I believe very strongly in intercultural, interdisciplinary and intergenerational meeting points, places where many, many, different things take place and cross-fertilize one another.

I want to highlight the term intercultural competence because I don't believe in multiculturalism. I don't believe in separate but equal units standing next to each other. I believe in the intercultural discourse. And the only way that we develop anything called common values is by, in fact, confronting one another and having shared experience, shared space. Interculture is mutual transformation.

So, we develop a personal professional capacity and a collective capacity. It is important that we develop new ways and new structures of doing things. We have to fine tune our arguments with the politicians so we can let them know that the process and the result are equally important and that the process is a kind of a result on its own. Politicians, because they are only elected every three or four years, want quick results, they want the quick fix. We have to convince them that there is a process going on. We have to be the long-term strategy makers in a society that is, politically and economically, concerned with short-term gains.

I like this Italian word "scambio", which means to exchange. Cambiare means to change. I interpret  scambio as changing together. We have to share space with people that maybe we don't care for. But the only alternative is to go back into conflict. I prefer sharing space, which puts a great deal of responsibility on our shoulders. We have to be responsible partners in the relationship and we have to make the same demands on those who are giving us the funding.

**Phil Wood**
Comedia, Huddersfield, UK

What is independence? People have different definitions of independence. Independent consumers versus independent citizenship, for example. And not everyone sees independence as a good thing. Nation building may not welcome independence and you can have the tyranny of the majority. And then you have national culture versus global culture. Nor can we ignore new technology and its impact on local, independent, culture. For people working in independent culture there is the continuing challenge of crossing boundaries and building bridges, sometimes at great personal risk.

Perhaps the key to all of this is adaptability and openness to change. Maybe what we need is a new creative ecology, something that is based on the context we live and work in. What looks like chaos but there is an underlying order, which is both productive and aesthetic.

There are notions of independence I want to look at. Political notions of independence and I wonder if we are actually trading some of our independence for other forms of living. I have been reading a book by John Kampfner, who has looked at eight countries around the world, and asking the question 'what has happened to our freedoms and liberties since the fall of the Berlin Wall?'. He looked at Britain, he looked at Russia, he looked at the States, he looked at China and various places around the world and he says in general he sees the loss of public freedoms and an enormous growth in private freedoms. So what this means is that to us as individuals and in particular to individuals brought up in socialist Slovenia or Croatia and other former Communist countries, we have seen enormous opportunities to travel; no one tells you where you can't go now; to set up and own a business and to know that no one is going to come and kick the door down and take your stuff away; to own property and to be who you are; to be gay or straight or to live any kind of lifestyle that you want as a personal freedom. Freedoms that most people in Western Europe have had for many years. And this has been fantastic but Kampfner says there has been a trade-off and we have actually lost some things. And maybe we don't even notice it. Maybe we don't even care that we have an increasing surveillance of our society. This is a particular beef with me in Britain because if you have ever walked around London or anywhere else in the UK, you will notice that your every move is watched and spied upon by a CCTV camera for your safety, for your security. I don't believe it actually. We've allowed surveillance into all aspects of our society. We've allowed an erosion of press freedoms and a right to public protest and we don't seem that serious about the right to vote anymore. So maybe that's fair enough. People make their choices and we are increasingly independent members of the consumer society but maybe our independent citizenship has suffered as a consequence of all of that. And if we are talking about cultural independence it depends where you are sitting as to what it really means. Is there real compatibility between the national independence that Central and Eastern Europe have achieved and the creative independence that some are fighting for and trying to build? This whole process of nation building, of creating a cultural, a civic and political identity for, say, Slovenia, is it in some sense almost a necessity that politicians will invoke the tyranny of the majority in various populist ways in order to build that sense of nationhood, and is that an inevitable process that's going to take time to work itself through?

I was in Finland recently and they have had independence for nine hundred years and they still think they are going through that independence-building, national-building process. And they are saying it is still difficult for independent and small voices to be heard above that sense that we all have to stick together and defend the motherland. But it's much more complicated now because right out there, all around us, is a global culture that we can't turn off. It's there all the time, the four hundred TV channels and the web and everything else is beaming that culture in there and so if you are someone that is trying to build a sense of national identity and nationhood, that can seem like a very threatening thing. Where is the space for independent culture in that battle between a global enveloping culture and a defensive nationalism that we see in many countries?

And then of course, where is the alignment between the state cultural institutions, whose role it is to very much defend and mark out that sense of nationhood against the non-aligned, who may be seen, in some senses, as being not just non-nationalist but anti-nationalist, working against what everybody else is trying to create? In fact, for the independent sector it might be much easier to walk into transnational gatherings and this is a fantastic opportunity, something that new independent peoples can do all the time. But it's also deeply unsettling for ministers and mayors, who see that you have this ongoing relationship, that it is possible to bring people from other countries to, say, Maribor, in a way that they can't. And that creates a sense of unease.

So, for all these reasons I began to think that maybe independence is not what should be my focus. Maybe it is something else. Maybe it is a new way of thinking about the world that independent culture inhabits. Being someone that is not just urban but that is very much interested in nature, in gardens, I think we all operate in a kind of ecology. And if we start to think about the world we live in in those ecological terms, there are some interesting parallels. The different crops, the different plants are interdependent upon each other. Trees just don't stand tall, separate from everything else. They are part of a forest, they are part of an ecology and there is both a sense of complete chaos and yet underlying order in an ecology. It is both aesthetic and productive in the way that our creative world is too. And it doesn't follow a linear path that science often wants us to feel. That actually life is ordered around seasons, that it can be ordered around much greater cycles of decline and regrowth and these are seen sometimes as unnatural when, in fact, they are very natural. And a successful ecology is one which is adaptive to change and not simply reliant on the right supply of fertiliser or weed killer or whatever but is actually adapting to whatever the world throws at it. And also we learn how complex and wonderful nature is and the fact that a butterfly's wings can have, as you know, consequences around the world. You can press one button and something you didn't expect can happen. And I think the world of independent culture is very similar and that is why we particularly ask people working within the state to be aware of this.

The first person who really made that connection between our societies and our cities and ecology was a woman called Jane Jacobs who started analysing how Americans were destroying their cities and societies fifty years ago and how the car and capitalism was tearing communities apart. She said the whole point of cities is about multiplicity of

choice and yet we were seeing orthodoxy everywhere. And she said a successful city or neighbourhood is one where you have diversity of activity. You have a diversity of building stock and ownership, which I think is very important. Jane Jacobs is really only now being understood by city planners and politicians.

So, what is a creative ecology? What are the essential elements of it? Well there are many but I want to highlight four:

1. The first is diversity. We all like to say that diversity is a fantastic thing and the source of our creativity and yet it is very difficult to actually prove that. How do we know that diversity is more creative than homogeneity? Well I don't read many books by mathematicians but if I was to recommend one to you, I'd recommend a guy called Scott Page, who has taken a mathematical approach to diversity to prove in mathematical terms that diversity does actually trump homogeneity and more than that, diversity outperforms ability. To prove this, Page gives the following example: Take a group of people and rank them by their performance in solving a problem. Give each of them a small puzzle to do and, depending on their answers, rank them. Now all of these people have a certain level of ability. Then you take the twenty people who did best in that test and put them into one group, calling it group A. Then we form group B from everybody who is left, the ones who didn't do very well in the quiz. If we then set the two groups another task, and what happens time and time again, is that both groups get to a certain point and get stuck. But if an outsider joins group B then they can take it a bit further. This is called 'the local optimum'. What happens then is that group A reaches a point where they can't go any further but group B gets the answer. So the so-called smartest group gets stuck, while group B solve the problem. And it works like this. And this is what we see in science, the arts, and everywhere all of the time. But, there are conditions. The diverse group works best but only if they share a common purpose and that they are being encouraged to be innovative; that everyone around them is giving them that encouragement. And that they are in an environment that supports risk taking. And that they have their identities and differences recognised, that they are not all forced to be the same and that there is mutual respect among that group of people. If all those factors are in place, then you have the conditions for diversity advantage. If you don't, then they perform worse than group A.

We have this in the private sector, as represented by someone like the electrical giant Philips' because they know their advantage derives from their ability to get new ideas and they deliberately put together people of different cultures, different genders, different ages, different temperaments and skills because this very diversity is where they are going to get their success from in the future. My book with Charles Landry 'The Intercultural City' explains how we apply this to cities. How can we enable a city to think about its own diversity of culture, and of skills and talents, and say this diversity that we have and all these people who want to do and say different things is not a threat to the city? It is not even a nuisance. It can be seen as an opportunity. And what I want to talk about now is how you get these conditions to achieve these opportunities.

You need encouragements and incentives and places and institutions and agents and this is where independent culture comes in and independent cultural centres because these are the places where that advantage is going to be found. I do have a frustration with that idea of multiculturalism and the idea that people can stand apart. The intercultural idea is the culture of the future, this rubbing together of different agents who have to be together and have to work together. It's not always pretty. It's noisy sometimes. There are disagreements but that's life. So, diversity is my first of my four elements.

2. The second essential element is sociability. We need to think independently but act collectively. In fact, the research shows that most of our thinking is collectively driven, collectively inspired. And most of the decisions that we think our brain has taken independently are mostly informed by what is going on around us, what other people are doing. It's called the herd. And we grow, primates grow, homo sapiens grow, as our group has grown in size and complexity. Some people call it the wisdom of the crowd. Groups can make better decisions than individuals on their own. And we see a whole culture and industry developing around this as the web opens up new concepts like Wikipedia and Open Source and Twitter. This is a whole new concept and it all has an impact on local, independent culture, this whole sense of collaborative individualism. But this is a double-edged sword. While this technology is enabling us to engage with people, I can only know a certain side of people through Facebook. But actually, I get to know people in their complexity over a couple of drinks. Is technology a threat to this kind of sociability? Or is it a threat to sociability that once you have found a group of friends you want to shut the rest of the world out and create your own gated community? Is this where we may be going? It is certainly where we are going in Britain and in America. The so-called creative class of Richard Florida are living in one place and the so-called non-creative majority seem to be living on the other side of the wall. Although I'd ask who the most creative is. The people who have to survive outside the wall are likely to be much more creative in the long run. We thought the Berlin Wall went twenty years ago and yet we are creating new walls here in the European Union now. For instance, in Italy they are building a wall to separate Italians from non-Italians. So beware. We have brave people who are prepared to jump over those walls. I call them intercultural innovators. But you might call them other things. You might even know people who cross over boundaries when they are told 'no, stay here, stay with your group. Don't go and talk to that tribe.' People who will automatically do the opposite when you tell them not to. People who will build bridges, even at great risk and personal cost to themselves.

3. Adaptability - you have to respond to change, otherwise the first bit of bad weather, or the first virus wipes everything out. The ability to be open to change and to learn by copying and mimicry. Let's get away from this Renaissance idea of this artist who just thinks great thoughts. Being creative is about mimicking and copying and learning from each other and gradually developing. It is about collaborating and competing at the same time. And you can only do this if you have a certain level of trust.

4. And finally it's about productivity. Clearly it's about producing new ideas, new concepts, new goods, new services. And we are seeing a whole raft of new products. I have already

mentioned Wikipedia and all the rest but it is not about trashing and dumping the things we did in the past, the old skills, the old crafts. We have the chance through all this new thinking and this new technology to breathe new life into the old products, the things that we have done before. Clearly tourism is a major industry, but tourism that is based on authenticity, on goods and skills and services that have roots in an area but have somehow been smartened by new ways of thinking, is better than the exploitation variety. And new production processes and ways of creating value. For instance, the cultural centre Pekarna was a bakery. The idea for the loaf was conceived in some office, it was produced in the bakery and some guy took it in the van to the shop and the consumers of Maribor ate their loaf of bread. Or bought their car or their suit of clothes. That's the way things were done. But it's done completely differently now. Almost anyone can originate an idea. It can be some big organisation but individuals can produce new applications, new ideas and they are getting them out to the consumer. But it is much more interesting than that. It is not linear any more,;it's actually cyclical. The relationship between the consumer and the producer is blurred. Think about the games culture. In computer games software, the games industry, the people who use the games know as much about a game as the people who produce that game. They are finding mistakes, they are finding opportunities, they are developing the games to a new level and what you find is this incredible cyclical interaction going on between the games industry and the games users to a point where you don't know anymore who is the producer and who is the consumer and you have this incredible pro-am relationship going on.

# HOW INDEPENDENCE?

On Struggles For Space – the relationship between independent cultural centres and the state

INTRODUCTION

The relationships between independent cultural centres and state agencies, in a majority of cases, vary from all out war to uneasy connections born of necessity. The history of independent culture in Western Europe since the 1960s is marked by continual struggles for space in the face of hostile state agencies. Many of the original centres began as squats, thus immediately setting up a potential for conflict. Although it is by no means a simple division to make by dividing Europe into West and East (the complexity of cultures and circumstances is not reflected by this shorthand), it is fair to say that the West's independent cultural centre movement is older than in the East, for obvious reasons, and it has reached a maturity that sees many of the original centres now established organisations, with state support and security of tenure. In  Eastern Europe, independent cultural centres are still a relatively new phenomena and there is a lot of suspicion on both the independent side and the state side with regard to forming relationships for future development. In this context of a maturing of the first wave of Western independent cultural organisations from the 1960s and 70s and the new wave of independent cultural energy emerging from the East, there is a great opportunity to learn and inspire, one from the other, in partnerships that have the potential to strengthen and invigorate all of Europe.

What is clear is that there is an ideological gap between independent culture and the state, which is still very much a factor in both Western and Eastern Europe. These days, now that traditional left/right politics has ended, the struggle is often about private investment versus civic ideals and the relentless march of the free market, which tends to trample over community considerations and not-for-profit idealism of any kind. One of the 'trade-offs' for security in the maturing process of independent culture is that many independent cultural centres operate as venues and resources with social and political agendas pushed well down the list of priorities. But if there is a perceived mission for change in the vision of a cultural centre, then the state usually reacts negatively in the first instance because politicians see themselves as the agents for change in society and not the type of change they perceive as happening in graffiti-covered, noisy, anti-social, independent cultural centres. And especially if the land occupied by the cultural centre is a valuable piece of real estate. However, misconceptions and caricatures exist on both sides and the truth lies somewhere in between.

There can also be a very unclear understanding of what art and culture is and what its place or role is in society. For most state agencies and representatives it is fair to say that 'heritage' culture is viewed as the most important and desirable art. Opera houses, national galleries, museums etc., are what receive the most funding; prestigious projects that represent a nation's and a politician's standing. There is nothing wrong with this per se (except where it turns into xenophobia or a tool for oppression), as protecting heritage and the history of civilisation is an important undertaking, but the fact is that the building of a future culture emerging from contemporary actions requires equal support and an enlightened understanding of what culture represents. And culture can be understood

from anthropological and sociological studies, which analyse human behaviour and its development over the centuries. First it is important to say that the word "culture" derives from the Latin cultūra, stemming from colere, meaning "to cultivate". In this light, culture is a process of cultivation, planting and seeding and preparing for the future. The second thing about culture is that it is what we as humans create outside of the natural world. It is our created world within the natural world. We have control of it, for ill or good. So, it is extremely important because it is everything that we create. And we do create it as sure as we create a picture or a sculpture. Everything that is our culture we have created from an original thought. So, what we manifest in the world we have to take responsibility for. It is in our hands to create the future, be it the next instant or 1,000 years from now. If culture is everything that we have and will create, then art is an element of culture, the same as farming, manufacturing, engineering and everything we do as humans. What art excels at is allowing us to test our imagination without practical limitations, which leads us to giving voice and is the free expression of our inherent creativity as human beings. Art is also a type of signpost for our society because it allows for the expression of subconscious ideas and reactions to our world. Self-expression is a vital element within the human psyche and is shown to be closely connected to mental and physical health. Everyone has the capacity and, indeed, the need to be creative and if culture is to develop as a whole then the more people that can creatively express themselves, the better for the future of society. In this sense, those who hold the purse strings and the resources have both the power and the responsibility to support processes leading to future cultural development, as well as protecting what exists from the past. The need to underwrite the process of bringing the culture of the future into being is as important as investing in the cultural representations of the past, even though this may mean taking risks by supporting young people's energy or not capitalising on a piece of city land.

It is also important to say that most independent cultural centres should try to develop a clear vision of their cultural role in the context of their location and society in general. If a centre can articulate clearly what their aims are, then it will be easier to communicate with the outside world, including negotiations with the state. The greater clarity that exists, the more possibility there will be to construct a working relationship. But, considering the cultural remit outlined in the previous paragraph, there is an onus on the state to support and to allow for experimentation by independent culture, which is usually dynamic and motivated and may take time to mature and evolve.

Another important consideration for an independent cultural centre is its effect on its immediate neighbourhood and, indeed, a responsibility to its neighbours. This may not be such an issue for centres based in industrialised areas, but for centres located in or nearby residential areas, this can be an important and sometimes fractious issue. If an independent cultural centre is 'alternative' to mainstream life and is home to young people and their activities, then it can seem intimidating to many people, particularly if they live in close proximity to such a centre. Building good relations with neighbours should be a priority for independent cultural centres and working to provide 'added value' for citizens is both a challenge and a necessity. While recognising that independent cultural centres are places that offer freedom of expression and open lifestyles to people, particularly young people, it

is also important for centres to take responsibility for their wider impact and context.

Building relationships and good communications are not easy and they require openness and compromise. But if two or more people or organisations are connected through a mutual interest, then this is a good place to start. Perhaps one of the past problems was that little time or effort has been spent on bettering the form these relationships and communications take in favour of the project under consideration. NTNM offers an opportunity to address this imbalance and it is hoped that this opportunity will contribute to new understandings.

**Xavi Pérez**
Cal Ninyo Cultural Centre, Sant Boi, Barcelona, Spain

I would like to speak about an autonomous cultural centre, the Ateneu Popular Nou Barris in Barcelona, which has a long and successful history. I want to stress some important points about this centre and I want to explain the more general situation in Barcelona with regard to independent culture.

The history of the Ateneu Popular began in 1977 when people from that neighbourhood, Nou Barris, decided to illegally occupy and destroy an asphalt factory because they considered it dangerous to the health of the people who lived in the vicinity. Once the action had served to make the factory inoperable, the district residents decided that this space should be transformed into a cultural centre. These events occurred in a very unique context due to the fact that the transition from the dictatorship to democracy was taking place at the same time. On the 9th of December, 1977, the people from the neighbourhood went into the factory, bypassed the guard, cut the telephone connection and destroyed the machinery. The news of this development had a great impact in the media and the facts came out about just how polluting and dangerous this factory had been for the neighbourhood. It was also true that the authorities had consistently failed to respond to the complaints of people living in the neighbourhood. When it was first proposed that the abandoned asphalt factory be converted into a cultural centre, the people had an important reference in mind and this was the cultural centres that had emerged in Spain before the civil war, especially during the early 1930s. And this is the reason for the name Ateneu Popular. In the 1930s hundreds of ateneus emerged around Spain and they were generally accompanied by objectives that determined their orientation. For example, they were worker-run, family-friendly, democratic, popular, scientific etc., so the people who were fighting for this new cultural centre in 1977 added the adjective 'popular' to their Ateneu because it was associated with the original ateneus who defined their position as politically neutral but with a deep social commitment and this is what the Ateneu Popular saw as its mission. It was in this spirit that the residents of the neighbourhood founded the Ateneu Popular Nou Barris in 1977.

Nou Barris is a peripheral district of the city of Barcelona built in a chaotic manner during the Franco dictatorship. It soon gained a reputation for being one of the most combative districts of the city as citizens struggled for a better quality of life because of the poor

working and living conditions in the area. These struggles coincided with Spain's shift to democracy and freedom of expression, the social movement of protest that had emerged all over the country. The difference between Nou Barris and other places in Barcelona was the fact that this district, which was lacking in almost every amenity – schools, hospitals, cultural centres, proper streets, public transportation etc. – called for the participation of local citizens in the management of these public services and installations, not only in culture but in health and education and so on. People not only fought for facilities and services but also participation. This was something that happened in this area of Barcelona but not in the rest of the city and this made Nou Barris different. This attitude, which was a consequence of the grass roots movements of Nou Barris, was a process of empowerment and maturity that was unfolding in the area. In other urban districts, citizens' initiatives began to lose strength when the new democratic administration came to power, assuming the governing of the city. Protest movements slowed down as soon as their objectives were achieved, for example once a school or a cultural centre was built. But in Nou Barris, once these goals were met, the neighbourhood demanded the right to participate in the management of the services. In wider Spain, democracy led to a decline in social movements. As a result, and in greater Barcelona, grass roots movements declined in favour of elected representatives and officials, who took over responsibility for civil initiatives, for instance the city hall and other social administrations. The social movements were thrown off course and for the most part, lost their capacity to respond to events.

This coincided with a very important process in Barcelona, something that is not very well known, the faith of the campaign for the popular ateneus. Led by a federation of associations in Barcelona, during the years 1976 to 1979, there was a proposal for more that 40 independent cultural centres in Barcelona in empty spaces of the city – factories, markets, cinemas, warehouses, palaces and boat houses. Many of these spaces were already occupied by neighbourhood people and run in an autonomous manner by the residents. In 1978 more than 50,000 people gathered at the Mercat de les Flors, an old market in the neighbourhood of Poble Sec, to demand that the site become an autonomous cultural ateneu. The pre-democratic city hall of Barcelona recognised these claims and even provided some funding for the restoration of the buildings, which were in very bad condition. At the same time, the government recognised that they had neither the financial capacity or the experience to work with all the projects that had emerged and they called on the citizens to wait until the first democratic government took office, which happened in 1979. It was suggested by the government that two models for running these centres could co-exist: that the cultural centres would have social centres attached, with office spaces for social services and associations with a social mission. Therefore, in 1978, the pre-democratic City Hall of Barcelona recognised the complementary nature of two models: one placing these centres under the self-management of local residents and the other a municipal model of management, geared towards a decentralisation of government. Once the new democratic City Hall of Barcelona was constituted in 1979, the city managers proposed a single model of managing cultural centres, which was not based on either of the original models, namely that the city would run everything centrally.

Obviously the grass roots movements did not agree with this. The grass roots movements pointed out that they had no ties to political parties and that their initiatives were open to everyone and were not subject to influence or monopolisation by any one group. For instance, the ateneus did not have members. Everything was shared between different associations. All of this led to activities unique to each city zone. On the other hand, the City Hall understood that it was the public administration that should take the initiative. This is how the so-called war of city centres began, lasting for four or five years. In this war the grass roots movements spoke of autonomous management and the city hall spoke of professionalisation in order to improve the quality of services. The war ended with a director being imposed on each centre and the board of each centre being filled with local politicians, all done with great skill by the City Hall giving victory in this war to the City Hall. This decentralisation by districts resulted in the grass roots movement having no spokespersons. Instead, different city officials were sent to the different districts provoking divisions within the local movements. This also led to policies of citizen participation as an alternative to citizen participation in the management of services. This moment also led to the City Hall presenting similar kinds of services that used to be controlled by citizens in their centres. All of this was done under the control of the City Hall. With this formula, civic centres were opened everywhere in the old popular ateneus, except in Nou Barris, which was the only exception to this official takeover.

Now in Barcelona, the City Hall has a new policy on industrial areas and the idea of using old buildings as new 'creative factories'. The new policy is to allow for self-management in some cases, so at last, thirty years later, they are beginning to get the idea.

**Anabela Angelovska**
Fortbildung, Hamburg, Germany

I come from the independent cultural centre Fortbildung in the city of Hamburg and I would like to speak of our struggles, which have to do mainly with gentrification and because of this there is also a shifting from the struggle for spaces to a struggle around the definition of art and culture. As we are speaking about new times, the new times began in Hamburg around 2002 when the city recognised a creative class for the first time and also the term 'creative industries' first appeared. This new recognition was seen in terms of an important new branch of economic development for the survival of cities. The local authorities learned this new direction from Richard Florida, hearing that the 'creative class', people who had money and who were innovators in areas like technology, are attracted by artists, bohemians and homosexuals. Florida pointed out that areas in a city that had a high index of the three Ts, that is tolerance, talent and technology, would have the perspective to survive in the global competition of locational factors. How this affected Hamburg was that they tried to use this theory and to fertilise urban spaces through artists and art-run spaces and cultural centres. So, on the one hand we have the development of the past ten years where a lot of city quarters were torn down, like in the harbour area where ateliers housing many artists were demolished and this property was then sold to investment companies, all with a view to increasing the value of real estate in the city to attract this creative class. The negative side affect of this was that they destroyed city areas and, in the process, changed the view of what culture is.

For Hamburg, culture became 'lighthouse' projects like Atmoni, a big complex in a prestigious area, where they have events and musicals. They feel musicals are important because they want to attract tourists. But they have realised that they need independent culture because in 2007 there was a study of how Hamburg could survive in this worldwide competition of cities and out of this came the idea of a new image for Hamburg with the by-line 'Hamburg city of talents'. But what people saw as talent were graduates with diplomas and they didn't take into consideration the grass roots structures and independent culture and the fact that they were driving us away. Now they are beginning to see this and there is a new study underway at the moment and what is presently being suggested as a new direction is for Hamburg to become a city of creativity and openness. This new study looked at the creative milieus in the city and of where these milieus can be found. The definition of a creative milieu is the complex network of mainly informal social relationships in a specific geographical area, which result in a specific external image and a specific international representation and sense of belonging, which enhance the local innovative and energetic capability through its learning processes. These local creative milieus they now want to instrumentalise and use for city marketing and this is why we have to fight for the notion of what we understand by culture so that it doesn't become just city marketing. If you look at the maps of the city, as drawn up for development by the city, it looks more like a battlefield, and in fact, it is a battlefield. What you see on these maps drawn up for Hamburg's development is creative milieus and then you see urban quarters which have to be developed. What this means is that a struggle is going on for the people who are living, working, and creating in these development areas to survive and stay in these areas as the rents are raised. What they do is try to attract us to other areas of the city where the rents are less but we don't want to be part of their master plan.


**Tomislav Medak**
Multimedia Institute – MAMA, Zagreb, Croatia

Understanding the Role of Independent Cultural Actors in Urban Struggles in Zagreb

Let me start with a general observation. Elinor Ostrom won the Nobel Prize for economics last year for her pioneering work on the management of commons. Commons are goods - such as fisheries, forests or pastures - held collectively, in common, without property rights, top down management and with very little regulation, and insofar different from public property or private property. I would like to use the distinction between commons and private property to better understand our post-socialist transition. Granted, in the socialist-planned economy, as most of the property was managed publicly, there weren't that many commons in the narrow definition of the term. But if we were to look closer at the dominant form of public property in our socialist society - as that held in common, managed through self-management and inalienable from the collectivity - the socialist public property would appear not so dissimilar from Ostrom's commons.

Well, using the distinction and the points Ostrom has made of the enclosure of the commons as a perspective to understand our post-socialist transition, nowadays we can observe a shifting balance between the stakes in ownership and in social organisation. The balance

is shifting from the public, the common, towards the private. And yet in that shifting balance, and this is the point that I want to make, it is of paramount importance to look at the way actors or stake-holders act. Public actors, such as state regulators or municipalities, having abandoned their former mission to hoard and protect public goods, have taken to facilitating that transition from the public to the private. And in that process of transition, that which is held in common or is fought for to be held in common, suddenly becomes an important grey zone of struggle, a struggle where the stakes are invested into forms of self-organisation. To simplify, if social movements do not coalesce around the protection of public goods, our public actors and stakeholders such as local authorities will do everything to serve the strongest economic actor and that is the capitalist, the militant for the extension of private property and the privatisation of goods.

So, this is the general context that social movements in Croatia and pretty much everywhere else around the post-socialist world have to work in. Now, turning to the particular Croatian context, there is an additional process that began in 1991, an aftereffect of the process of privatisation of economy from the worker-owned to privately-held economy. The publicly stated vision of the then government was to create one hundred wealthy families who would hold the wealth of the nation and a couple of million small stakeholders who would cede their ownership to these large stakeholders. And this is exactly what unfolded in the 1990s in Croatia. During that process many of the companies exposed to the free market went bankrupt. And many companies going bankrupt revealed what this privatisation was all about. It wasn't about keeping the jobs and keeping the production going. It was about acquiring assets, and as 2000s will later show, real estate.

This would then feed into another fundamental event in the economic development of post-socialist Croatia - the privatisation of the banking business in 2000. The state restructured the banks and made them solvent, and then sold them off to Italian and Austrian large banking corporations. Suddenly, with the entry of foreign financial institutions, the failed and criminal privatisation from the early 1990s was abstracted into the global flows of capital by these banks - banks started to acquire previously privatised assets and betting on the raising value of the real estate. A typical procedure to raise the value of an asset works like this: you have a piece of land, a green zone, and then you push for a change in the area master plan to transform it into a developable zone. It's a small bit of difference on paper but it's a huge difference on the bank account.

Those two steps of privatisation within our society defined the context in which urban struggles have been going on for the last six or seven years in the city of Zagreb. Zagreb might not be the worst of situations in Croatia but given its critical mass it has brought to the fore the problems that have been created by these two steps of the privatisation of public goods.

In parallel to this economic sequence of events, which had a huge impact on the entire society, there are two other processes that are relevant for our struggle: the disenfranchisement of public actors insomuch as the local authorities have ceded their interest to hold spaces and the  potential for developing them into public spaces - spaces

for culture, youth, civic functions - to private investors for private projects, mostly highly commercial developments, such as big shopping centres or upscale housing, retail and offices.

And there was a third parallel process of a group of mostly cultural actors coming together in the late '90s, heirs to the social movements of the early 1990s that were more focused on issues of human rights and the immediate impact of war and social injustice brought on by the Balkan wars. These actors sprung up in a context where there were very few spaces to work in. Around the year 2000 there only were two or three independently held cultural spaces in Zagreb available for independent cultural actors to work in and to present to the public, as opposed to cultural institutions which held large resources but were more often than not helpers of the nationalist politics of the 1990s.

That's a general context where these struggles started to come together and began to transform from a particular struggle by cultural actors for space to struggles to protect and preserve public use of spaces in the city, looking to breathe new life into the public life in our cities.


**Barbara Beznec**
Rog, Ljubljana, Slovenia

I come from the cultural centre Rog, an old factory building in the centre of the city of Ljubljana, which we liberated in March 2006. To come back to the initial question of why this struggle for spaces, I think the transition from socialism to capitalism or liberal democratic capitalism is a very important factor for our space in Ljubljana and similar spaces in this region, as it is for the environment in Slovenia and this part of the world. This is the starting point of the analysis and the need for such interventions and illuminates what was guiding our actions back then in 2006.

Pekarna in Maribor and Metelkova in Ljubljana are based on a similar premise and we could say this all resulted from the movements for democratisation and minority rights in socialist Yugoslavia in the 1980s. Since then we have witnessed huge structural transformation, influenced not only by local factors but also by initiatives like the anti-globalisation movement and so on. These new subjectivities were happening in the context of imperial shifts, like the entrance of Slovenia into the global market, into NATO, and into the European Union. So, in this context, we saw the complete transformation from social property that was first nationalised in order to be privatised, and this was the context for the almost complete disappearance of public space and the corruption of the remaining public spaces through the so-called Private Public Partnerships, whatever that means. This was also the context for the more authoritarian management of the space itself, which means also the authoritarian management of the cities. Ljubljana is no exception to this trend of city as corporation, with mayors as managers, which is happening in Maribor and Zagreb and elsewhere. This is a new type of authoritarian management where new legislative and executive power is elected on the basis that they promise that they will run the cities as corporations, which means efficiency and a reduction of life and creativity to the logic of the profit.

My centre, Rog, is a former bicycle factory, which produced bicycles for the whole non-alignment movement and it is funny because most people in Yugoslavia connect Rog to something really warm and positive. Every socialist child had a wish to find a Rog bicycle under the Christmas tree. But Rog was a symbol of this transformation in the production paradigm. It was closed in 1992 when the property was bought by the municipality. Then it was sold again and now the municipality is buying it back again at huge interest rates and so on. It is a symbol of property speculation and of expropriation and concerns issues of workers' rights. At the time of occupation by activists, there was also a fight going on to remedy one of the biggest expropriations in independent Slovenia, which was the fight for the rights of Yugoslav citizens that were made illegal by the state in 1992.

This new reality that I try to describe articulated the need to create a space that would go beyond the liberal individualism or the ethnic communitarianism, which so strongly developed in all the countries of ex-Yugoslavia. The vision was to create a space beyond the idea of exception but also beyond the idea of integration. To create a space that was common, of self-organisation, of the re-appropriation of rights, knowledge and creativity. We like to consider the project of Rog as more than the space through the concept of the margin, as the African American activist and feminist Bell Hooks developed it, when she says 'margin is the place, not that you are put, but that you choose as the site of resistance' and she says 'this margin is not a safe space, it is a profound edge and you need to build a community in resistance in order to shape it'. In this context we, people that make this space a living space, we erase the migrant workers, the asylum seekers, people without papers, and various researchers, students, and so on, that is a result of the European immigration policy, the huge amounts of populations that live in the territory of the European Union that are denied the right to space through their status. And this is why we fight for common property.

**Sigrid Niemer**
ufaFabrik, Berlin, Germany

The ufaFabrik is situated in the western part of Berlin on the former grounds of the UFA - Universal Film Company, and this is where the initiative got its name from. The project started as a squat in 1979 and, as the squatters were willing to pay rent and all other costs, they got the first legal contract with the city council after three months. Today the ufaFabrik holds a long-term lease until the year 2037 for about 1,800 square meters: the seven buildings on the site belong to the organisation. 30 people live here permanently and there are about 200 people employed by the various organisations. More than 150,000 visitors come during the year and about 85 animals live on the children's farm. From the very beginning one of the approaches was ecological issues and a lot of prototypes and experiments where tried out in that field. Today the ufaFabrik produces energy by solar panels and a co-generation-system and even makes a surplus that is sold to the city grid. The organic bakery produces bread, pies and cakes, that are distributed in shops and markets all over Berlin. The neighbourhood centre with a wide range of activities is open to all ages and generations and to all nationalities and all religions, as long as people are friendly with

others – and hopefully with themselves. Artistic and cultural productions are shown, such as variety, circus, theatre performances, musicals, world music, cinema and programmes for children: a wide range of activities on three stages.

The basic idea originally did not come through art and culture; it was friendship - friendship to close partners inside the group and to the outside world as well. The collective followed the principle of shared income. Decisions were made in a process of intense communication that made consensus possible. The business model was quite simple: all income that was made went into one box and all the expenses were paid out of that box. People living there had no private income for about eight years. In the beginning the street circus company and the café gained income and the surplus from these activities was used to renovate the first theatre. Now out of these now three sources came the investment to open up the bakery. And when the bakery worked there was surplus to open up the natural food store and so it went on. The economy grew quite successfully by this system. All profit was reinvested immediately and all people were connected through intense cooperation and activities. The organisation grew step by step and this is what was seen as sustainable and worked well for the first years, until difficulties appeared.

The biggest problem was brought up by the tax collectors. They came and said 'look, you are doing business, so what about the income taxes?' The argument from the ufaFabrik's collective was 'sorry we cannot pay taxes because we have a value model and don't make profits. There are no laws existing for us, so can you please create new, suitable laws for us'? This was discussed for about one and a half years without any success. It came to the biggest crisis for the ufaFabrik ever. Some people left and those that remained started to build up a new structure. This is more or less the structure that still exists today: a kind of umbrella organisation. In this non-profit association the residents are members and still this membership makes all the big decisions by consensus. Everyone is now paid for his job as a private income. All residents still work in the various branches of the ufaFabrik. Under the main umbrella you have: property management including the guest house; the housing corporation for the residents; the sustainable development projects and parts of the educational programme. Aside there exist about 12 organisations, like the bakery as a limited company; the circus as a non-profit association etc. And these are independent from the main association but they have certain duties, like paying rent and energy costs for the parts they use. This allows, when projects are successful, to create new structures or as well as to stop an activity if it is not successful, without the whole structure breaking down.

This model is seen as a mixed blessing: there are legal structures, clear managing rules and the units are smaller. It is easier to manage the projects in themselves. For some activities there is the need and the possibility to ask for subsidies. On the other hand the administration work increased, as originally all was concentrated in one organisation. Now there are about twelve separated administrations and offices and people employed. The interests differ and it needs constant effort to make cooperation possible. For the social and cultural parts, where public subsidies are needed, there is financial control through the City of Berlin.In general you could say the ufaFabrik moved from an 'all in one' business model into an umbrella organisation under which a network of interdependent organisations operate with a shared vision of interdisciplinary cooperation.

**Stuba Nikula**
Kaapelithedas, Helsinki, Finland

Kaapelithedas is a real estate company, so the structure is as a city-owned company. But you have to remember that we come from Scandinavia where cities have loads of power and governments are not that strong and everything is based on trust. Kaapelithedas is a former cable factory once owned by Nokia. It is a huge building of 50,000 square meters and the history is that in the late 1980s Nokia was still running the building and some artists rented spaces from them and then these artists started to lobby the city for the building to be turned into a cultural centre. And this is what happened because Nokia donated the building to the city and the cultural centre company was formed. So, as a company we are still nurturing this original initiative from the '80s. And since we have been such a success, two years ago we were given another old factory to run, an old gas factory, smaller in size but in much worse condition than Kaapelithedas. But our job was to renovate and rent this space and we have now done this with 35 tenants, from visual artists to writers to production companies. There is also a big outdoor space around this old gas factory where we have festivals. And when I say 'we' it is never done by us as a company, we just rent the spaces to the producers or artists.

The centre of Helsinki is not too far from the Kaapelithedas, to the east side of the city centre. Helsinki is a city of 530,000 people and not that huge a metropolis and things are in close proximity to each other. So we are owned by the city and the board is appointed by the city and then you have a director, managers, tenants and customers. It is the board that makes the decisions and there are no rules about how the board is elected. The chair of the board is an outsider in the sense that he is not a tenant or a politician or a city official. He or she is balancing these different passions. On the staff we have no producers whatsoever. We have an office staff and maintenance, construction and property management are the main areas of work. There are eleven of us running the two centres.

Most of the spaces are rented on long-term contracts. At Kaapelithedas we have about 100 artist ateliers, 3 museums, 6 spaces for contemporary dance, 60 band rehearsal rooms and then 5 big venues, which can be rented on a day by day basis for events and exhibitions. We have to approach the running of the centre as a commercial entity because it all has to survive financially. We don't have an artistic director. We are not centralised in that way. We are like a shopping centre and our job as the manager of the shopping centre is to create and maintain physical space so that the tenants can do their work and enjoy each others' customers.

The history of all this is based on happy accidents, more or less. It was a big building and there were no studies made but suddenly the need for space was there. Today we have 250 tenants. And I say this was a happy accident because part of our success was that we were left alone. Our owners didn't even know what we were doing. They didn't know what they had and why. And there were no easy three-year funded projects back then (1989). Owning and running a building is not a project. It is something that takes forever and you can't waste that on the idea that we have funding for three people for three years and when the funding ends we have to come up with something new.

Our model creates challenges. We don't create and own our brand. If you ask one hundred people in Helsinki what Kaapelithedas is, you will get one hundred different answers. We have no tools to control that. And then we have 250 tenants and we want them to create a community. And how we do that is to provide them with space. Space where they can work and produce and meet each other. And why are they there if not for the reason that they have neighbours? And we cannot be part of that. And then who is our customer? Our customers are our long- and short-term tenants. But then what about their customers, the people who attend events and exhibitions? These people are not our direct customers but really they are. This raises questions around to whom should we talk and in which way and whom to serve first. We are not that clever. I get a headache reading those six-line sentences with long words. I want my life to be simple. And that's why I need simple things that we can multiply and multiply.


**Klaus Schafler**
WUK, Vienna, Austria

The social, cultural and political context under which the WUK was founded in the 1980s arose from the spirit of the '70s, with the desires and protests for an open society and the political struggles for independence, freedom and peace, which led, in turn, to the struggles for open spaces for cultural activities. The complex where the WUK is housed was built in 1855 as a locomotive factory and was abandoned in 1980. The association WUK was founded back in 1979 and two years later artists and social activists squatted the building. Official recognition followed by the city of Vienna. The philosophy behind the WUK is one of a social and cultural centre and for contemporary artists to produce and promote critical art and culture.

More recent facts and figures from last year show that WUK works on a space of 12,000 square meters, with a staff of 140 employees, and with a yearly budget of 2.4 million euros. This excludes social projects that are outside of the complex itself and that are spread all over the city of Vienna but emanate from WUK. Our subsidies are: 1.9 million euros from the city of Vienna; 130,000 euros for theatre; the Ministry of Education gave us 240,000 basic subsidies and the cultural programme got 77,000 euros. Our subsidies, for the first time starting last year, were guaranteed for three years by the municipality and for two years by the ministry. Before that, it was always an annual approach.

The organisation itself consists of three pillars: the main pillar is the WUK autonomy, the 130 organisations and groups that work in the social and political field. Then there are the education and counselling projects for disadvantaged people. And finally the venues for contemporary arts production and promotion. The autonomous decision making consists of a six-member board, which is elected every two years by all its 550 members and there is a general assembly every year at which all the important strategic decisions are made and then carried out by the board, together with the managing director. This is the hierarchy of the centre.

In the WUK terminology, the words autonomy and self-management have to do with the structures of associations and cultural productions. Grass-roots democracy and internal issues come from this. For example, in 2003 there was a big financial crisis, very close to bankruptcy, then the conflict between the WUK autonomous ideas and the WUK enterprise ideas led to a fluctuation of people, spaces and concepts. Therefore the WUK decided to implement a strategic planning and management system called BSC, Balance Scorecard System, to align the business activities to the visions and strategies of the organisation, with the main goal being to consolidate the financial situation and, at the same time, to reorganise WUK.

The relationship with the municipality is an institutionalised one. The government isn't directly involved in our decisions and board. We have frozen subsidies and every year the same people give the same amount of money from the same offices. It's a very absurd theatre. Another interesting point is that the whole complex is still the property of the municipality but there is no lease or contract, which means that we don't pay anything to the city and the users don't pay rent for the spaces. The problem is the old structure and the monumental protection. It is like everywhere that the creative industries is the management and marketing tool of the city and the growing importance of the success matrix and successful criteria that are ways for the authorities to evaluate projects.

With regard to funding and finances, there are more and more open calls for proposals that sometimes make problems for institutions like WUK because if you already get a high amount of subsidy you can't compete for these calls for subsidies because people want fresh initiatives and projects.

Many things are happening every day in the WUK: between anarchy and spectacle, between WUK autonomy and WUK enterprise; the big gap between the guiding principles of 1982 and the current cultural and social realities. Current and future challenges are: is it important to get a contract with the municipality?; as staff and users get older, how to be a progressive cultural institution today?; is it important to bite the hand that feeds you?


**Nataša Serec**
Metelkova, Ljubljana, Slovenia

I can't talk about our model because it is not formalised as a model. But I will explain how Metelkova came into existence. It was a former military barracks and after the departure of the Yugoslav People's Army in 1991, the complex was squatted. Now, in the southern section, there are very nicely renovated buildings, housing the National Gallery and the Ethnographic Museum, and we are still squatting the other section. Our organisation, Metelkova Mesto, was established in the 1980s with the aim of securing some production space for art and culture. It was agreed that this property be given over to this purpose by the Republic of Slovenia and the city of Ljubljana but this legal procedure went too slow and the civil support for this kind of centre was quite big at the time because Slovenia had just become an independent country, with no military control by Yugoslavia and so on. The

city authorities of Ljubljana began to illegally demolish Metelkova on the 9th of September, 1993. As a result, 800 squatters occupied the premises. The power and water supply were disconnected but the programme of events developed by the squatters went on without all the facilities. However, when the winter came in December 1993, there was a crisis and many people left because they couldn't continue to work in such poor conditions. In 1994 we put together the first organisational model, called Retina. Its responsibility was to settle the situation and to be a service for squatters, NGOs and individuals at Metelkova. A development plan was launched by Retina on behalf of the people in Metelkova, including an architectural scheme drawn up by an architect from New York, Kevin Kuafman.

Some of the important achievements since then by Retina and people from Metelkova (I always say Retina and people from Metelkova because there were disagreements internally between the board of Retina and others actively involved with Metelkova) was to overcome a number of attempts by the city to demolish the site and that of overcoming a major financial crisis in 1998. Stabilising the situation, we began to have monthly meetings, which we called Metelkova Forum Meetings, and we started to renovate some of the buildings, which led to the opening of new spaces in 2000 and 2004.

Today we are not witnessing the demolition of physical spaces but we are experiencing what I would term violent intrusions into out internal functioning, so we are trying to combat this by devising a formal model of functioning. The city, which is the owner of Metelkova property, requires the legalisation of Metelkova and this is now a project of the present mayor of Ljubljana. And also because the governmental inspectors are coming in and checking our illegal bars. So, four years ago our forum decided that we go for legalisation. A working group was established and this group includes representatives from the city and people from Metelkova. This working group is trying to define a proper organisational model for Metelkova. The city would like to sign a management agreement but we couldn't agree with the contract and it was rejected. It is now under review but the city's goal is to sign the contract as soon as possible and when it is signed the city will help Metelkova with the renovations.

We do have a diagram of ideas around a model for Metelkova, which is a model of self-management based on anarchism and this model is based on economic independence and joint management, alongside how our Forum functions. It is quite complicated and not definitive but I have to say we are well organised through the Forum.


**Dušica Radojčić**
Rojc, Pula, Croatia

Pula City Association Centre "Rojc" is housed in a former military barracks. It is the largest building in town covering more than 16,000 square meters of land.
Built under the Habsburg Empire, it was a military school up to 1976, when it changed its function into a barracks for the Yugoslav army until they withdrew in 1991. At the beginning of the 1990s the building received war refugees and when they left the destruction of the

buildings started. The first squatters entered in 1997 and that was a time when Rojc had a very bad reputation. The site fell into a terrible situation. Then there was a restoration period when the squatters repaired and decorated their own and other spaces for common usage, such as huge halls and surrounding green areas.  Even though the building was in a desperate situation, the water and electricity had always been available for free. More and more associations enter Rojc, and the City of Pula decided to formalise the existing situation, even though the owner of the place was still the Ministry of Defence. The first utilisation contracts were signed with the squatters in 1999. All attempts to charge a rent have not been successful. Then the first public investments in the building occurred, and the sanitary conditions improved. The place became safer and more and more people started to visit. At last, in 2003, the Ministry of Defence finally transferred the ownership to the City. But the City of Pula has been assigning premises to organisations without any criteria for allocation or recovery, which has resulted in problems and animosities. The lack of any proper response by the city administration is caused by their lack of vision and capacity regarding Rojc. But the good side of the story is that one more space has avoided the destiny of other similar public spaces, which, due to the commercial policies of public authorities, are being transformed into private spaces. Today 102 associations using Rojc have a formal contract with the city with no rent but also with no formal recognition of investments made by the organisation towards the restoration. Today the only expense born by the associations is the electricity bill. The actual budget for the centre is around 250,000 Euros per year paid from the city budget. This covers the maintenance, security, cleaning, repairs, water, insurance, staff etc.

After years of dissatisfaction with the management, the Rojc settlers organised an initiative during 2008, which resulted in the establishment of the Rojc Coordination. It is a sort of public/civil society joint management body. But the city is still not ready to share the decision making power with Rojc representatives and obstructed the work of the Coordination. They have imagined the role of the Coordination as a formal and legitimising device for decisions already taken by the city. In February 2009, Rojc protested against this refusal to recognise the Coordination body and proposed the development of a new public/civil society management model. Induced by the unsuccessfulness of the management so far, the Mayor accepted the Rojc settlers' proposal to start with the designing of the "real" joint public/civil society model of management and Green Istria took over the fundraising initiative for this project. The fundraising initiative was successful and funds for the project "Social Center 'Rojc': Education and Development of Cooperative Public/Civil Society Model of Management" were secured from the National Foundation for Civil Society Development. This project will be implemented during 2010. There are two major axes of this project: education about self-organisation and cooperation models as a prerequisite for partnership with the public sector and a facilitative process for the construction of a cooperative model for public/civil society management. Expected project results include: the strengthening of democratic procedures; improvement of intersectoral collaboration; stronger influence of civil society; implementation of modern management practices; transparent management of public funds and the rationalisation of public expenditures.

In this project we hope to increase the low levels of participation in the field of public participation and move it from first and second level to the third and highest level of

participation, namely to the shared control over decisions and resources. The political values of the project are: to improve information and public participation in decision making; public control over the work of local authorities; the development of social dialogue; good governance; building trust and active participation by the public in the creation of public policies. Political values specific to the NGOs are: cooperation between NGOs covering different fields inside Rojc; responsibility and risks are taken over by the public and the transformation of the NGOs' warehouse in the social centre.

**Sonja Soldo & Nenad Barić**
POGON - Zagreb Centre for Independent Culture and Youth, Croatia

This recently established cultural organisation is based on a new model of public/civil partnership. It is co-funded and co-governed by a local network of culture and youth NGOs, by the Alliance Operation City and by the city of Zagreb. The co-funders have to agree on appointing a director, the main functions of the centre and its statutes. This hybrid model provides long-term sustainability that results from the balanced rational between the public financing and supervision on one side and independent programming and participatory decision making on the other. Cooperation and the interconnection of the different groups and organisations is also one of the core elements of our model. Moreover, the centre is based on the partnership of two civil society sectors: culture and youth. This partnership is a result of common values, shared interests and complementary needs.

The main purpose of the centre is to provide services and a managed infrastructure for the programmes of these NGOs. This infrastructure is meant to be decentralised and supportive of the different centres and post-industrial buildings in at least three different locations in the city. In this way the centre will be able to provide various services and spaces in different locations and with different functions. For instance, spaces with cultural events, information and education, gathering places, work spaces, etc. By operating in different locations, ghettoisation will be avoided and the urban matrix will be really infiltrated.

The centre was initiated by coalition of NGOs that consisted of two national networks (one of independent culture, the other one consisting of youth organizations), of local collaborative platform Zagreb - Kapital of Culture 3000, as well as of three independent cultural clubs. The coalition started exhaustive advocacy in early 2005, a few months before local elections. For the first time, the needs of independent culture and youth in Zagreb were articulated, publicly discussed and stated in policy documents signed by future decision makers.

In order to focus public discussions, media activities and protest actions, we started Operation City. Every year Operation City focuses on a specific issue important for the urban development of a contemporary city. Through various formats and art forms, it occupies different locations and, among other things, it promotes the idea of Zagreb Centre. The first Operation City was organised in 2005 as a ten-day festival of independent culture, gathering over twenty organisations that presented more than seventy events attended by fifteen thousand people. The other example is the squatting of the factory Jendinstvo in 2007, and

that place eventually became the first location of our centre. Public actions against the city government started in July 2006, generated by billboards for the Youth Salon. The billboards focused directly on the mayor, who had consistently ignored the needs of the youth and cultural scene. From that moment a wider initiative against destruction of public space started - Right to the City initiative.

During the subsequent long, four-year period, relations with the city went from reserved cooperation at first, to ignoring, to marginalisation, to direct attacks and drastic budget cuts and in the end, the shutting down of one independent cultural club that was part of the coallition (Club Mochvara). Despite all of this, we never gave up and continued protesting and before the last elections the city finally agreed to establish the centre.

At the moment the centre is run in two locations. The first has been operating in the centre of the city since June 2009. It's an office space, with conference hall, altogether 120 square meters. This is used for the centre headquarters, temporary offices for NGOs in formal education programmes, public presentations and meetings. The other location is in the former factory Jedinstvo and it has two main halls of 80 and 450 square meters each. It opened in September 2009 and hosts various events, from one-day exhibitions of local artists to international festivals.

Our present situation with regard to the spaces is a big improvement for the working conditions for the Zagreb scene but existing venues are not sufficient and they are poorly equipped. The most urgent need is for spaces for artists-in-residence programmes, rehearsal rooms, artists' studios and a youth information centre.

Any independent organisation or group can use POGON for programmes in the field of contemporary art and culture, as well as for various youth activities. The spaces are equipped with the necessary services and temporary offices can be used free of charge for all non-profit programmes and activities. When it comes to reserving the space, we operate on the basis of first come, first served. We publicly announce the space just to spread the basic information, what resources are available and who can use them. There are no deadlines to apply. At the moment we are trying to be as flexible as possible. Strategic decisions, programme principles and criteria are set by the programme board. This programme board consists of representatives of five associations and member organisations, elected by the associations' general assembly. Any organisation that uses the centre's resources is free to join the association and to realise the right to participate in decision making.

There are some disadvantages to the model, primarily that the municipality's approval is necessary for most formal decisions. Due to administration inefficiency and political struggles, the process lasts too long. Also, because of fights in the past there is a lack of trust between the independent scene and the municipality. One of the greatest challenges is the fact that the management has responsibility for the centre's functioning but no control over the programme since it depends on the NGOs and their activities and capacities. Moreover, flexibility in programming makes planning and promotion rather complicated and inefficient.

The most important advantages arising from this civil/public partnership are the joint ownership and responsibility; public infrastructure that is accessible to everyone on the same terms; long-term financial stability on one side and independent programming and participatory decision making on the other.


**Anna Czapski**
With Marléne Hagnere and Jean Francois Masselot
Fructose, Dunkirk, France

Fructose is a centre based in Dunkirk, Northern France, by the North Sea. Dunkirk is a port city and it is very close to the Belgian border. Our centre was founded in 2008 but we had a legacy of other projects. Our project is independent, carried out by artists and people involved in cultural development and not from a professional base but more from friendship. The people involved in founding this project had known each other for more than ten years. Of course friends doesn't mean that we always agree. We have lots of discussions and disagreements but I think friendship is really the heart of the project. The aim of the project is to help artists from various backgrounds and practices, so visual arts, live arts, performances and in many kinds of disciplines, depending on what people want to do and to assist them in a cooperative way. It is not like there is just a technical structure helping them, it's much more a cooperative approach. Many of them need spaces but they also need support to enter the artistic market in France, which is very much about public networking, as well as private, of course, but in France culture is still very much publicly funded.

The Fructose is a complex of buildings that were formally warehouses and offices, based in the port area of Dunkirk. As this part of the port area is no longer in use, it is being given back to the city by the port authority little by little. The building at the centre of our project was a former sugar warehouse and this is why we call our project Fructose. We share the site with some official cultural buildings but our spaces cover 3,500 square meters. So, we have services and support for creation. We also give some support to projects in the form of grants, basically to artists for help with materials. Often this is not cash but comes in the form of help for their production. And, of course, the idea is also to invite people to see Dunkirk, which is a nice city, so we organise residencies as well. We also support the distribution of the artistic creations because the centre is mainly a work place, it is not really for presenting, say, exhibitions or festivals, although we do have that possibility too. In fact, we want to organise some events and festivals because this part of the city holds memories for the city and the people who worked there and people do want to come to that place too and we want to be part of that. But we focus on our spaces and on artistic production. This means we have a person employed to promote various projects by the artists within the networks at local, national, regional and trans-border levels. And we can also act as an employer for the artists for a short period of time and pay their social contribution and help them with contracting with producers and any kind of people who hire the artists.

With regard to the spaces, the needs are defined by the artists. In 2010, we are working with four architects and we hold seminars with artists to define their needs and to see how

everyone can be happy with ateliers and technical equipment and so on. We have also got a green approach to the refurbishment of older houses, which is not simple.

We began with 23 artists involved in regional, national and European projects, so this was a network in itself and they share resources between organisations and we share like this also because we can't do everything ourselves, there is no point. The project is open to any artist of any age, from people starting out to more established and professional artists and also to people involved in cultural development.

We are formulated as a very classical French not-for-profit association, with a specific working group looking after the organisation. This group is formulating the statutes and the charter to use the buildings and all the other rules we need for ourselves and also to discuss with the district council. Artists are members and can vote for directors and we have different working groups for developing the buildings, for communications etc. We also have an artistic committee for the selection of the different projects and invited residencies. In this way we don't share power but we share responsibilities. The decisions are delegated to the various working groups and the members of the working groups change. The president of the association does not sit on the working groups.

What we call the Red House was the fist to be squatted and here we had an exhibition space and a venue that could hold 200 people. We had a nice project on paper to link the ports of Northern Europe with a ship. It was a dream but in practice it was just too expensive, so in the end it became an exhibition space and a place for free parties and at that time there was no dialogue at all with the district council. At the time this was the property of the Port Authority. But we were tolerated. In five years we had the police maybe four times.

We started this new project in 2008 with the district council for the support of artists and in order to be recognised by the district council we said 'OK we have our project but we are also interested in the redevelopment of this old dockland area of Dunkirk.' We have ideas for urban space development and for what we can do within the city, as artists in the city, so we have this kind of dialogue with the district. We have our own architects. We don't want the district to give us a nice building because then we feel that we have to propose something on a very technical and professional level. We try to define with the artists very useful services and we don't put anything on paper until we can match it with a need. And we claim that we also have a place in communication with the community, being a creative organisation.

We are funded by mainly local and regional councils. We have a very good relationship with the Theatre of Dunkirk and this is really very helpful and acts as a gateway to the district council, so we don't have to exhaust ourselves dealing with all the different departments. We have no interference from the council. We can do what we like and there is no interference with the artistic choices.

**Auro Foxcroft**
Village Underground, London, UK

Village Underground is a new cultural centre based in East London. We are quite a small team and, as such, we don't have very many internal governance issues. Our main concern with governance hinges on the use of a number of different companies and their interactions. Essentially we operate as a social enterprise in that we are more a commercial company than a charity but that we try to work with a social and ecological conscience. Historically we have done this by maintaining a split in our work, so 60% of our work is our multi-disciplinary cultural activity: concerts, theatre, exhibitions, film screenings, art happenings. And the other 40% of our work is corporate and sponsored events and commercial activities for creative industries like film shoots. These activities cover all of our operating costs and allow us to subsidise all of our arts and culture work. And then we have a third main activity, artists studios, which we built from recycled London Underground train carriages and shipping containers, which we rent out on a not-for-profit basis to a multi-disciplinary community of cultural practitioners.

So, we have some commercial activity and cultural activity and not-for-profit activity and we felt the best way to govern it all was a separate legal entity for each. We started with Village Underground Limited, which is a commercial limited company, the most appropriate vehicle for owning the business assets, leases, borrowings etc., needed to set up the organisation. It is also the best vehicle for making quick, unimpeded financial decisions; if we want to take out loans, get credit, change direction and generally just maintain the freedom that we need to operate as we want to. Then we have Village Underground Foundation, which is a charity and that's a good vehicle for all of our social projects, for some of our art projects and to apply for grants, donations, pro bono work, or for working with volunteers. And our third legal entity is Village Underground Projects and that's a company limited by guarantee, which is a structure based on a model document by the Charities Commission in the UK. It's a good vehicle for doing not-for-profit activities, mostly for managing the artist studios and some of our arts and culture events.

We have various pros and cons for these models.
Positives: the freedom to do what we want to do and we just have to pick the right vehicle to work with; it gives us control and freedom from external controls (we don't have any members or trustees); we can make our own decisions as soon as we need to – flexibly making operational and financial decisions as and when we wish.

Problems: a lot more bureaucracy (you end up administrating for three companies, instead of one); more cost in terms of maintaining the different companies; not particularly tax efficient.

In the future we hope to change this. The end objective of Village Underground is to become an international platform for cultural exchange. We are currently working on projects in Berlin and Lisbon. Or goal is to set up projects in different cities around the world so that we can facilitate the moving of artists and creative people and creative organisations, as well as the movement of shows, festivals, art works, theatre shows and projects, with the idea

that they can travel from country to country, which is obviously great for audiences and practitioners alike. This will change our governance structure. We will have different bases in different cities and we will have a central hub, which will act as a facilitator, helping with fundraising, networking, advocacy, advice and generally supporting these projects.

We are in central London and the local authority we deal with is like a lot of very large UK government organisations, in that it is difficult to work with because it is quite slow and bureaucratic. It is also very divided. You can speak to a lot of different people for a lot of different things: planning, licensing, education or arts and culture. The problem then becomes trying to maintain a coherent relationship with the Council. Currently we keep our relationship strictly to a landlord and tenant arrangement. They gave us a derelict building and essentially left us to it to convert it into our centre. Since then we have had a lot of difficulties with the Council, particularly getting licences and other consents and that has threatened our organisation. In fact, it has almost caused us bankruptcy. As a result, we keep our distance from them. For example we did a very successful public art piece on the side of our building and didn't apply for any permission. We just went ahead and did it and it worked.

Part of our distance from the Council is because they don't really understand what we do, or how to run a cultural centre. They wanted to set up a cultural quarter some years back around a project called Hackney Ocean, which was a huge multi-million pound venue and it went bankrupt after a couple of years. Then another Council-backed project next door to the Town Hall, called Hackney Empire, a big 1,300 seat theatre, has just announced near bankruptcy. So, their history of managing cultural spaces is not good and we don't want them to get too close to us.

This may all sound a bit negative on the subject of dealing with local authorities, so I wanted to reference Camden Roundhouse. They are the biggest independent cultural centre in London and they have a really great model of working with their authority. We are working with Camden Roundhouse now and we are probably going to adopt their stance in working with our authority. They are a charity and their main objective is inspiring young people through arts and culture. The relationship they have with the council is through a service level agreement, which means that they deliver the council's targets for education, youth services and cultural agenda, and in return the council give them money but, more importantly, a lot of support. What you get then is a win-win situation. The Council becomes dependent on the centre to deliver their objectives and the centre then get the funding and backing that they need for long term sustainability. The young people in the area get fantastic facilities and great support and the cultural infrastructure in the area gets a lot of support for emerging artists and also great facilities for programming. This model of working with a local authority is a really successful one, it seems, in London. It is also good because it is limited to a contract and it doesn't lead to any problems of control or power struggles.

To conclude, we have different company structures and we jump from one to the other depending on whether we are doing something commercial or charitable or not-for-profit. We maintain control of our governance structure because we don't have trustees or voting

members working above us and the blend of structures we use means we are totally free to do what we want to do within reason. And working with local authorities through service level agreements means that they will be dependent on us or, to put it another way, we are striving for interdependence. And if we are all professional and work properly, it should be a mutually beneficial relationship. We have a long-term future and they get their objectives delivered in a way that they couldn't deliver themselves and everyone should be a winner.

**Dudley Stewart**
Quest Project, Charleville Castle, Tullamore, Ireland

The Quest Project originated in 1992. There was an international process taking place at that time, which culminated in the Rio summit on sustainability, which in turn, resulted in the international agreement, signed by all countries, titled Agenda 21 – a common platform for action towards sustainable earth. The Quest Project was set up as a response to Rio, to develop appropriate Agenda 21 programmes for Ireland as an interdependent nation. Quest, from the outset, worked within Government, but after a number of years of bureaucratic engagement, it found itself "spinning its wheels" as government moved to present Ireland as an early Agenda 21 adopter – with an unfortunate emphasis on perceived change and little substance. The outright derailment of Quest was avoided only by a call to action from a small group of activist in Offaly who were struggling to pursue one of the principle Agenda 21 Cultural objectives – protecting our cultural history – the saving of an important element of Irish-European Cultural Heritage – Charleville Castle.

This castle in the middle of Ireland, Charleville Castle, was under threat by two forces: one was the original landlords, who wanted that history to disappear and fade back into the background and the other was developers, who saw this place as having potential as the mother of all golf courses. There was a small group of people fighting this at the time and we felt we couldn't walk away from that struggle. As a result, it is an accidental cultural project. Our volunteers like to call it a one-world cultural project. We, as in the Quest Project, went in to save this castle that was part of our history and we decided that we would continue our Agenda 21 work from within this castle.

Our mission was to prepare a wide range of people from very different backgrounds for a world that was going to become increasingly interdependent. We were using action learning as a process for introducing this concept into the system. Our mechanism for doing this was through volunteerism because with volunteers we could create self-organising units that could raise money and that could take on the control and actions of running the castle twenty four hours a day and that could act independently.

We do all of the normal things that a cultural centre does from classical arts all the way through to festivals and then we get down to sustainable development, civilian peacekeeping and restoring the castle. Security, preservation and safety of the castle is a top priority because it is of grade one international importance, which is why we feel the hosting of international gatherings is tremendously important. For instance, last year we had 4,500 people at one such gathering.

Our programmes are based on action learning processes, active world citizenship, training for climate and civilian emergencies, research into international issues, Agenda 21 action policies and transnational relations. For instance, we are working with components of the Iraq government on Agenda 21 sustainable reconstruction. We also try to push out the boundaries and we have a programme looking at combining arts and engineering. Issues for us would be the limitations of the building and not having any residential capacity for visiting artists.

OK Agenda 21. Agenda 21 recognised the interdependence of all nations and all citizens and the importance of empowering all citizens to act and to form groups to act to achieve real change for a sustainable world. More generally people from all countries and backgrounds love to share and create common ground to achieve the impossible and to make great things happen and then to celebrate. Celebrate is a big thing with us.

What we want to create is a 'people's castle'. It is also a reminder that the past is always with us and can be repeated in the future. We know that great things can happen there and we have learned that bringing people from different cultures together can overcome adversity in a way more powerful than any university and we have seen this in action. And all of our local associations use the castle now and know how to use it and take care of it.


**Marin Lukanović**
Molekula, Rijeka, Croatia

Molekula is an umbrella organisation consisting of six member organisations: Drugo more, Trafik, Prostor plus, Filmaktiv, Infoshop Skatula and Katapult. We have a common space that can be used for offices, production, workshops and presentations, but it is also open to other organisations to use. We started some years ago as a programme designed by Drugo more, in a much smaller space and, when it became crowded as organisations joined in, the umbrella was formed and we found a new space in an old industrial part in the very centre of our city, Rijeka. Although we are only a few meters away from the National Theatre, we are also only a few meters from the port. So, in some way, we are between the official institutions and the capitalist marketplace.

Our building used to be the Academy for Applied Arts and, before that, a warehouse. The problem is that the building is owned by the city government but the surrounding area is owned by the Port Authority. We have a good relationship with the city. We have had some problems with the Port Authority who couldn't understand that people should be allowed to cross their land and be able to come to our space. The building looks decrepit from the outside but inside it is in pretty good condition. The building, as part of this whole port area, is set for demolition in the future, which we won't oppose, but we are preparing a good case to move to another place when this occurs.

Regarding our internal governance, we trust each other but we have also formulated a contract regulating the rights and obligations of each organisation. We have a coordinator and an assistant coordinator and there is a coordination board that makes the decisions. We

remodel our internal policies when practice proves them wrong.

What we do is: workshops, education, contemporary dance, physical theatre, film, contemporary art and literature. It is important to note that we are mainly a production space. Work is prepared in our centre and then brought to other public venues in the city. In this way we are not enclosed into our ghetto of 500 square meters. While we don't use our space as a public space, we do have some presentations in our space, including outside groups that come and present their work, for free. Lately a contemporary art gallery has been formed and is operating under the name SIZ.

We also engage in policy pressure on the local government to try to build up better cooperation between city institutions, be they cultural, political or independent organisations.

A very important point is that each organisation in our centre is autonomous concerning financing and executing their programmes but we have a common platform for policy and for the use of space. Also important is that each organisation is able to formulate national and international alliances to produce their work.

We have also helped to produce some city cultural programmes, such as the art house cinema.

Our lease expires in 2012 and then the building is meant to be torn down but in the present crisis, I don't think this will happen.


**Marko Gaić**
CK13, Novi Sad, Serbia

CK13 is an alternative educational and cultural centre for young people for their independent actions, for their creative work, for their individual initiatives and, most of all, for social and political engagement. The story of CK 13 began in 2006 when the three Novi Sad independent organisations came together to work on the growing problems of fascism, racism and right wing activism in Serbia and the result of one year working together was the establishment of CK 13 youth centre. We got initial support from the German foundation Schuler Helfen Leben and this was 2006 when the youth centre was founded as an alternative, non-profit educational project. It's vision was to be a youth centre that possessed high levels of social and political engagement with high visibility through its activities within the community and also self-governing and self-managed and self-sustainable in youth activities.

In order to build a fully operating and productive youth centre, we had to take into consideration all the noticeable demands and requirements of young people, so the project and its concept is based on several key points:

- Participation by youth groups, associations and independent initiatives
- A meeting point for young people
- A research centre
- Residency space
- A place for media work and alternative communication tools

By 2010, we had two more organisations included in the centre: the Novi Sad lesbian organisation and the free software group. These are two organisations that today are an essential part of this project and they have their offices inside the youth centre.
With regard to the programme, we are mostly organising public debates, research projects and workshops. We have a daily programme open to the young people of Novi Sad: movies, music, educational programmes, workshop programmes and exhibitions. We are one of the rare places in Novi Sad for young people to go for that kind of programme. We also have a youth radio station.

When it comes to how the centre is governed, the first approach was to have no hierarchy and to have collective decision making but that governance model just didn't work. It was unsuccessful so we had to change something. In agreement with the SHL foundation we agreed to establish a new position in the centre, which is the position of manager, my position, because we realised that somebody has to take responsibility for the things that are happening and somebody has to lead the vision. Along with the manager there is a programming council, which is a council that is made up of people from different organisations that take part in the youth centre, along with people from the youth centre representing management and volunteers and this council is the highest level of decision making for the centre. All important decisions on programme, management etc., are discussed and approved by this council. Alongside this we have weekly meetings of the coordinators of the activities and the purpose of these meetings is to plan and control events and programmes.

Our relationship with public authorities and statutory bodies is currently our main problem in Novi Sad. We have three levels of authorities in Serbia: local, municipal and provincial authorities and then national government and altogether their involvement in CK 13 is 0%. We get no support from them. Right from the beginning we tried to establish a relationship with every public authority, especially with the municipality of Novi Sad, because the situation of the position of culture and youth in Novi Sad nowadays is quite terrible. There are no youth cultural centres, no youth facilities, even no movie halls. Novi Sad is a place of almost half a million people and it has no movie hall, has no place for concerts, has no real cultural centres. So that is the reason why we think we became visible in the local municipality but we are still searching for some kind of support. This year (2010) we decided not to go with calls for applications just for the projects but we are trying to establish some form of general cooperation in support of the centre and we will see what will happen. We respond to any kind of call that comes from the authorities. For instance, our members became part of a group when there was a local action plan for youth in Novi Sad, so we are trying to make some small steps in communication.

CK 13 is not a classical public space but we are one of the rare open public spaces for young people in Novi Sad.

**REGIONAL CASE STUDIES - Developing an integrated policy**

**Lorenzo Canova**
Visioni Urbane, Basilicata, Italy

Visioni Urbane is an initiative whose main aim is to analyse public policies in relation to cultural centres, in particular the institutional tools used in the Italian region of Basilicata and in the context of their youth and economic development policies. Visioni Urbane itself is set up under the Italian Department for Cohesion and Development Policies of the Ministry of Economic Development (MISE-DPS).

This initiative came about because, after several studies on regional territories, the Ministry recognised that there is a separation between the local context and the development actions and policies being implemented by the Ministry, which creates a risk to the effective communication and implementation of those policies. This realisation led the MISE-DPS to promote new forms of experimentation in specific territories. These new approaches were tested within "Sensi Contemporanei" ("Contemporary Senses"), a programme of public investment whose objective is to support Italy's economically underdeveloped areas, i.e. the seven regions of southern Italy. "Sensi Contemporanei" is currently in its second edition.

The first edition (2003-2005) focused on contemporary art as a tool for local development. Visioni Urbane is one project of "Sensi Contemporanei". Visioni Urbane is aimed at evaluating the results obtained during the first edition of the programme. The outcomes of this evaluation were used to define the objectives of the second phase.

To summarise, the conclusion of this evaluation is that development policies have to focus on the local context in which they are implemented. They should support and mentor actions that help regulate the interdependences between territorial, private and public bodies on which both the implementation of concrete projects and processes, as well as the local socio-economic dynamics, depend.

The logic behind Visioni Urbane is that of "first the contents, then the containers". This might seem obvious from a theoretical point of view but what actually happens in administrative practice is the contrary. Regions and local authorities are used to starting from construction sites, focusing on the building or the restoration of a container and considering the issues related to the content of those containers only in a second step. An inevitable result is that there are more and more non-functional, useless and abandoned spaces. Visioni Urbane policy therefore represents an innovation: the Region reversed their traditional logic, and it did so in cooperation with a central administration, the MISE-DPS.

So, how did we do this? The management of the project was assigned to an institutional working group consisting of regional officers, policy-makers and professionals from the Department for Cohesion and Development Policies, with the role of supporting the regional decision-making.

The process began in June 2007. It had four phases, of which the last is still ongoing. Each phase can be evaluated in relation to the results it produced. The four phases are:

a) "From a rhetoric about creativity to the creative scene";

b) "Creating a common public creative sphere";

c) "Selecting ideas and spaces";

d) "Spaces, programmes and management"


a) From a rhetoric about creativity to the creative scene (March – November 2007)

Those known by the institutions and regional administrations as 'creatives' are usually the ones who respond to open calls offering funding and who apply for grants. Yet these may not be representative of the creative scene nor are they necessarily the most competent actors. Visioni Urbane organised a survey applying the viral method. The viral method consisted of interviewing the known creatives, who then suggested people, associations or organisations with creative profiles that they know. This interactive and viral research led to a detailed mapping of the creative scene in Basilicata. In a short time the results obtained permitted a representation of Basilicata's arts and cultural landscape different to the one taken for granted by the official bodies and rich in new people, projects and organisations hitherto unknown to the region. The interviews led to the discovery of 49 new individuals and groups in the Basilicata region and included bloggers and information technology creatives, who are indispensable for the new creative industries[1].

The gathered, analysed and organised information is made available through a blog named *www.visioniurbanebasilicata.net*. This is the main communication tool among the Visioni Urbane working group and the wider community. The choice of the blog is highly innovative for the region and is run by the Department for Cohesion and Development, in collaboration with local actors. It guarantees, from an institutional point of view, the transparency requested by a public policy process; from a methodological point of view it facilitates the creation of awareness for a scene; it maintains the participatory process of everyone involved.

Public meetings were organised by the working group, which led to direct participation in the process and made the representation of the creative scene more concrete. The meetings had the following functions: to share the acquired knowledge gained during the mapping process and to discuss the nature of the problem; to reflect on the creative spaces to be funded; to debate the themes and the management models of the future cultural centres. From October to December 2007 the blog and the public meetings not only made the existence of a creative scene in Basilicata tangible, but also clarified the terms of collaboration for the participants.

b) Building a common public creative sphere (December 2007 – March 2008)

The concept of a public sphere in this context means the creation of an extra-political space where the members of the creative community and the representatives of the institutions can exchange ideas and form shared opinions on the development and the definition of the objectives of Visioni Urbane. To consolidate the construction of this public sphere, meetings with representative and significant international figures of the creative sector were organised. These meetings led to the defining of three work themes:

1                http://www.visioniurbanebasilicata.net

1) identifying the spaces which were going to be transformed into cultural centres

2) the management models to be adopted for the running of these centres

3) the projects and activities that should be carried out in these spaces

Following these first results from the working group it was proposed to start a survey of existing buildings suitable for transformation into cultural centres, carried out in conjunction with the regional territorial officers. Furthermore it was decided to invest some time and resources in the research of existing models of cultural spaces in Italy, as well as some non-Italian cases, in order to build a database useful to the development of the project. Finally, the information gathered was communicated via the blog to the creative scene. In this manner all of the people involved shared the same references in terms of concepts around creative spaces and consequently proceeded to gathering ideas on the activities to be realised in the future cultural centres in Basilicata.

c) Selecting ideas and spaces (April 2008 – June 2009)

During this phase the public creative sphere transformed itself into a laboratory where members of this community promoted the discussion of ideas, plans, management models and intervention proposals for the physical construction phase of Visioni Urbane. In general, the creatives' difficulty to carry out and market cultural activities that are financially sustainable and at the same time in line with their creative objectives, became evident. The working group was aware that it was necessary to foresee – in the area of Visioni Urbane – system actions i.e. training and support to enhance management skills, specific competences, and the ability to make and write projects. All of these are still too weak to guarantee the economic and operational sustainability of the cultural centres. 23 locations were proposed as possible cultural centres but there is a need to elaborate criteria to help in defining scenarios and identifying possible characteristics of these centres. Starting from the presented ideas, the working group proposed a synthetic reflection that identified:

1. multi-functional spaces as a main characteristic

2. five themes[2] that sum up the presented ideas

People involved in the creative industries were then asked to respond with positive comments and to share the overall proposed framework. Although it is difficult to reach

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[2] The five themes that represent the synthesis of the creative process internal to the public area are:
- The technological quarry, a very Italian mixture of ancient stones and modern functions that are typical of the Basilicata; ;
- The inclusive art representing a border area between performing art and social inclusion or even welfare processes;
- The roots, a very sensitive and shared theme among very different artists which entails a work line that tells the territory and its traditions, lending itself also to operations of international territorial marketing;
- the Basilicata in the world, the world in Basilicata,
- reinventing the future, it reflects the artistic intention of young creatives to re-read the artistic and cultural heritage of the Basilicata , confronting themselves with the Eurpean models through the digital art.

consensus on the model of management of the individual spaces, the material available allows the working group to formulate indications on the type of spaces to be proposed, on thematic specialisations, on possible management models (to be examined in depth later after the final selection of the spaces) and on the system actions (training and support) that accompany the implementation and the start-up phase of the cultural centres. The regional officers will then be able to write a document with specific criteria to be presented to the president of the region. During a public meeting the president of the region will ask members of the public creative sphere to give specific indications of spaces, which are going to be transformed into culture centres.

d) Spaces, programmes and management

In this last phase, the process, hitherto based on ideas, concepts and criteria, now becomes real. Local buildings will be inspected and selected on the basis that they conform to the objectives of the project. The outcomes of the whole Visioni Urbane process to date are then converted into two investment programmes. These two options are then presented to the president of the region, with a view to choosing spaces that can be reconstructed in a short period of time. The financial plan has now been revised because of the Visioni Urbane process and 900,000 Euro of the original figure of 4.3 million Euro, which was only for the spaces, is destined to go to training and support for the project. When the spaces are chosen, they will then undergo a public enquiry and consultations process organised with the mayors and the administrative councils. The assignment of the resources for the renovation and construction work of the buildings is subordinated under three conditions:

1) the executive project and the use of the resources must be ready and decided before July 2009

2) the purpose of the buildings for Visioni Urbane will be maintained in the future

3) the mayors accept and share the methodological and participatory approach of Visioni Urbane[3]

In June 2009, following coordination by the town council's technicians and people working in the creative industries who participated in the preparation phase, the five council administrations in which the buildings are located published the calls for tender.

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3    The methodological setting can thus be synthesised : an initial phase of laboratory and support finalized, with the support of experts, to the organizational managerial perfecting of the project ideas; the building of an external commission for the evaluation of the quality and sustainability of the project ideas; the entrustment of the contract to the projects selected by the Commission.

**Piet Forger**
Vlabra'ccent and Magda, Belgium

Vlabra'ccent is a network, an umbrella organization of 45 cultural centres in the province of Flemish Brabant.

Part 1. Cultural centres in Flanders:

Belgium, as everyone is aware, has two big communities/regions: Flanders in the north and the Walloon part in the south. Cultural policy belongs solely to the powers of these regions.

In Flanders, by "cultural centre" we mean: "An organisation that is presenting and facilitating cultural activities" (Soren Soeborg, Huse i Danmark, ENCC).
Its focus is not producing or creating art, but presenting and facilitating art and culture.
"Cultural centres" in Flanders are a public cultural service; they are public institutions. Of course there are hundreds of other cultural, artistic or youth organisations in Flanders, and most of them are independent. In Flanders, we have about 150 cultural centres:
-         15 big ones
-         25 middle size
-         35 normal
-         75 small

According to Flemish legislation, an organisation can only be a cultural centre if:

1.        the initiative to start the organisation comes from the local authority
2.        the infrastructure is owned by the local authority
3.        the board consists of half users and half local politicians

Why this legislation? In the 1970s the Flemish government said that every person has a right to culture; every person is entitled to enjoy and take part in culture. To achieve this, they stimulated every city/town in Flanders to start a cultural centre.
And very important - they wanted cultural centres not to be linked to any specific political group or ideology (such as Catholics, socialists, liberals, etc). Cultural centres had to be pluralist, objective, and impartial like any other service from a local authority.

Two important factors to keep in mind when considering the situation with regard to culture in Flanders and the relationship between these cultural centres that are local public institutions and others that are independent cultural organisations:

1) Being a cultural organisation that is a public institution has many advantages and benefits, mostly they have to do with security and stability (of finances, of personnel, good infrastructure, of legitimacy, raison d'être, etc.) but on the other hand being a public institution risks having a lack of drive, a lack of flexibility, a lack of sharpness of image and identity.

2) In my opinion it is good that in many small villages and towns there is a cultural centre that is a pluralist/objective public cultural service because then people get the possibility to take part and enjoy culture nearby. But in the bigger cities and towns, these public institutions have a lot of power, funds and influence and there are many small creative initiatives, for example from independent cultural organisations, that have a lack of means and that need support. I think the balance is not right.

My point of view is that cultural centres that are public institutions should engage more in the support of all artistic and cultural initiatives in their region, including the work of independent organisations. And on the other hand, individual independent cultural centres should try to persuade their local authority to support their work.

What kind of support could this be? The support could be:

- free use of infrastructure
- being able to use instruments of communication (brochure, website, etc)
- sharing expertise
- and maybe most important: the people from the local cultural centre have to change their mentality and believe in supporting these independent initiatives and be proud to do so

2. Start dating your local government, make love to each other and make children. Go for a structural long-term sustainable cooperation.

Of course as independent cultural centres you can stick together with other independent organisations and advocate "against" your local/regional/national authority. You can struggle with the authorities; you can make war with the authorities.

But you can also choose to start getting to know each other, start trusting each other, start dating each other, start liking each other, making love and having some children! Go for a structural long-term sustainable cooperation.

I will illustrate this model of relationship with the authority with two examples: two "children" that were the result of this love making between the cultural field and the local authority in the province of Flemish Brabant in the past years - Vlabra'ccent and Magda.

| Vlabra'ccent | Magda |
|---|---|
| Umbrella/network organisation with 45 members in the province of Flemish Brabant | Network of tens of organisations dealing with culture and education: cultural education organisations, cultural centres, theatre and dance companies, museums, libraries, youth organisations, schools |
| In the province of Flemish Brabant, a region around Brussels with 1 million inhabitants || 
| Age: 10 years | Age: 1 year |

| Why do these organisations in the network work together? To achieve added value and to move onto the next levels. They meet each other: ||
|---|---|
| 1. to share & exchange information, experiences and expertise ||
| 2. to increase, enrich and diversify the range of activities offered | 2. school time |
| 3. to stimulate audience development: reaching more people (quantity & quality). Common communication to the public | 3. leisure time |
| 4. to start up new projects: research & development/experiment, bigger,… ||

| Organisation/Governance Both new organisations are based on a strong partnership, equal partnership, a marriage between the father, the province on the one hand, and the mother, the cultural organisations, on the other hand. Board: <u>mixed board (not a board run by the authority, not by the cultural organisations) but by both: co- governance.</u> ||
|---|---|
| Staff Staff are funded by the province and the cultural field ||
| Means/finances. Both father and mother have shared responsibility for the property and the finances ||
| Provincial funding for personnel 2FTE and working budget: 170,000 € and for common projects. 20,000 € from the cultural centres. | Provincial funding for personnel 1 FTE and working budget: 50,000 and for common projects (ad hoc) |
| www.applaus.be | www.magdanet.be |

Of course making love to your local authority is not the answer to all basic problems you deal with as an independent organisation. But I really think that making networks together and then trying to engage with your local government to establish a new organisation that is supporting you can really be a benefit.

To conclude, I just want to underline some necessary conditions in this flirting with the government:

- if you want to date, it is very interesting to have some matchmakers - people who know both dating partners and who can bring them together!
- If you want to date there has to be a partner that is willing to be a dating partner. So you need an authority that is open to working together, that is not just giving funding out of an ivory tower but that is close to the field and grass-roots level, a "warm government" that fosters the cultural organisations in its area
- You need to trust each other!
- If you want your child, your common organisation, to grow, you have to give them care and food. It needs means, personnel and finances!

# CONCLUSIONS

Through the NTNM workshops, meetings and, especially the NTNM conference, an overview of the independent cultural sector in Europe and its practices, as represented by artists, managers, activists, policy makers and academics, has emerged. This overview and wealth of knowledge is a vital reference point in forming new models of practice for both organisational governance and external communications. The new models will be based on past successes and at the same time, the difficult and less successful models from the past offer us valuable insights on how to improve ways of working.

Some of the key issues that have emerged during this process and which run through this book are:

- Management model(s) need to be relevant to the values and goals specific to the spaces, communities and artists that inspire such initiatives. Economic, legal and other considerations should be secondary to and in support of such values and goals.
- Building and developing an idea into a reality is a process that should involve all interested parties and such involvement needs to be structured and built into the process.
- The owners/city officials/decision makers should recognise users of cultural space(s) as equal, fully competent, partners in any development process.
- No side should be afraid of change.
- An unwillingness to share power and decision making is evident on all sides.
- A general and deep mistrust exists between independent culture and the state, on both sides.
- Collective decision making within an organisation can be achieved if there is clarity and honesty around the process.
- An unwillingness on the part of the state to allow participation in decision making by local, community and NGO organisations is a common feature in many countries, regions, cities and towns.
- Interculturalism is a desirable goal.
- There is a missing partner in the Private Public Partnership, namely the NGO sector.
- There is little or no consensus on what art and/or culture is, leading to misunderstandings and communication failures.
- Vested commercial interests may unduly influence the development of civic space.
- The erosion of common space, mostly for commercial gain, is a feature of all modern towns and cities.

NTNM aims to clarify these issues and in addition, there are a number of key questions that must also be kept in mind:

Who is a cultural project for?
Who has ownership of the project and its outcomes? It is important to clarify who the stakeholders are and the target beneficiaries of a project - not just in terms of the physical structure or geographical site of the project but also in terms of the vision and philosophical context in which a cultural process or project is developed.

Who is leading the process and the project and how is it happening?
Once the stakeholders and beneficiaries are clarified, then the governance of a project and the relationships within a project become easier.

Where is the decision making happening and how?
Along with clarifications around stakeholders and beneficiaries comes the question of responsibility and the transparent nature and understanding of how decisions affect the future development of an organisation.

These are just some of the big issues that NTNM attempts to tackle and this book is part of a wider process begun in 2009 and ongoing. More events and encounters, more debate and publications, are envisaged and it is maybe this ongoing dialogue, the testing and challenging of these issues, that is most important. There can never be a conclusion or definitive answer to any of these questions but it is the willingness to engage with the process and to continually build and refine the practices around cultural development that is developmental and culturally productive. In the end the two most important forces for change in any situation are: the quality of the relationships between all the protagonists and the effectiveness of the communications underpinning these relationships.

There are always new times and there must always be new models. The process never ends but the outcomes must be bettered for the short, medium and longer-term development of independent culture and its contribution to a society that is democratic, sustainable and open.

# APPENDIX 1

INTERNAL GOVERNANCE OF INDEPENDENT CULTURAL CENTRES - CURRENT MODELS OF PRACTICE

## MODEL 1
### A COLLECTIVE WITH NO FORMAL STRUCTURE AND NO LEGAL ENTITY

Where this exists, it is usually at the genesis of a project, say a squat, where a group of diverse people take over a building and operate outside the law for a period of time. This is often referred to as an anarchist collective, although the term 'anarchist' is more likely to be used by those outside the activist group as a description of the participants and often as a misunderstood term. While the ideal of a non-hierarchical, non-structured, system of living and working together has merit, human nature tends to intervene and hierarchies and leaders emerge naturally, as do divisions and conflicts, leading to some form of formal structure being introduced, if the group survives for longer than a few years. However, it has to be noted that some groups do adhere to the more considered and historical philosophy of Anarchism and try to organise and operate according to its tenants.

Positives
*Can be very flexible with regard to numbers, actions and projects involved*
*No restrictions on who can participate*
*Freedom to operate without normal legal controls*
*No organisational hierarchy*
*Freedom to try new models and ideas without outside interference*
*Doesn't pay tax or other official charges*

Negatives
*Difficult to organise, manage and develop*
*Difficult to attract outside support and funding*
*Difficult to have formal relationships with state agencies*
*Hard to identify where decisions are made*
*Lack of responsibility, both internally and externally*
*No legal basis to protect assets*
*No security of tenure*
*Harassment by the state*
*Viewed with suspicion by neighbouring communities*
*Insecurity*

## MODEL 2
### A COLLECTIVE WITH A STRUCTURE AND A LEGAL ENTITY

Most centres who begin life as squats or fee collectives with no legal structure do formalise with time, often forced to do so because of state pressure, internal demand for accountability, moves to develop the project on a more permanent footing, requirements for contracts with regard to outside suppliers, building development, tax demands and/or

seeking grant aid, to name the more usual reasons. Finding a legal structure that supports a collective ethos is not easy and usually such an organisation will compromise by forming a legal structure that complies with the local law and this is usually one that has become common practice for NGOs in that particular region.

Positives
*Democratic structure*
*Allows for wide participation*
*Allows for ownership of the project by all participants*
*Can engage with state and other agencies in a formal way*
*Can apply for state funding*
*Can develop legally and protect assets legally*

Negatives
*Decision-making can be slow and cumbersome*
*Internal ownership and responsibility can be confused*
*Has to abide by rules that may not suit a collective, such as employment or tax law*


MODEL 3
## NOT-FOR-PROFIT COMPANY

A common form of legal entity for an NGO is a not-for-profit company. This type of company varies from country to country but the common aim is to have no share capital and no dividends paid to directors or members. In other words, no one gains a financial profit from the activities of the company. Directors of the company cannot be employed by the company and have to be seen to be independent and as having no vested interest in the company, apart from a commitment to see the company fulfil its vision. Directors of such companies are seen as giving service to the cultural and civic life of a city or region. Such companies have a membership who elects the directors. The membership may be small and may be confined to the directors of the company. With a small membership it is easier to make decisions and to have a sense of 'ownership' of the company. On the other hand, a small membership can reduce the democratic mandate, whereas organisations with a large membership may be more representative. Deciding who can be a member of a not-for-profit company is a key decision and should be considered carefully by those (founders, stakeholders etc) setting up the company. When making this decision factors to keep in mind are: the membership holds the power in the company; overall decision making is held by this and can be complicated in the case of a large membership because of legal requirements e.g. tracking long-standing members; groups forming among the members to push through specific decisions etc. Besides the directors, people can receive a wage if employed by a not-for-profit company. The board of directors, in their overseeing role, can hire a director and staff (usually through the director) to implement the practical day-to-day running of the organisation.

In the UK the most common not-for-profit legal structure is called a Company Limited by

Guarantee. In France it is an Association. In the Netherlands most NGOs use a legal entity called a Foundation.

It is worth noting that there have been moves to create a common legal structure for NGOs operating in Europe but this has not been successful to date, having been blocked by certain member states. As a result, it is not possible to set up a not-for-profit company that is pan-European, which means that if an NGO wishes to have a legal standing in more than one country it must register as a separate not-for-profit in each country of operation. It can, of course, operate all over Europe but its legal responsibilities are attached to the country or countries it is registered in.

Positives
*It is a common and recognised legal entity for NGOs*
*It is clear what the structure is and who is responsible*
*There is a separation between participants and users and those legally responsible*
*Can provide tax breaks and other official exemptions that apply to not-for-profit companies*

Negatives
*Can be hierarchical*
*Can restrict a sense of ownership by users and participants*
*Can create stagnation at the top*
*Can lead to a lack of responsibility, commitment and leadership at the top*

MODEL 4
## FOR-PROFIT COMPANY

Although the constitution of not-for-profit companies varies somewhat from country to country, the for-profit model is universally the same in makeup. However, like the not-for-profit company, if an organisation or project wishes to have a legal base in more than one country, then it must register legally and separately in each country.

The for-profit company model is not common among independent cultural operators but some do opt for this way of working. It is also the case that some independent organisations have more than one legal structure and use the not-for-profit option as well as the for-profit. The reasons for this might be tax related or as a way of dividing the more commercial aspects of the organisation (such as bars, shops, consultancy etc) from the core not-for-profit activities. In this case, it is usual for the for-profit company to grant back to its sister company any surplus that it makes from its business. There is another reason that some independent cultural organisations opt for a for-profit model and this is to do with decision-making and the difficulties that often surround not-for-profit structures. For instance, the very people who are most committed to an independent cultural ideal and its development are often excluded legally from the not-for-profit legal structure by virtue of the fact that they receive some form of payment for working in the company. This makes for a cumbersome and complicated decision-making process or can lead to decision-making by stealth.

It is also the case that an individual or group can set up a cultural project as a private business. They invest their own money or use their own property initially but may also establish a not-for-profit legal entity in order to apply for funding. Decisions are taken by the owner(s).

Positives
*Allows for clear and speedy decision making*
*Allows for those with a clear vision of what they want to achieve to act independently*
*Freedom to run the organisation without outside interference*

Negatives
*No exemptions from tax and other official requirements*
*Can be hierarchical and individually driven*
*Can exclude the organisation from applying to most grant-aiding bodies*

MODEL 5
## ORGANISATION OPERATING UNDER THE LEGAL STRUCTURES OF A LOCAL AUTHORITY

Some centres operate under the legal wing of their local authority or the local authority has a legal and decision-making stake in the centre. For instance, it is accepted in Finland that a centre is run by an independent board, who makes decisions independent of interference by its parent but operates through the local authority legal structure. In the UK, many centres are wholly owned and run by the local authority. It can also be the case that if a local authority supports a centre then it will seek representation on the legal management board of that centre.

MODEL 6
## PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN TWO OR MORE ORGANISATIONS

Many independent cultural organisations form partnerships that support each other and work together. Mostly these have no legal basis but sometimes, if necessary, such partnerships are constituted into a legal entity, either for the duration of a project or as a mechanism to work collectively, thus creating a third organisation. Usually this happens in the case of a large project, such as a festival or prestige European event or for a network of organisations on a regional or international level. One thing to note, as has already been mentioned in explaining other forms of organisational identity, is that the legal registration of such a partnership can only take place in one country and is tied to that country with regard to all financial and administration reporting. An organisation may be pan-European but its legal identity and reporting can not be pan-European and is embedded in the country of registration.

Positives
*Security of tenure*
*Security of funding*
*Legal and insurance coverage*
*Access to decision makers at a political level*

Negatives
*Can lead to more conservative and cumbersome decision making*
*Very bureaucratic*
*Can lead to political interference*
*Hierarchical*

MODEL 7
### OPEN HYBRID MODEL OF AN INSTITUTION BASED ON CIVIL-PUBLIC PARTNERSHIP

Sometimes it is the case that an independent cultural organisation or organisations and, say, a local authority combine into a hybrid institution based on public-private partnership. In this case the local authority shares certain responsibilities with the cultural organisation(s) but does not have control of the organisation(s). This is a model that has the benefits of forging a partnership between independent culture (NGOs) and the state, where both sides enter as equal partners with defined aims. In Croatia and Slovenia, for instance, this model is advocated by NGOs as a way forward in the building of civic initiatives.

Such models combine openness, participation in decision making and autonomy in programming that are characteristic of the civil sector with involvement of public authorities that secure public supervision and more sustainability for non market-oriented operations. The model starts from building a strong coalition, collaboration platform or an operative network of local civil society organisations that are ready to share a particular space and ownership with the institution. Local government's main responsibility in such cases is to provide a system that will serve all diverse cultural needs by acknowledging independent culture as part of public interest and to secure the means for its constant development. Local authorities present equal, not dominant partners to a collective of independent organisations and by involving them directly as co-founders and co-governors of a particular cultural center for independent culture, they take direct responsibility for general directions and financial sustainability. That secures continuous communication between usually conflicted sides and assures sustainability provided from the public side. Active involvement of an open civil platform secures participatory decision making, independent programming and a postulate openness to other initiatives, organisations, groups and individuals.

This model is particularly important in the territory of former Yugoslavia[4], where cultural systems in all the countries (wherever they are in EU accession process), is dominated by obsolete, politically controlled public institutions.

Positives
*Citizen and grass roots initiatives gain official recognition*
*The relationship between NGOs and the state is clearly defined*
*There is an equal working relationship and responsibility between the NGOs and the state.*
*It creates a form where relationships and communications have a context to work within.*
*Goals can be identified, agreed and achieved.*

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4    The first such experiment was carried out in Zagreb and is developed further in Pekarna, Maribor, and in Karlo Rojc centre, Pula. As an open model, the main principles stay the same, while the rest is adjusted according to local needs and possibilities.

*State support is more likely to be forthcoming in a defined and shared legal set of legal responsibilities.*

Negatives
*The strength and power of the state may overwhelm the NGO.*
*The compromises in forging an agreement may be too demanding for the NGO.*
*The values and initial aims of the NGO project may be diluted by the relationship.*
*The NGO may lose its advocacy role if it is part of the state mechanism.*

MODEL 8
## SOCIAL BUSINESS

This is a relatively new concept based on the idea that the organisation is run like a business but not with a profit motive. The concept has gained worldwide recognition as a result of Nobel Peace Prize winner Muhammad Yunus' work in developing micro investment and his book Creating a World Without Poverty. The memo and articles of a social business state very clearly that the aim of business is to make a profit but the dividends are not given out as returns but are reinvested in further development.

Positives and Negatives yet to be tested.
MODEL 9
## EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION

Educational institutions can be either state or privately run and can vary hugely in size and objectives. In addition, with the advent of the Internet and the huge growth in distance learning, there is a bewildering array of educational organisations. Anyone can call themselves a college, university or school but receiving accreditation is another matter. Accreditation is where an organisation applies for and receives the formal recognition of an objective and esteemed educational body. Every country has national accreditation bodies that endorse educational awards, such as diplomas and degrees. But this need not be just national as organisations seeking such endorsement can receive accreditation from universities anywhere in the world.

Being an educational institution is quite specific and rare in the independent cultural field but it is more likely to find educational institutions running or hosting arts and culture facilities on campus. Many have theatres, galleries, arts centres and other types of cultural facilities under their organisational umbrella.

Because this type of model is particular to its context and educational parent, positives and negatives are impossible to define without knowing the particular situation.

MODEL 10
**FOUNDATION**

A foundation is a legal support structure for non-profit organisation. Like trusts, they may be set up simply to fund non-profits but they can also provide the sole source of funding and management for their own charitable activities. In some countries foundations, as constituted under the law of that country, are the preferred option for NGOs.

Similar positives and negatives to Model 3 above, the Not-For-Profit Company.

MODEL 11
**PUBLIC INSTITUTION**

Wholly owned and run by the state, usually under a department such as culture or environment. These institutions are common for, say, national galleries or museums. In many post-socialist countries, for instance in territories of former Yugoslavia, during the 1960s and 1970s many cultural institutions were established by local governments, mostly in the smaller cities and towns or in non-central quarters of the cities, following the French model of cultural decentralisation. They all function quite similar to national/city theaters and museums: founded and completely controlled by local governments. Most of them are still in existence today, some of them trying to redefine their functions and purposes in the new globalised environment.

# APPENDIX 2

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS ARISING FROM THE CONFERENCE AT PEKARNA
28/29/30 JANUARY 2010

## GOVERNANCE

- Develop non-oppressive leaderships models
- Develop participatory processes of decision making
- Clarity of decision making and responsibilities
- Define vision, mission and goals clearly
- Create a continuous learning environment
- Develop participatory principles
- Develop an economic model that decreases economic dependence
- Be clear about where decisions are made and by whom
- Be transparent with regard to decisions
- Have clear structures
- Be inclusive
- Develop an internal dialogue within organisations that works
- Recognise and understand boundaries
- Work in a spirit of solidarity
- Resolve all conflicts as soon as possible, with mediation if necessary

## RELATIONSHIPS

- Develop good communications with all internal and external relationships
- Seek defined policies around independent culture from statutory bodies
- NGOs should be clear with regard to aims and plans
- Request ways of imputing into cultural policy making
- Be realistic when presenting plans to statutory bodies
- Develop recognition that all sides have a stake-hold in cultural development
- Network and forge partnerships with organisations that hold common aims and values

## GENERAL

- Cultural independence does:
  Offer different choices and viewpoints
  Create new art work
  Stimulates social change
  Stimulates active citizenship
  Takes on social responsibility though creativity
  Identifies new ways of cultural production
  Changes the way we look at the world
  Builds and protects civic space for citizens
  Safeguards ideals of creative, social and artistic freedoms
  Empowers citizens

- Cultural independence is:
  - Defined by freedom of expression
  - About cultural change for the development of civil society
  - Committed to social engagement
  - Different from official culture and this needs to be analysed, discussed and defined
  - Not centralised and works for decentralisation
  - Not be based on the 19th century concept of mono-culture with National cultural houses, which is still the model for many governments. This is not a model that is relevant or constructive for today

- Developing independent culture as:
  - Measured by the degree to which the gap between ideology and structure is successfully removed
  - NGOs acting responsibly and not being selfish
  - Independent and without official interference, even if supported officially
  - Entering relationships with understanding and respect
  - New models of professional and political relationships that work
  - Building good relations, both internally and externally
  - Celebration and fun
  - Building relations with local communities
  - A model of sustainable development

- Independent culture should contribute to:
  - Creating a better social environment
  - The development of new ideas
  - Understanding that not only cultural independence but also cultural inter-dependence is important
  - The multiplicity of cultures and sub-cultures that is the new reality in cities
  - Connecting different actors in the social field
  - Giving a voice to young people

# APPENDIX 3

**CASE STUDY: PEKARNA GOVERNANCE MODEL**

**Prologue:** Brief history of the independent cultural centre Pekarna or how it all began…
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1980s:
Slovenia, one of 6 Yugoslav (aka Socialistic Federative Republic of Yugoslavia) republics experience a rise of cultural pluralism with the emergence of numerous grass-roots political, artistic and intellectual movements.

1991, June 25:
 Following a referendum, Slovenia announces its independence from Yugoslavia.  Armed conflict between Slovenian armed forces and JA (Yugoslav Army) breaks out, lasting for 10 days. After  JA leaves Slovenia in October, a considerable number of its military compounds are left abandoned and unused.

1993
In Maribor, quite a few new civil society initiatives grow on top of existing ones after independence. On the initiative of AGD Gustaf (Alternative Music Workshop Gustaf) and Društvo prijateljev delfinov (Friends of Dolphins Association) a Magdalenska mreža (Magdalena network) is formed together with other civil society organisations and individuals. They advocate for the premises of an ex-military bakery ("pekarna") to be used by independent cultural associations and initiatives.

1994, June 16
After almost two years of empty promises and fruitless negotiations with city officials, individuals from AGD Gustaf and Društvo prijateljev delfinov decide to squat the premises of the ex-military bakery and to establish cultural centre Pekarna (Bakery).

1995-1999
Pekarna's golden years in terms of cultural programming and audience numbers; due to the lack of more commercial entertainment in town, Pekarna becomes a cultural and creative hot spot of Maribor city.
The complex and its inhabitants go through various forms and degrees of coordination and self-governance, while its activities are mostly self-funded.

1996
 Individuals from the Magdalenska mreža network establish "Pekarna magdalenske mreže" institute, legally formed as an NGO and start producing its own cultural and youth programme.

2002
Pekarna complex' ownership is transferred from Ministry of Internal Affairs to City of Maribor with the intention that the area and buildings are renovated for the needs of youth and cultural activities.

2004
In August, Maribor City council adopts a city development plan, in which the Pekarna complex is designated as a youth and cultural centre, designated solely for cultural, social and educational activities.

2005
On the initiative of Pekarna magdalenske mreže, the City of Maribor finances an architectural competition for the renovation of Pekarna. Plans are then safely stored in a drawer for a couple of years due to lack of any city cultural strategy whatsoever. Meanwhile, the city is getting a richer provision of commercial entertainment in the form of shopping malls and Cineplexes.

2008
➜ October 1: Mayor Franc Kangler officially announces that he wants to relocate Pekarna to a new location, despite the fact that City Council already confirmed investment and renovation plans. The present site is rumoured to become a commercial housing development.
➜ In response, a loose coalition of organisations and individuals from Pekarna is formed around Pekarna magdalenske mreže (now a member of the Trans Europe Halles network, from which it receives support in its actions), which grows into Odbor za Pekarno (Committee for Pekarna).
➜ Odbor za Pekarno starts a petition against relocation and for the renovation of Pekarna. A petition is signed by more than 5000 individuals and organisations from Slovenia and abroad in just 5 days. Media pressure builds up.
➜ October 22: Public debate with mayor Franc Kangler, city officials, experts and people who are active in Pekarna is held in Gustaf hall, one of the biggest spaces in the Pekarna complex. Mayor and city officials are confronted with many solid arguments and options to keep Pekarna at its present location. At the end of the discussion, mayor Kangler promises not only that Pekarna will stay at its present location but that it will also be renovated in order to improve safety and working conditions.

Odbor za Pekarno (Committee for Pekarna), formed by representatives of the 10 most active organisations and individuals of Pekarna, is mandated to act as the representative body that will oversee, facilitate and negotiate the process of renovation and is charged with developing a new governance model together with the Municipal Department of Culture and Youth. Its mission is defined by three main points:

➜ to preserve Pekarna as space for independent, informal and alternative culture, contemporary art and cultural practices, civil initiatives and other compatible non-profit activities;
➜ that a model of governance, which will ensure further development, legal operating, programme diversity and independence, will be reached in cooperation with those who are active in Pekarna and
➜ that the renovation phase of the complex will be continued and completed as soon as possible.

Following this a tedious process of negotiations and coordination begins.

2009:
February: Pekarna magdalenske mreže, in cooperation with Alliance Operation City (Zagreb) and with support of Trans Europe Halles (EU), Artfactories/Autre(s)parts, Institute des Villes and New Territories Of Art (FR) designs the New Times New Models project. The project has four main aims; (1) to bring together all stakeholders on a local level and to start discussion processes, (2) to research case studies of good practice on a European level, and (3) to develop the new governance model for Pekarna, based on research and the transfer of existing practice (4) to investigate new models of practice with regard to relations between independent culture and the state.

May: Project manages to get partly funded by European Cultural Fundation and later also by City of Maribor.

June: Vice mayor Andrej Verlič forms a working group consisting of members of Odbor za Pekarno and Department of Culture and Youth, whose task it is is to define the governance model and oversee the details of the renovation process (substitute places, renovation details, etc) Protracted negotiations continue.
August: The first New Times New Models Lab takes place, facilitated by representatives of the Operation City (Emina Višnić and Teodor Celakoski). The workshop takes place in Pekarna and brings together all local stakeholders; users of the complex, city officials and external cultural operators to define basic outlines of present problems and the future governance model. The workshop is modulated to transfer the concept and the main attributes of the civil-public partnership implemented in POGON – Zagreb Centre for Independent Culture and Youth.

2010:

➔ In February, the international conference New Times New Models takes place in Pekarna, bringing together more than 90 people, representatives of independent cultural centres, cultural operators or experts from 23 European countries.
➔ July 2010:
   - Renovation works on the first building finally begin, meanwhile funding is secured also for the other three out of five buildings.
   - The basic governance model is agreed upon on the level of the working group and submitted to the city council, where it is confirmed.

....TO be continued....

**PEKARNA GOVERNANCE MODEL – A NEW BEGINNING**

**Background**

Cultural Center Pekarna (CC Pekarna) is established as a non-institutional public space, which provides the venues and production facilities for less established  artistic, cultural and social practices. With the renovation of CC Pekarna, and besides the issues relating to infrastructure alone, the issue of governance of Pekarna was raised.

In order to define the model of governance, a joint working group was established in June 2009, consisting of three representatives of the Committee for Pekarna, a representative of the regional hub of Podravje region NGOs, representative of Youth Cultural Centre Maribor and 2 representatives of the Office of Culture and Youth of the Municipality of Maribor.

The Working Group prepared this proposal for a governance model on the basis of the following principles:

- To enable continuation of established  cultural production of CC Pekarna, Pekarna magdalenske mreže[5]  and Youth Cultural Centre Maribor[6]  ;
- Maintenance of programming independence  of CC Pekarna,
- To promote self-initiative and social responsibility of non-governmental sector
- To establish cooperation between NGOs and the public sector.

The governance model defines the mission and purpose, scope and method of use of Pekarna premises, provides the underlying platform for the implementation of economic activities and management, and defines all stakeholders of CC Pekarna.

(Excerpt from "Justification for consideration at the meeting of the City Council of the City of Maribor").



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5        NGO, working in Pekarna complex since 1996
6        Public youth and  culture institution

**Cultural Centre Pekarna – Summary of governance model proposal,**
Confirmed at Maribor City Council session on 28.06.2010)

## 1) STAKEHOLDERS

Stakeholders in the governance model of cultural centre Pekarna are:
- **Land and Buildings owner** (City of Maribor)
- **Management**: (Youth Cultural Centre Maribor, public institution)
- **Programme Coordinator** - cultural NGO organisation with 3 year mandate to maximise the use of Pekarna spaces in accordance with Programme Plan and Development vision.
- **Programme Board** – a 7-member governance body, delegated by users of Pekarna premises.
- **Users** - all users of Pekarna spaces that are operators of either programmes or projects

## 2) PRINCIPLES OF FUNCTIONING

### 2.1. Mission of CC Pekarna
Cultural Centre Pekarna is an open cultural space for interaction between independent culture, arts and youth activities and for critical assessment of political, social and societal dimensions related to culture.

In the first instance, Pekarna functions as an international centre of contemporary art and culture, which focuses on the creation and presentation of grass-root, research based and socio-critical art, and (sub)cultures at local, regional and international levels. CC Pekarna also functions as a youth and socio-cultural centre, which enables reflection, facilitates the processes of emancipation, self-help, social engagement and independence, and promotes the processes of creating community cultural activities and facilities, self-management, self-organisation and autonomy.

### 2.2 Purpose of CC Pekarna
The purpose of CC Pekarna is to ensure quality conditions for cultural production and to establish connections between users themselves, visitors and surrounding residents on all three areas of programming: Culture, Youth and Society.

Resources (spaces and equipment) of CC Pekarna can be used for the production and creation of non-governmental organisations, informal groups and individuals working in the fields of contemporary and urban culture, youth and socially engaged activities. Resources are also intended to be used by local public institutions in the field of culture and youth for Pekarna management purposes.

In the case of spare capacity, the facilities and equipment can be made available to other organisations for the implementation of cultural or youth activities. Only exceptionally, part of capacities can also be used for commercial activities.

## 2.3 Programme areas of CC Pekarna

**CULTURE**
- contemporary art (visual arts, performing arts, music, literature, new media, architecture, interdisciplinary programs ...)
- cultural policy, an interdisciplinary and transcultural programmes, research ...

**SOCIETY**
- Innovative and/or socially engaged activities, social theory and reflection, community media ...

**YOUTH**
- Education, mobility, youth work, intercultural practices, social inclusion, participation of young people, youth policy ...

## 2.4 Use of Cultural Centre Pekarna premises

Use of premises and equipment in CC Pekarna is only possible on the basis of a successful application to public tender or public call.
Public tender shall be applied for the award of space and equipment both for the programmes ("programme use") and for the projects ("project use").
Premises in Administrative building that are to be used for administrative (office) purposes by Management are exempt from these Public Calls and Tenders.

Definitions:

**Programme** is long-term implementation of activities in one or several programme areas.

**Project** is an individual activity (eg, concert, theatre performance...); so are all events, that take place occasionally on a regular basis (programme cycle, music and dance practices...)

**Programme use** allows long-standing use of programme in a given spatial unit to a single NGO organisation or individual for a period longer than one and less than three years.
For Programme use, the Management launches a Public call that defines individual programme areas and available spatial units. The selection criteria and assessment of applications is competence of the Programme Board. For long-term use of spaces, a contract is signed between the Management and selected User.

**Project use** enables implementation of short-term activities that are either not tied to a specific area or are carried out at specific premises in accordance with the time-space schedule (band practices, implementation of single project). Project use is designed to be quickly adapted to new creative or production needs or circumstances. A permanent Public call is launched by Programme coordinator, who also implements selection criteria.

## 3) IMPLEMENTATION OF ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES AT CC PEKARNA

The concept of economic activities comprises of any gainful activity, i.e. activity carried out

for profit or which competes in the market with other persons or legal persons under the law on corporate income tax.

Revenue which is generated from the disposal of assets in CC Pekarna, and the excess of income over expenditure generated by Management from implementing economic activities in CC Pekarna is intended to cover the costs of maintenance and purchase of equipment in CC Pekarna and to subsidize projects and Pekarna programmes.
The modalities of the above-mentioned principles will be detailed in the elaborate opinion of the competent departments of Municipality of Maribor.

Management ensures transparency of the management of economic activities by leading separate accounts showing income and expenses from the implementation of economic activities in the annual report, which is presented to the Programme board of Pekarna.

## 4) RESPONSIBILITIES, COMPETENCE AND RIGHTS

### 4.1. Land and Buildings owner (City of Maribor):
- Provides funding for basic operating of Pekarna in accordance with provisions of the Act on Enforcing Public Interest in Culture and Act on Physical Assets of the provinces and municipalities;
- Ensures legal transfer of Pekarna's premises to the management of the Youth Cultural Centre, Maribor (known as the Management);
- Provides funding for the execution of coordination by funding Management's regular activities and the annual work programme;
- Exercises control over the legal use of spaces in accordance with the specific legislation establishing the order of Management and the agreed upon governance model.

### 4.2. Management (Youth Cultural Centre):

- Prepares and launches a call for the Program coordinator and Programme use of premises;
- Enters into contracts for Programme use of specific premises (tripartite contract: Management-Programme coordinator - User);
- Enters into contracts for programming coordination of CC Pekarna, which includes covering the costs of programme coordination in accordance with the annual work plan and contract
  of financing for regular activities;
- Ensures the effective and legal regulation of CC Pekarna, covering in particular the minor repairs and works on site or on premises, which do not affect the construction of the facility and do not change the capacity, size, purpose and appearance of the facility;
- Ensures the maintenance investments and purchase of equipment for CC Pekarna;
- Provides technical service in CC Pekarna, which includes maintenance of stage and other event equipment, which is owned or managed by Management;
- Implements and monitors the execution of economic activity in the CC Pekarna.

## 4.3. Programme Coordinator:

- Carries out the organisation and coordination of the programme in CC Pekarna;
- Implements a development vision that is set by Programme Board;
- Prepares and implements annual work plans that are based on programme strategy;
- Carries out activities under the annual work plan, which is submitted to Management so that it can be included in the annual plan of the institution;
- Prepares and implements an open call for project use of space and equipment in CC Pekarna;
- Enters into contracts for project use of premises (Programme coordinator - User)
- Coordinates the schedules of use according to the annual work plan;
- Monitors and supervises user activity in the CC Pekarna;
- Provides programme project coordinators;
- Coordinates the work of the Programme Board;
- Carries out communication with the Management;
- Initiates programme conferences of Users and citizens of Maribor;
- Operationally and strategically provides, promotes and oversees the implementation of programmes and projects in accordance with the rules and procedures adopted by the Programme Board;
- Prepares and coordinates the schedules and premises use;
- Coordinates project use of facilities;
- Identifies trends and practitioners in the field of culture, youth and society and includes them in the work of CC Pekarna;
- Implements PR and marketing.

For the first transitional period, Programme Coordinator is Pekarna magdalenske mreže, (since it has the status of institution of public interest in culture, contract can be signed directly in accordance with the Act on Enforcing Public Interest in Culture Act (Official Gazette RS, no. 77/07 - UPB1, 56/08 ZUJIK)).

## 4.4. Programming Board:

- Consists of 7 members, namely:
  1 member is nominated by Programme Coordinator.
  3 members are nominated by users of CC Pekarna.
  3 members are nominated from the ranks of professional experts (one is nominated by Programme Coordinator, one by Users, one by Management). Representatives of experts are adopted by consensus.
- The Programming Board is the central decision-making body in CC Pekarna;
- Prepares a development vision;
- Creates the tender conditions and criteria for selection of Programme Coordinator;
- Assesses and chooses Programme Coordinator and suggests selection to be approved by the Management;
- Develops public tender specifications and award criteria for Programme use of spaces;
- Approves the annual work plan of Programme Coordinator;

- In the case of perceived irregularities in the implementation of economic activities proposes measures to Management;

## 4.5. Users:

- All programme and project operators in the fields of culture, youth and society in CC Pekarna;
- Implementing programmes or projects in the fields of culture, youth or society is a prerequisite for the use of the spaces in CC Pekarna;
- Basic decision-making body of Users is Plenary assembly;
- Apply for the use of premises through the tender bid for the project/programme use - Propose three representatives in the Programming Board;
- Are grouped per building in the House councils;
- Commit themselves to regular ongoing maintenance of the premises in their programme project use (regular routine maintenance, cleaning and minor works that keep the spaces in good condition).

## 4.6. Interim Arrangements

Pending the completion of the reconstruction, the Pekarna governance model will work with the transition situation and conditions, as the facilities are renovated. The governance model will come into full effect on the completion of reconstruction of the entire complex and this will include the planning, decision making and communications processes between the various bodies in the model.