Cultural and Artistic Co-operatives as a Form of Worker Interest Representation

Larry Haiven
Saint Mary’s University
Forms of collective action and worker representation

- Unions
- Guilds
- Copyright collectives
- Professional societies
- Co-operatives
“The form of association… which if mankind continue to improve, must be expected in the end to predominate, is not that which can exist between a capitalist as chief, and workpeople without a voice in the management, but the association of the labourers themselves on terms of equality, collectively owning the capital with which they carry on their operations, and working under managers elected and removable by themselves”

J.S. Mill

*Principles of Political Economy*
Paradox in cultural creation

- Individualists par excellence
- Great benefits from collectivity

E.g.
- painter needs studio, supplies and exhibition space
- actors & actresses require stage or film distribution
- the musician who might self-record but cannot self-distribute her work,
Logic of producer co-ops

Costs of Inputs

Working together to process & market

Prices of Outputs
Resource
- potential future flow of income

Capital
- money
- knowledge
- assistance
- access to markets
- distribution to markets

Types of Capital
- share capital
- loan capital
- social capital
- human capital

The Calculus of Power in the Development of a Resource
Cultural production and economic development

- capitalization
- appropriation of surplus
Cultural co-operatives

Types of cultural co-operatives

- Live theatre
- Journalism
- Film
- Radio
- Visual art/handicrafts
- Cultural services
- Circus
Pilot study

- Region of Emilia-Romagna, Italy
- Nova Scotia, Canada
Emilia-Romagna, Italy

Emilia-Romagna

Bologna
Emilia-Romagna Region

- 7% of Italy’s population and area
- One of the most prosperous regions in the world
  - GDP per capita $28,000
    - 36% higher than the European union
    - 25% higher than the Italian average
- Enviable recent growth rate of 2.2%
- Low unemployment rate of about 3%
  - Compared to average 9.1% in EU
  - And 8.4% in Italy

- One of the lowest rates of inequality in the country
  - .25 Gini coefficient; almost 1/2 EU average
- One of the highest indexes of social capital and social cohesion (e.g. volunteerism): Robert Putnam
- One of highest rates of “economic freedom”
- Left governments
- Different attitude to competition
Le Macchine Celibi

- Cultural services
  - Visual art exhibits
  - Multimedia
  - Fashion
  - Organizing cultural events
- Vocational training
- Information technology
  - Websites, videos, digital archives, networks
Il progetto cooperativo: coniugare valori culturali e sociali con capacità gestionali e organizzative, per l’obiettivo di una sempre più ampia partecipazione sociale alla cultura.

**NOVITÀ**

**Women IM - Corso per Tutori/animatrici di rete**

Eciap-Emilia Romagna, in collaborazione con due strutture formative bolognesi L’ISTITUTO PROFESSIONALE ALBERGANTE RUBEGANI e PEGASOFT, organizza due corsi legati ai settori della moda e della produzione multimediale: MODELLESTRA DELL’ABBIGLIAMENTO MULTIMEDIA SPECIALIST. Entrambi i corsi sono co-finanziati dalla Provincia di Bologna e dalla Regione Emilia-Romagna attraverso il Fondo Sociale Europeo.

**LA PARTECIPAZIONE E’ GRATUITA**

Per informazioni sulle modalità d’iscrizione contattare ECIAP allo 051-4199711 o scrivere a eciap.minerva@go.crs.it

**Modellesta dell’abbigliamento**

**Argomenti del sito:**

- Servizi per le aziende
- Corsi e formazione
- Gestione eventi culturali
- Produzioni multimediali
- Affitto aide
- LegaCoop
- Portfolio

**Siti affiliati:**

- Lesia
- Vito Sorana
- Poplao
- Fo-It
- Fo-Sound
- E-Workers
Nuova Scena – Arena del Sole

- Founded 1968 by Dario Fo (Nobel prize)
- Theatre company
  - Repertory
  - Travelling shows
- Theatre space – Arena del Sole
- Theatre school
Artemisia

- Founded 2003
- 5 women (Artemisa Gentilleschi)
- Services to municipality of Imola
  - Ticketing municipal theatre
  - Libraries
  - Cinema
  - Cultural tourism
“Not available” Co-op Radio

- Founded 1976
- Political radio
- Experimental
- Innovative
- 15 employees
Fiori avvelenati: Dercенко querela la responsabile della Casa delle Donne

Accusato di tentata violenza sessuale su un'ospite, il presidente dell'ONLUS Fiori di strada, Antonio Dercenko accusa la responsabile della Casa delle donne Elsa Antonini di diffamazione: “C'è odio nei miei confronti”.

Cazzola: “Non ho mai chiamato Berlusconi. Se lo riterrò opportuno lo farò”

Sull'agenda di Alfredo Cazzola non c'è ancora un incontro fissato con Silvio Berlusconi. L'ex patron ribadisce il suo “no” alle ronde e afferma di non sapere nulla sul candidato della sua lista simpatizzante di Casapound.

Tutto l'antifascismo che c'è

Il primo Festival sociale delle culture antifasciste si aprì il 29 maggio alle Caserne rosse. Fino al 3 giugno ci saranno 90 eventi in uno dei luoghi più importanti della deportazione nazi-fascista.

Agl’ini degli anni ‘90 Radio Città del Capo è tra i fondatori di "Popolare Network" e continua le prime campagne abbonamenti, chiedendo cioè al proprio ascoltatori di versare una quota fissa annuale per sostenere una informazione indipendente. Nel 2004, con l’ingresso dell’Ardi di Bologna nella compagnia.

http://www.locarnoclub.it/expresstv.html/
Valori

La nostra cooperativa di giornalisti fonda i presupposti della propria indipendenza oltre che nella propria storia, nella propria autonomia finanziaria, nella criticità, nella ricerca, nella scelta di guardare alla trasformazione e in quella di schierarsi comunque a fianco di coloro i cui diritti sono lesi, consapevoli che essa si realizza anche in un concorso di intenti con soggetti sociali, politici e sindacali ma da essi non dipende.

Questo progetto di libertà e indipendenza non può avere padroni ma solo compartecipazioni.
La Baracca – Testoni Ragazzi

- Children’s theatre co-operative
- Founded 1976
- One of top children’s theatres in world
- Theatre presentation
- Theatre school
- International links
- “Theatre and nursery school” project
Founded in 1973, La Baracca is a cooperative and it has been working in the field of theatre for children and young people for 30 years. Its founders introduced an original project, a cultural model which has, over the years, become an important point of reference in this field. Their aim was to convey a new idea on society and theatre, characterised by a creative and playful energy. Always in evolution, La Baracca is still drawing from those sources its suggestions and its innovative paths, which correspond to our time’s perspectives and cultural needs.

On the basis of its creative independence, La Baracca has always pursued an autonomy in management and project-planning. In 1993, La Baracca started to run the Centro Teatro Ragazzi e Giovani di San Leonardo.
Cantamaggio is a chance to know and meet each other, a residential workshop whose aim is the creation of a collective performance. Words amplified by the voices of over one hundred Italian and European young people who work together to think about social issues, to get to know and keep the memory of both the past and the present.

The event, organized in partnership with the Medicina City Council, develops into three days of theatrical workshop. Over these days, the participants have the chance to experience stories and witness, to take part in group experiences and moments during which the young people, divided into groups, work with actors to produce the performance.
Nova Scotia, Canada
La Coop Artisanale, Cheticamp

- Cheticamp tradition of hand-dyed wool rug-hooking
- Jobbers used to exploit market
- Incorporated 1963
- Showroom, museum, restaurant
- Lowered costs of inputs; raised price of outputs
- Part of robust co-operative culture
Coopérative Radio Cheticamp

- founded 1992
- community fighting to preserve French language heritage
- recording studio
- 78 hours of local programming
  - rest pre-recorded from Le Réseau Francophone d’Amérique
- “Promoting regional cultural development and artistic expression with the presentation of folk and historical shows and Acadian plays..”
Acadia Cinema Co-op, Wolfville

- old opera house/movie theatre from 1911
- founded 2002; fully restored 2010
- university town Annapolis Valley
- community share ownership
- interesting problem with bank lender
- plus buy-in from JustUs Coffee Roasters Co-operative (operate coffee shop inside)
Atlantic Filmmakers Co-op,

- founded by 17 film artists 1973
- initial funding Canada Council
- oldest English-speaking film co-op in Canada
- other film co-ops in NB, NL
- produced generations of successful filmmakers
- courses, workshops, equipment & facility rentals, screenings,
Halifax Circus Co-operative

- founded 2005
- school for performers
  - aerial work, acrobatics, tightrope, balancing
- youth at risk
  - helping change teens’ lives
- founded by performer/trainer w experience @ Cirque du Soleil
- “The co-op way of working is a way I’m very familiar with….People who share experiences and are informed make better decisions.” (Hirschbach)
Artist-run Gallery Co-ops

- Tidnish Bridge Art Gallery Co-op
- Viewpoint Gallery, Halifax
- Turnstile Pottery Co-operative, Halifax
- Peer Gallery, Lunenburg
- Art 1274 Hollis Co-operative, Halifax
- Alderberry Village Craft Co-op, Truro
Other cultural co-ops in Atlantic Canada

- New Brunswick Filmmakers Co-op Ltd. (Fredericton), La Coop de Theatre L'Escaouette Ltee. (Moncton), Rising Tide Co-operative (Antigonish), Deep Roots Music Co-operative (Berwick), Marigold Cultural Centre Co-operative (Truro), Lunenburg Performing Arts Co-operative, Art Dealers Co-op of Lunenburg, Island Music Centre Co-operative (Sydney), P.E.I. Musicians Co-op (Charlottetown), West Prince Bluegrass & Music Co-operative (Pleasant View PEI), Newfoundland Independent Filmmaker's Co-operative (St. John’s), St. John's Photography Guild Co-op
Conclusions

- Immediate benefits to members yet resistance
- Ephemeral nature of cultural co-ops
- Need experiential capital from established co-op movement
- Legislative environment major factor
- Capitalization a key variable
Nature of Work

Isolated Social/collaborative

Robustness

“Star prospect”

Low High

Artisans

Theatre non-actors

Radio

Filmmakers

Theatre actors

Visual artists

Writers

Film actors

Actors

non-actors

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