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Thesis

Del silenzioso fare.

Economic and sociological analysis of the Italian non-profit
organisation Live Arts Cultures

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Art is a great enemy of that obtuseness, and artists (unless thoroughly browbeaten and corrupted) are not the reliable servants of any ideology, even a basically good one — they always ask the imagination to move beyond its usual confines, to see the world in new ways.

Martha C. Nussbaum, *Not for Profit. Why Democracy Needs the Humanities*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2016.

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INTRODUCTION

This thesis presents the case study of the Italian association Live Arts Cultures, which distinguishes itself for its specific history and context. The organisation was founded in 2014 in Mestre (Venice) and derived from two artistic projects, *C32 performing art work space* – founded by artists Aldo Aliprandi and Marianna Andrigo, and *electronicgirls* – an electronic music collective and netlabel. The artists joined their research since they could dispose of a space to experiment with their artistic languages. They set their headquarters in Forte Marghera, a former military fort recently turned into a public park. Since 2007, Aliprandi has set his activities in the fort, renovating a building called Pavilion 32 and creating an equipped place to rehearse and produce works dealing with live arts. At first, Pavilion 32 hosted the projects by Aliprandi and his artistic group Krisis, but soon, it became an open space welcoming all those interested in experimenting with performing arts. In the following years, Aliprandi joined his work with Marianna Andrigo and *electronicgirls*. Together, they enhanced Aliprandi's original attempt to provide a social space for their community by sharing their artistic project. To better structure their activities and cultural purposes, they founded an informal artistic group in 2012 called Live Arts Cultures, which became a cultural association two years later. The artists considered their headquarters – also called C32 – not as their private property. They were aware of using a public space, so their activities always tried to propose cultural content for the community. This thesis aims to analyse Live Arts Cultures' management throughout its history. It will discuss whether the association achieved effective results, according to social organisations' nature and requirements for economic sustainability. Also, the analysis will consider the association as a producer of cultural and artistic activities. Artworks and performances need people collaborating to implement productive processes and participating as spectators. They originate a network of relationships that recalls the primary goal of Third-sector entities – to nurture and increase connections between people. Therefore, Live Arts Cultures will be examined by combining its social dimension with the arts sector. It will refer to the concept of *art worlds* by American sociologist Howard Becker.

The first chapter will present the history of Live Arts Cultures until recent years. Aldo Aliprandi discovered Forte Marghera in 2005 while working on a project with his artistic group Krisis. Later, the company Marco Polo System – the park manager – asked Aliprandi to set up his group’s activities at Forte Marghera. It followed an informal agreement that led Aliprandi to choose Pavilion 32 as the headquarters of Krisis’ work in 2007. Aliprandi’s academic studies and previous work experiences led to his creative research experimenting with the combinations between performance languages. Then, the first floor of Pavilion 32 offered the opportunity to provide an independent open space hosting activities dealing with live arts. As some of its members left, Krisis changed its legal status in 2009. Meanwhile, artist Marianna Andrigo joined Aliprandi in his research. In 2011, they developed the project *C32 performing art work space*, considering the space not only a physical workplace but also an ongoing creative context that created its own identity from the activities hosted. C32 started presenting events, training activities and residencies. Among all the artists and companies who worked in the space, Andrigo and Aliprandi met electronic musician Anna Giulia Volpato, also known as Johann Merrich. In 2009, she founded the electronic collective and netlabel electronicgirls. As the artists got to know each other, they considered joining their research and experimentation with their artistic disciplines. In 2012, they founded the informal artistic group Live Arts Cultures and increased the events presented at C32. In 2014, the group turned into a cultural association; meanwhile, the Municipality of Venice relieved the Marco Polo System of the fort’s management. The following year, the Forte Marghera Foundation became the new referring manager for all the organisations operating in the park. In 2017, the foundation called for tenders to rent Pavilion 32. Live Arts Cultures applied to the call and was selected formally as manager of C32. However, the Forte Marghera Foundation began delaying the signature of the rental agreement without a specific reason. Live Arts Cultures waited for the foundation to respect the tender procedure for three years while enduring some necessary internal changes. In 2020, the rental agreement reached its definition, and the association could overcome the uncertain conditions of the previous years. Since 2021, Live Arts Cultures returned to present a dense programme of activities.

The second chapter reports a series of considerations to contextualise the analysis of Live Arts Cultures. As the association belongs to the producers of cultural activities, a focus on data is presented from the Italian Cultural and Creative Production System. Live Arts Cultures is a small-sized organisation, yet it contributes to the cultural environment of its city and has achieved collaborations with significant cultural institutions in recent years. Also, data about the production of cultural and artistic activities indicate relevant insights into different management aspects of private for-profit and non-profit organisations. A discourse on the Third sector follows, first illustrating some data explaining its impact on the national economy. The Third sector originates from the necessity of establishing human relations through activities not belonging to public institutions or private enterprises. The considerations by American anthropologist Arjun Appadurai help to understand how such a need develops and why it has reached its considerable value in today's societies. Global phenomena in the last century caused deep transformations in everyday life, including a change for public authorities to guarantee the improvement of collective welfare. The concept of public action is increasingly becoming detached from public administrations and implemented by single community members. The Third sector seems to offer the social space to found private organisations and develop the social capital necessary to keep the society alive. Nevertheless, it still has significant issues to solve. Non-profit organisations must find valuable solutions to achieve and maintain their economic sustainability. Yet, they cannot implement adequate management strategies without the support and acknowledgement from public institutions and private businesses. Then, the chapter illustrates the most recent attempts to legally recognise the impact of non-profit organisations, presenting the Third-sector reform that occurred in 2017. This updated regulation formally defines the economic context of non-profit institutions, which now find more precise directions for implementing efficiency measures and planning fundraising programmes. The social capital pursued by the Third sector can approach the entrepreneurial dimension more efficiently while legally being recognised as an instrument to improve society. Further considerations of social relationships confront the perspectives of French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu and Italian sociologist Pierpaolo Donati. The latter belongs to the sociological branch of relational sociology, which considers the Third sector a complex configuration of

human actions. This perspective connects with Howard Becker's concept of the *art world*. The American sociologist applies a social analysis to the art sector, as it is part of society. Therefore, art worlds help to understand how art production systems can be examined from a social point of view.

The last chapter discusses Live Arts Cultures' case, referring to the considerations reported in the second chapter. Social capital has been present in the association's past since the activities carried out at C32 by Aldo Aliprandi's first experience with Krisis. Live arts require the cooperation of a certain amount of people to produce performances and have an audience while the performance is displayed. The experimentations developed with Marianna Andrigo and electronicgirls further explore the natural connection of theatrical presentation and draw from the history of Performance Arts and postdramatic theatre. Live Arts Cultures' research deepens the implications of artistic performance as a self-reflexive discipline that is no longer attached to a narrative intent. This leads to redefining the modalities of sharing the piece with the spectators, who need to understand and be aware of the different aesthetic experiences concerning drama theatre. In addition, the space represents an essential social element for the association. The artists wanted C32 to develop an identity through its hosted cultural activities. This attitude can be associated with the concept of space as a social product by French sociologist Henri Lefebvre.

The change in Live Arts Cultures' status from an informal group to a cultural association claims the artists' desire to plan and implement more structured activities for their community. It indicates a stronger connection between the social and artistic dimensions of Live Arts Cultures. Therefore, the association presents the essential premise of Howard Becker's considerations on the art world. The American sociologist's concept is then used in discussing Live Arts Cultures' history. The analysis distinguishes two sections, following the transformations in the management conditions. The first part examines Live Arts Cultures' activities from 2012 to 2017, while the second part considers the activities from 2018 to 2022.

The research work is based on data collection to report and analyse Live Arts Cultures' activities. The interviews with Aldo Aliprandi, Marianna Andrigo, and Anna Giulia Volpato were essential to retrace the history of their professional partnership. The meeting minutes of the municipal commission dealing with Forte Marghera's

management provided information about the Marco Polo System's management of Forte Marghera from 2011 to 2015. The documentation provided by *Gruppo di Lavoro per Forte Marghera... stella d'acqua* supplied pivotal elements displaying the working conditions of independent organisations at Forte Marghera until 2013. Information about Live Arts Cultures' activities was collected from the catalogues and activities reports produced by the association.

CHAPTER ONE

Live Arts Cultures – From its origin to the present day

The first chapter of this thesis aims to introduce the history and mission of the Italian association Live Arts Cultures, its current situation, and the context in which it has developed. Live Arts Cultures was founded in 2014 and replaced a former informal artistic group – also named Live Arts Culture, which, in turn, resulted from the merging of two artistic projects, *C32 performing art work space* and *electronicgirls*. Artists Aldo Aliprandi and Marianna Andriago founded C32, and Anna Giulia Volpato, also known under the stage name Johann Merrich, founded the electronic music collective and netlabel *electronicgirls*.

Aliprandi and Andriago started their adventure in one of Forte Marghera's buildings – also named pavilions. Forte Marghera was a former military fort surrounded by open spaces, recently converted into a city park. Aliprandi used the pavilion as a working space since 2007, while Andriago since 2011.

The principal phases of Live Arts Cultures activities are the following:

1. 2005-2011 – Aldo Aliprandi operates in Forte Marghera with his previous artistic organisation Krisis;
2. 2011-2012 – Marianna Andriago joins Aliprandi, and together they start the space-project *C32 performing art work space*;
3. 2012-2014 – Andriago and Aliprandi merge forces with *electronicgirls*, and they start Live Arts Cultures as an informal artistic group;
4. 2014-2017 – Live Arts Cultures as a cultural association;
5. 2017-2020 – the impediment in signing the association's rental agreement, and its consequent decrease of activities;
6. 2021-2022 – recent years.

1.1 2005 – 2011 Aldo Aliprandi and Krisis at Forte Marghera

At the beginning of the 2000s, Aldo Aliprandi (1964) and his first artistic group – Gruppo Krisis – laid the foundations for the experience of Live Arts Cultures. The

artists met thanks to the creative action proposed by Aliprandi and became interested in researching common points from their different artistic backgrounds.

Aliprandi practised various artistic disciplines as hobbies, starting from visual arts – painting and photography – and drama¹. His first public activities occurred in some exhibitions curated by Fondazione Bevilacqua La Masa in 1987 and 1989; between 1991 and 1993, he became a member of the Cultural Commission of the Fondazione. Aliprandi also focused on live arts, especially experimental music and its relations with movement and dance. He referred to such creative interest for his job in the social field. He spent years as a social worker, dealing primarily with young adults in Venice and its mainland. He has worked for the Municipality of Venice from 1988 to 1996, for the social cooperatives CRAS from 1987 to 2006, and Codess Sociale – created by CRAS in 2006 and for which Aliprandi worked until 2011. His tasks included planning educational and recreational activities both through school systems and outside educational institutions. He worked in summer camps and social centres, and he performed street operations for young people and educational home activities for minors and their families.

Besides introducing creative methods in the activities with young people, Cooperative CRAS managed the cultural centre in Dolo – a town that today is part of the metropolitan city of Venice. The cultural centre originated from a slaughterhouse, as its Italian name suggests – *Ex Macello*, meaning *former slaughterhouse*. Other associations had previously managed such creative space, and in 1994, the Municipality decided to set a call for applications and assign the management of the place. Cooperative CRAS applied and was selected to manage the space and its programme of cultural activities for the following five years. Aliprandi was appointed as the centre's Artistic Director, whose primary purpose was to develop creative ideas with local artists. The cooperative organised drama activities, concerts and exhibitions, some of which were curated by Professor Gaetano Mainenti from the Academy of Fine Arts in Venice. Moreover, some of the young adults from Cooperative CRAS' educational programmes had the opportunity to showcase their creative activities.

¹ “Curriculum Aldo Aliprandi”, Live Arts Cultures, accessed August 1, 2023. https://liveartscultures.weebly.com/uploads/2/6/9/5/26951716/curriculum_aliprandi.pdf

Among the different projects, a unique collaboration was created with the jazz music school *Thelonious Monk* in Dolo: the music classes of Ensemble Music, as well as the rehearsals of the Big Band were held at *Ex Macello*. Such an operation managed to connect artistic points of the town and to increase the audience in the activities of the *Ex Macello*: anyone interested – students or fellow citizens – could visit the cultural centre and listen to the open classes.

In the context of *Ex Macello*, Aliprandi also met Davide Tiso, a musician who helped Aldo produce three concerts in which contemporary music was associated with visual art. This was the beginning of the collaboration between Tiso and Aliprandi: their duo brought a series of concerts throughout Italy where Tiso played as an electronic musician, while Aliprandi provided the verbal score. At the end of the decade, their joint project started involving a new member, the dancer Elisa Dal Corso. The three formed an informal artistic group, Gruppo Krisis, in 2000, which became the main creative expression for those artists throughout the new decade.

The ideas and practices shared by Aliprandi, Tiso and Dal Corso developed from Aliprandi's Bachelor's Degree in Philosophy². More specifically, during the academic year 2002-2003, Aliprandi presented the paper *Krisis e Opera Aperta* as final dissertation. Such work presented a series of theoretical considerations about four artistic projects – two music compositions and two pieces for musical theatre – that Aliprandi created with Davide Tiso and Elisa Dal Corso. From the beginning of the thesis, Aliprandi points out that his paper does not try to define a methodology for studying aesthetic theories; instead, he expresses some considerations developed from actual artistic practices that he wishes to communicate. Aliprandi's purpose became an attempt to contextualise his creative works between artistic and philosophical references and personal thoughts.

Aliprandi's text presents five sections: the first one describes the three fundamental concepts of art, artwork and interpretation, on which his considerations are based. The primary historical references identify the work by Umberto Eco *Opera Aperta*³ and the musical composition *Visage* by Luciano Berio (1961). As further

² Aldo Aliprandi, *Krisis e Opera Aperta* (BA diss., Ca' Foscari University of Venice, 2003).

³ Umberto Eco, *Opera Aperta*, (Milano: Bompiani, 1962).

conceptual references, Aliprandi reports some personal reflections on the notions of openness – *apertura* in Italian – and *krisis* – as the Italian transliteration indicates the word *κρίσις* from ancient Greek. The second term is taken from the poem *On Nature* by Parmenides of Elea⁴: analysing three verses of the poem, the notion of *κρίσις* appears and assumes the meaning of choice. The third section of Aliprandi's paper highlights some considerations from the previous sections: the execution moment, seen as the time of existence for live art pieces; the experience of fruition by spectators; the representation of live art pieces as a process in which the spectators' consciousness makes the event correspond to the artwork itself; the presence and the interaction with technology when making live art. The last two sections of the thesis describe the technical details of the four artistic projects.

Aliprandi's dissertation is relevant for two reasons. Firstly, it provides a written record of the work of the informal artistic group created by Tiso, Aliprandi and Dal Corso. The text and technical sheets of each project allow to discover and study the kind of research the artists were working on. The descriptions of the compositions points out how the considerations on openness became a common ground for the artists. Although each of the artists was used to deal with different artistic languages, they worked on the possibility of identifying common elements that would open new scenarios for experimentation.

Secondly, such a dissertation introduces the fundamental concepts – openness and *krisis* – that would mark Aliprandi's work besides Gruppo Krisis. The Krisis phase is immediately connected to those ideas; however, such considerations will be recognised in further projects throughout his career, such as the work with Marianna Andriago and, especially, his considerations which will lead him to the creation of Live Arts Cultures. One of them is the redefinition of openness realised by Umberto Eco. Openness is not only the existing dimension of the artwork through which the artist has conceived the work but also the condition revealing the work's significance perpetually. The expression of the artwork itself occurs in its poetic form – not in the denotative one – and such form gives the spectators complete freedom in approaching and interpreting the artwork⁵.

⁴ Parmenides of Elea, *On Nature*, trans. by Giovanni Reale (Milano: Rusconi, 1991).

⁵ Aldo Aliprandi, *Krisis e Opera Aperta*, 16-17.

Another consideration is about the notion of *krisis* deduced from Parmenides' discourse⁶. According to Giovanni Reale's translation (1991), *krisis* refers to two essential paradigms of the ancient philosopher's thought and indicates the choice between Being and Not Being. Only what exists – Being – can be defined and comprehended by the human mind, and it is the only solution an individual can choose. Aliprandi sees in choosing the fundamental task of any artistic process: the sequence of decisions throughout the creative process will result in the artwork.

Aliprandi further discusses the artistic creation process through the connection between openness and *krisis*. Creating artwork is a different mechanism for every artist throughout their career. Aliprandi believes that such activity comes from a gradual process of choices. The starting point occurs with the seed of an idea that later becomes a more structured thought. Then, a series of choices derives, and it can bring to existence or tear apart the previous reviews. When the action of choosing is complete, a new Being is ready to be delivered to the art world, and as soon as it is presented to the audience, it becomes detached from its creator. Openness allows the artist's conceptual and concrete choices, and when the audience experiences the artwork, openness is the fundamental and infinite dimension in which the artwork assumes significance.

The considerations in Aliprandi's dissertation attempted to illustrate the research carried out with Tiso and Dal Corso. Referring to Aliprandi's text, they decided to call their group Gruppo Krisis.

Their informal status continued until 2005: the group changed its legal status to apply for a call about a film on drug addiction issues in its latest stages, run by the Municipality of Venice. Gruppo Krisis founded a general partnership – in Italian *società in nome collettivo* – called KRISIS s.n.c. Società di Produzione Artistica and it resulted as the selected organisation for the project. They decided to set their work at Forte Marghera, a former military fort in Mestre closed to the public and managed by the company Marco Polo System. The company was a European economic interest group – an independent organisation with a legal status separated from its founders – created by the Municipality of Venice, the Province of Venice and the Association of

⁶ Aldo Aliprandi, *Krisis e Opera Aperta*, pp. 18-21.

Greek Municipalities KEDKE in 2000⁷. It was promoted by the Regional Council member Pierangelo Pettenò, who later became the sole administrator of the company, and intended to encourage territorial marketing, starting with the enhancement of all the former Venetian military forts in the Adriatic area⁸. Forte Marghera was the last site of this kind to be abandoned by the Italian Army in 1995 on the mainland of Venice – formally acquired by the Municipality in 2009⁹ – and it was also the biggest and the most important¹⁰. When Aliprandi first visited the fort, the only organisation operating was caring for foster cats, while a couple of buildings were used as storehouses. Previously, a series of associations had made a few attempts to take care of the reopening of Forte Marghera and the other forts. Still, the Municipality never decided to collaborate with them formally¹¹. Those organisations received support from volunteers and continued to propose activities for the citizenry in the forts when the Marco Polo System began implanting its work¹².

When Krisis began shooting the film, the group established its headquarters at Forte Marghera, using different spaces inside and outside the fort. At the end of the shooting, the group discovered the entire property and established a fruitful relationship with the Marco Polo System. Aliprandi later asked permission to stay and work on other projects, mainly related to dance and theatre, while Forte Marghera reopened to the public in 2007. As the company aimed to set a series of activities at Forte Marghera to promote its requalification, the Marco Polo System proposed that Aliprandi and his artistic group would develop his actions in one of the fort's buildings¹³. The idea was to transform Forte Marghera into a public arts centre¹⁴. Aliprandi chose to work on the first floor of Pavilion Number 32 (Figures 1-2). It was informally agreed that he would not pay any rent but would take care of all the essentials to make the space suitable for the activities – i.e., providing water

⁷ Gruppo di lavoro per Forte Marghera... stella d'acqua, *Forte Marghera. Cuore del campo trincerato* (Gorizia: RES Edizioni, 2014), pp.19-20.

⁸ Gruppo di lavoro per Forte Marghera... stella d'acqua, *Forte Marghera*, p. 20.

⁹ *Ivi*, p.21.

¹⁰ Giorgio Danesi, Sara Di Resta, *Forte Marghera '900. Architettura moderna nel complesso fortificato. Dalla dismissione alla valorizzazione* (Siracusa: LetteraVentidue Edizioni, 2023), pp. 36-40

¹¹ Gruppo di lavoro per Forte Marghera... stella d'acqua, *Forte Marghera*, p.19.

¹² *Ivi*, pp. 19-20.

¹³ *Ivi*, p.25.

¹⁴ Mauro Scroccaro, Andrea Bonifacio, *Forte Marghera. Una grande opportunità per la città. A great opportunity for the city* (Venezia, 2007).

connection and electricity. In return, Aliprandi was supposed to support all the events the Marco Polo System organised from a technical point of view. On the pavilion's first floor, the 500-square-metre space turned into two main rooms – one equipped for training and performing and the other arranged as a living room with facilities (Figures 3-5).

The collaboration aimed to attract an audience to Forte Marghera, as the fort could become a prosperous source of attraction for the city. Aliprandi started renovating the building and launched an informal series of artistic residencies, running from spring to autumn, whereas during winter, working in Forte Marghera was impossible without a heating system. The programme of residencies received approval from the Marco Polo System and was called *Performa*¹⁵. In a few years, many other cultural organisations moved their activities to the fort: the majority were held at Pavilion 32, and other buildings hosted creative laboratories. Later on, some classes of the Academy of Fine Arts of Venice were also hosted in the fort more or less regularly, while Krisis started to organise shows and workshops at Pavilion 32.

Between 2008 and 2009, Krisis reached its end. Whereas Tiso and Dal Corso decided to take different paths, Aliprandi remained at Forte Marghera, turning the previous general partnership into the cultural association Krisis. In the same period (2009), he met dancer Marianna Andriago while they were working on a production for the association. Their meeting led to the beginning of a personal and artistic relationship.

Marianna Andriago (1982) is a performer, choreographer and dance teacher. Between 2001 and 2002, she studied in Milan at the “Arcobaleno Danza” Academy, run by Ariella Vidach and Rosita Mariani. Between 2004 and 2005, she attended professional dance classes held by Arteven and OperaEstateFestivalVeneto, while between 2005 and 2006, she trained in the acting class “Scuola Europea di Formazione per l'Attore” run by the Italian theatre company Teatro Valdoca in Cesena. She was a performer for Teatro Valdoca from 2004 to 2008 and a vertical dancer for the Venetian company Il Posto, run by Wanda Moretti, from 2003 to 2009¹⁶.

¹⁵ Live Arts Cultures, *C32 performing art work space. Report 2012-2014* (Venezia, 2014), p. 6.

¹⁶ “Curriculum Marianna Andriago”, Live Arts Cultures, accessed August 1, 2023. <https://liveartscultures.weebly.com/uploads/2/6/9/5/26951716/cveuropeoandriago.pdf>

The collaboration between Andriago and Aliprandi turned out not to be easy: Andriago had already started thinking about working on her own as a vertical dancer, and the possibility of experimenting with something new with Aliprandi led Andriago to leave Moretti's company. The two artists shared artistic necessities and ideas on how their creative process could develop. Their private relationship, which began after their first collaboration, made them consider which prospects they could choose in their research. They started sharing their work's instruments: the camera from Aliprandi's visual practices, while the body and its movements were Andriago's contributions. They studied each other's work to find points in common and be able to develop new experimentations. In 2010, they also funded the vertical dance company Vertical Waves Project.

1.2 2011 – 2012: C32 performing art work space

From 2009 to 2011, Krisis continued to propose its activities as part of the Marco Polo System's cultural programme. In 2011, Marianna Andriago joined Aliprandi in the management of Pavilion 32, contributing to the project's artistic direction. In the same year, Krisis participated in *Parco del Contemporaneo*, a biennial project promoted by the Marco Polo System, proposing a series of events to make the fort an active cultural centre for the community¹⁷. The curator of the events was Riccardo Caldura, artistic director of the cultural association Galleria Contemporaneo. The first event of the project, *Costellazioni*, took place in May 2011¹⁸. A series of talks and performances discussed how Forte Marghera could develop as a centre for the artistic production of non-profit organisations. Andriago and Aliprandi presented their work *Del tuo dove*: the artists focused on the body's movement through the skin, primarily through wrinkles. Such a subject was fascinating for both as body movements generate creases as traces of a living entity. Wrinkles reflect the natural condition of the skin moving and ageing. Inside the space of wrinkles, a person wedges, hugs, and keeps the traces of another individual.

¹⁷ Live Arts Cultures, *C32 performing art work space. Report 2012-2014*, p. 6.

¹⁸ "COSTELLAZIONI. ARTI CONTEMPORANEE, COMUNITÀ E SPAZIO PUBBLICO", Galleria Contemporaneo Associazione Culturale, accessed August 12, 2023. http://www.galleriacontemporaneo.it/pagine_schede/incontri/scheda_incontri_023.html

Two more events of *Parco del Contemporaneo* occurred between October and November 2011. Scholars, politicians and art professionals participated in meetings to discuss the issues of the production and consumption of art, the attention towards the natural environment, and the re-use of historical places for the community's present¹⁹. Another crucial issue, especially regarding economic management, was the potential partnership between private donors and enterprises and the public institutions supporting the project, such as Veneto Region²⁰.

Krisis proposed the performance *CAMMINARE NELLA FRANA – Addestramento urbano. Da Abele a Forte Marghera: piccola dissertazione caotica sulla fragilità* by the performer and researcher Leonardo Delogu. The show connected to a previous workshop for dancers, actors and performers occurred in June 2011 at Forte Marghera. Delogu was the first artist to have a residency at Pavilion 32 since Andriago had joined Aliprandi in managing the space. Andriago proposed Delogu to work at Forte Marghera since the two knew each other and worked together for Teatro Valdoca. Delogu's residency did not aim to define a production. It was a work-in-progress and proposed an intellectual and performative consideration on the theme of residual spaces. Forte Marghera was the ideal place for such complex training: its military past was still quite evident, and while it was turning into an urban park, it was not a place with a defined identity yet. Eventually, Delogu presented its work as a contribution to the considerations expressed during the presentations of *Parco del Contemporaneo*.

During the second event, *Soundscape*, several performances were presented by visual and sound artists and performers²¹. The underlying theme was the relationship between images, sounds and silence in everyday life. The urban context surrounding the people in the city changed during the last decades and transformed the human perception of its sound landscape. The performances in *Soundscape* provided possible attempts for new perceptions of such a relationship between people and the

¹⁹ “PARCO DEL CONTEMPORANEO. PUBLIC, GREEN, ECO-ECONOMICS. COMUNITÀ E SPAZIO PUBBLICO”, Galleria Contemporaneo Associazione Culturale, accessed August 12, 2023. http://www.galleriacontemporaneo.it/pagine_schede/incontri/scheda_incontri_024.html

²⁰ Live Arts Cultures, *C32 performing art work space. Report 2012-2014*, p. 6.

²¹ “SOUNDSCAPE. ITINERARI VISIVI E SONORI NELL'AREA DI FORTE MARGHERA”, Galleria Contemporaneo Associazione Culturale, accessed August 12, 2023. http://www.galleriacontemporaneo.it/pagine_schede/progetti/scheda_progetti_009.html

environment. Among them, Andriago and Aliprandi proposed an interpretation in which Andriago's body met the inputs produced by the live music of Aliprandi.

A fundamental contribution to *Parco del Contemporaneo* and generally to the activities at Forte Marghera was the creation of a guesthouse in the park in 2011. It was Aliprandi's idea, as he thought that hosting more and more events and guests would imply higher costs, especially in terms of accommodation. Aliprandi proposed the Marco Polo System to turn the first floor of a former military headquarters into a guestroom, which the organisations inside Forte Marghera could use for their events. The ground floor of the building was already hosting the Scouts, but the first floor was still empty. The Marco Polo System approved Aliprandi's suggestion: Aliprandi managed to get the beds as a gift from the former psychiatric hospital in Mogliano Veneto. First, Andriago and Aliprandi defined the first interior design; then, the Marco Polo System agreed to realise some construction works to arrange the space further. This way, Forte Marghera could provide a valuable service to the artists who chose to operate in it.

In 2011, another significant change occurred, as the association Krisis disbanded²². The elements of the artistic and intellectual research that Aldo Aliprandi carried out since the writing of his academic thesis were still essential for his work. However, his experience with Marianna Andriago started a new phase of such work. Andriago and Aliprandi's experimentation was still possible thanks to a space like Pavilion 32. Nevertheless, managing such a place was very demanding. The pavilion needed constant care from the people living in it. This condition depended on the initial and informal agreement that Aliprandi took with the Marco Polo System and continued to follow. Although the artists were not paying the rent, they bore all the costs of the restoration works. Moreover, Andriago and Aliprandi considered the place as a public good and believed it had to be open to everyone. They felt responsible for turning the pavilion into a safe space for artistic research, bringing new ideas and practices to the community. A safe space was not only intended as physically adequate but especially as a place where performers could be free of experimenting, having space and time at their disposal. By welcoming all those who would accept Andriago and Aliprandi's

²² Live Arts Cultures, *C32 performing art work space. Report 2012–2014*, p. 6.

vision, the space could have acquired an identity itself, created by all the people and ideas developing there. From such considerations, Aliprandi and Andriago founded the *C32 performing art work space* in 2012: the pavilion became more than a simple place, since it presented itself also as a real project²³.

Since the beginning of C32, Andriago and Aliprandi considered themselves the curators of a project belonging to *Parco del Contemporaneo*. Therefore, C32 began to structure its artistic programme by considering the conditions defined by the Marco Polo System²⁴. Open evening shows – *Jam (1°)* and *Jam (2°)* – were the first events curated by Andriago and Aliprandi (Figure 6). A group of performers and sound artists were invited to improvise and develop jam sessions where they could mix their creative languages. In addition to these open shows, the result of the workshop run by Margherita Piroto *Io contengo moltitudini*, dealing with movements linked to the concept of identity, was also shown to the public. Furthermore, Marianna Andriago ran a contemporary dance seminar that focused more on physical training. On such occasion, Andriago started to analyse the possible attendees based on the research she wanted to carry on.

During the first year of C32, Andriago and Aliprandi established two fundamental relationships with two organisations: 4Culture and Perypezye Urbane²⁵. 4Culture is a Romanian non-profit organisation based in Bucharest and managed by Andreea Capitanescu. The collaboration originated from shared ideas supporting live arts training, research, and production. The directors of the organisations developed an exchange practice between the two countries: Andriago, Aliprandi and Capitanescu defined a programme of international residencies in September 2012. In October, C32 hosted another residency after a call for applications developed with Perypezye Urbane. This organisation is based in Milan (Italy) and deals with contemporary dance and its contamination with video and other visual media. The purpose of the call was to support the collaboration process between artists. National live arts performers, actors, dancers, musicians, and choreographers were invited to research a unique creative language focusing on body movement, scenic space, and music experimentation. The call referred to either artists who did not collaborate or groups

²³ Live Arts Cultures, *C32 performing art work space. Report 2012–2014*, p. 6.

²⁴ *Ibidem*.

²⁵ *Ivi*, pp. 14-19.

who had already started their research. In the end, forty-five collectives and informal groups applied for the call: Andriago and Aliprandi selected two groups – Slow Machine and Collettivo MAVart – for an eight-day residency in collaboration with Perypezye Urbane.

A significant development for C32 also came from the collaboration between Andriago, Aliprandi and electronicgirls. Electronicgirls originated in 2009 as a blog - *Electronicgirls, stories from the electric days* – by electronic musician Anna Giulia Volpato²⁶. She began interviewing some female pioneers of electronic music to recreate and divulge women’s commitment to the history of electronic music. At the same time, she founded a girls’ collective in Venice with two female deejays – LeCri – and the theremin musician Marta Marotta – also known as Chironomia. They dedicated themselves to electronic music as deejays and sound composers. They began performing in Venice to foster their kind of music in the city, as it was absent in institutional music contexts. In 2010, the collective became a netlabel, with a digital distribution system bound to Creative Commons²⁷, and it had the legal status of a non-profit organisation. Meanwhile, Volpato’s blog became a book – Johann Merrich, *Le pioniere della musica elettronica* (Milan: Auditorium, 2012). Volpato decided to structure a theatrical show as a promotion strategy: collaborating with actress Ilaria Pasqualetto and actor Giacomo Trevisan, Volpato wrote a monologue called *Annusavamo fiori di fibra ottica*. Later, they visited C32 as a possible space for their rehearsals and met Andriago and Aliprandi, immediately feeling a sort of harmony. The encounter led to the creation of the collective Gruppo 21, which based its work on Volpato’s shows. Volpato was already interested in the connections between electronic sound and choreographic language, and this production became an opportunity for implementing her research. The first collaboration between electronicgirls and C32 led to the production of *21*, which premiered at Teatro Ca’ Foscari on October 5, 2012. Twelve musicians improvised a composition following a verbal score from the Fibonacci Sequence, while Andriago developed the choreographic level by working with six dancers.

²⁶ “About us”, Electronicgirls, accessed August 16, 2023. <https://electronicgirlslabel.weebly.com/about-us.html>

²⁷ This licence is often compared to “copyleft” free and open-source software licences.

Parco del Contemporaneo was meant to receive biennial funding from Veneto Region. Therefore, each programme year should have requested half of the entire financing. As the first year of *Parco del Contemporaneo* passed, the Marco Polo System wanted to publish a catalogue about the activities of the first part of the project; however, the company informed the people involved that the publishing costs for such a catalogue would require half of the funding for the second year. Aliprandi and Andriago immediately felt the need of clarifications with the company's spokespeople. They wanted to understand the reason of such a high cost, as they believe the quality and quantity of activities in the project's second year would be negatively affected. Since the Marco Polo System did not answer, Andriago and Aliprandi asked not to be inserted in the catalogue. A conflict between the company and the two artists arose. On the one hand, the Marco Polo System considered Aliprandi and Andriago ungrateful for the support the company had provided them. On the other hand, the artists believed that the company was managing the project and its funding with a different purpose than taking care of Forte Marghera. The doubts of Andriago and Aliprandi increased when the Marco Polo System started to invite more prominent organisations – La Fenice Opera House, La Biennale, and the Academy of Fine Arts – to establish their activities in the fort. Meanwhile, since the public reopening of the fort, several little associations decided to leave their space at Forte Marghera because the company did not seem interested in fostering their activities²⁸. Moreover, the Marco Polo System entrusted the guesthouse to organisations that could increase revenues. It appeared that the purpose of turning Forte Marghera into a cultural public centre relied more on the major Venetian cultural institutions instead of the cultural organisations from the urban life of Mestre and its mainland.

Andriago and Aliprandi were not the only ones concerned. Since the foundation of the Marco Polo System in 2000, the voluntary associations taking care of the forts in Mestre feared that the company could spoil those places for its financial business. Although the sites were public property, the Municipality needed to be informed on how the management of the forts had developed, either positively or not²⁹. The voluntary associations and the citizens were also worried about the choice of the

²⁸ Gruppo di lavoro per Forte Marghera... stella d'acqua, *Forte Marghera*, pp. 21;27.

²⁹ *Ivi*, p. 22.

Municipality to entrust the company Impregilo S.p.A. to manage the costs for the renovation works of the entire area of Forte Marghera. The company presented a proposal that suggested converting the fort into a tourist centre focused on children's activities³⁰. Between 2011 and 2012, a self-financed group of associations and citizens who wanted to prevent Forte Marghera from potential privatisation became the Marco Polo System and Municipality interlocutor. The group was named *Gruppo di Lavoro per Forte Marghera... stella d'acqua*. Among its members were some of the people to whom the Marco Polo System informally entrusted some spaces inside Forte Marghera, like Aliprandi. Since the Municipality expressed the intention to decide on the future management of Forte Marghera during the first months of 2012, the group worked to provide all the necessary information about the fort, such as the number of organisations operating inside the fort and the number of citizens participating in their activities.

1.3 2012 – 2014: Live Arts Cultures as an informal artistic group

While the relationship with the Marco Polo System started changing, C32 witnessed a relevant internal change. The collaboration between Andriago, Aliprandi and electronicgirls – which had concluded after production *21* – generated such a positive experience that Aliprandi and Andriago asked electronicgirls to join C32. The electronic musicians had the musical expertise the other two lacked and could present a more structured programme of musical events. Moreover, inhabiting C32 together allowed for more experimenting with the combinations between movement and sound. Electronicgirls accepted the proposal and, together with C32, created an informal artistic group called Live Arts Cultures in 2012. Such a name aimed to express the idea of diversity, integration and hospitality. The group was meant to show all the possibilities of live arts, which are always different and reflect subjectivity, methodology and language. Moreover, in their artistic direction, the focus on diversity did not dictate a fixed method for working but a singular style nurturing the different characteristics of anyone. The group became an opportunity for increasing each artistic career: C32 and electronicgirls also continued their separate projects, but they got

³⁰ Gruppo di lavoro per Forte Marghera... stella d'acqua, *Forte Marghera*, pp. 26-27.

inspiration from and deepened their collective work. Besides Aldo Aliprandi and Marianna Andriago, the musicians involved were Giulia Volpato, Cristina Pacquola and Marta Marotta³¹.

The space of C32 became essential once again for gathering people and allowing them to share and implement their ideas. Electronicgirls needed a space to rehearse, develop their research and plan their future actions. Finding available places for electronic music in Venice was difficult between 2009 and 2012: the only open areas were community centres, such as Laboratorio Occupato Morion, or isolated organisations like S.a.L.E. DOCKS. Electronicgirls could not intercept the kind of audience the musicians wished, and it lacked the equipment to support their experimentation. The musicians felt the need for a place with an acceptable political orientation, which could also be neutral enough to gather many different individuals with their preferences. They sought an inclusive place, fostering constructive dialogue and moving various cultures. This is why they admired the apparent neutrality of C32, a space with strong political and social integrity that, at the same time, was neutral enough to welcome everyone without prejudices.

Volpato became increasingly involved in the work at C32, which allowed her to experiment without limits and with all the technical support she needed. She found time and continuous new developments for her sound research. She dedicated herself to training, collaborating with other artists and expanding her creative freedom: the space allowed the start and development of many projects.

Volpato also managed to persuade Aliprandi to deepen his knowledge of electronic music. He improved his skills thanks to some projects she created: for instance, several electronic music ensembles, in which she made the confidence to work on something entirely unexplored. The experimentation on music that Aliprandi is still doing nowadays comes from that experience. However, his research differs from Volpato's – she works on electronic music while Aliprandi works on electronic acoustics, two artistic fields with different conceptual origins. She believed he could approach such a discipline, and they worked together several times, each focusing on

³¹ Live Arts Cultures, *C32 performing art work space. Report 2012-2014*, p. 6.

their preferences. Those were fundamental moments for Aliprandi to continue his work alone and with Andriago.

Live Arts Cultures started growing, not only for artistic research but also from a management point of view.

Between January and April, the group worked on the *Expanding Universe of Al-Joberal-Chirolechi* production, an electronic ensemble implementing the practice of *Intuitive Musik* by German composer Karlheinz Stockhausen³². The ensemble, whose members could vary between two and six, later performed throughout Italy, France, Croatia and Bosnia. Another collaboration with Perypezye Urbane in May supported and fostered the exchange among Italian arts organisations. For this reason, C32 hosted the residency of Collettivo Cleancorner, who was working on the production *[In]Quiete*. It researched the constant tension people feel in their everyday lives between the high performativity in producing something and the sense of stasis in front of the endless flow of information around them³³. Then, the artists showed their work in an open night and shared their practice in a workshop for young dancers. Another relevant event was the May 2013 *Mayday* intensive workshop, run by artists Andrea Pagnes and Verena Stenke – known as VestAndPage (figure 7). This was the first collaboration between C32, Pagnes and Stenke concerning the *Venice International Performance Art Week* project. Such an event, usually hosted at Palazzo Mora in Venice, proposed a training activity in Forte Marghera during its second year in collaboration with Studio Contemporaneo. Eighteen worldwide performers spent eight days at C32 sharing considerations and actions, monitored and helped by VestAndPage³⁴.

A new event also occurred in 2013 at C32: *Electro Camp*. Since their first collaboration, C32 and electronicgirls have experienced great creative potential in combining their artistic languages. They soon started thinking about creating an event to present performances with different backgrounds, from contemporary dance to electronic music. Such event could also offer training opportunities and engage spectators interested in attending art events and participating actively. These

³² Live Arts Cultures, *C32 performing art work space. Report 2012-2014*, p. 21.

³³ *Ibidem*.

³⁴ “VestAndPage ‘Mayday’2013”, Venice International Performance Art Week, accessed August 16, 2023. <https://veniceperformanceart.org/summer-class/vestandpage-mayday>

considerations took the form of a festival, *Electro Camp*. Its first edition occurred in June 2013 and presented workshops on electronic music and contemporary dance, lectures with university professors, musicians, critics and art curators, and performances exploring sound and movement in the dimension of performance art³⁵. Among the productions presented, Andriago and Volpato proposed a project where choreographers and musicians would meet and work for one day and perform the following day. This performance led to no complete production, rather an action resulting from such a stimulating and underground contest. Live Arts Cultures began understanding how to manage more complex projects from both a communication and logistics point of view and how to share something that the group was still experimenting with. From *Electro Camp*, Live Arts Cultures would form an experience that would present itself again in the future as an idea for commissioning productions, managing training activities, and making different artistic language encounters (Appendix I).

The Electro Camp's work continued after its end: getting inspiration from the experiences in the sound workshop, Volpato created the production *The barbagianni's electronic experience*, which premiered in July 2012. At C32, two residencies occurred in August and September, with Brazilian performer Larissa Ferreira and Italian dancer Irene Russolillo.

In 2013, the activities at C32 continued to be promoted in *Parco del Contemporaneo*. However, the Marco Polo System stopped presenting C32 as part of its cultural programme and did not allow any financial support for the activities managed at Pavilion 32³⁶. Throughout the year, it became evident for Live Arts Cultures that the company no longer considered their group an appreciated element in the fort. The artists had criticised the choices of the Marco Polo System regarding the management of *Parco del Contemporaneo*, and because of this, the Marco Polo System began pressing Live Arts Cultures more and more on leaving its space. The group considered such behaviour unacceptable, as the collaboration between Aliprandi and the company originated because the Marco Polo System had asked him to set his

³⁵ Live Arts Cultures, *C32 performing art work space. Report 2012-2014*, p. 24.

³⁶ *Ivi*, p. 6.

activities at the fort at the beginning of Forte Marghera's reopening. Moreover, Aliprandi – first with Krisis, then with Andriago and Live Arts Cultures – turned Pavilion 32 into a place equipped for producing and presenting artistic activities, bearing the costs for the renovation works and management of the building. Pavilion 32 remained operating during all the years in which Aliprandi was present; meanwhile, other pavilions in the fort still had significant architectural damages, and the roofs of many buildings had crumbled, such as in the building assigned to La Fenice Opera House³⁷.

Live Arts Cultures could not accept how the Marco Polo System managed a public place like Forte Marghera. Throughout its history, Pavilion 32 had been a space for the arts opened to everybody inside a public area for the community. The artists had invested and worked hard to maintain a safe space where people from all backgrounds could meet, dialogue and share their practice. They wanted to continue participating in the city's cultural life by increasing the potential of C32.

However, the artists could only refer to an informal agreement with the Marco Polo System and not provide any formal demonstration of their activities in the fort. The Marco Polo System never did anything to officialise their existence, delaying any act of recognition until it became convenient to make them leave the space.

1.4 2014 – 2017: Live Arts Cultures as a cultural association

In January 2014, the group decided to formalise their work by changing their legal status: the informal group became the cultural association Live Arts Cultures, maintaining the name that brought together C32 and electronicgirls. Such status marked the definition of the group's primary purpose, working and sharing ideas for two years. Moreover, the status of a cultural association was a legal instrument recognising its members and its ability to communicate with external actors. There were no single identities anymore but a group of people who believed in specific values and wanted to act in the community. The artists thought associationism was a fundamental means for society in its cultural, political and economic terms.

³⁷ Gruppo di lavoro per Forte Marghera... stella d'acqua, *Forte Marghera*, p. 27.

The events at C32 continued, and four international projects were hosted between March and August 2014³⁸. The association presented an event honouring the victims of the Japanese tsunami on March 11, 2011, in collaboration with the Japanese artist Beniko Tanaka. The choreographer Thomas Kortvélyessy – founder of the Real Dance Company based in Rotterdam – worked at his production *Wolking Con-sensus*. Besides rehearsing at C32, he was involved in his work with a group of performers gathered by Live Arts Cultures and proposed an open workshop on the technique of *Kinetic Awareness*. Another event presented the work of two French bands, Bonne Humeur Provisoire and BadaBoum, while the Canadian musicians Jen Reimer and Max Stein were in a specific residency at Forte Marghera, experimenting and transforming the sounds of many spaces of the fort.

In July 2014, Live Arts Cultures hosted a workshop by Teatro Valdoca that presented the performance *Avere attitudine al congedo* in the spaces of C32 and the French Armoury of the fort. Fifteen participants – among actors, musicians and dancers – worked for seven days with the director Cesare Ronconi and his colleagues, the movement coach Lucia Palladino, and the sound coach Enrico Malatesta. Live Arts Cultures also supported the production *Takis* by the dancer and choreographer Carlotta Plebs and appointed once again C32 as a residency space through a call for applications. The tender aimed to select projects lined to the dynamics between sound and movement: the chosen work was *Aphonos* by Laura Pante, Giovanna Rovedo and Elisa Sbaragli. A collaboration with EventiArteVenezia - an independent artistic group also present in pavilion 32 – led to the workshop *Tilde* by the musicians Attila Favarelli, Enrico Malatesta and Nicola Ratti. The musicians proposed a 10-hour work exploring the sound potential of space through the relations between the architectural dimension, the performative body and the electro-acoustic instruments. Live Arts Cultures also hosted the production *Voto di silenzio* by the theatre association La Noce.

The second edition of *Electro Camp* occurred in September 2014. During four days, several events combined sound experimentation, choreographic language and visual design at C32 (Appendix I).

³⁸ Live Arts Cultures, *C32 performing art work space. Report 2012-2014*, pp. 30-39.

As the conflict between the Marco Polo System and Live Arts Cultures became more severe, the association sought the support of the Municipality's spokespeople, meeting the Council members and the Neighbourhood presidents from the District of Mestre. Many visited C32 to understand what was happening there, and the former President of the Municipality Council, Roberto Turetta, appeared to think about stepping in.

In October 2013, the Municipality of Venice announced that it would have assigned the buildings of Forte Marghera to external organisations³⁹. The Heritage Office and its Commission on Heritage started managing such, previously run by the Marco Polo System through conventions and informal agreements, as in the case of Aliprandi. Such change became a temporary solution for Live Arts Cultures but did not represent an act of recognition of its presence at Forte Marghera. Changing the referents from the company to the Heritage Office required several months⁴⁰. In April 2014, the Commission on Heritage was still debating the problematic situation of the buildings, which was also reported in the newspapers⁴¹. The Municipality struggled to define actual compliance with the safety standards of the buildings, and it appeared that no tests on wall construction had been carried out in the years before. The Heritage Office had to manage all the requirements for complying with the spaces before renting the buildings to external organisations. Meanwhile, the Marco Polo System was allowed to continue its promotion projects about Forte Marghera and manage the previous rent agreements that were supposed to end in 2015.

In June 2014, an unexpected event caused the suspension of the dialogue between the Municipality and the Marco Polo System: Mayor Giorgio Orsoni was arrested on accusations of alleged violation of the Parties' financing law⁴². The City Council had to resign, and the Municipality was put under temporary receivership by

³⁹ “Verbale per seduta del 12-03-2014”, Comune di Venezia, Consiglio Comunale VII Commissione, accessed August 17, 2023. http://consiglio.comune.venezia.it/index.php?pag=srchatti_verb_3304

⁴⁰ “Verbale per seduta del 26-03-2014”, Comune di Venezia, Consiglio Comunale VII Commissione, accessed August 17, 2023. http://consiglio.comune.venezia.it/index.php?pag=srchatti_verb_3318

⁴¹ “Verbale per seduta del 09-04-2014”, Comune di Venezia, Consiglio Comunale VII Commissione, accessed August 17, 2023. http://consiglio.comune.venezia.it/index.php?pag=srchatti_verb_3330

⁴² “Mose, inchiesta sugli appalti: arrestato il sindaco di Venezia. Chiesta custodia cautelare per Galan”, La Repubblica, accessed August 18, 2023. https://www.repubblica.it/cronaca/2014/06/04/news/mose_35_arresti_per_tangenti_anche_il_sindaco_di_venezia-88004605/?ref=HREA-1

Prefect Vittorio Zappalorto⁴³. Regarding Forte Marghera, Zappalorto decided to create a public foundation, the Forte Marghera Foundation, supported by the Municipality in March 2015⁴⁴. The Foundation became operational when the new mayor, Luigi Brugnaro, was elected in June. The newly-appointed City Council considered the Forte Marghera Foundation the proper organisation for managing Forte Marghera, as it also wanted to detach its work from what the previous municipal authorities had done. Therefore, the Municipality stopped financing the Marco Polo System, which then found itself without the financial resources to deal with the costs derived from the activities between 2014 and 2015. The company sued the Municipality and required the Municipal authorities to pay the company's creditors. The Italian Court finally agreed with the Marco Polo System and judged the Municipality of Venice and the Central Union of Municipalities of Greece (KEDE) – the former Association of Greek Municipalities KEDKE – responsible for bearing the company's costs. The founders who created the Marco Polo System in 2000 ended their collaboration by formally dissolving the company in December 2022⁴⁵.

In 2015, the Marco Polo System had to move its office from Forte Marghera, which is now the headquarters of the Forte Marghera Foundation. Among its purposes, the new managers of Forte Marghera aimed to renovate the park and preserve and promote the study of the former military fort and its cultural and social values. Since its official assignment, the Foundation saw Live Arts Cultures as an already-existing organisation in the fort, open to collaboration. Live Arts Cultures also welcomed the Foundation as it understood it was utterly different from its predecessor in its objectives. The association immediately established a positive relationship with the Foundation, which continued to support the activities at C32 while the Municipality

⁴³ “Il prefetto Zappalorto commissario del comune di Venezia”, La Nuova di Venezia Mestre, accessed August 18, 2023. <https://nuovavenezia.gelocal.it/venezia/cronaca/2014/07/02/news/il-prefetto-zappalorto-commissario-del-comune-di-venezia-1.9527196>

⁴⁴ “Una Fondazione per gestire gli spazi di Forte Marghera”, La Nuova di Venezia Mestre, accessed August 18, 2023. <https://nuovavenezia.gelocal.it/venezia/cronaca/2015/03/28/news/una-fondazione-per-gestire-gli-spazi-di-forte-marghera-1.11138803>

⁴⁵ “Società partecipate: l'assessore Zuin alla firma dell'accordo per la definitiva estinzione della Marco Polo System G.E.I.E.”, Comune di Venezia, accessed August 18, 2023. <https://live.comune.venezia.it/it/2022/12/societ-partecipate-lassessore-zuin-alla-firma-dellaccordo-la-definitiva-estinzione-della>

was still debating on the modalities for renting the buildings of Forte Marghera to external organisations.

Between 2015 and 2017, the operational team of the Live Arts Cultures increased: from experience in *Electro Camp I*, the writer and singer Alessandra Trevisan began working with the group in the artistic direction and as a press referent. Marco Gnaccolini and Alessandra Dolce, already members of the theatre company Woodstock Teatro, joined Live Arts Cultures as well as Alessandra Zuin – project consultant, teaching assistant and research fellow at Ca' Foscari University.

The programme of events at C32 continued with the other three editions of *Electro Camp* until 2017 (Appendix I). The training activities combined languages and practices among performance art, sound, visual images, and dance. During the evening, visual and sound installations and live performances were held at C32 and other fort places, such as the French Armoury and the former Bunkers. Besides the festival, the association's work can be distinguished into three main categories: workshops, residencies and production support⁴⁶. In 2016, musician Davide Tidoni proposed the workshop *Venice by night*, about the practice of listening during the night. Markus Stockhausen presented the intensive workshop *Intuitive music and more with electronics*, about the method of *Intuitive Musik* elaborated by his father and its manipulation through traditional and electronic instruments. VestAndPage returned to C32 with the third edition of *Mayday* as part of the *Venice International Performance Art Week* training programme in collaboration with actor and director Jürgen Fritz. Authors and performers Andrea Fagarazzi and I-Chen Zuffellato planned a performance art workshop for a group of unaccompanied foreign minors. This activity was supported by the Venetian branch of the non-profit organisation Emergency, the social cooperative GEA, and the cultural programme *Fort in Fest*. Dancer Marta Ciappina presented the training *Brilliant mind & powerful body*, while Teatro Valdoca brought its training residency *Noi corridori veloci* for the third consecutive year. Through the artistic residencies, Live Arts Cultures hosted the work of Davide Tidoni, the French company Kollektif Singulier and the Venetian artistic group Bitols. The main productions supported during the year were *Mechanical Vibrations* by Johann

⁴⁶ Live Arts Cultures, *Live Arts Cultures 2016* (Venezia, 2016).
Live Arts Cultures, *Live Arts Cultures. Attività di promozione e Produzione delle arti dal vivo 2017* (Venezia, 2017).

Merrich, the work of the musical group Unknwn, three projects by Woodstock Teatro and the training activity *Laboratorio di ricerca corporea* by Francesco Nordio.

In 2017, the training programme presented *the magnetic attraction of music. Workshop on creative sound technology* by musician Vesna Velickovic and the second edition of the dance seminar by Marta Ciappina *Brilliant mind & powerful body*. Several other activities came back at C32 for the fourth year: VestAndPage presented a different edition of their workshop, a *Joint Performance Summer Class* conducted with La Pocha Nostra and in collaboration with artist Francesca Carol Rolla and Studio Contemporaneo. Teatro Valdoca presented the workshop *Mappe per l'invisibile*, as part of the production *Giuramenti*. C32 hosted the residencies for the productions *Gli amabili resti – Primo studio. Una piece per cinque danzatori e un dj* by Sara Lupoli and Loris De Luna; *Project M* by the Frech Compagnie Hippocampe; *Effetto Cocktail Party* by Sara Catellani, Johann Merrich and Violeta Arista – also connected a dance workshop by Catellani. Two music residencies – *Where is Mr.R?* by the musicians Basile Naudet, Luca Ventimiglia and Augustine Bette, and *Venus before Venus* by Aldo Aliprandi, Alessandra Trevisan, Jasna Velickovic, Johann Merrich and Kalalunatic aimed to write the score and rehearse for performing at the French Pavilion in the Venice Biennale in 2017. Live Arts Cultures supported the productions *Then, at one point – Frammenti da Francesca Woodman* by Alessandra Trevisan and Johann Merrich, *Piano Piano Forte Forte* by Marianna Andrigo and Aldo Aliprandi, *Sapir – Whorf* by Valentina Milan and Nicola di Croce, *XPL – Experimental Performance Lab* by Sabrina Bellenzier, Giorgia De Santi, Marina Garreffa, Emalia Mattia, Daiane Rafaela, Cristiana Zeta Rolla.

Aliprandi and Andrigo, as members of Live Arts Cultures, also participated in the *Co-creation Live Factory. Prologue 1*. This was a new project, part of the *Venice International Performance Art Week* programme in December 2017, in which the artists VestAndPage and Marilyn Arsem tutored young performers through performative practices and theoretical classes for ten days.

Since Aldo Aliprandi had worked in Pavilion 32 and Marianna Andrigo and electronicgirls had joined his artistic project, all the artists who performed at C32 understood and respected the meaning and the relevance of such a place. Any creative

possibility could occur because there was a space open to any research in live arts. Over the years, Aliprandi and others donated concrete materials to C32 and equipped the first floor of Pavilion 32 with tools and technical systems necessary for working with live arts. Those who lived in that space for a workshop or a residency have defined C32 as an independent and safe home where they could express their work following any direction they wanted. All the people who visited C32 established a network of relationships: obviously, some connections turned out to be temporary, while others proved deep and solid.

An example of the significance of C32 occurred in the spring of 2017⁴⁷. In March, a water pipe broke, damaging the dancefloor in the performance room. The association decided to provide the financial resources for the new wooden dancefloor through a crowdfunding campaign. To promote the campaign, Live Arts Cultures created a video in which several artists who had worked at C32 made vocal contributions on why that place was relevant to them. The video also used a drone belonging to a colleague of Aliprandi's: he visited the space and fell in love with it, so he allowed the association to use the drone to make the video.

The group defined the maximum amount of the crowdfunding at 5,000 euros: in forty-five days, Live Arts Cultures received 7,000 euros thanks to one hundred-three donors who knew or worked in the space. The 150-square-meter dancefloor was placed in four days by a team of thirteen volunteers. To remember the donors' contributions, the names of all those who supported the campaign were then put on the dancefloor's frontal edge in front of the audience space.

1.5 2017 – 2020: The call for tenders by the Forte Marghera Foundation for renting the Pavilion 32

In 2017, a significant event offered Live Arts Cultures the possibility to acknowledge its presence and formally work inside Forte Marghera. The Municipality of Venice and the Forte Marghera Foundation finally agreed on the terms for granting some of the buildings in the fort, and Pavilion 32 was one of them. The Forte Marghera

⁴⁷ Live Arts Cultures, *Live Arts Cultures. Attività di promozione e Produzione delle arti dal vivo 2017*, p.13.

Foundation issued a call for tenders that would have appointed the space for eight years, from 2018 to 2025⁴⁸. The call required that the activities occurring in such area belong to social and cultural categories. The minimum annual base fee was 3,500 euros, and the Foundation would select the most economically advantageous offer. The applicants to the call should guarantee the payment of the annual fee, the implementation of the project submitted to the call, the payment of general administrative and management costs and the economic and financial sustainability. The documents to submit in July 2017 included the management, preservation, and promotion of the building, the eight-year schedule, the economic and financial programme and the measurement of the annual fee.

Live Arts Cultures applied to the call: there were two elements in the proposal that could make a difference compared to other applicants. First, the association introduced a detailed audience analysis supporting the programme of activities. In the previous years, the group had considered it necessary to increase its knowledge about the management of arts organisations. For this reason, the association supported Giulia Volpato's training programme at Fondazione Fitzcarraldo, an Italian foundation aimed at researching, training, helping and promoting the arts sector. Volpato then developed a complex analysis of the audience categories of the association through the systematisation of association forms from 2014 to 2017, the study of questionnaires to spectators and online questionnaires to electronic musicians distributed between April and July 2017. The analysis of the members of Live Arts Cultures was essential to understand the audience reached and the attendees at the events. The questionnaires indicated how the audience perceived the association, how participants judged the activities, and which issues could be solved. The application also introduced a deeper targeting: programmes illustrating activities, instruments and time of approaching were distinguished between the existent audience and the audience yet to be reached.

Secondly, Live Arts Cultures managed to find a funder willing to donate the amount of 100,000 euros to support the costs of renovation work. Therefore, the economic and financial programme, the management strategy, and the artistic

⁴⁸ "Bando di gara", Fondazione Forte Marghera, accessed August 19, 2023. <http://fondazionefortemarghera.it/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/concessione-uso-terzi-dellimmobile-n-32-c-proprietà-del-comune-venezia-appartenente-al-complesso-ex-forte-marghera.pdf>

programme formed a solid application to the call. In November, the association won the call and could rent the first floor of Pavilion 32 in Forte Marghera.

Live Arts Cultures was supposed to sign the rental agreement with the Forte Marghera Foundation at the beginning of 2018. However, the Foundation started to delay the meeting with the association: the more Live Arts Cultures tried to ask for a new appointment, the vaguer answer the artists received. The group also contacted the Municipality but without success. During the winter, activities were permanently suspended at C32 due to the lack of a heating system. The artists continued their work with a series of actions outside Forte Marghera. Between October 2017 and April 2018, the association presented the project *ATTIVA(R)TI* as a creative requalification programme for the urban area near the railway station in Mestre⁴⁹. The association Luoghi Comuni supported the project, financed by the Municipality of Venice, which offered a performative workshop for teenagers in the public spaces of the urban area, as well as seminars and meetings with neighbourhood inhabitants.

Between January and April 2018, Live Arts Cultures collaborated with the association and theatre company Farmacia Zoo:é for the programme on performing arts and workshops *Living Room. Venere in Teatro*. Among eight evening shows, Live Arts Cultures curated five events, presenting the works *Trigger* by Annamaria Ajmone, *Good Lack. Trittico sull'assenza* by Francesca Foscarini, *Bello Mondo. Rito Sonoro* by Mariangela Gualtieri, *Come un cane con il suo padrone* by Lucia Palladino and Alice Ruggero, *A sangue freddo* Silvia Costa. During all the evenings, after the main show, electronic musicians selected by electronicgirls performed a series of pieces. Among the training activities on the programme, three artists from the evening shows – Ajmone, Foscarini and Palladino – proposed free dance workshops.

The Forte Marghera Foundation still did not provide an answer to Live Arts Cultures at the end of the spring and throughout the whole summer. Nevertheless, the association continued its actions. Habitual training activities returned, such as the *Art Week Series 2018*, where Andrigo and Aliprandi tutored the participants with VestAndPage, and Teatro Valdoca with *La Veglia Perfetta. Danze, canti e parole ardenti*. C32 hosted the residency works *Neu Ma* by Laura Colombari and Giovanni

⁴⁹ Live Arts Cultures, *Live Arts Cultures 2018* (Venezia, 2018), pp. 6-11.

Dinello, *Progetto Ex IT – BOB* by Matteo Marchesi, *Look Ma, no hands* by Marina Donatone and *Il pesce d'oro* by Samanta Cinquini.

In October, the association worked with Perypezye Urbane for the project *Più che DanceMe*, supported by the Italian Ministry of Culture. During two evenings, four performances were presented: *Cambia-Menti* by Elisa Sbaragli, *Mai Mask* by Marianna Andrigo, *VaV* by Paola Ponti and *Phoenix* by Luna Paese.

Without receiving any answer from the Forte Marghera Foundation and the Municipality of Mestre, Live Arts Cultures could not plan its future activities. Such an impasse became unbearable for some members of the operational group. First, Woodstock Teatro and then Volpato decided to leave the association. The rest of the group felt a significant loss due to the absence of Volpato's artistic creativity and management contributions. When she arrived and started working with Andrigo, the group's artistic direction gradually became theirs. Aliprandi willingly began focusing on other aspects of their work, such as the technical dimension. The discussion together was always an essential moment of their work, but Aliprandi preferred to leave the artistic direction to the group's youngest members. This was a natural consequence of more people participating in their joint project.

Live Arts Cultures started focusing on dance and performance, since nobody could replace Volpato's role. The musical dimension remained fundamental for some artistic groups that were still hosted; however, inside the operational group, there was no one with the specific skills in sound research as *electronicgirls* had.

During 2019, Live Arts Cultures tried to face the uncertain situation by continuing to present some of its customary activities⁵⁰. *DIS-SENSUS, the Art Week Workshop series 2019*, proposed a ten-day workshop conducted by Andrigo, Aliprandi and VestAndPage. Silvia Piovan and Anna Giulia Arpini presented a seminar about reading tales for young children and their families. Marianna Andrigo proposed the training sessions *Passaggio al corpo* while the French dancer Julia Berrocal – a member of *Kollektif Singulier* – presented a workshop for professional dancers. *Kollektif Singulier* also worked at C32 through a residency on *The Mars Brothers* production. The last event in 2019 was *NEFORMA – Dialogues* by the Slovenian

⁵⁰ “Attività 2021 - 2020 - 2019”, Live Arts Cultures, accessed August 18, 2023. https://liveartscultures.weebly.com/uploads/2/6/9/5/26951716/attivit%C3%A0_lac_19-20-_21_.pdf

Zavod Sploh (Sploh Institute), a series of improvised music and dance compositions that elaborate the mistakes occurring as the best elements to study.

In 2020, the condition of Live Arts Cultures got more complicated as the COVID-19 pandemic spread. The only activities allowed were a few residencies during the summer months and a training activity at the beginning of autumn. In February, the association called for a residency at C32: after some of the hardest months due to the pandemic, the selected company Quattro4 could work on its project *9 gesti* on contemporary circus and puppetry theatre. Other residencies hosted Gloria Dorliguzzo and Giulio Petrucci, Elisa Sbaragli, Loris De Luna, Farmacia Zoo:é and Il pesce d'oro. Between September and October, Marianna Andrigo proposed the workshop *Parasceva: preparazione continua verso l'inatteso*. The activity aimed to train the participants for a durational performance at the V-A-C Foundation in Venice.

1.6 2020 – 2022: Recent years

In September 2020, the Forte Marghera Foundation became available to sign the rental agreement⁵¹. The Foundation initially required the same amount of money that Live Arts Cultures proposed for the eight-year programme in 2017. However, the new deal would last five years, until 2025. The new conditions addressed a period entirely changed for Live Arts Cultures after 2017: three years after the public call, the financier was not available anymore, and rental costs were quite hard to bear. Moreover, such an offer occurred during the pandemic, when the association could not operate as in the previous years.

The association members met with the Foundation and presented their condition: Live Arts Cultures did not have the capacity proposed three years before and started considering leaving the space. The Foundation managers understood the organisation's position and offered a new evaluation of the rental agreement: they thought about the formal limits of the group and its history at C32. The Forte Marghera Foundation wanted Live Arts Cultures to stay and continue its projects in Forte Marghera. Although the association had already prepared to leave the space, the members discussed and decided to stay, even though such a situation would become

⁵¹ “Attività 2021 - 2020 - 2019”, Live Arts Cultures, accessed August 18, 2023. https://liveartscultures.weebly.com/uploads/2/6/9/5/26951716/attivit%C3%A0_lac_19-20-_21_.pdf

extremely expensive. They broke through the uncertainty that had lasted three years, even with heavy economic conditions.

The rental agreement established that Live Arts Cultures would have paid 15,337,50 euros each year, and that amount would be partitioned between the actual rent – 3.575,00 euros – and the remaining part consisting of other investments for renovation works in the building until 2025.

The rental agreement signing caused Live Arts Cultures to consider new sources of income for bearing its costs, including several activities that were proposed for free in the past. Such conditions also occurred during the complex period of the pandemic, during which some opportunities started to come after the first harsh months.

2021 became a hyperactive year⁵²: Live Arts Cultures entered a network managed by Municipal Social Services and aimed to connect and support all the organisations operating with children and teenagers in the metropolitan area of Venice. The network called *Rete ad Alta Intensità Educativa* has three sections according to the main areas of the city – Venezia, Mestre, and Marghera. As a member of the Mestre section, Live Arts Cultures received funding for two projects with teenagers in 2021⁵³. Andriago proposed two activities where teenagers could experiment with their expressive potentials – *Kit contro la solitudine* and *Kit per un ballo fuori dal tempo*. She wanted to allow them to express themselves as individuals and grow through creativity, imagination, respect, responsibility, relationships, and sensitivity – all terms continuously involved in studying the human body. The research addressed girls, boys or people discussing their gender during an age in which the body is unfaithful and unknown and is also the home they bring around wherever they go. It dealt with young individuals with no demand for skills or professions but wants to be searched, pushed, and loved. Such terms are challenging to use with teenagers and are often not explicit. However, the hope is that they become more precise through practice; the body needs to reach new definitions of aesthetics, which is always important to teenagers. Young people need to experience something besides beautiful and ugly, such as something

⁵² “Attività 2021 - 2020 - 2019”, Live Arts Cultures, accessed August 18, 2023. https://liveartscultures.weebly.com/uploads/2/6/9/5/26951716/attivit%C3%A0_lac_19-20-_21_.pdf

⁵³ “Kit contro la solitudine”, Live Arts Cultures, accessed August 21, 2023. <https://liveartscultures.weebly.com/kit-contro-la-solitudine.html>

attractive, seducing, and dashing. Such aesthetics must be studied with teenagers because they could be the ones who will research and spread these concepts of beauty, authenticity, truth, love, and sexuality. This information must be understood and practised in their relationships.

Another activity proposed for teenagers was the vertical dance workshop *Cosimo*, as part of the requalification project *SEMINA – Terreni Creativi* in the urban area near the railway station in Mestre⁵⁴. A series of cultural associations and organisations in that area collaborated to develop a cultural programme for the people living there, and the Volunteer Service Centre in Venice financed the project. Live Arts Cultures proposed a training programme for vertical dance in a park during the summer: participants and inhabitants could experience a different use of the place, as young people exercised among and on trees.

Through the programme of residencies, C32 hosted the works by choreographers Francesco Cocco and Elvira Scorza, Farmacia Zoo:é, Carlotta Plebs, and VestAndPage.

Thanks to the signed rental agreement, Live Arts Cultures started participating in public and private funding applications addressed to arts organisations. Supported by Scena Unita and FUS–Ministry of Culture, the association presented a new dance festival called *Venere in Teatro*⁵⁵. The financial support by the Ministry of Culture was very relevant: the highest public authority for arts recognised the cultural proposal of Live Arts Cultures. The title of the festival, already used in the past by the organisation, highlighted the continuity of the group's work, although it referred to a different event from the one created with Farmacia Zoo:é in 2018. The festival was held in September 2021 and was completed in collaboration with Perypezye Urbane. *Venere in Teatro* proposed twelve performances, a concert and a workshop. The results of the latter were presented during the evening and three open lessons curated by the artists performing during the week (Appendix I).

Live Arts Cultures also participated in the artistic programme *Opening Nights* for the re-opening of one of the municipal theatres in Mestre, Teatro del Parco.

⁵⁴ “SEMINA. Terreni Creativi”, Live Arts Cultures, accessed August 21, 2023. <https://liveartscultures.weebly.com/semina--terreni-creativi.html>

⁵⁵ “Venere In Teatro 2021”, Live Arts Cultures, accessed August 21, 2023. <https://liveartscultures.weebly.com/venere-in-teatro-2021.html>

Collaborating with the cultural associations Farmacia Zoo:é – curator of drama content – and Macaco – curator of music productions – a series of shows was presented between November and December 2021. The associations’ collective also proposed two training programmes for teenagers in collaboration with the distributing organisation of Veneto Region, Arteven. The activities included a workshop curated by Marianna Andrigo on movement and a seminar on multiple art disciplines by members of each association. Andrigo also presented *Notte a Teatro*: twelve hours in the theatre at night, in which a group of teenagers could experience the theatrical space differently. Some artists performing during the season also presented a short workshop after their evening shows. At the end of the season, a selected group of young local artists worked together for a week through a residency at the theatre.

The collaboration with the Municipality at Teatro del Parco led the three associations to the artistic direction of the seasonal programme of *youTheater. Al Teatro del Parco* from January to June 2022 and from October 2022 to June 2023⁵⁶. As in the previous months, evening shows dealt with dance, drama, and music performances – the association managed each category – and a morning programme for schools was proposed. Seminars for young people were also organised, one dealing with dance and one with drama and visual media. In the edition 2022-23, the classes were divided into two age sections: teenagers until eighteen years old and young adults until twenty-six years old. The programmes also proposed seven workshops by the artists and a series of residencies for professional artists and young artists (see Appendix).

At C32, the *Venice International Performance Art Week* activities returned with the residency *Body Matters*. Since the pandemic restrictions were still active, the artists decided to work with a more limited group of people: some of the artists that had become usual participants of the event during *Art Week* in the previous years took part in the residency and presented a final performance. C32 also hosted the residency works of the French company Kollektif Singulier, a class of the Dutch University Artez – University of Arts, dancer Marina Donatone, director Carola Minincleri Colussi, Il pesce d’oro, dancer Sara Sguotti, the German performers Julek Kreutzer and Diethild

⁵⁶ “Attività culturale 2022”, Live Arts Cultures, accessed August 21, 2023. https://liveartscultures.weebly.com/uploads/2/6/9/5/26951716/relazione_attivit%C3%A0_lac_2022.pdf

Meier, the Venetian companies Malmadur and Teatrino Pasini, and actor Alvisè Camozzi. Another activity presented during the summer of 2022 was the workshop for teenagers, *Raccontar Mi.Ti* by Marianna Andriago – supported by *Rete ad Alta Intensità Educativa* – and the two-day workshop *Cantieritalia* by director Barbara Altissimo.

The second edition of the festival *Venere in Teatro* occurred in September; besides the Ministry of Culture, the Veneto Region, the Municipality of Venice and the Venetian Fondazione Musei Civici became financial supporters. Live Arts Cultures proposed seventeen performances for ten days, a six-day workshop by director Claudia Castellucci, video installations and an open seminar conducted by Julek Kreutzer and Diethild Meier (Appendix I).

CHAPTER TWO

The Third sector between economic and social capital

As the previous chapter showed, Live Arts Cultures operates as a non-profit organisation dealing with live arts. It belongs to the category of cultural activity producers, representing an essential sector of the Italian economy. Thus, the second chapter of this dissertation will focus on the economic dimension of cultural activities' national production. In particular, elements of the Italian Cultural and Creative Production System will be hereafter discussed.

The absence of profit distribution among the association's members also describes Live Arts Cultures' identity and management. For this reason, this chapter examines the Third sector, including the whole of private organisations performing public utility activities without a profit goal. Analysis of the Third sector will consider both economic and sociologic issues. The analysis of the financial perspective allows us to understand the concrete impact of the industry on the national economy and its production of economic capital. Instead, sociological discourses help to evaluate the specificity of activities carried out by Third-sector entities, that is, the establishment of social relationships or, in other words, social capital.

The last part of this chapter aims to connect the considerations about the producing dimension of cultural activities and the role of human relationships, as they represent an essential feature for the development of both social and cultural capital.

2.1 Italian Cultural and Creative Production System

Since its informal beginning, Live Arts Cultures represented a means for experimentation for its members. Yet the artists involved also desired to share their activities with anyone interested in live arts, especially their local community. This way, the group respected the fundamental principle of managing Pavilion 32 as its nature of public good recommended. The artists used their knowledge and competencies about live arts to develop opportunities for fellow artists and new cultural habits for the community. The change of status of Live Arts Cultures' legal status – from informal artistic group to cultural association – represented primarily the

artists' intentions to structure their actions in a way that could be useful for them and the entire community. Since Aliprandi's first experiences at Forte Marghera, Pavilion 32 has attracted people who understood the creative potential of such space and worked together to increase its work. Especially after signing the rental agreement and becoming acknowledged by the Forte Marghera Foundation, the association functioned as a proper producer and distributor of cultural activities.

Live Arts Cultures' work also represents an economic contribution to the general arts and culture sector. The association can be considered part of the Italian Cultural and Creative Production System⁵⁷. The study of such a system aims to analyse the role of the cultural and creative sector relating to national wealth and to highlight relevant elements of its productive dimension. The Cultural and Creative Production System distinguishes two main categories of activities: the core component and the creative-driven one. The first category deals with the economic activity of public, private and Third-sector cultural organisations. At the same time, the creative-driven component indicates all the activities connected to cultural organisations but not directly producing cultural outputs. In 2021, the wealth generated by the entire Cultural and Creative System was equal to 88.584,4 billion euros, whereas 1.459.767 people worked in core and creative-driven activities⁵⁸. Concerning the Italian economy, the cultural sector provided 5,6% of the total wealth and 5,8% of workers. Those data represent a positive increase compared to the same sector (+4,2%) and the whole national economy (+6,6%) in 2020, the year the COVID-19 pandemic spread. However, the System could not recover completely from the pandemic difficulties: relating to 2019, the data of 2021 indicate a decrease of 3,4% of wealth produced by the sector and 1,1% of wealth in the entire economy. Percentages of workers show a slow increase that has yet to reach the levels before the pandemic, with decreases of 2,3% related to 2019 and 0,6% related to 2020.

Among the various core activities, some could face the unstable situation between 2020 and 2021 better than others⁵⁹. This happened because of the different impacts of the restrictions with regard to the Covid-19 pandemic. 2021 represented the toughest year for performing arts organisations as they witnessed a decrease of 21,9%

⁵⁷ Fondazione Symbola, Unioncamere, *Io Sono Cultura – Rapporto 2022*, (2022), p. 70.

⁵⁸ *Ivi*, p. 77.

⁵⁹ *Ivi*, p. 83.

in wealth and 15,6% in workers related to 2019. The second most challenging situation occurred for organisations promoting historical and artistic heritage, with a decrease of 11,8% in wealth and 14,6% in workers, related to 2019. The videogame and software sector was the only one to increase its activities, with positive percentages of 7,6% in wealth and 7% in workers.

Besides the core and creative-driven components, the Cultural and Creative System creates a network of intersectoral relationships⁶⁰. All the organisations directly or indirectly involved with cultural activities generate added value to other economic sectors. According to statistical analyses of such transversal relations, the added value results from multiplying the wealth composed by core and creative-driven activities with a specific coefficient equal to 1,8. The multiplier indicates that for each euro produced by the Cultural and Creative System, an average of 1,8 euros is made in other sectors.

In relation to 2021, some comparisons can be made between the private organisations operating in the system's core component, distinguishing for-profit enterprises and non-profit organisations. Concerning all Italian enterprises, the for-profit organisations dealing with cultural activities represented 4,5%, with 270.318 units⁶¹. The non-profit cultural organisations were 57.615 and corresponded to 15,9% of the total⁶². According to the occupation rate, enterprises employed 268.400 people, corresponding to 5,8% of all the workers in for-profit organisations; employees in non-profit organisations were 20.038, equal to 2,3% of the workers. However, the non-profit sector also relied on significant voluntary work: 752.281 people worked as volunteers for cultural and artistic activities, and 910.366 people volunteered for recreational activities in 2021. Voluntary work is a primary resource for the activities of non-profit organisations, contributing to their economic and social management⁶³: it supports the improvement of quality of life, social relationships and community welfare, and it proved to be essential during the pandemic.

The most recent picture of the distribution of cultural activities managed by non-profit organisations can refer to the data from 2020⁶⁴. The majority of

⁶⁰ Fondazione Symbola, Unioncamere, *Io Sono Cultura – Rapporto 2022*, pp. 96-98.

⁶¹ *Ivi*, p. 119.

⁶² Istituto Nazionale di Statistica, *Censimento Permanente delle Istituzioni Non Profit (2023)*, p. 2.

⁶³ *Ivi*, p. 3.

⁶⁴ Fondazione Symbola, Unioncamere, *Io Sono Cultura – Rapporto 2023*, (2023), p. 111.

organisations (89%) deal with performing and visual arts, followed by the promotion of historical and artistic heritage (3,4%), publishing and printing (1,9%), communications (0,2%), and music and audiovisuals (0,1%). Some activities are carried out by a small number of organisations, such as videogames and software, and architecture and design, while a group deals with other non-defined cultural activities (5,4%).

Non-profit organisations and public institutions support the production and sharing of cultural goods and services, responding to the nature of culture as a source of merit⁶⁵. In other words, cultural goods and activities constantly improve individual and collective aspects of people's lives. For this reason, private organisations are responsible for producing such merit goods and renouncing personal utility. The actions of such organisations are usually supported by European governments, although in the last twenty years, there have been relevant reductions to public funding aimed at such financing. In Italy, different choices about supporting cultural and recreational activities led to a decrease in public spending by about 30%, whereas the total public expenditure has increased by about 68%. At the same time, private non-profit organisations were urged to improve their fundraising strategies. The whole system became highly fragile during the pandemic, and the debate about adequate financing sources between public institutions and private organisations spread.

2.2 The Third sector as a source of economic capital

After considering the specific cultural sector managed by non-profit organisations, it is helpful to analyse the more general dimension of the Third sector to which non-profit organisations belong. The Third sector indicates the legal status of the organisations that do not distribute profits to their funders or members: such status allows the entities to structure all the activities – managerial, economic, etc. – that are fundamental to their survival.

The Third sector is the label of private organisations that are neither associated with for-profit enterprises nor belong to the public sector⁶⁶. The concept of a third actor

⁶⁵ Fondazione Symbola, Unioncamere, *Io Sono Cultura – Rapporto 2023*, p. 222.

⁶⁶ “Terzo Settore”, Treccani, accessed December 15, 2023, [https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/terzo-settore_res-063e4964-4061-11e7-a2fd-00271042e8d9_\(Enciclopedia-Italiana\)](https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/terzo-settore_res-063e4964-4061-11e7-a2fd-00271042e8d9_(Enciclopedia-Italiana))

in society derived from considering the State and the capitalistic market as the First and Second sectors. The First is the system legally constituted to represent the total citizenry, and its service costs are based on the collective needs and resources. The Second sector indicates the system of private enterprises providing goods and services, whose prices aim to bear the production costs and generate profits for the producers. The Third sector distinguishes itself from other private enterprises because the profits produced by its activities are not destined to the owners or members of its organisations: the profits are reinvested to sustain and improve management. Since the commercial purpose is absent, the members of Third-sector entities aim at public utility purposes, connecting public institutions' objectives and the private organisations' legal forms. In 2021, the most common forms of Third-sector entities were associations (85,2%), social cooperatives (4,1%) and foundations (2,3%), while the rest presented other legal statuses⁶⁷.

The activities carried out by non-profit organisations are a fundamental contribution to the national economies. In 2022, the Italian Third sector was based on 375.000 organisations and 900.000 employees – whose 70% were women – and produced 84 billion euros, representing 5% of the gross national product⁶⁸. Citizens recognised the commitment of the Third sector as demonstrated by two relevant factors: the size of subscriptions and voluntary work. Italian citizens can donate 0,5% of their annual income tax to support non-profit organisations. In the last decade, 15 million people decided to sustain the Third sector in such a way, appointing specific organisations to receive their donations or distributing their contributions among all the recipients⁶⁹. Thus, about 520 million euros were distributed annually to non-profit organisations, reaching 73.000 entities. The voluntary work also indicated how significant the contribution of the Third sector was for individuals: more than 4.661 billion volunteers took part in the activities of non-profit organisations in 2021⁷⁰. Not all the organisations in the Third sector involve voluntary work, yet those working with volunteers represent 72,1% of the total. About the previous census of non-profit

⁶⁷ Istituto Nazionale di Statistica, *Censimento Permanente delle Istituzioni Non Profit* (2023), <https://www.istat.it/it/files//2023/05/Censimento-non-profit-primi-risultati.pdf>, p.2.

⁶⁸ Fondazione Sussidiarietà, *Sussidiarietà e... Sviluppo Sociale. Rapporto sulla Sussidiarietà 2021/2022*, (Milano: Fondazione per la Sussidiarietà, 2023), p.15.

⁶⁹ *Ibidem*.

⁷⁰ Istituto Nazionale di Statistica, *Censimento Permanente delle Istituzioni Non Profit* (2023), p.3.

organisations in 2015, the presence of volunteers was decreasing throughout Italy. The trend was unusual only in North-Eastern areas and on the main islands, where the number of volunteers was higher in 2021 than in 2015.

The relevance of the Third Sector also results in the distribution throughout the national territory⁷¹. In 2019, surveys showed 61 non-profit organisations per 10.000 citizens. The North and the Centre had the highest numbers of organisations. Although the Southern regions presented fewer quantities, they showed a more significant increase in the foundations of new organisations⁷².

The data stated above indicate concrete evidence of the increasing value attributed to the Italian Third sector by the community. People structure their need for specific sociability that cannot fit into the forms of public institutions or private enterprises in the capitalistic market. On the one hand, statistical findings and censuses illustrate economic and managerial aspects of the non-profit organisations' activities, showing their quantifiable features. On the other hand, considering just the data cannot explain why the Third sector is developing in such a way. Another point of view may help to examine more generally the changes in worldwide societies that occurred since the last century and led to the current systematisation of the Third sector⁷³.

In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, masses evolved, and individuals could be understood as mere components of greater aggregates. Yet, from the second half of the last century, the awareness of the human being as a person more than a simple individual started to grow. The perception of being just an element inside a greater structure – whether, for instance, it is the civil society or the whole of consumers of a specific commercial product – is still evident. Nevertheless, phenomena like the spreading of mass media and new technologies, the higher rapidity of worldwide transportation, and globalisation undermined everyday certainties about how reality works. The small communities completely changed for individuals, and the much greater dimension of human relationships has become more difficult to understand. People have increasingly lost their strength in judging information as

⁷¹ Fondazione Sussidiarietà, *Sussidiarietà e... Sviluppo Sociale. Rapporto sulla Sussidiarietà 2021/2022*, p.33.

⁷² *Ivi*, p.34.

⁷³ Antonio Pavan, "Le Condizioni Politiche di una Nuova Cittadinanza nel Terzo Settore" In *Società e Terzo Settore. La Via Italiana*, edited by Giovanni Silvano (Bologna, Il mulino, 2011), pp.107-108.

truthful or false while receiving instant communications from all over the world and continuous news that often contradicts one another.

An incisive contribution to considerations about how people experience confusion and distress nowadays can be traced in the work by anthropologist Arjun Appadurai on the changes of modern times⁷⁴. In the nineties, Appadurai identified the fundamental causes of contemporary social disorders in two specific aspects of globalisation: migration and the spreading of electronic media. He focused on habitual cultural practices through which society changed and thought modern transformations should be analysed with a transnational approach. Indeed, the movements of thousands of people should have been considered when studying the evolution of contemporary communities. He also claimed that the consequences of experimentation with electronic technologies and media would have shown in the following years, especially when dealing with nationalism, violence and social justice⁷⁵. He believed the changes in modern sensitivity were not only a cultural matter but also something deeply connected with politics, as it expressed everyday urban dynamics.

Global migration and electronic media – adapting Appadurai’s considerations to today’s reality could suggest a more updated expression, that of *digital media* – exposed the essential element of global order, imagination⁷⁶. Imagination represents the element individuals refer to when perceiving confusion in everyday life. Suppose their external reference points are questioned by causes they cannot grasp. In that case, people tend to recur to what can distract and reassure them, confirming such a sensation of detachment from the hostile reality. Imagination runs to the rescue of the individual’s necessity and works to build social imagery. Social imagery recurs to fictional narratives to pursue a comforting purpose, re-editing the present⁷⁷. A collective vision of the current society calms the community, especially when people believe in something joining them together. This is why the past offers a time archive to which imagination can refer as necessary. Although narratives can alter some elements, the necessity to be attached to something that happened – fixed and not changing – justifies even mistakes about the past. It follows that a whole set of

⁷⁴ Arjun Appadurai (1996), *Modernità in Polvere*, Translated by Pietro Vereni (Milano, Raffaello Cortina Editore, 2012).

⁷⁵ *Ivi*, p. 18.

⁷⁶ *Ivi*, p. 44.

⁷⁷ *Ivi*, p. 42.

communicating signs normalises a fictional picture of the present and is completely detached from the actual social significances, which are the concrete objects of communication. Imagination becomes a social practice that mitigates the language and, at the same time, hides the cruel reality.

More than thirty years after Appadurai's first formulation of his theories, his considerations are still valid, especially his suggestion that globalisation's consequences would change global societies more and more. Social and political transformations begun in the nineties became some of the most pressing issues of contemporary reality. Deterritorialization of goods, resources, money and people is a phenomenon that anyone can witness worldwide⁷⁸. The places of departure and arrival of migrants start moving because people decide to continue their journeys towards better opportunities for their lives. In such a scenario, conceiving stable references in one's existence becomes difficult, leading to frustration. There, expedients like the invention of tradition, ethnicity, and other identity indicators grow strong and become dangerous. They condition the relationship between the entities of state and nation, which often express diverging positions. The explosiveness underlying nationalist movements threatens the fragile relations among States.

Appadurai also provides an interesting consideration about the idea of culture, founding the social imagery that re-edits the present and leads to the meaningful declination of collective identity. Imagination is a tool that adapts to any creative purpose, and it can define traditions as inventions approved by a community and can always change. Then, culture, the material of such traditions, seems difficult to associate with something preserved and fixed, like in the definition of *habitus* by French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu⁷⁹. Instead, it can be considered a whole of choices, justifications and aware representations of preferences.

Because individuals feel overwhelmed by unstoppable incentives, they need a strategy not to bow down to confusion and anguish. A possible solution is focusing on one person's humanity, considering others as people with the same common purpose of living peacefully together. Sympathetic actions to sustain and improve the community's life are an alternative reference to the fast transformation of everyday

⁷⁸ Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity in Polvere*, pp. 52-60.

⁷⁹ Pierre Bourdieu (1972), *Per una Teoria della Pratica. Con Tre Saggi di Etnologia Cabila*, Translated by Irene Maffi (Milano, Raffaello Cortina Editore, 2003).

reality. In this sense, the Third sector gained more and more supporters in managing organisations and acknowledging its role as a social and productive actor for national wealth.

Activities for the community represent actions that give meaning to individuals' lives and enhance collective cultural and economic structures. Solidaristic purpose becomes a synonym for public purpose, although public institutions do not perform the actions aimed at it. A change in the conception of the public develops away from the meaning of the State's prerogative, leading to a complex whole of opinions and activities affecting society directly from its single members⁸⁰. Public and private sectors become less and less distinct and appear to serve as immanent logics at the base of human behaviour. They sustain individuals' desires and necessities to provide grassroots attempts to face ordinary social problems. Collective actions, performed by community members who present themselves as private citizens, create a new form of public support and transform social actors' roles. Individuals' behaviour adapts increasingly less to defined social groups – which, in the past, represented macrostructures dealing with the social actors' needs⁸¹. Today, social categories are more challenging to define and describe in simple terms. As Arjun Appadurai indicated, global changes produced implicit and invisible segments in the social structure, in which people may find themselves with inadequate instruments to face everyday life and aspire to cultural, economic and social improvement. In such an uncertain dimension, several people decide to share their knowledge and practices with some specific social segments or the entire community, leading to numerous solidaristic approaches adopted by Third-sector entities.

If the anthropological perspective helps to explain the social usefulness of the Third sector, the economic view corroborates the importance of non-profit organisations. The Third sector enters the financial space where both the First and Second sectors fail to provide adequate services for the society's welfare⁸². On the one hand, public institutions struggle to respond to the fast changes in individuals' lives – because costs and bureaucracy stand as obstacles in resolving problems – and leave

⁸⁰ Antonio Pavan, “Le Condizioni Politiche di una Nuova Cittadinanza nel Terzo Settore”, p. 109.

⁸¹ Silvio Scanagatta, “Persona e Capitale Umano nel Terzo Settore” In *Società e Terzo Settore. La Via Italiana*, edited by Giovanni Silvano (Bologna, Il mulino, 2011), p. 83.

⁸² *Ivi*, p. 85.

the market to provide for their defects. On the other hand, privatisation often proves not to be the solution to the lack of public efficiency because private enterprises may aim to maximise their profits instead of caring for consumers' welfare. Moreover, consumers may lack information to evaluate their consumption accurately. Such a disadvantage for those who benefit from goods and services is called information asymmetry and constitutes a market failure⁸³. Then, the Third sector appears as the ideal solution: it may be expedient to increase the community's services while limiting the public cost and, at the same time, guarantee non-involvement in the monopolistic logic of for-profit enterprises, which leads to worse service quality for the consumers. Non-profit organisations may provide a better and broader contract for consumers, as the entities' legal commitment to devote their entire earnings to the production of services discourages raising prices and decreasing quality.

However, the actual situation of the Third sector is not clearly defined: non-profit organisations often toil to achieve economic sustainability, and their activities become strategically controlled by public institutions⁸⁴. The need for financial sustainability has raised some urgent issues for Third-sector entities, which must balance the dynamics of the First and Second sectors. Indeed, the first controversy deals with which elements of the public and private sectors the non-profit organisations should inherit⁸⁵. Public interventions and social activities cannot be defined by the profits they generate. However, in the past, this rightful purpose has often obstructed the First and Third sectors because it justified the waste of resources. Different principles of for-profit and non-profit organisations – profit maximisation and social equity – should not lead to a polarisation between efficiency and ethics. The need for adequate management of Third-sector entities also originated from the recent decrease in public funding to non-profit organisations and the development in size and role of the organisations. The search for balance between efficiency and solidarity has become evident outside and inside the Third sector.

Several attempts have been made to cross liberal and socialist policies to various extents – ranging between the opposites of individualism and collectivism. Yet,

⁸³ Henry B. Hansmann, "The Role of Nonprofit Enterprise", *The Yale Law Journal* 89, no. 5 (1980), pp.843-844, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/796089>.

⁸⁴ Silvio Scanagatta, "Persona e Capitale Umano nel Terzo Settore", p.86.

⁸⁵ *Ivi*, pp. 88-91.

no proposal has proved to resolve the matter. For instance, one case highlighted the social network as a source of solutions that are not usually considered. Connections among organisations could activate positive experiences by sharing their practices, but without external inputs, the resources of the single entities remained limited. Non-profit organisations need a strategy to become economically independent because no social policy can be achieved without the economic sustainability of its activities. The corporatisation process can help Third-sector entities develop their structure and improve their services without recurring to the simplistic association between financial sustainability and profit. For-profit enterprises cannot only focus on their earnings; considering the consumers' preferences and the employees' welfare are fundamental elements to elaborate their market competition strategy and internal efficiency.

Another complication for non-profit organisations is defining parameters and methods to measure efficiency⁸⁶. Enterprises in the capitalistic market provide all the existing references for quantifying the efficiency of organisations. Consequently, Third-sector entities may struggle to apply the for-profit example to their solidaristic dimension as they were used to judging their results by self-reflexivity without a technical approach. Indeed, the offer of a public service has preferred an accessible and easier consumption over the efficiency of the service management for a long time. Such a common habit has also made the application of the subsidiarity principle difficult. According to this social rule, the State should delegate the implementation of services to entities that can guarantee better quality and are closer to the citizens, always protecting efficiency and social equity. Without a defined system controlling the efficiency of non-profit organisations, subsidiarity is not entirely applied by public authorities, and citizens risk a lack of essential services as well as the best and least expensive ones. The consumers of a specific service and all the social classes may be deprived of their subsidiarity right, which stands as a component of the social contract. If public authorities also indicate vague directions on efficiency parameters for the Third sector, non-profit organisations are left with poor resources to improve their habits on more efficient management. This negligent situation leads to poor pay and precariousness and weighs negatively, especially on younger workers. The subsidiarity principle helps to understand why non-profit organisations should base their activities

⁸⁶ Silvio Scanagatta, "Persona e Capitale Umano nel Terzo Settore", pp. 92-95.

on efficiency strategies. Cautious management of solidaristic organisations does not compromise the ethical purpose; on the contrary, it represents a possible means of enhancing such a purpose. Third-sector operators can believe a similar opinion if they start feeling responsible not only for their actions' aims but also for managing resources. In this way, a different work environment may lead to a new sensibility and cultural orientation about the functioning of the Third sector.

A further contribution to stop considering efficiency and solidarity as choices may also derive from reflecting on the typologies of capital produced by non-profit organisations⁸⁷. According to their foundation statute, all Third-sector entities aim to sustain their communities by creating specific activities. Then, their principal capital can be defined as social capital, meaning that the output of the Third sector is primarily the creation of relations and support among the members of the society. The network of relationships can be achieved through several social connections, including productive activities. Therefore, all the actions performed by non-profit organisations can also refer to economic capital since those actions are services produced and consumed. Traditional economic theories associate services and goods with financial items undergoing production and consumption. However, in modern times, the concrete materiality of goods has become an essential element of economic items. Consequently, the market draws more attention to dealing with material goods, while services remain as items of secondary importance. Paradoxically, economic outputs rarely base their value only on production costs: a fundamental contribution to the definition of value comes from symbolic significance. Non-countable values are, for instance, the emotions consumers feel when using a particular item or on the social occasion when the consumption happens. Such an immaterial dimension has become vital in the market mechanisms yet struggles to be defined in the actual productive processes. In truth, a possible connection between countable and symbolic aspects of services can be analysed precisely in services produced by the Third sector. Non-profit organisations generate activities for their social capital, which is then implemented by achieving the status of economic capital. In other words, Third-sector services are produced and consumed to materialise social capital. The materiality of these services may not be concrete objects, but they make people physically meet and share some

⁸⁷ Silvio Scanagatta, "Persona e Capitale Umano nel Terzo Settore", pp. 96-97.

experiences. Such experiences create connections and sensations that may help individuals on infinite occasions.

The Third sector develops various human relations, defining a complex market section. It is hardly quantifiable because it relates to social capital, which indicates the quality aspects of the lives of society's members. Yet, without the Third sector, the people directly involved in producing and consuming its services and other community members would witness a worsening of their everyday reality. Two elements of social capital mainly affect society: the extent of relational skills, which structure all the social institutions – from the local systems to the national ones – and the social identity⁸⁸. Relational skills relate to any aspect of everyday life: they allow the most personal relationships with other people and the foundations of any productive activity. The Third sector proves its importance as it becomes one field where individuals can exercise and acknowledge their relational abilities. Autonomy then grows in creating and maintaining relations, as well as in defining their meaning. The continuous valuation of relationships also reveals the ability to consider the context, the needs and the consequences of those connections. It follows the practice of analysing and negotiating the symbolic significance of those relations and, consequently, the symbolic meaning of anything around them. Social identity constantly transforms and adapts to the individuals' necessities and habits, reaching the people and the goods connected to them.

2.3 Reorganising the Third sector

After considering the Third sector's definition, development and issues, the attention can be shifted to some elements that non-profit organisations have adopted to improve their economic sustainability in recent years.

Debates about more efficient management have influenced many Third-sector entities to rearrange their operational strategies and resource allocation. Generally, organisations have started to juxtapose efficiency purposes with their usual solidaristic objectives⁸⁹. Some examples include choosing adequate and flexible professionals and technicians for managerial responsibilities, adjusting operational systems to meet

⁸⁸ Silvio Scanagatta, "Persona e Capitale Umano nel Terzo Settore", pp. 97-99.

⁸⁹ *Ivi*, p.100.

expected results, and sharing achieved results with all organisation members. Moreover, public authorities have determined significant incentives for implementing more effective management practices⁹⁰. The Italian Legislative Decree 155 of 24 March 2006 designated the regulation of social enterprises, intended as totalities of individuals, resources, values and activities combined to achieve specific and declared public goals. Such a document was still imperfect in defining some aspects of the economic dimension of the Third-sector entities. Yet, non-profit organisations have increasingly adopted concepts and practices from business economics.

Four essential notions from economic theory help Third-sector operators better analyse and structure their activities: mission, governance, operations, and accountability⁹¹. The mission represents the organisation's purpose and is explained in specific goals and implementation strategies. Applied to the Third sector, it is implemented by all documents that state members' intentions and ethics and generally the formal agreement on the organisation's aims. Governance indicates the whole of the decision hierarchies and control references. It realises the typology of the organisation declared in the founding statute and defines how individuals can interact through the organisation's administrative organs. Operations are the activities carried out by the entities and concern the allocation and use of resources and the relation skills to communicate with the activities' targets. Finally, accountability refers to the editing and reporting of data about the activities of organisations. Accounting documents serve many purposes, providing information for decision processes, operational programs, and monitoring methods. They are the materials through which all stakeholders can control how the Third Sector entities use their resources.

The two main financial reports for Third-sector entities are the balance sheet and the social balance sheet⁹². Accounting rules for non-profit organisations have been disregarded for a long time since efficient management was not considered a necessary element of the social sector. However, as economic sustainability began to be recognised as an essential condition to achieve solidaristic aims, reporting instruments were established as habitual tools of non-profit organisations. Guidelines for

⁹⁰ Giacomo Boesso, "Economicità e *Accountability* nel Terzo Settore" In *Società e Terzo Settore. La Via Italiana*, edited by Giovanni Silvano (Bologna, Il mulino, 2011), p.179.

⁹¹ *Ivi*, pp.182-185.

⁹² *Ivi*, pp. 193-205.

compiling the balance sheet depend on the specific legal form of the entities. When the Third-sector entities do not present a corporate form, they must provide a simple management overview, as established by the Italian public institution Consiglio Nazionale dei Dottori Commercialisti e degli Esperti Contabili. Instead, organisations formed as corporate entities must comply with the legislation on financial statements introduced by the Italian civil code and national and international accounting principles. The balance sheet distinguishes four categories of contributions: revenues, public funding, individual donations and non-repayable funding. Such distinction helps Third-sector organisations explain the values of their outputs, whose revenues may appear too low according to market logic. Since non-profit entities often bear on public funding or donations, a more accurate categorisation of the contribution leads to a more transparent reporting activity.

The social balance sheet refers to general directions released by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies⁹³. It serves the organisations' activities as a tool for defining and verifying goals. Every year, specific indicators illustrate information about operations, outputs, and outcomes – which distinguish the actual activities carried out by the operators, the results achieved, and the impact of these activities on the target consumers. Stakeholders can interpret the organisations' behaviour thanks to three main points: the evaluation of consistency between goals pursued and instruments adopted, the evaluation of implementation strategies, and the impact evaluation on consequences generated by the activities.

The jurisdiction of rights and obligations of the Third Sector entities improved with the Legislative Decree 117 of 2017, also known as the Third Sector Code⁹⁴. This document belongs to a series of legislative decrees defined by Act No. 6 of 2016, through which the Italian Parliament delegated the government to reform the Third sector and rearrange the past legislation. The other three fundamental decrees regulate the universal civil service – Legislative Decree 40 of 2017, the institution of the five per thousand on personal income tax – Legislative Decree 111 of 2017, and social enterprises – Legislative Decree 112 of 2017. The Code's twelve sections define the

⁹³ Italian Ministry of Labour and Social Policy Decree, January 24, 2008.

⁹⁴ “Codice del Terzo Settore”, Italia Non Profit, accessed December 26, 2023. <https://italianonprofit.it/risorse/definizioni/codice-terzo-settore/>

Third-sector entities and their characteristics, management rules, tax regime and control systems⁹⁵. Article Four lists as acknowledged organisations voluntary organisations, associations for social promotion, philanthropic entities, social enterprises, including social cooperatives, association networks, mutual aid societies, associations, whether recognised or not, foundations and other private entities other than companies. On a non-profit basis, these organisations must carry out one or more activities – specified in Articles Five and Six – aiming at civic, solidarity and socially valuable purposes. Actions and purposes are expressed in the certificate of incorporation and the statute on the organisation’s functioning. These documents also indicate the role and the obligations of the Members’ Assembly, which, for instance, defines the members of the administrative organs and the statutory auditor and approves the financial statements. Specific conditions, illustrated in Articles Thirty and Thirty-One, determine the appointment of the statutory auditor, monitoring compliance with the law and the articles of association, and the principles of proper administration. Organisations can structure fundraising actions through organised and continuous patterns, including the supply of goods and services of modest value. Volunteers and employees can participate in organisations’ activities, always according to principles of transparency and honesty.

All Third Sector entities must enrol in the Third Sector National Register – in Italian *Registro Unico Nazione del Terzo Settore (RUNTS)* – an online instrument to guarantee non-profit organisations’ transparency established by the Italian Ministry of Labour and Social Policies. For each entity, the register presents several data, such as the legal status, the legal residence and eventual secondary offices, the date of constitution, and all the changes in the certificate of incorporation and the statute. The register is then revised every three years.

The organisations producing activities as commercial enterprises must also enrol in the online public register *Registro Imprese*, to which all enterprises compulsorily sign up in Italy and which is governed locally by the Chambers of Commerce. Third-sector entities file their balance sheets to the two registers, which present the statement of assets and liabilities, the financial report and the mission

⁹⁵ “DECRETO LEGISLATIVO 3 luglio 2017 , n. 117”, Normattiva, accessed December 26, 2023. <https://www.normattiva.it/esporta/attoCompleto?atto.dataPubblicazioneGazzetta=2017-08-02&atto.codiceRedazionale=17G00128>

report, according to the guidelines established by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies. Organisations must release other essential documents, such as the Members' Book, the Book of the Assembly's Meetings and Deliberations, and the Book of Meetings and Deliberations relating to the administrative and control organs.

The concept of subsidiarity appears in Article Fifty-five, besides other principles like cooperation and efficiency, which encourage public institutions to involve Third-sector entities in programming and implementing local services based on the activities listed in Article Five. Collaborations between the First and Third sectors can occur as co-planning, accreditation and local social programming. The implementation of social activities of public interest by non-profit organisations can also involve conventions with public institutions.

Section eight of the Code defines the institutions promoting the Third-sector entities. These are the National Council of the Third Sector – in Italian *Consiglio Nazionale del Terzo Settore*, the Volunteer Service Centres – in Italian *Centri di servizio per il volontariato*, the National Control Body – in Italian *Centro nazionale di controllo*, and the Territorial Control Bodies – in Italian *Organismi territoriali di controllo*. The National Council of the Third Sector stands as a non-binding authority monitoring the regulatory acts and the financial resources of the Third-sector entities; it also controls the national association networks. It is established by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies and the National Control Body. The latter is a foundation with legal personality under private law and manages the National Fund for sustaining the Volunteer Service Centres. The Fund provides stable three-year funding and originates from the compulsory contributions of banking foundations. The National Control Body defines the amount of Volunteer Service Centres throughout the country and supervises them through the referring Territorial Control Bodies. Volunteer Service Centres are Third-sector entities providing technical, formative and informative support to promote and enhance volunteers' presence and role in non-profit organisations.

Finally, several articles of the Code relate to the financial initiatives sustaining the Third sector – reported in sections eight, nine, and ten. For instance, the State, the Regions and the Independent Provinces foster access to the European Social Fund and other European funding; another national Fund, managed by the National Council of

the Third Sector, allocates resources financing activities of general interest, as reported by Article Nine in Act No. 6 of 2016. Third-sector organisations – excluding social enterprises – can also benefit from subsidised rent when they have a public movable or immovable property in concession. Organisations can propose a management project to promote redevelopment and reconversion of assets through restructuring and recovery, which ensures preservation, public opening and promotion of the public place. Public authorities can also deduct the intervention expenditures from the rent.

The aspects of the Code highlighted so far, aimed to rearrange and revise the past jurisdiction of the Third sector, show evident connections to corporate law⁹⁶. The Code refers to company regulations regarding subsidiarity and, in some cases, appeals to a compatibility clause to apply such rules to the specific instances of Third-sector entities. Direct references to company regulations appear when dealing with members' decisional processes, organisations' management and control, and defining the responsibilities of administrative organs. The necessity of more efficient governance led the Code to establish differentiated rules according to the categories of Third-sector entities. Instructions for monitoring the activities' results focus more attention on the actions performed by the organisations. Such initiatives try to combine economic principles with social purposes and still present some defects⁹⁷. Yet, the connections between corporate rules and Third-sector organisations reveal the legislative authority's awareness of the social utility of non-profit entities. Then, this awareness enables the Third sector to structure its activities through the Code.

2.4 The Third sector and the social capital

In considering the economic dimension of the Third sector, the anthropological discourse contributed to a better discussion of the changes in the recent past, which led to the development of the Third sector. Appadurai's considerations about the consequences of globalisation help to contextualise the statistical findings about the actions of non-profit organisations. Moreover, the focus on the Third Sector Code showed how the legislative authorities recently acknowledged and structured the

⁹⁶ Matteo L. Vitali, *Riforma del Terzo Settore, Nuova Disciplina dell'Impresa Sociale e Regole Societarie*, *Osservatorio del Diritto Civile e Commerciale*, no. 1 (January 2020), 79-128, DOI 10.4478/98133.

⁹⁷ *Ivi*, p.104.

essential contribution to public utility by the Third-sector entities. The ethical dimension of the operators has been recognised as the primary characteristic of non-profit activities through the creation of social relationships. Connections established among the members of society can lead to improvement in all the fields of individuals' lives: this constitutes the social capital and stands as an identity trait of the Third sector. However, not all those who studied this sector have agreed on the ethical nature of the capital produced. Some argue that the relationships established through social activities have other essential purposes, and solidaristic behaviour is secondary, although important. For instance, American professor of law and economics Henry Hansmann, one of the classic theoreticians of the Third sector, identified non-profit enterprises as vital elements of the modern economy⁹⁸. He judged such organisations to be the best alternative to consumers' uncertain evaluation of goods and services, a market failure, also known as contract failure. People tend to trust organisations aiming to improve service quality and not distribute profits among members. Then, the solidaristic purpose appears just as a formal feature of Third-sector entities, whose essential goal remains to fix the market sectors ruined by the contract failure.

In the sociological field, some consider the utility of social activities and the absence of distribution of earnings as elements to better please consumers rather than enhancing their social capital. Italian sociologist Giovanni Moro regards the development of the Third sector as a strategy planned by the organisations to improve their relations with public institutions⁹⁹. Then, the concept of the *non-profit sector* should be treated as an invention to legitimise and implement specific social policies establishing a classification for those organisations. It follows a political operation to identify and give visibility to an endless and fragmented series of entities, even though it risks turning into a twisted move for the same organisations.

Another strategic use of the ethical identity – aimed to diversify the activities produced – appears from the considerations of French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu applied to the Third sector¹⁰⁰. Bourdieu believed that any human action or practice follows the input of one's *habitus*. This is one of the most famous and complex

⁹⁸ Henry B. Hansmann, "The Role of Nonprofit Enterprise", p. 835.

⁹⁹ Sandro Stanzani, *La Dimensione Etica e il Problema della Specificità del Terzo Settore*, *Sociologia e Politiche Sociali*, no. 1 (2016): 163-164, DOI: 10.3280/SP2016-001008.

¹⁰⁰ *Ivi*, pp. 167-169.

concepts conceived by the French sociologist¹⁰¹. *Habitus* represents an embodied system of intellectual schemes that people continuously and unconsciously adjust to the contexts to which they belong. It is instilled by education and experience and allows individuals to implement their behaviour systematically and reproduce the features of their existence. Therefore, *habitus* is a principle-generating practice that is objectively classifiable and system-classifying practice. The combination of these aspects leads to specific lifestyles¹⁰². People of the same social class share a similar lifestyle because they are assumed to experience similar circumstances. The features expressed bear the differences standing between classes so that *habitus* marks the specific taste of a social group. Taste defines the attitude of material and symbolic appropriation of practices simultaneously associated with a class and evaluates what should be related to them. Each social group joins a certain number of people who are always about each other¹⁰³. For every activity, the network of relationships creates a field, the space where individuals relate, primarily through power dynamics. In fact, according to Bourdieu, the generating principle of each field is the competitors' interests in possessing specific resources and their ability to use them to gain an advantage over the others. The field develops a proper *habitus*, now intended as the whole of autonomous rules that define the space and originate from the interrelated competitors' forces and the force over the competitors from the space itself. The forces of the single competitors derive from their *habitus* and tastes, which refer to different kinds of capital – the resources of various aspects of lives that are cultural, social, economic, symbolic, political, and ethical¹⁰⁴. The dominant competitors result as those preserving or transforming the change rate among the capital typologies. They establish their power as the indirect result determined by the totality of intertwined actions that the competitors experience.

Bourdieu believes people's actions follow specific interests, which consistently explain human behaviour¹⁰⁵. Interests are the reason guiding human practices, which

¹⁰¹ Richard Jenkins, *Pierre Bourdieu. Revised Edition*, (London: Routledge, 2002), pp. 74-76.

¹⁰² Pierre Bourdieu, (1979), *La Distinzione : Critica Sociale del Gusto*, Translated by Guido Viale (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1983), pp. 174-179.

¹⁰³ Pierre Bourdieu, *Ragioni Pratiche*, Translated by Roberta Ferrara (Bologna: Il Mulino 1995), pp. 46-49.

¹⁰⁴ Sandro Stanzani, *La Dimensione Etica e il Problema della Specificità del Terzo Settore*, *Sociologia e Politiche Sociali*, p. 167.

¹⁰⁵ Pierre Bourdieu, *Ragioni Pratiche*, pp. 134-142.

always require a particular cost. One meaning of the word interest is also cost or price. Human actions always come with a motivation and a specific amount of value. That's why Bourdieu wonders if developing a sociological consideration about disinterest is possible. A disinterested action would have no cost or reason according to the considerations above. Yet, actions need a reason to occur. Nevertheless, reality shows that disinterested actions, meaning unselfish, happen every day. Indeed, the rational thought about the necessity of interest as a reason must encompass more complex reasoning. Referring to the meaning of cost, interest belongs to the semantic area of economic capital. However, this is just one of the categories of capital to which the human being can relate. Besides the concrete materiality, the value of an action can also be perceived as symbolic capital. The latter originates from intellectual structures – perception categories, cognitive schemes, and classification systems – which allow one to attribute meaning to different extents. This way, actions no longer need a concrete price: disinterest is sociologically possible. Unselfish actions can result from a *habitus* prearranged to disinterest and fields in which disinterested actions are valid and rewarded.

A question still arises from Bourdieu's considerations: whether disinterest is truly an unselfish practice – which people carry out for their own sake – or is a concept comparable to profit¹⁰⁶. People pay costs to achieve something, and, in the case of individuals producing something to be sold in the market, they pay the costs of resources and labour to earn some profit. Earnings are the goal of the activity, just like disinterest is the purpose of unselfish actions. Solidaristic activities contribute to the collective welfare based on the best interests possible for the highest quantity of people. Human reason – intending intellect or logic – is fundamental to recognise what activities should be universalised. Concrete improvement of society's welfare requires structured actions and following specific rules and laws. Therefore, individuals are willing to invest some of their resources – which are not necessarily monetary – as long as their actions will enhance their collective lives. Then, their compensation occurs in terms of better consequences in their individual lives. Collective values, belonging to the solidaristic narrative, are one's values universalised. On different concepts of capital, disinterest and profit are equivalent values.

¹⁰⁶ Pierre Bourdieu, *Ragioni Pratiche*, pp. 143-149.

Bourdieu's considerations about economic and symbolic capital dynamics suggest a perfectly logical reasoning. However, they presume that human relationships only stand as power struggles and that people define their social positions in the fields only through competitive strategies, even when ethical purposes are involved¹⁰⁷. The focus of disinterested actions aiming to improve the collective welfare refers to the individual actor, neglecting the social connection established, that is, the value of social capital. Then, social relations seem to present two conflicting assumptions: on the one hand, people involved should be autonomous and independent in establishing their relationships; on the other hand, the social connection transforms the parties into dependent subjects¹⁰⁸.

Another sociological perspective may help to overcome the matter of individualism as the only guiding principle of social relations. Considering the approach of relational sociology, ethical goals stop functioning as an instrumental opportunity. Relational sociology bases its considerations on relationships, intending a general and common human activity that needs more than one person to be fulfilled. When relationships become the means through which individuals can contribute to society's welfare, a change occurs in the subjectivity of the action. Rather than being interested in what is helpful for their own sake, people involved start feeling more inspired by the collective entity to which they belong¹⁰⁹. Their lives are influenced simultaneously, and deceiving other community members would not be worthwhile. Relationships connecting members of the same community and enhancing their everyday lives are the social capital that composes the Third sector. All the non-profit organisations – gathered under the concept of *social private* by Italian sociologist Pierpaolo Donati¹¹⁰ - represent private networks of social entities that implement public and solidaristic activities and orientations.

Relational sociology defines the Third sector as a social phenomenon, a complex configuration of human relations¹¹¹. The social dimension acts as the matrix

¹⁰⁷ Sandro Stanzani, *La Dimensione Etica e il Problema della Specificità del Terzo Settore*, *Sociologia e Politiche Sociali*, p.169.

¹⁰⁸ *Ivi*, p.170.

¹⁰⁹ *Ivi*, p.172.

¹¹⁰ *Ivi*, p.171.

¹¹¹ Pierpaolo Donati, *Sociologia del Terzo Settore* (Roma: Carocci, 1998), pp.15-40.

for all the other aspects of the sector – cultural, economic, political and legal. The need to establish social relationships emerges as an essential feature of human beings, as it appears in the everyday life of societies. Other values enrich the connections subsequently, whether they concern economic exchanges or political discourses. The Third-sector entities recognise social value as the primary feature of their identity and target their activities towards producing a specific kind of goods, which are relational goods. Such a definition goes beyond economics and law's traditional classifications of goods and services. Relational goods are neither public nor private and encompass all that needs to be consumed while people share them in connection. Such a collective dimension for consuming certain goods reveals an advanced structure of society. Indeed, increasingly complex societies must arrange their activities into various sectors. The traditional categorisation of sectors acknowledges four main dimensions: the economic organisations – the capitalistic market; the political and administrative authorities – the State and its organs; the informal entities – the families; the social solidarity organisations – the Third sector. The four sectors operate as systems, with their institutions managing the corresponding activities. Since the Third sector depends on the social interactions of a specific community, its characteristics are not objectively predictable from the beginning of its development. Social needs referring to relationships differentiated from the dynamics of the market and public institutions define the framework of the Third sector between the most formal configuration – as in administrative entities – and the economically inspired management. However, to establish itself formally and become acknowledged by all the actors of the society, the Third-sector organisations need to have their purposes and actions approved by the other sectors: the non-profit activities must be provided for their own economic evaluation and legislative space. Such aspects are essential to make the Third sector a component equal to the other sectors of society. In this way, civil society can implement its ambition of acting functionally. Its social role becomes visible and quantifiable thanks to the exchanges with other sectors. In addition, through the connections among the Third sectors, other society institutions can scale their social parameters.

2.5 Production of Cultural Activities through Relational Networks

As illustrated in the previous paragraph, social connections are an inescapable aspect of human nature, whose development leads to networks in which individuals interact through different capital levels. Relationships allow people to define the meaning of everything involved in their interactions; such a process is the mechanism defining culture. As reported in the UNESCO Declaration on Cultural Diversity, culture represents

[...] the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of society or a social group, and that it encompasses, in addition to art and literature, lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs [...] ¹¹².

By definition, culture is something shared and refers to the significance of ideas, objects and all that pertain to networks of people. Therefore, it considers anything surrounding human beings and their thoughts and actions. Agreed meanings allow individuals to determine which values the various aspects of everyday life should have and their corresponding capital.

A particular role of culture occurs in the case of cultural meanings associated with multiple interpretations of symbolic capital. As it happens in complex societies, people may need to meditate on the culture itself and follow in creating goods and actions to deepen cultural considerations. The outputs of such activity define a sector of human work that produces cultural and artistic items and performances. Necessarily, such a sector achieves other forms of capital like the economic one, as shown by the Italian Cultural and Creative Production System data ¹¹³. Goods and actions relating to artistic content seem to develop a fundamental level of symbolic capital. This appears to be perceived and understood only by a limited group of people, who distinguish themselves by studying or being acquainted with the items. American art critic Arthur Danto suggested that those who take part in the *art world* – intending the social sector which deals with artworks and artistic performances – share a similar habit of

¹¹² “UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity: a vision, a conceptual platform, a pool of ideas for implementation, a new paradigm”, UNESCO, accessed 31, 2023. <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000127162>

¹¹³ See paragraph 2.1.

observing artistic items¹¹⁴. The skill of recognising certain artistic qualities and discussing particular cultural meanings identifies the most relevant aspects of the interactions between members of the art world.

One of the fundamental and most controversial questions regarding art is how to define what art is or what distinguishes artworks from other common objects of everyday life. Again, Danto provided an interesting consideration, examining all the elements that characterised historical artistic languages and styles. He imagined an actual rectangular matrix in which the features of the artworks correspond to their pieces, creating a visual sequence of the aspects of art history. Artists and artistic movements provided a series of aesthetic qualities in their works that seem never to end. Yet, the art critic seems not interested in the actual process, leading some aesthetic aspects into the historical acknowledgements of art. Instead, he notices how such a phenomenon can be considered from a sociological point of view¹¹⁵. The traditional theory of art supports the perception that only a limited number of individuals can observe and appreciate art. These people appear as an elitist circle, which detaches itself from the contingency of common social relations. However, reality can easily contradict such reasoning because relationships connecting people in the art world are intertwined with many other sectors of society. Paradoxically, many sociological studies related to art appear to accept the assumption that the art world is detached from the rest of society, as the theory of art sustains¹¹⁶. For instance, the already-mentioned Pierre Bourdieu believes all individuals develop competitive strategies to position themselves in their social fields. Each field is based on a specific activity that all the competitors within the field carry out. Power struggles determine the positions and the corresponding influence, as well as who can enter the field or leave it. These dynamics also occur in the sector of art production. If Bourdieu's social space is confronted with Danto's matrix, the competition among artists could be translated into choosing the correct aesthetic features to become the next acknowledged piece of art. Artists and all those working to produce artworks belong to a specific field with its language and rules, which are the *habitus* of the art world. In this way, people in the

¹¹⁴ Laurie Hanquinet, Mike Savage, ed. *Routledge International Handbook of the Sociology of Art and Culture* (London: Routledge, 2016), p. 162.

¹¹⁵ *Ibidem*.

¹¹⁶ *Ivi*, pp.163-164.

art field appear to be detached from the other social spaces because the intellectual categories and schemes define practices specifically used only in that field.

An approach that at first seems similar to Bourdieu's derives from the concept of the *art world* by American sociologist Howard Becker¹¹⁷. Becker believed that all artistic activities, as they belong to the greater category of human work, require the collaboration of a certain quantity of individuals. All those involved in artistic activities must accept some agreements to coordinate their actions as easily and efficiently as possible¹¹⁸. Then, some conventional ways of working establish the references for artistic ideas, languages, and devices that allow artists, support personnel and audience members to make sense of the artworks. Therefore, conventions set essential constraints on artistic practices, although they are not entirely fixed. Artists can always choose to act differently from the custom if they prepare themselves to face consequences like a decrease in artwork circulation or a general cold reception. In any case through which the artist decides how to behave, an artistic activity generates an art world, which consists of all the people contributing with the necessary actions to produce this artistic activity.

If people interacting in the art world must share some conventions, these necessary agreements appear to function as the proper language of that social space. As in Bourdieu's art field, Becker's art world suggests that its members somehow separate themselves from other social actors. However, the American sociologist stresses a fundamental difference from the concept of the field: art worlds cannot have fixed boundaries¹¹⁹. They interact with all the other organised society groups, so they are likely to vary to some extent. Above all, art worlds are relational networks – tangled connections between human beings – and the values attributed to their goods – pieces of art – originate from the meanings shared by the members of the world itself. Though they have aesthetic value, meanings associated with artworks should not be confused with pure aesthetic judgements. While traditional art theories support the idea of an art world detached from social reality, with its theoretical concepts and language, Becker's art world is based on the language that individuals use in their everyday lives, and that

¹¹⁷ Howard S. Becker, *Art Worlds* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008).

¹¹⁸ *Ivi*, pp.29-33.

¹¹⁹ *Ivi*, pp.35-39.

elaborates specific meaning open to any change coming from other sectors of society. The relationships among all the parties involved in art production constantly transform so that mutations develop continuously in art history.

Howard Becker repositioned the focus on the paradox first imagined by Arthur Danto through his considerations about the infinite list of art history's features. Danto highlighted the impression that the aesthetic qualities of the art world could form a specific language detaching itself from other human activities and remaining connected to them at the same time¹²⁰. Instead, the American sociologist provided a singular alternative to the paradox by considering aesthetic meanings as any other output of social communication. This way, anyone running into an artistic activity can potentially understand and use the art world's language. To comprehend such language, individuals should share and question the values associated with artistic qualities. Indeed, although it might seem an exaggerated practice to perform, this process is the usual and subconscious mechanism through which humans learn and implement all their cultural traits.

Becker's art worlds – and all that is within them – change constantly because they originate from social interactions, which always challenge the meanings and values of human actions¹²¹. Danto's considerations about essential qualities of historical artworks suggest that all those features making the corresponding art pieces become acknowledged are some of the infinite changes art history witnessed. Artists praised as masters are some members of the same art world in which many other artists remain less celebrated. At first, innovative aesthetic qualities may appear as irrelevant mistakes. Yet, the individuals working in the creative process might identify a certain meaning in these mistakes. By choosing to reproduce and share such features, the unusual qualities can be accepted by the other members of the art world and reach the form of conventions. A change in creative practices or in defining the primary aesthetic values could always lead to abandoning rules previously considered inescapable references.

¹²⁰ Hanquinet, Savage, *Routledge international handbook of the sociology of art and culture*, pp. 164-165.

¹²¹ Howard S. Becker, *Art Worlds*, p.300-309.

CHAPTER THREE

Economic and social capital in Live Arts Cultures' activities

The last chapter of the thesis analyses the activities of Live Arts Cultures according to the essential points about the Third sector and cultural producers highlighted in the second chapter. As reported in the sociological discourse about the Third sector, social capital is a natural need for individuals and the founding component of non-profit organisations' activities. Also, it contributes to defining cultural meanings in human communities, allowing people to confront different opinions and necessities. The following analysis focuses on how Live Arts Cultures' members considered and developed social capital and the role of social capital in the artists' research, their cultural habits and relationships with the community. Particular attention is given to the status change occurred in 2014, which led to the foundation of Live Arts Cultures as a cultural association. I also analyse here how the organisation connected its social capital to economic capital and how the nature of non-profit organisations influenced the role of Live Arts Cultures as a cultural producer.

The producers of cultural and artistic activities usually belong to three categories: public institutions, private enterprises, and non-profit organisations. The latter is the most recent group in Italy to update its legal regulation, as all the entities in the Third sector did. In 2016, the Italian Parliament passed a law delegating the government to reform the normative context of all the organisations producing activities for public utility purposes. Since 2017, a series of legislative and ministerial decrees have implemented rules and instruments to improve the management of non-profit entities. Therefore, the Third sector represents a part of social actors still defining their productive capacity and economic sustainability.

Non-profit organisations relate to social business, which plays a significant role in national economies¹²². According to the European Commission, social economy actively involves individuals in their communities. Entities engaged in social business are recognised as institutions helping society's development, from the local to the

¹²² “Creare un'economia al servizio delle persone: un piano d'azione per l'economia sociale”, Commissione Europea, Accessed January 31, 2024. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/IT/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52021DC0778&from=EN>

European dimension. They pursue activities with public utility purposes, positively impacting their context. Profits and surpluses are not addressed to the enterprises' owners and stakeholders but to enhance their productivity. Also, they implement accountable and transparent actions in their management¹²³. In the European Union, five typologies of non-profit organisations participate in the social economy, though their legal forms depend on each nation's regulations¹²⁴. They are associations, cooperative companies, benefit societies, foundations, and social enterprises. The last ones only received a formal definition from the European Commission in 2011. They operate by combining their social purposes with private entrepreneurial management. Therefore, they appear to be valuable institutions joining economic and social sectors. Enterprise management implies an ongoing and professional production of goods or services, a minimum number of employees, and significant financial risk. Social goals require activities' profits to go into the fund addressed to the organisation's work. Consequently, governance becomes an essential aspect of efficient social enterprise management. It is based on an autonomous foundation and management, decision-making processes not influenced by capital ownership, and a participative structure involving all the stakeholders in the organisation's activities.

3.1 Social capital as a component of artistic practice

In their individual and joint work, Marianna Andriago and Aldo Aliprandi consider experimenting with live arts an intimate necessity. Primarily through their encounter and experience with electronicgirls leading to Live Arts Cultures, they develop the desire to deepen the meaning of their relationships and their artistic connotations. Their work allows them to deepen a need that everybody has – questioning one's existence – and try to answer in different ways. They search for what can nurture the interpretation of reality, the relation with others, and the maintain logic of hospitality in the project of C32. One of the artists' principles in working at Forte Marghera has always been sharing a space equipped for live arts¹²⁵. Their co-workers

¹²³ *The Social Business Initiative of the European Commission*, Commissione Europea, Accessed January 31, 2024. http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/publications/docs/sbi-brochure/sbi-brochure-web_en.pdf

¹²⁴ Sara Rago, "L'Impresa Sociale in Europa" In *Società e Terzo Settore. La Via Italiana*, edited by Giovanni Silvano (Bologna, Il mulino, 2011), pp.247-250.

¹²⁵ Live Arts Cultures, *C32 performing art work space. Report 2012-2014*, p. 3.

accepted and enhanced such an idea, especially when Live Arts Cultures started operating as an informal artistic group. Andriago and Aliprandi's productions and the experimentations with electronic girls originated from the desire to work together and explore their creative connections. All the artists believed in the relational dimension as the space where their artistic concepts could search for a form. Also, the group's name was meant to express the fundamental diversity and creative power of live arts. It suggested something made more potent by its collective identity that could not be repressed. Besides, the artists considered the possibility of working together as their interpretation of the collective use of public property. They never saw Pavilion 32 as their private place where they could do whatever they wanted. They took the opportunity offered by the informal agreement between the Marco Polo System and Aliprandi to have a working space. However, they always felt responsible for the building itself and for presenting their activities as a cultural proposal for the community.

Sharing represented a natural practice deeply associated with the specific research carried out at C32. The ways the informal artistic group experimented with live arts remind us of the creative potentiality that originated from the turn to performance in theatre history, as discussed by German theatre critic Hans-Thies Lehmann¹²⁶. During the last century, art forms, starting with the live events of neo-avantgarde movements and happenings, led to a cultural phenomenon focusing on the gestural aspect of the body executing artistic actions. Performance art increasingly defined itself as a discipline, distancing the object of the artwork from the recognisable tradition of visual arts. The performer's body became the referent of the creative meaning, involving the spectators in a completely different way from their habitual artistic experience. Focusing on the performing dimension also led to considerations and innovations in the theatrical field. This attention to the performance's materiality was linked to new attitudes toward the hegemony of the text in the theatre, especially from the second half of the Twentieth century.

The spirit of experimentation with performance burst in the Sixties belongs to the context of one of Aliprandi's principal guiding texts, *Opera Aperta* by Umberto

¹²⁶ Hans-Thies Lehmann (1999), *Postdramatic theatre*, Translated by Karen Jürs-Munby (Cambridge: Routledge, 2006), pp. 4-6.

Eco (1962). Eco's considerations on openness reflect his current aesthetic atmosphere where art forms questioned their rules and production. Eco's definition of open artwork – in Italian *opera aperta* – indicates a work which is continuously available to offer new and different inputs in its fruition. To explain how openness operates, Eco focuses on analysing the artistic language. Although it keeps the semantic dimensions of denotation and connotation as the everyday language, the artistic discourse adds an emotional aspect to the connotation¹²⁷. In other words, an artwork presents itself with a specific form, constituting its denotative or referential level. Such a form connects with a meaning and an emotional experience, which is the connotative level. Then, the aesthetic experience of the artwork occurs by altering the linear association between referent and meaning. The usual dynamic of everyday language requires a direct connection between the denotative sign and its connotation. Yet, in the artistic form, referent and meaning are interconnected in a loop system, and significance continuously acquires new aspects¹²⁸. The aesthetic sign becomes ambiguous and leads the receiver the artwork's spectator – to experience different ways of fruition. Variable echoes in significance expressed through the artistic sign create the art form. Then, the aesthetic function of the artwork consists of repeatedly stimulating the audience. The form loses its aesthetic value if it stops providing different inputs for its reception.

Eco also provides a communication perspective on the functioning of aesthetic discourse¹²⁹. As previously reported, significance is what the referent is connected to. It is transmitted through the conventional structures of a language known by each person. All communicating individuals must use recognisable linguistic patterns to understand each other and their context. When conventional structures are organised unexpectedly for the receiver, linguistic signs produce different meanings representing new information. The greater the information is, the more complex the communication pattern and its significance are. The development of meaning through unexpected signs is precisely the creative process art forms implement. Aesthetic discourse provokes a disorder concerning the receiver's linguistic structures. However, the experience of

¹²⁷ Umberto Eco, *Opera Aperta*, pp. 78-82.

¹²⁸ *Ivi*, pp. 84-88.

¹²⁹ *Ivi*, pp. 111-117.

elaborating on the emotional significance may lead to the building of a new paradigm of knowledge and awareness.

As illustrated in his academic dissertation, Aliprandi believed live arts to be the best means to experiment with Eco's considerations from *Opera Aperta*. The sheets about the joint works with Davide Tiso and Elisabetta Dal Corso combined music, dance and drama to explore the creative potential of such a connection. Later, the projects produced together with Marianna Andrigo increasingly focused on searching for innovative and engaging forms dealing with dance and movement. An example may refer to the performance and video installation *Del tuo dove* created for the project *Parco del Contemporaneo* in 2011¹³⁰. Through Aliprandi's camera, Andrigo's moving body provides the material of the artwork: the wrinkles forming on the body as something altering the skin and body itself (Figure 8). Natural and temporary scars, almost unnoticed daily, encourage the spectator to look for a more profound message. Yet, the meaning appears exactly in front of the spectator, which is the continuous transformation of the human body. It praises physical adaptation to the body's necessity of changing a position, creating tension, or passing time. Skin and wrinkles are elements that allow flexible movement and represent life itself. The body could suggest infinite references, yet its simple representation may offer the most powerful of all¹³¹.

Another application of Eco's suggestions may derive from the ensemble *Expanding Universe of Al-Joberal-Chirolechi*, produced by Live Arts Cultures in 2012. In this case, music becomes the artistic form, challenging both musicians and the audience to understand the possible limits of the performed piece. It is not a simple musical improvisation: performers are responsible for creating a musical composition by connecting. The outcome reveals the skills of the musicians in translating their working harmony into the quality of the performance.

The informal artistic group experimented with Eco's suggestions on the association of performance as an artistic form and its meaning. The artists researched how live art can achieve a fresh and effective experience for the performers and the spectators and connect to issues of everyday existence. Indeed, their performances did

¹³⁰ See Paragraph 1.2.

¹³¹ "Del tuo dove. Video", YouTube, accessed January 21, 2024. <https://youtu.be/skUBfU4yrCk>

not consist simply of exercises the group did to spend the time: Live Arts Cultures was aware of the uncommon opportunity to have a free and open space to develop its work. Besides being interested in their careers, the artists believed that their actions could represent a new proposal in the cultural habits of their community. They felt something missing in their artistic environment and tried to provide solutions. As the five editions of *Electro Camp* showed, the artists proposed unusual combinations of contemporary artistic languages. These events tried to introduce different paradigms of artistic forms, taking the risk of challenging an audience less used to experimental performance.

Live Arts Cultures has promoted the sharing of the creative processes by artists and members of informal groups with other fellow artists and the community of returning spectators. Although Live Arts Cultures dealt with a limited group of people, it encouraged them to share their experiences with more people.

In many productions, Marianna Andriago challenges traditional body and dance techniques. For instance, the workshop and durational performance *Parasceva: preparazione continua verso l'inatteso* (2020)¹³² proposed thirteen performers to test their endurance in time during ten training sessions from two to four hours. Besides the physical training, performers received a list of philosophical texts about the concepts they exercised with their bodies: presence, resistance, duration, taste, creation, and anarchy. The workshop aimed to present a final performance over two days by dividing the performers into two groups, each performing on one day. Performers could choose among the physical exercises from the training and perform them for four hours (Figure 9). They could never stop during the performance, except if they needed a sip of water. As a musical score, a loop recording presented a combined sequence of sounds: water dropping, dogs growling and barking, machines beating, pieces of electronic music, and cars' engines. The performance provided the evident obstacle of physical effort and a stressed condition suggested by the sound environment that enhanced the performers' tension. The workshop and the performance show an example of Andriago's research attitude based on the idea that the performer's body is a means for knowledge.

¹³² "PARASCEVA. Esercizio: preparazione continua verso l'inatteso", Live Arts Cultures, accessed January 19, 2024. <https://liveartscultures.weebly.com/parasceva-durational-performance.html>

3.2 C32 performing art work space as a social product

Live Arts Cultures' members could work together thanks to the opportunity of using Pavilion 32 in Forte Marghera. This space allowed Andrigo to join Aliprandi and develop *C32 performing art work space* together. The first meeting with electronicgirls occurred because the musicians looked for a place to rehearse. C32 represents the element centralising all the founders of Live Arts Cultures, who needed a space to develop their research. The group's projects and desires were achieved thanks to the equipment implemented since Aliprandi's first creative experiences. Turning the first floor of pavilion 32 into a production space for live arts gave Live Arts Cultures a proper means of production for its activities¹³³.

The group's actions also managed to turn C32 into a social framework and outcome. Indeed, Live Arts Cultures' work recalls the consideration of French philosopher and sociologist Henri Lefebvre, who defines space as a social product¹³⁴. Space has an epistemological duality that allows us to perceive it in two ways: it simultaneously indicates a physical place containing human actions and an abstract dimension where relationships acquire specific meanings, such as social, political, economic, gendered, or other¹³⁵. People's interconnections performed in a place define the purpose of that place, and, at the same time, the developed spatial identity affects human action. The building became an equipped place for experimenting with live arts because the company aimed to realise a cultural space and considered Aliprandi to be an adequate person to do the work. In this context, Aliprandi had complete freedom to choose his artistic direction and implement the construction works he thought essential. By carrying on his experimentations with live arts, he realised which pieces of equipment the space needed. The pavilion started to have an identity as an open space for the arts, and it slowly defined what kind of work it could host. The place required time to understand its necessities and the material and human resources to manage its maintenance works. All the people involved in the development of C32 worked for free voluntarily, believing in the importance of creating such a place.

¹³³ Live Arts Cultures, *C32 performing art work space. Report 2012-2014*, p. 3.

¹³⁴ Kim Solga, *Theory for theatre studies. Space*, (London: Methuen, 2019), p. 32.

¹³⁵ *Ivi*, p. 2.

Live Arts Cultures' members always thought of C32 as an independent and informal context, and this attitude inevitably attracted professionals not belonging to any particular institution. A relevant case derives from the electronic musicians, an important element of the artistic scene in Venice. They found a possibility of expression at C32 through *electronicgirls*. For instance, Karine Dumont – one of the members – came to C32 to participate in one edition of *Electro Camp*. On this occasion, she collaborated with the French company Kolletif Singulier, and they still work together. *Electronicgirls* provided essential contact with contemporary electronic music, especially female electronic musicians. They aimed to enhance their community: collaborating with Andriago and Aliprandi and working at C32 strengthened such purpose. Live Arts Cultures allowed its members to combine their artistic languages and create events reaching notable personalities such as Marco Stockhausen, Veniero Rizzardi and Paolo Zavatta. Without C32, *electronicgirls* would have kept being a limited community of listeners and experimenters, lacking the possibility to grow and work with experts and academic professionals.

Live Arts Cultures' activities changed the life of the building used as headquarters. Before Forte Marghera started its urban renewal – which would have been structured after the Marco Polo System's management, Pavilion 32 became a local example of public property managed by a private subject and open to the community. The informal artistic group considered its work an opportunity for such a transformation, trying to connect members' interests with a possible collective resource. The artists felt the need to have a space for freedom of speech and to preserve their independent attitudes. They considered performance art an intellectual means leading to freedom, responsibility, activism, and social operability. The group wanted to foster a way to protect public spaces by managing some of the usual activities of the artistic community – training, producing performances, building relationships – and connecting them to the social dimension.

Therefore, Live Arts Cultures succeeded in implementing the process of making C32 a social space by defining it through the social actions of its inhabitants. The group focused on two main directions to develop human interactions, according to the major categories of individuals dealing with performing arts: the performers and the spectators. Both these entities need a space that can overlap with one another – as

happens in participative art – by activating the audience's participation. Live Arts Cultures provided a supporting space for those who needed to grow professionally and tried to enhance and sustain the meeting with the spectators. An example is the participation of young artists Caterina Barbieri, Giulia Vismara, and Marta Ciappina at *Electro Camp*: Live Arts Cultures invited these performers as it recognised their artistic potential. Through such a relationship, performing arts may reveal which processes lead to professionalism, sustainability, dialogue, and a structured audience.

The consideration of C32 as not only a means of production but also as a component of the social purpose of Live Arts Cultures can be associated with the dynamics defining the space as a social product, according to Henri Lefebvre¹³⁶. Any product also provides a discourse about its creation process. When products are connected with a defined spatial aspect, considerations about production move from the item to the spatial dimension of production. Then, the discourse on space overcomes its trait as physical context and can consider space as an abstract concept. It acquires a complexity structured through three primary levels: spatial practice, space representations, and representation spaces. Lefebvre indicates these three aspects as conceptual generalisations of human actions in the social space. Spatial practice refers to the specific places where individuals perform actions: it encompasses the space people perceive as the physical context of their activities. This spatial aspect considers human actions as productive and reproductive processes. The latter deals with the relationships among the member of a community and their social references, which allow them to carry on the production activities. Space representations indicate the concepts of space, which belong to the intellectual nature of space. They are still connected to productive processes, as spatial theories and considerations aim to explain the purposes of space. Finally, representation spaces consider the complex symbols dealing with space, which originated from social interactions. They represent space experienced as a combination of physical and intellectual frameworks. Besides the specificities of the other spatial aspects – spatial practice and space representations, they refer to all the elements bringing new meanings to the space, such as artistic forms.

¹³⁶ Henri Lefebvre (1974), *La Produzione dello Spazio* (Milano: PGRECO Edizioni, 2018), pp. 54-55, 57-63.

Applying Lefebvre's considerations to the space managed by Live Arts Cultures, C32 seems to provide a complex social context. It hosts production processes by operating as a means of production through the equipment and the opportunities of a site-specific production. It achieves the aspect of spatial practice, providing the environment where Live Arts Cultures based its activities. C32 also allows the artists to imagine possible space representations to implement. Since Aliprandi and Andriago's first experiences, the space provided various ideas about how the artists could structure and share their work. Besides the configurations useful for producing live arts events, the space has become the subject of considerations about the social and political connotations of the artists' actions. Maybe the third spatial aspect, space representation, is the most easily associable to C32. As the spatial practice deals with artistic production, complex symbols are usual components of Live Arts Cultures' activities. C32 acted as the home of the artistic networks connected to the group. For each event, the temporary artistic communities working on their productions included the space in Forte Marghera in their creative projects. They contributed to enhancing the significance of such a place.

Working at C32 was essential for achieving the artists' desire to gather people, interests, and goals. Without a space, the group would have lacked the opportunity to grow its collective identity. C32 characterised Live Arts Cultures' purposes and still does nowadays.

3.3 The analysis of art worlds: activities from 2014 to 2017

An additional complexity level to C32 as social space occurred in 2014 when Live Arts Cultures changed its status from an informal group to a cultural association. It represented the first acknowledgement of the creative process, originating from the spontaneous desire and practice of joining different artistic paths. Live Arts Cultures formally defined its work and space as a social contribution to its community. The artists described their purpose as working on a complementarity among arts, society, and politics. This recalls the peculiar concept of the *art world* by Howard Becker. The American sociologist presents his consideration by referring to «[...] a more general theoretical orientation toward the study of society [...]»¹³⁷. If applied to more general

¹³⁷ Howard Becker, *Arts Worlds*, p.369.

reasoning, the definition of the art world – a network of people cooperating repeatedly, referring to specific conventions – could adapt to any social process. Art proves to be necessarily social since it originates from relational networks. Also, the whole relationship dealing with artistic content production metaphorically approximates a social organisation's structure¹³⁸.

The art world's description and implications rest on Becker's principle of using sociology to deepen social phenomena that people already know. He believes empirical observations and materials are the starting point for developing a social analysis. He is aware of adapting a research approach from the sociology of occupation to the art sector rather than following a more traditional direction of the sociology of arts¹³⁹. Then, Becker's considerations about the functioning of art worlds may provide a helpful reference to analyse the managing structure of Live Arts Cultures.

Any artistic product constitutes the centre of its corresponding art world, which consists of all the necessary activities to produce and consume the artwork by a certain amount of people¹⁴⁰. All the individuals work together through an extensive division of labour – with temporary tasks or on a more permanent routine. Considering the cooperative context, no task is more natural than others, yet activities should follow a specific sequence to develop functional connections. The first, obvious task is choosing which artistic content will be created and in which form. Then follows the execution phase, which encompasses the process of elaboration of the form and its significance. Execution usually needs manufacturing and distributing equipment and materials. Producing instruments and their further application according to the artist's idea requires time. Besides, the equipment's creation may directly involve the artist and not be only performed by industrialised sectors. Also, the artist could be engaged to a greater extent when deciding to use non-conventional distribution channels. A certain number of support activities sustains the executing phase: they refer to any technical necessity of the core task – the latter is the activity without which the entire work would not be art. There is also an activity aimed at defining and maintaining the rationale according to which the interconnected tasks make sense. All the activities may relate in different ways, leading to different results.

¹³⁸ Howard Becker, *Arts Worlds*, p. 370.

¹³⁹ *Ivi*, pp. XXIV-XXV, 370-371.

¹⁴⁰ *Ivi*, pp. 1-13.

People who perform the activities constituting the art world must agree on the sense of their cooperation¹⁴¹. Their actions must endorse conventions representing the art world's conceptual structure. Artistic conventions explain the connection between a specific art form and its meaning. They define the rules for core and support tasks, such as the codes associated with particular ideas or experiences, which materials are preferable in specific scenarios, and which characteristics the final artwork should have. Besides allowing the coordination between the artist and the support personnel, conventions also regulate the relationships between the artist and the audience. The spectators may expect a specific connection between artistic signs and their significance or the possibility of changing such connection. By sharing the conventions of the artwork, the audience members can participate in the artistic experience and achieve an emotional response. However, conventions are not entirely fixed, and artists can break them. Such an attitude must consider that conventional languages and habits represent the spectators' references to understand and appreciate the artwork. If not communicated efficiently, the change in conventions may lead to a loss of the audience's interest in the artists.

Artistic conventions indicate the culture shared by all the art world members. They allow social interactions through which artists and support personnel produce the aesthetic language and experience, and the spectators elaborate an aesthetic judgement. The value of an art world and its artwork is defined and shared by a community – all the members of the art world, and it complies with the artistic conventions and their possible transformations¹⁴². Then, knowing the artistic conventions sets the essential premise for participating in an art world¹⁴³. Moreover, the distribution strategies have a relevant influence on the value attribution to artistic products. They compete to gain the audience's attention and maintain their prominence effectively.

Therefore, creating a new art world requires a placement among existing art worlds¹⁴⁴. Artists must establish adequate relations providing support activities, personnel, equipment, and other facilities, such as a place to carry out productive tasks. No specific level in the art world development allows us to understand when an

¹⁴¹ Howard Becker, *Arts Worlds*, pp. 29-34.

¹⁴² *Ivi*, p. 134.

¹⁴³ *Ivi*, p. 52.

¹⁴⁴ *Ivi*, pp. 156-158, 162.

artwork can be treated seriously – which occurs when the audience counts more people than the ones producing the artwork. The only fundamental component to originate the network of relationships between the artist and the audience is established aesthetics, which logically legitimises the artist's actions. It represents the rationale indicating why all the art world's activities are worthy and what the other art world's entities – such as audience and distribution organisations – treat as art forms.

Live Arts Cultures' work can be considered by referring to Becker's art world to understand if the association has effectively structured its activities. The analysis will be divided into two parts to follow the organisation's history. Indeed, the municipal tender for renting Pavilion 32 represented a significant event that changed the association's upgrade. Therefore, the activities must be analysed, recalling the transformations in the management conditions. The first part will focus on Live Arts Cultures' work from 2012 to 2017, while the second part will follow in the next paragraph, considering the activities from 2018 to 2022.

The actions of the informal artistic group performed from 2012 to 2014 can be considered the trial period to define Live Arts Cultures' artistic content. Andriago, Aliprandi and electronicgirls joined their research and artistic methodologies to deepen the implications of their combination. They did not invent or share one single art form but developed together a creative attitude that could spread in various disciplines. All the artists could refer to their specific artistic genre, yet they originated an experimentation practice as their joint art form. Consequently, the execution phase from the art world's analysis appears to be a component of Live Arts Cultures' art form. The group's members combined their languages to create the production *21* premiered at Teatro Ca' Foscari on October 5, 2012¹⁴⁵. This direct experience of joint work showed them a creative potential that could not be limited to just one production. Moreover, the peculiar spatial context of C32 led the group to consider how its work could expand the artists' opportunities. The artists' creative practice needed C32 to welcome anyone interested in the opportunities to experiment with their artistic languages. This way, the space could enhance Aliprandi's first purpose of providing an equipped space for working with live arts. In addition, it could achieve its function

¹⁴⁵ See paragraph 1.2.

as a public space by hosting events and experiences meant to be shared with the artists' community.

In 2013, Live Arts Cultures started expanding its network: the exchange with Perypezye Urbane hosting the residency of Collettivo Cleancorner, the first edition of the training programme of the *Venice International Performance Art Week*, *Mayday*, and the first edition of *Electro Camp*. For instance, the collaboration with VestAndPage for *Mayday* marked the beginning of an essential contribution to Live Arts Cultures' work¹⁴⁶. Since 2012, artists Andrea Pagnes and Verena Stenke have been focusing on sustainability, hospitality and care to reconsider sharing practices between performers and the audience¹⁴⁷. They proposed a methodology based on temporary performance artists' communities: short periods in which performers could train intensively and develop creative needs and reactions by sharing their languages. They felt the need to provide production and display occasions that could be different from the greatest art platforms and standard performance art festivals. In the first edition of the *Venice International Performance Art Week* at Palazzo Mora in Venice (2012), live performances were juxtaposed by a selection of pioneer performers' documentation. Pagnes and Stenke «[...] wanted to re-shape the idea of cultural event into a recognisable place of magmatic creativity, intellectual freedom, and a shared sense of humanity»¹⁴⁸. The following year, the first edition of the *Venice International Performance Art Week* educational learning programme took place at C32. VestAndPage recognised Live Arts Cultures as a fellow project working on alternative ways to share performance art¹⁴⁹. Besides the training programme, the collaboration with Pagnes and Stenke took Live Arts Cultures to become an active member of the network established by VestAndPage's project. Live Arts Cultures became a producing partner, and its members participated as tutors and performers in Forte Marghera and Palazzo Mora in all the following editions of the project.

The fundamental principle allowing Live Arts Cultures' network of relationships to grow was the belief in the creative and social potential of the artistic

¹⁴⁶ Andrea Pagnes, *The Case Model of the Venice International Performance Art Week*, *KAYLLA. Revista del Departamento de Artes Escénicas*. PUCP, ISSN: 2955-8697 (2022), 68-95, DOI 10.18800/kaylla.202201.004

¹⁴⁷ *Ivi*, pp. 69-72.

¹⁴⁸ *Ivi*, p. 73.

¹⁴⁹ *Ivi*, pp. 78-79.

practices performed at C32. The artists shared the attitude of gathering in such a space, accepting its nature of generating and regenerating context and transforming it through intellectual and artistic energies and harmonies. Also, they recognised themselves as cultural professionals inside a context belonging to the local territory and the international artistic community. All those who participated in their vision were invited to accept Live Arts Cultures' proposals. The following structure was established: whoever entered C32 approved its nature and principles of a social space aimed at participating in the community's life. Artists were always willing to share their research, visions, and time. Then, the activities presented at C32 proposed the same convention to the spectators. For instance, some aspects of Live Arts Cultures' work required being in non-conventional theatrical spaces, knowing the association's purpose and the artistic languages proposed, and accepting a possibly uncomfortable viewing modality. The spectators participated and confirmed the definition of a convention for sharing Live Arts Cultures' work. The possibility of someone being less informed is always present; naturally, they are free to leave if they desire to.

Since Live Arts Cultures became a cultural association in 2014, it has increasingly structured its work as a formal cultural operator. The management dimension of the organisation still remained with the members of the early group, first and foremost with Marianna Andriago and Giulia Volpato. Yet, some new members brought relevant expertise in the activities, such as Alessandra Trevisan for press communication and Alessandra Zuin for accounting tasks. In addition, the association financed Volpato's attendance in the training programme for cultural professionals run by the Italian Fondazione Fitzcarraldo. This way, Volpato developed a significant knowledge about cultural management, especially in audience development strategies that proved successful for the selection by the municipal call to rent Pavilion 32. Live Arts Cultures' application presented an audience analysis aimed at the development programme from 2018 – the first year of the eventual rental agreement¹⁵⁰.

The audience analysis focuses on activities from 2014 to 2017. Since Live Arts Cultures could never bear the costs of adapting the space to winter conditions and the Marco Polo System never provided any means to support such renovation, C32 could

¹⁵⁰ The analysis refers to the paper *Analisi dei pubblici 2014-2018. Piano di audience development*, produced by Live Arts Cultures for the municipal tender to rent pavilion 32 in Forte Marghera (2017). The document was consulted during the study for this thesis and is not available publicly.

host public events only for five months – from May to September. This condition prevents considerable building of audience loyalty. Moreover, most spectators participated in the activities as members of the association. Such a condition only reported the single attendance registration when the association form was filled. Then, the analysis referred to the period 2014-2016 presents just a quantitative and demographic definition of the audience for each year. Instead, activities in 2017 show a more detailed analysis since the association managed to submit questionnaires to its spectators relating to their participation in Live Arts Cultures' events and their cultural habits. The more profound research occurred only in 2017 because the analysis aimed to provide valuable data for the municipal application announced in the same year. Before, the association had no specific reason to conduct such research. This recalls the traditional aspect of Third-sector organisations, which is the lack of definition of efficiency measures. The Third Sector Code had not yet become law, and Live Arts Cultures did not have clear management indications, as many other non-profit institutions did.

The analysis of activities from 2014 to 2016 meant to know the audiences reached and which activities the spectators participated in. Also, it could detect eventual problems and formulate possible solutions. Specific questionnaires referring to 2017 aimed to show the spectators' perception of the association, improve the services provided, highlight specific questions, deepen the target audiences, and offer a first picture of the spectators' cultural preferences. As reported in Appendix II, the number of people participating in Live Arts Cultures' activities was 217 in 2014, 350 in 2015, 234 in 2016, and 224 in 2017 (Chart 1). For all the years, the event attracting the most participants remained *Electro Camp* – 112 in 2014, 279 in 2015, 170 in 2016, and 148 in 2017. Not all the activities presented during the four years required membership to the organisation. This was the case for significant events, such as the *Venice International Performance Art Week* training programmes Teatro Valdoca and the performance by Markus Stockhausen. The overall number of spectators reached over 200 people every year. 2015 excels in the number of association forms, with 350 members.

Regarding other demographic information, the audience analysis focused on the geographic origin of the members (Appendix II, Chart 2). Live Arts Cultures'

spectators come mainly from Mestre, the Metropolitan Area of Venice, the Province of Treviso, Venice, the Province of Padua, Vicenza, and, only minimally, from other Italian Regions. A small number of members come from abroad.

While the association aimed to reach people between 22 and 35 years with the activities from 2014 and 2016, it reached principally three age categories: people between 30 and 34 years, between 35 and 39 years, and 40 and 49 years (Appendix II, Chart 3). The following categories refer to ranges 25-29 years and 50-60 years. Scarcer numbers occur for the categories 19-24 years, over 60 years and 15-18 years.

In 2017, 86 questionnaires were distributed between April and July during three activities – a dance workshop, the final performance of the *Venice International Performance Art Week* training programme and the final performance of the Teatro Valdoca workshop. Besides demographic information, questions related to people's judgement about their experience, ease in finding information about the association activities and reaching C32, judgement about welcoming personnel, quality of the activities and the adequate starting time (Appendix II, Chart 4). The overall result showed a positive experience according to the answers collected. The location was easy to reach, and the starting time was adequate for the activities proposed. The audience considered the reception and performance quality to a positive extent. A further set of questions regarded the attending attitude to Live Arts Cultures' activities, such as the usual source of information about the association's news (Appendix II, Chart 5). Half the people participated in the association's events for the first time. This indicates the attraction process of a new audience, whose loyalty still had to be built. Informal communication between spectators was revealed to be the most successful source of information about Live Arts Cultures' activities. Most agreed to stay informed about the association's events through the newsletter.

3.4 The Analysis of Art Worlds: Activities from 2018 to 2022

The audience analysis carried out in 2017 aimed to provide relevant data for Live Arts Cultures' application to the municipal tender. Being recognised by the Forte Marghera Foundation had been the artists' desire for a long time. Their work began during the informal agreement with the Marco Polo System. However, their position became increasingly uncertain when the association explicitly disagreed with the

company's management of Forte Marghera¹⁵¹. The Marco Polo System proved insensitive regarding all the maintenance work of Pavilion 32, done by Aliprandi since 2007. Especially since Live Arts Cultures' foundation as an informal group, the artists invested time, monetary and material resources to sustain their work at C32. They could not accept that such efforts to maintain a place open to public cultural activities risked being jeopardised. In addition, turning Live Arts Cultures into an association marked a more substantial definition of its artistic and social mission. The association believed in preserving the social dimension of C32 as a public space belonging to the citizenry. Then, the municipal tender for renting the space represented a chance for Live Arts Cultures to continue and enhance the role of C32 in the urban cultural environment. In addition, the opportunity to formally inhabit C32 led the organisation to think about the future in a more concrete way. Live Arts Cultures could grow, achieve financial sustainability/stability, and plan a cultural programme for many years rather than being confirmed yearly. Instead of just seeking support from the members, the association could define a fundraising plan. The artists also felt the desire to see their work rewarded. Indeed, the grant of the space could represent a radical change, especially starting from the technical restoration of the building.

Although Live Arts Cultures was the selected organisation in the municipal call, neither the Forte Marghera Foundation nor the Municipality of Venice proceeded to sign the rental agreement until the Summer of 2020. The association could only assume possible explanations but never had specific answers about the reason of this silence. Meanwhile, Live Arts Cultures' members had to deal with uncertainty that was never experienced before. The association started losing its productive attitude, waiting for the signature of the rental agreement. As an inescapable consequence, some members felt they could no longer remain in such conditions. Besides working at C32, their individual growth was also blocked. Through the years, voluntary work needs to be supported, mainly if performed by young professionals. The missing formal recognition erased the opportunity for sustainability to grow.

Live Arts Cultures' situation between November 2017 and September 2020 – blocked by the immobility of the Forte Marghera Foundation, is a concrete example of Third-sector organisations being unable to pursue their purposes when not

¹⁵¹ See paragraph 1.2.

acknowledged by the other sectors of society¹⁵². Without the legal recognition of the rental agreement, the association lost the donor's support to finance the plan presented in the proposal for the rental application. Live Arts Cultures could not implement its programme for economic sustainability because its conditions had become unreliable. Nevertheless, it elaborated resistance strategies by referring to the networks of relations established in the previous years. Between 2018 and 2019, C32 hosted the activities presented by Teatro Valdoca, VestAndPage and Perypezye Urbane. These artists and companies have shared Live Arts Cultures' principles since the years of the informal group. They sustained the association by proposing workshops and events and keeping C32 an active space. Live Arts Cultures also continued to host artistic residencies: it wanted to provide the same support to artistic production as it did since 2012. Then, Live Arts Cultures succeeded in maintaining a trust dimension in its connections. This is an essential element in building the network of art worlds¹⁵³. The association's improvement decreased during the uncertain years, yet its previous history proved that its work was at people's disposal. In other words, until someone continued to show interest towards experimenting and producing live arts at C32, Live Art Cultures' members would have tried to sustain such experimentation.

Among the strategies to face the uncertain period, Live Arts Cultures also brought its work outside Forte Marghera. Two significant activities were the project *ATTIVA(R)TI* and the theatre programme *Living Room. Venere in Teatro*. The former was developed between October 2017 and April 2018 and was financed by the Municipality of Venice as part of a teen programme for urban regeneration¹⁵⁴. It aimed to involve the inhabitants of the urban area near the railway station in Mestre in developing participatory habits through actions with live arts. In partnership with the association Luoghi Comuni, the project implemented three training activities, a public call for young artists and photographers and two public events. All the actions involved about 50 participants: in the final event, they proposed a performing walk with performances, dances and readings (Figure 10). More than 200 people attended the walk.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵² See paragraph 2.4.

¹⁵³ Howard Becker, *Arts Worlds*, p. 87.

¹⁵⁴ Live Arts Cultures, *Live Arts Cultures. Attività di promozione e Produzione delle arti dal vivo 2017*, p. 15.

¹⁵⁵ Live Arts Cultures, *Live Arts Cultures 2018*, pp. 7-8.

Between January and April 2018, Live Arts Cultures participated in *Living Room. Venere in Teatro*. Since 2016, the theatre programme has been an annual proposal by the association and theatre company Farmacia Zoo:é, which hosted the programme in its space in Mestre, Spazio Farma. Among the eight events, Live Arts Cultures presented five shows and three workshops, while electronicgirls performed a series of electronic pieces after the main show of each event. All the activities were sold out, counting about 80 spectators for each event.

As Live Arts Cultures' activities have shown, since 2012, to be able to build a network of artists and cultural organisations that also attracted spectators. However, the element marking formal recognition and allowing the association to increase its actions was delayed. During the impasse period, the association considered the decision to leave the space because the Forte Marghera Foundation appeared not to care about the history of C32. However, the foundation finally asked Live Arts Cultures to stay and changed the conditions to rent the space concerning the tender in 2017. The association understood that the new conditions would have required a completely different economic effort. There was no longer a donor willing to sustain Live Arts Cultures' activities. Yet, the association could raise its planning activity again by signing the rental agreement. Meanwhile, it updated its legal status according to the Third Sector Code, which had recently become law. In September 2020, Live Arts Cultures became an association for social promotion – in Italian *Associazione di Promozione Sociale*¹⁵⁶.

The agreement required an annual rent of 3.575,00 euros until April 2025. Also, the association would have provided for the renovation works on the first floor of Pavilion 32 for an overall cost of 58.812,50 euros¹⁵⁷. An essential point of the new conditions for renting the space was that Live Arts Cultures could manage the rental amount through the grant period. In other words, the foundation did not require a yearly deadline to document the costs of renovation works, and the association could arrange them during the entire rental period. Also, the actual rent could be transferred

¹⁵⁶ Book of the Assembly's Meetings and Deliberations of Live Arts Cultures, meeting minutes, September 24, 2020.

¹⁵⁷ Fondazione Forte Marghera, *Concessione d'uso per beni immobili*, (Venezia, September 8, 2020), p. 2.

to the cost of the renovation work. A further change in the agreement considered the constraints on cultural and artistic activities imposed by the pandemic spread in March 2020. The association could start working in 2021, so the foundation accepted Live Arts Cultures' request to reconsider the amount of renovation work, which decreased to 47.200,00 euros¹⁵⁸.

Therefore, the association started examining new strategies to bear the costs of renovation work. It had to reconsider many activities that had been proposed for free in the years before. Yet, the members refused to consider the economic need a discriminating factor in choosing the projects to host at C32. They tried to find solutions to guarantee economic sustainability and preserve open space's original nature to experiment with live arts. As often happened in the past, relationships proved fundamental to making Live Arts Cultures productive again. In addition, in 2021, the association could apply for significant public and private funding to support cultural and artistic struggles during the pandemic. The signed rental agreement played an essential part in proposing relevant applications. As Live Arts Cultures could formally state that its work was based in an equipped artistic space, the association began to prove a reliable and competent cultural operator.

In 2021, Live Arts Cultures participated in the call *#Tutta mia la città* supported by the Volunteer Service Centre in Venice – in Italian *Coordinamento delle Associazioni di Volontariato della Città Metropolitana - CSV Venezia* – in collaboration with Università IUAV di Venezia. It presented a joint project with three other non-profit organisations based in Mestre, whose objective was to provide an urban regeneration programme for a specific area of the city – the area of Via Piave. From May to September, all the organisations proposed cultural and artistic activities involving people living in the neighbourhood and from other parts of the city. Live Arts Cultures turned a little park into the context of activities dealing with vertical dance (Figure 11). Through the collaboration with the company Vertical Waves Project, a training for teenagers developed between June and September, while the company participated in two public events alongside the activities of the other organisations.

¹⁵⁸ Fondazione Forte Marghera, *Concessione d'uso per beni immobili*, p. 8.

Another significant connection was established with Municipal Social Services. Live Arts Cultures became a member of the project *Rete ad Alta Intensità Educativa*. It aimed to create and maintain a network among all the private and public institutions dealing with children and teenagers. Not only non-profit organisations participated, but also teachers at public schools and professionals dealing with issues of specific groups of young people and their families. The referents of Municipal Services wished to create a relational context in which members could discuss and elaborate on constant communication, professionalism, continuous updates, and adequate reward for professionals' work. They could rely on their administrative institution as the guarantor of the whole project. Thanks to the funding supporting the network projects, Live Arts Cultures presented *Kit contro la solitudine* in July and *Kit per un ballo fuori dal tempo* between October and November. Both activities involved teenagers from 13 to 17 years old and occurred at C32. The first was the most challenging as the group counted 16 participants with entirely different attitudes towards the proposed activities¹⁵⁹. The teenagers struggled to feel comfortable working in the collective dimension. Nevertheless, the tutors – Marianna Andrigo and Rosa Mantovani – gradually presented various actions to change the participants' feeling of inadequacy. At the end of the week, the group of teens agreed to have a public meeting with an audience and talk about their experiences during the camp. From this first experimentation with teenagers, Live Arts Cultures structured the further activities differently and succeeded in finding more participating reactions from the teenagers involved¹⁶⁰. Physical activities helped the group overcome shyness and led to a comfort dimension to elaborate the individual expressivity even through words.

The two most important projects for Live Arts Cultures' new phase occurred between September and December 2021: *Venere in Teatro – Dance Festival* and the theatre programme at Teatro del Parco with the associations Farmacia Zooé and Macaco. Both originated from collaborations aimed at a limited period, yet they paved the way for the activities programme the association implemented the following year.

¹⁵⁹ Live Arts Cultures, *Relazione attività svolta. KIT CONTRO LA SOLITUDINE - FORTE MARGHERA MESTRE*, (Venezia, 2021).

¹⁶⁰ Live Arts Cultures, *Relazione attività svolta. KIT PER UN BALLO FUORI DAL TEMPO - FORTE MARGHERA MESTRE*, (Venezia, 2021).

Live Arts Cultures created *Venere in Teatro* in collaboration with Perypezye Urbane. It represented the opportunity to bring back the experience of *Electro Camp*. The association has changed its members and research since the last edition of *Electro Camp* (2017). Yet, it preserved a desire to propose the festival format as an opportunity to gather people at Forte Marghera. Although the new festival focused on dance, it maintained the habit of commissioning productions, presenting training activities, and combining different artistic disciplines. Another connection with Live Arts Cultures' history was the festival's name. However, it reminded of past activities – *Living Room*. *Venere in Teatro*, the title encompassed a creative potential that the association still wanted to express. The festival was financed by private organisations – SCENA UNITA, Fondazione Cesvi, La Musica che Gira e Music Innovation Hub – and the Italian Ministry of Culture through a specific fund sustaining live arts during the pandemic.

Live Arts Cultures wanted to present a programme where different styles and generations of dancers could meet, always focusing on performances dealing with contemporary languages. Therefore, some examples of the festival's artists were great Italian authors, such as Claudia Castellucci and Compagnia Abbondanza/Bertoni, relevant foreign performers, such as Mette Ingvartsen, prominent young artists like Chiara Ameglio, and emerging performers like Collettivo OS¹⁶¹. The total number of spectators was 450 over six days, while the three workshops counted 25 participants each. Performances occurred in outdoor spaces and at pavilion 32 – using C32, the shared space on the ground floor and a renovated room adapted to theatrical performances (Figures 12-15). After years without presenting complex events, Live Arts Cultures considered the festival's results a significant improvement. Then, collaborating again with Perypezye Urbane, it decided to apply for the triennial funding the Italian Ministry of Culture provided – planning three other festival editions from 2022 to 2024. In Spring 2022, the ministerial committee selected *Venere in Teatro* among the events receiving the triennial funding. This constituted a fundamental acknowledgement of Live Arts Cultures' work. The highest Italian public authority on culture recognised the association's activities as relevant cultural content.

¹⁶¹ “Venere In Teatro 2021”, Live Arts Cultures, accessed January 27, 2024. <https://liveartscultures.weebly.com/venere-in-teatro-2021.html>

In September 2022, the second edition of *Venere in Teatro* received the financial support of the Ministry of Culture, Veneto Region and the Municipality of Venice. Through Perypezye Urbane, the festival connected to the European project *Dance Me*. It increased the number of collaborations, including Fondazione Musei Civici di Venezia, Università IUAV di Venezia, and the Swiss Arts Council – based in Venice. Also, two further partnerships grew with the engineering company Milan Ingegneria and the non-profit organisation Lab43, which deals with graphic design. The festival developed over ten days and increased the performance spaces: besides outdoor areas and Pavilion 32, events also occurred at Pavilion 29 and Pavilion 30 (Figures 16-17). Proposing artists from different generations again, the second edition enhanced the participation of foreign authors, with Spanish company La Veronal, Swiss company La PP, and German authors Lina Gómez, Julek Kreutzer and Diethild Meier. The five training activities attracted 60 participants, while the spectators reached an overall number of about 500. Personnel counted 12 people and 17 volunteers¹⁶².

The collaboration with Farmacia Zooé and Macaco led to a series of activities at the municipal theatre Teatro del Parco in Mestre. The building has been closed since 2007 and reopened in September 2023¹⁶³. The Municipality of Venice started assigning the management for short periods in 2021, so Live Arts Cultures and the other associations presented their proposal called *Opening Nights* between October and December 2021. The associations joined their activities to provide a cultural programme they felt was missing in the city. They all refer to specific disciplines and, in the previous years, had established a connection with spectators willing to participate in their activities. Inhabiting a municipal theatre like Teatro del Parco, the second biggest theatre in Mestre, was an opportunity to formally enhance the organisations' work, still entirely perceived as an underground cultural proposal. Particularly for Live Arts Cultures, this project was an essential improvement action in its strategy of increasing its network of relations. The associations also collaborated with Arteven – the regional company for theatre distribution, to promote two training

¹⁶² “Attività culturale 2022”, Live Arts Cultures, accessed January 27, 2024. https://liveartscultures.weebly.com/uploads/2/6/9/5/26951716/relazione_attivit%C3%A0_lac_2022.pdf

¹⁶³ “Il Teatro del Parco”, Comune di Venezia, accessed January 27, 2024. <https://www.comune.venezia.it/content/il-teatro-3>

activities for teenagers dealing with live arts. The project was successful, as the evening programme reached the maximum number of spectators possible – the theatre counted 266 seats. Also, the training activities attracted about 50 teenagers. *Opening Nights* became the first part of the municipal assignment for the theatre’s management to the three associations. From January to June 2022, the programme *youTheater. Al Teatro del Parco* offered again evening shows and training activities for young people¹⁶⁴. In addition, it proposed morning shows for schools, workshops run by some artists performing during the evening events and a residency for local artists under 30 years of age. Again, the theatre management assignment was renovated between November 2022 and June 2023¹⁶⁵. All the activities increased: not only did more evening shows occur, but training activities doubled, proposing a programme for young adults besides the one dedicated to teenagers. In addition, the theatre hosted three residencies – one dedicated to professional artists, one for amateurs, and one for young dancers in collaboration with Università IUAV di Venezia.

Since the programme began in January 2022, all the activities were provided for free, as a condition defined by the Municipality of Venice. The Municipality financed the project at Teatro del Parco through European Union funding, which required that all the participants in the activities did not bear any cost¹⁶⁶. This proposal was unusual for the audience, as any theatre event or training activity often demands a price. Free participation at the theatre was meant to be more attractive. However, the associations witnessed a common habit among the spectators due to the free tickets. Especially when pandemic constraints were still present, spectators had to book seats. The bookings to almost all evening events resulted sold-out, yet the actual number of spectators was usually lower. Having no cost appeared to have decreased the audience’s sense of responsibility to participate in the show. A similar attitude was shown by some people signing up for the workshops and not being present.

¹⁶⁴ “youTheater. Al Teatro del Parco. IL PROGRAMMA | Gennaio – Giugno 2022”, Live Arts Cultures, accessed January 27, 2024. <https://liveartscultures.weebly.com/youtheater-2022--programma.html>

¹⁶⁵ “youTheater. Al Teatro del Parco” Live Arts Cultures, accessed January 27, 2024. <https://liveartscultures.weebly.com/youtheater---al-teatro-del-parco.html>

¹⁶⁶ *Ibidem*.

3.5 Live Arts Cultures as a cultural producer

All the activities and projects presented in the first chapter and discussed in the previous paragraphs show how Live Arts Cultures grew during its history. Originating from an informal group, the association overcame difficult obstacles and increased its connections with artists, cultural organisations, public institutions, and the spectators' community. It invested a great effort in the potential of relations, considering it a purpose to achieve and a strategy for implementing activities. Live Arts Cultures' explicit desire for nurturing relationships has been recognised as a source of trust and worth of its work. The association found the power of networking as a possible means to support its project and involve partners in the future renovation of C32.

After the pandemic constraints, the activities carried out during 2022 marked the first year Live Arts Cultures could start scheduling new programmes at C32 for further years. Still, without working during winter, the association planned a dense list of residencies for 2023¹⁶⁷. It established a relevant collaboration with La Biennale, hosting some training activities for Biennale Teatro between June and July 2023. As the selection for the triennial funding from the Ministry of Culture occurred in Spring 2022, the third edition of *Venere in Teatro* could start its planning as soon as the second ended. Also, Live Arts Cultures renewed its partnership with the *Venice International Performance Art Week* by hosting the first *Co-Creation Experiential Residency Body Matters*. This occurred in June 2022 and was not the usual training programme proposed by VestAndPage. It gathered no emerging performers but some artists who had often participated in the project in previous years. After the pandemic, the artists needed to meet in the flesh and experiment with old and new sensations of sharing a physical space¹⁶⁸.

Live Arts Cultures achieves the dimension of cultural activities' producer by operating as a social organisation. The status of the Third-sector entity is derived as a natural outcome of implementing the artists' work in the specific context of C32. By enhancing its network of relations, the association might also aim at social enterprise status, which would better adapt to greater productivity and growing professionalism

¹⁶⁷ "Residenze artistiche ed eventi", Live Arts Cultures, accessed 27, 2024. <https://liveartscultures.weebly.com/residenze-artistiche--eventi.html>

¹⁶⁸ Andrea Pagnes, *The Case Model of the Venice International Performance Art Week*, p. 88.

of Live Arts Cultures. Indeed, the requirements imposed by the Third Sector Code led the association to implement its efficiency measures. It constituted the opportunity to elaborate on management tools assisting in evaluating productivity. This exemplifies how Live Arts Cultures has turned formal obligations into valuable means to improve its work. Nevertheless, the association's history also proved how political and economic support for cultural activities remains essential to producing cultural and artistic activities.

CONCLUSION

This thesis analysed the case of Live Arts Cultures to understand whether the association has achieved effective results according to the nature of non-profit organisations and their need for economic sustainability. Live Arts Cultures' members have always been aware of their abilities, context and potential. Since the foundation of the informal artistic group in 2012, they have increased their professionalism and network of relations with artists, partners and audiences.

Relationships constitute the essence of the association's project in three main ways. They became the means through which artists could implement their ideas. Live Arts Cultures' founders first started experimenting with their creative languages by establishing a deep connection between themselves. They hosted others' works that could enhance exchanges between art forms. Besides the concrete production of performances, relations based on trust and respect allowed the development of C32 as an equipped space for working with live arts. Throughout the years, members and volunteers donated materials and furniture to use the place in the most adequate way possible. Relationships are also involved in the final output of Live Arts Cultures' activities. As performing arts do not produce anything concrete, they seem to leave no trace of their happening. However, any performance – whether displayed or practised through training – originates sensations, memories, and meanings. Sharing a live event with the audience produces a connection that deposits in the spectators and can create further references. Finally, relationships became the purpose of Live Arts Cultures' work at C32. Proposing cultural activities to the community is an incubator for increasing the possible social experiences between people in that specific space. Artists, spectators, and workshop attendees always share different moments and messages. They create temporary communities through which they can connect emotionally. Many return to C32 to participate in other events and repeat the experience of sharing the natural need for belonging. Live Arts Cultures created a collective identity based on the search for experimentation, change, and relation.

Considering social capital so involved in the association's work, Live Arts Cultures seems to implement non-profit organisations' nature and purpose effectively. According to the economic sustainability issues for Third-sector institutions, a more

complex condition emerges. Since 2020, the rental agreement has provoked a difficult economic impact on the association. Currently, renovation costs are bearable only thanks to the delay granted by the Forte Marghera Foundation. After losing the donor's financing in 2017, Live Arts Cultures had no other safe source of income. Yet, it accepted the rental proposal to continue its project at Forte Marghera. The association wanted C32 not to renounce its openness towards experimental and independent artistic projects. The years following the contract signature showed that the single activities could not provide the necessary amount of money to face the rental costs. Then, Live Arts Cultures resorted to the potential of its relationships to find a solution. This choice was necessary, primarily to raise the association's productivity during the pandemic years. Projects such as the dance festival *Venere in Teatro* and the theatre programme *youTHeater* were successful because of the management shared between the various associations and the artistic quality the audience appreciated. Through the activities in 2021 and 2022, Live Arts Cultures experienced different strategies for collaborating with fellow organisations and dealing with various financial partners. It drew inspiration for establishing new relations to help bear the rental costs. Involving more partners in using and understanding the value of C32 is the association's strategy to combine its social capital with producing economic capital and achieving financial sustainability.

Live Arts Cultures increased its network of relationships throughout its history. As Howard Becker pointed out in his considerations of art worlds, a producer of cultural and artistic activities can measure its success by considering how it involves the members of its art world. Members' high engagement and acceptance of the art world's conventions maintain the whole network and increase cooperation. The aesthetic judgement the members share enhances the value of what is produced. Therefore, Live Arts Cultures succeeded in building and expanding a network with artists, partners and spectators. According to its changing context – whether there was an informal management agreement or an unjustified management condition, it always provided a solution by adapting its social capital to the economic requirements. It proved to be a valuable producer of artistic activities and still plans to continue.

APPENDIX I

Electro Camp I, 2013 – Training programme

Date	Workshop category	Artists
June 15 – 22, 2013	Electronic music	Enrico Lucchese, Nicola Lucchese
		Paolo Calzavara
		Giulio Escalona
		Marta Marotta
		Johann Merrich
	Movement	Simona Mariucci, Federico Ortica
		Barokthegreat
Marianna Andrigo, Aldo Aliprandi		

Electro Camp I, 2013 – Artists and lecturers

Date	Artists
June 15 – 22, 2013	LECRI, Oceanic Mood, Top Banana, SuperAreYou, Davide Vettori, Paolo Calzavara, Chironomia, Giulio Escalona, Mudwise, Johann Merrich, Bertrand Rossa, Claudio Rocchetti, DezroyAdam, Carlo Natale, Collettivo MAVart, Barokthegreat, Gruppo 21, Alessandro Ragazzo, Damiano Rocco, Andrea Cazzagon + EMA, Ilaria Pasqualettoe Giacomo Trevisan

Date	Lecturers	Lecture Title
June 15 – 22, 2013	Claudia D'Angelo – PhD in History of Arts, Università di Bologna	<i>Il suono come ready-made. Suono e performance nel '900</i>
	Veniero Rizzardi – Professor at Ca' Foscari University in Venice	<i>Musica Elettronica. Per una genesi del rumore</i>
	Agnese Doria – Journalist and theatre critic	<i>Il corpo dell'oggi: corpo del performer vs corpo dello spettatore</i>
	Damiano Rocco – Musician and blogger	<i>Sequencer. Il blog italiano pensato/fatto, da/per coloro che si occupano di creatività e informatica</i>
	Claudio Racchetti – Musician	<i>La musica elettronica all'estero: prospettive ed esperienze dell'autore</i>
	Penzo+Fiore – artists and curators	<i>Poetica e corpo nella produzione artistica del duo tra arte visiva, teatro, performance</i>

Electro Camp II, 2014 – Training programme

Date	Workshop category	Artists	Workshop
September 11 – 14, 2014	Electronic music	Aldo Aliprandi, Karine Doumont, Johann Merrich	<i>M (Momenti)</i>
	Movement	Marta Ciappina	<i>Brilliant Mind and Powerful body</i>
	Visual Design	Mauro Ferrario	<i>Creative Coding</i>

Electro Camp II, 2014 – Artists

Date	Artists
September 11 – 14, 2014	Zero Branco, Arianna Marcolini, Discobolide, ?Alos, Micaela Leonardi, Kalalunatic, Gianluca Favaron, Camilla Monga, Fabio Orsi, Umlaut + Arianna, LECRI, OttoElectro, Maurizio Abate, The Expanding Universe, Mauro Ferrario, Federico Caporal

Date	Artists	Installations
September 11 – 14, 2014	Mauro Ferrario – Goofy Goober Project	<i>Tributo alla linea</i>
	Mauro Ferrario, Federico Caporal – Goofy Goober Project	<i>Omaggio a George Seurat</i>

Electro Camp III, 2015 – Training programme

Date	Workshop category	Artists	Workshop
September 9 – 13, 2015	Sound	Veniero Rizzardi	<i>Che cosa apparirà? Workshop dedicato a partiture grafiche e verbali</i>
	Performance	Chiara Bortoli, Francesca Raineri – Collettivo Jennifer Rosa	<i>Training per Performer con azioni di gruppo</i>
	Visual Making	Francesca Vassallo, Michele Toninelli, Alessandro Descovi	<i>Come creare un video promo</i>

Electro Camp III, 2015 – Artists

Date	Artists
September 9 – 13, 2015	Mariaelena Stocchi, Collettivo Jennifer Rosa, Arthemigra Satellite, Caterina Barbieri, Fagarazzi & Zuffellato, Kalalunatic, Von Tesla, M+P Project, Chironomia, Serena Gabrielli, IOIOI, Marta Ciappina, Patrizia Mattioli, Phlox, Andrea Kackl, Jasna Velickovic, Emanuele Wiltsch Barberio, B.E.A, Patrizia Oliva, Cilloman, Anna Clementi, Veniero Rizzardi, LECRI

Electro Camp IV, 2016 – Training programme

Date	Workshop category	Artists	Workshop
September 7 – 11, 2016	Sound	Ronit Ziv	<i>Cassandra and other Matters</i>
	Dance	Sejiro Murayama	<i>Collective works with voice, body movements and object manipulations</i>
	Lecture	Valentina Valentini, Walter Paradiso	<i>Drammaturgie sonore</i>

Electro Camp IV, 2016 – Artists

Date	Artists
September 7 – 11, 2016	Corinne Mazzoli, Aldo Aliprandi, Tomaz Grom. Ciprian Ciuclea, Catalin Cretu, Emil Ivanescu, Thomas Körtvélyessy. Benjamin Strauch, Giulia Vismara, Valentina Dal Mas, Jasna Velickovic, Valentina De Piante Niculac, Carlo Siega, Le Kollektif Singulier, Marta Bichisao, Patrizia Mattioli, Annika Pannitto, Isabel Nogueira, Luciano Zanatta, Sodinonsuonare, Mario Mariotti & Elia Moretti Duo

SPECIAL ACTIVITIES

Netlabel Fair

PARTNERSHIP

- 4Culture
- Institute of Romenian Culture
- WASP
- Electronicgirls
- Perypezye Urbane - Espressioni Film Festival.

Electro Camp V, 2017 – Training programme

Date	Workshop category	Artists	Workshop
September 7 – 10, 2017	Sound	Silvia Rampelli / Habillé d'Eau	<i>La Natura dell'atto</i>
	Performance	Patrizia Mattioli, Ilaria Pasqualetto	<i>Concerto per alberi, laboratorio di fiabe sonore</i> For children between 4 and 10 years
	Lecture	Giulio Escalona	<i>Sasso, forbice, carta: incontro su pietre sonore, sculture e litofoni</i>

Electro Camp V, 2017 – Artists

Date	Artists
September 7 – 10, 2017	LECRI, Salvatore Insana, Giulia Vismara, Elisa Turco Liveri, TWINZ, Loup Abramovici, Tomaz Grom, Roberta Milevoj, Giovanni Dinello, New Landscapes, Federica Marcoleoni, Tania Lo Duca, She Zeno, Cilloman, Minh Duc Nguyen, Christian Bläsche, IOIOI, Patrizia Mattioli, Effe Effe, Arazzi Laptop Ensemble, Alessandro Fagiuoli, Valentina Milan, Nicola Di Croce, Paola Ponti, Giulio Escalona, Ashley-Louise MCNaughton

SPECIAL ACTIVITIES

- *Teen Leader* - by Tania Lo Duca and Federica Marcoleoni | For teenagers
- *Crowdance* - by Laura Moro
- *Yoga in The Dark* - by IOIOI
- *Sleep Concert* - by IOIOI, Patrizia Mattioli, Effe Effe
- *Masufuria Yanaimba, the Pans are Singing* - by Giovanni Dinello and Giuseppe Diterlizzi
- *Percorsi sonori* - voices by di Mariangela Gualtieri and Valentina Valentini

VENERE IN TEATRO – Dance Festival
September 7 – 12, 2021

Date	Artists	Production
September 7	Compagnia Mòra	<i>Verso la specie</i>
September 7	Collettivo Jennifer Rosa	<i>Veneri</i>
September 7	Collettivo OS	<i>M.M.M.</i>
September 8	Matteo Marchesi	<i>BOB</i>
September 8	Chiara Ameglio	<i>Ave Mostrum</i>
September 9	Opera Bianco	<i>Jump!</i>
September 9	Collettivo Jennifer Rosa con Francesca Foscarini	<i>Hit Me</i>
September 10	Mette Ingvarstsen	<i>The Blue Piece</i>
September 10	Via Negativa	<i>Hundred Toasts</i>
September 11	Elisa Sbaragli, Fabio Brusadin, Edoardo Sansonne	<i>SEDIMENTI Site specific</i>
September 11	Tommaso Serratore	<i>Domino – Studio</i>
September 11	UB Dolls	Music Show
September 12	Compagnia Stalker Daniele Albanese	<i>HOME_action #Forte Marghera</i>
September 12	Simona Bertozzi	<i>Quel che resta - Studio</i>

Dance workshops

- September 10 – workshop by Opera Bianco
- September 11 – workshop by Maria Cargnelli
- September 12 – workshop by Elisa Sbaragli

Productions supported by Live Arts Cultures

- *M.M.M.* by Collettivo OS
- *SEDIMENTI Site specific* by Elisa Sbaragli, Fabio Brusadin, Edoardo Sansonne

VENERE IN TEATRO – Dance Festival
September 3 – 13, 2022

Date	Artists	Production
September 3	Francesco Cocco	<i>A chi si perde</i>
September 3	Lina Gómez	<i>Träumerei des Verschwindens</i>
September 4	Marianna Andriago	<i>Parasceva - performance in forma di durata - 4 ore</i>
September 7	Dehors / Audela	<i>All my loops for you</i>
September 7	Aldes	<i>Dance Club</i>
September 8	Sara Sguotti	<i>It'sHardToBeHuman. Rituali di adattamento . xxx è morta e al suo posto c'è un alieno</i>
September 8	Gloria Dorliguzzo	<i>Folk Tales</i>
September 9	Compagnia Mòra	<i>Esercitazioni ritmiche di Mestre. Il trattamento delle onde</i>
September 9	Sara Sguotti	<i>S.O.P.</i>
September 9	Compagnia Abbondanza / Bertoni	<i>C'è vita su Venere</i>
September 10	La Veronal	<i>Equal Elevations</i>
September 10	Sara Sguotti	<i>Dedica Lontana</i>
September 11	La P.P.	<i>Dédicace</i>
September 11	Chiara Bersani	<i>Seeking Unicorn</i>
September 11	Marina Donatone	<i>lower</i>
September 12	Julek Kreutzer and Diethild Meier	<i>Pile of pieces</i>
September 13	Elisa Sbaragli	<i>Beside Me</i>

Training programme

- September 4 – 9: workshop *Esercitazioni ritmiche di Mestre. Il trattamento delle onde* by Claudia Castellucci / Compagnia Mòra
- September 4: workshop by Lina Gómez
- September 9: workshop *COSMO_TECNO_POETICA. Incroci di pratiche per un habitat ecologica* by Laura Pante, in collaboration with Danila Gambettola and Edoardo Lazzari
- September 10: workshop by Julek Kreutzer and Diethild Meier

Installations

- *sull'irrequietezza del divenire – installazione* by Elisa Sbaragli, Fabio Brusadin, Edoardo Sansonne
- *Mi è sembrato di vedere un uccello (Compost)* by Luna Paese
- *Storie digitali di DanceMe UP* by Tina Bikic

Live Arts Cultures at Teatro del Parco

Date	Artists	Production	Programme
November 27, 2021	Silvia Gribaudi	<i>Graces</i>	Opening Nights
January 23, 2022	Compagnia Abbondanza / Bertoni	<i>Hyenas</i>	youTheater. Al Teatro del Parco 2022
April 9, 2022	Paola Lattanzi	<i>Crying out loud a doll's house</i>	youTheater. Al Teatro del Parco 2022
November 26, 2022	Barokthegreat	<i>Ghost. Lucifer wants to sell</i>	youTheater. Al Teatro del Parco 2022-23
January 21, 2023	Compagnia Enzo Cosimi	<i>Bastard Sunday</i>	youTheater. Al Teatro del Parco 2022-23
February 4, 2023	Claudia Caldarano	<i>Riflessioni</i>	youTheater. Al Teatro del Parco 2022-23
March 4, 2023	Vertical Waves Project	<i>AURAE. L'ora della massima veglia</i>	youTheater. Al Teatro del Parco 2022-23
May 20, 2023	Ambra Senatore	<i>A posto</i>	youTheater. Al Teatro del Parco 2022-23

Training programme

- November 28, 2021: workshop by Silvia Gribaudi
- January 22, 2022: workshop by Michele Abbondanza – Compagnia Abbodanza / Bertoni
- November 27, 2022: workshop by Barokthegreat

APPENDIX II

The following charts and data were derived from the *Analisi dei pubblici 2014-2018 document. Piano di audience development*. Live Arts Cultures produced the document for the municipal call to rent Pavilion 32 in Forte Marghera (2017).

The document was consulted during the study for this thesis and is not available publicly.

Chart 1. Number of association forms collected in Live Arts Cultures' activities from 2014 to 2017.

YEAR	2014	2015	2016	2017
TOTAL ASSOCIATION FORMS	217	350	234	224
WORKSHOPS	12	27	47	29
EVENTS	70	22	9	29
ELECTRO CAMP	112	279	170	148
OTHER ACTIVITIES	23	22	8	18

Chart 2. Geographic origin of the spectators in Live Arts Cultures' activities from 2014 to 2017.

YEAR	2014	2015	2016	2017	TOTAL
MESTRE	58	86	66	44	254
VENICE	32	25	23	35	115
METROPOLITAN AREA OF VENICE	35	45	29	38	147
PROVINCE OF TREVISO	29	61	22	22	134
PROVINCE OF PADUA	18	44	15	13	80
PROVINCE OF VICENZA	7	17	14	11	49
OTHER VENETO PROVINCES	0	7	6	5	18
OTHER REGIONS	27	56	55	47	185
ABROAD	11	9	4	9	33

Chart 3. Age of Live Arts Cultures' members.

YEAR	2014	2015	2016	2017	TOTAL
15 – 18 YEARS	0	5	0	0	5
19 – 24 YEARS	7	13	15	21	56
25 – 29 YEARS	20	41	35	16	112
30 – 34 YEARS	47	77	60	47	231
35 – 39 YEARS	53	76	46	53	228
40 – 49 YEARS	53	72	35	40	200
50 – 60 YEARS	25	42	23	20	110
OVER 60 YEARS	6	18	7	15	46

Chart 4. Questions about spectators' qualitative perception on Live Arts Cultures' activities.

QUESTIONS	YES	NO	POSITIVE	QUITE POSITIVE	NEGATIVE
How would you rate your experience today?	-	-	63	9	3
Was it easy to find information about the event?	60	20	-	-	-
Was it easy to reach Forte Marghera?	85	4	-	-	-
Were you received with care and courtesy?	68	3	-	-	-
Did the event have an appropriate time?	60	2	-	-	-
Did you find the artistic quality of the proposal good?	67	2	-	-	-

Chart 5. Questions about the spectators' involvement in Live Arts Cultures' activities.

QUESTIONS	Have you ever participated in Live Arts Cultures' activities?	How did you get to know Live Arts Cultures?	Would you like to be informed about our activities?
YES	43	-	-
NO	44	-	-
FACEBOOK	-	22	-
PRESS	-	0	-
RADIO	-	0	-
POSTERS	-	0	-
FRIENDS	-	55	-
BY CHANCE	-	6	-
I ALREADY RECEIVED THE NEWSLETTER	-	-	9
I DO NOT WANT THE NEWSLETTER	-	-	54
SIGN ME UP FOR THE NEWSLETTER	-	-	26

LIST OF IMAGES



FIGURE 1. Pavilion 32 before the renovation works, Forte Marghera (Mestre, Venice), 2007.



FIGURE 2. Pavilion 32 before the renovation works, Forte Marghera (Mestre, Venice), 2007.



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FIGURE 5. Pavilion 32 after the renovation works, Forte Marghera (Mestre, Venice), 2009.



FIGURE 6. *Jam (1°)*, Forte Marghera (Mestre, Venice), 2012.



FIGURE 7. *Mayday*, Forte Marghera (Mestre, Venice), 2013.



FIGURE 8. Andriago_Aliprandi, *Del tuo dove*, 2011.



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FIGURE 16. Chiara Bersani, *Seeking Unicorn*, Pavilion 30 – Forte Marghera (Mestre, Venice), 2022.



FIGURE 17. Sara Sguotti, *S.O.P.*, Pavilion 29 – Forte Marghera (Mestre, Venice), 2022.

IMAGES CREDITS

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Live Arts Cultures, “2007-2011 Photo Gallery”, Accessed January 28, 2024.

<https://liveartscultures.weebly.com/photo-gallery-2007---2011.html>

FIGURE 6

Live Arts Cultures, *C32 performing art work space. Report 2012-2014*, Venezia, 2014.

FIGURE 7

Live Arts Cultures, “2012-2015 Photo Gallery”, Accessed January 28, 2024.

<https://liveartscultures.weebly.com/photo-gallery-2012-15.html>

FIGURE 8

Andrigo_Aliprandi, *Del tuo dove*, 2011.

FIGURE 9

Ilaria Salvagno

FIGURE 10

Live Arts Cultures, *Live Arts Cultures 2018*, Venezia, 2018.

FIGURES 11 – 17

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https://commission.europa.eu/index_it

Comune di Venezia

<https://www.comune.venezia.it/>

Electronicgirls

<https://electronicgirlslabel.weebly.com/about-us.html>

Fondazione Forte Marghera

<https://fondazionefortemarghera.it/>

Forum Terzo Settore

<https://www.forumterzosettore.it/>

Galleria Contemporaneo Associazione Culturale

<http://www.galleriacontemporaneo.it/>

Istituto Nazionale di Statistica

<https://www.istat.it/>

Italia Non Profit

<https://italianonprofit.it/>

KEA European Affairs

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<https://www.normattiva.it/>

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Venice International Performance Art Week

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