

PARADIGMS AND SYMPTOMS

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HOW IS HANGAR GOVERNED?

Artistic activism and associativism. The foundation of AAVC

One of the stereotypes that weigh on visual artists refers to their ancestral individualism, their associative incapacity, and their scepticism towards any form of collective action. However, in the Spanish State, despite the limitations on freedom of assembly and expression during late Francoism, collectives of creators were formed focusing on the defence of corporate aspects, as well as mobilised formations in the anti-Franco struggle that went beyond that scope to interconnect artistic practices with socio-political reality. Starting in the 1980s, some initiatives promoting the transformation of the operative and projective space of art also emerged (such as Lunatic Workshop (*Taller Lunàtic*), Union of Imaginary Jobs (*Sindicato de Trabajos Imaginarios*), Beginning Group (*Grupo Inicio*), P Space (*Espacio P*), or The Atomic Eye (*El Ojo Atómico*)).

The end of the Francoist dictatorship, the Transition, and the arrival of democracy allowed for a renewal of the artistic scene. One of the chosen strategies was the union of many left-leaning artists, «where the prominence of the Communist Party of Spain [PCE], still in clandestinity, was always dominant» (García, 1986). In this way, the Union of Popular Artists (*Unión Popular de Artistas (UPA)*) was created in Madrid in 1970. The UPA particularly brought together musicians and actors, as well as artists like the collective The Family of Lavapiés (*La Familia de Lavapiés*) (Vindel, 2017). The first organised collective specifically sectorial in nature was born in 1971 under the name Promotor of Visual Activities (*Promotora de Actividades Plásticas S.A (APSA)*). It was established as a joint-stock company to overcome the Francoist administration's refusal to create an association of visual artists in Madrid (Marzo, 2015). After its legalisation in 1977, APSA changed its name to the Trade Union Association of Visual Artists (*Asociación Sindical de Artistas Plásticos (ASAP)*). This association focused on defending the commercial, expressive, labour, union, and social

rights of artists, the abolition of censorship, freedom of expression and assembly, and amnesty for visual artists.

In the Catalan context, discussions about the foundation of an artists' association began within the Permanent Assembly of Catalan Intellectuals (*Assemblea Permanent d'Intel·lectuals Catalans*) (1970-1975), a political and cultural platform that brought together intellectuals identified with the anti-Franco opposition. In the mid-1970s, the Democratic Assembly of Girona Artists (*Assemblea Democràtica d'Artistes de Girona*) (1976-1978) was established, transcending sectoral demands to focus on organising artists and integrating their practices into the struggle for social and national freedoms. This entity served as a model for the Assembly of Garrotxa Artists (*Assemblea d'Artistes de la Garrotxa*) (1976-1978) and the Secretariat of Barcelona Artists (*Secretariat d'Artistes de Barcelona*) (1976). Among the goals of the Secretariat was to raise awareness among the population to advance in the recovery of local institutions (Selles, 2017).

The Barcelona Bar Association organised a series of activities between 1975 and 1978 aimed at studying and promoting Catalan culture, known as the Congress of Catalan Culture (*Congrés de Cultura Catalana*). Within this framework, a specific section for the plastic arts was created in 1977, facilitating the self-organisation of a group of left-leaning artists to establish the Unionised Federation of Visual Artists of Catalonia (*Federació Sindical d'Artistes Plàstics de Catalunya* (FSAPC)) in 1978. Alongside delegates from associations and federations in Madrid, Andalusia, Aragon, Alicante, Castilla and León, the FSAPC, in the same year, founded the Unionised Federation of Visual Artists (*Confederación Sindical de Artistas Plásticos* (CSAP)) of the Spanish state, from where the first studies on professional issues of a labour and legal nature were developed. Among its objectives, one can mention promoting the creation of associations where they did not exist, the Draft Law on the status of visual artists, and a conglomerate of legal provisions concerning copyright that coincided with the restructuring of the Spanish Society of Authors and Publishers (*Sociedad General de Autores y Editores* (SGAE)). The SGAE, under the influence of the Communist Party, advocated for rights of exploitation rights for work by its member authors. The various associations or federations of artists continued their activities in the 1980s with varying success based on their economic capabilities and government support. In Catalonia, during the first government of Jordi Pujol, with Max Cahner as the Minister of Culture, the transfer of competencies from the central government began. The FSAPC then drafted an outline of a policy for the plastic arts (1981) and organised the sessions that laid the foundation for coordinated action with gallery owners and art critics: "Art in Catalonia in Debate" (*L'Art a Catalunya a Debat*) (Girona,

1983). Shortly before this, they created their first dissemination organ, the magazine *A: Publication of the Unionised Federation of Visual Artists of Catalonia* (*A: publicació de la Federació Sindical d'Artistes Plàstics de Catalunya*) (1982-1988). These initiatives were complemented by the study "Art and Law" (*Art i Dret*) on legislation regarding visual arts. Presented as a seminar (Barcelona, 1986) and published as a book (1991), it contains an extensive analysis of the Intellectual Property Law passed in 1987. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, the FSAPC focused its activities on reforming copyright legislation, participating in the creation of the rights management society for the visual arts sector, VEGAP (Visual Artists' Management Organisation (*Visual Entidad de Gestión de Artistas Plásticos*)), in 1990.

In the post-Olympic era, the FSAPC underwent a reorganisation, becoming the Association of Visual Artists of Catalonia (*Associació d'Artistes Visuals de Catalunya* (AAVC)) in 1994. This change in structure and name was prompted by the creation of MACBA. Presided over by sculptor Susana Solano, the AAVC amended its statutes to include artists working in areas such as video art, performance, or emerging electronic arts. A year later, the collective released a report on the visual arts policy of the Generalitat of Catalonia (1991-1994), conducted a survey on contemporary art policy in municipalities with over 15,000 inhabitants, and published the first report on cases of censorship in the visual arts (1995). In 1996, sculptor Sergi Aguilar was elected as president. Florenci Guntín explains the reasons behind the launch of Hangar, created that same year and inaugurated the following year in one of the industrial buildings of the Can Ricart complex (Poblenou): «**The FSAP was already aware of the problem, then incipient, of the shortage of space for the majority of artists.**» Pep Dardanyà recounts that one of the most persistent actions since the transformation of FSAPC into AAVC «**was to pressure the administrations to jointly find workspaces for artists, especially younger ones. Due to real estate speculation, they were beginning to have difficulties securing studios in the city centre.**» At the same time, the AAVC proposed the creation of the Advisory Council of Visual Arts (*Consell Assessor d'Arts Plàstiques*) of the Generalitat of Catalonia, of which it would be a part until, in February 2000, it withdrew its representatives in protest against the meagre resources allocated to contemporary art and advocated for changing the public culture management model with the establishment of an Arts Council (*Consell de les Arts*). The arrival of Francesc Torres as president of the AAVC in 2002 marked a boost in that direction. The association, along with other entities, founded the Cultural Platform for an Arts Council (*Plataforma de la Cultura per a un Consell de les Arts*), a civic movement that participated in drafting studies and bills for the future National Council for Culture and Arts (*Consell Nacional de la Cultura i de les Arts* (CoNCA)).

The AAVC advocated that the development of art and culture should not be left in the hands of the market, striving for public administration resources to approach European standards. It acted as an interlocutor to secure fair and balanced treatment for artists, demanding compensation for their work. The AAVC urged legislative changes and defended the presence of art in education and the media. Like its predecessor, the AAVC contributed to the promotion of new associations throughout the country, participating, after the disappearance of the CSAP, in its reestablishment as the Union of Visual Artists Associations (UAAV) in 1996. As a member of the UAAV, it collaborated with other state associations in the artistic sector¹ in drafting the «Document of good practices in museums and art centres,» signed by the Ministry of Culture in 2007. During Ignasi Aballí's presidency (2005-2008), the AAVC published the study «The economic dimension of visual arts in Spain» (2006). In the same year, as a result of this report, the association launched a continuous training plan for artists, led by Xavier Carbonell. In line with these analyses, the AAVC, along with the Centre for Innovation and Economic Development in the Arts (Centre d'Innovació i Desenvolupament Econòmic de les Arts (CIDEA)), directed by Iván Orellana, promoted the Comprehensive Research and Development Plan for the Visual Arts sector in Catalonia, also known as "Laboratory Catalonia" ("Catalunya Laboratori"). In 2007, after two years of preparation, the association, in collaboration with the cultural production company YProductions, founded the artist video distributor, Hamaca. This platform was built on a previous initiative of the association with the same name, which aimed to promote net.art, art on the internet.

Thirty years after its foundation, around 2010, the AAVC had more than 1,341 members. A census, which in the words of Francesca Llopis, the president of the Union at the time, «**had been inflated to gain easier access to credits, and above all, to have dominance in the votes and decisions of the Union. This data caused a setback in the federation and a great distrust towards the association.**» On one hand, there were the figures of active members, and on the other, those of nominal associates: all those individuals who had stopped paying their fees, mostly due to a lack of resources, but who had not been removed from the census.

[1] The Association of Directors of Contemporary Art (Asociación de Directores de Arte Contemporáneo), the Consortium of Contemporary Art Galleries (Consortio de Galerías de Arte Contemporáneo), the Council of Visual Arts Critics (Consejo de Críticos de Artes Visuales), the Institute of Contemporary Art (Instituto de Arte Contemporáneo) and the Union of Art Galleries in Spain (Unión de Asociaciones de Galerías de Arte de España).

The different governance stages of Hangar

Since its inclusion in the Factories of Creation (*Fábricas de Creación*) programme, Hangar has been conceived as a next-generation cultural facility by the Barcelona Culture Institute (*Institut de Cultura de Barcelona* (ICUB)) and the Generalitat (Martínez Illa, 2010). The ownership of the building is public, and the project's funding primarily comes from local and regional administrations. The management is carried out by a non-profit organisation, the Private Foundation AAVC, established in 2003 by a board of elected individuals, mostly artists linked to contemporary practices. The Board also includes a representative appointed by the Barcelona City Council. The foundational heritage of this organisation was formed through a donation of artworks by artists. The legal structure of a foundation enables the search for sponsorships and patronages that are allocated to the organisation's purposes. This model provides Hangar's project with legal and financial autonomy; although private sector contributions have not reached the proportionality defined by the public-private partnership (PPP) criteria over these years.

Hangar, therefore, aligns itself with those spaces that manage public resources intended for the community that breathes life into the project, emphasising its ability to operate independently of the market and outside of administration. The project is situated in a municipal environment where numerous self-management practices exist, whether linked or not to public administration, forming a significant map of initiatives organised by groups of creators. The economic management of the project is determined by the interests of the community that governs it, a community that has evolved while expanding its configuration but is primarily associated with the visual arts sector. The ways in which resources reach the collective to which the centre owes its existence are diverse. Lluís Nacenta, the current director of Hangar, mentions three of them:

«**One way is by making the infrastructure, machines, and the team's work available to the artists. Another way, in making resources accessible, is by providing a budget to the artists, which includes a portion for fees and another for production through various grants.**» The third approach involves support, in which Hangar takes on the role of intermediary in the production processes. In addition to this, there are knowledge transfer and continuous training programmes, mostly subsidised.

1997-2002: The Executive Commission of the AAVC

In its first five years of existence, Hangar was governed by the Executive Committee of the AAVC. This form of governance, based on assembly principles, had a horizontal nature and ensured diverse participation in collective decision-making. During that period, Florenci Guntín, the general secretary of the entity², also served as the first director of the centre (1997-2001).

Hangar's budget grew and grew in its early years, doubling by around 1999. 80% of the resources came from public funding: half from the ICUB, and the rest from the Generalitat, the Ministry of Education and Culture, and to a lesser extent, the Provincial Deputation of Barcelona. Own resources, meaning the fees from AAVC associates and user services at the centre, accounted for 17%. The contribution from the private sector represented a marginal 3%. To address this deficit and attract sponsors, the first steps were taken in the establishment of the Private Foundation AAVC³, launching the Friends of Hangar initiative in the same year.

The catalyst for this was a sponsorship obtained by the AAVC for the centre in 1999. Guntín recounts, «in those early years of Hangar's life, one of the few supports we received from the Generalitat was a donation, through its Patronage Agency (Agència de Mecenate), of part of the equipment for the first operational digital video station in Spain.» However, additional support was needed to acquire the remaining equipment, leading to the decision to request works from established artists as collateral for a bank loan. «Antoni Tàpies gave us a painting, Susana Solano and Sergi Aguilar a sculpture. Frederic Amat, Perico Pastor, and Francesc Torres also contributed original works.» Through the Friends of Hangar initiative, the AAVC obtained new donations of artworks in that first year. Artists such as José Luis Fajardo, Joan Hernández Pijoan, Luis Gordillo, Robert Llimós, Antoni Muntadas, and Jaume Plensa contributed pieces. These productions formed the foundational heritage for the establishment of the Fundació Privada AAVC, with its registration approved on March 5, 2003. The collection would be further complemented by contributions from Antoni Abad, Evru, Arranz-Bravo, Ràfols Casamada, Miguel Condé, Florentino Diaz, DIS Berlin, Jorge Galindo, Teresa Gancedo,

[2] When he was hired with full powers a year after Hangar opened was an inflection point for the AAVC.

[3] During those times, neoliberal policies advocating for a drastic reduction in public funding for cultural activities and the need for private participation began to be announced. However, unlike in Anglo-Saxon contexts, in the Spanish state, even to this day, donations from individuals and companies do not entail significant tax exemptions. In fact, the incentive for these contributions, despite the announced changes in the Patronage Law, has only materialised in the Navarre region (Cejudo, 2017).

Juan Genovés, Montserrat Gomez-Osuna, Josep Guinovart, Sohad Lachiri, Carlos León, Daniel Machado, Feli Moreno, Jorge Oteiza, Soledad Sevilla, Manolo Quejido, Rafael R. de Rivera, Sergio Sanz, Schlunke, Salvador Victoria, and Carlos Franco.

Eight years after the foundation was established, in 2011, Tere Badia proceeded to request the artworks from the donors who had acted as custodians. Over time, some of the pieces had disappeared, leading to an agreement to replace them with productions from the same artist of similar value. Through the mediation of Antoni Abad, this collection was loaned to the Museu *Jaume Morera* in Lleida. The set of pieces, along with two paper works by Tàpies acquired by the Foundation of the AAVC to settle a debt, still constitutes the art collection of this entity to this day.

The creation of a foundation, besides serving as a tool to secure its own funds, was linked to the need to provide Hangar with autonomy and its own legal personality. This autonomy was crucial to dissociate the dealings and negotiations with the administrations and thus separate the acquisition of public resources for the centre from the political claims and demands of the association itself. However, the Foundation would not be composed of individual persons but rather by an entity: the AAVC, which would elect its trustees until 2012.

2002-2012: The governance of the assembly through the Private Foundation AAVC

The Board of Trustees of the Private Foundation AAVC became the governing and representative body of Hangar in 2003. Its members are responsible for establishing the activities to be carried out by the centre, approving budgets and annual accounts, and setting the criteria for its operation. The Board of Trustees has been renewed every three years. Every four years, the foundation organises a competition to select the director of Hangar and the director of its own structure, meaning that the position entails a dual responsibility. The Private Foundation AAVC defines its purpose through its statutes, modified in 2013, in the following terms: «The Foundation aims to generate services of a welfare nature and support for training, research, and the dissemination of contemporary artistic practices, contributing to the social understanding of contemporary art. The Foundation will carry out its purpose primarily through the management of the artistic production centre known as Hangar.»

The second stage of Hangar's governance is preceded by a change in the centre's leadership, a director appointed through a public call in 2001. The AAVC advocated for institutions to organise open competitions for the appointment of artistic directors of cultural centres, and for juries to be composed

of competent individuals in the field rather than politicians. With this competition, Hangar applied the code of good practices it demanded from the managing institution. After an initial competition that was declared void, the association's Executive Committee chose the candidacy submitted by Manuel Oliveira in the second round.

Manuel Oliveira's leadership was accompanied by the addition of the position of a manager: Ignacio Somovilla. With a curatorial background, Oliveira encouraged the emergence of a local scene, and Hangar's public activity significantly improved. The two editions of Open Processes (*Processos Oberts*) in Terrassa (2003-2004) marked the peak of the centre during his tenure. The programme aimed to make visible the production processes and relationships generated between the residents of the Vallès municipality and the artists, who carried out on-site artistic proposals. However, the Board of Trustees felt that the director's work did not align with the mission and terminated his contract in May 2005. Florenci Guntín argues that Hangar was taking the direction of becoming a dissemination centre, that production services deteriorated and were even outsourced, and blames Oliveira for the failure of the expansion of the centre's facilities at the Roca Umbert and *Can Saladrigas* factories. Nevertheless, a year after these events, Hangar developed a strategic plan and a usage plan titled «Hangar at Roca Umbert, Factory of the Arts. Granollers.» During that period, decision-making in artistic matters shifted from the Programme Committee, responsible for selecting artists and centre exchange grants, «to the management, which took on the functions and responsibilities of an art curator.» Paradoxically, this evaluating committee has included the centre's directors since 2013. «Finally, teamwork and internal coexistence became impossible. The forms failed, partial explanations or delays in communicating decisions created a very unpleasant situation, contrary to the "good practices" that the AAVC had been demanding from public institutions» (Guntín, 2008). This dismissal was accompanied by the resignation of the Programme Committee members in total disagreement: Joan Morey, María Ruido, and Francesc Ruiz.

The debate over what a production centre should be hovers over this decision, a conception that is contested and recurrently reappears, as can be inferred from the text «Prototypes and Projections» (Manubens, 2020). When questioned about this issue, Oliveira responded in an interview on Zerom3.net: «There are those who believe that a production centre should be a space to meet the technical needs and provide solutions for the production needs of artists (on an individual level) or museums or exhibition spaces (on an institutional level). This "refuge" in technical objectivity is nothing more than a non-existent fallacy that seeks to hide the hand throwing the stone. In this sense, the quest for objectivity and neutrality from which positivist knowledge

of technoscience is constructed is aimed at strengthening a cultural reason and an idea of culture but concealing its presence, its definition, and therefore, its public discussion» (Manem, 2011b). For Oliveira, Hangar should address the production cycle as a process that encompasses everything from creation to integration into discursive circuits. In his words, the production centre could play «the same dynamic role in artistic activity, depending on where the emphasis is placed.»

After the removal of Manuel Oliveira, Hangar remained without a director until January 2006. The process of selecting a new director prompted a reflection on the new needs of an initiative with a public service vocation. To this end, debate sessions were organised under the title «Rethinking Hangar,» inviting artists, technicians, and those responsible for the emerging network of production centres. The conclusions drawn from these sessions formed the basis for the competition to appoint the new director. The Foundation placed special emphasis on the technical profile of the person who would occupy the position and their responsibilities. Pedro Soler took on the role until 2009. For this director, «the centre had almost ten years of experience in the processes of reflection and analysis of the needs of artists, which began when video or computers were first introduced. It was really not necessary to invent anything new; it was simply a matter of paying attention to the work that had been done and the observations that arose in daily practice.» More important than the equipment were the skills, so following this logic, «the investment was focused on people to support the artists. Above all, considering that the situation had changed significantly since the inauguration of Hangar. By then, people had powerful machines, so it was more important to have someone who could design and build an electronic circuit or someone who knew how to light. This went hand in hand with the training programme.»

In 2005, Hangar, together with the AAVC, initiated research aimed at mapping the initiatives and centres in Catalonia that work to support production in the field of visual arts. The cartography presented a precarious landscape in terms of the number of spaces and resources, but with certain future expectations determined by the formation of new centres in the territory. This map laid the foundation for what would become the Network of Production Spaces of Catalonia (*Xarxa d'Espais de Producció de Catalunya*), *Xarxaprod*, a collaborative network based on cooperation. The first *Xarxaprod* portal and the online resource database were created in 2007. Over a period of ten years, the AAVC launched various projects. Among them, it's worth mentioning the founding of Hamaca (2007), a platform for distributing video works that focused on building a catalog of productions by artists residing or born in the State. In 2009, the Ephemeral Spaces (*Espais Efímers*) initiative was undertaken, aiming to

provide workspaces in temporarily unused buildings for artistic initiatives. The project was open to creators of any discipline and called on owners of unused buildings. The proposal drew inspiration from European initiatives that also relied on the temporality and transitional periods of buildings, such as *Précaire* (Brussels), *Bureau Broedplaatsen* (Amsterdam), or *Usines Éphémères* (Paris). Espais Efimers was conceived at a time of collapse prompted by brick-based growth, and it died of starvation three years later due to the AAVC crisis.

Pedro Soler was succeeded as the director of Hangar by Tere Badia (2010-2017). Shortly after joining, she took on the role of both content management and administration due to personnel adjustments caused by a drastic budget reduction and the return of part of a grant to the ICUB. The new director's first step was to resize and reorganise the team to strengthen it. Her arrival coincided with the obligation of the centre to return a grant to the ICUB that was not invested in the rehabilitation of Warehouse 1. This episode triggered a crisis that led to the disappearance of the AAVC, which could not return a loan to the Private Foundation AAVC, the funds of which came from that public contribution. To settle the debt, the association offered the foundation two Antoni Tàpies logos on paper. The acquisition was approved by the Board of Trustees to forgive the debt, and the centre assumed the losses of the AAVC, an economic detriment that included an overvaluation in the appraisal of the artist's pieces.

The disastrous economic management and lack of transparency in the management of resources from previous stages led the new leadership to include this aspect on the centre's political agenda. To address this, annual audited financial statements began to be published, as required by the Foundation Law, and the transparency demands of resident artists were considered. Badia recounts that there was a debate about what constitutes an artist residency, what the centre should provide, and under what conditions. «**When I entered Hangar, artists paid for each of the services they received. They paid rent and demanded that if we wanted them to be a governing part of this project and not a governed part, they should not be considered as guests.**» These demands led to a shift towards a communal model. Services were no longer sold, and artists could access production tools for free. This issue, which was not part of the initial management programme, transformed the centre and is an example of how its governance has also been shaped based on the demands of the artists.

2012-2015: The disappearance of the AAVC

In 2015, the foundational community of Hangar, the AAVC, ceased to exist. This event led to the loss of collective appointment mechanisms for both

the Board of Trustees and the Programme Committee of the centre. By then, Hangar had been managed for just over a decade through the Private Foundation AAVC. Although the trustees of this entity were elected in the general assembly of the association, they were part of a separate legal structure. The legal distinction between the two organisations prevented the closure of the association from dragging down the production and research centre.

En 2012, shortly before the crisis that led to the closure of the AAVC, efforts were made to have the general assembly of the organisation appoint a new board of trustees, which would be the last one coming from that entity. In this situation, several alternatives were prepared to ensure the renewal process. Montserrat Moliner, the new president, recalls that «**it was the first time that we had to consider working without a reference assembly. Therefore, we began to explore what governance constellations could be created.**» The first step was to adapt the statutes of the Private Foundation AAVC so that the governing body would have the power to appoint new trustees in the future, «**while leaving the door open for it to rejoin a critical mass of artists or the same association if it rebounded.**»

The first sign of the association's crisis was the resignation, in October 2011, of eight out of the fifteen members of the Executive Committee. They explained in a statement that they couldn't solve «**the structural, economic, public representation, and internal communication problems of the AAVC.**» More and more associates disagreed with the cost of the technical structure, consisting of the two salaried workers, Florenci Guntín and Muntxa Roca, and expressed concerns about the divergence between their excessively optimistic economic forecasts and reality. They demanded cost reduction measures for staff and insisted on detailed knowledge of the salaries. The AAVC assembly realised at that time that the salaries of Guntín and Roca accounted for nearly 75% of its budget. The remaining Executive Committee, led by Joan Fontcuberta, proposed a salary and/or working hours reduction for the employees, which they rejected. In June 2012, at a general assembly, a request for an alternative audit of the financial report for the period 2009-2011 was approved. In October, after the new financial report of the AAVC was released, raising doubts and substantial accounting differences with previous balance sheets and providing information on the unauthorised use of the association's credit card, an extraordinary assembly decided to revoke the secretary-general of the association, Florenci Guntín, for his economic management. Coincidentally, a week later, the elections for the presidency of the association were scheduled, and Guntín led the only candidacy. His downfall led to the suspension of the election. The economic situation was severe due to the non-payment of grants from the Generalitat, causing Guntín and Roca not to receive their salaries since June.

Under these circumstances, the association officially expressed the intention to fulfil their labour commitments and sought a negotiated solution. However, Joan Fontcuberta stated that «**they will resign through the stratagem of a procedure for objective dismissal since they have not received their salaries.**» The dismissals ended up in court, and the judge determined that they were unfair and imposed compensation on the AAVC. Still, the claimants' request, given the association's insolvency, for precautionary measures on Hangar's accounts and assets and all members of the Executive Committee was dismissed. The division in the management mechanisms between the foundation and the association prevented the crisis of the latter from irreversibly affecting Hangar, which, thanks to its management by a legally independent entity, was exempt from any responsibility.

After the labor trial, the acting Executive Committee of the AAVC filed a criminal complaint in May 2013 against the former employees for alleged offences of misappropriation and unfair administration. All the accounting documentation of the association for the years before 2009, held by the technical team and external professional services, had disappeared. Nora Ancarola, president since September 2014, recalls that «**a working group was created parallel to the AAVC Board to organise the remaining computer material and documentation.**» Based on the documentation from 2009 to 2012, in the oral trial held in July 2018, Guntín and Roca were convicted of an offence of misappropriation.

Until 2010, the economy of the AAVC had seemingly remained stable, but with the delay and reduction of public subsidies, a period of crisis began. The deficit in the current account, debts, and indemnities to the workers culminated in bankruptcy. Finally, in June 2015, the AAVC was closed, after more than three decades of activity in which the number of members and public representation had been increasing. Despite the efforts of the entity, the judge declared it insolvent and ordered its dissolution. Unable to sustain itself through membership fees, the AAVC was characterised by a heavy dependence on subsidies from public administrations. Several factors contributed to its bankruptcy: budget cuts by public administrations, the inability to function economically with greater autonomy, a decrease in self-generated income due to the impact of the financial crisis on the artists themselves (many were unable to pay the annual fee), and the dismissal of the two staff members.

The crisis of the AAVC is, in a way, a reflection of a certain decline in the major unions in our context, their reliance on leadership (Guntín was a member of the executive with various positions since 1983), the proximity to political power of its secretary general, and the lack of attention to the economic direction of the structure by its members (there was absolute trust in

the management of the technical team, so before the crisis, there had been no request for detailed accounts). The work of the Board of Trustees of the Private Foundation AAVC during the triennium 2012-2015 was to stabilise the situation. In the words of Montserrat Moliner, its president at that time, «**identify people who saw a personal opportunity in the fact that Hangar could fall, reassure artists and the team, and engage with the administrations.**»

2015-2019: The Re-foundation of Governance

With the disappearance of the AAVC, Hangar suddenly found itself without a community to appeal to. To address this, in the planned renewal of the Board of Trustees in November 2015, Tere Badia proposed a mechanism that included the Hangar community in the selection of its members. To achieve this, proposals for names were requested from resident artists, members of the Programmes Committee, Hangar's technical team, and outgoing trustees. The body that emerged from this consultation, while still maintaining a majority of creators, included professionals from the academic field, museum institutions, and other independent entities and areas. This diversity is undoubtedly one of the new assets of the centre.

In Barcelona, experiments related to community governance have led to reflections on common goods as tools for political, social, and legal action. It is not only about access to production resources or content but also about being able to participate in the construction of the rules and norms that govern the community that manages a project, in our case, Hangar.

Cultural policies require identifying the communities that jointly manage resources. Therefore, the challenge for Hangar's Board of Trustees is to re-establish the project's sovereignty in the hands of the collectives it serves. Without the participation of this social base in its governing body, the administration of the project loses its community character. Thus, the absence of a community, the *raison d'être* and recipient of the initiative, affects the internal democracy of the centre.

The last Board of Trustees (2015-2019) has had among its functions the rethinking of mechanisms for participation in decision-making, focusing in its last period exclusively on the issue of governance. Governance that is intended to be representative of what Hangar has been and what it is projected to be; defined by an alliance between different groups and sensibilities; bringing together the past and present community; the sectors of creation and research in our context, and the associative fabric from which the centre precisely emerges. A few months after the AAVC ended its activities by judicial mandate, the Assembly Platform for Artists in Catalonia (*Plataforma Assembleària d'Artistes*

de Catalunya (PAAC)) was presented. The appearance of this entity is seen by the Board of Trustees as an opportunity to restore democracy in Hangar by making it once again a participatory place. However, it is worth asking whether this perception of sovereignty extends to everyone who can participate and contribute what is their own to the project; how we recognise and facilitate the right and power to govern Hangar; or whether the articulation of previously informal communities should be promoted. In any case, there is no common management without linking personal desires and choices to collective projects, that is, without the possibility of recognising oneself as part of a collective capable of establishing, or questioning, the rules that regulate their life in common. According to Lucía Egaña, it would be appropriate for the group of people not organised in an entity but linked to Hangar and willing to participate in the centre's sovereignty, to have a communication platform. Montserrat Moliner, on the other hand, advocates for a modular, nodal, or nexus format that also responds to the decline of artistic unionism: Commission of Programmes, resident artists, workers, co-workers, etc.

As the years of Hangar's existence demonstrate, all community management is an adaptive project. Among the future challenges is the inclusion of mechanisms that overcome dynamics of exclusion or self-absorption that may arise within it. The future governing bodies must make the instance where decision-making takes place accessible, not only in terms of spaces, technologies, or knowledge.

The community management of Hangar involved the creation of a heritage not constituted solely by the materiality of an art collection but also includes a network of social relationships aimed at responding to shared needs. Where bonds are built through care, reciprocity, cooperation, joint enjoyment, but also involve emotions such as frustration, disappointment, or anger.

The conception of production at Hangar has shifted from accessibility to resources to an emphasis on open source, so that artists and collectives have operated with informal sovereignty over these years without an articulated collective. «**The understanding of the project as a shared, accessible, and horizontal space has affected the structure itself more than technological sovereignty, which we have also promoted from Hangar,**» recalls Tere Badia. The result is groups of artists who, during their time at Hangar, organised to generate other communities in L'Hospitalet, taking with them a part of the centre's own context, which in turn has distributed its institutional capacity among these groups. *Trama 34*, *Fase*, or *Salamina* are some of these projects.

The form of governance that emerges from the reflection process of Hangar's Board of Trustees will be crucial to surpass the materiality in which the projects included in the network of Creation Factories want to establish themselves

and resist the trend towards centralisation of resources by the administration. Hangar is an infrastructure, but not only that. In this sense, it would be interesting to think about how it could be if it were not in Can Ricart. Tere Badia argues that «**when it is said that it is not a factory, what is being said is that Hangar is a project. What kind of project? Where is that project? Is it essentially composed of services, materialities, or is it composed of other things? Being composed of other things is what allows you to be in a constant process of extitutionalisation, thinking of yourself as an interface.**» Hangar is a safe zone for the development of dissident discourses and an interface space to blur the standards of disciplines. The centre operates in a dynamic of constant questioning of the use of services, tools, and infrastructures «**placing people at the centre, with special care for communities and not promoting individualities,**» according to Badia. She would add that sometimes, through informal economic practices, or precisely because of them, it allows for community reproduction. Its political, social, and economic life also involves incorporating sensitive issues related to gender, race, or ecological emergency into its governance. It is imperative to analyse together how to achieve an institution that is egalitarian, intergenerational, non-classist, or colonial. For Mafe Moscoso, people who participate directly or indirectly in the centre are «**like tentacles of an octopus, they are connected to each other. In that sense, it embraces certain knowledge and certain practices, leaving others out, something that obviously happens in all institutions.**» Hangar should reach out «to those who are excluded so that we can enter. To all the people who, for various reasons, are not, cannot access, and do not even know it exists. Strange bodies, migrants, racialised people, refugees, etc. Hangar is a European space, a white space.» The project, with a special emphasis on processes, has always been reactive and has allowed itself to be affected by its inhabitants, residents, visitors. Hopefully, this space of possibilities becomes intersectional, and its desire for a plural governing body is able to incorporate a heterogeneity of voices that permeate its political agenda.

Beyond these speculations, challenges, and opportunities, the process of selecting the incoming Board of Trustees in the Private Foundation AAVC in February 2020 resumes with old methodologies, taking the necessary steps to once again place governance in the articulated community with which it maintains an organic relationship: the Plataforma Assembleària d'Artistes de Catalunya. With a gender-balanced composition of between seven and eleven members, who do not necessarily have to be artists, the positions of president, vice president, and secretary will be elected by the new governing body once constituted. The individuals who are part of it have been proposed in a consensus by the PAAC and the outgoing Board of Trustees, voted on in the general

assembly of the Platform, and subsequently ratified by the Foundation, a necessary aspect until the entity that replaces the founder is incorporated into the statutes.

The Programmes Committee

Hangar is an initiative at the service of the artistic community, meaning it is not restricted to a limited number of members of any specific organisation. The centre, while focused on the most innovative aspects of the present, avoids any specific aesthetic programme to ensure the diversity of proposals from collectives or artists who wish to access the space or scholarships.

The Programmes Committee is the body that determines the community that inhabits the materiality of the project; it selects who enters the workshops, receives production assistance, or is preselected for a residency abroad. This evaluation committee thus emerges as the other governance tool of the centre.

The individuals who are part of the committee are professionals with knowledge of the art scene, a commitment to serving the community, and respect for best practices. Its members were selected from the candidates presented by the members of the AAVC. The board currently carries out this task based on the votes for the various communities that make up the centre's ecosystem: resident artists and collectives, the centre's technical team, the outgoing Programmes Committee, the Assembly Platform for Artists in Catalonia, and the patrons themselves. The committee has been renewed every two years since 2006. The management has had voting rights in the meetings since 2013, an aspect that was previously dismissed to create a distance between the centre's administration and aesthetic decision-making. Collaborating public institutions, on the other hand, have a delegate with a voice but without a vote.

Hangar offers two types of residencies, for artists or for collectives, which are accessed through public calls. Collectives must develop a project, with one of its objectives being specific attention to the community. This means that, on the one hand, they must be able to find resonance within the community they address or generate a new one, and on the other hand, they must create and distribute knowledge among the inhabitants, residents, and visitors of the centre to encourage the emergence of learning communities. An annual follow-up is carried out on the resident collectives, both regarding their project and their relationship with Hangar. After two years, they can apply for a second and final call that allows them to extend their stay for a similar period. However, based on the criterion of complementarity and alignment with the centre's goals, three collectives enjoy a permanent residency: Befaco, Hamaca, and Orquesta del Caos.

The characteristics of collective residencies were established in 2016, aiming to address the differences between collectives and individual artists and prevent groups from becoming isolated or entrenched within the centre. The resident projects are non-profit structures. In case they lose this non-profit status and the project begins to generate dynamics of dispersing attention to common goods, their economic activity has to be reviewed by Hangar.

As for artist residencies, the responsibility of the Programmes Committee is not only to select them but also to accompany and support their work through periodic visits, as well as monitoring the funded projects, evaluating them with the individuals involved, and supporting them in presentations. The studio is understood at Hangar as a context of relationships, and, in fact, this is one of the aspects taken into account when deciding on access requests. As Pilar Bonet, a member of the Programmes Committee from 2006-2008, notes, «**creating a community in a space of creation and production where solipsism and individualism are quite common seems to me as necessary as it is opportune.**» This prioritises the specific needs of applicants, without neglecting Hangar's project as a production centre. The final selection is made through a personal interview, allowing a more detailed understanding of the type of use the artist wants to make of the space and the centre's service structures. The contract that binds the resident artist to Hangar has a duration of two years, and it can be reviewed to prevent prolonged and unjustified absences. The temporal limitation imposed by residencies allows for the periodic renewal of residents. This condition was decisive when naming the project, which may sound grandiloquent today. Florenci Guntín describes how it was conceived: «**The artist in Hangar had to know how to use the two years they had and make the most of their stay. The name says it all; a hangar is a provisional place where you use all kinds of technologies to build something and fly away.**»

Hangar seeks to integrate into a residency context primarily aimed at supporting young artists. Although there is no predetermined age limit, those who apply for open calls tend to be artists under the age of 35. Irina Mutt, a member of the Programmes Committee from 2016-2019, points out that «**the idea of emerging art has a perverse effect and quite defines the open calls, either accentuating the perception that an artist needs production aids or residencies when they are between 25 and 35. Resources and opportunities need to be distributed to facilitate intergenerational coexistence, the different narratives, and practices of those starting out with those who already have a trajectory.**»

Montse Badia was part of the first Programmes Committee (1997-1998) and recalls that «**there was an awareness that this committee would serve to lay the groundwork for future work. In our context, we lacked a**

professionalisation trajectory; we didn't know how to present dossiers, and a clear group of profiles to which residency calls were directed had not been determined.» Pilar Bonet comments that her time on the Programmes Committee «would be a decisive experience in her development as a teacher and as a critic. I wasn't interested in getting to know artists to curate exhibitions but to know how they worked. Being able to share both crises and new opportunities or imagine what the field of artistic production could be.» Irina Mutt emphasises that «each member brings a perspective, a position for reading projects.» For Montse Badia, «reviewing dossiers is an opportunity to discover artists you don't know, and regardless of whether they have been selected or not, they become references for further tracking of their work.»

Although Hangar is not an exhibition centre, it is an open space, so from its inception, activities have been organised to make the work developed by resident artists public. These open days are inseparable from the production processes. Mireia Sallarès, Programme Committee member from 2014-2016, comments that «the dilemma of whether Hangar should have an exhibition space arose recurrently; artists asked for it, but it was always said that Hangar was a production centre and not an exhibition centre, and that TOP (Open Studios of Poblenou) already existed for that. However, formulas were sought, such as the current Paratext, to maintain a certain dissemination activity, so as to avoid Hangar becoming an exhibition centre.» Under the direction of Tere Badia at Hangar, artists themselves begin to programme activities independent of the centre's staff or other agents, as seen in the Multipurpose Sessions.

THE FOUNDATION OF HANGAR AND ITS PROGRAMMATIC LINES

Artist-run centres and alternative structures

The economic and cultural context in which Hangar emerges is determined by the 1992 Olympics and large-scale projects such as the reorganisation of the coastline or the subsequent 22@ District, clear examples of the «Barcelona model.» These interventions cannot be dissociated from a growing demand on the city, mainly manifested in the form of tourism and real estate investment. To this negative impact will be added successive reforms of the Urban Lease Law that will lead to a rise in rents, expelling creators from their workspaces. The shortage of studios for artists became a demand of the Visual Artists Association of Catalonia. The centre opened its doors on June 20, 1997, but it appears in the imagination of the Unionised Federation of Visual Artists in Catalonia in the mid-1980s.

In Barcelona, significant exhibition spaces were being created in the decade prior to the establishment of Hangar. La Virreina, transformed into the headquarters of the Department of Culture in 1986, began to organise exhibitions shortly after opening its doors. The Centre d'Art Santa Mònica held its first exhibition shortly after, in 1988. The National Art Museum of Catalonia was officially established at the same time the Fundació Tàpies opened its doors, in 1990. The Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona started its journey in 1994, and the Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona was inaugurated in 1995. The map of exhibition spaces had been completed, but the demand for production support infrastructure was not met. The AAVC argued that «the system was failing at the base, the quarry,» and that an artist-run space was needed to address the needs and demands of younger artists.

The experience of Catalan artists and cultural managers who had firsthand knowledge of independent management models in countries like Canada, Germany, the Netherlands, England, or France placed on the agenda the need for spaces for experimentation and production. Art Space in London, Cité des Arts in Paris, or Künstlerhaus Bethanien in Berlin were some of the references considered. These initiatives, often led by artists or their organisations, with the support of public institutions in those contexts, addressed the scarcity resulting from the gentrification processes in those cities. The Barcelona Institute of Culture mediated to find a publicly-owned building in the city, but the lack of

facilities related to sensitive areas such as health or education in our context complicated finding a solution. Finally, in mid-1996, the association came into contact with the Marqués de Santa Isabel, owner of the former textile factory located in Poblenou. Federico Ricart offered one of the warehouses at the current Can Ricart for a rent lower than the market price, hoping that the association's project would attract other tenants related to the audiovisual industry or advertising. The hangar, named Warehouse 1, had two floors and a total area of 1,800 square metres. The rent represented a significant obstacle that was resolved with the help of the city council, which allocated an annual budget to finance Hangar. At that time, the initial project, based on providing workspaces for creators, took shape, and the path was set for the creation of a resource centre for artistic production.

The AAVC initiated a consultation process to assess the characteristics that the workshops should have before undertaking the renovation of Warehouse 1 on the then Passage Marqués de Santa Isabel. In this process, the needs of those working on videos, interactive art, or web-based art were identified. The emergence of these practices brought new requirements related to production and post-production, including access to equipment and programmes and the support of specialised technicians. As a result of the debate process with these collectives, awareness was raised about the growing importance of artistic practices based on information and communication technologies. The resizing of the project was reflected in the change of the centre's subtitle, which was changed to Hangar. Centre for the Production of Visual and Multimedia Arts (*Centre de producció d'arts visuals i multimèdia*).

Hangar was established as a commitment to a model where the main axes initially was artistic production and the transmission of knowledge through contact and the experience of other artists. Having its own spaces allowed for the development of a residency programme for local artists and collectives, as well as exchanges with centres in other contexts. The international residency programme was launched thanks to the experience of AAVC associates. The first agreement was established with Kaus Australis, an artist-run space in Rotterdam.

A decade after the opening of Hangar, the so-called "creation factories" completed the map of facilities dedicated to the arts, a process that began with museums and art centres in Barcelona. The projects of the Creation Factories programme became the focus of cultural policies that organise culture from the administration. In recent years, spaces with similar characteristics have been created throughout Spain: Laboral (Gijón, 2007), La Alhóndiga (Bilbao, 2010), Matadero (Madrid, 2011), Tabakalera (San Sebastián, 2015).

Programmatic lines of Hangar managements

1997-2001: Multimedia arts and net.art

Under the direction of Florenci Guntín, the three fundamental pillars of Hangar were renting spaces at subsidised prices, an exchange programme with similar centres⁴, and promoting production through the use of new technologies.

The medialabs, symbolising the shift from individual to collective action, began to be crucial at the end of the century. In Spain, Arteleku, MIDECIANT, and Laboratorio de Luz attempted to develop a medialab with varying degrees of success. In the case of Hangar, the residency of Kònic thtr led to a reconsideration of the project and the creation of the first laboratory. Álex Posada, later in charge of the centre's medialab, points out that despite the boost provided by Kònic thtr, «the collective worked on its projects inwardly, that is, differently from how laboratories were later understood at Hangar.» The multimedia laboratory at Hangar was equipped with computers for digital image processing, multimedia creation, and internet connectivity. One of the objectives of this laboratory was to contribute to the artist's autonomy in producing their work. In this regard, various training seminars were scheduled on editing and programming techniques for multimedia production, based on the dialogue between art, science, and technology, from which collectives like Platoniq emerged.

Simultaneously, in 1998, a pioneering experience in the field of digital arts began with the creation of a net.art archive. The seed was a seminar on the medium held that year at Hangar by Ricardo Echevarría and José Luis Brea, founders of the Aleph portal (1997-2002). Shortly after, a committee on these practices was set up in the centre, the net.art commission, which drafted the project for the creation of www.hamaca.org, a platform dedicated to the production, dissemination, critique, and debate of art on the internet. With Echevarría as the head of net.art at Hangar, the AAVC proposed an alliance to some art centres and museums to fund projects of this nature under the newly created Hamaca, which did not succeed. During these years, seminars on net.art, video creation, and interactive graphic environments were conducted. The centre also offered highly demanded services related to video production and editing. Contributions from Carles Ametller, Maite Ninou, La 12 Visual, Toni Serra, Núria Canal, and Joan Leandre equipped the centre with the necessary resources for these types of expressions.

[4] In this first stage, Kaus Australis (Rotterdam), Astérides and Triangle France (Marseille), Fondazione Pistoletto (Biella), Fonca-Cenart (México D.F.) and PS1 (New York).

Thanks to the Barcelona Art Report 2001. Experiences triennial, organised in 2001, Hangar obtained an additional budget from the Institut de Cultura de Barcelona, with which it organised training activities and acquired equipment. Paradoxically, an event conceived as an ephemeral showcase that consumed resources for ordinary cultural activity was the trigger for expanding the centre's heritage in technological infrastructure. The centre's participation in the triennial also, in a modest but significant way, deactivated its spectacularity. Thus, the programme, primarily dedicated to exhibitions, incorporated workshops and presentations related to new technologies and the social application possibilities of artistic creation by artists of recognised prestige, such as Allan Sekula, Krzysztof Wodiczko, Natalie Boockin, Marc Pataut, and Vuc Cosic.

Two years after the centre's inauguration, the 22@ District project was announced. Aware of the attracting function that initiatives like Palo Alto or Hangar itself would have in the transformations announced for the neighbourhood, closer ties were forged with the Neighbours' Association of Poblenou (Associació de Veïnes i Veïns de Poblenou) with the goal of addressing a common problem: diversity in the neighbourhood. It was demanded that the new Poblenou includes young people, low-income individuals, or emerging artists. The neighbourhood movement saw artists as allies against the project to turn the district into a monoculture of offices and headquarters for technology companies.

2002-2005: The visibility of production processes

The programme with which Hangar joined the activities of the Barcelona Art Report triennial coincides with the change in leadership with Manuel Olveira. During this period, the network of international exchanges with other spaces dedicated to production was expanded, and the project gained recognition both locally and internationally.

Despite Hangar's focus on the creation processes, during Olveira's tenure, it was considered that dissemination strategies were intrinsically linked to them. In this way, activities were organised, both inside and outside the centre, with the aim of confronting artistic productions with the public, mainly composed of professionals. The most emblematic activity during this period was "Open Processes" (P_O_), a research project, mentioned earlier, lasting seven months, on productive processes in art. P_O_ arose under the umbrella of the municipality of Terrassa's adherence to the Universal Forum of Cultures in 2004. The project was configured as a framework in which the work itself and its insertion into a context counterbalance the excessive weight of the final object and

exhibition. The interest it arose in certain sectors led to a second edition with similar characteristics.

The return to budgetary normality after the Barcelona triennial imposed a reduction in workshops and seminars. For example, in 2002, only one workshop related to open-source philosophy was organised. This activity was led by Daniel García Andújar and resulted in the creation of a free software workspace called "El Taller" (The Workshop). In the same year, production grants were initiated, initially aimed at promoting videographic creation. Later, in 2005, the first steps were taken to support editorial projects in print and online, but this initiative was cut short with Olveira's departure. The precedent was the book "Fèlix Bermeu, Buried Life" ("Fèlix Bermeu *vida soterrada*"), written by Paco Cao during his participation in P_O_.

During this period, the centre continued to maintain its connection with the neighbourhood movement, hosting a series of debates on the cultural, educational, and economic role of the industrial legacy of Poblenou. This event, organised by the Ribera del Besòs Forum, the Associació de Veïns i Veïnes del Poblenou, and the Poblenou Historical File, was part of the programme "How do we want to be governed?" ("*Com volem ser governats?*") (2004), produced by MACBA and directed by Roger Buerger. Later, in 2005, a series of citizen mobilisations took place to preserve the industrial site of Can Ricart. In line with this struggle, an open house day called "We live in Can Ricart" ("*Visquem Can Ricart*") was organised, and Hangar dedicated its autumn Open Hangar to the industrial complex.

2005-2009: Communities and free coding

The transition of Pedro Soler represented a significant opening of the centre to the city context. Hangar expanded and strengthened its ties with the local environment, specifically with neighbourhood associations and artists from the workshops who were resisting in Poblenou, and increased the number of co-productions with municipal diffusion centres. As Soler points out, his programme «was not oriented towards a policy of national alliances and partnerships but rather towards influencing the Catalan context by supporting the creation of Xarxaprod.» Hangar began to be populated by communities that sometimes consolidated as research groups and practices linked to the possibilities of free tools, but also to feminism and post-pornography (Radio Paca, Girlswholikeporno, Minipimer TV, la Muestra Marrana). Pedro Soler says that the «responsibility was not to activate or create collectives but rather to generate a conducive context for their emergence. There was a more permacultural focus than a productive one, that is, we focused on having a healthy soil

where beautiful plants could emerge and interrelate with each other, having lovely harvests.»

In 2006, Hangar underwent a migration to GNU/Linux and Ubuntu, making open-source software present in every area of the production centre, from administrative spaces to artists' creative processes. Hangar's medialab, equipped with video and digital image services, incorporated an open-source interaction laboratory in the same year. This move demonstrated the centre's commitment to the potential of these tools, engaging in the development of custom hardware for artistic projects with a dedication to free hardware and software. One of the initial actions of the laboratory was to organise workshops that played a key role in activating local groups and communities based on them. Residents at Hangar, including Hans Christoph Steiner, Ben Fry, Casey Reas, David Cuartielles, and Zachary Lieberman, conducted sessions on Pure Data, Processing, Arduino, and openFrameworks, respectively. These workshops attracted individuals interested in open-source technologies beyond the strict scope of artistic production. These growing communities led to the establishment of Open Thursdays, a space for co-creation, individual and collective development, and democratisation of tools based on open-source technologies. Additionally, the laboratory developed a series of free tools, available to artistic projects, and engaged significantly in training through weekly working groups.

In 2006, Hangar acquired its own server, marking a substantial change as it enabled the provision of internet services to third parties such as artists, cultural collectives, and associations. In the same year, experiments with online video distribution began, allowing the centre to establish its own broadcasting and publishing system. Raffaello Manacorda, the system, network, and server administrator, played a crucial role in developing these new services.

The creation of new digital tools, the conceptualisation of new uses for them, and their appropriation, domestication, and democratisation fostered the generation of, as Pedro Soler pointed out, «spaces of relationship with the communities of users or visitors that Hangar opened up to.» One of those communities was guifi.net, a network that has become the first non-profit telecommunications foundation in Spain. Since 2007, there has been a guifi.net supernode at Hangar, where the eXO operator, part of guifi.net, provides direct internet access via wifi or cable. Matteo Zappa, system administrator, explains that Hangar is «an exchange point between three networks: the wireless network of guifi.net, the fibre network of guifi.net, and our internal network, which is a medium-sized network. In addition, the centre purchases connectivity from the foundation because we believe it is a good way to support it.» Monthly local guifi.net meetings are held at Hangar to acquire knowledge and exchange experiences related to the network or communication technologies in general.

The start of Soler's tenure coincided with the launch of the AAVC's continuous training programme, aiming to address the educational needs related to the professionalisation of artists. Developed mainly at Hangar, the seminars covered topics ranging from best practices to hiring. Clara Piazuelo, the coordinator, and later the head of the knowledge transfer area, notes that the courses were «**focused on skills that were not taught in Fine Arts and were not so much about creativity as about entrepreneurial skills.**» These modules concentrated on sector-specific aspects in line with some of the new policies for entrepreneurship in culture: fiscal and economic management, coaching, communication of professional trajectory, or production. Piazuelo reflects on the economic and political context in which the programme emerges: «**The discourse of cultural intuitions, European programmes, and the strategic plans of culture and economy departments was that of culture as an economic engine. The artist was seen as capable of generating research and innovation to boost the economy, so they had to be an entrepreneur. The continuous training programme clearly responds to this idea of the creator as an entrepreneur. With the economic crisis, this notion is questioned, and the artist is perceived more as an agent of critical or disruptive thinking.**»

The production service, led by Carme Romero with the support of Núria Marqués, was given the grandiose name of Production Hub and incorporated a pre-production support advisory that provides technical and economic feasibility studies. Activities of a collective nature were also co-produced by providing physical space, promoting through the website and mailing list, and offering technical support. Simultaneously, the usage plan and the centre's expansion project were approved. The waning prominence of the term multimedia, along with the "Rethinking Hangar" debate sessions and the unsuccessful invitation from the City Council of Granollers to participate in the Roca Umbert Arts Factory project, led Hangar to narrow down the used heading: from "Centre de Producció d'Arts Visuals i Multimèdia," it transitions to "Centre de Producció d'Arts Visuals" (Hangar, 2005: 5).

In this phase, indicators such as spaces and entities collaborated with, users, activities, attendees, productions, co-productions, publications, and distribution lists were introduced into the centres reports. Soler's directorship began with the publication of a summary of economic data detailing expenditure and income items. The commitment to public service translated into alliances with the social, cultural, and economic environment of the centre, with special attention to relationships with civic platforms, neighbours, and initiatives from artistic and cultural collectives. During these years, Hangar actively participated in the "Plataforma Salvem Can Ricart," focused on preserving the industrial site. Hangar's facilities hosted the platform's meetings every Wednesday, bringing

together a unique mix of collectives. In addition to these actions, Hangar focused on supporting artist collectives being displaced from Poblenou by disseminating reports on their precarious situation and participating in campaigns and protests. Lastly, the centre joined the European network of creation centres Art Factories and, for the first time, got involved in two international collaboration projects in Europe in 2007: "Signs of the city" and "As_tide Networks."

2010-2017: Emphasis on investigation

Tere Badia directed Hangar for eight years, creating a new framework to promote artistic research and generate conducive contexts for interdisciplinary knowledge transmission. In parallel, alliances and agreements were established with universities, research centres, and experimental collectives that share objectives, methods, and content with the centre. One year after her entry into the centre, Badia revised the model and the place the project occupied within the cultural context and added the term "research" to its then name, becoming "*Centre de Recerca i Producció d'Arts Visuals*." Finally, in 2014, the order of the words was reversed to fit a historical narrative, resulting in the name "*Centre de Producció i Recerca d'Arts Visuals*."

The new director aimed to reconnect cultural entities with the experimental and productive base of creators and their practices, and also advocated opening spaces of action beyond the endogenous environment of the arts. For Tere Badia, **«the role of a centre is to facilitate that production, training, or dissemination occurs in any of its most sustainable forms, which usually become viable through network movements. In this sense, collaboration, delocalisation, and complementarity logics prevail.»** Regarding this philosophy, Badia emphasised that **«the idea of DIY/DIWO, shared knowledge, and especially accessibility tools»** have been **«disruptive contributions to reassemble the modus operandi at Hangar.»** The model of free and shared culture, mostly linked to technopolitics, helped create common spaces and a sense of belonging. Thus, Hangar redirected its support to emerging and intangible cultural practices, **«not based on exclusive end products but on the process, experimentation, and knowledge.»**

The goal of the new research area, launched in 2010, was to provide artists with the context and tools necessary for their research; emphasise the value of artistic research processes and the artist as a researcher; defend the specificity of the knowledge proposed by artistic research and its fundamental role in the development of contemporary society; support interdisciplinary research between artistic creation and other research disciplines to achieve a symmetrical relationship between diverse knowledge creation processes; and reduce

the historical separation of disciplinary research areas and the communication gap between artistic development and scientific, social, and economic advancements. Regarding knowledge production, the centre didn't just provide infrastructure but created a context for development through its network of relationships with universities, foundations, European projects, and research centres. Hangar supported the research of artists and partners from the academic world or research centres while initiating joint research processes. An example of this is the Prototyp_ome programme, an interdisciplinary DIY/DIWO biology collaboration, driven by Hangar and the Barcelona Biomedical Research Park (PRBB), funded by the Daniel and Nina Carasso Foundation. Similarly, Hangar collaborated on European projects such as "Soft Control" (2012-2015) or "Iterations" (2017-2020). The promotion of the creation of CAiRE (Clúster d'Art i Recerca Experimental), involving four artistic research groups linked to established universities in Catalonia (UPF, UOC, UAB, and UB), is another example of the centre's commitment to recognising artistic research as a knowledge generator. Its members work on joint research lines, advise public policies, and provide channels for disseminating the processes undertaken and their results. The transfer of knowledge, methodologies, and results from various projects initiated by the centre is hosted on the Grid_Spinoza website.

If technology is one of the drivers of knowledge generation at Hangar, a framework intersected by affective forces or techno-ecofeminism, the knowledge transfer programme will be the environment for sharing knowledge, methodologies, and results. This line has its origin in the revision of that part of the AAVC's continuous training programme that had been taken over by Hangar. Knowledge transfer differed from the master class or lecture in that it took place in informal and, above all, horizontal spaces that allowed bypassing the figure of the expert. Conceived as a non-academic space, it was initially a fundamentally reactive proposal, meaning that only what was proposed was programmed. With this logic, the Artist2Artist workshops were conceived, where an artist shared their experiences and processes with other colleagues.

Since 2010, Hangar has been connected to the Anella Cultural, a project that explores how technology can help improve the performance of traditional objectives in a cultural facility. This initiative by the Institut de Cultura de Barcelona, the Fundació i2cat, and the Xarxa de Municipis Transversal aims to intensify the use of the internet as a tool for cultural dissemination, production, and exchange. It is a high-speed network connected through fibre optics. Thanks to the availability of this connection, Hangar can carry out activities in collaboration with other participating centres and develop research lines such as telepresence. However, it is not possible to use this infrastructure for high-speed connections with centres outside the Anella, meaning on the internet.

For this, Hangar will have to rely on collaboration with the Fundació Privada per a la Xarxa Oberta, Lliure i Neutral Guifi.net, with whom it will strengthen its ties in those years.

In this stage, the laboratory services were also reviewed, incorporating the assessments of users and technicians. The growing self-sufficiency of residents and visitors in relation to audiovisual work led to the reformulation of the laboratory that integrates the medium, which became exclusively dedicated to self-publishing. Later, the impact on the centre of a project by Pechblenda/Gynepunk alongside the Parque de Investigación Biomédica de Barcelona led to the creation of a self-managed biology laboratory in 2015. The Biohacklab, later named Wetlab, was intended for experimentation and support for the emergence of collaborative practices between artistic disciplines, biotechnologies, and sciences in general. The consolidation of Hangar Sonor, on the other hand, led to the opening of an audio laboratory in 2016. Befaco's technical infrastructure was crucial in its establishment.

This period began with a significant adjustment of resources due to the financial crisis, the partial return of a capital grant awarded in 2007 by the Barcelona City Council, and the acquisition of Antoni Tàpies' logos by AAVC. The reduction in resources and delays in aid calls for creators led to a decrease in production activities. The cultural fabric in Catalonia weakened during these years. The delay in receiving grants from the Department of Culture or the ICUB was accompanied by a normalisation of pre-financing through credit entities. The first phase of the expansion and renovation works of Hangar began in 2010 and concluded in 2012. Among the new buildings was an artists' house that contributed to the consolidation and diversification of the residency programme. However, economic limitations during this period led to the disappearance of some residencies and exchanges with centres from other locations. To address this situation, reconstruction work on international residencies began in 2015. Simultaneously, the international and national calls for residency stays at Hangar were created, along with the Hangar production grant and the research and development grant in Hangar's Interaction Lab.

Hangar continued to maintain its commitment to sectorial struggles, actively participating in the Platform 8 d'octubre and the working committee to develop self-management tools. Established in 2012, this platform aimed to unite forces against the non-payment of cultural subsidies by the Government of Catalonia in a challenging economic period. The economic weakness of some members of Xarxaprod led to the active involvement of various technical team members from Hangar in the network's activities. During this stage, collaborations with the Taula de l'Eix Pere IV were solidified, a forum formed by local agents cooperating to revitalise this axis through social economy projects,

interventions in the urban landscape, and the recovery of industrial heritage. The goal of this board was to promote the temporary use of vacant spaces with initiatives of social, cultural, and local commercial interest.

2018- : The consolidation of a project

Lluís Nacenta won the competition for the direction of Hangar between 2018-2022 with a programme that aimed to consolidate the work initiated by Tere Badia in relation to research. Hangar is a non-academic research centre, and for Nacenta, the idea is «to conduct research not about art or artists but from and with artistic practice.» The current director's programme reinforces the relationships between art and technology that have been established at Hangar since its inception. This philosophy is not new; it originated in the 1960s in New York with the project Experiments in Art and Technology (E.A.T.). What is innovative in the Hangar project, however, is its structural and constant commitment since Pedro Soler's leadership to open source and to uses of technology that are not obedient or regulated. The centre's commitment to technology, specifically open source, is related to the recognition of this medium as a key element for contemporary creation on one hand and the centre's commitment from its inception to providing technological tools that were not readily available to artists in art faculties on the other.

The current programmatic framework also emphasises the strategic commitment to collaboration with other national and international centres for artistic, academic, and scientific production and research. The goal is to transfer knowledge derived from creative processes directly to the social sphere. An example of this is «Biofriction. Cultural transformations through Hybrid Spaces,» the first European project led by Hangar. Biofriction, directed by Laura Benítez, primarily involves generating nodes, networks, and exchanges. Benítez explains it as follows: «the title refers to the combination of biology, science fiction, and art(s) as surfaces of friction. The proposal aims to explore the relationships between biomaterials, humans, and "others" through friction [...], as well as working on a critical analysis of the emancipatory potential of biotechnology in the context of artistic practices.» In the research area, efforts are made to deactivate expert languages and authorised voices in all research processes, transforming the various modalities of knowledge into expressions and articulations of common language. According to Marta Gracia, responsible for the area since 2011, «there is no pre-defined definition of what characteristics a researcher or artist-researcher should have.» The area has two types of resources, «on the one hand, the structural resources of the centre, covering the salaries of workers and some collaborators in this line;

on the other hand, the resources generated by the area itself.»

Coordinated by Hangar's research team, the Wetlab, with the collaboration of the *Institut de Recerca Biomèdica* (IRB), has continued hosting workshops, presentations, and residencies, as well as fostering discussions and proposals to develop an open protocol for its use. Throughout the year 2019, a seminar on reading Spinoza's Ethics was conducted, a figure constantly referenced in the context of the so-called new materialisms and critical posthumanisms. Spinoza also gives his name to the online repository about the centre's research projects, Grid_Spinoza.

The training and knowledge transfer projects at Hangar do not adhere to the model of an expert instructing others. As has been customary since Tere Badia's tenure, these are processes where someone with more experience or closer to the tools shares their knowledge in a peer-to-peer relationship with those interested. Carolina Jiménez, the current head of this area, notes that the intention is **«to continue generating programmes that impact the questioning of hierarchies of knowledge, disciplinary paradigms, and the training of professional knowledge, addressing the transfer of knowledge as a political-affective space that challenges the categories of what can or cannot be learned.»** Jiménez emphasises the implementation of **«constituent processes and institutional frameworks from which to exercise the diffraction of situated knowledge and generate other modes of non-commodifiable value.»**

Hangar Sonor transformed into Audio Formal, conceived as a platform for experimentation and education on music and sound. It articulates a common project among collectives that have been linked to Hangar for some years, organising activities independently. In this context, the "Rarefactions" programme emerged in 2018. Curated by Sergi Botella, participants in the cycle shared an evolutionary and analytical perspective in the way they work with sound. The theorisation of their acoustic practices gave their proposals critical capacity while helping to rethink the label of sound art.

Currently, the centre faces cash flow tensions in the first months of the year, a situation that forces it to incur debt by seeking loans to overcome the moment. The lack of liquidity is caused by the timing dictated by public administrations. To overcome this situation, the AAVC Private Foundation is considering creating a second activity that is not subject to subsidies, and whose returns are used to fulfil the foundational purposes. In 2018, the agreement with the Barcelona City Council for the use of Hangar's facilities was renewed for ten years, with the possibility of an extension for an additional five years through mutual agreement.

Hangar continues to be part of social and cultural platforms such as Taula de l'Eix Pere IV or Cultura de Base, being one of the voices in the struggle. In

October 2019, it joined various entities, associations, and individuals linked to the cultural world around We are Culture (*Som Cultura*) in response to the sentences against Catalan political and social representatives (October 2019). The goal was to denounce both the unjust sentence and the two years of imprisonment suffered by the convicted individuals and demand the immediate release of the political prisoners. The regression of rights and freedoms evident in these sentences also threatens the work of artists and exposes them to complaints, detentions, or exile simply for expressing themselves.

FROM THE MANCHESTER OF BARCELONA TO DISTRITO 22@

The designation of Barcelona as the host city for the 1992 Olympic Games brought about the first changes in Poblenou. The industrial area of Nova Icària transformed into the Vila Olímpica, a housing zone for athletes that later became a residential neighbourhood. The intervention was completed with the construction of the Ronda del Litoral, the recovery of the beaches, the relocation of coastal railways inland, and the creation of the Litoral and Poblenou parks. In the 1990s, new projects were added that modify the environment: major public facilities such as the Auditori, the Teatre Nacional de Catalunya, or the Universitat Pompeu Fabra; the extension of Rambla del Poblenou to Gran Via; the conversion of the Olivetti factory into the Glòries shopping centre, and the extension of the Diagonal Avenue to the sea. The city's solution for those industrial areas in Poblenou that had not been regenerated was the 22@ Barcelona Plan, which took effect from the year 2000, aiming to transform it into a district of knowledge-intensive activities poised to become a productive engine. The emergence of 22@ was accompanied by the creation of the City of Knowledge department (1999), aimed at promoting the city of science and scientific culture.

The 22@ District project (1999) was launched under the mandate of Mayor Joan Clos, who was the first president of the municipal company 22@ bcn SA (2000). The renewal of these areas, where the establishment of companies, universities, and research and training centres related to the ICT sector was foreseen, and took place by modifying «the old planning qualification of 22a [from the 1976 PGM] for the modern one of 22@, which clearly indicated the orientation of the change to be promoted: the knowledge economy» (Cubeles, Muñoz, and Pardo, 2011).

A generic discursive continuity linked the propaganda of the new actions of the "Barcelona model" to the enthusiasm of the Olympics. Mass demolitions and new constructions, seasoned by the celebratory rhetoric of major events, deepened the change in the city's physiognomy, particularly in Poblenou. Stefano Portelli (2015) points out that «the contradiction represented by the fact that Barcelona's international popularity was causing the disappearance of many of the areas that had allowed it to achieve this popularity, that is, many of the neighbourhoods that formed the roots of its 'symbolic capital'» According to geographer Joan Roca (2008), artists, who began to move to

Poblenou from the 1980s, were the first pioneers. Just at the moment when the industrial system began to decline: «they detected in this decline an opportunity characterised by three elements: a very affordable price, an environment that had all the elements of the past and the future, in a place that had a local, but also metropolitan scale (urban centrality)» (Roca, 2008).

Poblenou, often referred to as the Manchester of Barcelona, began to attract creators who were forced out by rising rents in Ciutat Vella, renewed with Olympic fever. One of the pioneers was the designer Javier Mariscal, who settled in an old factory in 1989, giving it the pretentious name of Palo Alto. This space, intended to be a kind of re-edition of Warhol's Factory, served as a magnet for other artists. By that time, various transformations of industrial warehouses into cultural centres had already taken place, such as the Ateneu Popular de 9 Barris (1977), La Sedeta in Gràcia (1982), or the Centre d'Art Tecla Sala in L'Hospitalet (1982). Among the spaces and artistic collectives that settled in the obsolete factories and industrial warehouses of the Poblenou neighbourhood were Can Font, Flea, Nau 7, El Submarí, Can Saladrigas, Taller Caminal, Palo bajo, La Escocesa, Makabra, Dacks, Risina Tòxica, Winchester School of Arts, and Hangar itself (currently, only La Escocesa and Hangar remain active). Ten years later, in 1999, a kind of Cultural Olympiad began: the Universal Forum of Cultures (2004). Paradoxically, this project also forced artists out of the neighbourhood, as their workshops were affected by the new urban remodelling. Poblenou was supposed to be the new promised land, but with the urban regeneration plans, new warehouses fell victim to municipal demolition. With the change of the millennium, rental prices experienced a significant increase, and the neighbourhood became unaffordable for most creators.

The fight for the Can Ricart industrial site

Barcelona underwent a rapid transformation into a hostile city. For a few years, the issue of workspace had been alleviated by the availability of factories and warehouses in Poblenou that were rented at moderate prices. With the Universal Forum of Cultures project and the announcement of the 22@ District, the area would once again undergo a violent process of renewal. The old warehouses began to disappear, the neighbourhood transformed, and prices began to skyrocket. Clued up citizens, conscious of the impending devastation, began to organise.

The real estate hostility in Poblenou reached one of its peaks in the struggle to save the industrial complex of Can Ricart, one of the few large industrial sets still standing in the municipality and a key piece of Barcelona's industrial heritage. Its mention served to remind that a significant part of the city's cultural

facilities is industrial heritage whose preservation has largely depended on the claims made by artists, neighbourhood movements, and historians (Alcázar, 2019). When the AAVC rented one of the warehouses to house Hangar, the complex was still fully operational.

Barcelona has an uncomfortable memory; the city is the result of the industrial revolution and the labour movement, immigration, and shantytowns. The factories represent the other side of the coin, explaining why there has been a preference to preserve the bourgeois memory of Modernism over the industrial memory of Poblenou. Mobilisations to preserve Can Ricart began in late 2001 when the Barcelona City Council approved the PERI (Integrated Action Programme) of Parc Central, which foresaw its demolition to make way for office buildings. In a press interview, Salvador Clarós, president of the *Associació de Veïns i Veïnes del Poblenou* (AVPN), described it in the following terms: «Taking into account what the Plan of the Olympic Village was like, where everything was razed, and charismatic constructions such as Elies Rogent's Docks, the Ford headquarters (later Motor Ibérica), and Can Torres disappeared, we had to obtain recognition of this heritage before they did the same with the 22@ Plan» (Theros, 2016).

In 2004, the parceling plan was approved, marking the beginning of the project's execution. It was then that the eviction of small businesses with workshops rented from the Ricart family began. In response, the first demonstration for the loss of 240 jobs took place in January 2005. Later that year, neighbourhood protests were organised, first against the destruction of Unión Metalúrgica and Extractos Tánicos and then in support of Can Ricart. In June, the Salvem Can Ricart platform held its first open house day. At that time, sixteen tenants, including Hangar, occupied the site. In the annals of the centre, the mobilisations for its preservation hold a significant place: «Between 2004 and 2005, [Hangar] was immersed in a movement to demand a different model of urban development, opposing the repressive tactics of property owners, developers, and the urbanism of 22@. Can Ricart, the former industrial complex where Hangar is located, was on the verge of being demolished to make way for offices and lofts. The battle for Can Ricart crystallised various currents of this opposition: artists being evicted from their studios, neighbours being evicted from their homes, businesses losing their premises, historians fighting to preserve the memory of the working classes in Poblenou, activists working for new ways to organise society, knowledge, and the city» (Hangar, 2009: 7).

Various actors converged in the so-called Salvem Can Ricart Platform, which included artist collectives from Poblenou (Alfama et al., 2007). Since its creation, the mobilising action of the platform was very intense: bike rides,

open house days, talks, assemblies, demonstrations, etc. Simultaneously, significant historical and architectural research work on the site was carried out, leading to various proposals to the City Council. An assembly met every week to articulate the demands of the various groups for the use of the available spaces. At the same time, Hangar initiated research in the Poblenou area to draw attention to the loss of artistic spaces in the neighbourhood (Hangar, 2009: 7). Mobilisations around Can Ricart also brought together issues such as job insecurity, affordable housing, the creative economy, the social transformation of the neighbourhood, or the preservation of architectural and historical heritage.

The Can Ricart conflict escalated throughout 2005 with the attempted eviction of the remaining businesses. The combined efforts of various groups managed to halt the demolition of the warehouses, but they couldn't prevent the loss of space for the companies and artists working in the area. Only Hangar, with the support of the ICUB, managed to stay in the premises despite legal battles and other hostilities from the owner, Federico Ricart. The centre weathered the challenges, surviving amid conflict and gradual decay.

In April 2006, the City Council approved declaring the Can Ricart site a Cultural Property of National Interest by preserving 98% of the original core dating back to 1853 and 67% of all buildings predating 1930. However, this proposal was not endorsed by neighbourhood entities as it disrupted the structure of the site. On the same day, a fire broke out in the main building of the complex, the former textile factory Can Font, which was planned to become the Casa de les Llungües. The fire was «clearly provoked by certain people dissatisfied with the direction events were taking» (Hangar, 2009: 7). The flames severely damaged the roofs of two warehouses, causing partial collapse. In less than a month, the industrial site suffered a second fire. The City Council later acquired the entire complex, compensating the owner for the lost square meters and allowing him to build at a greater height on the properties he owned in the surrounding area.

In the same year, the occupied centre La Makabra, located on Tànger Street not far from Can Ricart, was evicted. After a demonstration through the streets of Poblenou, several abandoned spaces in Can Ricart, still owned by the Marqués de Santa Isabel, were occupied. The occupation coincided with a neighbourhood celebration for the preservation of the industrial complex taking place at Hangar and received support from the Salvem Can Ricart Platform. The response from the City Council was to restrict access to the site by imposing disproportionate control measures. La Makabra was evicted two weeks later, on December 14, and a protest demonstration was called, coinciding with the presentation of the new Cultural Strategic Plan by the ICUB. As for Can Ricart, a wall was built dividing the entrance square, the access gates to the site

were closed, and free entry was prohibited. As a sign of protest against police repression, the Fundació Privada AAVC decided to close the centre until the siege it was undergoing would be lifted. The Barcelona Cultural Strategic Plan, under the Barcelona Laboratori programme, announced the promotion of a network of spaces dedicated to rehearsal and creation in various artistic fields throughout the city, located in disused industrial areas. The closure statement of Hangar indicated that the document had to be hastily revised to include a «**project for a network of factories for creation,**» with the intention of countering the impact of the evictions of the "La Makabra" collective. As we can see, the vicissitudes of Hangar constitute a symptomatic metaphor for the urban development of the city and its cultural policies.

The mobilisations for the preservation of the industrial site led to the birth of the Fàbricas de Creación (Creation Factories) programme. The centre's memories describe these actions as follows: «**These actions, combined with years of activism by the Visual Artists Association of Catalonia (AAVC), served to make municipal officials aware of the need to promote an active artistic culture in the city and provide accessible workspaces, which also helped to appease visible and dangerous social protests. Thus, the Fàbricas de Creación project was born, of which Hangar is the model (building and public funds with private management through foundations or associations).**» Jordi Martí, director of the Institut de Cultura, confirmed this on the occasion of the centre's tenth anniversary: «**the ability to generate initiatives and proposals beyond artistic production itself, the idea of a laboratory, the public vocation, and the involvement with the environment make it a reference**» (Bosco, 2007). It was the only centre that not only had workshops, rented or assigned through international exchange programmes but also continuously offered services, equipment, and technicians for production and research. Josep Maria Soler, former spokesman for AVPN and later a trustee of the Fundació Privada AAVC, commented that «**Hangar's proximity to the reality of the neighbourhood and its decision to take on the demands of the neighbours have made people look at art with different eyes. No one now questions why a cultural or artistic space is necessary when we lack schools, nurseries, health centres.**»

Can Ricart concentrates the conflict of an entire district, that of Poblenou, which has been immersed in a process of destruction of its memory and urban, social, and cultural space with its rapid and often violent reordering. Since the expulsion of businesses and artists, its splendour has deteriorated. Arson, demolitions, frustrated projects, and the long economic crisis have hindered the new uses of the industrial site. An example of this is Tere Badia's account of the materiality of Hangar's old building when she arrived at the centre: «**when**

it rained in the artists' workshops, waterfalls came down. I remember having to pump out pools of water.» From 2016, the complex began a certain rebirth with the establishment of an entity table by the Sant Martí District, aimed at preventing the deterioration of its facilities. New projects for the space emerged, such as the Casal de Joves, currently in operation, or the Humanities and Social Sciences park of the *Universitat de Barcelona* (UB), frustrated by the lack of funds.

The struggle regarding Can Ricart remains active. The *Associació de Veïns i Veïnes del Poblenou* has requested that the buildings that were not cataloged be incorporated into the heritage complex, while also denouncing the serious deterioration and illegal demolitions in the area that still remains in private hands. In 2018, all the actors working in the complex signed a manifesto against the excessive building density of the planned project for the outer radius of the industrial complex.

HANGAR IS THE MODEL: THE FACTORIES OF CREATION PROGRAMME

After forty years of dictatorship in the Spanish state, the first municipal elections took place in 1979. The Socialist Party of Catalonia (PSC) emerged victorious in those elections and governed the city until the electoral triumph in 2011 of the right-wing coalition *Convergència i Unió* (CiU). Since 2015, the city council has been governed by *Barcelona en Comú* (BeC), which governs with the support of the PSC.

The establishment of Hangar in 1996 is linked to the socialist City Council led by Pasqual Maragall. In the same year, the city council created the Institute of Culture of Barcelona (ICUB), promoted by Ferran Mascarell⁵, with the aim of making culture one of the main assets for the development and projection of the city. The Strategic Plan for the Culture Sector of Barcelona (1999-2006), implemented by this body, expressed the desire to strengthen the relationship between culture and the tourism sector, while planning the role that major cultural events would play in boosting Barcelona's image⁶. Examples of this are mentioned in the presentation of the subsequent strategic plan (2006-2016): «Projects such as 22@, which focuses on creative industries, or the celebration of events, such as the Gaudí 2002 international year, in favour of cultural tourism [...] are some examples of sustained intervention that has sought to enhance the positive effects of culture on economic growth and social cohesion in the city.» In order to "project Barcelona," the first plan also aimed to create conditions to attract creators through the redevelopment of Poblenou, even though the Modification of the Metropolitan General Plan of 22@ had not been approved⁷. The goal of this planning was to organise the cultural fabric, making it a tool for building a business-like city and a competitive city brand in the global market.

[5] Director of Strategic Cultural Plan for Barcelona, named the city hall's councillor of culture in 1999, and minister of culture of the Catalan government in 2003.

[6] Strategic Plan for the Cultural Sector of Barcelona. Culture, the motor of society and knowledge 1999.

[7] «The process of urbanisation in Poblenou offers the opportunity to rethink the traditional industrial uses of the area and allows for the development of new industries, with cultural productions standing out among them. The creation of suitable spaces, both public and private, for cultural creation and the development of cultural producers is proposed. This territory should have the most advanced technologies and infrastructure to offer a space connected to the world, with flexible management and attractive to creators from around the world. The goal is to create an image of a pilot cultural territory.» *Ibid.*

Under the heading of "New Accents," the new Strategic Culture Plan advocated for the social function of culture, emphasised quality and excellence, and highlighted connectivity among cultural facilities, institutions, and industries—an adaptation at the local level of the reference document for the development of cultural policies: the Agenda 21 for culture (approved at the Universal Forum of Cultures). One of the structuring programmes of the new strategic plan was Barcelona Laboratorio. The first line of this programme, «**More opportunities for creation,**» included the Fábricas de Creación project, whose guidelines were outlined in the Governance Measure Fábricas de Creación presented at the Plenary Session of the Municipal Council in October 2007.

The references for the Fábricas de Creación programme can be found in various Western countries where models have existed since the 1970s. In France, for example, friches are creation spaces managed by the authorities that have undergone rehabilitation. In Germany, on the other hand, these are mostly private places managed by entities or collectives that receive support from public institutions. In Barcelona, the pre-existence of projects managed by associations and collectives is the real catalyst for the programme, presented as a «**network of spaces oriented towards rehearsal and creation in different artistic fields... to be located in disused industrial areas, such as Fabra i Coats (Sant Andreu) or La Escocesa (Poblenou).**»⁸ This way, there was a push for the provision of public spaces to artists' collectives through programme contracts.

The municipal administration, having largely completed the infrastructure map with the construction of museums, libraries, auditoriums, etc., will, in the new economic cycle, focus on spaces dedicated to innovation and creativity. The cultural equipment model implemented from 2007 proposes «**a meeting point between economic, social, and cultural agents to outline [...] the Barcelona of knowledge in its "third transformation" (as a post-industrial and service-oriented city).**»

The initial action of the Fábricas de Creación programme took place in relation to consolidated projects such as Ateneu Popular 9 Barris (1977), Sala Beckett (1989), La Caldera (1995), Nau Ivanow (1997), La Escocesa (1999), or Hangar itself (1997); to which La Central del Circ, Graner, and the future Fabra i Coats were added. Each of them was different both in origin and management, although most were initiatives born from artist collectives. Under the administration's protection, these projects received safeguards against possible evictions, as well as a budget for the mandatory architectural reform to comply with regulations or for the relocation to a new location. The other two

[8] Strategic Culture Plan for Barcelona. *Nous Accents*, 2006.

objectives outlined by the ICUB were the preservation of a portion of the industrial architectural heritage and the rehabilitation of neighbourhoods that were working-class and peripheral.

The priorities of institutional cultural policy have shifted from dissemination centres to production factories. However, instead of focusing on productive contexts and their operations, substantial budgetary allocations continue to be directed towards facilities. On the other hand, it is paradoxical that after initiating transformations that increased land prices, thereby contributing to the disappearance of a significant number of spaces, the city council considered creating a network of spaces for creators, attempting to institutionalise processes that had emerged spontaneously.

According to a report by Hangar, between 1994 and 2006, a total of 6,783 square metres and 133 artists had disappeared in Poblenou due to the urban transformation of the neighbourhood. By 2007, the loss of around 200 artists and 9,670 square metres dedicated to creation was expected. Interestingly, in statements to the press, Jordi Martí announced that the city was being mapped to identify spaces and premises that could be converted into workshops for artists, and a budget had been allocated for the expansion of Hangar (Bosco, 2007). The expansion of the centre, through adjacent warehouses and the caretaker's house, improved its situation but did not solve the need for workshops at affordable prices. In the introduction to Hangar's 2011 annual report, an assessment was made of the crossroads in which the project found itself due to its growth: «**the entire artistic sector, including us, faces the consolidation of a structural change in public cultural policies. The direction of some reflections on heritage makes us fear that an economic model for culture based on investment in real estate heritage will continue to prevail, and that the consideration that cultural production is an elitist good and cultural products are an exclusive object that can become—or not—an industry of immediate exploitation and periodic obsolescence will not change.**» Despite the failure of the 2004 Universal Forum of Cultures—a large urban project disguised as a multicultural celebration—the 2006 Strategic Plan suggested that culture is a useful tool in the city »both for its ability to generate wealth and for its contribution to social cohesion, gaining centrality in the domain of local public policies.» Culture became a tool for planning, ensuring conflict mitigation and increasing benefits. This new document deepened the vision of the uses of culture as a resource.

Hangar was cited as the model by the ICUB in driving the Fábricas de Creación programme. Its commitment to public service, its defence of industrial heritage, its efforts to provide workspaces for artists and young collectives, and its responsiveness to artistic practices made it a paradigm and reference. In

this regard, Sergi Díaz, in charge of Hangar, commented that its ability to recognise and adapt to new needs made it a model for the administration: «This can be seen especially in the application of new technologies and multimedia to the visual arts; in this field, Hangar is not only a reference in Spain, which is evident, but also internationally.»⁹

Each municipal administration has shaped the *Fábricas de Creación* network according to its preferences. In this way, Lluçia Homs, director of promotion of cultural sectors at the ICUB during the CiU government, in an intervention that shamelessly followed the dictates of gentrification through the creative class, pointed out at the *Factorial* congress, *Trobada Internacional de Fàbriques de Creació* (2014) that this model in Barcelona should be based on internationalisation, excellence in content, or the 3Ps (public-private partnership) (Alcázar, 2019). The programme was not aimed at the general public or enthusiasts but at those «**who make creativity their profession and who, in turn, can make culture one of the economic and developmental engines of the city**» (Homs, 2013).

With the arrival of *Barcelona en Comú* (BeC) to the City Council of Barcelona in 2015, the culture department became a commissioner, dependent on the council of Citizen Rights, Participation, and Transparency. The concerns caused by the loss of status in the cultural sphere dissipated for some sectors with the appointment of Berta Sureda to the position. Sureda advocated for a change in the guidelines and frameworks of the municipality's cultural policies, taking the right to culture and culture as a common good as guiding principles. With these premises, a new strategic document began to be developed, named the *Plan de Culturas de Barcelona 2016-2026*. However, after an agreement with BeC (2016), the *Partit dels Socialistes de Catalunya* (PSC) entered the municipal government, and culture passed into the hands of the socialist Jaume Collboni. The PSC replaced the guiding plan that had been worked on with governance measures aimed at sectors such as books or audiovisuals. Among these governance measures, approved in 2017, there was one related to the *Fábricas de Creación* programme. In this way, after a little over ten years since the programme was introduced, the *Institut de Cultura de Barcelona* aimed to give it a new boost.

With the governance measure, there was an emphasis on regulating relationships between projects, moving towards a common governance model (where transparency and internal democracy were fundamental aspects), establishing mechanisms for evaluating and validating initiatives, defining the programme,

[9] Interview by Adrià Pino of Sergi Díaz, who will work on the design and coordination of the *Factories of Creation* project in Barcelona between 2009 and 2013.

and enabling the expansion of the network. At the same time, *Fabra i Coats* (a facility that has had difficulties defining itself since its inception and, unlike the other projects, is publicly managed and owned) was to be turned into a reference space and "flagship" of the network, in the words of Lluçia Homs. To build consensus on the governance measure, which was expected to be presented to the Municipal Council Plenary in September 2017, a participatory working process was initiated between the administration and the initiatives included in the *Fábricas de Creación* programme. This process was framed as a justification for the measure. With Xavier Marcé, advisor to Jaume Collboni, as the interlocutor, the timelines were accelerated, and the number of agreed dialogue sessions was reduced. This haste, along with the deletion of agreed paragraphs or terms¹⁰, the homogenisation of the included initiatives, political interference in the measure, and the lack of understanding of its potential impact on support for the city's artistic community, raised concerns among some projects, including Hangar. The administration accommodated aspects that were not shared, such as ideas related to service catalogues, internationalisation, training, or exhibition. Some of the initiatives in the network of factories had to renew their individual programme contracts with the ICUB during those months, which added additional tension to the dialogue process with the administration, but also among the projects themselves. The lack of consensus led to the presentation of the governance measure for debate being postponed to a plenary session in October, when the «**New Impulse to the *Fàbriques de Creació de Barcelona* Programme**»¹¹ would be approved, with the condition from the projects to open a dialogue on evaluation processes and the breakdown of the measure.

The *Fábricas de Creación* programme is not a closed programme. From its formulation until 2017, initiatives have been incorporated. Currently, it consists of eleven projects associated with as many disciplines: *Fabra i Coats* (multi-disciplinary), *La Seca Espai Brossa* (performing arts), *Nau Ivanow* (performing arts), *La Escocesa* (plastic and visual arts), *Ateneu Popular 9 Barris* (circus), *La Caldera* (dance), *Hangar* (visual and technological arts), *Graner* (dance), *La Central del Circ* (circus), *Sala Beckett* (playwriting and performing arts), and *Tantarantana* (performing arts). The measures included expanding the network by incorporating new disciplines: audiovisual, literature, design, craftsmanship, or new technologies. Although disciplines in contemporary creation

[10] Discipline instead of practice, Factory as a municipal initiative rather than a project, or dissemination instead of socialisation, and terms like research, experimentation, and process become residual.

The word "market" is replaced with "visibility," and the programme goes from being considered "the strategic axis" of the policy to support creation to being "one of the main axes."

[11] «Government Measure. New Impetus to the *Fàbriques de Creació* Programme in Barcelona 2017.»

are toolboxes used transversally, the administration started from the idea of the specialisation of each centre by areas in its programmatic definition. The new government measure opened the possibility of adding what are called associated factories, that is, initiatives located in private spaces; and also set the possibility of creating a network of relationships with existing spaces in the metropolitan area such as L'Hospitalet, Badalona, and Santa Coloma. The 'fabriques' were conceived as the strategic axis to channel support for cultural creation, a coordinate that aimed to organise the creative map of the municipality, although there is no mapping of the rest of the agents and spaces in the sector, and may detract from support for artistic production that occurs outside of these infrastructures. The Fábricas programme must be one more piece within a larger ecosystem of creative projects. The initiatives that are part of it cannot, and in many cases do not want to, assume the role of mediators between the administration and the creative fabric, becoming the sole references and prescribers of the sector. This concern is added to the worry about a logic of seeing the complete picture of support for creation that is proposed by the ICUB. What will happen to those spaces dedicated to creation that decide not to join the programme? How will support for creation be approached for all of them? How will diversity be maintained in the city's creative fabric?

The government measure attributed to the City Council the "existence of this first fundamental piece," which is the "fábricas de creación" (creation factories). As Jorge Luis Marzo points out, in this narrative, historical times are reversed. First, communities create the spaces, and later, the political will emerges to protect them and put them in relation. Most of the projects grouped under the Fábricas de Creación brand were pre-existing projects, validated and legitimised by the sector itself after a long trajectory. Each of them has an origin, birth, context, territorial environment, framework of social and artistic relationships, driving agents and collectives, objectives, forms of evaluation, and different and unique ways of operating. However, the activities carried out and the budget allocation by the City Council are also different. They can be managed by the artists themselves, by communities that come together around a project, or operate as a cooperative. Some initiatives are housed in old disused factories converted into cultural facilities, while others are in newly built buildings.

In the Report of the Executive Committee of the Council of Culture for 2017, written by Ingrid Guardiola, the variety of activities carried out in these spaces were listed: "On the one hand, they are creation centres that allow renting spaces or co-producing and that give rise to artist residencies, rehearsals, shared spaces, or shared workshops. They are also spaces for education and training focused on the most innovative aspects of the discipline. Thirdly, they are spaces to support the production, exhibition, and distribution of artistic projects. Finally, the exhibition of shows has also been included as a way to co-finance the spaces." Faced with this diversity, Consonni wondered: what makes a centre a creation factory? Its industrial past, its current creative and multidisciplinary nature, its support for creators, the awareness of being a factory, its management style? There is no definition that can encompass all the initiatives that fall under these programmes, except for the fact that they represent a shift from an industrial society to one based on services. The term "factory" applied to cultural production entities derives from both the new cultural uses of Barcelona's old industrial heritage and the success in using productivist metaphors of late capitalism, which designate the shift from the industrial system to a knowledge and information-based system. But it is not a term born within the cultural or artistic entities of the city where it is now being implemented from cultural policies. The concept of a factory has its own semantics related to the generation of products, when many of these initiatives recognise themselves as centres of creation and research that promote processes not intended for the creation of surplus value. The factory, on the other hand, is a place of discipline, where labour segmentation takes place.

In the government measure, there was confusion between the concept of a factory as a physical resource (building, equipment, or infrastructure) and the idea of factories/spaces of creation as a project. The concept of services hides an exercise of homogenisation, where the role of the entities is to act as managers of "factories" as facilities. In this way, the public sense that these initiatives already have is confused with the idea of service provision. The autonomy of the projects is recognised, but paradoxically, there is an attempt to intervene in the objectives and services that each project emphasises in a uniform manner. To mitigate this impulse and address the specificity of each initiative, the projects managed to define the service provisions through multi-year programme-contracts established for each of them. The evaluation indicators, both qualitative and quantitative, adapt to the idiosyncrasy of each project. In this way, in 2018, the ICUB commissioned a new evaluative paradigm in a shared process between the administration and the projects of the Fábricas de Creación Programme.

The management with a public service vocation in these initiatives equated to ensuring accessibility, internal democracy, social return, and transparency.

Transparency should also be applied in the selection processes of management teams and resident artists or collectives. These projects should be considered at different scales, not only outwardly in relation to the local or international context but also inwardly. What framework of labour relations do they promote? Is cooperation stimulated among the people who inhabit them? Is an equal relationship promoted? How are artistic practices decolonised? Rather than listing a set of elements for a common action programme (scholarship system, rental policy for spaces, management of educational services, etc.), as indicated in the second line of action of the measure, the values and forms that guide the support for artists should be included. "Not what but how we do it, in terms of the work dynamics established by different projects. They offer 'rehearsal spaces, documentation centres, etc.' But also 'environments of trust, flexibility, care, etc.'¹² Moreover, even operating in the local sphere, these spaces sought to acquire an international dimension through their relationship with centres from other latitudes, through residency programmes that host creators from other contexts, or with exchange scholarships that facilitate the movement of local workers. Can this model generate quality employment? Where do the artists go, and what happens to their work once their residencies conclude? Is the promotion of nomadism a solution to scarcity or a forced "migration"? Does this investment in the cultural fabric address a real demand from creators, or is it done to position the infrastructure in international and local contexts?

The government measure aimed to alleviate pockets of precariousness by promoting, among other things, the proper coordination of the connection "between creators and the city's production and dissemination system." Although the promotion of the city's artistic creation system must be "away from the pressures of the industry, media, and finalistic market," the first line of action set cultural markets as the destination for artistic practices that go through the *Fábricas* programme. This approach to cultural work standardises expressions in pursuit of criteria such as media visibility or audience; promotes the privatisation of knowledge; hierarchises and segments cultural agents; and imposes a productivity logic on projects.

Beyond the public-private model, the projects proposed to the administration to enable management formulas that recognise the associative-citizen agent, linked to artistic, sectoral, or territorially legitimised communities. This legitimacy, evident through a historical trajectory, its representation in the sector, territorial and community recognition, an extensive social base, or its ability to generate synergies from developed programmes, should allow for the identification and validation of entities, projects, or collectives that are part of

[12] Amendment proposal to the text Government Measure from lines of action, 07-03-2017.

the network. Based on the document "*Comuns Urbans. Patrimoni Ciutadà*," elaborated by the Directorate of Active Democracy and Decentralisation of the Barcelona City Council, the projects introduced, in the debate on the conceptual and legal framework of the government measure, the demand for recognition of the community service that some of them perform as public infrastructures. These projects, conceived by collectives that associate and cooperate in collaboration with public authorities to address collective problems through self-management, do not engage in private but in community activities and, therefore, are marked by a desire for social return (for creators, for other citizens). The communities that have created them organise around shared resources and adopt democratic forms of governance. Thus, they represent «alternatives to the usual way in which either the state or the market provides these resources. Social practices not characterised by commercialisation or monetary exchange, nor by the rules derived from public bureaucracy»¹³.

The projects within the *Fábricas de Creación* network make use of infrastructure that they conceive, mostly, not as public but as community-owned. This conceptualisation underscores the importance of creator communities as leading agents in the city's culture without business interests. In this vein, Tere Badia remarked, «At the end of 2017, we approached the *Asilo Filangieri* in Naples. We wanted, precisely so as to review governance, which we knew was in crisis, to assess other possibilities of conferring on spaces, materialities, buildings, another type of status. Something that the Italian Constitution contemplates and the city of Naples intelligently applies.» In Italy, there is a clientelist management of resources and an abundance of under-utilised public buildings, meaning the State and municipalities do not address a significant part of the demands, giving society the opportunity to organise around those places. For Badia, the inadequacy of the state can become an opportunity: «These incapacities allow for reclaiming a building and giving it its own status, in this case, the building itself becomes a common good. It must be seen as an opportunity for people to self-govern because they feel that they are being addressed.»

In July 2019, dissident voices and cultural identities outside the institution (whether intentionally or not) and claiming themselves as subjects generating grassroots culture (*CdB*) gathered at *Àntic Teatre* to denounce, through a manifesto and a press conference, the complete lack of transparency in the budgets allocated to culture and the arbitrariness of the administration in its system of support for creation. With a budget of 200 million euros (2019), only 4.2 million are distributed through public competition among the city's projects,

[13] Urban Commons. Citizen Heritage. Executive Summary.

whether macro-festivals or grassroots culture. The local fabric of individuals, entities, spaces, or proposals related to art, education, culture, audiences, or social issues pointed out that culture is a good and not a resource or instrument to generate order, control, and brand image: «**These dynamics of the system operate, construct, and encode based on predetermined models and not on the real needs of the cultural fabric.**» In this sense, the creation factories are, for projects that see themselves as grassroots culture, a symptom.

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