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**WORKARTS AND ART-BASED INITIATIVES:  
THE IMPACT OF ART ON THE ORGANIZATIONAL SETTING**

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# INTRODUCTION

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In recent years art within the business environment has been progressively recognized as a powerful communication tool to convey corporate vision and identity to stakeholders. In light of this fact, the frequency of interaction between the art world and the business world has significantly increased. In particular, art is deemed relevant to promote and foster employee creativity (Batey *et al.*, 2021) which in turn serves as a potential innovation enabler. Thus, the aim of this study is to analyze and examine the often overlooked topic of artistic interventions (*Art-Based Initiatives* in Schiuma's (2009) words) that companies can put in place within the organizational setting and the related effects that can stem from their implementation. Hence, it seems worth comprehensively investigating this topic in an attempt to provide valuable insights and remarks to practitioners for future research and especially to companies seeking for profitable investment opportunities that can improve their innovation processes. Since the pace of innovation constantly requires corporations to keep up to date, they shall be equipped with useful knowledge on these groundbreaking interventions so as to ensure that even this innovative instrument is at their fingertips. Moreover, this field of analysis appears to be relatively neglected arguably because it blends various disciplines and demands knowledge of each of them: this is exactly why it deserves more attention.

Regarding the employed methodology, an exploratory approach is adopted in order to thoroughly address the research questions and to study more in depth what can be considered a novel corporate resource. Therefore, by intersecting the underlying theoretical principles with empirical evidence, this dissertation shows that art and the associated artistic interventions represent a useful cost-effective strategy positively affecting workers' well-being, productivity and creative thinking. The dissertation is structured in four chapters with the key takeaways mentioned below. In order to contextualize the field of analysis, the first chapter explores the evolution of the relationship between Art and Economics and ends with the definition of art value as culmination point of the discourse. Afterwards, the second chapter provides an overview on current firm investments in the arts that are mainly ascribable to corporate philanthropy and sponsorship. In addition, we dwell upon the organizational areas impacted by these investments and delineate the main strategies that companies should preferably resort to when it comes to corporate investments in the arts. In the third chapter we narrow the scope to those art investments specifically affecting internal

organizational areas and thus examine the underexplored field of artistic interventions or *workarts* (Barry & Meisiek, 2010) which enable the framing of organizational value of art. Lastly, in the fourth chapter we propose empirical case studies that deal with the effects of artistic interventions on employee well-being, productivity and creativity. Hence, we conclude the dissertation by emphasizing the importance of art within the workplace as enhancer of a creative workforce (i.e. creative capital) and, ultimately, as a means of streamlining firms innovation processes.

# CHAPTER 1

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## LITERATURE EXCURSUS ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ART AND ECONOMICS: THE VALUE OF ART

Economics and Art have always been somehow intertwined and have proven so by sharing the same fate: they emerged to fulfil human primal needs for nourishment and communication (Alpagu, 2014). Due to this interconnection, the relationship between Art and Economics and its evolution over time deserves to be more thoroughly investigated. To achieve this objective the relatively niche discipline of Cultural Economics (or Economics of the Arts) is worth mentioning because it represents the junction point between Art and Economics (Ginsburgh & Throsby, 2014). The roots of Cultural Economics should be sought in 1966 with the publication of *Performing Arts – The Economic Dilemma* by Baumol and Bowen (Throsby, 1994), a study on the “financial problems of the performing arts” (Heilbrun, 1984, p. 41) that, according to Heilbrun (1984), signals the starting point of the arts as “a respectable subject for professional economists” (p. 41). This work determines the demarcation line between two eras: one in which art and economics were considered two distinct and distant disciplines and the other in which they form a unique object of study (Ginsburgh, 2012). In any case, the concept of art value makes his way throughout the years leading several economists to devise some approaches to investigate and decouple it in order to better analyze its main components.

### 1.1 ART & ECONOMICS BEFORE 1966

In the 17<sup>th</sup> century, well before the rise of Cultural Economics, art and its related activities were considered (by economic thinkers) either “wasteful extravagances of the aristocracy, or dangerous distractions for the working classes” (Goodwin, 2006, p. 26). Luckily, in the following centuries “economic thinkers offered more positive and thoughtful speculations” (Ibid.) from Adam Smith, who dedicated several essays on paintings, to Keynes, who consistently contributed to the creation of the Arts Council of Great Britain for the public support of art (Throsby, 1994). Thus, Economists, especially in the past, have always been captivated by art in every form and aspect: Galiani and many other Enlightenment economic thinkers, like Hume and Turgot, were interested in the functioning of art markets and the



social benefits stemming from art (Goodwin, 2006). Needless to say, their remarks on art were deeply aligned with their Enlightenment ideology. Galiani, among others, who strongly believed in the value of *Human Sapienza* (Reason), also recognized the importance of imagination and men's "ability to create beauty" (Makolkin, 2014, p. 260). In fact, he stated that artworks' "price always corresponds to the needs or desires of the buyer and the esteem of the seller combined, and forming a compound ratio" (Galiani, 1751, pp. 295-296 cited in Goodwin, 2006, p. 32). The philosopher and political economist Bernard de Mandeville, whose division of labor theory influenced Adam Smith's work (Kaye, 1922), demonstrated an interest in art and artworks as well. In his famous *Fable of the Bees*, as noted by De Marchi and Van Miegroet (1994, pp. 454-455), he identified four main factors affecting the value of paintings: the "Name of the Master", "the Time of his Age", "the scarcity of the artist's work" and the "Quality" of people possessing them together with the time period they were owned by "Great Families". The first three factors refer to the strength of demand ("desirability" (Ibid., p. 455)) while the fourth one is related to the supply. Moreover, with Hume and Turgot, a new perspective on arts takes shape in the 18<sup>th</sup> century (Goodwin, 2006). For David Hume art was not limited to the individual experience, but rather it should have been embedded in a more public, "shared and mutually reinforcing" dimension (Stradella, 2012, p. 39). For this reason, the fine arts, deemed to be part of the "'innocent' luxury", led to positive economic externalities as well as political ones "essential to a democracy", in that they raised "civic virtue" among the members of society (Goodwin, 2006, pp. 33-34). Thus, Hume suggested that the social benefits stemming from the art "went along with accomplishments in other areas such as the economy and were not competitive with them" (Ibid., p. 33): "the consumption of all the commodities which serve to the ornament and pleasure of life [like artworks], are advantages to society; because [...] they are a kind of *storehouse* of labor, which, in the exigencies of the state, may be turned to the public service" (Hume, 1752, pp. 51-52). Turgot emphasized the dependance of economic progress on the freedom of "mental activity" and thus on creativity (Hussein, 2014, p. 71). He even showed how "artistic and intellectual progress" underpinned societal advancement for ancient Greeks (Goodwin, 2006, p. 34). According to Turgot, successes in arts were pivotal for the history of any country which should have promoted and fostered the arts for its own development and growth (Hussein, 2014). Therefore, a "sustained demand" (Goodwin, 2006, p. 36) was necessary to support competition considered unavoidable to achieve concrete and positive results in the arts: however, for Turgot "conspicuous consumption was not a sound basis for patronage of the arts and was [...] destructive of artistic quality" (Ibid.) because a high demand for the arts

(*taste* in Turgot's words) was not linked to "genuine creativity" (Ibid.) but rather to "great waves of fashion, and a variety of causes could lead to loss of demand" (Ibid., p. 37).

In line with Turgot's thinking on fashion as main determinant of demand for art was Adam Smith who "was particularly intrigued by the demand side of art markets" (Ibid.). His *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, together with his essays *Of the Imitative Arts* and *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres*, stressed the importance of the arts as moral enhancers able to drive "emotional involvement [...] in conjunction with rational thought" (Wight, 2006, p. 157). Stated in another way, arts served "the vital public interest by stretching moral perspective" and, as for Hume, they provided positive externalities for society and had to be supported by an adequate public policy (Ibid.). He also delineated "a qualitative hierarchy" (Goodwin, 2006, p. 41) made up of the three *sister Arts* (namely music, dance and poetry) contributing to cultural development, "somewhat parallel to his [...] stage theory of economic growth" (Ibid.). The British economist and nobleman James Maitland (1819, pp. 136-140) in his *Inquiry into the nature and origin of public wealth* view the artists as "productive labourers" on the ground that wealth consisted "in the abundance of the objects of man's desire" and was not only "constituted of price or exchangeable value". Moreover, as Goodwin (2006, pp. 45-46) pointed out, he even "argued that in the arts [...] talent imposed barriers to entry and that prices of works of art [...] under competition would reflect increasing rents to artists of rare talent".

But, if on the one hand there were art enthusiasts, at the other end of the spectrum, because of Bentham "emphasis on utility" (Goodwin, 2006, p. 26) and of his envisioning of art as any other "forms of entertainment" (Ibid.), many political economists followed his steps and departed "from exploration of the economics of the arts" (Ibid.). John Stuart Mill was among those who "accused Bentham of disparaging poetry as misrepresentation" (Ferguson, 2020, p. 47) and who saw Bentham's "intellectual project" (Ibid.) as purely utilitarian. Regarding Bentham's conception of art, as noted by Quinn (2020), one should take into account his British socio-historical background characterized by a "shift from the idea of beauty as a harmonious order [...] perceived by an 'inner sense' of taste towards a more practical aesthetics appropriate to commercial society" (p. 201). Hence, for Bentham the utility of fine arts and their value had to be found in the mere pleasure they delivered: yet, he recognized a kind of moral utility to art because its existence and "cultivation" (Julius, 2020, p. 174) represented an alternative occupation to "mischievous and dangerous passions and employments" (Ibid.).

Notwithstanding the scarce amount of research due to “the negative heuristics conveyed to scholars” (Goodwin, 2006, p. 46) on art in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, one could still draw insights from the positive ones: Ricardo, for example, held that the value attributed to artworks was driven by demand (Ibid.). David Ricardo attached to inimitable and unrepeatable goods (i.e. artworks) a value resulting from the wealth of those willing to own them and not on the labor quantity required for their production (Tsoulfidis, 2017). Because of the decreasing interest in art by political economists, artists, novelists and poets decided to bridge the gap and criticize economic thinkers’ views on the art world: Thomas Love Peacock asserted that the 19<sup>th</sup> century “had become the age of the ‘huckster’ (*l’épiciier* [in Peacock’s words]) in which all goods were produced in response to consumer demand without regard to their inherent merit” (Goodwin, 2006, p. 48). Peacock observed how *l’esprit épiciier* had led the huckster to be an authoritarian seeker of order condemning everything opposing to it (disorder); the author thus regarded the huckster as “the enemy of the artist and the intellectual” (Ibid.) that by definition look for disorder since they are guided by imagination. Among the “humanist critics of political economy” (Ibid., p. 49) who addressed the relationship between art and economics, Matthew Arnold and John Ruskin need to be mentioned. The former insisted on the value that art education carried for any democracy and on the role the state had to play in funding its teaching for all social classes; in Arnold’s view, arts enabled individuals to “achieve the rich sense of human life” (Pratt, 2007, p. 22) and for this purpose the government had to “be committed to funding public school systems” (Ibid., p. 23) because of its “vested interest in educating a wise and humane citizenry” (Ibid.). Moreover, he challenged the political economists by stating that the arts “were more than merely a distinctive collection of goods amongst which consumers might make a selection for their amusement” (Goodwin, 2006, p. 49) because he was convinced that they favored “social development” (Ibid.) by bringing “human nature” (Ibid.) to a state of perfection where beauty and intelligence coexisted in harmony (Ibid.). Arnold thus highlighted the importance of the cultural environment within which market interactions took place; along with him, the art critic John Ruskin rebuked political economists for treating consumers utility functions as given and “exogenous to economic analysis. Arnold’s concern was macro, about the stability of the entire social and economic system, whereas Ruskin’s was micro, about the happiness of the individual in society” (Ibid., pp. 50-51). Ruskin was concerned about the “poor working conditions of his day” (Avery-Quash & Barnes, 2020, p. 2) due to industrialization and saw the arts as a way to escape from reality for people that could “enjoy and learn from beautiful, publicly-accessible and well-maintained works of art” thanks to “well-trained and properly-directed visual

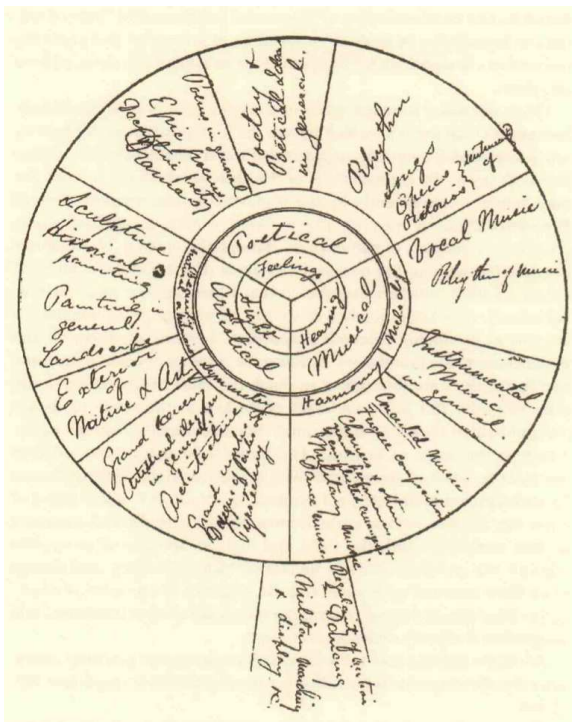
perception” (Ibid.). For Ruskin, Goodwin (2006, p. 51) continues, to make a consumer happy quantity had to bend over quality and, to achieve this objective, artists’ key role was to “educate consumers” on the selection of the best quality goods. For this reason, “he was an early [...] advocate of public support of arts education [...], of museums (to protect old art), and of a national arts purchase fund (to provide demand for new art)” (Ibid.). In 1857, Ruskin held a public lecture in Manchester, the city he blamed to be “the epicentre of all ills in the world” (Hudson, 2020, p. 3) because of its “rampant free market capitalism, polluting industrialization and the dehumanizing mechanization” (Ibid.) and in his speech *A joy forever (and its price in the market): Two lectures on the political economy of art* he offered a “morality tale on how art should not be acquired by individuals for personal gain or prowess, but was a precious thing to be used for the common public good” (Ibid.). The lecture he gave, as argued by Hudson (2020, p. 3), “marked a watershed in [...] Ruskin’s life, as he expanded his ideas beyond ‘just art’ into the realm of the ethics and morals of how we organize and manage our society as a whole - the true meaning of economy”.

Regarding “the treatment of the arts” (Goodwin, 2006, p. 53) by neo-classical marginal economists, there are some aspects that can be pointed out. They are essentially referred to the features of uniqueness and non-reproducibility recognized by marginal economists to artworks and to the higher “willingness among the marginalists than among the classical economists” to assume and hypothesize the positive externalities generated by the arts (Ibid.). As a marginalist, Alfred Marshall believed that “the demand for artworks has roots in some fundamental set of preferences that will [...] prevail over the pressure of fashion” (Ibid., p. 54) and that only thanks to “true artistic excellence” (not to fashion) art will be remembered by several generations (Ibid.). Moreover, Marshall’s focus on “economic and socio-ethical progress” (Nishizawa, 2012, p. 21) aimed at eradicating poverty, improving “people’s welfare” (Ibid.) and “quality of life” (Ibid.) and developing men’s “higher faculties” (Ibid., p. 38) led him to “personify the idea of ‘a moralizing capitalism’” (Ibid., p. 26). In the unpublished book “which was to be titled *Some Possibilities of the Economic Future*” (Nishizawa, 2012, p. 24) he even stated how human life enrichment, deemed “the true aim of mankind” (Ibid.), was attainable through the artistic experience among other things.

According to Goodwin (2006, p. 55), if William Stanley Jevons “lived longer and continued to pursue his interests in the arts he might be remembered today as the father of cultural economics”. Such a strong assertion can be explained by the fact that, because of Jevons, a new phenomenon arose among marginalist economists: the one of the “closet artist or

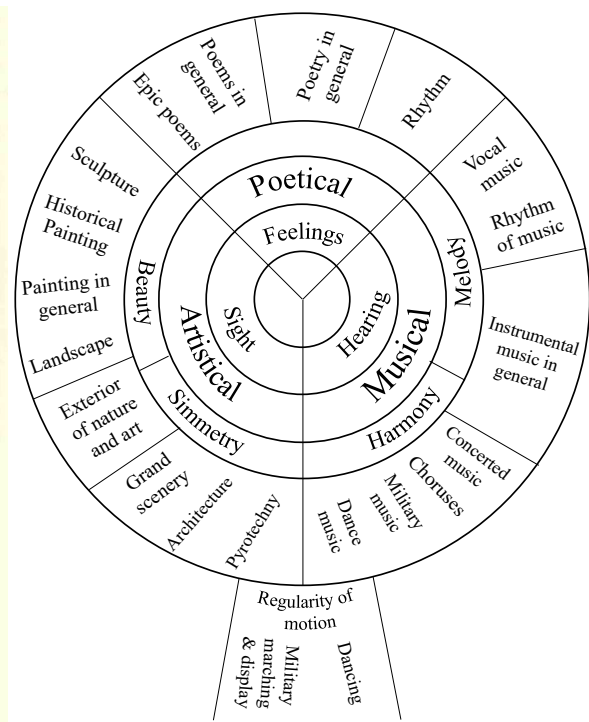
aesthete, [namely] the economist who either has a separate life as an artist or acknowledges having had a profound aesthetic experience while seeming unwilling to incorporate the artistic dimensions of life into economics” (Ibid., p. 54). Mosselmans and Mathijs (1999) underscored how Jevons remained true to its utilitarian principles when analyzing art thus dwelling on “its usefulness” (p. 122) and how, by doing so, he was able to “classify art forms through their levels of abstractness” (p. 136). He introduced the concept of “perceptive pleasure” (Ibid., p. 130) representing those emotions coming from different sources that he classified in light of the way in which they influence one’s mind: the “sense of hearing, the sense of seeing, and [...] a ‘third and highest division’, in which he places poetical ideas and mental pictures of beauty (Ibid., p. 134). As shown in the pictures below (Figures 1.1 and 1.2), in Jevons’ diagram “the individual is at the center, [...] surrounded by different kinds of senses and the perceptive pleasures with which they are associated; and the events capable of producing these pleasures are listed at the outer end of the circle” (Ibid., p. 136): in this classification of the arts, the section of sight is followed by a distinction between “beauty” and “symmetry” as well as the category of hearing that includes “harmony” and “melody” (Ibid.). According to Mosselmans and Mathijs (1999, p. 136), Jevons drew “abstract” insights “of perception from concrete art forms”, thus constituting “a hierarchical view of the perception of art. The more we approach the outer end of the circle, the more concrete the perceptions become”.

Figure 1.1: Jevon’s diagram JA6/45/4



Source: Mosselmans and Mathijs, 1999

Figure 1.2: Jevon’s diagram JA6/45/4



Source: personal rielaboration

Within the “Artistical” heading, for example, Jevons inserted “sculpture” and “painting” below “beauty” and put “architecture” below “symmetry”, while the position of “exterior of nature and art” suggests “that it possesses characteristics of both categories”. The same can be said for “Hearing” and “Poetical” general headings whereas the category “regularity of motion” deserves a separate discussion since it is “the furthest from the center of the diagram” (Mosselmans & Mathijs, 1999, p. 136): its main feature is that it “cannot be represented directly by one of the three main classes” (Ibid.).

In conclusion, Jevons’ interest in the arts even led him to become a “pioneer” in the “museum economy” (Goodwin, 2006, pp. 56-57): his commitment in this public policy area related to the arts involved arriving “at some conception of the purposes in creating public collections and of the means” to attain them. So, Jevons called upon “governmental attention to the arts” arguing that art was a useful tool to “keep the working classes away from various temptations that might be personally and socially destructive” (Ibid.).

Lionel Robbins can be considered the last neo-classical economist “who attended to the economics of the arts before the appearance of the cultural economics sub-discipline in the 1960s” (Goodwin, 2006, p. 58). Robbins (1994, p. 67) recognized the role and the “obligation” of the state to ensure “cultivation of the arts and higher learning” among its “political objectives”. In an attempt to define “the educational function” (Ibid., p. 67), he mentioned that the “purpose of education” (Ibid., p. 68) had to go well “beyond the mere essentials of vocational competence” (Ibid.) and, consequently, argued that “the provision of examples of the highest standards of cultural achievement in the visual arts [...] comes within that function” (Ibid.). He even employed every possible “neo-classical economic arguments” (Goodwin, 2006, p. 58) for the public support of art by illustrating that certain artworks should be regarded as public goods because of the positive “external benefits” they induce and by showing how leaving art goods to the sole private sector funding would have caused their underproduction. Not surprisingly he strived to retain a painting by Titian in the U.K. suggesting that this “work of superlative intrinsic beauty and of pivotal importance in the history of art” (Robbins, 1994, pp. 76-77) would have brought “unalloyed happiness and enlightenment” to the British visitors of the art museum where it was exhibited. This proves that Robbins questioned himself whether the arts were somehow “different in kind from other consumption goods” (Goodwin, 2006, p. 58) and even came to the conclusion that “it was a matter of ‘ultimate values’”. Stated in another way, he was aware that, by merely existing, the

arts gave a meaningful reason to life but, in the end, he also acknowledged that “to understand why and how they did so was probably beyond the scope of economic science” (Ibid.).

American Institutionalists were economists who, between the 19<sup>th</sup> and the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, strongly objected marginalists’ view and were in contrast to “Benthamite utilitarianism” (Goodwin, 2006, p. 59) as a way to measure “economic behavior and [...] changes in human welfare”: Veblen and Galbraith were among the most prominent figures of the Institutional movement. But, while the former mainly disregarded artworks as superficial demonstrations of “the wealth and power of the patron” (Ibid.) and included the arts in “the large body of wasteful and unproductive activities pursued by those concerned mainly with wealth and power” (Ibid.), on the other hand, Galbraith’s vision of the arts demonstrated his devotion to “the building of bridges between economics and the arts” (Ibid., p. 60). Firstly, Galbraith noticed that large firms across the years managed to create the conditions to operate in an environment with a lower degree of uncertainty and, by that time, they tried to force their values on “the artistic world” to “influence its creativity” (Droucopoulos, 2019, p. 3). He observed how within “large corporations the word ‘artist’ was used as a term of contempt for someone unwilling to submit to discipline” (Goodwin, 2006, p. 60) and art was seen as an “anathema to the ‘technostructure’” (Ibid.) of big companies whose managers were strictly oriented towards the scientific organization of labor. Thus, according to Galbraith, the state had “to support, with vigour and generosity, artistic education, to encourage artistic activity and [...] innovation” (Droucopoulos, 2019, pp. 3-4) thus paying attention to those activities (i.e. the arts) falling outside the scope of the market economy. He reckoned that economists did not pay attention to the arts because “of the necessarily anachronistic character of most artistic production” (Goodwin, 2006, p. 60): in other words, artworks were in striking contrast with the organizational reality of firms at that time. As such, he blamed large corporations “for inculcating in the artist the fallacious absurdity of an inferior and subordinate economic and social role” (Droucopoulos, 2019, pp. 4-5) and called for an empowerment and a liberation of the “artistic community” from the constraints imposed by the “planning system” whose “influence [...] minimized public and private financial support” of the arts.

John Maynard Keynes, as pointed out by Heilbrun (1984, p. 37), “was a man of action as well as a man of thought” and for this reason he did not limit himself to “passive contemplation of art” but rather took the lead as “promoter, innovator, and organizer of an astonishing array of arts enterprises”. Plus, with the Bloomsbury Group he examined several issues that are still relevant for nowadays cultural economists: “the place of the arts in human life, including

economic life; the character of the artistic experience [...]; the use made of the arts by artists and others to shape behavior in society and the economy; the nature of the demand for and supply of art works in art markets; and opportunities for experiments with policy change and institutional reform” (Goodwin, 2006, p. 61). Keynes and the “Bloomsburys” (Ibid.) asserted that art had to be accessible to any strata of society and not only to the wealthier classes since it represented the milestone “in the achievement of true human civilization”; in addition, they were convinced that economic development that led to the rise of the “modern society” aimed at stultifying instead of prompting “the artistic impulse in humans” (Ibid.). With the “‘formalist’ theory of aesthetics” (Goodwin, 2006, p. 62) that the Bloomsburys Fry and Bell introduced, they inferred “that the aesthetic experience was fundamentally different from the satisfaction achieved from consumer goods and services” and, in this way, they elevated the arts by conferring them an “exceptional status”. Keynes, among others, rejected the “Benthamite tradition” (Goodwin, 2006, p. 62) and claimed that applying it to art hindered “the development of a richer and more truly enlightening body of theory [on the arts]” (Ibid.). The Bloomsbury Group was also interested in the functioning of art markets but “found the conventional models in economics unsatisfactory to explain them” (Ibid., p. 63); with respect to the supply, it was not properly reflected by price because the main drivers for artists and their works were “internal psychological pressures” (Ibid., p. 64) and not “financial rewards” (Ibid.); with regards to the demand, Roger Fry analyzed the different demand determinants and “the psychological circumstances of [...] the actual or potential providers of support for the arts” (Ibid.). Moreover, Fry and Bell decided to found the Contemporary Art Society in 1909 “to educate the artistic opinion of the country” (Goodwin, 2006, p. 65) in an “attempt to correct what was perceived to be a unique market failure in art markets”: the CAS aimed at providing “support for those artists who deserved to survive” thanks to the resources offered by individuals that “perceived the social significance of education and research in the arts”. Few years later, in 1925, Keynes set up “The London Artists Association, to help alleviate financial pressures on accomplished but not yet self-supporting artists” (Heilbrun, 1984, p. 38) testifying to his role “as innovator and promoter”. Along with private initiatives, Keynes and Clark created the British Arts Council, “a public funding mechanism” (Goodwin, 2006, p. 65) focused on “channeling public support for the arts [...] through private sector intermediaries [...] to strengthen public support for the arts but lighten the heavy hand of governmental bureaucracy”. Keynes, thus, took all these initiatives “on behalf of the arts in the twenties and early thirties” (Heilbrun, 1984, pp. 43-45) with the goal of supporting the arts “through private or cooperative activity” hoping that “in the long run high art” would have become “self-supporting”.



## 1.2 ART & ECONOMICS AFTER 1966

### 1.2.1 DEVELOPMENT PHASES AND APPROACHES TO CULTURAL ECONOMICS

Before delving into the topic and illustrating the main schools of thought that have delineated within Cultural Economics across the years, it seems advisable to contextualize this discipline by depicting its development phases detected by Seaman (2009). Starting from the field of industrial organization, Seaman (2009) proposes a framework identifying the stages of “*foundation, maturation, reevaluation, and backlash*” (p. 7) that he applies to cultural economics in an attempt to analyze “the development of and controversies surrounding” it. The first stage (Foundation) is mainly “definitional” and aims at establishing “core paradigms and theoretical foundations, with initial applications of preliminary approaches”; the second stage (Maturation) is characterized by the definition “of a dominant methodological approach” and by its implementation “to an ever expanding array of research problems within the scope of the definitions established in the foundation stage”; the third stage (Reevaluation) is connected to “the discomfiting sense that the full potential of the field is not being realized by the decisions made in the maturation stage” and thus one has to concentrate on renewing “the initial foundation stage insights that had been de-emphasized”; the fourth stage (Backlash) is marked by “a more concerted effort to act upon the growing recognition that a more sophisticated version of some foundation stage approaches may be [...] fruitful” (Seaman, 2009, pp. 20-21).

With respect to the Foundation stage, Seaman (2009) continues, there have been several issues related to the definition of Cultural Economics because of its transversal nature: “Ginsburgh (2001) identified six overlapping disciplines that made definition a challenge (art history, art philosophy, sociology, law, management and economics)” (p. 22) and, in addition to this, “a certain division with the field has been present from the very beginning, with one ongoing ‘litmus test’ being whether references to the works of Bourdieu elicit appreciative recognition (generally among Europeans) or blind stares” (p. 22) (generally among North American). Along with this interdisciplinarity, Gianfranco Mossetto was among those trying to exploit this feature of Cultural Economics by incorporating “aesthetic quality in economic theorizing” (Bjorkegren, 1997, p. 363).

Regarding the Maturation stage, it occurred thanks to the increasing “application of [...] standard economics and basic econometric tools to nearly all the many sub-fields” and to “the

formalization of the ACEI” (Association for Cultural Economics International) that broadened the scope “of the Journal of Cultural Economics (JCE)” (Seaman, 2009, p. 24).

The Reevaluation stage reflects “dissatisfaction with the status quo” (Ibid.) and tackles the following issues: inadequacy of method, inadequacy of scope and inadequacy of policy conclusions. The first essentially pertains to the inadequacy “of some of the theory and the econometric techniques that had become standard in much of the literature”; the second refers to inadequacy of the “boundaries” defined for Cultural Economics in the foundation stage that limit “the influence of the field”; the latter is about the inadequacy of the “policy prescriptions” of the foundation stage later “developed [...] in the maturation stage” (Seaman, 2009, p. 24).

As long as the Backlash stage is concerned, the first backlash in Cultural Economics can be found in the review by Tabarrok where he criticizes Ginsburgh and Menger’s choice of providing analytical and statistical techniques in their “collection of papers” of 1996 instead of dealing with more intriguing questions “peculiar to the arts” and that can attract “the creative attention of economists” (Ibid., p. 26).

Cowen (1998, pp. 68-69) outlines three main approaches adopted in Cultural Economics: “mainstream neoclassicism” (this method is the same applied to “any other mainstream economic field”), “loose neoclassicism” (this method is largely neoclassical but not mainstream and enhances “unorthodox features of economic problems”), “explicitly non-mainstream” and “institutionalist” approach (this method, mainly followed by Europeans, is “descriptive and empirical”). Since 1966 the main method employed to Cultural Economics has been “loose neoclassicism” (Blaug, 2001, p. 124) that should be interpreted “in the loose Adam Smith sense of self-interested individual action constrained by costs, incomes and the norms of economic institutions” (Ibid.). Among the adopters of neoclassical economics principles, Ruth Towse must be mentioned for her significant contributions to the classification of a consistent body of research in Cultural Economics (Blaug, 2001). Towse (2010) illustrates the main works that brought to the growth and evolution of Cultural Economics from the 1970s. She starts by citing the book *The Joyless Economy: An Inquiry into Human Satisfaction and Consumer Dissatisfaction* by Tibor Scitovsky who, ahead of his time (in 1976), believed “that economics could learn much from behavioural psychology” and whose “emphasis on the search for novelty” fits well “with the current interest” in Cultural Economics (Towse, 2010, p. 15). Other significant contributions, as noted by Towse (2010), can be sought in the works by John Michael Montias who was a pioneer in the research on the “economic history of art markets” (p. 61) and by Alan Peacock who “initiated the first

economic analysis of museums and of built heritage” (p. 15). Regarding the performing arts, David Throsby and Glenn Withers succeeded at formulating theoretical models that found widespread adoption in Cultural Economics (Towse, 2010). Bruno Frey and Werner Pommerehne provided “a European perspective on cultural economics” and Frey, in particular, deepened his research on the “economics of museums” (Towse, 2010, p. 16). Thanks to the establishment of the Journal of Cultural Economics in 1977, “cultural economics acquired a forum for the publication of articles on a range of topics now perceived as belonging to an identifiable, distinct field of study”, but starting from the 1990s “interest in the economics of this branch of cultural production really developed” (Ibid.). Blaug (2001, p. 123) notes that the progress made in Cultural Economics was both “analytical” and “empirical”: the former refers to the “refinement of basic theoretical concepts” while the latter to “more accurate estimates of fundamental empirical relationships”. He continues by stating that this “process of evolution in the subject has by no means come to an end” (Blaug, 2001, p. 124) and it even brought “to the application of economics to an ever widening domain of artistic phenomena”. Within this evolution process, cultural economists like Klammer managed to turn this subject “from a sub-discipline of economics into a sub-discipline of anthropology” (Ibid., p. 123).

Throughout the analysis on the evolution of the relationship between art and economics, it is possible to detect two main conflicting visions between those economists sticking to their neoclassical thinking (like Cordes and Goldfarb, Towse, Abbing, Grampp, Frey) and those more open to a change in perspective relating to the arts (like Klammer, Hutter, Amariglio, Spranzi).

### 1.2.2 ART AS COMMODITY

According to Klammer (1996, p. 9), Cordes and Goldfarb “stick to the economic strategy in their investigation” on the arts. In their analysis, they focus on a specific “subset of art” namely “public art [...] for which public display or performance looms large” (Cordes & Goldfarb, 1996, p. 77). Public art is often directly or indirectly subsidized by the State for “its creation and/or [to] make it available to the public” (Ibid., p. 77): this feature poses several problems that Cordes and Goldfarb (1996) have chosen to “examine through the prism of economic analysis” (p. 77). They note how “European countries devote significantly more resources to public support for the arts” than the US while, at the same time, “indirect state support of the arts [...] through tax incentives for private contributions” (Ibid., pp. 77-78)

accounts for a larger portion in the US than in Europe. To explain such differences between US and Europe, they employ “the framework of neoclassical economic analysis” which essentially assumes that individuals, “the behavioral unit” of the analysis, are able to evaluate each alternative action and that “social phenomena” are “the outcome of choices made by rational individuals” (Ibid., p. 78). They believe that the framework proposed can be useful to explain “patterns of support for the arts” (Ibid., p. 92) but they are also aware that economic insights “to understanding the arts” can “falter” (Ibid., p. 77).

Klamer (1996, p. 9) states that Ruth Towse is an advocate of the art as a commodity and that “she wants economists to stick to their conventional, well-tested tools” when dealing with arts and culture. Towse (1996, p. 97) believes that “what is art is a market outcome” and that progress in Cultural Economics has been achieved by recognizing that and by following “the neo-classical paradigm”. She continues by affirming that the neoclassical approach applied to the arts was successful since it “has avoided breast-beating over ‘intrinsic’ value by equating market price with value” (Ibid.). She corroborates this argument by presenting several results and insights produced by “research based on neoclassical analysis of artists’ labor markets” (Ibid.): the main questions asked are concerned with the different functioning of artists' labor markets and with the wage earned by artists. It was shown that the majority of artists “work longer than average hours, and earn less in total (in arts and non-arts work) than other workers [...] They have typically undertaken longer education and training than other workers but their earnings from arts work do not rise with length of training, age or experience” (Towse, 1996, p. 98). Thus, Towse (1996, p. 99) argues that thanks to neoclassical economic analysis it is possible to understand that artists’ labor markets “have distinguishing features” in comparison to “other types of labor markets”. She also recognizes the limitations of this approach for example when it comes to analyzing “art organisations [that often] are not profit-maximisers and therefore do not necessarily have an incentive to minimize costs” (Towse, 1996, p. 99): this poses a problem because it “makes marginal productivity theory [...] irrelevant” (Ibid., pp. 99-100). Notwithstanding such complications, Towse (1996, pp. 103-104) still insists by asserting that “it is counter-productive to deny that art is an economic good or service like any other” since “most transactions in the arts, heritage and cultural industries” are “organized using the price mechanism”.

Hans Abbing “prefers to think of art as just any other commodity” and remains “faithful to the dominant economic dogma” (Klamer, 1996, p. 9). In fact, he states that the “underlying forces” (Abbing, 1996, p. 138) leading to the production of art do not differ from “other

spheres of production”. This statement shows his “dual perspectives of a painter and neo-classical economist” (Martin, 2003, p. 192): the former “informs his understanding of the ways in which markets for art objects are alienable from artists” while the latter “assumes a universe of free-willed individuals whose choices are based upon maximizing reason and reward”. Upon the concept of rewards, Abbing (1996, p. 141) claims that “rewards in the arts are both monetary and non-monetary” and that even if the “economic perspective encourages to think in terms of interests and rewards”, when it comes to the arts “self-interest cannot account for all behavior”. To explain the “apparent sacrifices that artists make, the neoclassical economist may evoke the concept of self-reward” (Ibid., p. 142) according to which the artist rewards himself; however, self-reward is not “independent of interest”, it is “produced by a mentality [...] which serves the interests of the individual artist or his group” instead. This mentality is what Abbing (1996, pp. 142-143) calls “artistic conscience” that is firmly guided by collective interests because artists have internalized the standards “which govern interpersonal exchange in the art sector”: so, “when an artist deals with his conscience, he indirectly deals with the market”. Stated in another way, artistic conscience drives artists’ “production decisions towards long term market demand” (Ibid., p. 143) suggesting that the arts sector is “reward oriented” just like “any other sector of activity” (Ibid., p. 146).

When asked about the value of art, the neoclassical economist William Grampp argues that “price is the best indicator of the aesthetic value” (Klamer, 1996, p. 14). In her review *The Arts and Arts Policy: Issues of Work, Money, and Power*, Balfe (1990, p. 519) uncovers Grampp’s thinking on the art market: “in *Pricing the Priceless*” Grampp claims that “a free market among competing individuals, be they artists, audiences, or other patrons, will result in better art, absent the drags and controls created by institutional supports (especially those of the state)”. According to Grampp, “arts should be totally self-supporting” (Ibid., p. 519) and “indirect government support through the tax system” causes a “distorting effect”; unfortunately, as noted by Balfe (1990, p. 519), this provocation to “conventional thinking” is not supported by any model or specific policy that could lead to “the autonomous and democratic culture he advocates”. Clarke (1992) also underlines the crucial role that the market plays for Grampp whose assumption on the exogeneity of tastes confirms his main orientation towards “cultural activities within the market place” (p. 672). Nevertheless, “artistic activity is [often] concerned with taste formation” (Clarke, 1992, p. 672) and since “consumers of the services of art institutions are also producers who undertake the activities for their own satisfaction” many artistic activities “take place outside the market”. This seems to suggest that “tastes are endogenous” (Clarke, 1992, p. 672) and that governmental support

becomes necessary to avoid damages to art sector activities due to market mechanisms granting “full consumer sovereignty”.

Along with Grampp’s conception of exogenous tastes, Bruno Frey (1994, p. 6) makes a distinction between individuals’ “basic preferences” and “revealed preferences” whereby the former ones are “exogenously determined”, “do not change over time”, and do not significantly differ among individuals, while the latter are “shaped by [...] basic preferences” and “by the constraints with which individuals are confronted”. Frey (1994) also supports the view of the Economics of Art according to which Art and Economics can be combined by applying the “economic” or “rational choice methodology to art” (p. 3). This “economic approach to art focuses on the fact that scarcity exists with respect to resources [...], time and the physical as well as psychic potential of persons” (Frey, 1994, p. 7): here Frey (1994) intends to emphasize the distinction and detachment of Economics of Art from other “studies of art” (p. 7) (i.e. aesthetics and art history). The economic approach has the following consequences on the definition of art: “what is ‘art’ is defined by individual actors and not by exogenous considerations of art experts; there is no ‘good’ or ‘bad’ art” (Frey, 1994, p. 7); art is a “dynamic concept; different institutional conditions affect individuals’ constraints” and thus the concept of art.

While Frey’s objective is to distance Cultural Economics from other art studies, David Throsby insists that researchers should go “beyond ‘tradition-bound’ economics to embrace the potential contributions of other fields such as cognitive psychology and aesthetics” (Seaman, 2009, p. 10). In fact, he suggests an “augmented social welfare function, where society expresses desires that are additional to those of its members as individuals” to account for the value of arts as “socially meritorious goods” that “contain some element of benefit that cannot ultimately be attributed to some individual” (Throsby, 1994, p. 24). Thus, to recognize this value to arts, “the boundary of conventional economic thinking must be extended to encompass ideas of culture and civilization drawn from philosophy, aesthetics, and political and social theory” (Ibid.). Like Clarke, Throsby (1994) believes that tastes should be endogenous in economic models because, thanks to tastes endogenization, it is possible to progress “in explaining demand for the arts” (p. 3). Furthermore, since art is “addictive” its increase “in an individual’s present consumption” will lead to an increase in its “future consumption” because tastes “cultivation” mainly consisting of “experience, understanding and other human capital attributes associated with the arts” will be acquired (Ibid., p.3).

### 1.2.3 ART AS ACTIVITY OR EXPERIENCE

Klamer (1996) draws a distinction between art as a commodity or product and art as activity or experience: the latter “has a value that is beyond measure and therefore clashes with the form of money” (p. 25). For Klamer the “conventional economists’ perspective” (Van Den Braembussche, 1996, p. 31), according to which “art and culture are valued exclusively in terms of commodity and measurement”, risks to “render economic analysis sterile” (Klamer, 1996, p. 10) because it is “too single-minded and tends to devalue important distinctive features of art and culture” (Van Den Braembussche, 1996, p. 31) like “ambiguity” and “reciprocity”. The first “explains why aesthetic experience is an experience of wonderment” whereas the second represents the “intrinsic role of reciprocity in human relationships, which is embedded in values that are ‘beyond measure’ [like the value of art]” (Ibid.). Since “both features are wholly neglected by conventional economics” (Van Den Braembussche, 1996, p. 31), cultural goods and artworks are treated as mere commodities and their values are solely expressed through price: for this reason, Klamer can be considered the most prominent advocate of “a morally oriented economics of art” (Ibid., p. 32) in opposition to the increasing “commodification of culture and art” (Ibid., p. 31). Klamer (1996, p. 8), in fact, asserts that the strategy of economists to disregard “the romantic sentiment in the world of the arts” is “unsatisfactory, because it does injustice to important characteristics of the world of art, including [...] its romantic sentiment”. Hence, he is willing to dismiss the concept of art as commodity and bring “a change in perspective” (Klamer, 1996, p. 70) aimed at getting “the subject of culture in its anthropological meaning on the agenda of economists” (Ibid., p. 104).

As noted by Klamer (1996), the economist Michael Hutter manages to implement “a framework that goes beyond conventional economic analysis” (p. 9) by indicating how art and economics interact as “different plays of meaning” (p. 135). According to Hutter (1996, p. 135), standard economics adopts a “scientific approach” to deal with “all social phenomena” and this approach presumes “one unique value scale” that makes “perfect sense in the economic world but only limited sense in the artistic world”; consequently, the issue is how to handle and cope with different “value scales” stemming from different realms like art and economy. In *The Rise of the Joyful Economy*, Hutter argues that the global economy is experiencing the development of a new era, namely the *joyful economy*, which is placing the satisfaction of human needs for joy and novelty at the core of “contemporary economic systems” (Velthuis, 2016, p. 518). He even states that “our economy does not revolve around the production of material goods, but around symbolic production” and that art, whose

“innovations [...] are adopted by the cultural industries” and later reflected in the rest of the economy, is central in this “symbolic economy” (Ibid.). The “joyful economy is set in motion” by the so-called “plays of value” and the main ones Hutter identifies are arts and economics (Velthuis, 2016, p. 519): “innovation [...] in the joyful economy” takes place because of “one play ‘irritating’ the other” whereby “irritation” refers to “the productive side of the confrontation between different plays” (Ibid., pp. 519-520). Hutter claims that “artistic inventions may set in motion new economic ‘games’ and may even be seen as a source of economic growth” (Ibid., p. 520) and, at the same time, that “economic life may be a source of fascination for artists and may therefore set in motion new artistic games”; these “productive impulses may flow in both directions, from the economy to art and vice versa”.

Starting from the concept of “‘everywhereness’ of economy” Amariglio (2009, p. 8) attempts to shed new light on the “intricate intersections of the arts and economics” by employing the notion of “aesthetics of value” meant as all “representations [...] of economic value [that] have been rendered within the arts [...] and, the ways in which aesthetic values and experiences have themselves influenced [...] the economy”. Amariglio (2009) argues that “if economics is everywhere [...] then the arts constitute a legitimate and consequential location not only for the representation, but also for the production and distribution of economic concepts and theories, including that of ‘economic value’” (p. 9). Such statement is confirmed by all the “artists and critics” that, in the last 150 years, “have been key players in the spawning and disseminating of modern (Western) economic ideas” (Ibid.). His noteworthy undertaking “forces [...] to reconsider the relationship between art and economic discourse” (Amariglio, 2009, pp. 9-10) since “‘if everywhere’, then, economic ideas” can be conveyed by the arts in innovative, “unfamiliar or unrecognizable” ways.

Like Klammer, Aldo Spranzi (2008, pp. 45-47) places importance to “the nature of art and aesthetic experience”: for him, “the act of consuming art consists of interpretation” which brings “what we call aesthetic experience”. And what’s more, Spranzi (2008) goes a step further by rejecting Cultural Economics and stating that it “is all a bluff, since it is concerned with an indefinite object, and adopts an indefinite method” (p. 16). He proposes a new concept of art economics meant as an economics of the diffusion of artistic knowledge (Spranzi, 2005). The “new scientific discipline, Art Economics” (Spranzi, 2008, p. 16) is intended as “a type of industrial economics furnished with a complete aesthetic basis” able to “offer a universal, operative solution to the problems of art”: it represents a “composite discipline” concerning “aesthetics, economics, marketing and cultural anthropology” (Ibid., p.



20). The marketing dimension is related to the theorization and empirical investigation of the “economy of the art consumer” (Spranzi, 2008, p. 20) while the economic aspect “is concerned with the efficiency of [...] the cultural industry”. The main mission of Art Economics is to “show how [...] the diffusion of art” can be realized and later optimized; the “objective of [this] optimization presupposes the industrial configuration of activities that are connected with art, and make up the *art chain of the cultural industry*” (Ibid.). This “industrial structure” (Spranzi, 2008, pp. 74-75) or “art chain” should be “equipped with mechanisms that can impose a tight finalization of the activities of the agents that it is composed of”: in other words, one has to determine “who the agents of the chain must be, what the tasks each one must carry out are, and how these agents can cooperate in order to efficiently achieve the industrial goal” that is “maximizing the diffusion of art”. Given that these agents’ tasks are related to the maximization of “the contribution from the market to cover the costs of the diffusion of art” (Spranzi, 2008, p. 82) and that the agents in the chain are above all “the management of artistic institutions” that “do not act under the stimulus and control of economic competition directed by profit” (Ibid., p. 75), Spranzi (2008, p. 75) raises the issue of the identification of “constrictive mechanism[s]” able to replace the “competition for profit”. He also suggests the creation of an “Agency for the Diffusion of Art” that would be a “political body” and “technical organ” in charge of the “strategic management of the [whole] chain” (Ibid., pp. 75-76) directly responding to the government. Spranzi (2008, pp. 17-18) strives for the prominent role of the arts in the society because he firmly believes that art is endowed with “cognitive nature” and should be viewed as a “precious form of knowledge” without barriers and “accessible to everyone”. Therefore, it can be “democratised” (Ibid., p. 18) and since “this is where its great social value lies” art “should have a strong position to compete with other requests for public funding in the partitioning of public resources”.

### 1.3 THE VALUE OF ART IN CULTURAL ECONOMICS

#### 1.3.1 SOME APPROACHES TO EXPLORE ART VALUE

Dekker (2015) delineates two main approaches to value art (i.e. the *art and commerce* approach and the *economics of the arts* approach) adopted throughout the history of cultural economics and highlights the emergence of a third (i.e. the *valuation* approach). The first one is represented by the art and commerce approach which is “the older of the two [already] established approaches” (Dekker, 2015, p. 311): it is “focused on the relative value of the arts

in society” (Ibid., p. 314) and “is characterized by a holistic approach” aimed at taking into account “the intrinsic value of the arts and its instrumental value in society”. The main feature of this approach is related to “the differentiation of arts from other goods or domains of society” which at the same time denotes “its main setback” since “it is little specific about art forms, particular markets or the agency of individuals” (Ibid., p. 314). The second method, called economics of the arts approach, is more unitary than the previous one and consists in the adoption of the economic analysis “to analyze the arts sector” (Ibid., p. 310): it points at defining value starting “from consumer preferences” (Ibid., p. 315). The main advantage of this approach is “its internal and external coherence with the wider body of economic thought” (Dekker, 2015, pp. 315-316): “artists and artistic goods were normalized within the neo-classical framework in the 1970s and 1980s” such that “historical, esthetic, social, societal and economic values” were “captured [...] in the market price”. Dekker (2015, p. 316) observes that, between the 1980s and the 1990s, “two alternative methods to evaluate the contribution of the arts” emerged within the economics of the arts framework: “economic impact studies and the contingent valuation method”. The former “seek to measure the economic impact of the arts mainly through the evaluation of their spill-overs to other economic sectors”, from “the tourism industry” to “other [more] innovative sectors in the economy” whereas the latter “seek to evaluate the impact of particular events or arts organizations through questionnaires” (Ibid.).

The main difference that can be detected between the economics of the arts and the arts and commerce approaches is that the economics of the arts approach “accepts the subjective preferences of individuals” while the arts and commerce one tries to “alter the structure of these preferences” (Dekker, 2015, p. 317).

The new emerging approach, named *valuation approach*, assumes that “the study of market prices is not sufficient to establish the value of cultural goods” (Dekker, 2015, p. 309): hence, “valuation processes” are analyzed “in and outside markets” together with “norms and conventions used to value the arts” (Ibid.) and, due to the durability attribute of artistic goods, these processes are “ongoing” (Ibid., p. 323). According to Dekker (2015), this new approach is based upon provisions from the arts and commerce approach and the economics of the arts approach and can be viewed as a “recombination” (p. 318) of the existing ones regardless of its inherently different characteristics. From the arts and commerce approach, it captures the attention on the “special position” of art in the society while it is affected by the economics of the arts approach with respect to “the heterogeneous nature” of artistic goods, “the uncertainty surrounding them and the subjectivity of their valuation” (Dekker, 2015, p. 321).

The valuation approach “recognizes that price is just one outcome, and not always a very important one, of valuation processes of cultural goods and services” (Dekker, 2015, pp. 318-319): thus, instead of concentrating on art markets “as the intersection of more or less stable supply and demand forces”, it focuses on “coordination which is a prerequisite for successful exchange in the first place”. Along with coordination as the main subject under investigation, quality becomes “the main variable to be explained” and does not get treated “as an exogenous variable, or as a product characteristic decided upon by the producer as traditional economic models do” (Ibid., p. 319). This is due to the fact that quality or “worth” of artistic goods and its coordination between art producers and art consumers, represents the outcome of the valuation process which in turn “shape[s] market outcomes” (Ibid., p. 320). Another relevant feature of the valuation approach “is its acknowledgment of the special position of cultural goods as symbolic goods with relations to the identity of people” (Dekker, 2015, p. 321): this concept stems from “Throsby’s idea that [...] cultural capital is always shared, and exists within communities” and that art goods and “shared heritage may hold groups together”. Finally, Dekker (2015, p. 321) concludes by stating that the main purpose of this innovative approach is “its focus [...] on the interpersonal and the intersubjective” or, in other words, on “the relationships between individuals and cultural goods, the coordination through market processes and other social settings, and the norms, conventions and institutions that shape these”.

Along with Dekker’s valuation approach, Klamer (2016, p. 368) introduces a “value-based approach” to the arts in an attempt “to bring an economics perspective while doing justice to the world of artists”. The value-based approach proposed by Klamer (2016, p. 369) enhances the importance of values in the art produced by artists and, consequently, on “the realization of such values”: for artists, this realization starts with “the awareness of what is really important for them, what they are making art for”. Klamer (2016, p. 369) claims that few artists’ “primary motive” is “to entertain and to gain an income” and that, in this case, “their values concern their own life [...] and all that they can realize with the money they earn” while for the majority the values concerned are essentially “artistic”, “social” and “societal”. Artists’ values are artistic “when they care most about an artistic practice, want to make art for art’s sake, or sustain cultural heritage or a cultural tradition”; they are social when artists are willing “to contribute to a particular community”; they are societal when artists “aim at a political impact, when they make art to contribute to social justice, political freedom, human rights, or national identity” (Ibid.). The main step for the realization of these values is related to their artistic, cultural, social and financial valorization which is grounded on the value-

based approach (Klamer, 2016). Artistic valorization is achieved by making art that can “embody and express” artistic values while cultural valorization is gained through the “attribution of artistic and cultural meanings” (Ibid., p. 369) by other artists to the artwork. Within the value-based approach, artworks, as underlined by Klamer (2016, p. 370), are not commodities but rather “shared” goods: thus, the social feature of valorization emerges in this context where art goods are “shared” and “commonly owned” by a group of people that “identifies within the common practice” of making art. In relation to financial valorization analysis, Klamer (2016, p. 370) states that there are “two types of [standard] logics in place, the one of the market and the one of the government” as shown in Figure 1.3.

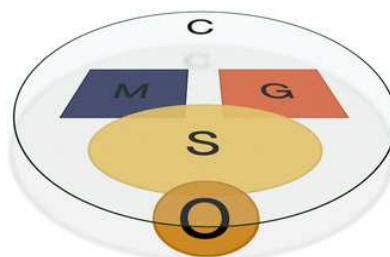
**Figure 1.3:** Market and Governance standard logics



*Source: Klamer, 2016*

By following the market (M) logic, artists’ work “becomes a commodity” while by following the government (G) one, artists “submit plans which are usually being appraised by a committee and if they are lucky leads to a grant or a subsidy” (Ibid.). The value-based approach proposed by Klamer (2016, p. 370) offers a “more comprehensive picture with the standard economic picture as a subsidiary part”: it “points at the cultural valorization” which “follows a cultural [C] logic” and that enables an artwork to acquire “its artistic status” (Ibid.). As illustrated in Figure 1.4, Klamer (2016, pp. 370-371) also deals with social valorization which “takes place in the S [social space]” where “artists contribute to a shared or a common practice”.

**Figure 1.4:** Value-based approach



*Source: Klamer, 2016*

Finally, the “O stands for oikos which connotes [...] household” and is “relevant for the valorization of art as it is there that artists convince themselves [...] to give up all kinds of

goods in order to practice their art” since most of them “fail to generate sufficient financial means to support their own home” (Ibid., p. 371). Therefore, S and O should be considered as “sources of financial means” that “come in the form of gifts and donations” (Ibid., p. 372).

In conclusion, Klamer (2016) claims that the main strength of his value-based approach should be sought in its ability to directly target cultural organizations by focusing on “what is really important to them, their values and the qualities that they want to realize and helps them to think about the best strategies to valorize them” (p. 373).

### 1.3.2 FROM INTRINSIC AND EXCHANGE VALUES TO CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC VALUES: THE CONCENTRIC CIRCLES MODEL

Within the Cultural Economics sphere, the concept of value represents “the origin and motivation of all economic behavior” and, on the other hand, it “permeate[s] the sphere of culture”: with respect to economics, “value has to do with utility, price and the worth that individuals or markets assign to commodities”; regarding culture, “value subsists in certain properties of cultural phenomena, [...] as an indication of the merit or worth of a work, an object, an experience” (Throsby, 2001, p. 19). Therefore, the notion of value in economic theory assumes tastes as given and artwork characteristics “will only be of interest if they affect an individual’s preferences, his willingness to pay for the work, or the process of exchange that generates an actual market price” (Throsby & Zednik, 2014, p. 82). Conversely, aesthetic theory places “subjective perceptions” stemming from “individual responses to a work of art” as the “source of value”: in this case, the work of art will be evaluated on the basis of “a set of formal rules, or [...] as informal feelings or attitudes that influence the individual’s reaction to the work” (Ibid.). Moreover, the “notion of value can be seen as an expression of worth, [...] in a dynamic and active way as a negotiated or transactional phenomenon” where the function of value is to link together economics and culture (Throsby, 2001, pp. 19-20). When dealing with artworks, the term culture mainly refers to “high culture” (Ginsburgh, 2012, p. 4) which, in turn, is articulated into the visual arts (e.g. paintings), the performing arts (e.g. theatre), and cultural heritage (e.g. museums). Furthermore, as noted by Throsby (2001, pp. 38-39), works of art represent “stores of value” and, thus, can be interpreted as “concentrations of cultural value of various sorts”.

In relation to the theory of value in economics, Adam Smith “was the first to distinguish between value in use of a commodity” defined as the “power to satisfy human wants”, and “value in exchange” meant as “the quantity of other goods that someone would [...] give up

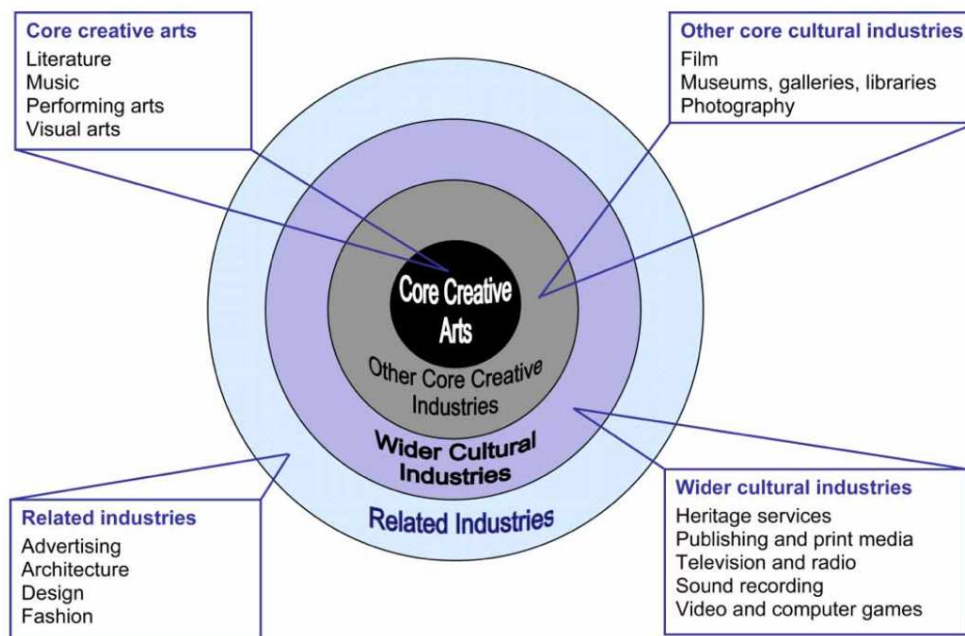
in order to acquire a unit of the commodity” (Throsby, 2001, p. 20). Within the labor theory context, for the Classical Economists value depended on “the amount of labour embodied in a good” (Ibid., p. 20): along with this value type, Smith and Ricardo identified “the concept of absolute or intrinsic value” as a “measure which could be attached to a unit of a commodity independently of any exchange through buying or selling invariant over time and space” (Ibid., p. 21). Ruskin rejected the theory of value in economics because he claimed that the assessment of value of a commodity by taking into account “market processes” alone, violated the “principles of intrinsic value upon which the worth of objects, especially art objects” had to be defined (Ibid., p. 21). The “cost-of-production theories of value” (Throsby, 2001, p. 21) criticized by Ruskin were replaced by the marginalist “model of economic behaviour built on individual utilities”: Jevons “explained exchange value in terms of preference patterns of consumers towards commodities that were capable of satisfying individual wants” (Ibid.). But, even “marginal utility analysis” was not exempt from criticism: it was argued that since “value is a socially constructed phenomenon” then “determination of value – and, hence, of prices – cannot be isolated from the social context in which these processes occur” (Ibid., p. 22). The “social theory of value” was developed by institutionalists such as Veblen and aimed at undermining the “foundation stone” of the marginal utility theory of value according to which “consumers can formulate orderly preferences based solely on their individual needs, uninfluenced by the institutional environment and the social interactions and processes that govern and regulate exchange” (Throsby, 2001, p. 22). Nevertheless, it was with the marginal revolution that, the theory of value in economics was turned into a “theory of price” (Throsby, 2001, p. 22) that is still acknowledged nowadays by several contemporary economists (Throsby & Zednik, 2014, Throsby, 2001).

However, Throsby (2001) states that “market prices are at best only an imperfect indicator of underlying value” (p. 22) and that “price theory elaborates on, but is not a replacement for, a theory of value in economics” (p. 23) since it dismisses the concept, suggested by the “philosophy of art”, of “artistic value” which emerges from “sources as the moral, social, cognitive, experiential, formal, or historical attributes of art works” (Throsby & Zednik, 2014, p. 83). Thus, the historical “development of these parallel approaches to assessing the value of an art work” has led to the evaluation of an art work “from two quite distinct standpoints – one derived from aesthetics or related areas and one from economics” (Ibid.).

These two perspectives induced Throsby (2008) to elaborate what he calls the *concentric circles model of cultural industries* which is built on the assumption that cultural goods carry two different types of value, namely economic and cultural values: this means that cultural

goods configure “a distinct commodity class” (p. 148). Throsby (2008) argues that “it is the cultural value, or cultural content, of the goods produced that gives the cultural industries their most distinguishing characteristic” (p. 148). Therefore, the greater the cultural content of a good, the “stronger is the claim of the industry producing it to be counted as a cultural industry” (Throsby, 2008, p. 149). Hence, the concentric circles model takes shape as shown in Figure 1.5: “at the centre are core industries whose proportion of cultural to commercial content is judged according to given criteria to be highest, with layers extending outwards from the centre as the cultural content falls relative to the commercial value of the commodities or services produced” (Ibid., p. 149).

**Figure 1.5:** The concentric circles model of cultural industries



*Source: Throsby, 2008*

Another underlying assumption which, according to Throsby (2008, p. 149), is useful to assess the cultural content of the “output of a given cultural industry” is that “cultural content springs from the incorporation of creative ideas into the production [...] and that these ideas originate in the arenas of primary artistic creativity”: due to this assumption, processes of artistic creativity are given primacy and, consequently, “creative arts [...] lie at the centre of the model”. Throsby (2008) suggests four layers to classify the main cultural industries and adopts a “diagrammatic form” (p. 149) for their representation: core creative arts (literature, music, performing arts, visual arts) constitute the heart of the model followed by other core

cultural industries (film, museums, galleries, libraries, photography), wider cultural industries (heritage services, publishing and print media, sound recording, television and radio, video and computer games) and related industries (advertising, architecture, design, fashion).

### *1.3.2.1 THE MAIN COMPONENTS OF ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL VALUES OF ART*

From the economics perspective, to apply the economic value notion, one has to “distinguish between cultural commodities existing as private goods, for which therefore a set of market prices at least potentially exists, and those which occur as public goods, for which no observable prices are available” (Throsby, 2001, p. 23). To analyze private cultural goods, Throsby (2001, p. 24) takes into account both the demand side and the supply side of “cultural markets”: with respect to the former, the “simple timeless utility-maximising consumer is replaced [...] by an individual in whom taste is cumulative and hence time-dependent”; with respect to the latter, “producers (particularly creative artists) may not be profit-maximisers, and expected price may play only a minor role [...] in their resource allocation decisions”. Moreover, since “cultural consumption” is an ongoing process “contributing both to present satisfaction and to the accumulation of knowledge and experience leading to future consumption”, Throsby (2001, p. 24) claims that demand affects price in ways that are “beyond the immediate valuation of the [cultural] good in question”.

As long as public cultural goods are concerned, Throsby (2000, p. 25) proposes “techniques such as Contingent Valuation Method (CVM)” which “attempt to assign an economic value to the [...] public [cultural] good by assessing what the demand function would be if [...] demand could be expressed through normal market channels”. Such tools have been improved over time although “methodological difficulties” remain due to the potential discrepancy of behavior between “real and simulated markets” thus preventing the determination of a real economic value (Ibid., p. 25).

Within the cultural context, the notion of cultural value (of an art work) is connected to a broader “moral and social universe” that is incorporated in the “intrinsic qualities of aesthetic, [and] artistic [...] worth which it possesses” (Ibid., p. 27). Therefore, it is possible to “disaggregate the concept of cultural value into [...] some of its constituent elements” embedded in an artwork: *aesthetic value* (refers to “properties” such as “beauty, harmony, form and other aesthetic characteristics of the work”); *spiritual value* (includes “beneficial effects” such as “understanding, enlightenment and insight” connected to “inner qualities shared by all human beings”); *social value* (arises when the artwork “convey[s] a sense of



connection with others, [...] of identity and place”); *historical value* (possessed by the artwork if “it reflects the conditions of life at the time it was created” and enriches “the present by providing a sense of continuity with the past”); *symbolic value* (associated to artworks that serve as “repositories and conveyors of meaning [...] to the consumer); *authenticity value* (related to features of originality and uniqueness of the artwork) (Throsby, 2001, pp. 28-29).

According to Throsby (2001, pp. 29-30), the main assessment methods to assess cultural value are represented by:

- *mapping* (represents “a straightforward contextual analysis” aimed at creating “an overall framework which will inform the assessment of each of the elements of cultural value”);
- *thick description* (represented by an “interpretive description” of an artwork in order to better understand the “underlying cultural systems”);
- *attitudinal analysis* (consisting of techniques such as “social survey methods” and “psychometric measurement” directed at “assessing social and spiritual aspects of cultural value” and employable at both individual and aggregate level);
- *content analysis* (comprehends methods that try to discover and detect meaning and thus are “appropriate for measuring various interpretations of the symbolic value” of the artwork);
- *expert appraisal* (useful to obtain a more “informed evaluation” by employing “expertise” in the “cultural value assessment [...] to provide judgements on aesthetic, historical and authenticity value”).

These methods seek to measure specific “aspects of cultural value” in an attempt to “disentangle the notion of cultural value, deconstructing it into its constituent elements as a means of articulating more clearly the multi-dimensional nature of the concept” (Ibid., p. 31). When it comes to the relationship between economic and cultural value, Throsby (2001, pp. 40-41) stresses the point on the importance of breaking down these “multi-faceted phenomena” into their components to better analyze and interpret them: for this reason, he states that in the “debate about culture in contemporary economic settings, the tendency for an economic interpretation of the world to dominate, deriving from the ubiquity and power of the modern economic paradigm” must be firmly opposed to enable the admission of cultural value “alongside economic value” when exploring and determining the “overall value of cultural goods”.

To investigate economic and cultural value of cultural goods, especially of paintings, Throsby and Zednik (2014) conducted a survey on “randomly selected individuals entering a major public art gallery in Sydney” (p. 86). These people had to express “their opinions about six named paintings” in the gallery by answering to questions contained in the received questionnaire to “elicit the individual’s cultural and economic evaluation” of those artworks (Ibid., p. 86). The main hypotheses tested by Throsby and Zednik (2014, p. 86) were the following:

- Hypothesis 1: “the cultural value of a work as assessed in relation to its various dimensions will only partially explain the work’s assessed economic value; in particular, some dimensions that are important as components of a painting’s cultural value will be unrelated to the work’s economic value”.
- Hypothesis 2: “Individuals can express the components of cultural value both in terms of the value accruing to themselves personally and also in terms of their estimation of the value accruing to others, and these two values will not necessarily be the same for any given attribute”.

The first hypothesis enables to examine the relationship between economic value and cultural value and “if upheld, it would be consistent with the proposition that a monetary assessment is not capable of providing a full account of the value of works of art” (Ibid.). With respect to the estimation of cultural value, it is defined by breaking down some of its previously cited dimensions (namely aesthetic, social, symbolic and spiritual value) together with a new one represented by *educational value* (meant as the role of the artwork in children education): the survey respondents had to confer to each dimensions a value on the basis of “a cardinal scale” (Ibid, p. 85). Symbolic and spiritual values “were specified as value to the individual himself, and value to others or to society in general” (Throsby & Zednik, p. 86) to test the second hypothesis. Regarding the estimation of economic value, it was “specified in terms of the stock and flow characteristics of the work as an item of tangible cultural capital” (Ibid., p. 85): the “stock value” represents how much, according to respondents, “the painting would be worth if bought for a public gallery” (the stock value reflects “a social valuation – [...] the painting’s monetary value to society at large”), while the “flow value” is related to the amount respondents would be willing to pay for the painting if it “could be hired for private use” over a “given period of time” (Ibid., p. 88).

The survey results showed that economic and cultural values are “strongly but by no means perfectly related” (Ibid., p. 92) after regressing (stock and flow) economic value on the

several cultural value dimensions: stated in another way, “overall [...] results are consistent with the proposition expressed in H1, namely that there exists a relationship between the cultural and the economic value of works of art, but that this relationship is by no means a perfect one” (Ibid., p. 95). The example presented by Throsby and Zednik (2014, p. 96) indicates that “to account fully” for non-financial values of cultural goods “in an economic assessment, researchers in economics have had to step outside the neoclassical framework that implicitly or explicitly assumes that all values can ultimately be rendered in monetary terms”. They also substantiated that the value of artworks “can be expressed as a combination of two separate components – their economic value and their cultural value – and that the cultural value component, while related to economic value, is not subsumed by it” (Ibid., p. 96).

### *1.3.2.2 VALUE ACCUMULATION, VALUE LOSS AND VALUE FORMATION*

Hutter and Frey (2010, pp. 1-3) questioned themselves on the “difference between cultural value and economic value, and of the process through which a change in the cultural value of an item changes the economic valuation of that item”: they suggest that the “two varieties of value are interdependent” up to the point that “the cultural value of certain items determines their economic value”. Regarding the similarities between the two values, Hutter and Frey (2010, p. 2) observe that “cultural value, like economic value, is a socially constructed measure [...] accessible to observation” but if “economic value finds expression in units of currencies which are generated and maintained by banking systems, cultural value finds expression through mutual, collective judgment procedures”. In the qualitative study conducted, Hutter and Frey (2010, p. 3) hold that cultural value accrues to individuals thanks to the “connection value” of artworks that enable to “coordinate the choices of large sets of actors” in the context of a “common cultural orientation”: in particular, they emphasize the “crucial orienting role in modern decentralized societies” played by artistic value as a “sub-category of cultural value” (Ibid.).

To support their theory, they have analyzed “exemplary historical works of art” whose cultural value impacted on their economic value starting from Raphael’s *Madonna of the Pinks* and Rembrandt’s *Man in a Golden Helmet* to Pollock’s *Number 12, 1949* (Hutter & Frey, 2010, p. 4). They begin with the recreation of cultural value and economic value starting from the “painting’s existence” and proceed by drawing a “trajectory of changes in valuation until today” (Ibid.).

Raphael's *Madonna of the Pinks* case is an example of "value accumulation" that shows "the effort made by public agents to retain a work which had unexpectedly entered the open market in the sphere of inalienable objects which define national identity"<sup>1</sup> (Ibid., p. 5).

On the other hand, Rembrandt's *Man in a Golden Helmet* represents an example of "value loss", in fact it "demonstrates how a loss of attributed ownership leads to a loss of cultural value" and "shows that the effect on market value is negative with respect to the painting itself, but of little consequence for the many imitative uses of the image"<sup>2</sup> (Hutter & Frey, 2010, p. 7).

Pollock's *Number 12, 1949* is a case related to value formation: this artwork can be identified as "paradigmatic" for the "construction of new cultural value" within an "intricate and well established institutional setting" where art museums set "the canon of artistic value" (Ibid., pp. 10-11). This painting brought to a shift towards an entirely new artistic style namely abstract expressionism that, in the 1960s, "was accorded the highest ranking in the artistic contemporary experience of Western society" (Hutter & Frey, 2010, pp. 13-14): such example proves that "cultural value drove up economic value" because prices of abstract expressionist artworks constantly increased and even crossed "the Million-Dollar-barrier".

Still on the relationship between economic and artistic value, Hutter (2008, p. 61) claims that it is possible to create artistic value from economic value since the latter acts as a "trigger" pushing for "artistic innovation" and thus for the creation of new artistic value. According to Hutter (2008), this happens because of changes in the prices of input commodities whose "expenditure [...] exhausts a major part of the artist's budget" (p. 61). While recognizing the unquestionable relevance of the "personal, mental, and physical contribution of artists" and their "rare 'genius'" as the source of "cultural newness", Hutter (2008, p. 60) goes "beyond the personal contribution" and focuses on "shifts in the forces of society at large" that affect "constraints" and "resources" of artists: the main shifts he singles out are "shifts in the availability of new resources and inputs, and on shifts in the relative prices of materials for artistic production" (Ibid.). Firstly, Hutter (2008, p. 60) "uses a straightforward application of

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<sup>1</sup> This painting "resurfaced in the hands of a well-known copyist" and, at first, was considered a "well- executed copy". When a thorough technological analysis proved its authenticity, the painting was in the hands of an English private owner who received an offer by the American Getty Museum. To prevent this sale, the National Gallery in London decided to raise "enough funds to match the Californian offer" and managed to do so thanks to "contributions both from private and public sources. All these sources saw themselves as part of a culture that did not want its cultural ranking diminished by the loss of a painting" (Hutter & Frey, 2010, p. 7).

<sup>2</sup> Due to the "negative findings of the *Rembrandt Research Project*", the portrait, exhibited in the Berlin museum, was "no longer attributed to Rembrandt's hand" and "the cultural value accumulated around the artist Rembrandt and his works does not extend to this particular painting anymore". This led the painting "potential market value" to dwindle "along with its cultural value". But, since it "continues to be in high demand as a subject of oil painting reproductions, art prints and posters", the "market value of these entertainment items" has not shrunk (Hutter & Frey, 2010, pp. 9-10).

rational decision making” and argues that changes in the “prices of goods that are relevant to artistic work” engender changes in the artists’ “financial constraints”. Thus, artists are confronted with unexpected situations and “are faced with new choices that lead to the use of new instruments and input materials, to new organizations of labor, and to migrations of entire artistic communities and industries” (Ibid.). Secondly, he moves on to the exploration of “the potential [...] released by artistic innovation” which shapes several works: “these new works [...] constitute the ‘richness’ and ‘expressive force’ of an art scene” (Ibid., p. 61). He concludes by stating that changes in input prices are able to frame “the historical development of particular art forms” and that changing economic conditions brought to the rise “of new artistic value”: “the availability of new painting materials at lower prices has triggered variations in formats, styles, and media”<sup>3</sup> and, therefore, propelled artistic innovation (Ibid., pp. 61-62).

On the value of art, De Marchi (2009, p. 95) distinguishes between intrinsic value and economic or exchange values, where the former concerns “essential properties [...] existing in an object, and implies greater stability than external evaluations”, while the latter derives from the market. Beyond these “core values”, De Marchi (2009, p. 95) identifies specific “standards” that “refer to the aspects or properties deemed to constitute the art of painting [...] and are scored along some arithmetic scale”: they are established “by some designated or self-appointed authority” to determine the “excellence” in an artwork. Starting from De Piles’s idea of “measuring performance in the art of painting on a numerical scale” (Ibid., p. 109) by employing the “four dimensions of design, composition, expression, and coloring”, Ginsburgh and Weyers show that “a set of scores” similar to “those assigned by de Piles to a group of artists” and their artworks can contribute to a comparison among these categories after “a weighting scheme” (Ibid., p. 96) is introduced: after each dimension is attributed a weight which is multiplied “by the numerical score of a painting [...] aspect by aspect”, it is possible to get “a measure of the contribution of each [dimension] to value”. What is new in Ginsburgh and Weyers’ approach, De Marchi (2009, p. 101) notes, is that they exploit two different valuations of the same artwork namely an “aesthetic value ranking, for which they use the number of lines given to each artist in a prominent modern dictionary of art” and “an economic value ranking, for which they take sales prices for works by the artists in auctions”. In this way, by comparing the weights attached to each dimension for each value ranking,

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<sup>3</sup> An example proposed by Hutter (2008) is the discovery of “synthetic blue pigment” (p. 63) and its impacting role on the innovative artistic movement of Impressionism.

they were able to discover “similarities and differences between artistic and market value thinking, via their rankings” (Ibid., p. 109).

Snowball (2011) delineates the two main value types possessed by the arts and explains “how at least some aspects of their value might be quantified” (p. 172): they are essentially represented by intrinsic and instrumental value. The former “is the unique value of the arts themselves” and “reflects the purpose of producing art” while the latter is connected to the so-called “side effects of the arts – not the main aim of the artistic endeavor, but nevertheless valuable” (Ibid.). Moreover, as noted by Snowball (2011, p. 173) instrumental values are “easier to quantify than intrinsic values” since they are “captured by some market transaction [...] measured in terms of price”: these measurements have been often used to obtain public or private funds but led to “vehement objections” due to the complete exclusion of the intrinsic value of the arts from the aforementioned measurements. The mere determination of instrumental values regardless of the intrinsic ones risks to undermine the funding of the arts because the “same [side] effects might be equally well provided by other, non-cultural industries” (Snowball, 2011, p. 173). For this reason, according to Snowball (2011, p. 173), intrinsic value of art should be measured by resorting to “effective non-market valuation methods” such as “contingent valuation (CV) methods” which employ “surveys to ask large samples of people about their consumption of cultural activities and whether they would be willing to pay (usually through an increase in taxes) to support them”. CV method “has become an accepted and widely used valuation technique [...] applied to cultural products” that enable to discover that both consumers and non-consumers of arts “are willing to pay to preserve or expand them” since art benefits the “society at large” (Ibid., pp. 173-174). Like Throsby, also Snowball (2011, p. 174) detects some issues potentially arising from CVM: “non-market valuation methods [...] are based on random utility theory (RUT)” which exploits “perceptions of value by individuals” and measures intrinsic values “by creating an imaginary market in which individual people signal their value through their willingness to pay”. As such, there is no guarantee that this imaginary market can effectively and accurately mirror the real one. Snowball (2011, p. 174) follows the argument proposed by Klamer who views the CV as a “problematic [method] for cultural goods” and claims that “individual [...] valuation of culture makes little sense, since such values are constructed by society and can be changed”: in other words, the arts possess “socially constructed value”. Hence, one can state that arts have a “‘public-good’ nature” because they “enhance national identity [...] and international prestige, they provide ongoing education, [...] foster personal development, integrate individuals into society and encourage [...] entrepreneurship that drives economic

growth” (Ibid.). Unfortunately, since the arts convey these positive effects (i.e. externalities) to the collectivity, all this results in the “underprovision of cultural goods because those who provide such goods are not able to recoup their value completely through market sales” (Ibid.).

Regarding the benefits offered by the arts to the society, Throsby came up with the concept of *cultural capital* meant as a “‘long lasting store of value’, providing a stream of benefits to individuals and groups” (Throsby, 2001, p. 44 cited in Snowball, 2011, p. 174). Cultural capital is, thus, deeply connected to “the intrinsic value of the arts – unique values provided by the art form itself” because it constitutes “that part of the value of culture that can be provided only by culture itself” and not by any other industry (Snowball, 2011, p. 174).

Hans Abbing (2002) affirms that aesthetic and economic values are “systematically related” (p. 55) or “interdependent” (p. 76) meaning that the former is a “social value, that is influenced by social circumstances including market value” (p. 76): for this reason, aesthetic value is not be independent and “cannot [solely] rest on the intrinsic qualities of a work of art” (p. 76). Abbing (2002, p. 57) seems to support the argument of economists like Grampp according to which there exists a “correspondence between aesthetic and economic value”: however, Grampp’s thesis “does not imply a one-way influence, i.e., that market value is determined by aesthetic value” (Ibid., p. 57) but rather that they “depend on one another” (Ibid., p. 58). On the other hand, artists, as well as governments, believe that “there is a negative relationship between aesthetic and market value” (Abbing, 2002, p. 57). Governments, in fact, “tend to subsidize young artists who have not yet succeeded in the market” in order to “promote ‘quality’ in the arts” thus presuming “an overall negative relationship between aesthetic value and economic value” (Ibid.). With respect to the definition of aesthetic value, Abbing (2002, pp. 60-61) states that it is “a social value by definition” because it is determined collectively by “individual experts who necessarily listen to one another” in the light of “rules and conventions” whose “existence [...] means that aesthetic value is in practice a social construction”. These experts, Abbing (2002, p. 65) continues, belong to a “social group that has much *cultural capital* and therefore, more cultural power” that they use to influence aesthetic value in the arts. Regarding market value, “art consumers are part of a social group that has relatively more *economic capital* (wealth) at its disposal” and possesses “more purchasing or *economic power*” that they employ to buy art thus influencing the “market or economic value of art”.

On the correspondence between aesthetic and market value, Abbing (2002) asserts that they will converge in the long run for several reasons:

- “consumers care about the opinions of experts, while experts are influenced by consumer behavior, whether they are aware of it or not”;
- “government tastes can be at odds with those of the average consumer. This implies that government subsidies and purchases bend market value towards aesthetic value [...]. Government subsidies and purchases can also indirectly bend market value towards aesthetic value because they have a signaling effect. They alert buyers that what they support is ‘high quality art’ and consequently consumers start to purchase more of it”;
- “in the long run, artworks with much aesthetic value can earn artists high symbolic rewards as well as market income”;
- “in the long run the two social groups – one with economic capital and the other with cultural capital – will probably begin to resemble one another more and more until they fuse and aesthetic and market value correspond” (pp. 74-75).

But, Abbing (2002, p. 75) is also aware that if “these forces may bring aesthetic and economic values together in the long run, they can just as easily be thrown off balance again” and if “this is a cyclical process, [then] long-term convergence is doubtful”.



# CHAPTER 2

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## CORPORATE INVESTMENT IN THE ARTS

After having ascertained the value that art possesses according to several economists and after having investigated the evolution of this concept overtime, it could be useful to move forward and deepen this topic: given that some economists (e.g. Robbins (1994); Spranzi (2008)) advocated public funding of the arts, it seems advisable to delineate and dwell upon the other side of art support namely private support as well. In particular, we chose to display the corporate perspective and thus to examine current firm investments in the arts in order to understand whether they represent a viable alternative to the public funding option auspicated by economists but more importantly to grasp the reasons pushing companies to undertake these investments.

### 2.1 THE IMPACT OF ECONOMIC CONDITIONS ON FIRM FUNDING

The funding of the arts represents an issue frequently tackled by public bodies that have progressively started to promote a greater involvement of private corporations in the arts (Wu, 2002 cited in Schuster, 2003) after that the introduction of the NEA<sup>4</sup> agency brought a decrease in private donations for the arts (Borgonovi & O’Hare, 2004): these findings apparently seem to suggest a convergence towards the so-called “facilitator model” (Mulcahy, 1998 cited in Colbert, 2012, p. 86) according to which individuals and private entities are entitled to decide and invest in “cultural goods” and thus in the arts.

Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, U.S. public funding for the arts “increased by nearly 17% from 2000 to 2020” while it “decreased by 31% from 2001 to 2021” after the health crisis<sup>5</sup> (Stubbs Rhoads & Rhee, 2022, p. 9). As a matter of fact, Nissley (2010) notes that in periods of economic downturns, arts are among the first things to undergo significant cuts by the government, despite their ability to prompt innovation. For this reason, Comunian (2008) suggests that companies should take a leading role as investors to support art because of the countless opportunities offered by a stronger “collaboration between arts and business” (p. 37). Therefore, it seems important to underline that the perspective taken by Comunian (2008)

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<sup>4</sup> The NEA (National Endowment for the Arts) is a federal agency said to be “the most prominent source of public support to the arts” (Borgonovi & O’Hare, 2004, p. 22).

<sup>5</sup> The impact of the health crisis and its related effects are reflected in 2021, the year following the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic (Stubbs, Rhoads & Rhee, 2022).

refers to the direct engagement by companies “with artists or different art forms, often in experimental ways” (p. 40) and dismisses the one adopted by Xiang (2017) of art as a mere investment in “pleasure assets” (p. 1699). According to Comunian (2008, p. 38-39), corporate investments in the arts can constitute a “strategic activity” leading to the “production of added value” achieved thanks to the enactment of products “creativity and originality”. Once a company opts for such investments, there are two main types of decisions to be made related to “where” and “how”: regarding the former, investments should be oriented towards the development of “key areas important for the business stakeholders” and should “involve human resources”; with respect to the latter, investments should not be treated as mere donations but rather as a “co-management of initiatives” undertaken to enhance companies “expertise, innovation processes and networks” (Porter & Kramer, 2002 cited in Comunian, 2008, p. 38). To support the view of art investments as an “element of competitive advantage for companies” (Ibid., p. 40), Comunian (2008) cites several examples of Italian companies who invested in arts and reached positive outcomes in terms of new product development (e.g. Targetti Sankey Group), market trends anticipation (e.g. Crespi Group), increased demand and customer involvement (e.g. illy Coffee), better communication and brand image (e.g. Benetton Group), stronger links along the value chain (e.g. Fantoni Group), market growth (e.g. StarHotels), and enhanced know-how and capabilities (e.g. Pitti Immagine).

To better understand the corporate drivers pushing companies towards sponsorship and support of the arts, it is possible to analyze four different models investigating corporate philanthropy (Young & Burlingame, 1996 cited in Moir & Taffler, 2004, p. 151):

- The Neoclassical/corporate productivity model, according to which philanthropy can be seen as another means of earning profit consistent with the notion of “enlightened self-interest”;
- Ethical/altruistic model, whereby companies invest in corporate giving because they are willing to “do what is right for society” in light of a “duty-based perspective”;
- Political model, followed when corporate objectives are related to the achievement of “long-term interests in society” such as legitimization, preservation and/or protection of the firm economic power;
- Stakeholder model, pursued if the corporation intends to accomplish both “business and society interests” because it is made up of “multiple stakeholders” with multiple interests either conflicting or compatible altogether.

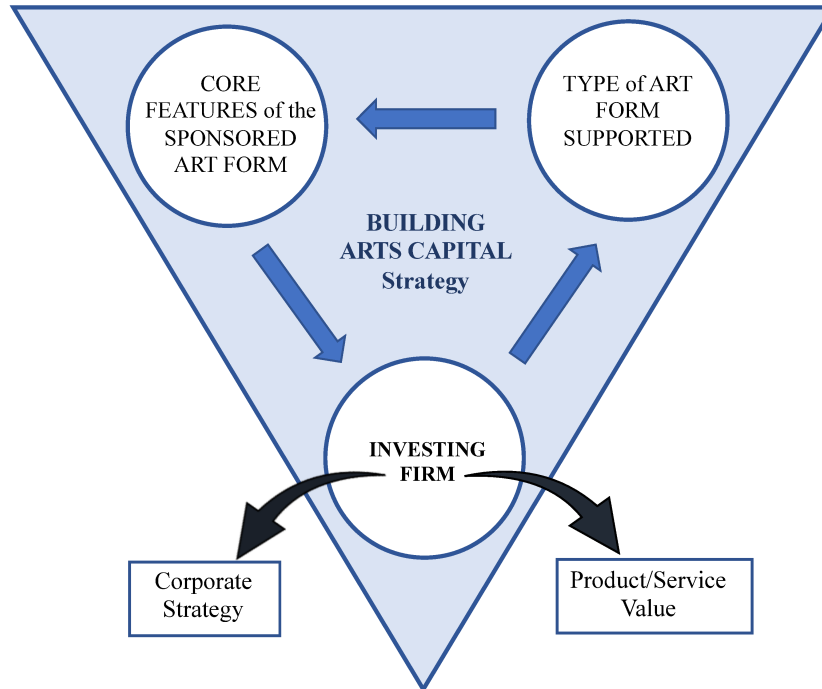
In a world transitioning towards an increasingly “‘culturalised’ economy” (Lash & Urry, 1994; Scott, 2000 cited in Comunian, 2009, p. 2) where the “cultural dimension” (Comunian, 2009, p. 2) is employed to “explain new economic processes”, one can explore “how arts and culture might provide useful and original services” for firms (Ibid., p. 6) notwithstanding “cultural and ethical” implications (Klamer, 1997 cited in Comunian, 2009, p. 6) connected to the risk for the arts to “become ‘service providers’ for the business world” (Wu, 2002 cited in Comunian, 2009, p. 6). Due to the potential insights that can be gained by conducting this analysis, Comunian (2009, p. 6) identifies two main types of “areas of the company [...] affected by contacts with arts and cultural organizations”: one type deals with the “communication and engagement of the company with the external environment” (Ibid., p. 7) (public relations, marketing, CSR areas) while the other is more focused on the internal dimension of the company and its operations (human resources, research and development, production areas).

#### 2.1.1 CORPORATE AREAS AND EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT: A FOCUS ON CCR

With respect to the organizational areas mainly interacting with the commercial or market environment (Lawrence & Lorsch, 1967), there are several objectives that a firm can pursue by building up and maintaining relationships with the art organizations it supports ranging from higher “public awareness” and better “brand image” to improved “current and potential customers” satisfaction (Meenaghan, 1991, cited in Comunian, 2009, pp. 9-10). In other words, art support can be viewed as a “promotional activity” (Kirchberg, 1995 cited in Moir & Taffler, 2004, p. 150) for firms to “reach customers or to communicate some form of ‘good citizenship’” (Mescon & Tilson, 1987, cited in Moir & Taffler, 2004, p. 150). In addition, corporate investments in the arts in the form of “collaborations between art and companies” can also lead to the so-called “art infusion effect” whose “main proposition [...] is that the integration of art always has a positive effect on the product and/or brand evaluation, independent of the art content and its evaluation by consumers (Baumgarth & Bahati Wieker, 2020, pp. 116-117). In figure 2.1 a specific framework, which draws from Schiuma (2010) and Comunian (2009) findings, is proposed. By going into the detail of the model, Comunian (2009, p. 12) argues that there is a mutually reinforcing “relationship between the type of art [...] supported and the kind of image that the company wants to portrait”. This implies that the main “qualitative attributes and characteristics of a certain art form are transferred to the company or its brand” (Ibid.). The resulting interactions among investing firm, type and core features of art supported can be embedded within a broader framework, namely Schiuma’s

(2010) *building arts capital* strategy. This arts-based strategy leads to an increase in firm value (Schiuma, 2010) in terms of improved strategic focus and/or enhanced product/service value (Schiuma, 2010; Comunian, 2009).

**Figure 2.1:** Building Arts Capital strategy: links between investing firm and type of art supported

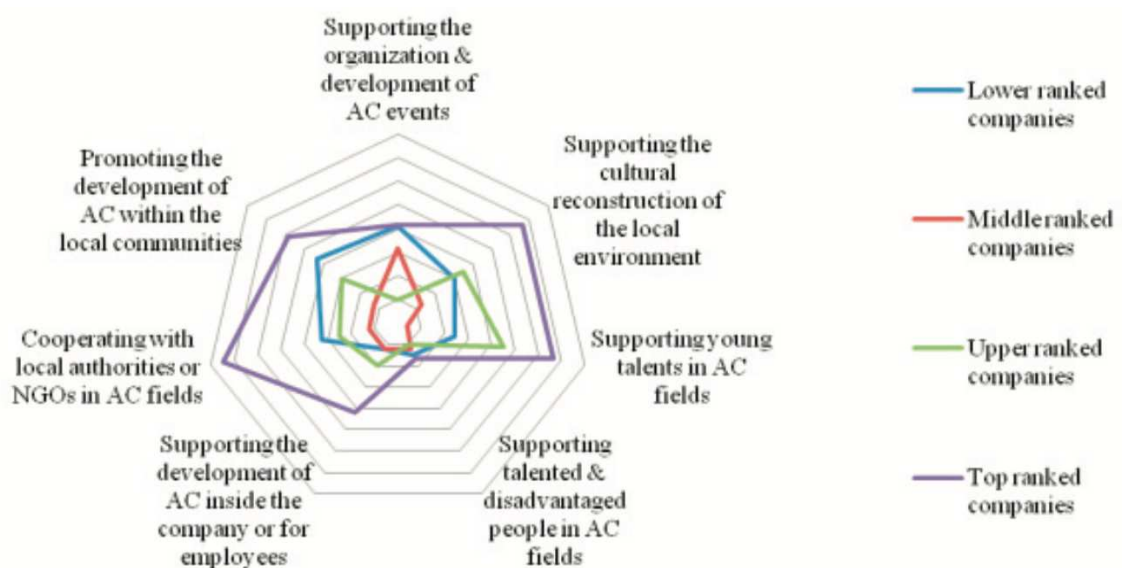


*Source: personal elaboration from Comunian (2009) and Schiuma (2010)*

Among the areas “reaching the external remit of the company”, Comunian (2009, p. 9) emphasizes Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) deemed important to promote investments in the arts: what is more, it was shown that CSR programs are more frequently activated when the company’s management adopts “pro-social behaviours” (Dunn 2004; Milner 1996 cited in Casais & Santos, 2018, p. 2). On this point, Cejudo and Rodriguez-Gutierrez (2016, p. 181) elaborate a “framework to assess the company responsibility regarding culture and fine arts” and come up with the concept of CCR (Corporate Cultural Responsibility) meant as a “specific field” of CSR to specifically address “the role of firms regarding arts and culture as another facet of their responsibility as corporate citizens” (Ibid.). The CCR definition proposed by Maon and Lindgreen (2015) who prefer to take a “broader perspective [...] beyond a focus on arts or a philanthropic orientation” (p. 759) does not seem to suit the meaning Cejudo and Rodriguez-Gutierrez (2016) want to convey. What they refer to instead can be traced back to Kohl (2007, cited in Howaniec & Wroblewski, 2018, p. 157) who defined CCR as a “modern” and “evolved” form of “cultural commitment of firms, such as the build-up of art collections, cultural provisions for employees, sponsoring of art and culture as well as patronage”.

Iamandi and Constantin (2012) take one step further by elaborating the AC-CSR index to measure “the involvement of companies in Romania and Bulgaria in the area of art and culture CSR initiatives” (p. 1123). The authors (2012, p. 1123-1124) considered seven main “components pillars –  $P_{i,i=1,7}$ , reflecting the engagement in AC-CSR activities: P1 – *Supporting the organization & development of AC events*, P2 – *Supporting the cultural reconstruction of the local environment*, P3 – *Supporting young talents in AC fields*, P4 – *Supporting talented & disadvantaged people in AC fields*, P5 – *Supporting the development of AC inside the company or for employees*, P6 – *Cooperating with local authorities or NGOs in AC fields* and P7 – *Promoting the development of AC within the local communities*”. Moreover, the “total revenue” and “industry” grouping criteria, that were chosen to analyze the companies “at the level of the seven pillars” included in the index, provide useful insights (Ibid., p. 1124). From the total revenue approach (see Figure 2.2 below), one can detect that the sample firms generating lower revenues (lower ranked companies) are likely to be “more active” in “AC-CSR practices than the middle and upper ranked companies” while “top ranked companies” are more involved in these projects in comparison to the other companies for all the seven pillars (Ibid., p. 1124). Moreover, if the latter are privately owned and develop professional donation programs, they are even more likely to donate (Dunn, 2004 cited in Casais & Santos, 2018) because the “increasing professionalization and bureaucratization of giving” is allowing large firms to “maximize the benefits from their contribution programs” (Useem, 1987; Useem, 1988; Useem, 1989 cited in LeClair & Gordon, 2000, p. 229).

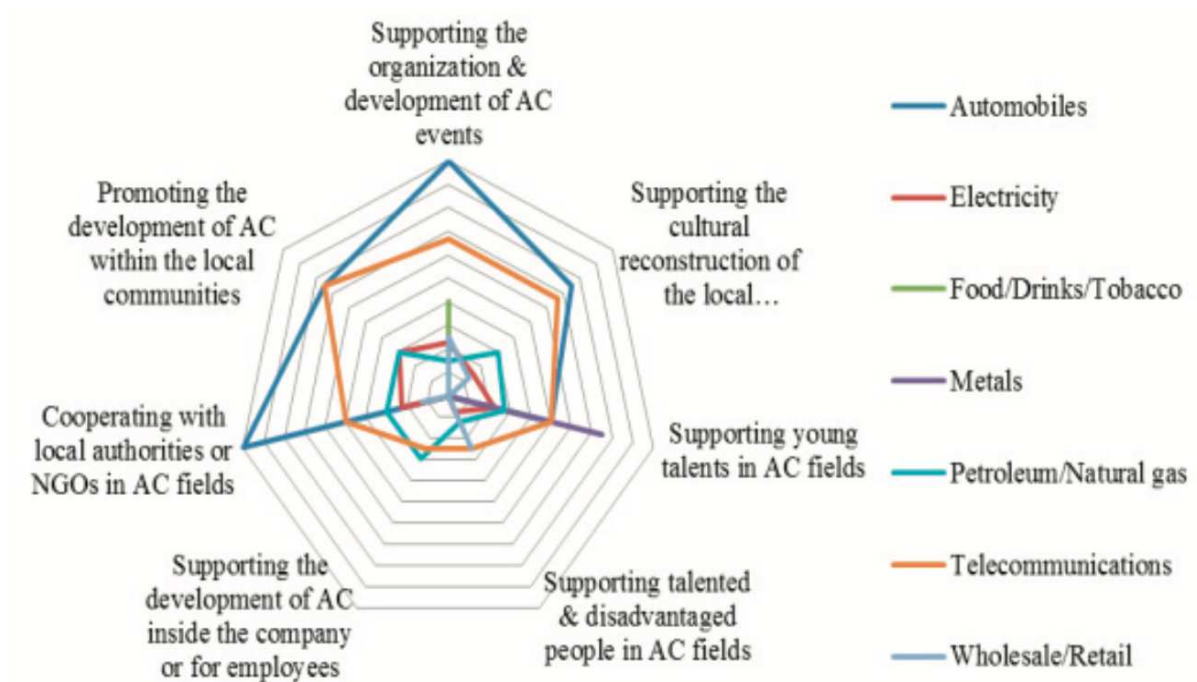
**Figure 2.2:** The total revenue approach



Source: Iamandi & Constantin, 2012

With respect to the industry approach (see Figure 2.3), Iamandi and Constantin (2012) note that Automobiles and Telecommunication sectors reach on average higher values than other sectors in P1 (Supporting the organization & development of AC events), in P2 (Supporting the cultural reconstruction of the local environment), in P6 (Cooperating with local authorities or NGOs in AC fields), and in P7 (Promoting the development of AC within the local communities) pillars.

**Figure 2.3:** The industry approach



*Source: Iamandi & Constantin, 2012*

Based on these findings, one can reasonably conclude that firms tend to invest mainly in “socially responsible initiatives that are strictly correlated with their object of activity” (Iamandi & Constantin, 2012, p. 1127) and “whose projects fit the positioning of the firm” (Bowe & Grau, 2009 cited in Casais & Santos, 2018, p. 3): for this reason their investment level in AC-CSR is lower in comparison to companies “focused on services” (Iamandi & Constantin, 2012, p. 1127) such as banks or operating in the printing/publishing sector (Useem, 1984 cited in LeClair & Gordon, 2000). On this point, it was demonstrated that “corporate donations may be influenced by the sector to which the company belongs” (Hanousek et al., 2010 cited in Settembre Blundo *et al.*, 2017, p. 151): philanthropic

activities, in fact, are particularly relevant for “service companies because they are closer to their customers and must be visible in the community” (Ibid.).

Regarding the role played by banks in supporting art, Campa and Zijlmans (2019, p. 81) underline that financial institutions “engage more extensively with art-based initiatives (ABI)” when there is a higher proportion of female directors and when there is “greater ownership dispersion”<sup>6</sup>. Thanks to the research conducted, art organizations are now equipped with useful information and a “better understanding of the companies [...] that could be their best interlocutors when developing long-term partnerships” (Ibid., p. 82).

### 2.1.2 CORPORATE AREAS AND INTERNAL OPERATIONS

Corporate investments in the arts can bring several benefits when they are directed towards the “internal assets of the company” such as HR, R&D and production areas (Comunian, 2009, p. 14). This is especially true if firms intend to invest and commit to long-term donations (Casais & Santos, 2018). With respect to the HR area, employees are among the “primary economic stakeholders with direct influence on the firm” (Moir & Taffler, 2004, p. 152) and, for this reason, Moir and Taffler (2004) take them into account when developing a framework to investigate business support for the arts. This model<sup>7</sup> analyzes corporate philanthropy along two dimensions that are business/society interest and primary/secondary stakeholder focus (Moir & Taffler, 2004). The first dimension is related to the attention paid to and the consequent balance between corporate interests (shareholder value maximization) and societal interests, while the second dimension “represents the relative attention paid to different stakeholder groups in firm giving” with employees and customers on one extreme and the social community on the other (Moir & Taffler, 2004, p. 152). The authors (2004, p. 149) identify two types of “business involvement with the arts” that they name advertisers and legitimators (see figure 2.4 below). Companies are advertisers if their use of the arts serves “primarily as a form of reputation enhancement in a marketing sense” (Moir & Taffler, 2004, p. 158) while they are legitimators when the arts provide a “licence to operate” (Ibid.). Legitimators seek community legitimization because they are aware of the resulting benefits in terms of business reputation (Moir & Taffler, 2004). In fact, among the variety of goals managers have to “fulfill in operating the firm”, one is represented by the “maximization of public welfare” which is a fundamental institutional factor contributing to the determination

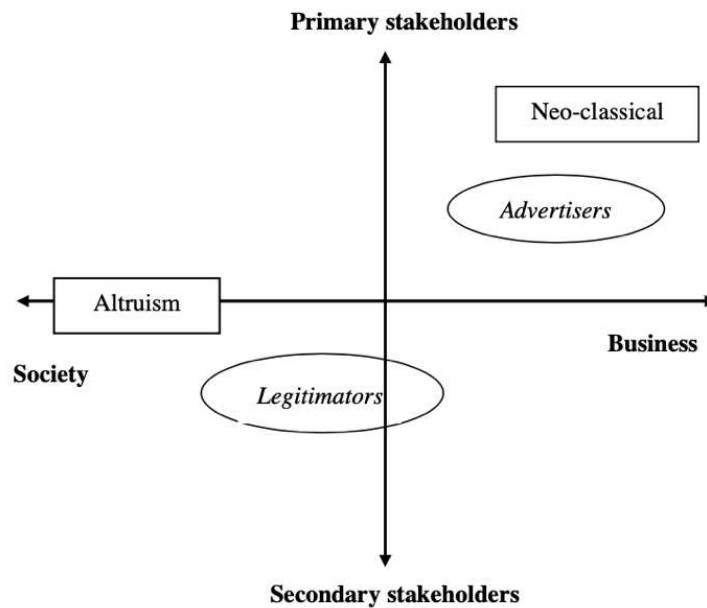
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<sup>6</sup> To realize the model Campa and Zijlmans (2019) exploit a sample including the 42 largest listed banks in Europe.

<sup>7</sup> The framework developed by Moir and Taffler (2004) is based on the reframing of the model taxonomy of Young and Burlingame (1996).

of the “magnitude of a firm’s contribution program” (Kushner, 1996 cited in LeClair & Gordon, 2000, p. 229).

**Figure 2.4:** A framework of corporate philanthropy



Source: Moir & Taffler, 2004

Hence, according to Moir and Taffler (2004, p. 157-158) there is “no evidence of pure altruism in the case of business support for the Arts” because companies are always looking for “some form of business benefit in giving to the Arts”.

In addition to this, LeClair and Gordon (2000, p. 225) elaborate an “analytical model” to examine the “allocation of corporate donations” to artistic activities in the U.S.: to do so, they take into account “profitability, firm size, advertising expenditures and type of business” as variables. Based on their findings<sup>8</sup>, they conclude that “corporate giving to artistic/cultural activities is correlated with advertising expenditures” and that, consequently, the “key motivation” behind corporate support for the arts is firm promotion (Ibid., p. 225). These statements seem to corroborate Comunian’s (2009) claim according to which the traditional distinction between corporate philanthropy (“simple donation” (Comunian, 2009, p. 13)) and sponsorship (financial support provided in exchange for “visibility” (Ibid.) to obtain an “economic return” (Ibid.)) is gradually blurring to the point that “arts sponsorship itself appears to be situated between commercial sponsorship [...] and corporate philanthropy” (Daellenbach, 2012, p. 365).

<sup>8</sup> Corporate giving to the arts (as a % of sales) increased as the level of advertising expenditure (as a % of sales), the rate of profitability and the employment level (“per unit sales”) rose (LeClair & Gordon, 2000, p. 235).



In fact, corporate philanthropy is increasingly playing a “strategic” role that can be defined as the “the synergistic use of organisational core competencies and resources to address the key stakeholders’ interests and to achieve both organizational and social benefits” (McAlister & Ferrell, 2002 cited in Comunian, 2009, p. 13). Thus, since philanthropic actions can yield a “positive economic return” to the firm (Porter & Kramer, 2002 cited in Comunian, 2009, p. 13), they have become instrumental to the achievement of the business “mission, goals or objectives” (Mescon & Tilson, 1987; Saiia *et al.*, 2003; Smith, 1994, cited in Moir & Taffler, 2004, p. 149) and, for this reason, they risk to damage arts and culture (Wu, 2002 cited in Schuster, 2003) due to the “use and abuse” of arts by corporations (Wu, 2002 cited in Comunian, 2009, p. 26).

In any case, corporate support for the arts should be enacted to stimulate “team building, loyalty and creativity” of staff members at all organizational levels (Comunian, 2009, p. 15). Employees involved in artistic initiatives and projects (Barry & Meisiek, 2010) can exploit the continuous interactions with artists to gain “insights into creativity” and “empower [...] their [...] imaginative and inventive powers” (Seifter & Buswick, 2005, p. 4, cited in Comunian, 2009, p. 15).

The R&D area places at the center “knowledge, know-how and creativity” that can be improved with corporate investments in the arts to “enlarge the culture and knowledge base of the company, creating potential for further projects or developments” (Comunian, 2009, p. 14).

The impacts of these investments in the arts benefit also the production area in terms of “product innovation and diversification” to find “new markets and new products” (Ibid.). Investing in the arts and bringing them inside the organization in the form of artistic interventions will be beneficial in respect of both product and process innovation since any “artistic idea can materialize into a new artifact or a new service” (Panozzo & Cacciatore, 2018, p. 19).

Hence, the main advantageous situations that any firm could incur in can be wrapped up in “the acquisition of new ideas for the development of the brand, the corporate image, the dissemination of know-how through new channels and methods, the dissemination of corporate values through art, team-building actions, the transfer of experience, corporate legacy, the dissemination of new values within and outside the organization, the development of latent ideas within the company, the strengthening of company image, the creation of new stimuli for management, the greater understanding of the interpersonal dynamics existing in the company context, innovative thinking” (Panozzo & Cacciatore, 2018, pp. 22-23).

## 2.2 CORPORATE PHILANTHROPY AND SPONSORSHIP

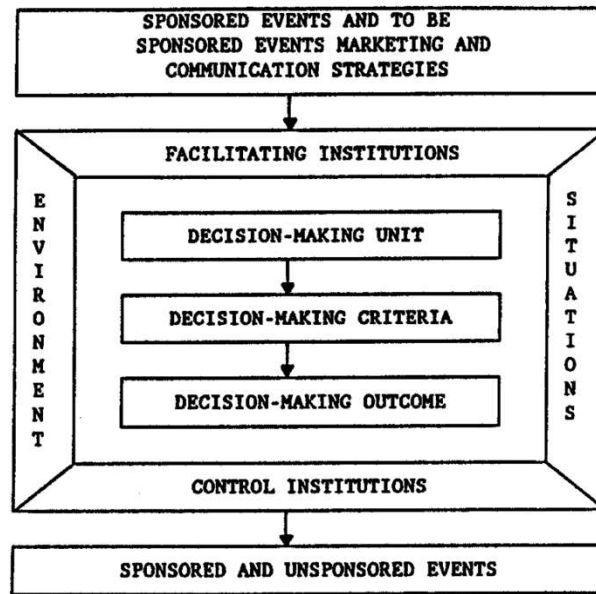
Sponsorship and patronage represent the two main alternative business strategies that companies can undertake in order to support the arts (Settembre Blundo *et al.* 2017). Other tools that can be employed, especially in the “cultural heritage sector”, are the “newer and more innovative” public-private partnerships (PPP) (Settembre Blundo *et al.* 2017, p. 147) along with options such as crowdfunding activated by the artists themselves (Handke & Dalla Chiesa, 2022) when “other preferred methods [like sponsorship] are unavailable” (Dalla Chiesa, 2022, p. 20).

The distinctive features of sponsorship and patronage lie in their objectives: while the former privileges commercial benefits in terms of improved company image, the latter aims at “building a positive social (and more altruistic) image” (Herranz de la Casa *et al.*, 2015 cited in Settembre Blundo *et al.*, 2017, p. 148). However, there are some common elements characterizing the management of sponsorship and patronage ranging from the impact on “corporate image and identity” and “the communication policy and strategies of the [supporting] company” to “the value of the service offered by the sponsored company and/or the quality of its artistic production” (Settembre Blundo *et al.*, 2017, p. 148).

Regarding sponsorship and its related activities, for Turgeon and Colbert (1992), sponsorship for the arts serves as “marketing communication device” (p. 49). Sponsorship activities comprise “institutional actions that project the company’s reputation and broadcast its vision of the world and are positively related to corporate reputation” (Kim, 2016 cited in Settembre Blundo *et al.*, 2017, p. 148). The commercial benefits stated above are gained by the firm thanks to the “positive publicity generated through its economic participation in an event” which hopefully will be turned “into higher sales” and “better relationships” with customers (Settembre Blundo *et al.*, 2017, p. 148). Together with these primary objectives, Settembre Blundo *et al.* (2017) underline the importance of “secondary objectives [...] such as the reevaluation of a product, the increase in the motivation of the sales force, social acceptance, changes in public opinion, increases in media coverage” (p. 148).

Turgeon and Colbert (1992, p. 42) present a “conceptual model” on the “decision-making process used by firms involved in sponsorship”: this model, displayed in figure 2.5 below, shows the multiple aspects involved in such decisional process.

Figure 2.5: Model on decision-making process in sponsorship



Source: Turgeon & Colbert, 1992

For an art event to be sponsored, both parties (art organizations looking for a sponsor and sponsoring companies) can rely on “facilitators such as promoters, public relations companies and newly-born sponsorship specialists” to assist the players in the development of the relationship (Turgeon & Colbert, 1992, p. 43) and avoid potential ambiguities due to the “vast differences in the needs and perspectives of the two parties” (Olkkonen *et al.*, 2000 cited in Daellenbach, 2012, p. 365). The “decision-making unit” (Turgeon & Colbert, 1992, p. 43) of the sponsor-firm (i.e. key executives with “personal interests” in the arts (Kirchberg, 2004; LeClair & Gordon, 2000 cited in Daellenbach, 2012, p. 366)) has to undergo several decisions involving “multiple variables” ultimately leading to “decision-making outcomes”: the variables to be considered are “control institutions (e.g., government regulations), environmental variables (e.g., economic activity) and situational variables (e.g., competitors’ involvement in sponsorship)” (Turgeon & Colbert, 1992, p. 43-45). Such variables impact on the decision-making outcomes and thus on “whether or not to sponsor [...], the type of activity to sponsor, the management of the sponsored event (Waite 1979), the type of support and the measurement of sponsorship results” (Ibid. , p. 45).

The most important feature of the model proposed by Turgeon and Colbert (1992) is related to the “decision-making criteria” that they group in five different categories: “event-related, sponsored-organization related, market-related, sponsor-organization related and effect-related” (p. 45). The category of event-related criteria contains “criteria that [...] describe the activity to be sponsored, and the primary concern deals with the fit (product, finance and

audience) between the two organizations involved” (Ibid., p. 45). The categories of sponsored-organization and related sponsor-organization include criteria that “take into account dimensions which reflect the capacity of both organizations to manage the sponsorship efficiently” (Ibid.). The category of market-related criteria “indicates the extent to which such sponsorship decisions are motivated by external players” while the category of effect-related criteria encompasses “criteria that describe the type of outcome sought by potential sponsors” (like broad corporate objectives, product-related objectives, sales-related objectives and personal objectives) (Ibid.).

With respect to patronage, it is “framed within the concept of corporate philanthropy, which is basically relevant to the areas of arts and culture and refers to the financial support of artists” (Rebaudengo, 2016 cited in Settembre Blundo *et al.* 2017, p. 149). In particular, corporate philanthropy or company giving saw an increase since the 1980s especially in Europe due to “high levels of take-over and merger activity, resulting in larger businesses with more resources to donate to charity; record company profits; increased sophistication in the manners in which charities appealed to companies; and government pressures on firms to contribute to community needs” (Casson, 1991 cited in Bennett, 1998, p. 458). In addition to this, “key stimulants to the growth of European CP [Corporate Philanthropy]” can also be sought in “the privatisation of European industries previously run by national governments, the rapid cross-border transmission of the latest business practices (such as corporate philanthropy), and withdrawal of governments from the provision of social and health services” (Logan, 1993 cited in Bennett, 1998, p. 459). Patronage, as part of a “valuable public relations strategy” (Mazza *et al.*, 1994 cited in Settembre Blundo *et al.*, 2017, p. 149), allows companies to support and preserve their reputation in the long term (Settembre Blundo *et al.*, 2017) and “offers a new, more altruistic dimension for the company” thereby increasing “public awareness” and improving relationships with stakeholders (O’Hagan & Harvey, 2000 cited in Settembre Blundo *et al.*, 2017, p. 149). Companies active in corporate giving have a “desire for both commercial and societal benefits [which] is raised more consistently than in sponsorship” (Madden *et al.*, 2006, cited in Daellenbach, 2012, p. 365): in other words, corporate philanthropy serves “these dual commercial and societal purposes” by combining “both ‘economic and moral reasons’” (Valor, 2006 cited in Daellenbach, 2012, p. 365). Thus, the motivations underlying philanthropic actions “may be related to strategic, altruistic, political and personal goals” (Campbell *et al.*, 2002 cited in Daellenbach, 2012, p. 365).

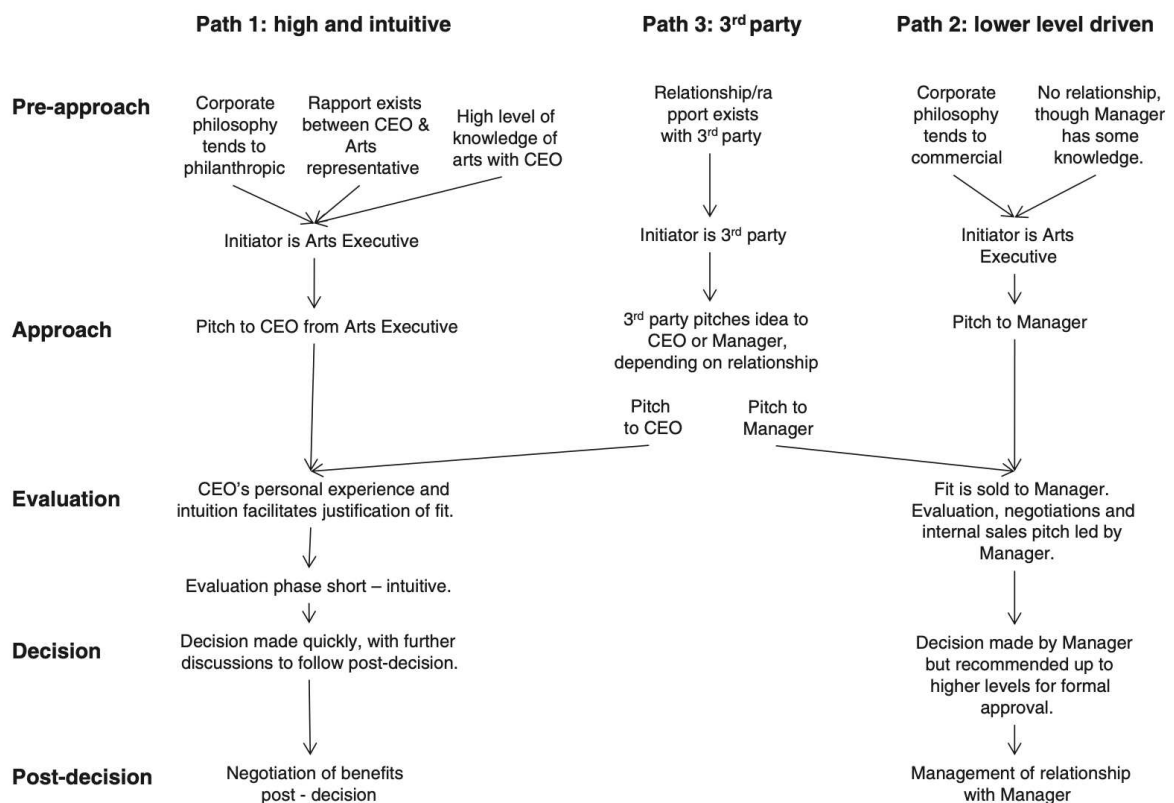
Sponsorship and patronage should not be regarded as mere “commercial paths” but as a “new type of business vision [...] linked to [...] corporate social responsibility” (Settembre Blundo *et al.*, 2017, p. 149) well beyond mere advertising and marketing strategies (Uhrich *et al.*, 2014 cited in Settembre Blundo *et al.*, 2017).

To summarize, “patronage underpins the company’s public role in public life, while sponsorship seeks to give the company and its brands an improved commercial image” (Settembre Blundo *et al.*, 2017, p. 153): in other words, “patronage focuses on society” (Bearfield, 2009 cited in Settembre Blundo *et al.*, 2017, p. 153), whereas “sponsorship concentrates on the consumer” (Poon & Prendergast, 2006 cited in Settembre Blundo *et al.*, 2017, p. 153). Furthermore, if on the one hand patronage is oriented towards the long term (Belk & Andreasen, 1982 cited in Settembre Blundo *et al.*, 2017), on the other hand sponsorship “seeks to become profitable in the short term” (Meenaghan, 2001 cited in Settembre Blundo *et al.*, 2017, p. 153). By taking into account the communication perspective, patronage is strictly connected to the field of public relations (Bearfield, 2009 cited in Settembre Blundo *et al.*, 2017) contrary to sponsorship which stands on a broader level that includes “advertising, [...] sales promotion and other mixed marketing techniques” (Javalgi *et al.*, 1994 cited in Settembre Blundo *et al.*, 2017, p. 153). In any case, among the most relevant motivations pushing corporations towards investments in the arts, either through sponsorship or patronage, they can be sought in “more favorable tax treatments” (Galaskiewicz & Colman, 2006; Clotfelter, 1985; Boatsman & Gupta 1996, cited in Settembre Blundo *et al.*, 2017, p. 150) “afforded to corporate charitable donations” especially in European countries (Logan, 1993 cited in Bennett, 1998, p. 459).

Moreover, corporate investments in the arts can also depend on art forms and on whether companies operate at a local, national or international level (Stanziola, 2007 cited in Settembre Blundo *et al.*, 2017) due to the different stakeholder groups expectations. By way of example, a firm operating at a regional level is “closer to its stakeholders and the needs of sponsorship and patronage of the local community” (Abzug & Webb, 1997 cited in Settembre Blundo *et al.*, 2017, p. 150). Another factor potentially contributing to the enactment of corporate philanthropic activities is represented by owners nationality because “it is expected that companies with foreign owners take the initiative in engaging in philanthropy in transition economies” (Settembre Blundo *et al.*, 2017, p. 150). In addition to this, it was shown that foreign corporations have a “greater propensity” in engaging in sponsorship and patronage because they may be pointing at building relationships and reputation in the penetrated countries (Meng-Lewis *et al.*, 2013 cited in Settembre Blundo *et al.*, 2017). To

conclude, according to Settembre Blundo *et al.* (2017, p. 158), companies willing to invest in the arts should clearly bear in mind a “strategic projection” when donating: for this reason, as backbone of these initiatives, each firm should place “expert teams in the relevant areas to manage issues” and, consequently, “devote part of their resources to these types of activities”. In this respect, Daellenbach (2012) observes three different decision paths undertaken by companies “in their sponsorship and/or corporate philanthropy investments” (p. 365). Each path can be further divided in five phases as depicted in figure 2.6 below: “the *pre-approach* context, the *approach*, the *evaluation*, the *decision* and the *post-decision* stage” (Daellenbach, 2012, p. 367).

**Figure 2.6:** Decision paths and phases for arts sponsorship/patronage



Source: Daellenbach, 2012

The first path is “dominated by senior-level managers and the use of informed intuition”, the second one is “driven by lower-level managers” while the third begins “with a third party” but ends up converging in “one of the two other paths” (Daellenbach, 2012, p. 367). Regarding path 1, it is mainly chosen by companies with “a more philanthropic mindset or orientation towards the sponsorship”: “this orientation served as a key element of the *pre-approach*. [...]”

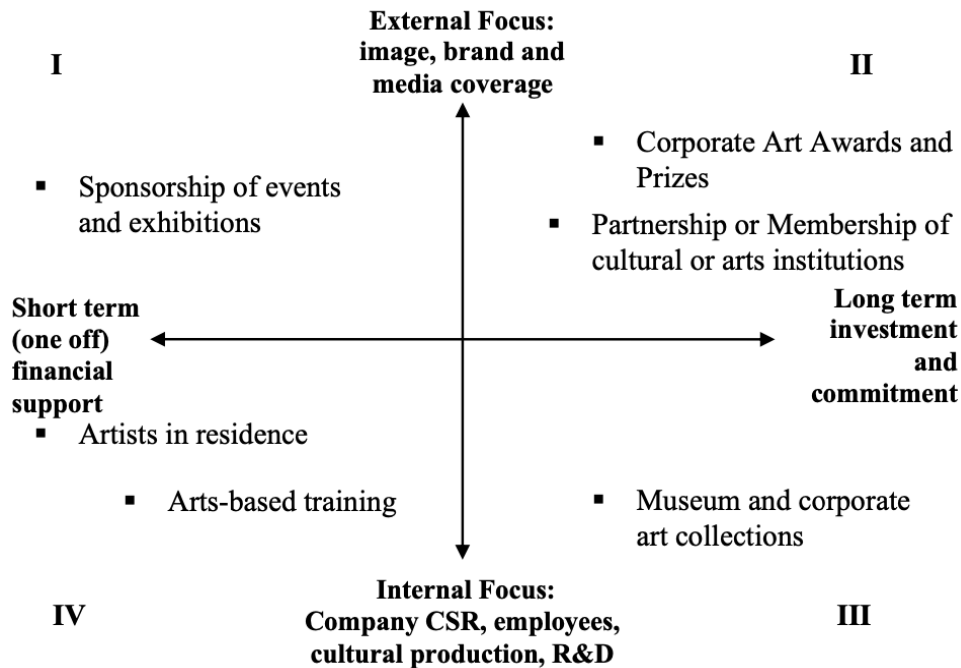
In the *pre-approach*, an arts executive had some rapport with the senior company manager (CEO). Subsequently, in the *approach*, [...] the arts executive [had] to speak with the CEO. The CEOs then recognized, on the basis of their own personal knowledge and experience [*evaluation*], that potential for a fit existed between the two parties. [...] The effect of this was [...] the *decision* [phase]. [...] To conclude this path, the more detailed negotiation of benefits occurred in the *post-decision* phase” (Daellenbach, 2012, p. 367-369). If, on the one hand, path 1 characterizes firms more “philanthropically oriented”, path 2, on the other hand, is usually undertaken by companies with “a more commercial orientation towards sponsorship”: in this case, “the procedures [...] in the *pre-approach* necessitated that the person contacted initially was the [...] Sponsorship/Marketing Manager. [Then] [...] the Arts Chief Executive made the request in the *approach*. The request was subject to a rigorous *evaluation*, driven by the Manager, to determine the extent of fit and benefits for the sponsor” but later the manager had to “submit” its “evaluation and recommendation ‘up’ to higher levels for approval [*decision*]. [...] *Post-decision* activity covered the management of the relationship and [related] benefits” (Ibid., p. 369-370). In path 3, the decision process starts when “an individual not directly employed by the arts organization or the company” initiates the relationship (*pre-approach*): “this third party, knowledgeable in and connected to the business sector, [...] put the two parties together. [...] These third parties viewed the partnerships as beneficial to both organizations and initiated the conversation. In addition, these individuals had established relationships, which they could use to open the door for the *approach*. The assessment of the opportunity by the third party was crucial to the process moving forward. Once the opportunity had been recognized, the third party pitched the idea to the person with whom they had a relationship” (Ibid., p. 369). If the idea was pitched to the Chief Executive “the decision joined Path 1” whereas if the idea “was pitched to the Sponsorship/Marketing Manager” then “the decision joined Path 2” (Ibid.). Overall, Daellenbach (2012) states that “the paths and processes [chosen] are very much determined by the company orientation being more or less philanthropic or commercial” (p. 372).

### 2.3 STRATEGIES FOR CORPORATE INVESTMENTS IN THE ARTS

In their conceptual model, Turgeon and Colbert (1992) highlighted the actors and the components involved in the decision-making process for arts sponsorship. With this framework in mind, one can move forward to the classification arranged by Comunian (2009) on the strategies implemented by companies to “create relationships with arts organisations”

(p. 16). As shown in figure 2.7, there are “two central dimensions” along which the different strategies take shape (Ibid.).

**Figure 2.7:** Framework of strategies on corporate investments in the art



*Source: Comunian, 2009*

The dimension on the vertical axis depicts the “‘spatial’ focus [...] in business terms” that can be either internal or external: in the first case the “business involvement with the arts” focuses on the internal “business environment” and on the “improvement of the business premises through corporate art, company galleries and museums”, while in the second case the firm is “clearly targeting the wider audience of the company and try to improve image, brand or engage with the external environment and corporate social responsibility” (Comunian, 2009, p. 16). The dimension on the horizontal axis is “temporal” and can relate to short term financial support or long term investment and commitment: with respect to the short term, the management comes up with “projects which aim to create the most impact and publicity, by investing large amount of money in a short period of time (temporary blockbusters exhibitions)” (Ibid.); regarding the long term, companies initiate “partnerships or [long term] projects” with arts organizations (Ibid.) to underline their higher “level of engagement” with the arts (Olkkonen & Tuominen, 2006 cited in Comunian, 2009, p. 16). From the intersection of these two dimensions, four quadrants emerge: “the first (I) represents those investments which are addressing mainly the external stakeholders, focused around image and branding”;

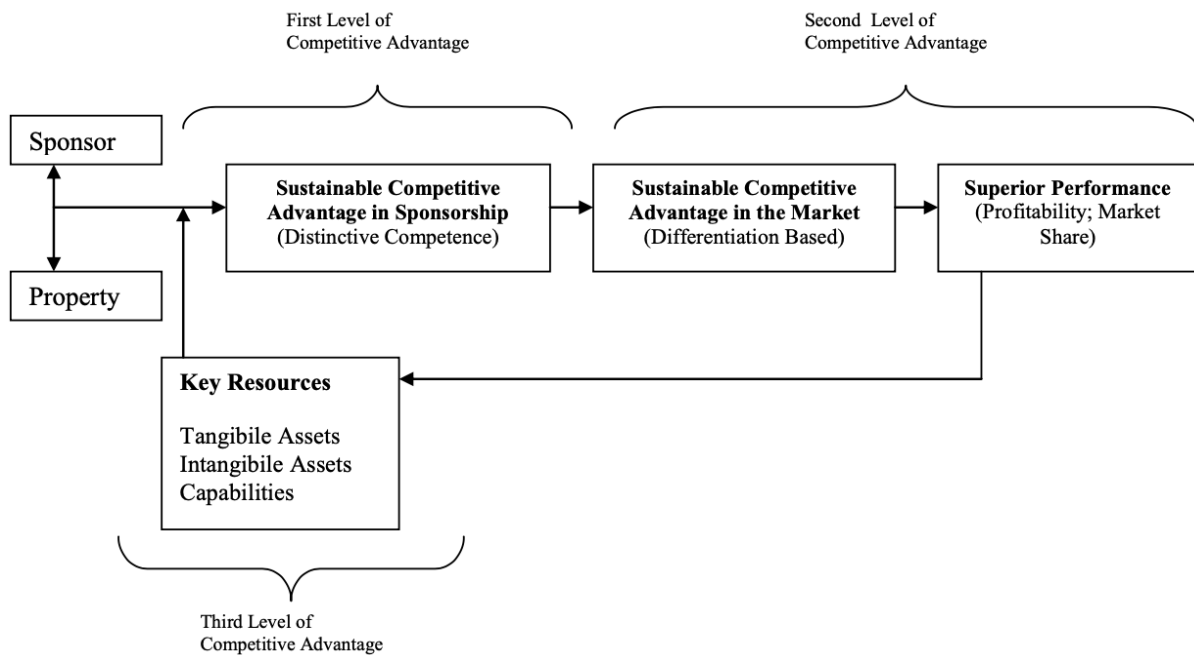


“the second quadrant (II) instead presents the long term investments which are focused on image and public relations”; “the third quadrant (III) includes investments which have a long term impact and involvement, but which tend to be developed within the companies”; “the final quadrant (IV) shows the short-term projects or investments that have a specific focus on the internal operations of the company in terms of human resources, creativity and innovation” (e.g. “arts-based training” or “other forms of collaborations with artists”) (Comunian, 2009, pp. 17-18).

According to Comunian (2009, p. 18), to reach “well-constructed” investments in the arts, companies should be able to “create a specific equilibrium between investment in external impact and communication and the involvement of internal audiences”.

To further address this topic, Comunian (2009, p. 18) emphasizes the “search for new competitive advantage” as a “meaningful key” to justify the “practice” of corporate investments in the arts. Stated in another way, competitive advantage can be achieved thanks to corporate giving. One can thus conclude that the “level of support” depends on “the degree of rivalry in specific industries” (Johnson, 1966; Whitehead, 1976 cited in LeClair & Gordon, 2000, p. 228): in fact, in industries characterized by a higher degree of rivalry, companies are forced “to raise their level of support to match that of their competitors” (Useem, 1987 cited in LeClair & Gordon, 2000, p. 229). Since investing in the arts can be translated in products with a higher “added value” (Comunian, 2003 cited in Comunian, 2009, p. 4), competitive advantage can be obtained because of these differentiating product features in the market (Porter, 2002 cited in Comunian, 2009). In this regard, “sponsorship can be a strategic ingredient of competitive advantage” (Fahy *et al.*, 2004 cited in Comunian, 2009, p. 19). Figure 2.8 below illustrates a model of sponsorship-based competitive advantage where three different levels of competitive advantage are identified.

**Figure 2.8:** A model of sponsorship-based competitive advantage



Source: Fahy et al., 2004, Comunian, 2009

The first level of competitive advantage should be interpreted “in terms of ‘competitive market for sponsorship’” to highlight “the ability of companies to defend their position in relation to a specific art field or art organization” because of their “long-term commitment” as sponsors in that art area (or art organization): “this competitive advantage in sponsorship depends also on the distinctive competence and know-how which the company acquires through dealing with events, arts organization and cultural managers” and can “become a valuable asset” to “improve the management skills for future sponsored events” (Fahy et al., 2004 cited in Comunian, 2009, pp. 19-20).

The second level of competitive advantage is referred to the “the possibility for the company to generate competitive advantage in its product market”: “the company’s capacity to create new and unique products” with “symbolic, aesthetic and cultural connotations” can be developed with investments in “the cultural and creative dimensions of the product” and thus with investments “placed in culture and arts” (Ibid., p. 20).

The third level of competitive advantage is connected to the ability of companies to learn and acquire tangible and intangible assets and capabilities from the development of “philanthropic and sponsorship programmes” they previously invested in: in other words, “these projects have a return in developing further the tangible, intangible and know-how assets for the company itself” (Ibid., pp. 21-22).

# CHAPTER 3

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## ART AND ORGANIZATIONS

This chapter narrows the field to concentrate on corporate investments in arts impacting the internal remit of the company, notably human resources, and is accordingly centered on the often overlooked domain of artistic interventions. The aim, in this case, is to emphasize the value that art carries and delivers to organizations in order to persuade them to shift the focus on art from mere short-termist marketing and branding objectives to long-term commitment towards employees' human capital.

### 3.1 ART AT ORGANIZATIONAL LEVEL: THE WORKARTS

Davison, McLean and Warren (2012) underline how “the role of the visual has been strangely neglected in organizational and management research despite its pervasiveness and despite having a healthy provenance in the arts” (p. 6). But, thankfully, the “marked rise in arts-based initiatives in organizations” (Barry & Meisiek, 2010, p. 1) seems to signal a mindset shift from the vision, condemned by Galbraith, according to which artists and their works had to be ostracized from the firm context. For this reason, it seems advisable to better investigate the multiple functions of art within the corporate setting and their evolution over time starting by Schein's (2004) definition of organizational artifacts as the most visible level of organizational culture that comprise a company's “artistic creations”. Barry and Meisiek (2010, p. 1) introduce the concept of “*analogous artifacts*” meant as artifacts endowed with “artistic attributes” and “evocative” power able to “invite inquiry and reflection by defamiliarizing organizational members' habitual conceptualizations”. Barry and Meisiek (2010) state that “arts use artifacts [...] to make our familiar sensemaking resources unfamiliar, to discover new ways through them, and to make them more deeply meaningful” (p. 2): they also confer greater importance to the role of mindfulness which Shapiro, Wang and Peltason (2015) deem to be valuable to foster growth, creativity, and innovation within the business context.

Due to the “arts' involvement with analogous artifacts” and their potential to favor collective mindfulness, Barry and Meisiek (2010, p. 2) coin a new term, namely the *workarts*, to identify the “arena where art, artifacts, and work meet”. The “term ‘workarts’ takes the term ‘artwork’

and reverses it so as to emphasize the work that art does at work” in “an attempt to challenge and improve the work” by “making or collecting art for the workplace” (Ibid., pp. 2-3). As stated by Barry and Meisiek (2010), the workarts can be viewed as “the other side of a continuum between scientific approaches to organization and arts-based ones” that “can complement and counterbalance efficiency-driven frameworks like TQM and ISO” (p. 15). The main aim of managers is to use “workart’s production” and “analogous artifacts” to create “organizational influence [...] within organizational settings” (Ibid., p. 3). After employing the concepts of “distinction making (seeing more)” and “context shifting (seeing differently)” (Ellen Langer, 1989, cited in Barry & Meisiek, 2010, p. 3), Barry and Meisiek (2010, p. 3) conduct a “review-based study of analogous artifacts within the workarts, describing how mindfulness is fostered within three general workart practices: art collection, artist-led intervention, and artistic experimentation”. One can suggest that they adopt the “*artistic approach*” which “focuses on the artistic experience and the flow of creativity and playfulness of organizational interactions in order to gain insight into the management of organizational processes and leadership” (Strati, 2010, pp. 120-123 cited in Ratiu, 2017, p. 181).

With respect to distinction making, they claim that the analogous artifacts in the workarts field can indirectly “foster mindful distinction making” because they create “a state of absorptive attention which [...] can help organizational members explore and reveal the concepts that they hold” (Barry & Meisiek, 2010, p. 4).

Regarding context shifting, analogous artifacts “evoked by workart [...] promote context shifting in indirect ways” and aim at destabilizing organizational routines (Ibid., p. 5). Corporate art collection belongs to one of the three “broad arts-based initiatives” and is analyzed on the basis of the assumption according to which “well-crafted” and “thought-provoking” art can “provoke the questioning of long-held beliefs”: it can aid “organizational members make new distinctions and challenge all-too-familiar perspectives” (Ibid., p. 7). On the face of it, “corporate art collecting seems to be more about impressing stakeholders rather than defamiliarization” as in the IBM case when its founder reconceived “corporate art collecting as a strategic activity” designed for “organizational prestige” (Jacobson, 1993, cited in Barry, Meisiek, 2010, p. 7). But, by digging deeper, Barry and Meisiek (2010, p. 7), noticed a “shift in collecting practice” from top managers administering “their own corporate art collections” to collections “handed over to professional corporate curators with legitimacy and networks in the art world”. Curators’ job is to predispose and arrange artworks “placement throughout the company based on managerial expectations” of spreading open-

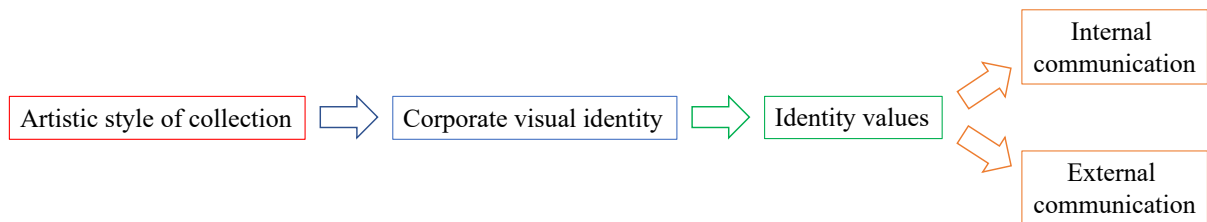
mindedness and innovation among organizational employees (Behnke, 2007, cited in Barry & Meisiek, 2010, p. 7).

It is possible to differentiate between art collections inducing distinction making and those entailing context shifting: the first ones are directed at stimulating “organizational members [...] to see more in their work processes and the environment” while the second ones are employed to “challenge the status quo and to stimulate questions and reflections around existing perspectives” (Barry & Meisiek, 2010, p. 8). Among the examples of distinction making, one can cite the textile company Spring Mills whose CEO inaugurated a corporate art collection in 1978, on the ground that art sharpens employees’ awareness and understanding of the business context” (Scotese, 1978, cited in Barry & Meisiek, 2010). Another case is represented by Deutsche Bank that began its collection of “‘works on paper’ due to its close relationship with money, stocks, bonds; all things on paper” thus testifying art collecting choices “based on the work processes of the organization”: in fact, as the latter “moved towards digitalization, the art collection shifted as well, extending to electronic art media” and art became a symbol of “the culture and identity of the organization” (Made, 2004, cited in Barry & Meisiek, 2010, p. 7).

Before moving to context shifting examples, some cases halfway between the two concepts of distinction making and context shifting deserve to be mentioned, in particular those “intended to provoke and irritate employees” (Barry & Meisiek, 2010, p. 8) leading to a “sense of disorientation” and ambiguity they experience by looking at these visual artifacts (Davison, McLean & Warren, 2012, p. 6). The managers of the insurance company Generali undertook corporate art collection in order to “spread ‘creative unrest’ throughout the company” (Breitwieser, 1995, cited in Barry & Meisiek, 2010, p. 8); the same objective was achieved by the former CEO of the pharmaceutical company Novo Nordisk who designed a “collection strategy” of “‘difficult’ artworks” to engage employees in questioning “themselves, their ways of noticing things, and their work” (Aunstrup *et al.*, 2000, cited in Barry & Meisiek, 2010, p. 8). But, as noted by Barry and Meisiek (2010, p. 8), art’s usefulness in this case did not cease here because even if these artifacts have accomplished their evocative task, they “became a symbol of the culture at Novo Nordisk” and thus of workplace identity after they reached a saturation point. On this matter, Bargenda (2020, p. 797) argues that “artworks and corporate art collections contribute a qualitative dimension to corporate identity by satisfying aesthetic, social and cultural standards” and that “corporate art [...] offers significant opportunities for innovative [...] identity-building strategies.” Along with “building

meaningful corporate identity”, corporate art collections can assist “disruptive [corporate] shifts, projecting humanistic values and mediating internal and external communication messages” (Bargenda, 2020, p. 812). Based on the findings of Bargenda (2020), an *artification* framework of corporate identity is suggested in Figure 3.1, starting from the artistic style of collection which constitutes the basis for the creation of the corporate visual identity and, subsequently, to the definition of identity values that in turn will be employed for internal and external communication to stakeholders.

**Figure 3.1:** Artification framework of corporate identity



*Source: Personal rielaboration*

Regarding marketing communication to stakeholders, in the first ever research<sup>9</sup> investigating the role of Corporate Art Collections (CACs) as a “powerful marketing communications weapon”, Kottasz *et al.* (2008) note that CACs enhance a firm “core values and culture, influencing the attitudes and behavior of employees, and developing a company’s external image” (p. 235). Moreover, the concept of artification can be extended to denote “the introduction of artistic practice” in “business, industry, or organizational operations” to enable employees to enliven their corporate work “from an artistic viewpoint” (Saito, 2012, pp. 1-2, cited in Ratiu, 2017, p. 188).

With respect to the context shifting sphere, another common practice of Deutsche Bank is related to acquisitions: more specifically, once it acquires another bank, Deutsche Bank’s managers “signal change and ‘mark their territory’ by taking down the acquired bank’s artworks and replacing them with new exhibits from the Deutsche Bank collection” (Made, 2004, cited in Barry & Meisiek, 2010, p. 8). A similar behavior can be traced back in the North American bank FBS which, according to Nissley (1999), transformed its “corporate art

<sup>9</sup> The methodology was developed on a sample of 181 enterprises from nine different countries and involved the completion of a “questionnaire concerning the roles of CACs in symbolizing a firm’s core values” and their ability to attract clients and contribute to “corporate identity building” (Kottasz *et al.*, 2008, p. 235).

[...] into symbolic meaning” (p. 1) proving that groundbreaking managerial changes were echoed and mirrored by changes in the corporate art exhibited (Barry & Meisiek, 2010). To let distinction making and context shifting happen, corporate art collecting should “rely on the willingness of organizational members to actively engage” with this activity: therefore, management must undertake “active measures” to enable and “put [...] to work” art collection (Barry & Meisiek, 2010, p. 9).

Moving on to artist-led intervention, Barry and Meisiek (2010, p. 9) point out that this workart initiative started “when managers brought artists, rather than artworks, into the workplace to catalyze new perspectives”: an example that they propose is the “Artist Placement Group in the UK [which] strove to relocate art making into organizational life by arranging [...] artist-organization pairings [...] to provide artists with access to the problems and realities of industrialized societies” in the 1970s (Walker, 1995; Ferro-Thomsen, 2005, cited in Barry & Meisiek, 2010, p. 9).

Within the distinction making perspective, managers’ aim is to “bring the artists and their defamiliarizing work with economic relationships closer to organizational concerns” by inviting “artists to explore work processes and their environment together with organizational members” (Barry & Meisiek, 2010, p. 10). This direction was taken, for example, by Xerox whose Parc research division initiated a collaboration with new media artists by bringing them to work closely with “Xerox product developers”: the two groups of “artists and developers shared space and emerging technologies, but worked with them in different ways” (Harris, 1999, cited in Barry & Meisiek, 2010, p. 10). Stated in other words, “artists’ understandings and interpretative moves” work as key enablers for “organizational members” to “notice more about their work and appreciate its dynamic complexity” (Barry & Meisiek, 2010, p. 10). Distinction making can even “become more active when employees are learning artistic sensibilities first hand, rather than [solely] co-inhabiting space or listening to an artist”: in this regard, Unilever and Siemens have implemented “art development programs” to push their employees to “become artistic themselves” by producing “amateur works of art” (Boyle & Ottensmeyer, 2005, cited in Barry & Meisiek, 2010, pp. 10-11).

Context shifting is enacted within the artist-led intervention practice when artists succeed at using “their media to get employees to reconceive their work practices” and thus to experience “aspects of the workplace through another medium”, namely art (Barry & Meisiek, 2010, p. 11). For this purpose, “some European countries have sponsored long term,

artist-led development initiatives” (Ibid.); Airis (Lindqvist, 2004; Styhre, Eriksson, 2007 cited in Barry & Meisiek, 2010), NyX (Barry & Meisiek, 2005, cited in Barry & Meisiek, 2010) and Disonancias (Ramos, 2009, cited in Barry & Meisiek, 2010) programs were developed to promote and encourage creativity and innovativeness and to find new ways to solve organizational problems. Hopefully, managers could come up with “major organizational shifts” like in the NyX project which led “executives” of the Danish company Quilts “to change the business focus from technical superiority to more lifestyle considerations” after a strong collaboration with the painter Karsten Auerbach (Barry & Meisiek, 2005, cited in Barry & Meisiek, 2010, p. 12).

The third workart movement deals with Artistic Experimentation as a means to “foster mindfulness” in the “everyday work life” of organizational members once they “familiarize themselves with artistic thinking and media” (Barry & Meisiek, 2010, pp. 12-13): according to Barry and Meisiek (2010) this can be achieved through a “combinatorial practice [...] that joins distinction making and context shifting” (p. 13). Barry and Meisiek (2010) explain how “artful” processes can affect organizational changes by presenting the case of the aluminum smelting company HAP-Raufoss and “illustrate how distinction making and context shifting potentially come together in artistic experiments” (Irgens, 2000, cited in Barry & Meisiek, 2010, p. 14). The peculiarity of this “example of managerial artistry” within the organizational context can be sought in the financial distress characterizing the firm: after his appointment, the new CEO “used his first months to analyze productivity and market possibilities” and then “decided to spend a million Norwegian crowns – more or less the last of the company’s money – to paint the production factory completely white, floors and all” (Ibid.). As a result, employees could better concentrate on “order and cleanliness, which meant less time searching for tools and fewer production interruptions” and were also able to see “their traces on the floors and machines, and began reconsidering their work patterns”: after few years the company “became one of the highest ranked companies in its industry” (Ibid.). The white painting on company walls represented for employees “white canvas on which to imagine what their factory could become”; moreover, “what is noteworthy is the interplay of corporate crisis (going bankrupt and need to cut costs), distinction making (work processes on white paint), and context shifting (hospital white within a mining company)” (Ibid.). The HAP-Raufoss case “suggests that artistic thinking is possible within a range of work conditions, not only in environments of surplus” (Barry & Meisiek, 2010, p. 15).



To conclude, Barry and Meisiek (2010) claim that “the workarts’ emphasis on making the familiar strange encourages organizational members [...] to comfortably hold and behold uncertainty and ambiguity, as well as suggesting new developmental paths” (p. 16) within the organizational environment. Hence, workarts and “artful analogous artifacts” emerged mainly to contrast relentless “managerial control” and the consequent “downward spiral towards the lifeless workplace” (Barry & Meisiek, 2010, p. 18). The “understanding of the arts in business context” mentioned above can be complemented and enriched by the “phenomenon of arts-based learning” due to “its relevance to strategy, leadership, and organizational performance” (Nissley, 2010, p. 10).

### 3.2 ART AS A LEARNING TOOL IN CORPORATE SETTINGS

As shown earlier, arts in business can take several forms: “*decoration* – the artwork in lobbies/corridors, and the pictures on office walls (e.g. corporate art)”; “*entertainment* – bringing the arts/performances into the office space”; “*instrument* – when business uses the arts as an instrument for management/leadership development (e.g., teambuilding, communication skills development, etc.); and *strategic transformation* – when the business integrates the arts in areas such as vision and values, creativity and innovation” (Darsø, 2004, cited in Nissley, 2010, p. 12). By emphasizing the “instrumental and transformative dimensions of the arts-business relationship”, Nissley (2010, pp. 12-13) provides a definition of “arts-based learning in the context of business” and states that it consists in the instrumental employment of the “arts as a pedagogical means to contribute to [...] organizational learning and development”. He cites Julie Muraco, “Senior Managing Director of NASDAQ Stock Market” and “Board Member for Americans for the Arts”, who claims that executives should “embrace the transformative potential that the arts and arts-based learning have to offer” so that “corporate America’s workforce” can acquire the necessary “qualitative skills” that the “arts can teach” in order to “remain competitive in the global economy” (Nissley, 2010, p. 9). Nissley (2010) continues by quoting Robert Lynch, “President and CEO of Americans for the Arts”, for whom art can shape “the future of [...] knowledge economy [...] dependent upon developing [...] creative and cultural capacities [...] mandatory for both leaders and workers to succeed in a rapidly changing global economy” (p. 10).

Due to the increase in employment of arts-based methods, Taylor and Ladkin (2009) have identified four processes that drive these methods and “contribute to the development of

individual organization managers and leaders” (p. 55). These processes are “transference of artistic skills”, “projective techniques”, “evocation of ‘essence’”, and “making” (Ibid.). Skills transfer is based on the assumption that “particular skills learned in the arts [...] can [...] be effectively applied to the management of organizations” (Ibid., p. 57): along with the “application of specific skills”, one can take a broader perspective and consider these skills as “meta-capabilities” in view of “managing or leading as art” (Grint, 2001; Vaill, 1989, cited in Taylor & Ladkin, 2009, pp. 57-58). As a projective technique, art fosters “reflection through projection” (Taylor & Ladkin, 2009, p. 58) and thus “aesthetic forms” help to “make tacit knowledge of ‘invisible’ concepts, such as [corporate] ‘culture’ visible” (Linstead, 2006 cited in Taylor & Ladkin, 2009, p. 58). The process of evocation of “essence” is related to “arts-based methods [that] can enable participants to apprehend the ‘essence’ of a concept” (Taylor & Ladkin, 2009, cited in Nissley, 2010, p. 13). The making process is connected to the concept of work which should contain “artfulness” (Richards, 1995 cited in Taylor & Ladkin, 2009, p. 60) that in turn contributes to individuals’ “experience of more fulsome living” (Taylor & Ladkin, 2009, p. 60). The way in which these processes are handled and drive arts-based methods result in different managerial development outcomes: for this reason, Taylor and Ladkin (2009) suggest that “in order to realize their developmental potential, arts-based methods [should] require facilitators” possessing enough “experience and understanding” of “both artistic and organizational worlds” (p. 66).

In fact, to strengthen and empower arts-based learning, “leading business schools worldwide” have decided to include “arts-based courses to their curriculum” from MIT University to the University of Chicago (Adler, 2006, cited in Nissley, 2010, p. 12). Additionally, Wilson (2012) illustrates that the usefulness of arts-based learning methods is not limited to for profit companies but can be even applied in not for profit organizations<sup>10</sup>. As stated above, arts-based learning can represent a powerful tool for the leaders of tomorrow: Nissley (2010, p. 17) calls upon Lotte Darsø<sup>11</sup>’s words who believes that the method of “arts-based learning offers unique potential for developing leadership competencies for business” and to forge “artful leaders, who care about people, profit and planet”. Within the leadership development sector, Wang and Chia (2020, p. 47) raise the issue of the gap between theory and practice of leadership and propose an “arts-based leadership training approach” based on the use of

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<sup>10</sup> Wilson (2012) cites the V&A Museum of Art and Design as an example of not for profit organization that launched the “Innovative Management and Leadership program” (p. 262) which employs arts-based learning methods for organizational development.

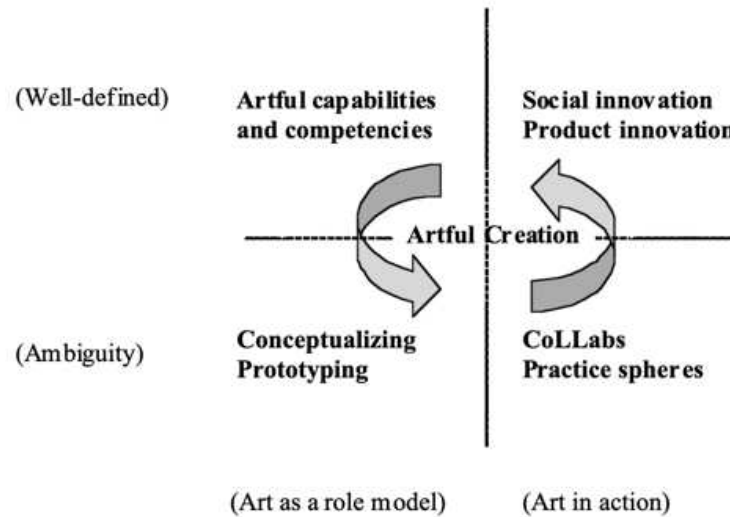
<sup>11</sup> Darsø is the founder of the Master Program in Leadership and Innovation in Complex Systems (LAICS) in Copenhagen Business School and director of the Oxford University’s Strategic Leadership Programme (OSLP) (Nissley, 2010).

“improvisatory theater techniques” to address the problem. They claim that “art-based leadership activities can be an effective means of fostering confidence, being empowered to lead and leading others through change” and urge for a transition “from traditional models of leadership towards a transformative model using an art-based approach” (Wang & Chia, 2020, p. 47). In conclusion, Nissley (2010, p. 17) mentions Tammy Matson, Senior Vice President of Towers Perrin, who “suggests an integral role for the arts to play in an organization’s efforts to create a culture of innovation” and acknowledges arts as “enablers of business creativity” that “should take shape anywhere and everywhere in the business model, from the way people work, to the way a company makes money, to its structure and operations”. Schein (2001) emphasizes this aspect by affirming that art and artists put people in touch with their creative self and stimulate them to broaden their “skills, [...] behavioral repertory, and [...] flexibility of response” (p. 81).

### 3.3 ARTISTIC INTERVENTIONS: THE ARTFUL CREATION FRAMEWORK

Berthoin Antal (2014) defines artistic interventions as “processes in which people, practices, and/or products from the world of the arts enter into the world of organizations” (p. 1). Artistic interventions, according to Berthoin Antal (2014) represent “a new approach to organizational learning” (p. 1) and can potentially become a “new management fad” (p. 2): they “vary greatly along several dimensions, such as time, purpose, and connection to other organizational processes” (p. 4). Therefore, starting from the “three broad categories” represented by “products, people, and practices”, she delineates three types of artistic interventions mainly borrowed by Barry and Meisiek’s (2010) work: product-based artistic interventions, artist-led interventions and practice-based artistic interventions (Berthoin Antal, 2014). In an attempt to show how to extrapolate learning from artistic interventions, Berthoin Antal (2014) proceeds by showing a conceptual map on “organizational-learning dimensions” (p. 10). This map “zooms in to look inside organizations, revealing the differences and connections between individual-, group-, and organizational-level learning in artistic interventions” (Berthoin Antal, 2009; Schiuma, 2009, cited in Berthoin Antal, 2014, p. 11). The visual model Berthoin Antal (2014) refers to was initially elaborated by Darsø in 2004 and is shown below in Figure 3.2. It consists of a “matrix framework of ‘Artful Creation’, based on empirical data from interviews with artists and business people” and defines “four approaches for applying arts in business” (Ibbotson & Darsø, 2008, p. 549).

**Figure 3.2:** The framework of Artful Creation



*Source: Ibbotson & Darsø, 2008*

The first approach is named “artful capabilities and competencies”, the second one “conceptualizing and prototyping”, the third one “CoLLabs (Collaborative Learning Labs) and practice spheres”, and the fourth “social innovation and product innovation” (Ibid., p. 549). In the model “the axes represent the degree of ambiguity (vertical axis) and the degree of involvement (horizontal axis)” (Ibid.). Moreover, while the approaches “artful capabilities and competencies” and “conceptualizing and prototyping” are “based on art as a role model”, the “CoLLabs (Collaborative Learning Labs) and practice spheres” and “social innovation and product innovation” approaches “involve artists in interaction with organizations and concern art-based methods, practice and results” (Ibid.). The framework presented “revolves around ‘artful creation’” thus highlighting that “when arts enter organizational spaces it is not just about transferring the ideas from one realm to another, but also about an interaction between different forms of knowing, from which new ways of knowing and doing can emerge” (Berthoin Antal, 2014, p. 13).

### 3.4 ARTS-BASED INITIATIVES AND ORGANIZATIONAL VALUE OF ART

Drawing from the concept of artistic interventions by Berthoin Antal (2014), one can move to Schiuma’s (2009, p. 3) Arts-Based Initiatives (ABIs) which essentially represent “any organizational and management intervention using one or more art forms to enable people to undergo an art experience within an organizational context, as well as to embed the arts as a business asset”.

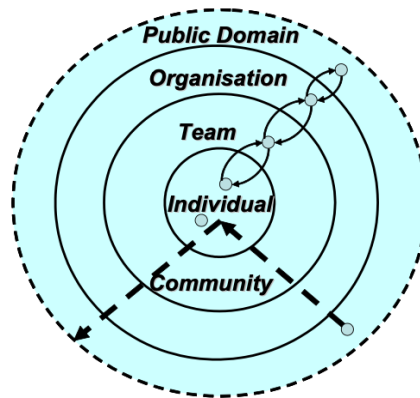
Berthoin Antal (2014) illustrates the variety of artistic interventions in terms of time and organizational objectives; in the same way, Schiuma (2009, pp. 4-5) identifies three types of ABIs (i.e. *intervention*, *project*, and *programme*) classified depending on “length and management goals”:

- an *intervention* is an ABI “performed within a limited time frame, usually between 2-3 days, and it works towards a specific operative goal. This kind of initiative tends to take the form and function of arts-based workshops or courses”;
- a *project* is an ABI whose “duration [...] is longer than 2-3 days and is characterized by a set of integrated and coordinated interventions, planned and programmed over a period of time usually ranging from one to six months to achieve a business performance objective. The focus of a project tends to be the production of an output; that is, the realization of a work of art either tangible or intangible in nature, with related organizational and managerial outcomes”;
- “Finally, when the initiative has a plurality of objectives and considers a set of different projects, although ascribable to the same strategic goal, the ABI presents the nature of a *programme*. This is usually related either to the definition or the renewal of the business model or to developing organizational performance in line with strategic direction”.

According to McCarthy *et al.* (2004, cited in Schiuma, 2009, p. 5), organizations gain more value by developing “a sustained involvement in arts” instead of implementing short-term oriented and “isolated ABIs”.

Among the beneficiaries of ABIs, it is possible to detect three main interdependent categories: the individual, the group and the organization at large (Schiuma, 2009). From figure 3.3 below one can grasp the multiple links and “spill-over” benefits existing among organizational beneficiaries of ABIs and assuming a “concentric logic” (Schiuma, 2009, p. 6).

**Figure 3.3:** Spill-over effects and links among ABIs beneficiaries



Source: Schiuma, 2009

At the center of these concentric circles is the individual because for Schiuma (2009) the benefits stemming from an art experience (i.e. an ABI) primarily accrue to the individual, followed by benefits propagating to the group and later to the organization, “with benefits also linked to the public domain external to the organization” (p. 6). The main benefits of ABIs Schiuma (2009) refers to comprise “intangible and knowledge-based assets, grounding business competencies and affecting the efficiency and effectiveness of business processes” (p. 7). Thus, the implementation of ABIs impacts on the firm human resources (and “potentially any other organizational stakeholder”) and on its infrastructure (“tangible and intangible structural assets”) (Ibid., p. 8). To evaluate and “assess the organizational value of arts” or, in other words, the benefits accruing from the ABIs in different corporate settings, Schiuma (2009) elaborates the so-called Arts Value Matrix.

#### 3.4.1 THE ARTS VALUE MATRIX

The Arts Value Matrix, as shown in Figure 3.4 below, “identifies nine purposes for adopting an ABI within an organization” and their “potential impacts [...] in terms of benefits related to people change and/or [...] to an organizational infrastructure development (Schiuma, 2009, p. 8).

**Figure 3.4:** The Arts Value Matrix

<b>Degree of Organisational Infrastructure Development</b>	High	<b>INVESTMENT</b>	<b>BONDING</b>	<b>TRANSFORMATION</b>
	Medium	<b>SPONSORSHIP</b>	<b>ENVIRONMENT</b>	<b>TRAINING &amp; PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT</b>
	Low	<b>ENTERTAINMENT</b>	<b>GALVANISING</b>	<b>INSPIRATIONAL</b>
		Low	Medium	High
		<b>Degree of People Change</b>		

Source: Schiuma, 2009

To simplify the analysis, Schiuma (2009) uses “‘low’, ‘medium’, and ‘high’ measures” (p. 9) when he examines people change and organizational infrastructure development. The effects of ABIs on people change can “induce transformation [...] both at the individual and group level” from a “low-level people change” (consisting of a “*transient impact*” on their “emotional [...] state” due to a “time and space constrained” ABI) to a “medium-level people change” (achieved “when the [ABI] experience has an influence on *participants’ attitudes* [...] for a longer period of time” resulting in “(short-term) behavioral change”) and to a “high-level people change” (realized when people “challenge their beliefs and values” and when the ABI acts as a “trigger and catalyser [...] leading people” to long-term behavioral change) (Ibid., pp. 9-10). In the same way the ABIs affect the organizational infrastructure development at a low level (“components and features of the operative platform remain unchanged”), at a medium level (the ABI is “adopted as an instrument to restore, renew and modify some characteristics of the infrastructural components of an organization”) and at a high level (“new components are introduced in the organization or the existing components are deeply modified” since, in this case, the ABIs “operate as change vectors of organizational infrastructure affecting [...] the organisation’s culture features, the property stock, the characteristics of the products and the services produced”) (Ibid., p. 10).

The ways in which companies implement the ABIs to enact people change or organizational infrastructure transformation “can be expressed as one of the nine impacts in the Arts Value

Matrix” where “each position [...] classifies the potential organisational value of an ABI and defines the kind of benefits an organization can achieve” (Ibid.). The nine categories of benefits depicted by Schiuma (2009, pp. 10-19) in this matrix are the following:

- *Entertainment* (L:L): “Implementing ABIs as entertainment, means people’s participation in the arts tends to be limited in time and space. [...] After having experienced and internalized the art, a person is left with a pleasant memory of the experience itself, without however involving any behavioral mindset change. Therefore the impact of ABIs implemented with the goal of entertainment is transient and ephemeral”;
- *Galvanizing* (M:L): “An ABI has a galvanizing effect when it is able to involve people into an intense, revealing and meaningful experience [...]. The ABIs implemented with a galvanizing purpose tend to create a psychological and social tension towards actions and changes”. To stimulate these actions, the “direct contact with arts” must be “put into context” to “allow the release of the energy to be translated into the performance of business activities”. Galvanizing is “useful in cases where an organization wants to stimulate employees creativity by creating a ‘spirit of innovation’”;
- *Inspirational* (H:L): “the main goal is self-reflection which can drive mindset and behavioral changes”. ABIs with an inspirational effect “encourage self-assessment, self-discipline, self-efficacy, [...] which in turn drive the development of personal attitudes and behaviors towards organization and work activities”;
- *Sponsorship* (L:M): “Through sponsorship an organization can assume the role of patron to an artist, an artwork and/or an artistic process. This can be done for [...] ethical and cultural motivations, getting the attention of institutions, strengthening ties with the local community, creating [...] an identity of the organization both internally and externally, and for increasing brand awareness and enhancing reputation”;
- *Environment* (M:M): “workplace design” can be considered a driver “affecting the performance of knowledge workers and knowledge-based organizations” (Davemport *et al.*, 2002; Whitley, 1994 cited in Schiuma, 2009, p. 13). Using arts as an “instrumental means to create a physical entity and an intangible aura within and around the organisation, [...] can have a positive impact on its assets and particularly on its people” in terms of their “attitudes and behaviors”;
- *Training and personal development* (M:H): “the main goal is to develop specific skills, competencies and personal capacity. [...] The underlying assumption is that



many artistic capabilities and skills are important for business, such as [...] communication, listening, storytelling, improvisation and the use of body language. [...] The fundamental idea is that by exposing people to arts and to the artistic process creation, people's skills can grow". Finally, "arts learning experiences [can even] stimulate and develop group and collaborative learning";

- *Investment* (H:L): "the main goal is the achievement of economic-financial benefits". Here, arts can serve as a "source of income" and thus as "commodities". But, "in today's knowledge economy" art can play the role of "value added vector" which includes "organisations that are discovering the relevance of arts as an economic activity in terms of their use to increase the value incorporated into products and services. [...] From a business perspective the idea is not to create artworks, but to infuse the artful energy which distinguishes works of art into their products/services";
- *Bonding* (H:M): "the main goal is to create a relational capital and a common ground for conversation and collaboration. [...] Through the arts, social boundaries collapse and the members of a group can be integrated and co-inspired. This brings people together, creating bonds between them, driving teambuilding and encouraging collaboration";
- *Transformation* (H:H): "the main goal is to [...] drive organization towards change" by employing art to "create a new consciousness". Art "drives the creation of a new culture, involves the transformation of organisational infrastructure components and supports change management. [...] At this level people [...] transformation [...] is aligned with the needs and wants of the organization in terms of strategic and performance objectives" to achieve "organisational renewal". Once this level of the Arts Value Matrix is reached, "there is a convergence of people change and organisational infrastructure development".

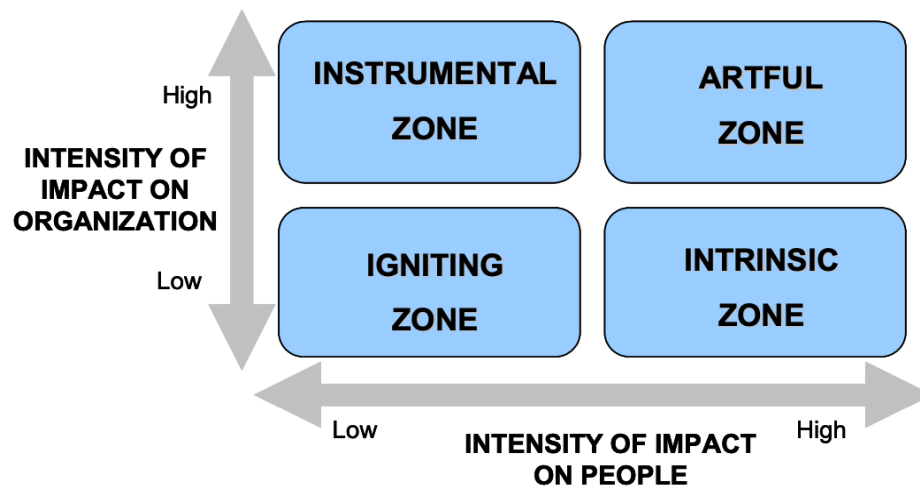
According to Schiuma (2009, p. 22), "starting from the origin of the Arts Value Matrix's axes and moving along its two sides, the impact of an ABI on people and on the organizational infrastructure tends to be more intense and broad" meaning that "the benefits related to people and to the organizational infrastructure are likely to converge".

#### 3.4.2 THE ABIS VALUE ZONES

Schiuma (2009) complements the Arts Value Matrix with the four value zones illustrated in Figure 3.5 below. These four zones "offer a different kind of assessment" in comparison to

the Arts Value Matrix: in fact, while the latter “provides a classification of ABIs’ potential benefits, the Four Value Zones define the nature of these benefits and particularly their strategic purpose” (Ibid., p. 24).

Figure 3.5: ABIs value zones



Source: Schiuma, 2009

These four categories (namely igniting zone, intrinsic zone, instrumental zone, and artful zone) are determined on the basis of the intersection between the intensity of impact of an ABI on people (axis x) and its intensity of impact on organizational infrastructure (axis y). Hence, depending on the ABI *intersectional* intensity and thus on its “strategic intent”, it will fall under one of these four zones (Ibid.).

The ABIs in the “igniting zone” have a low impact on both people and organization and their “strategic goal is to activate an organization’s interest around an issue” but this interest is not long lasting: “this zone basically corresponds to the entertainment area of the Arts Value Matrix” (Ibid.).

ABIs in the “intrinsic zone” have a high impact on people while a low impact on the organization and their “strategic intent [...] is to engage people and channel their emotions and energy in order to achieve specific organisational objectives”: this zone can correspond to the galvanizing and inspirational areas of the Arts Value Matrix (Ibid., p. 25).

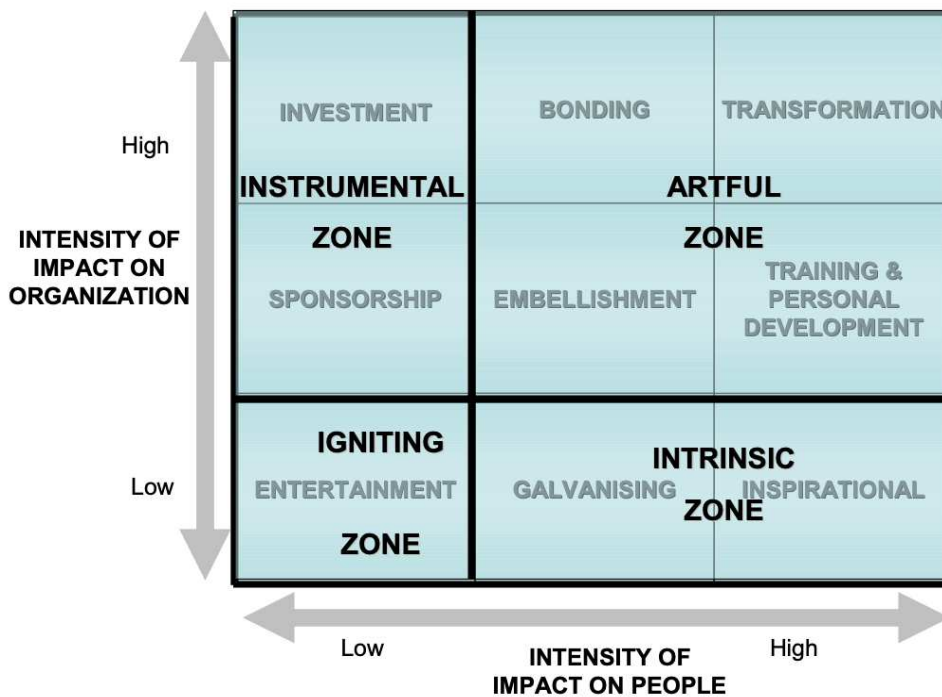
When ABIs are in the “instrumental zone”, they have a low impact on people and a high impact on the organizational structure: this category “denotes the pragmatic benefits which can be achieved directly and/or indirectly by the use of a work of art or an artistic process” (Ibid.). Within the instrumental zone the ABIs help to “develop tangible and intangible

components of the organisational infrastructure” and, for this reason, this zone can be matched to the sponsorship and investment areas of the Arts Value Matrix (Ibid.).

With respect to the “artful zone”, ABIs have a high impact on both people and organization and the benefits generated are the “result of a convergence of the art experiences’ impact on people and on the organisational infrastructure”: “ABIs mapped in the artful zone are able to integrate people change and [...] the organization’s transformation” (Ibid., p. 26). In relation to the Arts Value Matrix, the “benefits related to environment, training and personal development, bonding and transformation are included in the artful zone” (Ibid.).

The correspondence and overlapping between the four value zones and the Arts Value Matrix is proposed by Schiuma (2009) in Figure 3.6.

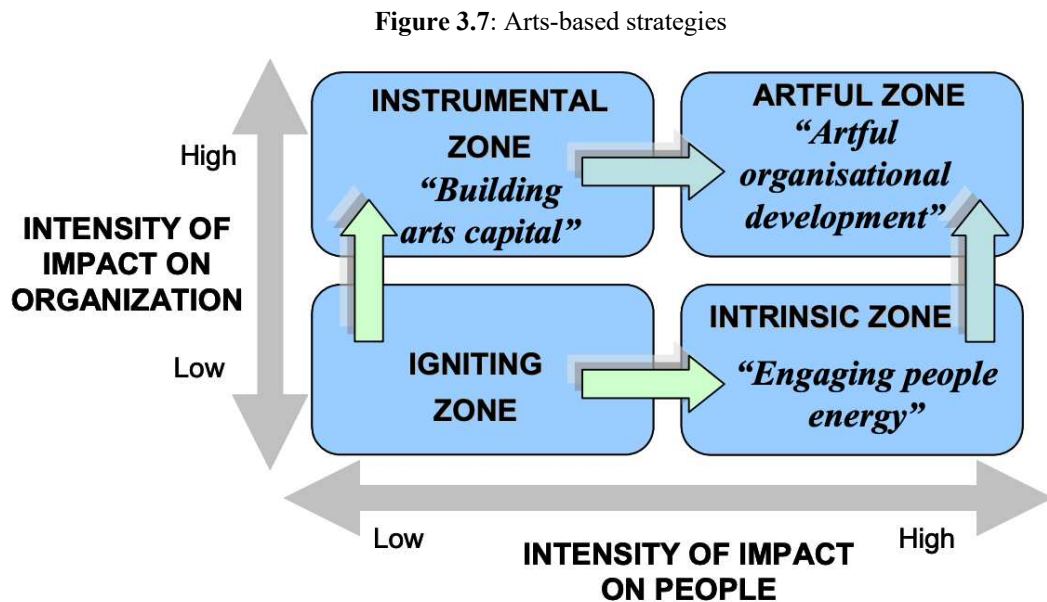
**Figure 3.6:** Four ABIs Value Zones and Arts Value Matrix



Source: Schiuma, 2009

Since ABIs can be undertaken by firms to attain various strategic objectives, it seems advisable to “delineate the best arts-based strategy to be implemented in order to generate value for an organisation” along with the Four Value Zones of ABIs (Ibid., p. 34).

Within the value zone framework, one can “distinguish three main types of arts-based strategies” depending on the “attention [...] paid on the development of people, rather than on the improvement of the organisational infrastructure” (Ibid., p. 27). These strategies are shown in Figure 3.7 and are listed below.



*Source: Schiuma, 2009*

**Engaging people energy strategy.** Starting from the igniting zone and moving into the intrinsic one, ABIs “respond to a people development management strategy” named “engaging people energy” strategy (Schiuma, 2009, p. 27). The ABIs implemented in this instance have a strong “focus on people” and aim at engaging their energy to “provoke a personal change [...] to turn an intension into an action [...] keeping basically unchanged the organisational infrastructure” (Ibid.).

**Building arts capital strategy.** If the strategic intent of an ABI is to “generate effects related to the instrumental zone”, then the management strategy to put in place is called “building arts capital” (Ibid.). This arts-based strategy can be applied when managers need to “increase an organisation’s value and the value creation capacity, by leveraging on the organization’s instrumental and infrastructure development” (Ibid.). To cite “some examples of strategic objectives related to this strategy”, one can consider “an improvement of the identity of an organisation’s brand; the development of links with the external communities; a better

management of the organisation's socio-cultural impression at intra-industry and inter-industry level" (Ibid.).

***Artful organizational development strategy.*** When ABIs are particularly successful, they "move into the artful zone and respond to an organization's development management strategy" defined "*artful organisational development*" strategy (Ibid., p. 27). This strategy leverages a "balanced integration of the engagement of people's energy and of the building of arts capital" strategies: the "implementation of ABIs is linked to the integration of the development of both the organization's infrastructure – tangible and intangible – and its people" (Ibid. pp. 27-28). The "development of people-related and of infrastructure-related assets", enables firms to "improve their competencies, which in turn have a positive impact on the efficiency and effectiveness of organization and business processes" (Ibid., p. 28).

Schiama (2009) concludes by stating that ABIs can serve as powerful managerial tools to assist business "transformation processes as well as to improve their value creation capacity" (p. 30). In particular, "artful organisational development strategies" can be integrated in companies business models and "specifically in their day-to-day activities": ABIs can thus "become a management philosophy" able to "improve business performance" and ultimately create value (Ibid, p. 30).

# CHAPTER 4

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## EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS OF ART-BASED INITIATIVES

What has been stated up until now proved useful to outline the theoretical background on the potentially beneficial interdependencies between art and the organizational context. It follows from this point that the investigation can be extended by proposing empirical analyses concerning the impact of art on wellbeing and productivity (Knight & Haslam, 2010) and on creative thinking (Batey *et al.*, 2021; Hale and Woronkiewicz, 2021). Hence, in an attempt to check whether the extant literature provided so far (e.g. Schiuma, 2009; Barry & Meisiek, 2010; Berthoin Antal, 2014) holds true in the empirical reality, three main studies are examined: the first one mainly covers the field of straightforward and routinary tasks peculiar to “low-skilled office jobs” (Harris & Harris, 2006 cited in Knight & Haslam, 2010, p. 164); the second and the third ones insist on the importance of enacting creativity to improve employee performance. Moreover, the first two examples have been selected because, according to Stone and English (1998, p. 176), “individuals performing creative or monotonous tasks” resort to “visual stimuli” (e.g. art posters) to enable task implementation and facilitate task performance whereas the third one has been chosen by virtue of artists’ ability to propagate their “artistic thinking [which] can permeate the corporate spaces and values and spread its tacit knowledge through a tangible or intangible output” (Panozzo & Cacciatore, 2018, p. 19).

### 4.1 REPETITIVE TASKS AND LOW SKILLED OFFICE WORK

The growing interest towards art and the subsequent art-based initiatives enacted by companies can be viewed as one of the indirect consequences stemming from an increasing awareness of the relevance of employee wellbeing within the office environment (Uolamo & Ropo, 2015; Colenberg Jylhä & Arkesteijn, 2021). Cognizant of the interconnections between workplace design and employee wellbeing (Vilnai-Yavetz & Rafaeli, 2021) and productivity (Hills & Levy, 2014), Knight and Haslam (2010) conducted an empirical analysis on the effects of different workspace arrangements on office workers. On this point, Thomas (2010, pp. 184-185) reports a qualitative analysis based on interviews with employees who “perceived the addition of [an] artwork [...] to increase satisfaction and [...] have a positive impact upon stimulation levels” thereby suggesting that the embedding of artworks in the

workplace can enable better worker performance. These interventions, named “design-led approaches”, constitute an alternative to lean and aseptic workplaces and “promote the value of offices that are enriched, particularly by plants and art” (Knight & Haslam, 2010, p. 158). Therefore, they can be conceived as falling within the scope of art-based initiatives since they embody an example of corporate action entailing the employment of an art form (Schiuma, 2009) within the organizational setting (Berthoin Antal, 2014).

The first experiment run by Knight and Haslam (2010) was carried out “in an interior office” of a university where four types of office arrangements were set up: (1) lean office, (2) office “decorated by the experimenter (with plants and art)”, (3) “self-decorated”, and (4) “self-decorated and then redecorated by the experimenter” (p. 158). This trial represents one of the few studies analyzing the links between green-designed workspaces (or “office landscaping” (Nieuwenhuis *et al.*, 2014, p. 1)) and employee well-being (Xue, Gou & Lau, 2016) and has been fostered by relatively recent research showing that art posters (especially those depicting naturalistic landscapes) let people experience low levels of stress and anger when placed within the office setting (Kweon *et al.*, 2008). Accordingly, Knight and Haslam (2010, pp. 159-160) formulate the following hypotheses:

- H1: “enriching workers’ office space with pictures and plants is likely to increase organizational identification (Hypothesis 1a; H1a), well-being (specifically, sense of psychological comfort, job satisfaction, and physical comfort; H1b), and productivity (H1c)”;
- H2: “empowering workers to manage and have input into the design of their own workspace [...] will enhance organizational identification (H2a), well-being (H2b), and productivity (H2c)”;
- H3: “disempowering workers by overriding their input into workspace design will compromise organizational identification (H3a), well-being (H3b), and productivity (H3c) relative to an enriched or an empowered office environment”.

To test them, they acted on the office space: the lean office arrangement (1) follows the “neo-Taylorist” prescriptions according to which the workspace should be standardized, subjected to management control and distraction-free (Boyer, 2003; Duffy, 1997; Harris & Harris, 2006, cited in Knight & Haslam, 2010, p. 160) so that office workers can be totally concentrated on the tasks to be performed; the “enriched” office (2) takes as a basis design theory whereby employees can carry out their work at ease in offices integrating art and plants arranged by

management (Duffy, 1997; Greenhalgh, 2002; Myerson, 2007, cited in Knight & Haslam, 2010, p. 160); the “self-decorated” office (3) grounded on social identity theory and thus on the belief that workers should be empowered to manage and design their own workspace “with the same art and plants as in the enriched condition” (De Croon, Sluiter, Kuijer, & Frings-Dresen, 2005; Elsbach, 2003; Elsbach & Bechky, 2007, cited in Knight & Haslam, 2010, p. 160); the “disempowered” office (4) which starts as condition (3) but then the experimenter reorganizes the workspace to deprive the employee from his “initial sense of autonomy” (Becker & Huselid, 1998; Wood & Wall, 2007, cited in Knight & Haslam, 2010, p. 160).

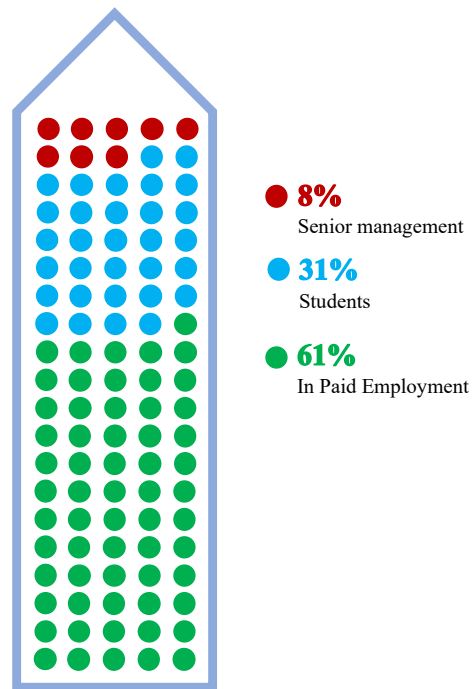
#### 4.1.1 EXPERIMENT 1: SAMPLE DATABASE

The sample drawn up by Knight & Haslam (2010) consisted of 112 people (40 men and 72 women) spanning from 18 to 78 years old (Mean = 37.55, Std Dev = 15.05) “randomly assigned to one of the four experimental conditions described above to gauge the impact of various space management strategies on organizational identification, well-being, and productivity” (p. 160): stated in another way, the dependent variables identified were “psychological comfort, organizational identification, job satisfaction, physical comfort, and productivity” (p. 161).

As shown in Figure 4.1 below, among the participants in the sample data collected, 31% were students, 61% were in paid employment and the remaining 8% were retired: thereby, this experiment includes “a panel of members of the general community who had indicated a willingness to participate” (Knight & Haslam, 2010, p. 161).



**Figure 4.1:** Sample distribution of participants in Experiment 1



Source: personal elaboration from Knight & Haslam (2010)

Moreover, the main characteristics available from the sample making up the database are summarized and elaborated in Table 1.

**Table 1:** Demographic composition of the sample (N=112).

		Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency (%)
<b>GENDER</b>	Female	72	64%
	Male	40	36%
<b>AGE</b>	18-22*	35	31%
	23-62*	68	61%
	>63**	9	8%
<b>EMPLOYMENT STATUS</b>	Employed	68	61%
	Unemployed	44	39%

\*cut off between student status and in paid employment status determined on the basis of personal assumptions and on the average education years in the U.K.

\*\*determined on the basis of personal assumptions by taking into account the average retirement age in the U.K.

#### 4.1.2 EXPERIMENT 1: MATERIALS AND ANALYTICAL PROCEDURE

As for the materials employed in the experiment, Knight & Haslam (2010, p. 161) predisposed “a small interior office in a psychology department”: it was windowless, with artificial lights, a “rectangular desk”, a “comfortable office chair on castors” and an “air conditioning system” to keep “the room at a constant temperature of 21 °C”. Participants were told “that they would take part in an experiment examining performance on analytical, processing, and intellectual tasks” and, once left alone in the office, they had to spend five minutes to settle in there (Ibid.). While in the lean condition (1) the office has not undergone additional modifications, in the enriched one (2) “six potted plants” and six posters (depicting plants) were added to it (Ibid.). The empowered condition (3) required that participants could enrich the office with any of the plants and art posters they received whereas the disempowered one (4) follows the same path as condition (3) but, as “the experimenter reentered the office, he looked at the chosen decorations [...] and then completely rearranged the pictures and plants” (Ibid.).

Once the workspace setting condition was established, participants had to perform two tasks, namely a card-sorting and a vigilance task: the first one consisted in reordering “three packs of playing cards [...] shuffled together” and to “sort each pack into its four suits” which in turn “had to be ordered from ace to king and placed in discreet piles, leaving 12 piles altogether”; the second following task involved the deletion and consequent counting of all “all the lower case letters ‘b’ that were on the page” of a “magazine article” distributed to the participants (Ibid.). The “key performance measures” employed by Knight and Haslam (2010, p. 161) were the “time taken to complete the task” along with “the number of errors made” in each task since “participants were told that they needed to perform the tasks as quickly and as accurately as possible”. Once the tasks were completed, participants also had to answer to a 74-item questionnaire where they had to attribute a “response on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 (*completely disagree*) to 7 (*completely agree*)” (Ibid.). The questionnaire contained manipulation checks to find out whether the manipulation was effective in the experiment and thus to verify that each participant was cognizant of the experimental condition he was exposed to (Hoewe, 2017): in this specific case, participants “were asked to consider the managerial control of space” (Tapping & Shuker, 2002; Taylor, 1911 cited in Knight & Haslam, 2010, p. 161). Therefore the questionnaire tested, through a 3-item scale, the level of “involvement”, “autonomy”, “quality of workspace” and “organizational identification” (Ibid.). Other three relevant 5-items scales were “job satisfaction”, “physical comfort” and

“psychological comfort” measured to assess “employees’ positive experience of work” (Ibid.).

#### 4.1.3 EXPERIMENT 1: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Knight and Haslam (2010) scrutinized the experimental data obtained by employing the ANOVA or analysis of variance: in addition, each office condition (lean, enriched, empowered, disempowered) was taken as an (independent) between-subjects variable. Bivariate correlations among the dependent variables analyzed are shown in Table 2 which reveals that most “interitem correlations” are statistically significant ( $p$ -value  $< .01$ ) (Ibid., p. 161).

**Table 2:** Bivariate Correlations in Experiment 1

Dependent variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Involvement	—	.16	.65**	.46**	.08	.41**	.44**
2. Autonomy		—	.01	.02	.12	.06	.07
3. Quality of workspace			—	.75**	.04	.39**	.57**
4. Psychological comfort				—	.14	.40**	.70**
5. Organizational identification					—	.30**	.15
6. Job satisfaction						—	.35**
7. Physical comfort							—

\*\*  $p < .01$ .

*Source: Knight & Haslam, 2010*

Table 3 below displays “means and effect sizes ( $\eta^2$ )” where the latter essentially refer to “how much of the variance in the DV (dependent variable) can be accounted for by each IV (independent variable)”: for this purpose, the effect size measure (eta-square) is judged moderate if equal to .07 while large if equal to .14 (Sheshkin, 2004 cited in Knight & Haslam, 2010, p. 161).

**Table 3:** Scale properties, Means, and Effects for Measures of Participants' Subjective Experience

Dependent variable	Condition ( <i>n</i> = 112)				Effects		Contrasts ( <i>t</i> values)		
	Lean	Enriched	Empowered	Disempowered	<i>F</i> (3, 108)	Effect size (full $\eta^2$ )	LvR, P, D, H1 <sup>a</sup>	RvP, H2 <sup>a</sup>	DvR, P, H3 <sup>a</sup>
Involvement <sup>b</sup>	2.56	3.21	5.77	3.18	44.92**	.56	6.08**	8.50**	5.04**
<i>SD</i>	1.06	1.34	0.91	1.15					
Autonomy <sup>b</sup>	2.90	3.77	5.93	3.95	38.21**	.51	6.90**	7.37**	3.55**
<i>SD</i>	1.20	1.31	0.85	0.96					
Quality of workspace <sup>b</sup>	3.32	5.39	5.49	4.57	20.23**	.36	7.10**	0.32	3.18**
<i>SD</i>	1.12	1.09	1.02	1.06					
Psychological comfort <sup>b</sup>	4.01	4.74	5.72	4.24	21.15**	.37	4.64**	4.22**	4.19**
<i>SD</i>	1.11	0.99	1.02	1.06					
Organizational identification <sup>b</sup>	4.60	5.25	4.64	4.33	2.87*	.07	0.56	1.88	2.17*
<i>SD</i>	1.19	1.13	1.14	1.37					
Job satisfaction <sup>b</sup>	4.82	5.26	5.71	5.31	5.55**	.13	3.39**	2.08*	0.91
<i>SD</i>	0.82	0.93	0.78	0.74					
Physical comfort <sup>b</sup>	4.56	5.49	5.74	4.59	10.03**	.22	3.19**	0.92	4.37**
<i>SD</i>	1.29	0.88	0.96	0.90					

Note. L = lean; R = enriched; P = empowered; D = disempowered; H1 = Hypothesis 1, (L < R, P, D); H2 = Hypothesis 2, (D < R); H3 = Hypothesis 3, (D < R, P, H).

<sup>a</sup> Means relate to 7-point scales (1 [completely disagree]–7 [completely agree]). <sup>b</sup> Contrast related to relevant hypotheses.

\* *p* < .05. \*\* *p* < .01.

Source: Knight & Haslam, 2010

Regarding manipulation checks on managerial control of space (see Table 3), the analysis of variance lead to an  $F(3; 108)$  equal to 44.92 for involvement, 38.21 for autonomy and 20.23 for quality of workspace (all statistically significant with  $p < .01$ ) and eta-squares equal to .56 for involvement, .51 for autonomy and .36 for quality of workspace (Knight & Haslam, 2010). Furthermore, Knight & Haslam (2010) constructed orthogonal contrasts for ANOVA and, through these independent linear comparisons, concluded that “participants in the lean condition felt less involved, less autonomous, and thought they were in a poorer quality space than participants in other conditions; [...] that participants in the enriched office felt less involved and less autonomous than participants in the empowered condition; [...] that participants in the disempowered condition felt less involved, [...] and thought they were in a poorer quality space than participants in the enriched and empowered conditions” (pp. 161-162).

With respect to organizational identification (see Table 3), “orthogonal contrasts only provided support for H3a” since “participants in the disempowered condition identified less with the organization than participants in enriched and empowered conditions” (Ibid., p. 162).

Well-being is analyzed with the dependent variables represented by psychological comfort, job satisfaction, and physical comfort (see Table 3) with an  $F(3; 108)$  equal to 21.15 for psychological comfort, 5.55 for job satisfaction and 10.03 for physical comfort (all statistically significant with  $p < .01$ ) and eta-squares equal to .37 for psychological comfort, .13 for job satisfaction and .22 for physical comfort (Ibid.). The articulation of well-being into

physical comfort, job satisfaction and psychological comfort can be traced back to what Vischer (2007, p. 8) describes as physical comfort (“basic human needs such as safety, hygiene, and accessibility”), functional comfort (“users’ performance of tasks and activities in the work environment”), and psychological comfort (“feelings of belonging, ownership, and control over one’s workspace”) within the “environmental comfort” framework.

With reference to orthogonal contrasts, they enabled Knight and Haslam (2010, p. 162) to infer that “participants in the lean condition felt less psychologically comfortable, reported less job satisfaction, and expressed lower feelings of physical comfort than participants in other conditions” (thereby corroborating H1b), that “participants in the empowered condition felt more psychologically [and physically] comfortable and reported greater job satisfaction than participants in the enriched condition” (thereby corroborating H2b), and that “participants in the disempowered condition felt less psychologically comfortable and reported lower feelings of physical comfort than participants in the enriched and empowered conditions” (thereby corroborating H3b).

Along with Tables 2 and 3, Knight and Haslam (2010) create a further table (Table 4 below) to more extensively investigate and emphasize the impact of the presence of art and plants on productivity in the workplace.

**Table 4:** Means and Effects for Performance Measures

Dependent variable	Condition ( <i>n</i> = 112)			
	Lean	Enriched	Empowered	Disempowered
Card sorting task <sup>b</sup> (SD)	15.24 (3.20)	12.91 (3.19)	10.94 (2.64)	12.76 (2.70)
Card sorting task <sup>c</sup> (SD)	1.04 (2.02)	1.29 (1.98)	0.36 (0.95)	0.82 (1.22)
Vigilance task <sup>b</sup> (SD)	7.51 (1.92)	6.69 (1.76)	6.08 (1.20)	7.70 (2.45)
Vigilance task <sup>c</sup> (SD)	19.54 (6.25)	17.64 (6.52)	18.21 (4.89)	19.82 (5.40)
Total time <sup>d</sup> (SD)	22.75, 100% (4.12)	19.60, 86.2% (3.47)	16.74, 73.6% (2.39)	20.47, 90.0% (4.28)
Total errors <sup>d</sup> (SD)	20.57, 100% (6.80)	18.86, 91.2% (7.40)	18.36, 89.3% (4.97)	20.64, 100.3% (5.96)

Dependent variable	Effects		Contrasts ( <i>t</i> values)		
	<i>F</i> (3, 103)	Effect size (full $\eta^2$ )	LvR, P, D, H1 <sup>a</sup>	RvP, H2 <sup>a</sup>	DvR, P, H3 <sup>a</sup>
Card sorting task <sup>b</sup> (SD)	10.07**	.22	4.74**	2.51*	1.23
Card sorting task <sup>c</sup> (SD)	1.67	.04	0.61	2.15*	0.00
Vigilance task <sup>b</sup> (SD)	4.44**	.11	1.66 <sup>†</sup>	1.21	3.02**
Vigilance task <sup>c</sup> (SD)	0.91	.02	0.77	0.37	1.41
Total time <sup>d</sup> (SD)	13.11**	.27	4.81**	2.95**	2.73**
Total errors <sup>d</sup> (SD)	0.96	.03	0.93	0.30	1.39

*Note.* L = lean; R = enriched; P = empowered; D = disempowered; H1 = Hypothesis 1, (L < R, P, D); H2 = Hypothesis 2, (D < R); H3 = Hypothesis 3, (D < R, P, H).  
<sup>a</sup> Contrast related to relevant hypotheses. <sup>b</sup> Time given in minutes. <sup>c</sup> Number of errors. <sup>d</sup> Total time and total errors (productivity) are shown as a percentage of the control (Lean) condition.  
<sup>†</sup>  $p < .10$ . \*  $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ .

Source: Knight & Haslam, 2010

They test what Vischer (2007, p. 2) defines as “individual productivity” that depends on the way the “micro-environment influences individual task performance (ITP)” and is usually assessed at “individual workspace” level. In particular, productivity was measured on the basis of the total time taken and total errors made “to complete the card-sorting and the vigilance tasks”: but, while there were statistically significant effects ( $< .01$ ) for the time taken to complete each task ( $F(3, 108) = 10.07$  and  $\eta^2 = .22$  for the card-sorting task;  $F(3, 108) = 4.44$  and  $\eta^2 = .11$  for the vigilance task), the “effects for the number of errors made on either task” are not statistically significant ( $F(3, 108) = 1.67$ ,  $\eta^2 = .04$  and  $p = .18$  for the card-sorting task;  $F(3, 108) = 0.91$ ,  $\eta^2 = .02$  and  $p = .44$  for the vigilance task) (Knight & Haslam, 2010, p. 162). Nevertheless, Knight and Haslam (2010, p. 162) also noted that “participants in the lean condition took longer to complete both timed tasks” than participants in the enriched and empowered conditions (thereby corroborating H1c), that “participants in the empowered condition took less time to complete the card-sorting task [and the vigilance task] than participants in the enriched condition” (thereby corroborating H2c), and that “participants in the disempowered condition took more time to complete the vigilance task than those in enriched and empowered conditions” (thereby corroborating H3c).

As for the experimental results obtained, Knight and Haslam (2010) articulate the discussion by stating that the hypothesized relationships were mostly confirmed: more in particular, the interpretation of data provided support for the three main hypotheses. Hence, “consistent with H1, relative to the lean condition, participants in enriched office space reported enhanced feelings of organizational identification and well-being” and completed the tasks faster “with no decrement in accuracy” (increased productivity) (Ibid., pp. 162-163). In line with H2, “when participants were empowered to decorate their own working space, this led to further improvements in participants’ perceptions of their working conditions” along with enhanced productivity (tasks were performed quicker and without a “rise in errors”) (Ibid., p. 163).

In other words, office enrichment (with art and plants) brings more fruitful results in comparison to the lean office, but employee empowerment within the workspace turns out to be even better in terms of greater perception of working conditions and productivity (Ibid.). In conclusion, immediately after the “feeling of empowerment was overridden by the experimenters [...], as predicted by H3, feelings of organizational identification and well-being fell” (Ibid.) along with productivity levels (Peters, 1989 cited in Knight & Haslam, 2010).

Experiment 1, however, has five main limitations highlighted by Knight and Haslam (2010, p. 163) and listed below:

- (1) the first one is connected to the sample deemed non-representative of the office workers population since the data set included a “wide cross-section of the population who had not necessarily experienced office work themselves”;
- (2) the second issue can be found in the fact that the “experiment took place in a university setting, whereas the majority of previous design studies have been based in the workspace”;
- (3) the third limitation refers to “noticeably weaker” support for the organizational identification hypothesis maybe due to the “fact that identification was [...] operationalized by asking participants to express their level of identification with an organizational entity (the university), that was irrelevant both to their everyday lives and to this study”;
- (4) the fourth issue is related to the type of task that participants had to perform (card-sorting) which may not be representative of the usual day-to-day office task (Anastasi, 1988 cited in Knight & Haslam, 2010);
- (5) the fifth one concerns the absence of an “organizational citizenship behavior” or OCB measure (Organ, 1988 cited in Knight & Haslam, 2010, p. 163) whose power lies in its ability to investigate “issues of workspace motivation and consideration”.

For the aforementioned reasons, Knight and Haslam (2010) conduct a further study (i.e. Experiment 2) to tackle the limitations they detected in the first experiment.

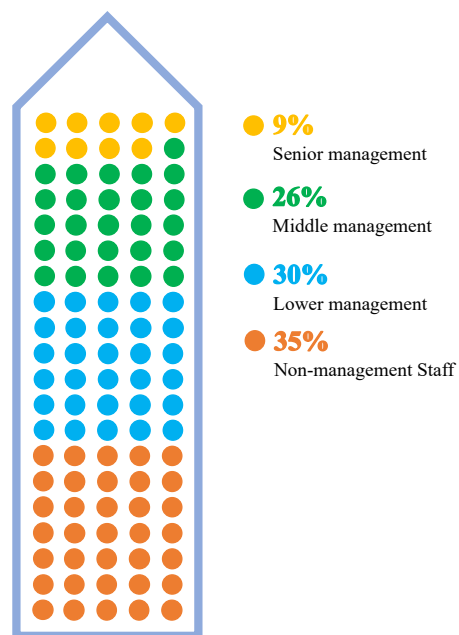
#### 4.1.4 EXPERIMENT 2: AMENDMENTS TO EXPERIMENT 1 AND SAMPLE DATABASE

Knight and Haslam (2010, p. 164) deepen their empirical research by carrying out Experiment 2 in an attempt to resolve the five main issues emerging from Experiment 1: with respect to the first limitation (non-representative sample), the sample was “drawn exclusively from a population of office workers”; regarding the second (inadequate setting), the trial “took place in a working office”; the third issue (weak support for organizational identification) was addressed by making use of a “measure of organizational identification” and [...] of organizational citizenship behavior”; the fourth limitation (unsuitable tasks) was tackled by introducing “more realistic, office-based tasks” such as “information processing and management”; the fifth one (absence of an organizational citizenship behavior measure) is

solved by inserting “an explicit measure of organizational citizenship behavior”. Due to the OCB measure insertion, Knight and Haslam (2010) establish another set of hypotheses, in addition to the ones already presented in Experiment 1, according to which the “OCB would be more apparent in an enriched office than a lean office (H1d), [...] would increase further in an empowered space (H2d), and [...] would be reduced if empowered workers were subsequently disempowered (H3d)” (p. 164).

In summary, Experiment 2 design slavishly followed Experiment 1 design “but with the addition of a quantifiable measure of OCB” (Ibid., p. 164). In this case the sample consisted of 47 office workers (28 men and 19 women) spanning from 22 to 61 years old (Mean = 36.23, Std Dev = 9.57). Participants came “all from commercial businesses” and, as indicated in Figure 4.2, the sample comprised mainly non-management staff (35%), lower management (30%) and middle management (26%) while senior management constituted a very tiny percentage (9%) (Ibid.).

**Figure 4.2:** Sample distribution of participants in Experiment 2



*Source: personal elaboration from Knight and Haslam (2010)*

#### 4.1.5 EXPERIMENT 2: MATERIALS AND ANALYTICAL PROCEDURE

As far as the equipment is concerned, Knight and Haslam (2010, p. 164) used “an air-conditioned commercial office” in London for the experiment: the workspace contained “an



executive desk”, “a large matching credenza with eye-level storage in the room”, “a high backed, comfortable leather chair” placed on “a raised Tec-Crete floor, with a large sea-grass rug beneath the desk covering the immediate working area”. Then, since “the door and most of the walls were glass [...] views and external distractions in this second experiment were minimized by ensuring that participants sat with their backs to the outside world” so as to replicate the windowless state of the office in Experiment 1 (Ibid.). In this trial, Knight and Haslam (2010) exploited six plants and six art posters (same number as in Experiment 1) that were positioned in the office where participants had to spend five minutes “to absorb the ambient environment before the experiment began” (p. 164).

Knight and Haslam (2010, p. 164) made a slight variation in Experiment 2 measures following the introduction of more representative office-based tasks: the first task, related to information processing and management, consisted of ordering and categorizing “a shuffled pile of corporate memoranda based on a fictitious company” in chronological order (information management task) and answering to 15 multiple-choice questions pertaining to “the information contained in these memos” (information processing task); the second task (vigilance task) was the same as Experiment 1 and, once again, “participants were told that they needed to perform the tasks as quickly and accurately as possible”; the third task (organizational citizenship behavior task) involved 10 more tasks to be performed wherein “five of these were undesirable (e.g., “Draw up proposals about how the company should reduce its headcount”) and five were desirable (e.g., “Represent the company at the annual Awards Dinner”). Regarding the additional workload (third task), Knight and Haslam (2010) explained to participants that it “could be off-loaded onto a colleague and that this would have no additional implications for them as the company’s management would make sure that the participants’ peers did not find out the source of any increase in workload” (p. 164). For the sake of completeness, the third task was drawn up and based upon “the participants’ fictitious employment with the company described in the information management task” (Ibid.). Moreover, it is apparent that the OCB task (Organ, 1988; Williams Pitre, & Zainuba, 2000 cited in Knight & Haslam, 2010) was instituted to measure the degree of organizational identification considering that it represents a “key indicator of relevant outcomes at the organizational level” (Ibid., p. 163).

After the tasks completion, participants had to answer to the same questionnaire as in Experiment 1 with the exception of two slight variations: “the three-item, organizational identification scale [now] reflected participants’ identification with the organization managing

(rather than the organization hosting) the experiment [...], while the job satisfaction scale incorporated a measure of OCB” (Ibid., p. 164).

#### 4.1.6 EXPERIMENT 2: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Here again experimental data were examined through the ANOVA and each workspace condition (lean, enriched, empowered, disempowered) was taken as an (independent) between-subjects variable (Knight & Haslam, 2010). Bivariate correlations among the dependent variables are displayed in Table 5 which shows that most “interitem correlations” are statistically significant ( $p$ -value  $< .01$ ) (Ibid., p. 164).

**Table 5:** Bivariate Correlations in Experiment 2

Dependent variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Involvement	—	.01	.89**	.72**	.68**	.55**	.60**
2. Autonomy		—	.04	.12	.07	.05	.02
3. Quality of workspace			—	.79**	.62**	.55**	.62**
4. Psychological comfort				—	.64**	.60**	.61**
5. Organizational identification					—	.72**	.67**
6. Job satisfaction						—	.60**
7. Physical comfort							—

\*\*  $p < .01$ .

*Source: Knight & Haslam, 2010*

With respect to manipulation checks on managerial control of space (as shown in Table 6 below), the analyses of variance brought to an  $F(3; 43)$  equal to 18.42 for involvement, 29.96 for autonomy and 11.51 for quality of workspace (all statistically significant with  $p < .01$ ) and eta-squares ( $\eta^2$ ) equal to .57 for involvement, .68 for autonomy and .45 for quality of workspace (Knight & Haslam, 2010). Additionally, the orthogonal contrast technique enabled Knight and Haslam (2010) to infer that “participants in the lean condition felt less involved, less autonomous, and thought they were in a poorer quality space than participants in other conditions; [...] participants in the enriched office felt less involved and less autonomous than participants in the empowered condition; and [...] participants in the disempowered condition felt less involved, less autonomous, and thought they were in a poorer quality space than participants in the enriched and empowered conditions” (pp. 164-165).

**Table 6:** Scale properties, Means, and Effects for Measures of Participants' Subjective Experience

Dependent variable	Condition ( <i>n</i> = 47)				Effects		Contrasts ( <i>t</i> values)		
	Lean	Enriched	Empowered	Disempowered	<i>F</i> (3, 43)	Effect size (full $\eta^2$ )	LvR, P, D, H1 <sup>a</sup>	RvP, H2 <sup>a</sup>	DvR, P, H3 <sup>a</sup>
Involvement <sup>b</sup> (SD)	2.25 (1.37)	4.82 (0.91)	5.83 (0.66)	2.79 (1.24)	18.42**	.57	4.93**	1.81 <sup>†</sup>	5.14**
Autonomy <sup>b</sup> (SD)	2.44 (1.33)	4.33 (1.22)	5.94 (1.28)	2.48 (1.50)	29.96**	.68	5.14**	3.75**	6.92**
Quality of workspace <sup>b</sup> (SD)	3.39 (1.51)	5.47 (1.32)	5.69 (1.40)	3.82 (1.44)	11.51**	.45	4.08**	0.46	4.12**
Psychological comfort <sup>b</sup> (SD)	3.02 (1.44)	4.98 (1.06)	5.68 (1.23)	3.20 (1.64)	20.50**	.65	5.45**	1.95 <sup>#</sup>	6.66**
Organizational identification <sup>b</sup> (SD)	4.00 (2.10)	5.19 (1.19)	5.00 (1.13)	3.21 (1.41)	4.29**	.23	0.93	0.32	3.43**
Job satisfaction <sup>b</sup> (SD)	3.51 (1.69)	5.06 (1.13)	5.25 (0.98)	4.02 (1.75)	7.00**	.33	3.49**	0.43	2.87**
Physical comfort <sup>b</sup> (SD)	5.02 (1.28)	6.08 (1.55)	6.45 (1.25)	4.79 (1.25)	6.65**	.32	2.11*	0.84	3.81**

*Note.* H1 = Hypothesis 1, (L < R, P, D); H2 = Hypothesis 2, (R < P); H3 = Hypothesis 3, (D < R, P).

<sup>a</sup> Contrast related to relevant hypotheses. <sup>b</sup> Means relate to 7-point scales (1 [completely disagree]–7 [completely agree]).

<sup>†</sup>  $p < .10$ . \*  $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ .

*Source: Knight & Haslam, 2010*

As regards to organizational identification (Table 6), the effect in this trial “was stronger than that obtained in Experiment 1” ( $F(3, 43) = 4.29 > F(3, 108) = 2.87$ ) but “orthogonal contrasts again only provided support for H3a in showing that participants in the disempowered condition identified less with the organization than participants in enriched and empowered conditions” (Ibid., p. 165).

As for well-being, measured through psychological comfort, job satisfaction, and physical comfort (Table 6), the ANOVA led to an  $F(3; 43)$  equal to 20.50 for psychological comfort, 7.00 for job satisfaction and 6.65 for physical comfort (all statistically significant with  $p < .01$ ) and eta-squares equal to .65 for psychological comfort, .33 for job satisfaction and .32 for physical comfort (Ibid.). Orthogonal contrasts revealed that “participants in the lean condition felt less psychologically comfortable, reported less job satisfaction, and felt less physically comfortable” than participants in the enriched condition (thereby corroborating H1b), that “participants in the empowered condition felt more psychologically comfortable than participants in the enriched condition” (thereby corroborating H2b), and that “participants in the disempowered condition felt less psychologically comfortable, reported lower levels of job satisfaction, and reported feeling less physically comfortable than participants in enriched and empowered conditions” (thereby corroborating H3b) (Ibid., p. 165).

In table 7 below, Knight and Haslam (2010) analyze more exhaustively the relationship between art and plants in the office and workers productivity.

**Table 7:** Means and Effects for Performance Measures

Dependent variable	Condition ( <i>n</i> = 47)			
	Lean	Enriched	Empowered	Disempowered
Information management/handling task <sup>b</sup> (SD)	32.04 (9.28)	25.49 (6.85)	21.29 (6.63)	27.27 (8.91)
Information management <sup>c</sup> (SD)	1.42 (1.08)	1.00 (1.21)	0.75 (.97)	2.64 (2.06)
Vigilance task <sup>b</sup> (SD)	8.42 (2.11)	8.03 (2.34)	6.13 (1.78)	9.67 (2.06)
Vigilance <sup>c</sup> (SD)	22.92 (10.16)	20.00 (9.97)	16.33 (8.99)	21.64 (9.98)
Total time <sup>d</sup> (SD)	40.45, 100% (10.26)	33.53, 82.9% (7.62)	27.41, 67.8% (6.74)	36.94, 91.3% (9.70)
Total errors <sup>d</sup> (SD)	24.33, 100% (10.02)	20.42, 83.9% (8.91)	17.08, 70.2% (6.52)	24.09, 99.0% (9.87)
Negative OCB tasks retained (SD)	2.00 (1.91)	3.42 (1.17)	3.92 (.79)	2.82 (1.42)
Positive OCB tasks retained (SD)	2.50 (1.31)	3.25 (.87)	2.75 (.97)	3.09 (.94)
Total OCB tasks retained <sup>d</sup> (SD)	4.50, 100% (1.98)	6.42, 142.7% (1.78)	6.67, 148.2% (1.24)	5.91, 131.3% (1.30)

Dependent variable	Effects		Contrasts ( <i>t</i> -values)		
	<i>F</i> (3, 43)	Effect size (full $\eta^2$ )	LvR, P, D, H1 <sup>a</sup>	RvP, H2 <sup>a</sup>	DvR, P, H3 <sup>a</sup>
Information management/handling task <sup>b</sup> (SD)	3.73*	.21	2.75*	1.29	1.33
Information management <sup>c</sup> (SD)	4.17*	.23	0.10	0.44	3.52**
Vigilance task <sup>b</sup> (SD)	5.75**	.29	0.68	2.24*	3.42**
Vigilance <sup>c</sup> (SD)	1.23	.08	1.21	1.01	1.07
Total time <sup>d</sup> (SD)	4.58**	.24	2.61*	1.67	1.98 <sup>†</sup>
Total errors <sup>d</sup> (SD)	1.88	.12	1.32	0.95	1.70 <sup>†</sup>
Negative OCB tasks retained (SD)	4.20*	.23	2.97**	0.88	1.67
Positive OCB tasks retained (SD)	1.25	.08	1.53	1.18	0.24
Total OCB tasks retained <sup>d</sup> (SD)	4.77**	.25	3.56**	0.40	1.13

Note. H1 = Hypothesis 1, (L < R, P, D); H2 = Hypothesis 2, (R < P); H3 = Hypothesis 3, (D < R, P); OCB = organizational citizenship behavior.

<sup>a</sup> Contrast related to relevant hypotheses. <sup>b</sup> Time given in minutes. <sup>c</sup> Given in errors. <sup>d</sup> Total time and total errors (productivity), and number of tasks retained (OCB) are shown as a percentage of the control (Lean) condition.

<sup>†</sup> *p* < .10. \* *p* < .05. \*\* *p* < .01.

Source: Knight & Haslam, 2010

Productivity is evaluated in light of the total time taken and total errors made to perform the information management and vigilance tasks: statistically significant effects ( $< .05$  for the information management task;  $< .01$  for the vigilance task) were reported for the “time taken to complete both the information management and the vigilance tasks,  $F_s(3, 43) = 3.73, 5.75$ , respectively, [...]  $\eta^2_s = .21, .29$ , respectively” (Ibid., p. 165). In this experiment Knight and Haslam (2010, p. 165) also found that “the effects for the number of errors made on the information management task” are statistically significant ( $< .05$ ) and equal to  $F(3, 43) = 4.17$  (eta-square = .23); however, the “effects for the number of errors made on the vigilance task” are not statistically significant ( $p = .311$ ).

Orthogonal contrasts in Table 7 indicate that “participants in the lean condition took longer to complete the information management task” than participants in all other conditions (thereby corroborating H1c); that “participants in the empowered condition took less time to complete the vigilance task than participants in the enriched condition” (thereby corroborating H2c);

that “participants in the disempowered condition took longer to complete the vigilance task than participants in either the enriched or the empowered conditions” (thereby corroborating H3c) (Ibid., p. 165). It is also worth noting that “participants in the disempowered condition also made significantly more errors on the information management task than those in the enriched or empowered conditions” (Ibid.).

As for the third task added in Experiment 2, namely the Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) task (see Table 7), Knight and Haslam (2010, p. 165) note that there was a statistically significant effect ( $< .01$ ) “for the total number of tasks retained on the OCB task,  $F(3, 43) = 4.77$ ” eta-square equal to .25. Finally, orthogonal contrasts showed that “participants in the lean condition retained fewer OCB tasks (particularly, fewer negative tasks) than participants in other conditions” (thereby corroborating H1d) while “no other contrasts were significant (i.e., there was no support for H2d or H3d)” (Ibid., pp. 165-166).

To recap and wrap up the discussion, Knight and Haslam (2010, p. 166) adamantly assert that the validity of their hypotheses has been verified, in fact:

- “Consistent with H1, relative to the lean condition, enriched office space led to improved feelings of psychological comfort, job satisfaction, and physical comfort. It also led to tasks being performed more quickly and to an increase in organizational citizenship behavior”;
- “Consistent with H2, when participants were empowered to decorate their own working space, this led to a further improvement in feelings of psychological comfort and to an increase in their levels of productivity relative to participants in the enriched condition”;
- “Consistent with Hypothesis 3, among disempowered participants, feelings of psychological comfort, organizational identification, and physical comfort all fell relative to participants in both the enriched and empowered conditions. Disempowered participants also tended to take more time to complete the two tasks”.

As hypothesized, Experiment 2 took as a basis Experiment 1 and then “extended its findings within a working commercial office as opposed to a university laboratory and used a representative organizational sample” (Ibid.).

Therefore, Knight and Haslam (2010) demonstrated that art (within the context of office design) increases employee wellbeing and productivity (Hypothesis 1) and, if complemented with workforce empowerment, its effect is enhanced further (Hypothesis 2). On the other hand, it goes without saying that employee disempowerment negatively impacts wellbeing and productivity (Hypothesis 3), as shown in the summary table (Table 8) which recapitulates the main findings of the empirical research (Ibid.).

**Table 8:** Summary of Support for Hypotheses in Experiments 1 and 2

Dependent variable	Hypothesis 1: Lean inferior to all other conditions		Hypothesis 2: Enriched inferior to empowered		Hypothesis 3: Disempowered inferior to enriched and empowered	
	Exp. 1	Exp. 2	Exp. 1	Exp. 2	Exp. 1	Exp. 2
Psychological comfort	++	++	++	(+)	++	++
Organizational identification	-	-	-	-	+	++
Job satisfaction	++	++	+	-	-	++
Physical comfort	++	++	-	+	++	++
Productivity—Time	++	++	++	++	++	(+)
Productivity—Errors	-	-	-	-	-	(+)
Organizational citizenship	Not tested	++	Not tested	++	Not tested	-

*Note.* Exp. = experiment; ++ = strong support ( $p < .01$ ); + = support ( $p < .05$ ); (+) = weak support ( $p < .10$ ); - = no support ( $p > .10$ ).

*Source: Knight & Haslam, 2010*

And besides, Knight and Haslam (2010) managed to prove that art can boost employee productivity by 17,1% (enriched condition) and, when combined with empowerment, by 32,2% (empowered condition) more than the lean condition. The strength of this research lies in its ability to furnish “a direct, quantitative assessment of the relative benefits of approaches to space management” by employing “an experimental approach to manipulate relevant variables thereby increasing control over these variables and increasing confidence in the causal status of [...] independent variables” (Ibid., pp. 167-168).

#### 4.1.7 EMPIRICAL LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Knight and Haslam (2010) study, which provided a measurable impact of art in the workspace setting in terms of workers wellbeing and productivity, can be viewed as pioneering especially given the “dearth of research on art in workplace settings” (Smiraglia, 2014, p. 285). Notwithstanding the groundbreaking potential of this study to blaze a new trail for further research in this area, Knight and Haslam (2010, p. 168) point out some of its main limitations which can be detected in:

- the artificial nature of the offices where participants had to execute “unfamiliar tasks” which is somewhat unlikely given the familiarity of employees with their workplace and the repetitiveness of their organizational tasks;
- the fact that participants performed the tasks individually not surrounded by other people while “most low-status office workers work (a) in multiperson, open-plan offices and (b) in teams” (Baldry *et al.*, 1998; Barker, 1993; Fredrickson, 1989; Laing *et al.*, 1998; Millward *et al.*, 2007 cited in Knight & Haslam, 2010, p. 168);
- the “limited evidence of variation in [organizational] identification across conditions” despite the adjustments introduced in Experiment 2 with respect to this variable;
- the short time period of the examination;
- the absence of weight for the OCB task<sup>12</sup>.

Future research could improve and overcome the limitations of this study especially in four respects: the first is related to the examination of the performance of multiple participants (“collaborative team-work” productivity in Vischer’s (2007, p. 2) words) that work together in open space offices deemed more representative of the current workplace reality due to their lower costs, affordability and organizational benefits (Hedge, 1982; Heerwagen, 2000; Veitch *et al.*, 2007 cited in Haynes, Suckley & Nunnington, 2017); the second is connected to finding a way to measure organizational identification instead of manipulating it (as it happened in this research since participants had to give a response “to a novel and unfamiliar organizational context”); the third refers to the possibility of conducting the experiment “over an extended period” to gauge whether the effects of enhanced productivity and wellbeing last or decrease (as noted by Nieuwenhuis *et al.* (2014, p. 12), longitudinal research showed that “enriching a previously lean office with plants” led to long-term improvements in terms of employee “workplace satisfaction” and “self-reported levels of concentration”. Therefore, it would be interesting to understand whether these positive effects also apply to office enriched with art posters); the fourth aspect concerns the assignment of a weight to the OCB tasks (such as “time taken and popular/negative affect”) to increase “the reliability of this measure” (Knight & Haslam, 2010, p. 168). In this way, it will be possible to broaden the reach on this field of research and thereby on the “theoretical and empirical connections [existing] between different strategies of office space management and workers’ well-being and productivity” (Ibid., pp. 168-169).

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<sup>12</sup> To determine the desirability and undesirability of the tasks used for the OCB measure Knight and Haslam (2010) involved 12 office workers (extraneous to the experiment) who were asked to rank 14 tasks on the basis of their desirability/undesirability: “the top five undesirable and desirable tasks were then used in the experiment itself” (p. 168).

## 4.2 CREATIVE THINKING AND IDEA GENERATION

Knight and Haslam (2010) investigated the impact of art posters in an office on productivity and wellbeing of employees performing repetitive and routinary tasks but, as Erlich and Bichard (2008, p. 274) suggest, the working environment, “originally designed to accommodate repetitive, supervised, process driven administrative work”, should now manage to welcome and promote the work of “employees with particular expertise who analyze, create and act on information”.

Hence, instead of dwelling upon “the mechanistic aspect of repetitive supervised process work” (Erlich & Bichard, 2008, p. 274), Batey *et al.* (2021) have decided to focus on the way art within the workplace can affect employees’ creative skills, aware of their importance for today’s workforce. Since HR costs make up “about 90% of a business’ operating costs [...] the productivity of staff, or anything that impacts their ability to be productive, should be a major concern for any organization” (World Green Building Council, 2014, p. 6). For this compelling reason, Batey *et al.* (2021) conduct an “experiment designed to examine the effects of the presence of a large poster depicting a natural woodland scene on individual performance on two Divergent Thinking tasks” (p. 2).

According to Blomberg and Kallio (2022, p. 433) creative thinking (“organizational creativity”) and corporate workspace are closely and inextricably intertwined: as a result, several firms “are investing considerable resources in building and designing what are termed ‘creative offices’”. Among the physical environmental features that should characterize any creative workspace Lee (2016, p. 420) lists the so-called “unusual/fun atmosphere” whose attributes comprise “stimulating art”. With respect to the concept of creative workplace (Thoring *et al.*, 2019), artworks belong to what McCoy (2005) terms “architectonic details” that basically are “fixed or stationary aesthetics of the place, ornaments or materials intended to embellish the environment” (p. 179). More specifically, in the experiment carried out by Batey *et al.* (2021, p. 4), the artworks are “virtual depictions of nature” which in turn fall within the scope of the Green Approach method of office enrichment witnessed by Gilchrist, Brown & Montarzino (2015). Moreover, office enrichment approaches in general can be interpreted as an “alteration of a company’s work environment [...] to develop employees’ creativity” and “promote [their] effective problem-solving in a company” which can often lead to enhanced productivity and competitive advantage gains (Dubina, 2013, p. 1238). Following these considerations, Dubina (2005) suggested to blend “innovation” and



“creativity” and coined the new term “innovativity”: it instantiates ideas from the creativity management discipline and can be considered as an “index [...] characterizing [and actualizing] a firm’s capability to activate employees’ creativity and transform it into [practical and tangible] innovations” (p. 334). On this point, Dul and Ceylan (2014) noted that “firms can enhance their product innovation performance by developing creativity-supporting work environments” (p. 1264). By employing a sample of 103 firms, they implemented a framework consisting of “9 social-organizational and 12 physical work environment characteristics [...] likely to enhance employee creativity” (Ibid., p. 1254). In particular, according to Vithayathawornwong, Danko & Tolbert (2008, pp. 1-15), the “physical work environment exerts indirect influence on creativity by contributing to [...] social-psychological conditions that are conducive to creativity”: as a consequence, they urge organizations to “integrate the design of the physical environment into an organization’s strategic plan for competitiveness and long-term success” aware of the relevance of creativity “as a key factor to organizational adaptability [...] in today’s rapidly changing business environment”. Dul and Ceylan (2014, p. 1254) also determined “firm’s product innovation performance” on the basis of “new product productivity (NP productivity)” (i.e. “extent to which the firm introduces new products to the market”) and “new product success (NP success)” (i.e. “percentage of the firm’s sales from new products”). The results of the research led Dul and Ceylan (2014, p. 1254) to conclude that “firms with creativity-supporting work environments introduce more new products to the market (NP productivity), and have more NP success in terms of new product sales (NP success)”.

The findings by Dul and Ceylan (2014) brought Batey *et al.* (2021, pp. 3-6) to hypothesize that “environments with natural stimuli or pictorial representations of nature can be helpful for creativity”: to empirically prove so, they measure “the effects of presenting a large poster depicting a natural woodland scene (experimental condition) versus no poster (control condition) on individual creative thinking”. Batey *et al.* (2021) “assess creativity [i.e. idea generation] using two [...] Divergent Thinking (DT) tests: The Unusual Uses (Guilford, 1967) and Consequences Tasks (Christensen, Merrifield & Guilford, 1953)” (p. 7). DT tasks enable to “measure creativity” (Kaufman, Plucker & Baer, 2008, cited in Silvia, 2011, p. 24) especially “the ability to generate creative ideas” (Silvia *et al.*, 2008, cited in Silvia, 2011, p. 24). Moreover, the Unusual Uses task tests are about “generating creative uses for common objects” while Consequences Tasks deal with “generating creative implications of a hypothetical event” (Silvia, 2011, p. 26). To evaluate the performance, expressed in terms of “fluency (i.e., the number of ideas generated)”, Batey *et al.* (2021, p. 7) recruited three judges

“blind to the study design” who had to rank “the creativity of the ideas generated”. In addition, instead of leaning on previous research which “tended to aggregate or simultaneously manipulate an array of design features [...], social-organizational features [...], or natural enrichments”, Batey *et al.* (2021, p. 7) also opted for “a targeted examination of one [single] enriching feature” (i.e. art poster displaying a natural landscape) to determine its sole importance as an environmental workspace enrichment. After controlling for “the personality trait of openness-to-experience and mood” (so as to ensure robust and useful results), Batey *et al.* (2021, pp. 7-8) formulate the following hypotheses:

- H1: “Participants exposed to a large poster depicting a natural woodland scene in the experimental condition will produce significantly more ideas than participants in the control condition on the Unusual Uses Test and the Consequences Test”.
- H2: “Participants exposed to a large poster depicting a natural woodland scene in the experimental condition will produce ideas that are rated as significantly more creative than participants in the control condition on the Unusual Uses Test and the Consequences Test”.
- H3: “The main effects of the presentation of a large poster depicting a natural woodland scene will remain significant when controlling for the covariates of openness-to-experience and mood”.

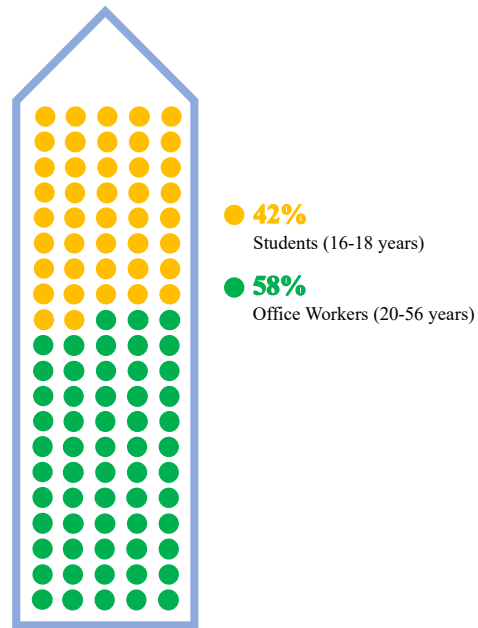
To test them, Batey *et al.* (2021) acted upon the office space in an attempt to establish whether “the large poster will enrich the office environment and induce creativity” (p. 8).

#### 4.2.1 SAMPLE DATABASE

The sample in the Batey *et al.* (2021) experiment was made up of 127 native English-speaking participants (52 men and 75 women) coming from “corporate real estate offices in three major UK cities [...] and a Sixth Form College” (p. 9).

In the sample collected, as shown in Figure 4.3 below, 42% were Sixth Form College students (N = 53, age-range = 16-18 years, Mean = 17, Std. Dev. = .34) while 58% were office workers (N = 74, age-range = 20 to 56 years, Mean = 33.20, Std. Dev. = 9.21).

**Figure 4.3:** Sample distribution of participants in Batey *et al.* (2021) Experiment



*Source: personal elaboration from Batey et al. (2021)*

Moreover, the main characteristics available from the database sample are summarized and elaborated in Table 9.

**Table 9:** Demographic composition of the sample (N=127).

		Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency (%)
<b>GENDER</b>	Female	75	59%
	Male	52	41%
<b>EMPLOYMENT STATUS</b>	Employed (16-18 yrs)	74	58%
	Unemployed (20-56 yrs)	53	42%

#### 4.2.2 MATERIALS AND ANALYTICAL PROCEDURE

The main material employed in the experimental condition of this study is represented by a “large [...] poster depicting a natural woodland scene presented across four panels” while no posters were employed in the control condition (Batey *et al.*, 2021, p. 9).

With respect to Divergent Thinking, it was evaluated “using two timed divergent thinking (DT) tasks” namely the Unusual Uses Task (Guildford, 1967, cited in Batey *et al.*, 2021, p. 9) and the Consequences Task (Christensen, Merrifield & Guilford, 1953, cited in Batey *et al.*, 2021, p. 9): the former required participants “to name as many uses as they could for a

balloon” in three minutes whereas the latter required participants “to list as many consequences as they could for a hypothetical scenario in which ‘everybody in the world suddenly became deaf’”. These two tasks were then assessed in two ways by three judges (“2 postgraduate psychologists with familiarity of creativity assessments and a senior academic”) oblivious about the experimental design and about the experimental and control conditions (Batey *et al.*, 2021, p. 9). The first type of assessment consisted of a “fluency score” that is “an objective count of the total number of non-repeating ideas generated” (Ibid., pp. 9-10). The second type of evaluation is connected to the “Consensual Assessment Technique” or CAT<sup>13</sup> (Amabile, 1982; Cseh & Jeffries, 2019, cited in Batey *et al.*, 2021, p. 10) which was useful to define a “subjective score of ‘rated creativity’ for the two DT tasks” (Batey *et al.*, 2021, p. 10). Moreover, the three judges had to rank the answers of participants “using a 5 point likert scale, where 1 = little or no evidence of creativity and 5 = significant evidence of creativity” (Ibid.).

Batey *et al.* (2021) also controlled for mood and openness to experience. Mood was gauged with the “Positive and Negative Affect Schedule” or PANAS questionnaire (Watson, Clark & Tellegen, 1988, cited in Batey *et al.*, 2021, p. 10) made up of two 10-item scales that estimate Positive Affect (PA) and Negative Affect (NA) from 1 (“very slightly or not at all”) to 10 (“extremely”). Openness-to-experience was measured thanks to the “Openness scale from the Mini International Personality Item Pool” (Donnellan, Oswald, Baird & Lucas, 2006, cited in Batey *et al.*, 2021, p. 10) which is the “20-item short form of the 50-item International Personality Item Pool—Five-Factor Model measure” developed by Goldberg (1999, cited in Donnellan *et al.*, 2006, p. 192).

Finally, Batey *et al.* (2021, p. 10) examined and appraised the “perceptions of the environment” by means of the “Checklist for Rating Theoretical Dimensions of Photographic Images” (McCoy & Evans, 2002, cited in Batey *et al.*, 2021, p. 10) which comprises 21 items along 7 “theoretical elements” (Nature, Challenge, Freedom, Support, Coherence, Threat, and Status Quo) (McCoy & Evans, 2002, p. 412).

Regarding the analytical procedure, “participants were randomly allocated to the experimental (poster) or control (no poster) condition”: Batey *et al.* (2021, p. 11) organized two sessions per day that lasted about one hour each with “a maximum of 30 participants” per session. The

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<sup>13</sup> The Consensual Assessment Technique (CAT) developed by Amabile (1982, cited in Jeffries, 2012) is considered the “‘gold standard’ of creativity assessment” (Jeffries, 2012, p. 211) and is “tied to a definition of creativity built upon creative output and the subject opinion of judges” (Ibid., p. 218).

experiment took part either in “a windowless room or [in] a room with closed blinds” but while in the experimental condition the nature poster was inserted (with participants directly facing the art poster), in the control condition it was not (Ibid.). Once seated, participants were required to complete the two creative thinking tasks “with an instruction to ‘*be creative*’” in order to validate effectively divergent thinking scores (Harrington, 1975, cited in Batey *et al.*, 2021, p. 11). Then, participants had to answer to the PANAS, the Openness scale from the Mini International Personality Item Pool and the Checklist for Rating Theoretical Dimensions of Photographic Images questionnaires to respectively rank their positive and negative affects, their openness to experience and their perceptions of the environment (Batey *et al.*, 2021).

#### 4.2.3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To test the three hypotheses and grasp any effect stemming from the presence of the art poster in the workspace on creative thinking, Batey *et al.* (2021) examined the experimental data obtained by means of a Multivariate Analysis of Covariance (MANCOVA) with “DT fluency (i.e., number of non-repeating ideas) and CAT-rated creativity (i.e., judge-rated creativity of ideas) on the uses and consequences tests as dependent variables, the poster experimental condition as between-subjects factor, and mood and openness-to-experience as covariates” (p. 12). Along with means and standard deviations, bivariate correlations among the dependent variables are shown in Table 10 (Batey *et al.*, 2021).

**Table 10:** Bivariate Correlations

Variables	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Uses fluency	8.31	3.96	--							
2. Uses creativity	2.87	0.97	.21*	--						
3. Consequences fluency	7.31	2.43	.38**	.20*	--					
4. Consequences creativity	2.68	0.95	0.16	.64**	.27**	--				
5. Poster	0.49	0.50	-0.01	.40**	0.09	.56**	--			
6. Positive affectivity	5.45	1.88	.20*	.19*	.21*	0.09	-0.02	--		
7. Negative affectivity	2.06	1.21	-0.11	-0.13	-0.11	-0.13	-0.02	0.13	--	
8. Openness	7.36	1.53	0.09	.24**	.21*	.29**	0.00	.30**	-0.16	--

Note. *N* = 127.

\*  $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ .

Source: Batey *et al.* (2021)

Sample results indicate that there was a main poster effect with Wilks' Lambda = .64,  $F(4;119) = 16.79$ ,  $p < .01$ ,  $\eta_p^2 = .361$  (Ibid.). Next, Analyses of Covariance (ANCOVA), displayed in Table 11, were run for each dependent variable (Ibid.).

**Table 11:** ANCOVA Results for Each Independent Variable with Poster as Between-Subjects Factor

Note.  $N$  poster = 62.  $N$  control = 65.

Predictors	Uses fluency				Uses creativity				Consequences fluency				Consequences creativity			
	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i> (1,122)	<i>p</i>	$\eta_p^2$	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i> (1,122)	<i>p</i>	$\eta_p^2$	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i> (1,122)	<i>p</i>	$\eta_p^2$	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i> (1,122)	<i>p</i>	$\eta_p^2$
Negative affectivity	34.59	2.27	.13	.02	1.43	1.96	.16	.02	8.24	1.48	.23	.01	.69	1.24	.27	.01
Positive affectivity	82.32	5.41	.02	.04	2.45	3.37	.07	.03	22.60	4.05	<.05	.03	.09	.16	.69	<.001
Openness	.04	<.003	.96	<.001	3.18	4.37	.04	.04	11.17	2.00	.16	.02	7.06	12.63	<.001	.09
Poster	.07	<.005	.95	<.001	18.89	25.96	<.001	.18	6.26	1.12	.29	.01	36.36	65.08	<.001	.35

Source: Batey *et al.* (2021)

In table 12, Batey *et al.* (2021) calculated means and standard deviations per experimental condition for each dependent variable.

**Table 12:** Means and Standard Deviations per Experimental Condition for Each Dependent Variable

Dependent variables	Poster <i>M</i> ( <i>SD</i> )	Control <i>M</i> ( <i>SD</i> )
Uses fluency	8.29(3.94)	8.34(4.00)
Uses creativity	3.26(1.00)	2.49(.78)
Consequences fluency	7.53(2.61)	7.09(2.25)
Consequences creativity	3.23(.96)	2.15(.60)

Note.  $N = 127$ .

Source: Batey *et al.* (2021)

As noted by Batey *et al.* (2021), “mean fluency scores did not significantly differ between the conditions” (p. 12) in contrast with what was previously hypothesized in H1 (see Table 12). On the other hand, mean creativity scores were quite different across conditions thereby corroborating H2 according to which “the poster condition did have a significant effect on the judge-rated creativity of the ideas generated in both tasks” (Table 12) (Ibid.).

In order to understand “whether participants perceived any difference between the poster and control condition”, experimenters decided to run “*t*-tests on the perception of room characteristics” in the two conditions: the results are shown in Table 13 (Ibid., p. 12).

**Table 13:** Univariate Statistics for Room Perception in the Poster and No Poster Conditions

<b>Dependent Variable</b>	<b><i>t</i></b>	<b>Control <i>M</i>(<i>SD</i>)</b>	<b>Poster <i>M</i>(<i>SD</i>)</b>	<b><i>p</i></b>	<b><i>d</i></b>
Personal peace	2.35	4.35(2.22)	3.50(1.84)	.02	.42
Refreshed	1.14	3.83(1.92)	3.47(1.66)	.26	.20
Inspiration	2.49	2.26(1.55)	3.03(1.92)	.01	.44
Curiosity	3.40	2.57(1.92)	3.95(2.62)	.00	.60
Intellectual stimulation	4.77	3.31(2.05)	5.18(2.36)	.00	.85
Tackle complex issues	.03	5.37(2.53)	5.35(2.39)	.97	.51
Independence	1.99	3.43(1.92)	4.16(2.22)	.05	.35
Open to new experiences	1.14	4.18(2.12)	4.64(2.44)	.26	.20
Do anything I want	.73	2.78(2.11)	2.53(1.79)	.47	.13
Encourages me	1.83	3.65(1.98)	4.34(2.29)	.07	.32
Feel competent	.76	4.88(2.47)	5.23(2.68)	.45	.14
Could do many things	.35	4.20(2.43)	4.35(2.50)	.72	.61
Makes sense	.66	3.52(2.47)	3.26(2.04)	.51	.11
Feel at home	1.09	3.49(2.04)	3.06(2.37)	.28	.19
Feel “together”	.83	3.94(2.01)	3.61(2.39)	.41	.15
Feel apprehensive	.22	3.18(1.89)	3.11(1.77)	.83	.04
Feel uncomfortable	.31	3.05(1.87)	2.94(2.19)	.76	.05
Do not want to spend time here	2.12	4.20(2.29)	3.32(2.37)	.04	.31
Place limits me	3.14	4.28(2.29)	3.00(2.29)	.00	.56
Required to follow rules	.97	4.49(2.30)	4.11(2.09)	.33	.17
Conform to rigid standards	.48	5.32(2.36)	5.53(2.52)	.63	.09

Note. *N* = 125. Participants were asked how being in this place (the room) made them feel.

Source: Batey et al. (2021)

By checking the results obtained in Table 13, Batey *et al.* (2021, pp. 12-13) could infer that the poster condition was perceived by participants as less limiting and “as increasing their curiosity, inspiration, intellectual stimulation, and independence” thus uncovering that “the room with a poster was perceived as more stimulating while the room without a poster was less stimulating”.

As for the experimental results obtained, Batey *et al.* (2021) articulate the discussion by asserting that the participants in the control (no art poster) condition generated approximately the same number of ideas as participants in the experimental (art poster) condition (H1 not confirmed) but the ideas of the latter were judged as more creative (H2 supported): therefore, the Unusual Uses and Consequences tasks enabled the experimenters to conclude that “a room enriched with a large poster depicting a natural woodland scene enhanced the rated quality, but not the quantity of participants’ ideas” (p. 13).

Thanks to these results, one can infer that creativity, expressed in terms of idea generation, can be enhanced with “modest enrichments of the physical office environment” such as art posters and visual representations depicting natural environments (Ibid.). For this reason, Batey *et al.* (2021, p. 13) suggest that “office enrichment [with artworks] is potentially a rather cost-efficient intervention” due to its “relative ease and very low financial cost” of incorporation within the workplace.

In addition, Batey *et al.* (2021) findings provide evidence on the role that workspace enrichment (with art) can play on employee creativity, thus broadening the scope of past research which focused on the productivity of workers performing routinary and repetitive tasks (i.e. low-skilled office work) (see Knight & Haslam, 2010; Nieuwenhuis, *et al.*, 2014). According to participants, the art poster had a “stimulating role [...] that facilitated a greater rate of mental associations” so, as noted by Batey *et al.* (2021, p. 14), “it is possible that participants in the poster condition more rapidly conducted their initial search of common associations” and spent a larger amount of time by making more creative associations. This interpretation would be in line with the Blind Variation Selective Retention Combinatorial model of creativity<sup>14</sup> (Campbell, 1960; Simonton, 2010, cited in Batey *et al.*, 2021) whereby “the blind variation generates the originality of an idea whereas the selective-retention determines the idea’s utility” (Simonton, 2010, pp. 159-160).

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<sup>14</sup> Creativity here is meant as a “function of originality, utility, and surprise” (Simonton, 2022, p. 1).



#### 4.2.4 EMPIRICAL LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Regardless of the study useful outcomes to shed further light on the impact of art in the office on employees, Batey *et al.* (2021, p. 15) point out some limitations which can be detected in:

- modest sample size which risks to “limit the generalisability of the findings” even if effect sizes (i.e. the magnitude of inter-group differences (Lakens, 2013)) were “robust to the inclusion and exclusion of control variables”;
- absence of a further control condition alongside the no poster one;
- narrow set of creative thinking tasks (DT tasks “which assess idea generation in response to hypothetical scenarios”);
- artificial nature of the experiment due to “the use of a controlled experimental setting”.

Hence, future research could tackle the limitations above-stated in several ways. With respect to the first issue, the robustness of the effect sizes allows the replication of the experiment in the future with the inclusion of a larger sample size (Ibid.). The second limitation could be overcome with the introduction of additional control conditions (other than the no poster one) such as the presence of posters “depicting futuristic, extra-terrestrial, urban environments”) or posters featuring a different “colour palette, complexity”: in this way, the specific “enriching elements [that] carry the [causal] effects” will be better clarified (Ibid., p. 15). Regarding the third limitation, further research could extend the reach beyond divergent thinking tasks and encompass convergent thinking tasks such as “problem formulation” and “implementation planning” (Hughes et al., 2018, cited in Batey *et al.*, 2021, p. 15) with the aim of evaluating “a broader set of creativity and innovation-relevant processes” (Batey *et al.*, 2021, p. 15). As concerns the fourth matter, Batey *et al.* (2021) propose “to use naturalistic field experiments to examine how natural physical environment indicators influence or interact with other features in perceptively rich environments” (p. 15).

Finally, Batey *et al.* (2021) conclude the discussion by affirming that, by virtue of their substantiated empirical research findings, companies seeking to boost employee creativity can achieve this goal by incorporating art posters and pictures within the office space: stated in other words, “such interventions would likely provide a low-risk and cost-effective strategy to stimulate a creative mindset for employees and increase the novelty of their idea generation” (p. 16).

### 4.3 ARTIST-LED INTERVENTIONS AND EMPLOYEES' PERFORMANCE ENHANCEMENT

Knight and Haslam (2010) and Batey *et al.* (2021) experiments can be considered on a par with Barry and Meisiek's (2010) first type workarts (i.e. corporate art collection) since they both brought to the conclusion that enriching the workspace with artworks can boost employees' productivity (Knight & Haslam, 2010) and creative skills (Batey *et al.*, 2021). Now, for the sake of completeness, it seems advisable to illustrate empirical examples of the second type workarts namely artist-led intervention leaving out the third type (i.e. artistic experimentation) because the latter deviates from the main focus of the dissertation since, as stated by Barry and Meisiek (2010), it is related to the "use [of] art-like media *without necessarily invoking the arts* [emphasis added]". So, as regards artist-led interventions, Hale and Woronkiewicz (2020, cited in Noonan, Woronkiewicz & Hale, 2021, p. 1801) assert that "there is evidence that suggests transference of creative skillsets between arts and non-arts work". To support such statement Hale and Woronkiewicz (2021, p. 663) "formally evaluate the impact of artist residencies in public sector work, particularly for the purpose of promoting creativity and innovation": in fact, artist-led interventions are mainly developed as "artist-in-residence projects" (Barry & Meisiek, 2010) or "residing" programs (McDermott & Fieseler, 2021, p. 14) whereby "the residency host [i.e. the company] provides studio space within its offices to artists to produce new works" (Ibid., p. 14). These projects are increasingly undertaken to initiate a "collaboration between Culture and Industry operating within private and public business sectors" aimed at "focusing upon the creative processes that are set in motion whenever a professional artist encounters people at a workplace" (Eriksson, 2009, p. 2).

An example of residency program whose aim "is to break up conventional structures and promote creativity" is represented by the WimmelResearch Fellowship organized by Bosch: the company hosts artists that "are required to have a continuous daily presence at Platform 12, a dedicated experimental space designed for artist/researcher collaborations, at the Bosch research and engineering campus" (McDermott & Fieseler, 2021, p. 23). Boyle and Ottensmeyer (2005) display another case of artistic intervention that is the Unilever Catalyst corporate arts-based programme which facilitated the merger of two subsidiaries (Lever Brothers and Elida Fabergé) of the multinational company Unilever by building a new organizational culture and easing the process of organizational culture shift.

Hence, cognizant of the “rapidly changing environmental conditions” due to “technological advancements, globalization, and demographic shifts” (Hale and Woronkiewicz, 2021, p. 653) that organizations have to face, Hale and Woronkiewicz (2021) state that arts-based interventions represent a potential solution to overcome these issues because they enable firms to innovate thanks to enhanced workers creativity (Windrum, 2008, cited in Hale & Woronkiewicz, 2021). It is precisely for this reason that Microsoft decided to launch in 2012 its Artist in Residence project: the program points at creating “a collaboration between researchers and artists working with new and emerging technologies” in an attempt to combine “the strengths of art with cutting-edge scientific research” (McDermott & Fieseler, 2021, p. 18). Therefore, one of the several strengths of this program is “to engage the artists directly with researchers in order to achieve a particular project or outcome” (O’Dea, Alacovska & Fieseler, 2020, p. 23).

Artist-in-residence programs are said to achieve the objective of enhanced employee creativity given that “artists serve as *intrapreneurs* [...] charged with developing creative ideas and bringing innovation [...] within organizations” (Hale & Woronkiewicz, 2021, p. 654): for this reason, Hale and Woronkiewicz (2021) decided to “test the innovative potential of artist residencies for public sector organizations” (p. 654). In this respect, the Institute for Management of Innovation and Technology (IMIT) was mandated to execute “a quantitative study of the specific effects of artistic and cultural intervention on the workplace” following the introduction of the artist-in-residence project AIRIS<sup>15</sup>: in order to measure these effects, “analytic parameters” such as “Organizational Climate for Creativity and Innovation, (Ekvall, 1996); Patterns of interaction in work groups, (Kylén, 1999); [...] Managing Complexity and Uncertainty, (Adler, 1999); The Outlook on Planning and Efficacy, (Adler, 1999)” were employed (Eriksson, 2009, p. 2). As noted by Eriksson (2009), the study was able to substantiate that the AIRIS program positively affected the work environment, collaboration among employees, and “reduced resistance to change” (p. 23) while also boosting productivity and improving ability to cope with uncertainty (artistic interventions allow employees to “develop capabilities [...] important for innovation and performance under conditions of ambiguity and change” (Berthoin Antal & Strauß, 2013, p. 25)).

As for the experiment that Hale and Woronkiewicz (2021) carried out, it led them to conclude that “artists bring intrapreneurial characteristics to public sector settings, including openness

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<sup>15</sup> The AIRIS project required artists and organizations (“private companies, municipal authorities etc.”) to be “paired [...] for a period of 10 months to act as creative consultants or change agents” (Berthoin Antal, 2009, p. 12).

and creativity, and that they may indeed boost the creativity of group solutions to public problems” (p. 654). Intrapreneurship refers to within-firm/intraorganizational entrepreneurship (Corbett *et al.*, 2013, cited in Huang, Lin & Hsieh, 2021) which allows companies to “innovate, enhance internal performance, adapt to external changes, and reinvigorate their businesses” (Augusto Felício *et al.*, 2012, cited in Huang, Lin & Hsieh, 2021, p. 1).

Moreover, artists are generally “more open to experience and imagination than non-artists” (Feist 1998, Feist 1999, cited in Hale & Woronkiewicz, 2021, p. 655): Hale and Woronkiewicz (2021) extrapolated from this claim the first hypothesis (H1) according to which “artists in the sample exhibit intrapreneurial traits such as extraversion and creativity” (p. 655). As a next step, Hale and Woronkiewicz (2021, pp. 655-656) tested “how intrapreneurial behavior among artists within public sector organizations can lead to innovativeness” through the introduction of the second hypothesis (H2): “intrapreneurial artists enhance organizational innovativeness”.

#### 4.3.1 SAMPLE DATABASE

To conduct the experiment, Hale and Woronkiewicz (2021, p. 657) had to recruit both artists and public sector workers but about 47% of the public sector workers and 61% of the artists withdrew from the experiment, so that, as shown in Table 14, “in total, 49 public sector workers and 10 artists participated in the experiment” making up the 53% and 39% respectively of the original sample: in any case, it was possible to obtain “10 treatment groups and 8 control groups [that] completed the experimental task”.

**Table 14:** Demographic composition of the sample (N=59).

		Artist				Public Sector Worker			
		Withdrew		Participated		Withdrew		Participated	
		Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency (%)	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency (%)	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency (%)	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency (%)
<b>GENDER</b>	Female	13	81%	6	60%	29	67%	27	55%
	Male	3	19%	4	40%	14	33%	22	45%
<b>AGE</b>	20-39	7	44%	4	40%	24	56%	23	47%
	40-59	7	44%	3	30%	17	40%	24	49%
	>60	2	12%	3	30%	2	4%	2	4%

In addition, as noted by Hale and Woronkowitz (2021), “the majority of artists specialized in visual arts or design” (p. 657).

#### 4.3.2 MATERIALS AND ANALYTICAL PROCEDURE

With respect to the analytical procedure, Hale and Woronkowitz (2021, p. 656) tested their hypotheses “in a lab experiment in which public sector workers worked in groups to solve a public sector problem, with artists randomly assigned to work with half of the groups”: they “invited participants to a black box theater” where they arranged several sessions. There was a maximum of six participants (including the artist/s) that could take part in each session (Ibid.). Public sector workers “were randomly assigned to either a control group of all public sector workers or a treatment group that included an artist” (Ibid., p. 656). Participants had to perform a task consisting of tackling a typical public sector issue that is “homicide reduction in the capital city amidst shifting crime patterns with unclear origins”: they had to “develop a [...] proposal for a grant to address the city’s growing crime problem, with an emphasis on creativity and innovation” (Ibid.). This task was specifically conceived by “a panel of three experts in local government administration” to prompt “creative problem-solving among team members” (Ibid., pp. 656-657). After finding a solution individually, “participants were then divided into groups and escorted to a private space to begin the group problem-solving portion of the experiment” and were given about 45 minutes to come up with a solution to the stated problem (Ibid., p. 656). To understand the impact of “artists’ contributions to group processes”, Hale and Woronkowitz (2021) investigated the “differences between the treatment and control groups [...] by assessing the creativity of the group solutions to the public sector problem” (p. 656).

Once the solutions were submitted, Hale and Woronkowitz (2021) had each participant taking a further test in order “to determine whether artists demonstrated different personality characteristics than public sector workers” (p. 657): in particular, participants had to complete “the two aspects of the extraversion domain—enthusiasm and assertiveness—and the two aspects of the openness domain—intellect and openness—from the Big Five Aspect Scales (BFAS)” (DeYoung et al. 2007, cited in Hale & Woronkowitz, 2021, p. 657). All the subscales of the “Big Five scores for the extraversion and openness domains” brought to Cronbach’s alpha larger than 0,7 thereby “demonstrating good internal consistency [of responses] for these measures” (Hale & Woronkowitz, 2021, p. 659).

Then, Hale and Woronkowitz (2021, p. 659) employed divergent thinking (“ability to generate [...] ideas” (Reiter-Palmon *et al.* 2019, cited in Hale & Woronkowitz, 2021, p. 659)) as an indirect measure of creativity: participants had to undergo and perform divergent thinking tasks to determine their “originality” (i.e. unique ideas) and “fluency” (i.e. number of ideas generated). One of these divergent thinking tasks to be executed was participants’ individual “response to the public sector problem” (Hale & Woronkowitz, 2021, p. 660). The “degree of divergent thinking among the individual artists and public sector workers in relation to the public sector problem” was evaluated by “raters blind to the respondents’ treatment status” who ranked the originality and fluency of participants’ responses (Ibid.).

Along with individual extraversion, openness and creativity, Hale and Woronkowitz (2021) extended the empirical analysis to team processes measures such as elaboration and conflict and team products such as group creativity. Elaboration is mainly connected to the “exchange, individual level processing, discussion, and integration of different perspectives and information” (Hoever *et al.* 2012, cited in Hale & Woronkowitz, 2021, p. 660): it was ranked by the raters based on the extent “to which teams share, acknowledge, discuss, and integrate perspectives and information from different team members” (Hale & Woronkowitz, 2021, p. 660). Conflict is related to “differences in opinion relating to the task” (Jehn, 1997, cited in Hale & Woronkowitz, 2021, p. 660): as in the elaboration measure, also the “frequency of task conflict” was assessed by the independent judges (Hale & Woronkowitz, 2021, p. 660). Finally, raters estimated group creativity (meant as “the joint novelty and usefulness of an idea” (Runco, 2014, cited in Hale & Woronkowitz, 2021, p. 662)) by employing the Consensual Assessment Technique (or CAT) which requires “experts to determine relative levels of creativity for a set of products based upon experts’ own understanding of creativity” (Hale & Woronkowitz, 2021, p. 660). Group creativity was evaluated because it is believed that artists can fuel “collaborative ways of working” which are even “likely to have positive impacts on productivity” (Berthoin Antal & Strauß, 2013, p. 23).

#### 4.3.3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To test the two hypotheses, Hale and Woronkowitz (2021, p. 661) ran “two sample t tests with one-sided tests” in order to compare the intrapreneurial traits of artists with those of public sector workers. Regarding H1 (i.e. artists show intrapreneurial characteristics), they found that it holds true. Hale and Woronkowitz (2021) employed the BFAS to analyze the extraversion (namely enthusiasm and assertiveness) and openness (namely intellect and

openness) domains: “artists and public sector workers are not significantly different with respect to their extraversion ( $t(54) = -0.39, p = 0.6503$ ) on either the assertiveness ( $t(54) = -0.14, p = 0.5541$ ) or enthusiasm ( $t(54) = -0.50, p = 0.6907$ ) aspects” while “artists [...] are significantly more open ( $t(54) = 4.05, p = 0.0001$ ), specifically on the openness aspect ( $t(54) = 5.95, p = 0.0000$ ) rather than the intellect aspect ( $t(54) = 1.67, p = 0.0507$ )” (p. 661). These findings on the differences in personality characteristics of artists and public sector workers are summarized in Table 15. As for the divergent thinking tasks, artists’ originality was significantly larger than that of public sector workers.

**Table 15:** Differences between artists and public sector workers in personality characteristics

	Artists			Public Sector Workers			t-Values	
	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	Two sample <i>t</i> test	Robust Regression
Assertiveness	9	3.57	0.55	47	3.59	0.54	-0.14	-0.11
Enthusiasm	9	3.73	0.73	47	3.85	0.63	-0.50	-0.45
Extraversion (overall)	9	3.65	0.58	47	3.72	0.50	-0.39	-0.34
Openness	9	4.71	0.26	47	3.85	0.42	5.95***	7.72***
Intellect	9	4.24	0.55	47	3.90	0.58	1.67	1.72+
Openness (overall)	9	4.48	0.38	47	3.87	0.42	4.05***	4.16***

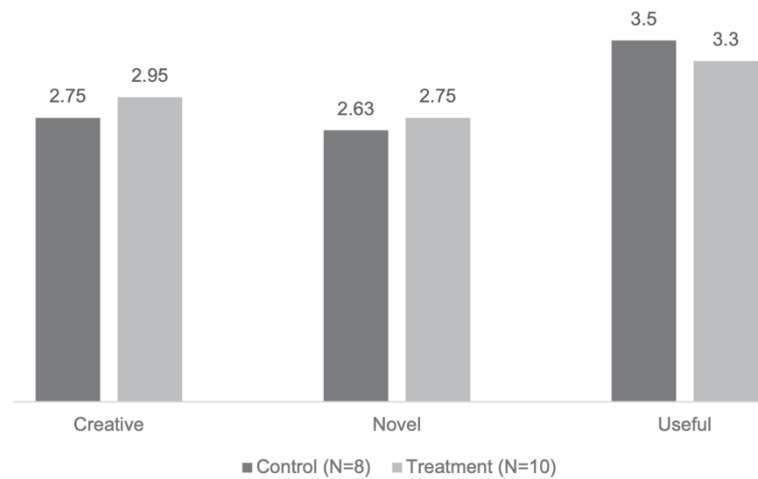
+ $p < 0.10$ , \* $p < 0.05$ , \*\* $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\* $p < 0.001$ ; one-sided *p* values are reported for *t* tests

*Source: Hale and Woronkowitz (2021)*

With respect to H2 (i.e. intrapreneurial artists improve organizational innovativeness), Hale and Woronkowitz (2021, p. 661) assessed how artists supported team processes by detecting “differences in the number of conflicts between group members and the level of elaboration achieved by the group”: however, they found that H2 did not hold true in relation to team processes. Furthermore, they tried to understand “whether artists contributed to group products by determining whether they increased the creativity of group solutions” (Ibid.). As expected due to the low power of the experiment (i.e. small sample size), the inter-group (treatment and control groups) differences in overall creativity, novelty, and usefulness measures were not statistically significant: nevertheless, Hale and Woronkowitz (2021, p. 662) found that “artists developed solutions with higher ratings for creativity and novelty, while the public sector worker groups proposed solutions with higher ratings of usefulness” (see Figure 4.4). Consequently, notwithstanding the statistically insignificant findings, Hale and Woronkowitz (2021) could infer that “if the magnitudes of the differences found in our

experiment hold in larger sample, it would indicate that artists contribute to overall creativity by contributing novel ideas” (p. 662).

**Figure 4.4:** Average creativity, novelty, and usefulness ratings of control and treatment groups in Hale and Woronkowitz (2021) Experiment



Source: Hale and Woronkowitz (2021)

Thus, given the experimental results obtained, Hale and Woronkowitz (2021) claim that artists endowed with intrapreneurial traits (especially openness and divergent thinking) can positively impact public sector organizations by seeking and uncovering novel and creative solutions “to address long-standing public sector problems” (p. 662). Drawing from theories on creative skills transfer, Hale and Woronkowitz (2021) elaborate the experiment “of pairing artists with non-arts sectors” (p. 662) thereby offering a potentially groundbreaking tool for the public sector: by recruiting artists and engaging in Artist-In-Residence programs, public sector organizations will be better able to foster creativity and facilitate the innovation process. In fact, “by thinking ‘out of the box’, artists can [...] provide additional knowledge and stimulate novel processes” (McDermott & Fieseler, 2021, p. 25).

In conclusion, firms seeking for continuous innovation and sustainable competitiveness should thus aspire to become “arts incubators” which “nurture [...] arts organizations and/or individual artists by delivering training and mentorship in business and entrepreneurial skills to support artistic and creative innovation” (Renard & Zanella, 2021, p. 1): in this way, firms will be able to bring and embed creativity and innovativeness inside the organizational walls and spread them to their employees by arranging and accommodating Artist-In-Residence programs.



#### 4.4 FROM HUMAN CAPITAL TO CULTURAL-CREATIVE CAPITAL

As shown in the previous paragraphs, “exposure to art positively influences [...] creativity through openness to new experiences and widened perspectives” (Van Den Broeck *et al.*, 2008, cited in An & Youn, 2018, p. 467). Therefore, art represents a very powerful tool that companies are trying to employ in order to “stimulate employees’ creative skills”: hence, it is increasingly apparent that firms “are trying to find ways to embed more creativity, more innovative potential, and more entrepreneurship into the everyday running of their businesses” through the art (Van Den Broeck, Cools & Maenhout, 2008, p. 573). Employees’ skills, know-how and capabilities that firms are constantly looking for constitute human capital that, along with physical capital and natural capital makes up the three main types of capital historically identified by economists (Throsby, 1999). So, human capital refers to the skills, know-how and expertise, accumulated by workers over the years, which contribute to output production together with physical capital (Becker, 1964, cited in Throsby, 1999). Physical capital denotes “the stock of real goods such as plant, machines, buildings” that allow the production of finished goods and products (Hicks, 1974, cited in Throsby, 1999, p. 3). Natural capital concerns “the stock of renewable and nonrenewable resources provided by nature” and the “ecological processes” connected to it (Jansson et al., 1994, cited in Throsby, 1999, p. 3). In addition to these three forms of capital, Throsby (1999) urges the identification of a fourth type of capital namely cultural capital said to have the potential to mediate “natural capital–human-made capital interactions” (Berkes & Folke, 1994, cited in Cochrane, 2006, p. 321).

With respect to the contribution that “cultural capital might make to economic output and growth in the economy” (Throsby, 1999, p. 8), Throsby (2005) argues that cultural capital can foster long-term sustainability. In fact, he insists on the point that “neglect of cultural capital [...] by not undertaking the investment needed to maintain and increase [...] cultural capital, will cause [...] loss of welfare and economic output” (Throsby, 1999, p. 9). Therefore, cultural capital can be viewed as “an asset that can be used to acquire other kinds of assets” (Wildhagen, 2009, p. 175). In this regard, Johnson (2019, p. 11) insists on the role of cultural capital “both as a direct contributor to production of benefits (and ultimately well-being) and as a mediating factor between the economy, society, and investments in the various types of capital”. The Inclusive Wealth Report 2012 (United Nations University, International Human Dimensions Programme, 2012) incorporates cultural capital within human capital defined as

“the knowledge, skills, competencies and attributes embodied in individuals that facilitate the creation of personal, social and economic well-being” (OECD, 2011, cited in United Nations University, International Human Dimensions Programme, 2012, p. 234). In particular, the report describes learning (e.g. “workplace training”) as the “key function in the creation of human capital” which is also “greatly influenced by ‘cultural capital’” (United Nations University, International Human Dimensions Programme, 2012, p. 234).

Moreover, Throsby (2011, p. 143) distinguishes between tangible and intangible cultural capital whereby the former is connected to “artworks and artefacts such as paintings and sculptures, and heritage buildings, locations and sites” whilst the latter represents the set of beliefs, ideas, practices, and values characterizing individuals. Along with Throsby’s (2011) interpretation, the concept of cultural capital has also been widely explored by Bourdieu (1986, cited in Throsby, 1999, p. 4) who breaks it down into three components: embodied cultural capital (“long-lasting disposition of the individual’s mind and body”), objectified cultural capital (“when cultural capital is turned into cultural goods”), and institutionalized cultural capital (“when the embodied cultural capital is recognized in the form of [...] an academic credential”). What Bourdieu values the most is surely the embodied cultural capital (Throsby, 1999) which “consists of various forms of knowledge, dispositions, and skills” (Zweigenhaft, 1993, p. 211) and thus stems from “human creativity” (Throsby, 2005, p. 4).

Due to the strong association with creativity, the embodied cultural capital definition can thus be said to englobe and incorporate the so-called creative capital. Harris (2014) states that with the rise of the knowledge economy there was “a shift away from human capital to other capital — [...] creative capital in Bourdieuan terms”. Therefore, it is possible to conclude that “creative capital [...] has replaced human capital” (Florida, 2007, cited in Harris, 2014, p. 154). The notion of creative capital can be couched in terms of “the total significance of creativity in research and innovation work” whereby creativity “is the connecting thread running through all innovation development” (Stenros, 2020, p. 1247). As stated by Kim and Williams (2020), creativity is related to “doing or making something unique and useful, and the end result of this process is innovation” (p. 36). With respect to this, Kim and Pierce (2013) draw a distinction between adaptive and innovative creativity: the first is connected to thinking which employs current techniques, tools and solutions to novel scenarios or altered conditions; the second pertains to thinking which gives rise to new and innovative solutions. In other words, adaptive creative thinkers come up with original ideas that are more suitable to solve standard patterns and existing paradigms, while innovative creative thinkers come up

with original ideas that are more predisposed to question and disrupt these paradigms (Kim & Pierce, 2013). Whether adaptive or innovative creative thinkers, firms will always be looking for a creative workforce: as pointed out by Stenros (2020, p. 1246), “future innovation work will also be ‘brain hunting’, in which individual talented people”, making up the “available [...] creative capital”, will be increasingly sought by companies with the aim of “optimizing local and global manufacturing and research”. In fact, Florida (2012, p. 120) asserts that “a company’s most important asset [...] is its creative capital—its arsenal of creative thinkers whose ideas can be turned into valuable products and services”: for this compelling reason, firms’ intention is to find and value “creative people [...], nurture and support their creativity, and allow them to realize their full potential”. Due to the urgent need for creative workers by large corporations, Florida (2002, cited in Oakley, 2009, p. 30) even goes as far as declaring that “there has actually been a shift of power between workers and employers, such that firms will locate where creative class workers are clustered, not the other way around”. On this matter, Forrester Consulting (2014, pp. 1-3) conducted a study which “surveyed senior managers from corporations across a diverse set of industries to quantify and qualify how creativity impacts business results” and “asked respondents to rate their business performance in three critical areas” namely sales growth, market share, and employee satisfaction: it was found that firms nurturing the “creative dividend” (i.e. “creativity experience”) outpaced “peers and competitors on key business performance indicators, including revenue growth, market share, and talent acquisition”.

In conclusion, besides the broader macroeconomic interpretation of Throsby’s (1999, 2005) thinking on the contribution of cultural capital to economic growth and long-term sustainability and by adopting a narrower corporate-level perspective, long-term sustainability can be achieved through firm investments in employees’ intangible/embodied cultural capital: by nurturing creative capital, companies will be able to foster innovation (e.g. new product development) and, consequently, secure their market positioning in the long-run (i.e. sustainable competitive advantage). In fact, as Boyle and Ottensmeyer (2005) state, the key to boost profitability is change “and change starts with people. Employees who are inspired and stimulated, as is possible through the arts, can become open-minded, creative team members, more confident in expressing ideas and experimenting with new ways of thinking, which then leads to innovative products and imaginative marketing, and ultimately to improvements in business performance” (p. 20).

#### 4.4.1 THE NEXT FRONTIER: DIGITAL CULTURAL CAPITAL

Another (little-known) cultural capital component which is embedded in individuals and coexists with creative capital is digital cultural capital. Rafalow (2018, p. 1416) claims that “digital competency represents a kind of cultural capital” and thereby follows the “line of thinking advocated by Lareau and Weininger (2003) that includes (digital) styles and skills both as cultural capital”. On this matter, Ollier-Malaterre, Jacobs and Rothbard (2019, pp. 425-426) emphasize the emergence of a new form of cultural capital in Bourdieusian terms that they name digital cultural capital: they state that this type of capital has evolved in the last few years due to the “rapid technological advances” that have increasingly started to “require active technology management” (i.e. digital cultural capital) besides the enhanced “opportunities for communication at work”. According to Ollier-Malaterre, Jacobs and Rothbard (2019), technology management can be viewed “as work performed to gain control over technology and its associated social norms in order to align one’s use of technology with one’s values and goals” (p. 427). Robinson (2009, p. 505) encourages to deepen the study on “the development of capital enhancing information [technology] skills” and on digital cultural capital accordingly. Digital cultural capital can be defined as “the combination of awareness, motivation, and skill needed to perform technology management” (Ollier-Malaterre, Jacobs & Rothbard, 2019, p. 427).

Due to the “technology-related evolutions of the workplace”, it seems clear that employees need to develop these digital competencies within this ever-changing context (Ibid.) especially with respect to three main areas: telework (changes significantly based on industry type whereby “managers and professionals [are] much more likely to work remotely than those employed in factory production and retail” (US Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2016, cited in Ollier-Malaterre, Jacobs & Rothbard, 2019, p. 428)); virtual teams (developed within “large organizations with geographically dispersed facilities” to connect and “bring together talent and skills from many locations” (Ollier-Malaterre, Jacobs & Rothbard, 2019, p. 428)); unpredictability of work (consisting in “shifting the risk of unpredictability from employers to employees” (Ibid.)). In addition, the amount of technology management required is substantial because “technology management is time- and effort-intensive”: thus, “the awareness of the need to actively monitor one’s use of technology and the motivation and skill to do so constitute an individual’s digital cultural capital” (Ibid., p. 436). In fact, digital cultural capital can be interpreted as a form of embodied cultural capital (Bourdieu 1979, 1997, cited in Ollier-Malaterre, Jacobs & Rothbard, 2019) since it “requires time and a

personal investment by the individual, which are characteristics of incorporated cultural capital” (Ollier-Malaterre, Jacobs & Rothbard, 2019, p. 436). An example inherent to technology management surely refers to “building and maintaining social media strategies” which necessitate digital technical skills in order to improve workers’ “professional reputation and quality of life” in the workplace: the content strategy consists in “actively controlling what information” to disclose while the custom strategy is related to the personalization of the content disclosed for each specific audience (Ibid., pp. 434-436). Therefore, along with technical capabilities, digital cultural capital is also about having “awareness of the impact of information disclosure on interpersonal relationships and professional reputation” (Ibid., p. 436). In conclusion, Ollier-Malaterre, Jacobs and Rothbard (2019, p. 439) suggest that further research is needed “on the acquisition and maintenance of the digital habitus” and question themselves on the type of “interventions [that] could help to provide people with greater digital cultural capital”. In this respect, since art is part and parcel of cultural capital and has shown its usefulness to foster creativity and enhance productivity in the workplace, we may argue in the same way that art can contribute to the creation and management of digital cultural capital for employees.

Not surprisingly, art and digital technologies are progressively getting more and more intertwined thanks to “interactive digital art” interventions: Ferreira, Anacleto & Bueno (2014, p. 1) posit, on this point, that “interactive digital art can create innovative ways to stimulate and engage” workers when placed within the office. By employing ICT, they turned an “artistic expression into digital art installation within [...] a workplace” to have employees “interact with the dynamic art-system” and found that the digital art intervention promoted “people engagement”, “socialization” and “place attachment” (Ferreira, Anacleto & Bueno, 2014, pp. 1-6). Digital art can thus be viewed as an opportunity to approach technology and create (and/or incentivize if already present) digital cultural capital. In this regard, O’Dea, Alacovska & Fieseler (2020, p. 5) notice that the majority of changes dictated by “the digital transformation [...] are being driven by enterprise, and many of the most powerful digital technologies are developed and employed by private technology companies”. As evolution “brought about by digital and computing technologies”, the digital transformation can be supported by art to “direct [and harness] these technologies”: for this purpose, the Artsformation<sup>16</sup> project “aims to understand how art can be an actor in the digital transformation” in an attempt to determine “opportunities and mechanisms through which art

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<sup>16</sup> Artsformation is a Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation project that explores the intersection between arts and technology: it focuses on fostering ways in which the arts can bolster the social, cultural, and economic benefits of the digital transformation (O’Dea, Alacovska & Fieseler, 2020).

and enterprise can interact to impact on the digital transformation” (O’Dea, Alacovska & Fieseler, 2020, pp. 5-6). Notwithstanding the potential of this project alone to generate innovative art-based methods to positively affect the digital transformation process (O’Dea, Alacovska & Fieseler, 2020), it goes without saying that future research is needed in this innovative field to shed more light on the ways in which companies can creatively cultivate and develop employees’ digital cultural capital through art in the workplace.

# CONCLUSIONS

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Starting from the investigation of the relationship between Art and Economics within the Cultural Economics discourse, this dissertation aimed at giving useful insights on the groundbreaking role that art can play within the organizational setting by providing a theoretical and empirical framework on artistic interventions that companies can enact. The adoption of this approach must be sought, in the first place, in the intention to provide guidance and elucidate on the extant literature of this field amenable to analysis: in fact, as stated by Berthoin Antal (2009), “theory-building is still in its infancy in this complex and diverse field, so it does not yet offer a sufficiently clear guide for which effects to look for, and too little empirical work has been conducted to warrant the extension and replication of instruments used so far” (p. 22).

In addition, it is worth noting that very often CEOs and managers rely on their own personal judgement when it comes to assessing the impact of an artistic intervention and, as a result, there are rare cases in which firms commit to carry out quantitative analyses of the art initiatives effects obtained following the undertaken investments (Berthoin Antal & Strauß, 2013). Notwithstanding this aspect, the main findings of this research can be summarized as follows:

- The main corporate investments in art are related to sponsorship and patronage of art organizations for CSR (CCR), brand reputation and marketing purposes which are connected to companies willingness to gain legitimization from external stakeholders (i.e. customers and social community);
- Along with image building and marketing communication objectives, firms support the arts also for internal operations reasons mainly attributable to the development and improvement of HR, R&D and production areas. In fact, art can promote employee team-building, loyalty, and creativity and enhance know-how capabilities which in turn will lead to innovation and thus to new product development;
- By adopting the internal focus (i.e. on Human Capital), it was found that artistic interventions in the form of art posters (first type workart) can boost employee well-being, productivity and creativity if employed as a means of office enrichment. In an

attempt to enhance these beneficial effects and instantiating ideas grounded on the belief that the transfer of creative skills between arts and non-arts work is possible (Hale and Woronkowicz, 2020, cited in Noonan *et al.*, 2021), it emerged that artist-led interventions such as Artist-In-Residence programs (second type workart) can foster (group) creativity and innovation and thus result in employee performance enhancement.

However, the abovementioned research outcomes present some limitations that could be tackled in future studies thereby offering further food for thought and broadening the scope of the extant literature. Particularly, the main issues that have arisen throughout the different empirical examples proposed trace back to the modest sample size and short time period (i.e. cross sectional study) of the experiments. Thus, it is apparent that future research should address these matters by employing a larger sample size to measure the effects of artistic interventions over an extended time period (i.e. longitudinal study): in this way it will be possible to augment the statistical power of the experiments. With respect to the first type workarts, it seems advisable to suggest that future research could analyze the impact of different artwork styles or art poster subjects on employee productivity, well-being and creativity to understand which ones lead to the best workers performance. Regarding the second type workart, it could be interesting to further investigate Artist-In-Residence programs in order to figure out which artistic activities should be carried out jointly by artists and employees to facilitate creative skills transfer and boost creativity.

Furthermore, it was shown that the hallmark of art and the related artistic interventions is represented by their ability to empower human capital and specifically creative capital: for this compelling reason, after providing a tentative guide to approach art initiatives, this dissertation serves as a means of clarification and recommendation for firms to stimulate the innovation process by implementing the low-risk and cost-effective strategy of artistic interventions. Hence, as the business world transitions towards the digital transformation which increasingly requires workers to gain new digital competences (i.e. digital cultural capital), it is clear that art in the workplace can play a significant role to support innovative companies and enrich their workforce also in this respect. This is especially true for innovative companies par excellence such as those belonging to the digital ICT sector which need to continuously pursue innovation because of the structural requirements of their market in constant change. Finally, in line with this reasoning, only arts incubators organizations will be able to promote and encourage innovation thereby achieving a sustainable competitive



advantage and securing themselves a stable market positioning notwithstanding the continually evolving and uncertain market conditions.

So in summary, as asserted by Parkinson *et al.* (2017, p. 10), firms are increasingly starting to view art as essential in “stimulating creative thinking and problem solving, and offering networking opportunities and the potential to develop new business and build market share. These positive impacts [ultimately] help companies attract and retain employees, particularly as the war for talent intensifies”.

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