

TELL US A STORY

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the social impact of culture

Title of the project:

Banda Rustica/BandaX – Una banda di musicanti Jazz (Italy)

A youth marching jazz brass band made of about 450 young people in the suburbs of Rome

About the project

Content: A youth marching jazz brass band in the periphery of Rome. An experience of informal education, inclusion, cooperation and big fun for boys and girls from one of the socially most degraded areas of Rome, invented and carried out by a single musician, with the support of a local coop.

Duration from 2000, ongoing.

Location Rome, La Rustica, 7th and 10th Municipalities

Field/discipline Music/Band

The actors

Jazz musician Pasquale Jannarella and Cooperativa Sociale Nuove Risposte – Centro la Rustica.

The people who received the most significant impact.

About 450 young boys and girls from one of the most derelict areas of Rome. Many among them were the children of emarginated parents: nomads, drug addicts and dealers, petty criminals, and some of the youth themselves were socially borderline.

Was the impact planned from the start?

The idea that music could make a change in the quality of life of those youth was very clear since the beginning.

The context

The two Roman municipalities where the projects was carried out are among the most isolated and abandoned of the city. Cultural services are very scarce, security low, illegal activities frequent. Families often come from diverse backgrounds (the poorest areas of Southern Italy, East Europe, Roma and Sinti clans, etc.). Children are often school droppers and youngster NEETs. About 80% of burglaries in Rome are committed by young delinquents coming from this area.

Expected and actual results

Peppe Jannarella was convinced that music could represent an effective instrument alternative to juvenile gangs. He wanted to create a marching brass band. And succeeded.

Resources

An initial donation of about 10,000 euros by the District administration to buy the musical instruments. A total 65,000 euros in three years by another District. They daily needs have been catered for by very little money, collected via tiny donations bordering on alms.

The main change

Working with local institutions has been often very hard. And parents, also, were difficult to deal with. Sometimes they stole the instrument I had lent their child and re-sold it to me. And I bought them back. I learned that I must literally run, a

trumpet in hand, after children who were almost solely interested in soccer. I had to convince them that music was worth trying. But in the end they played before Peter Gabriel in Rome Capitolium. Some among them had never seen the historical centre of Rome.

The main area of impact

One girl and one boy from the Banda Rustica have discovered a true musical vocation and are now musicians. The large majority have re-discovered the importance of school and education, and cultivate their passion for jazz and the music in general. Two, instead, have gone astray. One is in jail, the other killed when trying to rob a shop.

The Big Idea

Music, the discipline and the study behind it, and the experience of an informal learning community of peers, the pride and the joy of playing for increasingly challenging audiences.