



An introduction to the special issue “The arts as sources of value creation for business: Theory, research, and practice”



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Interest is growing in the application of the arts in public and private organizations. In particular, the awareness that absorbing the arts in organizational working mechanisms and business models can drive performance improvements has gradually increased. The arts can produce a wide range of benefits and, especially, they can help to stimulate new ways of thinking; to renew routines, processes, values, identity, image, brand and culture; to challenge established mindsets; to shape workplace innovation and add value to products and services; and to develop new skills, competencies and behaviors (Adler, 2006; Darsø, 2004; Harris, 1999; Meisiek & Barry, 2014; Nissley, 2010; Styhre & Eriksson, 2008). A fundamental argument supporting this view is that through arts it is possible to manage those organizational aesthetic dimensions, such as passion, emotions, hope, moral, imagination, aspirations, and creativity, both at individual and organization level, that in today's complex business landscape can build new differentiating competitive factors. Nowadays organizations benefit from being agile, intuitive, imaginative, flexible to change, and innovative to meet the complexity and turbulence of the new business age. Employees need to be engaged, energized and inspired so that they can exercise their feelings in everyday working activities and operate as innovation and transformational agents (Schiuma, 2011). The arts can represent a powerful means that organizations can deploy to handle people's experiences, emotions, innovative behaviors and play a strategic role in affecting organizational value creation capacity. Additionally, the arts can be exploited to increase the intangible value embedded in organizational products and processes and, therefore, to better satisfy the experiential-based wants and needs of stakeholders.

It, therefore, seems clear the management use of the arts can be a crucial means to develop new management approaches, models, and systems more suited to facing the challenges of the twenty-first-century business landscape. However, the understanding of what happens when the traditional world of business meets the less conventional world of the arts still remains an area requiring investigation. Several anecdotal pieces of evidence from practitioners emphasize the positive experience that employees report during or after arts based initiatives. However, rigorous studies conducted to establish whether the high hopes placed on arts based initiatives are justified are needed. The longer term impacts and critical features of a worthwhile use of the arts in business still need to be understood.

Seeking to understand how arts can affect organizational dynamics and outcomes and the kinds of value generated are critical issues and a challenge to be investigated. Different stakeholders have interests in obtaining a sound understanding of whether and how the arts can develop organizational value creation capacity (Berthoin Antal & Strauß, 2013). Undoubtedly stakeholder groups have quite different expectations from research, relating to their roles and interests in artistic initiatives in organizations. Policymakers and managers seek to understand how arts based initiatives can foster and sustain innovation and improve performances at different levels including individual, group, and organization. Artists and arts organizations operating as producers seek knowledge about the methods to improve designs, implement, and assess arts based initiatives that can generate relevant impacts to enhance business value creation mechanisms.

The JBR special issue “The arts as sources of value creation for business: theory, research, and practice” aims to examine views, approaches,

☆ This special issue aims to provide a contribution to the development of the research field of the arts based management. Traditional attention has been paid on what business can offer to arts and culture, and the development of the art management has been focusing on the application of management principles, approaches, models and tools to run arts and cultural organizations. The arts based management distinguishes the arts as a knowledge domain that can inspire business management and support management innovation. The collection of articles gathered in this special issue provides relevant perspectives from both theory and empirical point of view to understand the why, what and how the arts can contribute to organizational value creation mechanisms. The papers in this issue are categorized on the basis of five main perspectives of analysis, i.e. understanding the value of the arts in business, arts for human resource and organizational development, arts for value added of organizational infrastructures and products, arts based initiatives for creativity and innovation, mechanisms of action of the arts for business value creation. Highlights of each paper are summarized in this editorial.

models, methods, tools, projects and case studies that contribute to explicate the role and relevance of the arts as a value driver in private and public organizations. Attention is also paid on new approaches to the study of management and evaluation issues regarding the design and implementation of arts based initiatives. This Special Issue features 23 articles that were carefully selected after several rounds of full reviews and which cover the wide area of research on arts as value creation catalyst for business. In the following, the highlights of this issue are summarized.

Understanding the value of the arts in business

The special issue opens with the position paper “*The Power of the Arts in Business*” by Daniela Carlucci and Giovanni Schiuma, on the role of the arts in business. The paper discusses the need to shift from the traditional modern management paradigm to a postmodern management paradigm. The fundamental underlying idea is that in the new millennium the organizations’ creation of value no longer depends on a mere rationalistic and linear design and functioning of organizational components and processes, but more and more is tied to people’s experiences, emotions, and energy in carrying out activities and developing new ideas. Starting from this statement the authors develop an analysis of why the arts matter in business and define the conceptual background to explain how the arts can be adopted by organizations for management purposes.

The progressive acknowledgment of the role of the arts in management is proved by the increasing attention that the subject is receiving in the research field. Fernando A. F. Ferreira, in the paper “*Mapping the field of arts-based management: bibliographic coupling and co-citation analyses*” maps the field of arts based management through a systematic review of 137 scientific articles published in refereed scientific journals from 1973 through 2015. The study provides an up-to-date bibliometric analysis of the theme of the relationship between the arts and business identifying some of the most influential authors, journals, and articles. It also provides researchers with a solid basis for positioning current contributions and identifying new streams for future research.

The perspectives of investigation around the binomial arts and management, both in academic and practitioner literature, often are focused on the potential value of bringing the arts into the organization sphere and on finding and assessing the value added by arts based initiatives.

These are two focuses closely intertwined that encompass several relevant questions regarding the arts as ‘value creation catalyst’ in business and that the authors of this special issue have analyzed by focusing on specific issues and adopting different lens and perspectives of analysis. A first perspective concerns the arts for human resource and organizational development. While the second perspective focuses the arts as a driver to add the value of organizational infrastructures and products.

Arts for human resource and organizational development

The use of arts based methods as part of a wider cross-fertilization between business and the arts often interests the sphere of individual and organizational development and change. Linda M. Ippolito and Nancy J. Adler, in their article “*Shifting metaphors, shifting mindsets: using music to change the key of conflict*”, present a mixed methods research study that explores the effects of introducing a music-based metaphor and pedagogical approach to teaching, learning, and resolving conflict in the organization. The authors develop and describe a set of music-based experiences, including the creation of playlists, an interactive workshop with a string quartet, and team-based music-making, to support participants in exploring the features of communication and in building effective collaborative communities. The results of these experiences show that study participants who were introduced to the musical metaphor and other music-based learning outperformed colleagues who were not exposed to similar music-based learning. Indeed, according to the authors, the engagement with music allowed to reconnect people to their creative potential and thus to lead them to see the value of employing creative thinking in professional settings traditionally characterized by analytical and critical thinking. The study provides insights into whether and how the musical ensemble metaphor might assist in shifting adversarial, combative, and competitive approaches toward more collaborative, settlement-oriented mindsets and outcomes, as well as in developing enhanced skills and practice behaviors that would lead to more desirable outcomes.

The transformative power of music for social bonds, empowerment, coordination and collective communication in organizational contexts is further analyzed by Virpi Sorsa, Heini Merkkiniemi, Nada Endrissat, Gazi Islam in the paper “*Little less conversation, little more action: Musical intervention as aesthetic material communication*”. The study, taking a communication-based perspective, addresses the problem of how deeply personal aesthetic experiences can support team interactions and ground collective phenomena. Specifically, the authors, through an in-depth case study of a musical intervention in a professional ice-hockey team, explore how musical interventions mobilize embodied and aesthetic experiences to support collective communication processes. The study shows that as a connection of the aesthetic, the material medium, and the interpersonal dynamic, music provides a collective mechanism by which groups can find their collective rhythm and explore new ways to synchronize their efforts. In this regard the authors propose the concept of “embodied communication”, to explain arts based interventions’ ability to promote new forms of experience and organizing through the interaction of aesthetic, material, and interpersonal aspects.

The power of arts for changing individuals mind set and practice behaviors is further analyzed by Ariane Berthoin Antal, Gervaise Debuquet, Sandrine Frémeaux in their paper “*Meaningful work and artistic interventions in organizations: Conceptual development and empirical exploration*”. In the study the focus shifts on whether arts based methods in organizations offer employees the possibility of fulfilling the human needs to give meaning to work. The authors explore if bringing the arts into organizations helps to create conditions for experiencing meaningful work. They analyze empirical data from thirty-three artistic interventions in Spain to see: (a) whether there is evidence that these activities have the potential for contributing to an experience of meaningful work; and if so, (b) which dimensions of meaningful work they can influence. Based on their analysis, the scholars conclude that artistic interventions can enable employees to experience meaningful work by giving them the opportunity to look at themselves, at their work, at their relationships at work and at their work context differently. In addition to the evidence that artistic interventions can enable employees to experience meaningful work, the authors offer an expanded integrated framework to conceptualize meaningful work with several categories.

The arts as an instrument for organizational development is analyzed also by Fara Azmat, Ahmed Ferdous, Ruth Rentschler and Emma Winston, according to the wide perspective of community’s sustainable development in the paper “*Arts-based initiatives in museums: Creating value for sustainable development*”. The authors explore how arts based interventions in museums facilitate the creation and retention of economic, social and environmental value over time that contributes to sustainable development. They examine the use of arts based interventions by the Islamic Museum of Australia (IMA) as a source of value creation for sustainable development. The scholars, drawing on the standpoints of multiple stakeholders and

methods - focus groups, interviews, forums and documentary evidence - highlight how arts based interventions as 'soft' and 'non-threatening' tools promote sustainable development, facilitate social inclusion and retain value over time with important policy implications.

In addition to support human resource and organization development, the arts can be deployed as a means to incorporate aesthetic value into organizations' products, processes, workplace components, equipment and working facilities, to improve organizational identity, to develop brand reputation, and to create organizational symbols able to build and represent the identity and image of an organization. In such a prospect the arts can be seen as an instrument to add the value of organizational infrastructures and products.

Arts for value added of organizational infrastructures and products

Zachary Estes, Luisa Brotto, and Bruno Busacca in their paper “*The value of art in marketing: An emotion-based model of how artworks in ads improve product evaluations*” explore how marketing can incorporate arts to add value for consumers. The scholars develop and empirically test an “emotion-based model” of how artworks in advertisements can increase the perceived value of a product (art infusion effect). Across three experiments ($N = 516$) using three different artworks (by Vermeer, van Gogh, and da Vinci), three different products (mineral water, toilet paper, and chocolate), and three different measures of product value (product evaluation, willingness to buy, and willingness to pay), the study shows that brand affects strongly mediated the art infusion effect. Furthermore, this affect-mediation resulted stronger for utilitarian products (water) than for hedonic products (chocolate). According to the authors, the study, in line with general theories of arts based methods in management, confirms that emotion is a fundamental mechanism through which the arts can affect product and price evaluations.

It is argued that emotions activated by arts based methods play a key role also in building brand loyalty. This is the focus of the paper by Eirini Koronaki, Antigone G. Kyrousi, George G. Panigrakis, “*The emotional value of Arts-Based Initiatives: Strengthening the luxury brand – consumer relationship*” which examines how luxury consumers actually respond to luxury brands' arts based initiatives. For this purpose, they propose and test a conceptual model. The empirical analysis considers Louis Vuitton. The key conclusions are that luxury brand connoisseurs derive emotional value from arts based initiatives, even when they are not physically present during the events and that this emotional value enhances their loyalty toward the brand.

The link between the luxury brand and arts is further analyzed by Claude Chailan in the paper “*Art as a means to recreate luxury brands' rarity and value*”. The study examines the different binding modes that link arts and luxury brands, putting a specific focus on the role of art in the creation of luxury uniqueness. By means of an in depth analysis of the practices of the major global luxury brands, the author identifies four types of collaboration involving luxury brands and art, namely, business collaboration, patronage, foundations and artistic mentoring and explains how each contributes to the brands' incomparability, designed to neutralize the risks stemming from the industrialization of luxury.

The links between a fashion brand and arts are the focus of the paper by Pielah Kim, Rajiv Vaidyanathan, Hua Chang, Leslie Stoel, “*Using Brand Alliances with Artists to Expand Retail Brand Personality*”. The authors analyze the conditions under which brand alliances of fashion retailers with visual artists are effective. Referring to brand personality and implicit personality theory, they develop two experimental studies to show both negative (dilution of retailer's original personality) and positive (expansion of personality) effects. Research findings suggest visual artists are an unexploited source of value that retailers can use to create differentiated brand personalities as a way to gain a greater market appeal.

The power of arts based networking experiences is analyzed by Giustina Secundo, Luca Simeone and Giovanni Schiuma in the paper “*Arts and design as translational mechanisms for academic entrepreneurship: The metaLAB at Harvard case study*”. The authors reflect on how the arts and design can be used as a translational mechanism to connect and align different stakeholders in the process of value creation in academic entrepreneurship. They develop an ethnographic investigation in 2013 and 2015 at metaLAB - a research and teaching unit at Harvard University aimed at exploring and expanding the frontiers of networked culture in the arts and humanities. Findings show that various forms of arts and design (including poetry, photography, art installations, motion videos, data visualization) play an important role in connecting metaLAB to external stakeholders across a spectrum of processes, such as networking, learning, and development, inspiration, and transformation.

The paper “*Art, Science and Organisational Interactions: Exploring the Value of Artist Residencies on Campus*” by Boram Lee, Ian Fillis and Kim Lehman, provides a further evidence of the positive effects generated by the arts based experiences, specifically, in an education context. The authors, through a case study, describe the experience of an artist residency in the aquaculture institute of a UK university. They highlight benefits and discuss implications about the effective implementation of university-based artistic initiatives.

Damien Chaney, Mathilde Pulh, Rémi Mencarelli, in their paper “*When the arts inspire businesses: Museums as a heritage redefinition tool of brands*”, focus on brand museum and, adopting a heritage framework, argue about two heritage roles: an inter-generational memory role based on the transmission of the brand's history and a community representation role through spaces and objects. In such a view the brand becomes a sacred and inalienable common good. These statements are corroborated by the results of an extended case study analyzing the brand museum dedicated to the Laughing Cow located in France.

The paper “*Developing a Film-Based Service Experience Blueprinting Technique*” by Jürgen Pöppel, Jörg Finsterwalder and Rebecca Laycock addresses film as an art form as well as its technological evolution, discussing how a film can open up new perspectives for the service industry and for designing and managing services. The authors focus on the technique of service blueprinting and argue that traditional form of this technique does not properly capture and visualize the customer's service experience. In such a view, they showcase how digital film can be used for the development of a film-based service experience blueprinting technique to make service issues more comprehensible and redesign more customer focused.

Besides being a management device to create aesthetic experiences within organizations, as well as to embed aesthetic properties into tangible and intangible organizational infrastructure and products, the arts can act as a catalyst of passion, emotions, hope, moral, imagination, aspirations, and creativity, both at individual and organization level. Indeed, the arts have the power to activate and develop aesthetic experiences by stimulating human senses that arouse and catalyze people's emotions and energy. Experiencing the arts can make employees able and free to express themselves and to give space to them for their own creative processes. Individuals through arts based experiences can feel better, somewhat inspired, more passionate, and motivated. Arts based experiences can be deployed to force people to modify their comfort zone, stimulate new ways of seeing and feeling personal and business issues, enlarge and enhance individual perspectives, and improve intuition. The arts, in particular, play a fundamental role to support the enhancement of creativity and innovation both at individual and organizational level.

Arts based initiatives for creativity and innovation

The investigation of the relationships among appreciation of arts, inspiration, and creativity is the focus of the paper “*The inspirational power of*

arts on creativity” by Donghwy An and Nara Youn. The authors argue that the appreciation of arts induces inspiration, which in turn facilitates performance on creative tasks. Through their analysis, they point out that the effects of arts appreciation are robust across various contexts of analysis.

Stefan Meisiek and Daved Barry in their paper “Finding the sweet spot between art and business in analogically mediated inquiry” describe a longitudinal study involving 19 companies that invited artists to help their employees become more innovative. The research purpose was to see if working artistically with a variety of media around organizational concerns could help employees question their habitual ways of seeing, knowing, and acting. The outcomes varied greatly. In some case the relationships resulted successfully, in other cases, the employees felt lost. On the basis of their study results, the authors introduce the notion of “sweet spots” where stakeholders can maintain a meaningful and dynamic balance between working artistically and business concerns.

The paper “Stimulating organizational creativity with theatrical improvisation” by Anna-Maija Nisula and Aino Kianto explores how theatrical improvisation, based on improvisational theatre training, could foster organizational creativity. On the basis of a qualitative action research, the authors argue that theatrical improvisation can be seen as a promising method to simultaneously stimulate both individual and collective creativity in an organization, and it can lead to sustainable changes at many levels of an organization.

Nina Bozic Yams in her paper “The impact of contemporary dance methods on innovative competence development” focuses on the topic of the development of employees’ innovative competence by means of dance based experiences. The study presents a 2-year participatory action research project at a Swedish municipality and shows how principles from contemporary dance and choreography can be used to design and implement long-term artistic interventions on a strategic level and enable employees’ innovative competence development. The results show that dance-based methods enabled participants to develop different innovative skills and strengthened their innovative competence.

In addition to being a management device to create aesthetic experiences within organizations, as well as to embed aesthetic properties into tangible and intangible organizational infrastructure and products, the arts can be seen as a body of knowledge, a new “terrain”, from where it is possible to draw inspirations to identify new organizational and business models that value the aesthetic, emotive and energetic dynamics of organizational life and activities. In such a view the arts can represent a management learning platform.

Mai Khanh Tran, Christina Goulding and Eric Shiu, in their paper “The orchestra of ideas: using music to enhance the ‘fuzzy front end’ phase of product innovation” by introducing music composition theory, offer a new perspective from which to understand the ‘fuzzy front end’ (FFE) phase of product innovation, i.e. the very first stage in which idea generation, idea screening, and concept development take place, with regard to both value outcomes and the innovation process. Especially, the authors attempt to answer the following questions: How can music enhance the FFE phase in which consumers are involved as the developers of ideas? How can music offer new approaches to values in FFE? How can music composition theory suggest the formation of FFE pathway? How can music be used as a stimulus for consumer co-creation in FFE? In such a prospect, focusing on ideas co-created by consumers, they draw on an ethnographic study to examine how young consumers tackled a real-life challenge to produce a digital product that would engage audiences in classical music.

With the rise of the use of arts-based methods to support individuals as well as organizational development and change, attention has been paid on how and why these methods work and, in turn, to explore mechanisms of action of arts in business value creation.

Mechanisms of action of the arts for business value creation

In the paper “Art infusion in retailing: the effect of art genres” Kelly Naletelich and Audhesh K. Paswan, investigate if the relationships between purchase intention and its antecedents (shopper, store and product characteristics) are affected by different genre of art (e.g., realist and abstract) in comparison to no art condition. The results indicate that presence of art, especially abstract art, does influence the relationships between purchase intention and its determinants.

Demah Alfakhri, David Harness, John D. Nicholson and Tina Harness in their article “The role of aesthetics and design in hotelscape: A phenomenological investigation of cosmopolitan consumers”, reflect about role that aesthetics and design can play in influencing behaviors of cosmopolitan hotel consumers within moments of consumption and propose the concept of *hotelscape* as a holistic evolution of the servicescape concept. They adopt an interpretive phenomenological approach to explore the lived experiences of art and design in a hotelscape and conclude that aesthetics and design can support marketing aspirations in hedonistic consumer groups.

Claus Springborg and Donna Ladkin, in the paper “Realising the potential of art-based interventions in managerial learning: embodied cognition as an explanatory theory” aim to shed more light on the mechanisms through which arts based interventions produce learning outcomes of value for organizations. They revisit the philosophy of art and education in light of developments in neuroscience known as “embodied cognition” and examine the role played by simulations in behavioral change and the way in which arts based interventions can foster the creation of simulations. They propose that Perceptual Symbol Systems (PSS) theory can be used to explain the mechanisms through which arts based interventions operate.

The paper “Value-creation Processes in Artistic Interventions and Beyond: Engaging Conflicting Orders of Worth” by Anke Strauß sheds more light on how to value arts based experiences. According to the author art world and the business organization sphere considerably differ in their values, codes, and practices and this implies that artistic interventions are involved with conflicting orders of worth. Moreover, according to the author, researchers often claim that tensions arising from these differences can add value in that they can be made productive for initiating changes in organizations. However, a meta-synthesis of evaluation studies carried out by the author shows that this is often not reflected on an organizational level. In light of this, it is proposed a shift from finding values added to engaging with processes of value creation. After demonstrating how researchers manage different orders of worth in evaluative studies by subsuming the inspirational world of art under an industrial order of worth, the paper introduces a different notion of evaluation that might support business organization members to create value from the experiences made with the art on an organizational level.

Final remarks

Several questions such as what are the main organizational domains benefiting from the use of arts based initiatives? How to plan and implement arts based initiatives for business and management purposes? How to evaluate the effects of introducing the arts in the organization? How and why the arts can be a management resource and source for organizational development? How can the adoption of an arts based perspective transform the management practice? Why should organizations integrate the arts into their business models? Represent still open questions that require further research investigations.

This special issue aims to provide a contribution to the development of the research field of the arts based management. Traditional attention has been paid on what business can offer to arts and culture, and the development of the art management has been focusing on the application of management principles, approaches, models and tools to run arts and cultural organizations. The arts based management distinguishes the arts as a knowledge domain that can inspire management and support management innovation. The collection of articles gathered in this special issue provides relevant perspectives from both theory and empirical point of view to understand the why, what and how the arts can contribute to organizational value creation mechanisms. However, the research field of arts based management is still in its infancy and further conceptual and empirical-based investigations are necessary in order to fully disclose how the arts and business can shape creative partnerships.

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