

## **PROBLEMS REGARDING ART INSTITUTION MANAGEMENT**

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*Summary: The present paper represents a short analysis of the cultural phenomenon consisting in the managerial limitations existing in contemporary cultural institutions in Romania. The paper does not aim to give solutions of “cultural benefaction”, it only indicates the vulnerable points, the role of managerial cohabitation and the role of the artistic liberties of the artist in general. Built around the field of the musical arts, the paper aims to enter the management mechanism, to analyze it and to look for its determining roles. The authors leave the readers the freedom to find their own possible solutions to current situations as well as alternatives to different financial and managerial difficulties.*

### **About the artist and his reclusion in art institutions**

Ever since God created the world, man has been drawn to beauty, the sublime, adoration. Amongst the spiritual gifts, man has found in art an opportunity to adore, a joy and satisfaction for beauty. The Genesis speaks about Jubal who plays a musical instrument. Later, artifacts become worship objects, the idols that God’s law forbid, but which people love and adore.

Until today art has remained a field of organization and order, the chaos and the mess being representative of a fleeting modernism, but still orderly in matters of organization and finance. The artist’s favourite place is the corner of individuality, of the creative artistic personality, who needs support in organizational matters, and which is offered by art institutions today.

Due to the specificity of the artist’s personality – creative, who generally presents oneself freestanding, needing for his work only certain materials and inspiration (a practical example: writers, composers and artists, who generally start belonging to a group as a result of their work of art), the present paper will analyze all the organizational issues that appear in art institutions. The paper does not aim to offer solutions, but only to signal positive and negative

aspects in managing contemporary Romanian institutions, where the administration is still based on an outdated, communist system.

The creative process, which has never been understood completely, is a long process until it reaches its receivers. They are, undoubtedly, a special category of educated people in the sense that they have gained the capacity to understand a certain product: the work of art (according to the old communist desideratum, of the *new person*, capable of producing art and artistic events coordinated by an oppressive system). It goes without saying that the main purpose of those who pass the artistic product and facilitate the relationship artist-receiver has to be to educate the masses in the sense that they should engage a numerous participation, and not promote “exclusiveness” of access from experts (the latter being considered enemies of society in communism, sadly a phenomenon that still continues today).

In this respect, art institutions, similar to Stalin’s ideas, need a scientific basis for their artistic act, which is a field belonging to artistic management. Insufficiently studied, communist artistic management is the matter of study in this paper. Without the intention of exhausting the subject, out of reasons concerning insufficient space and delicate subject matters related to the freedom of the creative artist, who is still limited and incarcerated by the dry selection of AFCN-type projects, or other similar institutions. This survey and its rationale will try to tackle certain issues that artistic management, which is such a subjective area which is in urgent need of freelance managers who are capable of understanding art in its European acceptance, without confinements and administrative constraints, too often managed by communism shaped amateurs, is confronted with. Understanding and mostly accepting this need will contribute to putting art institutions on the right track, to enhancing their present results which should lead to the efficiency of the process of free, unchecked creation capable of creating Romanian cultural contemporary trend.

Irrespective of the specific activity of an institution, the process which sets the “central element” of the entire activity is the management process. Its quality and efficiency establish, to a great extent, the success and quality of the participation of the entire organization to the process of attaining its specific objectives, which characterizes art which is free of red tape constraints. In this context we will try to explain the two terms, of management and culture, in the context of the need to associate them.

## **Management and the art institution – conceptual boundaries**

### **Management and culture**

The art and science of leadership, the management which is free of performance, is the process which envisages the attainment of pre-established aims, so that this challenge is met with free (not shallow) artistic managerial application which has maximum result. This process involves combining all the data and information that come from the present cultural environment and organization and converting them in a set of strategies, decision, policies that serve the organization's main purpose and last but not least cultural and financial profit. This challenge is specific to the economic field, but also to artistic performance.

The artistic field, a field of human life characterized by subjectivity, both from the point of view of the creator and the receiver, asks for management involvement in order to attain objectives which are totally different from those in the field of economy, endeavouring to promote value, that is non-profit. Peter F. Drucker asserted: *"Management, in its present form, appeared firstly in big economic organizations. We soon realized that management is necessary in all modern organization, whether they are economic or not. In fact, we realized that management is much more necessary in organizations with a different profile, such as those that do not pursue financial profit (the so-called social field), or in state institutions. They need management particularly because they are not subjected to the discipline imposed by benefit and loss."*<sup>1</sup>

The two fields that the concepts management and culture belong to are antagonistic in their essence, in a contemporary approach. The science of leadership, management is part of the economic field, characterized by objectivity and practicality, pursuing profit and productivity. The field of culture, which art belongs to as a sub-field, has the role to guide human society towards cultural and moral value, towards cultivating thoughtfulness and entertainment, as part of human spirituality. These fundamental differences between the two fields apply to the beginning of the development of managerial thinking. At present, once all the stages have been gone through, it is thought that management is based on making decisions not only based on scientific methods, but also intuitively, by motivating the staff and by practicing a method which relies on involving the human resources in the process of aim attainment. At present we can notice that cultural institutions rely exclusively on economic tendencies. The meeting point between management and culture is represented by elements of cultural institution management. Taking into account the specificity of the "product" of these

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<sup>1</sup> Zecheru, B. *Management in culture*, second edition revised and augmented, Publisher "International Letter", Bucharest, 2002, pg. 20 (Drucker, P. F. *Managing the Non-Profit Organization*, Butterworth – Heinemann, 1990)

institutions, one cannot ignore the importance of setting the management of this type of institutions on scientific grounds even with extremely difficult consequences for their activity. Being defined as a leading process, management activity is present in all forms of human association. Apart from the relationship established between the management and the organization itself, one should take into account the relationship of the organization with the environment it leads its activity. Thus the substance of management suffers variations, its essence being the same. In the same train of ideas, the management of a cultural institution has certain peculiarities which are specific to its field, as well as to the environment it is part of. Taking into account the fact that nowadays the dynamics of change of the social environment is extremely active, there is need of a maximum attention approach, full of resilience and managerial thoughtfulness so that culture can offer a cultural “product” which is adequate for the contemporary Romanian society.

The management of art institutions should be orientated towards the attainment of certain aims which are totally different from the economic ones, becoming an instrument for musical or artistic education in state cultural organizations, associations and NGOs. The influences of a scientific management approach in these organizations can be noticed in setting the creative process on the track of well organized activities, by making running and development decisions pursuing the attainment of specific aims: creating and promoting authentic value.

The science of management can be applied to any type of organization. However, we can easily notice that certain organizations, associations and NGOs have a managerial resilience, while there is a certain immobility in the case of state institutions which are not open towards diversified forms of the musical culture. Thus, different philharmonics, opera houses and variety theatres consider an elastic approach of a diversified repertoire in terms of music genres to be an impiety. There is a certain repertoire stubbornness and the so-called “classical” approach is considered to be a justification for maintaining a sometimes extremely severe traditional course. There are, however, mass-media type approaches, for the masses, when the music performance is placed in non-conventional spaces such as the airport, parks, public squares, etc. In this respect, the example of Banatul Philharmonics of Timisoara, which organized performances in the street or other spaces, even disused factories, had the expected effect, the audience inflow being related to the effort put into organizing these events.

### **About managerial concepts manageriale in art**

One can notice two characteristics of the development of the process of specialization of management namely the evolution from the firm management, which pursues profit maximization, towards social institution management (non-profit), and the scientification of the management process. According to Samuel Certo, the management is “... *the process of attaining the organization objectives working with and with the help of people and capitalizing the other organizational resources.*”<sup>2</sup>

In Ovidiu Nicolescu's point of view, the process of management consist in “...*the set of stages, the processes that lead to establishing the aims (of the organization o.n) and other contained subsystems, the resources and work processes which are necessary to attain them, as well as their enforcers, by means of which the work of the personnel is integrated and controlled using a complex of methods and techniques pursuing the most effective realization of the reasons for which the respective organization was established.*”<sup>3</sup>

Corneliu Russu defines the management process as being: “*the action performed by a subject (leader) on his object (system being lead: undertaking, activity, compartment, workplace, etc.) in order to keep its state of efficiency and stability within a certain structure, to adapt it to the changes in the its existence conditions and to make it evolve from a state of existence to a desired state according to a set of pre-established objectives ... The actions taken by the subject of the management according to the contents of stages in management represents its functions, while the sum of the respective functions forms the contents of the management process.*”<sup>4</sup>

The management process can also be defined by the way in which, using the resources of a certain organization, one established the aims to be attained, organizes and plans the amount of work that is necessary in order to attain the objectives, trains, motivates the personnel and in the end checks the results, adjusting them in such a way as to attain the objectives with maximum efficiency and effectiveness. This challenge involves the four main functions of management: planning, organizing, leading (training and motivating) and control. According to some experts, these functions are: forecasting, organization, coordination, training and control. The vision that this paper adopts is that according to which there are four functions of management, as listed above.

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<sup>2</sup> Zecheru, B. *Management in culture*, second edition revised and augmented, Publisher "International Letter", Bucharest, 2002, pg. 50 (Certo, S. *Modern Management*, Sixth Edition, Allyn & Bacon, Boston 1994)

<sup>3</sup> Nicolescu, O. & Verboncu, I., *Management*, Economic Publishing House, Bucharest, 1999

<sup>4</sup> Russu, C., *Management*, Technical Publishing House, Bucharest, 1996

The planning is the function of management that involves establishing a set of objectives as well as the best ways to attain them, including taking into account what needs to be done in order to encourage change and improvement.

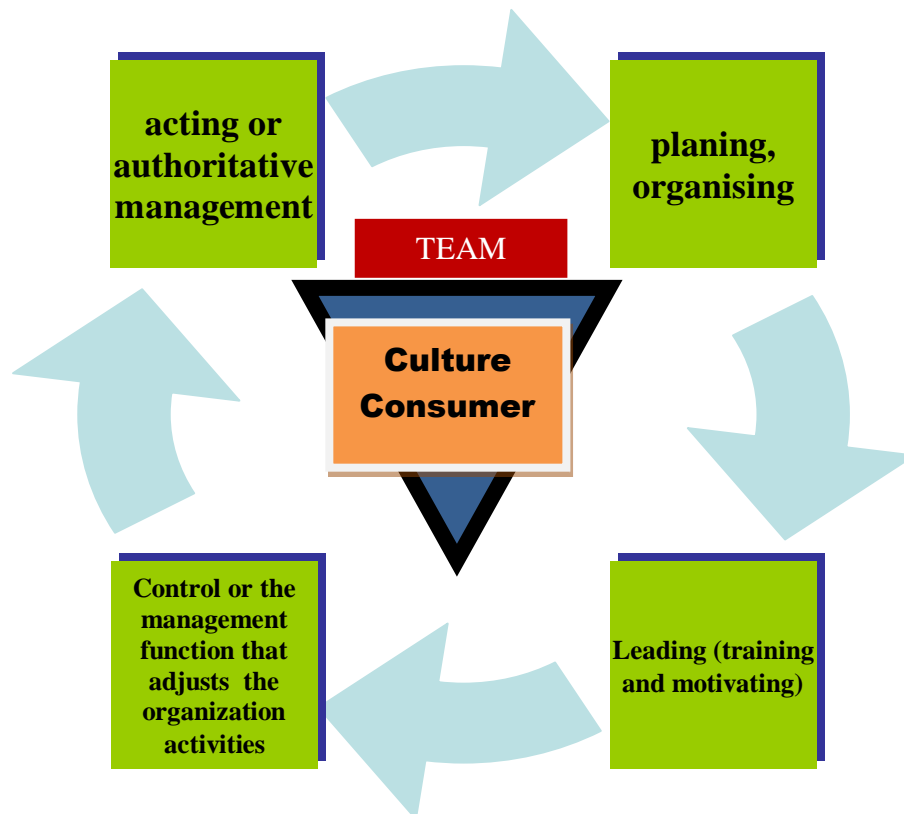
The organization is the function of management which assigns, arranges, adjusts human and non-human resources so that the plans are carried into effect in optimum and successful conditions. By means of this function managers establish the tasks to be carried out, which of the tasks cover a certain job – workplace – and the way these workplaces can be grouped into units, compartments or departments that make up the structure of the organization. this function also describes the authoritativeness and the way responsibilities are given.

The leading (training and motivating) is the management function which is based on influencing the other members of the company to get involved in work related behaviour and attitudes which are necessary to attaining the organization aims. This function involves communication of the management with other members of the organization in order to draft and design the general frame regarding the things that can be done, guiding and motivating the members of the organization to make the necessary effort to fulfill the tasks of their job as well as attaining the objectives of the organization.

The control is the management function that consists in adjusting the organization's activities so that real performance is in accordance with the desired standards. In order to attain the necessary adjustment, managers need to carefully monitor all the activities, to compare the results and performance with the expected outcomes, or the progress made in attaining the objectives, as well as to take all the necessary readjustment measures.

Management is a dynamic, flexible process – due to the permanent need of adjustment, especially in the case of an environment characterized by hiperturbulence. It is also a cyclic process, its stages are repeated with a certain rhythmicity, this process taking place in gradual succession of its stages. As far as the functions that managers have within a certain organization are concerned, the managerial activity takes place at certain level: the technical level, which corresponds to the acting or authoritative (the invigilators) management – the lowest level of management which involves a busy activity making sure that tasks are fulfilled responsibly and correctly; the managerial level, which corresponds to the middle management, consisting in coordinating and monitoring the work of the invigilators with the help of verbal interaction mainly; the institutional level, where the top management is and where decisions are made regarding the aims of the organization and the most appropriate strategies to attain those aims.

The present management is based on a “reversed pyramid” according to which the activity of the entire organization is dedicated to serving the consumer. A special emphasis is put on team work. Good managers offer their help and support to their employees, they do not only give orders.



The objective of artistic management is to discover and apply those organizational models that lead to the effectiveness of the artistic activity socially and on the market economy. This objective can be attained with the help of management experts whose scientific knowledge can “combine” with information which is specific to the music field. The characteristic of this field, namely the fact that the “product” of art institutions is less tangible, makes it more difficult to control the results, which most often than not are appreciated extremely subjectively. The manager has the task to monitor and coordinate the managerial process taking into account the fact that the staff of an artistic institution is rather difficult to deal with due to their professional formation and to the artist’s specific sensitivity. For all these reasons a good manager in the artistic field need to have a number of qualities based on intrapersonal



communication which help them establish good collaboration relationships with the staff, mediating conflicts and misunderstanding that appear more frequently within this community.

### **A new perspective in musical art institutions management**

The present paper refers to the latter meeting point between management and culture, referring strictly to the field of music. The art institutions compete with a large number of associations and NGOs, which, in their turn, have sometimes an exceptional musical offer. Live concerts with famous personalities, and especially the large number of festivals ranging from the Renaissance and the Baroque to modern music, belonging to the most varied genres, represent a serious competitor for the state institution. Sometimes we notice an attachment and stagnation in old traditions, which leads to the appearance of phrases like *music museum* or, even more pejoratively *music fossils*. Such *music zoo museums* with mammoths and pre-historic performances, with sets that are typical for the 30s or 40s, with a repertoire which is restricted to the Romantic nostalgic world only serves a small audience who is equally nostalgic and out of date, so that the state institution does not honour its role which consists in producing and “selling” contemporary artistic values.

The aims of the art institution are, on the one hand, to promote value, and on the other hand to survive as a music institution, being impossible to ignore the financial factor. Thus, it can be noticed that it is necessary to ensure a bicephalous management, which strives for the attainment of the two fundamental objectives stated above: art and the culture consumer. In this way, if the economic management is involved in managing the financial part of the institution, this type of institution urgently needs a manager who specializes in the respective artistic field, who has the necessary artistic management knowledge, who is a contemporary of what goes on at a global scale as well as in his country. From this point of view, the majority of art institutions suffer from a “go with the flow” type of managerial approach, which is not based on scientific principles, this type of management leading, in the end, to the appearance of activity syncopes. This is the case of the majority of music state institutions within the country. The nomination of certain managers, who sometimes have no expertise in the field, the political award consisting in being offered the job of a manager is not only a managerial disaster but also an anachronistic and void mindset.

In another train of thought, music art institutions represent relatively simple organisations, which are usually financed by state grants and sponsorship, whose role is to promote artistic



contemporary Romanian values. Such an organisation can be defined by: the group of employees, the techno-material and financial mechanism; the aim and artistic goal; legal status which establishes the existence frame. Like any type of organisation, the art institution can be described in different variants. It has to be considered as an open social – humanistic system where its relationship with different components of its environment is noticeable: banks, sponsors, contractors, clients, audience, mass-media, etc. Due to its mostly operational characteristic a music art institution needs to permanently adapt to the environment conditions it continuously interacts with. From the point of view of its structure, the activity of a music art institution depends to a great extent on the relationships between its departments, on its informative structure as well as on the quality of its management. The way the organization is structured represents one of the main management instruments which essentially contribute to supporting the effort of attaining its pre-established goals. The art institution can be considered an instrument in attaining one of its missions namely to give the artist the possibility to express himself and to circulate such values.

Like any other type of organization, the culture institution needs resources in order to be able to deploy its activity. These are made up of, like in the case of a economic structure, human, material, financial and informational resources which contribute to the making of the specific “product”. Such an institution develops around the creative artist, who is free of political constraints, where art and only art is the essential component of the process of creation. Personality who is driven by a strong sense of individualism, motivated by the thirst for celebrity, the creator can freely deploy his activity only in an environment which offers the freedom of expression. Within the art institution, by means of his projects, the creator capitalizes the other organization resources with the help of the manager who understand the artistic process of the musician performer, his needs and his battles with his own performances, in other words, a manager who knows how to run not by means of internal manoeuvres and uninterrupted intrigues, but by applying the art of modern leadership and artistic management, adequate to crisis situations and capable of solving any type of institutional conflict.

In this context the financial support is indispensable to any artistic project. The problem of lack of funds for artistic projects is responsible for the precarious conditions the management activity takes place in an art institution. The state is the one which ensures the majority of funds, allowances and subventions. Some supranational institutions such as: UNESCO, The Council of Europe, The European Union, etc. also grant funds for art projects. Arts

institutions also have a proper financial contribution by means of the income obtained from the activities they conduct, but this contribution is insignificant as compared to the financial resources that they need. Economically speaking there is no profit as a result of the allotment of these funds to the art institution. The effects of creation and artistic performances appear in time and are beneficial for society in the sense of enriching the spiritual heritage of mankind. Sponsorship, as an act of modern financial support takes place through funds transfer with a precise destination: artistic events and projects. The sponsor benefits from fiscal amenities by reducing the tax basis and getting an advertisement advantage. In order to attract sponsors the manager of the art institution has a special role participating in establishing the legal frame so that the sponsorship is advantageous for economic agents, being aware and constantly evaluating the financial needs of the organization, identifying and approaching potential sponsors, developing partnership relationships with efficient and potential sponsors.

The material factors of an arts institution are represented by movables and real estate which form its patrimony. The responsibility to administer and use the institution patrimony belongs to the manager who will establish certain rules for his employees. The process of artistic creation is different from the technical – scientific one and based on the type of information, it is an important factor that contributes to the artistic “production”. The latter is distinguished by outage due to the enrichment of human knowledge it need high costs when accessed, the reuse of information being possible at any moment.

The previously mentioned factors are transformed into “products” by means of an internal process which combines two types of activities: activities which are specific to the process of management and activities which are specific to the production process.

## **Conclusions**

The main decisional factor within an art institution, the manager should pay attention to two different categories of aims: artistic and economic. The regulation of the management process is a continuous process, by acknowledging the continuous feedback coming from the environment as well as from the operation department. The manager should also guide the organization by elaborating plans, strategies and should try to implement them in order to attain the expected results. The management is totally responsible for the internal process and for the performances of the organization. The manager should also improve his communication abilities, as the aims can be achieved with the help of the people.

The process of music production in an arts institution, the artistic creation is meant to produce as well as to promote authentic values in the world. The creation and circulation of values are complementary and reciprocally conditioned. “*The creation travels so that, once it has been taken in, to become, in its turn, the condition of a new creation ...*”<sup>5</sup>

These two fundamental processes, the management process and the execution process are not exclusive. Their coexistence within an art institution offers the guarantee of performance by the organization. Within the art institution the focus is, like in any other type of organization, on efficient management, which aims to maximize the results and minimize the efforts. As a last resort, during a period of transition the music phenomena are continuously changing are adjusting. It depends on us how we perceive this aspect and how much we care until we find the means and mechanisms that lead us to success.

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