



PORT FOLIO

Creative Crafts

*“Evolving Artistic Narratives
Through Traditional Techniques”*



Co-funded by
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Introduction

The Creative Crafts project focuses on traditional crafts as a means of connecting generations, preserving cultural heritage and allowing participants to express their identities.

The project is aimed at two different generations, namely 18-35 year olds and over 55s, who together have created new products, shared stories, learned new and old techniques and, above all, forged new bonds.

Creative Crafts has several objectives:

- To give voice to personal narratives, i.e. to explore and express one's identity through traditional crafts.
- To preserve and reinterpret cultural heritage, i.e. to encourage the use of craft techniques by blending them with modern art.
- To promote intergenerational learning and collaboration, i.e. to facilitate meaningful exchanges between adults and young people.
- Expanding artistic heritage, i.e. amplifying the impact of existing craft projects (such as 'R YOU 65').

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Introduction

This portfolio presents a series of creative workshops organised by Fondazione Città Nuova was held at the headquarters of the social tailoring workshop "fatto@scampia" in Via Don Pino Puglisi 38 (Naples).

The workshop sessions were led by Barbara Annunziata, fashion architect, academic lecturer and innovator.

With hands-on activities in sewing, embroidery, crochet and textile art, the workshops encouraged the rediscovery of manual skills while fostering innovation and experimentation through intergenerational exchange.



Young and older participants collaborated, shared techniques, and learned from one another in a supportive, creative environment. Each session offered opportunities for experimentation, personal expression, and connection. The portfolio highlights how these experiences not only develop practical skills but also create meaningful social bonds and a sense of shared accomplishment.



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The loom

Barbara Annunziata

The construction of the base

On Thursday, June 26th, Fondazione Città Nuova hosted the first session of the creative workshop cycle within the Creative Crafts project.

The session was dedicated to building a loom on which to begin weaving. The participants had pieces of recycled cardboard at their disposal, from which they made the bases of a 40x45 cm loom.

The activity required the participants to work together, especially in the initial phase when it was necessary to make the base of the loom from the 'raw' cardboard. The participants helped each other and this first part was very lively and chatty.



The loom

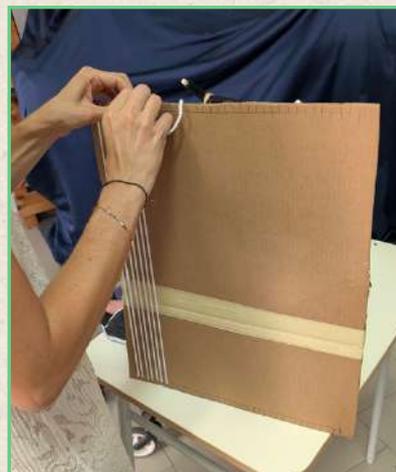
Barbara Annunziata

Towards the self- portrait

After constructing the looms, the participants prepared the warp threads on which to begin weaving the weft.

The goal was to reproduce a self-portrait on the loom, using different materials and experimenting with them. To do so, they had wool threads, old newspapers, and textile scraps provided by the tailor's shop at their disposal.

This second part of the activity, while the warp and weft were being prepared, was a little quieter. The participants' work, while the loom was being woven, became almost meditative. The exchange of thoughts and advice became increasingly sporadic.



The loom

Barbara Annunziata

Self-portraits and experimentation

On Friday, July 11th, Fondazione Città Nuova hosted the second session of the creative workshop cycle within the Creative Crafts project.

While some new participants caught up on the work begun in previous meetings, the group continued their weaving.

Wool threads alternated with sheets of newspaper and scraps of fabric, cotton and felt. Each participant freely chose the elements they preferred to insert into their loom to construct their own personal vision.

The participants helped each other and immediately got down into the work.



The loom

Barbara Annunziata

Self-portraits and experimentation

As they became more experienced, working on the loom greatly facilitated conversation among the participants. As some got to know each other better, they gave each other technical advice, some participants recognised each other from previous experiences.



Each participant interpreted the self-portrait in her own way. Some stuck to a more realistic reproduction, others preferred a more imaginative reproduction, including their own photos in the loom.



For example, one of the women cut a piece of fabric to reproduce the shape of ocean waves and included it in the loom.



The loom

Barbara Annunziata

Some results

After these first two sessions, each participant continued working on the loom at home, taking wool, cotton, flowers and sheets of paper with them.

Weaving on the loom was a pastime that accompanied the participants in their free time, and the meetings at the tailor's shop were opportunities to catch up and show others their results.

During the workshop cycle, as they finished their work, the participants brought their finished looms to the tailor's workshop.

The results are a great example on how to merge traditional craft with modern innovations.



The loom

Barbara Annunziata

Some results



The tapestry

Barbara Annunziata

A new path

On July 25th Barbara Annunziata proposed a new project to the participants.

The workshop opened with a critical and evocative presentation of the collective performance *Legarsi alla montagna* (1981), one of Maria Lai's most emblematic works, later recounted by Michela Murgia in the book *Noi siamo tempesta*, from which Barbara read some excerpts.

The work was analysed as an artistic and political gesture, capable of making visible the invisible bonds between the inhabitants of Ulassai, staging a collective plot made up of threads, listening and relationships.

All participants together discussed art as a language of connection, but also the sense of home, belonging and memory.



The tapestry

Barbara Annunziata

Co-design

Barbara proposed working on a collective textile artefact, a tapestry symbolising the relationships, experiences and desires that had emerged.

The tapestry was co-designed by all the participants, who drew what the reading and discussion had evoked.

Each participant illustrated their proposal to the group, explaining its meanings, references and intentions. It was a moment of listening in which personal stories and shared insights emerged.

Starting from the individual contributions, Barbara composed a visual synthesis that took into account the main ideas that had emerged, harmoniously integrating the most representative elements.



The tapestry

Barbara Annunziata

Co-creation

A three-metre by three-metre canvas cloth was then laid out in the centre of the room.

The participants gathered around it: some began by choosing which materials to use, others began by reproducing a small portion of the pencil drawing on the cloth.

Different sewing techniques emerged. Embroidery, direct sewing on canvas, sewing pre-cut fabrics, knitting and sewing on canvas.

Working on a single output gave the participants more space to get to know each other. They shared amusing anecdotes, life stories, work stories, and experiences related to textile work they had done in the past.



The tapestry

Barbara Annunziata

Focus

On 12 September, work on the tapestry continued.

Each participant continued working on her own section of the tapestry. Co-design was an ongoing process involving the exchange of ideas, opinions and advice. Barbara Annunziata supported the process by supervising the overall compositional consistency.

Working in a circle helped to strengthen the bonds between the participants, who now felt part of a whole, of a group.

The closeness between the participants encouraged the exchange of knowledge, especially in small micro-groups of mutual support.



The tapestry

Barbara Annunziata

Experimentation

The work on the loom continued on 26 September 26th and October 9th.

The appointment at the tailor's became a ritual for all the participants, a meeting with fellow travellers with whom to share stories and strengthen bonds.

However, the meetings were also a way to exchange influences and techniques, such as felting and crocheting.

Some participants organised themselves to continue the work on their own on October 9th, working on the areas that appeared to be weaker, even without Barbara Annunziata being present.



The tapestry

Barbara Annunziata

Passion and constance

With the help of the seamstresses employed in the tailor's shop, on October 10th it was possible to experiment with the use of a digital embroidery machine on tapestry. The work on tapestry was a way to modernise craftsmanship through digital tools and new materials.



The work on the loom continued also on October 24th. It was intense and there never seemed to be enough time, even though the meetings lasted four hours. Meanwhile, the meetings have given rise to opportunities for collaboration between participants outside the workshop cycle, including participating in trade fairs and joining solidarity initiatives for ongoing wars through textile art.



The tapestry

Barbara Annunziata

Looking to the future

On November 27th a further, extra, meeting was agreed upon in order to complete the work.

The final touches were made and the tapestry was positioned vertically for the first time so that its final form could be admired.

The meeting was peaceful and the participants chatted at length about their experience in Rome a few days earlier, when some of them took part in a collective weaving experience.

This meeting was also marked by a touch of melancholy, as it was to be the last one. Everyone said goodbye with the promise to meet again soon for a pizza, looking forward to attend to the final exhibition.





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