A logo for La Pigna

Maria Canepa (1), Adriano Magliocco (2)
Department Architecture and Design DAD (University of the Study of Genoa )
mail: 1) mariacanepa@arch.unige.it  2) magliocc@arch.unige.it

Abstract

Centers of resources and innovation for artistic crafts" (with the DAD part of the partnership, leader the Chambre des Métiers et de l'Artisanat Provence Alpes-Maritimes Cote d'Azur) aims to promote artistic craft activities, with the final goal to combine contemporary tools and processes with the creative abilities and the manual skills of artisans of the territories involved - Liguria, Sardegna, Corsica, Région PACA -. This article is focused on one particular activity that is intended to use artistic craft to redevelop the ancient Sanremo neighborhood called La Pigna, currently considered an unsafe neighborhood by its residents. This activity consists in a competition, launched in spring 2018 among the students of the Architecture and Design courses in Genoa, aiming to identify a "logo" for the future activities of the district La Pigna. This logo should recall the neighborhood morphological (from which the name derives) and a significant and recognizable graphic element.

Abstract

Oggetto del presente articolo è la relazione su una delle attività svolte nell’ambito del progetto INTERREG Marittimo Italia Francia denominato “ART LAB NET Centri di risorse e di innovazione per i mestieri d’arte” che ha come obiettivo la valorizzazione dell'artigianato artistico. Il progetto (con il DAD parte del partenariato, capofila la Chambre des Métiers et de l'Artisanat Provence Alpes-Maritimes Cote d'Azur) vede nell’artigianato artistico una esplicitazione delle tipicità dei territori di cooperazione del programma coinvolti - Liguria, Sardegna, Corsica, Région PACA - con volontà di sposare le capacità creative e le abilità manuali degli artigiani d’arte con strumenti e processi di crescita contemporanei. Una parte del progetto vede l’artigianato d’arte come forma di riqualificazione urbana e sociale dell’antico quartiere di Sanremo denominato La Pigna che ha vissuto un progressivo abbandono, ed oggi è un insediamento con molti problemi ma dal grande fascino. Si intende quindi contribuire ad una ridefinizione identitaria del luogo, oggi visto dagli abitanti del centro unicamente come luogo di attività illecite. Nella primavera del 2018 è stato lanciato un bando di concorso tra gli studenti dei corsi di studio di Architettura e Design di Genova con lo scopo di individuare un “logo” per le attività future del quartiere, che possa in qualche modo richiamare la sua singolarità morfologica (de un elemento grafico significativo e riconoscibile.
Introduction: the ART LAB NET Project - Centres de Ressources et d'innovation pour les Métiers d'Arts

ART LAB NET project has been funded by the Interreg Maritime Italy-France Program with the aim to help and support the craftsmanship – with a focus on artistic artisanship –, an economical sector that suffers from the globalized and globalizing context in which it is located. The artistic craft is a direct expression of the traditional culture of the territory and, in most of the regions included in the Interreg Marittime IT-FR program, it represents a component of the local economy that struggles to survive. As a consequence of this, many artisans are disappearing or are unable to transfer their know-how to next generations. This is happening even in areas where artistic craft maintains a strong role, with close ties to tradition, despite the appreciation of the public - as in Sardinia -.

The ART LAB NET project partnership consists of: Chambre des Métiers et de l’artisanat de la Région PACA (Provence and Côte d'Azur, VAR Department) as lead partner; Chambre des Métiers et de l’artisanat de la Corse; Sassari (Sardinia) Fine Arts Academy “Mario Sironi”; ARTIMANOS artistic crafts association (Sardinia); Insight Human Resources (consultancy – Sardinia and Liguria); Department Architecture and Design University of Genoa (Liguria); Pigna Mon Amour association (Sanremo, Liguria).

The project wants to combine craftsmen's creativity and manual skills with contemporary instruments and processes, and improve their communication and marketing skills. Based on a survey of the needs carried out on the project's territories, training activities and tutorials were offered and workshops organized. One point was to allow a better understanding of the digital tools useful for the communication and for selling products. In order to innovate and stimulate production capacities and to attract the new generations in a little known work, four Resource Centres were funded. These Centres are laboratories able to host advanced machinery, like a sort of Fab Lab, with 3D printers, laser cutter, allowing old and new artisans to experiment and hybridize traditional production technologies. These Resource Centres are very different from each other, related to different management organizations. The two Chambre des Métiers are organisms created for the training and support of artisan companies, with public funds and offices. In Sardinia, the Resource Centre is divided in two seats, one is a big Laboratory managed by the Fine Arts Academy in Sassari, a place where to experiment and to prototype objects. The other one is in Cagliari and it is a place where artisans can attend seminars and sell, collectively, some of their products in the city centre (most of Sardinian craftmans have labs located near their home and out of the city centres of the main touristic cities, due to the high rent costs). The fourth Resource Canter is in the old part of Sanremo city, named La Pigna (that means The Pine Cone), and is managed by Pigna Mon Amour (PMA), an Association for the cultural promotion of the old historic centre of Sanremo called "Pigna". The activities conducted by ARTIMANOS and PMA need project funds to be numerous and effective because usually they are self-financed and people work for them as volunteers.

Craftmanship and city requalification
Cities have always been the place for economic and cultural opportunities. The artisinal objects are direct expression of their history and traditional expertise. We are facing a generalized crisis
in the redevelopment of historic centres, but we can hypothesize that today craft can be an instrument for their redevelopment. In the cities where the historical centres have survived with limited levels of gentrification, rent prices have remained affordable. In these spaces, on the ground floor, we can still often find small shops. Some experiences in Italy seem to support this hypothesis.

The Association Free Artist Craftsmen Balarm of Palermo (Alab) is an example of symbiotic relationship between territory and craft activities, with about eighty laboratories and three hundred members involved. Their manifesto states: "We create a diffused network of microeconomics for the urban redevelopment of the territory". "We spread creative craftsmanship as economic and cultural innovation in squares, in schools, training both the youngest and those trying to make a real alternative." The Association aims to create a space of cultural initiatives that would lead to cultural development by encouraging art and crafts. According to the members of Alab, artistic craftsmanship is a fundamental economic and productive resource, which led the association to conceive a path of rebirth within the historic centre of Palermo that is at risk of abandonment. An itinerary has been defined for citizens and tourists to discover the artistic and craft work and to distinguish it from industrial product, enhancing a profession in which handcraft and intellect meet and where the artisan manage the entire production process.

Another example is the Perugia historic centre, where in 2009 the cultural association "Artisan shops of the historic centre" was set up by promoting artistic craft activities both traditional and innovative. The historic centre is an ideal place for its artistic importance, wanting to disseminate, protect and communicate the culture, the craftsmanship and its product.

Another initiative comes from Finale Ligure: in order to promote and enhance art and craftsmanship, a few years ago, the “Fatto a Mano” Finalborgo association (that means: made by hand) was established. Finalborgo is the medieval historical centre (but the foundation date back several centuries earlier) of the coastal town of Finale Ligure. In 2014, the “Fatto a mano” head office was conceived to promote manual work and ancient crafts through the products created by artisans and guest artists, creating opportunities to show their skills and their creativity, demonstrating and exposing their creations rigorously made by hand and involving the public with courses or workshops.

These initiatives – others could be mentioned - often arises during public projects aimed at recovering the most degraded portions of the urban territory, favouring the establishment of new economic activities or supporting the existing ones. These projects are not always able to activate self-generating mechanisms and it is necessary that the new entrepreneurs are able to maintain competitiveness. ART LAB NET aims to establish a lasting collaboration between Resources Centres and artistic artisans involved even after the project will be over. In fact, in the case of artistic craftsmanship, the difficulty in sustaining all the costs that a small-scale production and commercial activity requires bring this activity more and more towards seasonal work. A solution is to provide services to artisans at reasonable costs. A temporary activity, linked solely to the festive days "markets", induces artisans to begin "operators of their own talent" that is a category that can sell works in a limited number of public events a year. This "temporariness", as well as being difficult to control from the fiscal point of view, has the consequent difficulty for the artisan to grow, to form himself, and subsequently transfer his
artistic skills to new generations. A consequence is that historical centres are going to be empty of craft and commercial activities, exposing themselves to degradation or, at best, to an intense gentrification.

**La Pigna district**

A specific part of the project sees the art and craft as a form of social redevelopment - and, consequently, of building recovery - of the old Sanremo district, called La Pigna. This strange name comes from the form of its planimetry, where the paths form the scales of a pine cone. The district was founded around 1000s and consolidated until the 1500s. After the boom of flowers cultivation and in Sanremo, it has seen a progressive abandonment that left it almost without human and economic resources, but allowed a substantial crystallization, so that today we are witnesses of a historic settlement of great charm, still almost inviolate. The district continued to expand and strengthen until 1500 to defend itself from pirate attacks. One of the entrances of La Pigna is the door of Santo Stefano, a stone arch in Gothic style that represents a point of connection between the old city and the new one. The residential area develops on the hill, on concentric circles, with covered passages, courtyards, arches and stairways. The district is located above sea level; at the top of the hill stands the sanctuary of the Madonna della Costa, a reference point for navigators from 1630, when it was finished, on an original small oratory from 1200. The evocative late-medieval Piazza della Cisterna (literally “tank-square”), which once was a district of artisans, is an example of urban wisdom, since the lack of water was solved with a complex system of collection and sorting of rainwater in subterranean tank. Not inferior in importance is Piazza dei Dolori (fig.1), where the oratory of San Sebastiano (1502) and the palace of the Genoese family Gentile-Spinola are located. Another peculiar characteristic of the neighbourhood are the Rivolte (fig.2), wonderful porticoed passages made up of medieval walls that connect Piazza dei Dolori to the door of Santo Stefano (Vulpio, 2016).

**Fig.1 Piazza dei Dolori**

**Fig.2 Le Rivolte**

Despite the great historical and cultural values, the buildings of La Pigna have been gradually
abandoned. Most of the ground floors are closed and remain unused, with few activities, mainly commercial, like bar, restaurant, brocanterie, and almost none of craft-shops. Art Lab Net project tries to face this problem opening the "Textile and digital fabrication" Resource Centre, developed by the Pigna Mon Amour association, looking for or training new artisans. This could be an opportunity for bringing back new small commercial businesses to the district, essential for the survival of La Pigna. In addition, due to the desire to keep intact the historical memory of the district, from which its charm derives, a short workshop on the restoration of the plaster was organized for the students from the School of Specialization in architectural and landscape heritage. The activities are filmed to witness the development of the project that will end this spring. The Resource Centre focuses on tailoring mainly, profiting by the presence in La Pigna of many unemployed women, some from North Africa countries, already used to sewing. For this reason the association members and sympathizers considered more profitable and simple to implement, as a first activity of the resource centre, some sewing and tailoring courses. Particular attention was given to the concept of "ethical fashion", organizing a seminar day "Fashion, style and lifestyle". To support the promotion of the Resource Centre, the Department of Architecture and Design (DAD), together with the Association Pigna Mon Amour, announced a competition for students to define the logo of La Pigna, to be used to promote products sewn in the district.

La Pigna’s logo competition

In February 2018 the Department of Architecture and Design (DAD), together with the Association Pigna Mon Amour, published a call for student “La Pigna’s logo competition”, with the aim to find a logo that can promote La Pigna district. The participation in the competition was numerous, thirty different logo proposals arrived, evaluated by a selected jury. The jury was formed by the authors (Magliocco, Canepa), directly involved in the project, by a representative of the Association Pigna Mon Amour Carlo Terzi, restorer, and by the Professor Ruggiero Torti, graphic and communication expert.

In order to find appropriate evaluation criteria, the jury referred to the characteristics that a logo must have. The word logo comes from the Greek word lógos, which in turn comes from léghein, “choose, tell, enumerate, talk”. Because of that a logo should represent a product, a service or a company. It is the readable and pronounceable part of a brand, in another words is the visual signature of a brand. The logo can be formed exclusively from the logotype and therefore can be represented by a lettering that reproduces a phonetics expression (such as Coca Cola, IBM, Zara or ASUS), or can be composed of a pictogram, an ideogram, a monogram, an acronym or a combination of these with the logotype. (Budelmann et. al., 2013). Another element to consider when creating a logo is the colour. Colour is a fundamental element of the visual code that helps in understanding reality, it is part of the DNA of all living beings and conveys mood by providing information that acts on the nervous system, influencing perceptions, judgments and sensations. Red is the most used colour in graphics because it transmits vitality, passion and a large amount of positive sensations such as love. It is the colour that most of all stimulates excitement and impulsiveness and is in fact used in many sales signs in shop windows to tempt to purchase. Black, as well as white, can be combined (almost) with any colour. The most elegant combination is the one between black and white. The black colour, however, must be used with great care because it is very heavy and conveys a high-risk range of emotions. In any case it remains a symbol of elegance and therefore suitable for
products and brands related to fashion, perfumes, art or design (Healey, 2012). The evaluation criteria selected concerned different characteristics which must have an effective logo, even in relation to the activities of the Resources Centre. First of all, the effectiveness: the logo had to be functional and attractive; many proposals have tried to start from the suggestion of the pine cone, referring to the shape of the neighbourhood, trying to synthesize its geometric characteristics, or on the contrary, emphasizing its urban characteristics. The second aspect is the consistency of the logo with the aim of the project: it was important that the logo was focused on tailoring as well as on promoting the neighbourhood. The third aspect was the originality: the logo had to offer a different point of view than the logos previously used by the association. The fourth aspect was the reproducibility: the logo had to be used in different formats and be applied to various products, like dresses, hats, t-shirts, posters, stamps, without losing its definition and quality. The last aspect was the versatility: the logo had to be suitable for the various activities of the centre. Each criterion could reach a maximum score between 15 and 25, for a total of 100 points. The winning project, elected with 90 points, was created by Elena Geria and Alessandro Chilosi, both students in architecture of the Department of Architecture and Design. Their design, starting from the shape of the pine cone, consists of triangular geometric elements, and thanks to its simplicity it allows the reproduction of the logo in different scales and colours. They proposed the logo in two versions: a red one and a black one initially without lettering and name study, added later after the association request.

Fig.3 The Pigna’s Logo by Elena Geria and Alessandro Chilosi

Conclusion
The *Homo faber* (Sennett, 2008) is a maker, a creator, a judge of labour and material arts. He is
the worker with the obsession for quality, that is the craftsman. Many men with the obsession for quality would therefore be able to face the re-establishment of a neighbourhood like La Pigna understanding its meaning. The challenge is to promote the neighbourhood without exceeding with the territorial marketing strategies that could transfigure it. The new logo La Pigna is not yet a brand, but it could be an evocative image of the activity of a group of people who want to focus on the neighbourhood without commercialise it. The first use of the logo will be to distinguish home sartorial products, made by the participants in the tailoring courses organized by the association Pigna Mon Amour within the project ART LAB NET. The goal is to bring some of the course participants to a level of ability that allows them to open a craft business based in the neighbourhood.

References
Vulpio C. (2016). L’Italia nascosta, Skira, Milano