



OPEN STREET

Vetrina Internazionale dell'Arte di Strada | 9-12 ottobre 2014 | Milano

OPEN STREET Milano, 2014

Reasons for success, contingencies organizational problems and operator satisfaction.

The International Showcase of Street Arts held in Milan from 9th to 12th October was the third event created by OPEN STREET from 2010 to today, and the first one in a big city.

The massive deployment of artists and operators, the presence of numerous audience, the excellent quality of performances and appeal of the locations involved, have all certainly conferred good success to the showcase as an event, but at the same time several accidents, bureaucratic difficulties, shortages of funds and means have left in some artists and part of operators the feeling that the project, unlike the other two editions, has only partially achieved its goal of promoting the sector, which is the very purpose for which this initiative was born.

It was emerged that to organize OPEN STREET in a big city, having the sole support of the city council and therefore having to meet their understandable requirement to create also a great city event, is not the optimal conditions for best implementation of the initiative.

This document intends to give an objective and detailed report of what happened in Milan in the period of OPEN STREET, explaining the reasons for the audience success of the initiative, but also, as far as possible, identifying the weak points of the production pattern adopted, out of a sterile logic of "attribution of merits and faults", aiming to unique and total benefit of tutelage and integrity of what in effect still remains a significant project for the development of the arts street in Europe.

>>> PREAMBLE

Three years after the last edition of the International Showcase OPEN STREET, the homonym association, founded in 2012 with the intention to take up the inheritance of this project, which was supported until 2011 by the European Commission, was eagerly awaiting the opportunity to revive the project, possibly basing on more funds and in an area in which it could develop at best. Through the National Federation of Street Art (founding member of OPEN STREET), the interest of the city of Milan was manifested, on early February 2014, with an approach that was understandably linked to the creation of an event capable of a significant impact on city audience.

The City of Milan had immediately determined 80.000 euro as the possible own contribution to the initiative. It was a fund at least double compared to each of two previous editions in Fermo. But here we had to implement a much more complex project: not only an initiative for insiders, but also a big public event, moreover in a metropolis in which the organizational costs would undoubtedly have been more ponderous.

In early March the first project, together with the relevant business plan, is submitted by OPEN STREET aisbl to the Directorate of Youth and Leisure. A cost of at least € 160,000 is expected to make the showcase possible.

A first result seemed to be obtained by Fondazione Cariplo, a banking institution particularly attentive to cultural projects capable of strong civic vocation on local territory. The bank says to be prepared to cover the missing part of budget for further € 80,000.

>>> PROJECT START

It's May 2014 now, the European "machinery" of OPEN STREET needs to be started. Between May and June there are invitations to introduce the project at three important Festivals of network: Sibiu (Romania), Leioa (Spain) and Rochefort (France). Representatives of OPEN STREET attend to each of them. A simple brochure is printed to bring the project to the attention of companies and European operators.

Upon showcase restart another important goal is being linking: the opening of campaign for membership to the international association that, starting from simple network, has now completely transformed into a real body with its own statute.

The administrators of OPEN STREET Alessio Michelotti (IT), Aleksandar Caric (SRB) and Fabrice Froger (FR), meet several times to define characters and manners of accomplishment for these important steps. At the end of May the Call for the participation of companies is issued, with a very precise regulation which already contains the complete formula and the numbers of the event. They decide to raise (up to double) the attendance fees to be assigned to GUEST companies selected for the official program. The aim is to have the attendance of at least 60 festival directors from various countries.

There is need to create a working group able to define strategies, characters and organizational modes of event. There is also need to create an appropriate structure able to implement these strategies.

Some of the most capable and expert organizers of the sector, all operators of the Milan area, are now involved in the process of design and construction of the event. They all are people who give own availability, pervaded by the great charm of the project, in the belief that OPEN STREET Milano is an opportunity for the development of a profitable and OPEN European cooperation. None of these people asks a financial recompense for own involvement in the project.

An organization chart is drawn up (click [here](#) for download), acknowledged by the whole working group, in which various collaborators of each member of this group are charged of specific tasks

Unfortunately, in the same month of June the second meeting between the city administration and the Cariplo Foundation ends with an unfavorable outcome: Cariplo can participate in the budget of the initiative through a contribution of €5.000 only.

Faced with this problem, the city administration is no more interested in being project leader, and in the successive meetings it will communicate its intention to commit the budget previously defined using the form of the contribution. OPEN STREET aisbl, notwithstanding the full cooperation assured by the City of Milan in every phase of the project, will be charged to implement the initiative as organizer, as well as to substantiate the budget by seeking the missing funds.

For OPEN STREET aisbl this is now a real problem because there is no longer way of turning back (an official call was already been issued all over Europe!). The only chance of salvage for newborn association having no own funds is the ticket sell: everyone hopes this will be able to cover the missing part of the costs but obviously the budget is no longer safe because even two days of rain could mean the financial debacle.

The period of October was chosen to facilitate the participation of companies, but this choice is not happy to search for private investors, who do not believe in an event organized outdoor and in full autumn in Milan.

The only contact positively developed is based on consonance of common values of consonance. In fact, the "Baladin" enterprise ("Mountebank" in old French), one of the first producers of Italian craft beer, is involved view his founder, Teo Musso, in his youth attended the Cirque Bidon and is lover of the wandering show.

The company does not seem particularly convinced that the partnership with OPEN STREET can be profitable, but the passion of Teo towards the sector convinces him to make available €5000 for the project, in exchange for a return of image which will result to be effective, considering that the event will be also characterized as a path on the Street Food.

The city administration seeks to sustain the project at best and decide to increase the previous expenditure forecast of further 10,000 €

>>> THE EUROPEAN CALL

Meanwhile, the interest to the initiative is growing at international level. In July the candidatures are opened and the platform open-street.eu receives hundreds of videos, all high level proposals, involving all eight categories of the contest. In concomitance with the membership campaign, with € 25.00 paid by each member (companies, festivals, operators), also the booking of exhibition stands starts (€ 50,00 per day x module).

This "positive energy" that the network is able to create is consequence of the COOPERATIVE and OPENED pattern of project, and instills a spirit of optimism in all organizers of the showcase, and none of them has the opinion to give up this great opportunity just for (eventual) economic problems.

The coordination office of OPEN STREET is forced to usual overwork throughout the month of August, in order to follow one by one all the problems related to the contest and the submission of applications. The selection ends in early September and the composition of the GUESTS program is really reach. Only two Italian productions are inserted in the program in greater evidence, and this contributes to create a climate of dissatisfaction by the artists from the same country in which the showcase is being organized.

But the real "unexpected" fact in the artistic selection of OPEN STREET 2014, is the participation of accredited companies, the same that in 2010 and 2011 editions were defined OFF COMPANIES. This section sees the attendance of companies like BILBOBASSO, DARE D'ART and KADAVRENSKY from France, DEK RU from Ukraine, CONTINUOUS THEATRE from the Czech Republic, SERIOUS CLOWN from Germany, as well as Italian TEATRO DEI VENTI, TEATRO NECESSARIO, AMBARADAN, CIRCO E DINTORNI and many more ...

This availability elevates the artistic value of the project, but this also makes it more ambitious in terms of organizational and technique management. The participation of these events, not inserted in the GUEST program, requires that the payment of costs is totally charged to the companies themselves and, as per call regulation, the showcase organization can be involved partially only, with the possibility that the companies themselves must integrate audio/lighting equipment and provide to other technical requirements.

Nevertheless, the public dimension of this edition, as well as the chance to host important productions also in the "Accredited Companies" section, suggests the opportunity to take charge about the technical problems of these artistic groups and to support them in the commitment to participate (at own expense) to the event.

>>> COMPARING 3 EDITIONS

In the days following the Showcase, many will be the comparisons done by participants (both operators and artists) between the two OPEN STREET editions in Fermo and that the Milanese one.

It is enough to look at the report of what preceded the project implementation on the ground to understand the design differences between OPEN STREET 2014 and previous editions. It is worthwhile to summarize them:

- in Milan OPEN STREET has created an international event able to attract a wide audience and to attract the attention of media, also aiming to relaunch the sector in the national ambit: in fact, Italy becomes the country hosting of one of the biggest international events of street arts, organized by an international association representing hundreds of operators and artists from all over Europe.

- The attendance fees for the companies selected in the GUEST section are DOUBLED

- The old program of 20 companies + off companies, is now a program of 50 fully entitled companies participating in the official program of showcase (shared between GUEST and Accredited companies). In Fermo, as per regulation, no support to the OFF companies was granted (except for minimum equipment and special cases). In Milan, despite the Regulation provided for a fixed limit for available technical support to be offered, we indeed tried to accomplish to all needs.

- We have added many side events (OPEN STREET FORUM) with free performances in the historic center of Milan, a pavilion dedicated to the festival at the Expogate, shows and conferences.

- We tried (in intention at least) to offer the highest standards in welcoming: 4-star hotel in the city, easily accessible by subway; catering service in the places of activities.

- The organization is in hands of a new entity, an international authority able to represent, independently, the OPEN STREET project.

>>> ORGANIZATION

As it was explained till here, the organization of the event rotates around three bodies: the City of Milan, Open Street aisbl, the National Federation of Street Arts of Italy

OPEN STREET aisbl is a structure still existing on paper only, composed of eight founding members of different countries, which puts many expectations in joint cooperation, but has no own funds apart from modest membership fees. Adherent members joining this Belgian association between July and October 2014 have a marginal role within the association, even not having right to vote at the meeting. The ordinary administration of the association is carried out voluntarily.

The association seeks to encourage the participation of membership in the project, by sharing bases and decisions to be taken, as well as formulating specific proposals of collaboration that are addressed with particular emphasis to some founding members.

Unfortunately, due to commitments, personal difficulties, organization of other concomitant events, they are unable to take part directly in the activities of the project.

Starting from these preambles, it is evident the need to create an "ad hoc" structure in order to face the organizational needs of the event. This could be also quite simple, considering that the true strength of persons involved is to be able to develop cooperation with the members, who by the way represent the best in the sector of events organization.

The focus is the relationship with the activities located in the Milan area, some of which participate immediately to the planning path for OPEN STREET 2014.

Since the first design, it is also clear how the event had an endemic need of a good number of volunteers. A call is directed to the students of History of Circus and Street Arts at the State University of Via Noto. The course is held by Prof. Alessandro Serena, advisor of the project. But the time for collecting applications, between the beginning of the academic year and the period of the showcase, are very tight and upon event start there are no more than 20 volunteers.

Up to now the whole project, although nearly in the finishing straight, is still without any type of confirmation by the City, the Cariplo Foundation and investors, in perfect Italian style.

The deliberation of the City Council arrives on 29th August, but we have to wait until the first week of September to see the contribution approved. The whole procedure is successful and the transfer of 50% of the funds as down payment takes place around mid-September.

In case of rain: by using two structures (one of which is a chapiteau) we think to "save", if needed, the whole GUEST program and to allow the accredited companies to perform a short show. This is a truly unexpected cost, considering that in case of rain the first project submitted foresaw the use of theaters and unconventional indoor spaces.

The ticketing, stopgap and risky solution for OPEN STREET to support such a difficult budget, seems to be difficult even in its implementation. A legal-administrative deepening confirms that the international association (Belgian) is not authorized to collect tickets for an event organized on Italian territory unless it creates a tax entity in Italy. The association then renounces to collect tickets and delegates the National Federation of Street Arts for this task, on the basis of the cooperation agreement that was concluded for this event.

A central problem remains unsolved: if OPEN STREET must support itself by ticketing, then the involved area should be locked, but the city administration is contrary to anticipate the closing time of the public Parco Sempione and is not even imaginable that at closing time the persons without ticket are sent out. The city administration, in place of the early closure, proposes to fence the main spaces of Park assigned to ticket shows. This will determine the partial economic success of OPEN STREET International Showcase 2014: the paying public, sitting inside the circle of fences, will actually be a small percentage of the audience.

View the delays in the opening of the new bank account of Open Street aisbl, the whole financial commitment related to the start of OPEN STREET 2014, is supported by the founding member National

Federation of Street Art, and by all OPEN STREET aisbl funds collected on its behalf (membership fees for 7.900 Euros, stand rents for 12.800 Euros, hotel bookings for 6.100 Euros). FNAS comes to drain its cash due to early payments to suppliers (which often consist in the full amount of the contracts), deposits, guarantees.

There are other bureaucratic problems that may hamper the event: on 2nd October, the direction of the Castello requests to OPEN STREET aisbl to stipulate a risk insurance coverage for damages to third parties and to public property. Open Street is a body governed by Belgian law and the Italian insurance companies consulted state that it is not possible for an Italian company to cover a risk for a foreign association. It seems even more difficult for a Belgian insurance to cover risks related to events abroad. In the absence of an insurance, the use of Castle and certainly the other city locations will be banned.

At the end, thanks to the interest of Luigi Russo at the INA Insurance of Ferrara, and to the availability of its General Agent, on Friday 3rd a suitable agreement is signed, thus obtaining the right to use Castello Sforzesco.

The access of vehicles access to all showcase is an essential condition, but in order to obtain the necessary permissions for the city centre, which is area at limited admission, the city police requires photocopies of all vehicle registrations. A request difficult to be satisfied, considering that most part of vehicles, which must be at least Euro 4, come from abroad. Many vehicles are hired and it is impossible for companies to obtain data in time. The staff of Open Street does everything possible to collect all data, but many vehicles remain unauthorized. On 7th October, the City informs management of Open Street that, view the incomplete documentation NO means will be exempted from the entrance fee to the city centre. An organizational disaster, because, despite circulars and notices, at the end someone will enter city Milan being sure to be authorized, but later same will be fined. An incomprehensible behavior by the city authority.

We are now facing a circumstance never experienced before in OPEN STREET: what usually was the period of preparation for the MEETING BETWEEN OPERATORS AND ARTISTS, the period in which habitually we perfected the necessary steps to ensure a fruitful outcome of the meeting, the period in which we strove for a good reception of guests, verifying that everything is in order, is indeed used by the main historical organizers of the showcase in strenuous struggles trying to save the event.

However, some macroscopic problems do not slip to them, in particular those regarding two fundamental aspects of the project: the technical part and the communication. These particular ambits will require an extraordinary effort, although the results at the end, unfortunately, will be achieved only in part.

>>> TECHNICAL PROBLEMS

The technical plan for the implementation of the artistic program of OPEN STREET 2014 (supplies + staff) costs about € 46,500, almost a third of the whole budget of the event. Although in the International Call, issued in May, the following principle was well expressed:

Art. 10 – Performing of shows selected in the showcase

[...] The most demanding technical requirements will necessarily be agreed between the company and the organizational management. The total supply of audio and lighting equipment for these shows will be indicated by means of a supplement to this call, following the agreement with the Municipality of Milan, depending on the available budget, and will not be increased unless the companies can provide some additional material [...]

This principle has been applied only in part, because the expectation of the companies is very high, and the intention is to offer to the public and operators a technical support worthy of the event. But, as already said, due to the attendance of productions of great value and technical complexity, absolutely over the most optimistic expectation, the forecasted intervention plan results to be inadequate. The companies, for their part, have not fully assumed the nature of the project, which has its basis in the cooperation between all parties, and following our timely communication of technical equipment available, disregarding the guidelines of the Call, they now insist that "the Festival", as now the Showcase is defined by most of them, must provide all audio, lighting and other equipment requested in each tech. file. This raises a day by day more scathing "union" vindication, considering that the artists are not paid for the (public) performance.

The locations are always appeared to the whole organizational group as the main highlight of this edition. Yet the problems related to the use of these spaces seriously jeopardizes the upshot of the initiative.

Despite the presence of several shows using open flames and pyrotechnics effects, neither the Parco Sempione nor the Castello are allowed for these performances. Apart hired stages and platforms, no available space has a smooth and compact ground: the gravel of the Parco, the cobblestones of Piazza d'Armi, the contours of the lawns on the sideline of the Arena Civica. It is not possible to fix pickets in any place: all the structures that need to be braced (trapezoids and curtains included) are secured to concrete basements, transported and moved for the occasion by specialized firms, with great expenditure of resources.

The electric connection creates many difficulties. In the first place it is necessary to obtain extraordinary power supply by the municipal company, but this is not enough yet, so for different locations of the Park, as well as for food and drink stalls, we must solve with hired and expensive power generators, with the necessary guarantees provided, once again, under heavy money deposits.

The use of the Arena Civica is particularly complex. The fundamental problem is to locate here the performances that foresee the use of fireworks, banned elsewhere, as well as shows requiring stage structures of a certain size. This suggests us to avoid the use of the delicate and expensive tartan (the particular mantle covering the athletic ring and the sideline), which risks to be spoiled. The public would necessarily seat on the steps, but on Tuesday 7th October, two days before the event, the Municipal Supervision Commission, due to a bureaucratic quibble, fixes for the shows a max capacity of 200 people (limit later raised to 950) when the Arena can contain up to 30.000.

This is a significant problem, since the event foresees much more public that would have found adequate space in the Arena in occasion of final events of the four evenings.

The most "delicate" venue of the showcase, the Castello Sforzesco, will paradoxically be the one where OPEN STREET faces fewer problems. This is undoubtedly due to the involvement of the city staff of the Castle, who welcomed the initiative fully endorsing objectives, strategies and cooperating actively. The total lack of premises to be used as dressing rooms and / or warehouses was the only trouble of this area.

In total for the technical adaptation of spaces, rentals concerning covers, toilets, stages and chairs, concrete footings, purchase of sand, electrical supplies, connections and certifications costs, transport of stuffs, the fire prevention plan, almost € 30,000 are spent. Audio/lightings strictly necessary for the performances require further € 17.000.

Once again, it is important to remember that for the first time the commitment of the showcase is to provide equally to the tech. needs for the 20 performances of the Guest program as well as for the performances of the 30 accredited companies.

One week before the showcase start, as provided in the official Call, all companies are promptly informed about the technical equipment OPEN STREET is able to grant. Any other stuff that the company considers necessary for the performance must be procured and prepared by the company itself.

>>> DIFFICULTY IN COMMUNICATION

The communication plan, shared and approved by OPEN STREET aisbl, foresees a total investment of € 20,600 (partnerships included), of which over 50% have been spent in print and billboards, 2,500 euro in graphic and web design, 1,600 for social media and web contents, 1,000 for radio spots, 2,000 for the press office. Nevertheless, 10 days from the event start, the information about the initiative is still very poor. The element that more than any other has affected this was the absolute delay of news issuing by media. In fact, the press conference was fixed by the municipal offices on 7th October.>>>

>>> THE SHOWCASE STARTS...

The problems do not stop even during the project progress, they impact as meteors on who organizes the event and as a consequence, also on who attends, leaving unscathed only the audience that despite the uncertain weather proves to appreciate the initiative.

Many suppliers delay the delivery of the materials needed by the showcase.

There are already the first arrivals and meantime the first problems with the allocation of rooms at the **** Arcimboldi Hotel. Despite a computerized management system, despite providing detailed lists with names and surnames of representatives of companies, the Hotel is not able to find these lists and to welcome

guests arriving at the reception. The direction of the 4 stars hotel tries to justify in various ways, but the feeling is that the staff (distributed in multi-shift) is not duly informed, that the structure does not recognize as valid the agreed booking system agreed (name of company / organization, name of responsible for the company / institution), and are indeed looking for the exact match between the names given and people who presenting at reception.

Many people are not accepted and even at late night, before having access to the guest rooms, the hotel requires to receive emails and written confirmation concerning the belonging of the person to the OPEN STREET group. Some people are even requested to pay (for a hotel service that should have been granted by OPEN STREET or that was been already paid), and moreover according to the ordinary tariff (not the agreed prices!).

Despite the efforts of the secretariat of OPEN STREET, trying to solve things and to foster a different level of collaboration with the hotel staff, this situation will last until Sunday, creating mess among the guests and a general negative sentiment among participant artists and operators.

Meanwhile, even this may sound incredible, the city administration is still unable to grant that the event will take place! The permission of public entertainment, subject to approval of the Board of Supervisors and the green light of SIAE (the national agency for author copyrights), is not yet released.

SIAE Milan in particular, just one week before start, requires to receive IN ADVANCE ALL data for each performance, with the identity of the authors, data about tutelage of pieces, and a full title list of all music used, both for music shows and for the stage music. All this must be delivered BEFORE the event. The General Permit is issued on 9th October, the same morning of event start, under a request of deposit of Euro 5,000 charged to FNAS (holder of the general permit).

In the morning here is a new big problem: the responsible of the company Ondadurto, already present at the showcase, informs the direction that the performance of their show is in doubt. Their power request for the performance is over 50 Kwatt, whilst the supply at the Arena can grant a maximum of 30. The electrician, who has provided the system, working in coordination with the service, does not intend to certify the provision for more than the allowed power. The standoff between the company and service goes on for a few days and flows even in a quarrel and mutual accusations of incompetence.

There is also a problem of resources. In application of the Rules of OPEN STREET call, it is proposed to the company to assume a part of costs (about 800 euro) relating to the staff, or to provide own staff, meantime fully assuring the hired material. But this proposal is rejected.

On 7th October the issue is being discussed within the management of OPEN STREET, and its final decision is to assume the full technique costs, even considering that this show is one of the most spectacular of showcase. On the same day the decision is notified in writing to the company, to which, moreover, the management had always given assurance that the show - scheduled for Saturday 11th October - would be performed and that solutions would have been found. Meantime, the additional service is also confirmed. But for the company the communication is not well timed, and consequently the troupe is now unwilling to arrive.

The secretary of OPEN STREET is besieged by companies, each of them is accompanied to own fair stand, but unfortunately in a part of wonderful Daily Hotel Cobianchi, which indeed is a splendid and very functional venue for this kind of initiatives, the electrical system (lights and plugs) is KO. The matter is solved with the purchase of lamps and cables. The problems related to practicability of the "Cobianchi" will increase in the following days, because although it is a wonderful and central venue (overlooking Piazza Duomo), it was not adequately prepared for an intensive use after so many years of closure.

At 15:30 of Thursday 9th October the most shocking news comes by the Office for Public Spectacle. The officer on duty will not yield the permission because the electrician responsible for certifying forgot to deliver one of the necessary documents. At 16:15 the documentation is integrated and the ticket windows are reopened.

Due to all problems which the organizers must find a solution for, they cannot dedicate the same attention in the management of the guest as happened in previous editions. Nevertheless, the festival directors of are accompanied by three assistants specially responsible, in different places of entertainment that engage them from 17:00 to 24:00. The performances of companies GUEST are seen by all guests, accredited companies are seen by 50% of the operators present. Each company is produced in 2 replicas, of which at least one is in the presence of operators themselves.

The threat of rain is always latent. The afternoon is gray and not particularly warm, the attendance of the public is scarce. 177 tickets are sold, but this must be compared to a total audience of many hundreds of people, who have free access through the Parco and up to 19:00 through the Castello Sforzesco.

Friday 10th is even worse in terms of organizational problems. The attention of technicians is focused on a puzzle that many days seems to have no solution. The South Paw Dance Company (Guest), arriving from Scotland on evening, must perform the next day in Arena. The use of free flames excludes the possibility to program the show at the Parco Sempione and the Castello Sforzesco. The sites of Arena are set up with stages or platforms, while the company would require a smooth and compact ground of stone or asphalt for use of gunpowder. At the end, they suggest to cover 144 square meters stage with a metal sheet, which is impractical solution for OPEN STREET, both for costs and for the tremendous work needed to fix the panels.

Furthermore, for the show of Bilbobasso on Saturday we must provide 1 cubic meter of sand to sprinkle on the second site of the Arena Civica,.

The complex problems of South Paw Dance Company and Bilbobasso are solved successfully, while a supplier at last moment refuses to provide a dance mat, essential for the performance of Francisco Rojas Dyvinetz, despite the presence of a specific agreement signed, citing as motivation the delay of "over one hour" in its collecting, as well as the "dubious identification of the applicant," OPEN STREET aisbl, which is a not Italian body. The show of Dyvinetz is postponed to the next day in Piazza Duomo.

Meantime the company LIT Circus, as consequence of the problems faced at the hotel and various inconveniences upon show mounting, disputes its treatment at the secretariat of the Showcase, insisting to get the best conditions for the performance. The direction of OPEN STREET puts itself at the disposal of the company, the show is programmed early in the afternoon, whilst further technical staff is assigned to the company. Nevertheless, at 17:00 the company decides not to perform, and indeed, at moment of the show start the company makes an announcement about the organizational shortcomings.

This act will redeem the solidarity of several other artists, especially Italians, who produce a document to express their discontent on next day. Several meetings on Saturday 11th and Sunday, between these artists, the OPEN STREET 2014 management and operators, will not be able to improve the collaboration between the parties and to produce constructive proposals.

We are on the third day, and things seem now to take another turn. The organizing group is finally more compact and coordinated, and it will not face further overwhelming problems. The performances begin in the morning in Piazza Duomo. A large audience of pedestrians assists surprised by the artistic quality of the shows.

The weather is finally favorable, the ticket boxes at the Castello Sforzesco and the Arena Civica are besieged by a crowd of persons who also seem to have quite clear ideas about shows they want to see: in addition to a good number of tickets, also many bookings for more specific and innovative shows are sold.

The public of free access to the park is even more numerous, and the feeling is that one of a great event. Appreciation for the quality of the artistic proposals is expressed by everyone. The Castle and the Parco Sempione, so crowded, are superb. Finally, in addition to the public, also many companies are enthusiastic about the context in which they are performing. The ticket boxes will collect a cash of over 11,000 euro.

Sunday morning, the climate seems more serene even at the fair stands. In late morning Leo Bassi arrives in Milano. His lecture, performed in the afternoon at the Cortile della Rocchetta, is seen by hundreds of people. Also the councilor Bisconti, through the moderation of Alessandro Serena, attends to the event. All will be accompanied by the jubilant presence of Street Bands.

The attendance of the public is very good, especially in the afternoon slot. In the evening all sites have a large audience.

Shortly before the conference, a delegation of Italian artists had asked Leo Bassi to convey own protest, intending to give him a statement focused on the flaws of the Milanese initiative. But Bassi had not accepted and had indeed started the conference, and later also the evening show, by underlining how the conquest of the Castello Sforzesco - the seat of Power long time ago - by clowns and charlatans, is for him an extraordinary result. In addition, during the conference, he said to be concerned by the transformation that

have recently influenced the street arts productions, increasingly linked to complex technical requirements that - he said - delineate the parting from the typical expressive modes of the street show.

Its show THE BEST OF, performed with a total of 8 theatre spots and a follower spot, closes the first edition of the Milanese Showcase "OPEN STREET 2014" with a spate of applause, in the fully booked Cortile della Rocchetta.

>>> CONCLUSIONS

Open Street in 2014, has pursued in Milan very ambitious objectives. Probably the organizational difficulties were underestimated. But what made the commitment of the working group at the limit of human possibility certainly was the binomial, narrow-time / insufficiency of resources. A combination that certainly deserved to withdraw the project by OPEN STREET aisbl. However, at time when abandonment could be decided (April 2014) it still seemed to be have enough time and resources to give life to this difficult project.

However, it must be recognized that, even partially, and despite the difficulties, the result of giving birth to a first edition of OPEN STREET in Milan, both from the economic point of view, and from that of the audience response, thanks to all those who have positively contributed up to the end, was almost reached.

The most macroscopic errors were certainly related to the internal coordination of the operational group, and to communication. In particular, the plan of communication has led to a minimum of sold tickets, compared to an expenditure so high to be equivalent to the same amount.

But to attribute all responsibilities for this partial result to OPEN STREET aisbl only would be an error of evaluation. Many others were involved in the implementation of the event. Some of them have given a decisive and indispensable support, as the Department of Health and the Department of the Castello Sforzesco, others (as some sectors of the city administration) have almost opposed the initiative and disappointed all expectations (as in the case of the Hotel and / or the Lighting/Audio Service, who were even commercial partners in the project).

The implementation of a project of pure COOPERATION like OPEN STREET needs availability and understanding by all parties involved. This means that "behind the stage" all operators, artists, management team, must first of all recognize in the same identity, assume that what brought them to Milan is not only an economic purpose, nor a special interest of the company, festival or operator. All together should indeed led to a meeting in which the availability of the operators to meet the artistic groups and attend their performances, was as much important as the disposition of companies to overcome any limitations given by the context. OPEN STREET remains a project with no commercial purposes or profit whatsoever, which has its sole reason to exist in the creation of a service, the best possible, in favour of the European Street Performing Art.

When this availability, support and participation were present in all parts involved, then the project has been able to arouse enthusiasm. And in fact it happened in most cases, despite the mishaps with suppliers and municipal bureaucracy.

For the first time, the Milanese public has lived the meeting with the best productions of European Street Show, expressing a high appreciation. The locations involved are an irreplaceable frame, able to create a magic meeting between international companies and the city.

For all above, we can consider that OPEN STREET Milan has certainly been a positive development of the project started in 2010, but now the association must seriously ponder whether to propose again the event to the City administration of Milan, under what conditions, if the model must change completely and if Milano may be a suitable partner.

The success of the initiative for the purposes of the sector will be decreed or discussed only after the analysis of the future artistic programming of the festival attending at Open Street. If, as it already happened in 2010 and 2011, the European Festivals will populate the productions of the network, then the ultimate goal of the initiative, the promotion of Eurcultural diversity of European street arts, will be reach.

COMMENTS OF PROTAGONISTS

I understand it was not an easy situation for none of you, I could see you all running up and down all day and I felt you tried your best.

We had some problems like the hotel saying we had no room when we arrived at 3 in the morning! But it was solved quite fast in the end.

Thanks again and hope we get many dates indeed!
Kind regards,

Inés
Debote Enbote Circo (ES)

Ciao Francesco, Alessio, Elisa, Marta
Mi metto in contatto con voi, perche come io non mi potevo salutarti a tutti perché la mattina del 12 Oct molto Temprado andare a Barcellona...
è il motivo per cui vi saluto e vi ringrazio per la vostra ospitalità
si spera andare contratti per lavorare in Italia.
mi piace essere in Italia
baci e grazie ancora

Ramon
Prof. Karoli

I hope you were able to get some rest after the open street festival.
I just want to say that of course we know all that the organisation was not really ok but i have to thank you both for your availability even when the things are going wrong.
Much people in that case are hide themself and you both didn't do that !
It's important and i'm gratefull for that.
And important for us is that much professionals came to see us and i think we will have contracts in Germany, Holland, Belgium, Spain following our act in Open Street.
I wish you much suuces with all your other projects.
See you later in France, Belgium,
Have nice a week-end !

Kind regards

Sam Baems, Kadavresky (FR)

Thank you very much for all your help,
The pitch, the sound and the lights were perfect for me and my show!

Until next time,
All the best!

Menno Romers (Eddie Only)

Yes! Open Milano was Very good for me... I got booked at the Kleines Fest because of it!
Thanks speak to you soon

Pierrick St-Pierre, MR BANANA

We do not want to say the event was a total flop. The showcase was of high level anyway, and some inconveniences happened because the involved persons were left alone. In next editions the aim can be refined. We want to thank all staff who gave us the chance to attend.

(By phone)

Compagnia dei Folli, Ascoli Piceno (IT)

Honestly, I give a positive opinion of the Open Street.

As my organizer point of view, I do detect some faults to be corrected for the next edition:

- You should always, at the beginning, upon arrival, hold a meeting of all the organizers present, a meeting in which everyone shows up, in which the event phases are explained, and the contact list of all people attending is given.

- You cannot eat standing. It is not just a matter of comfort. The table is an essential moment of sociability - also considering the rhythm at which the shows are performed. And the tables must not be for 4, but at least 6 or 8 seats, once again to promote sociability.

- The show times must be distributed throughout the day. One in the morning and then from 15.00 in bursts, but ending with a final show not later than 22:30 (so people can go to the hotel via metro, thus saving budget). I cannot imagine if instead of a tropical October the event faced an usual Milanese October: cold, very wet and rainy

Perhaps it would be very good if to give to the organizers the list of all sites and email addresses such as the invited companies and the attending organizers.

Alberto Masoni, Terzostudio

Festival Mercantia (certaldo – it), Apriti Borgo (Campiglia Marittima - it), and many others.

Alberto Masoni, Terzostudio

Festival Mercantia (certaldo – it), Apriti Borgo (Campiglia Marittima - it), e molti altri.

Good Morning,

I am Mauro Negro of Cultural Group 86 of Vascon - Treviso, responsible programming of Coi Pie Descalsi Festival. It was not possible to give my opinion at the meeting with operators on Sunday 12th at 15:00, so I do it now. From the beginning I felt this initiative OPEN STREET AISBL as an opportunity for the whole movement linked to street arts. I feel sorry about the problems that have invested organizers and penalized especially foreign guests, not giving to some companies the opportunity to perform. But there are also things that have worked: we had the chance to meet different artists, old friends and new people, to exchange opinions, to attend performances of several companies, some of which will be contacted by us. To be able, in Italy, to create the event and propose many and diverse qualified companies is really not common, especially in these days. And what's more, beyond the problems, to have tried the opportunity to do it in the center of Milan. Surely all the analysis on what did not work will be made, looking for responsibility etc. We know it well, at least for us ... how hard it can be to shake politicians, governments, organizations, sponsors. I want to thank you for the opportunity, I hope that this project can have a future, and I think it is essential to have the support and contribution of those who live and trust in these art forms.

Mauro Negro

Gruppo Ricreativo Culturale 86, Vascon-TV

To the organizers and responsables of Open Street Milan: It is so sad that these incredible problems did happen at Open Street in Milano - that performers had to cancel their shows and there was no support from the side of the responsible and at least no communication at all. We stand behind all the artists who, I'm sure, did all their best to do their shows and contribute to that Street Festival. Let's come and work all together, that this will never happen again!!!!

Kleine Feste Hannover

13th Oct. 17.58 (Via Facebook)

Thank you very much for the opportunity to attend the festival.
Thank you very much all the help and all the best.
I am in your debtor
best regards

Darek Jarosiski
MF Sztuka Ulicy

Come Parada, non posso che ringraziarvi per la bella opportunità che ci avete offerto di poter comunicare sulle nostre attività in favore dei bambini e giovani che vivono sulle strade.
Congratulazioni anche per l'evento in se, Milano ne aveva bisogno!!!!!!

Un caro saluto ed ancora un ringraziamento.

Franco Aloisio
Rappresentante Parada Italia

FROM VOLOUNTEERS AND COOPERATORS

Sono felice di aver fatto parte di questa breve ma ricca e intensa avventura, così come di aver conosciuto la vostra disponibilità e gentilezza e di aver contribuito nel mio piccolo a un progetto bello e grande.

Un caro saluto
Giulia Pagone

E' Stata una bellissima esperienza.
La Cassiera Mirella

FROM AUDIENCE **Comments Via Facebook**

bellissimo! noi abbiamo partecipato ieri ed è stato strepitoso! spettacolare!non solo gli spettacoli in se, ma anche il board con la mappa! Bravi!

Giuliana Giulie Donati

Ci sono stata ieri, spettacoli molto belli. Se vi sarà una seconda edizione (autunnale) spero che gli orari siano rivisti. Lo spettacolo di Bassi è finito alle 00.30 quindi metro chiusa. Visto che gli spettacoli sono anche per i bambini, sarebbe stato molto più gradito assistere agli stessi già dal primo pomeriggio e non a pomeriggio inoltrato(dalle 17.00 alle 23.00).... anche per via della temperatura non certamente estiva
Matilde Ferraro

arrivederci,... bellissimi ieri e oggi! week end in strada!
Manuela Alboreto

Ieri sera siamo stati all'Open Street.

L'impressione che abbiamo avuto è che sia troppo dispersiva, gli spettacoli sono troppo distanti gli uni dagli altri, non c'era nessun cartello che indirizzasse la gente. Inoltre va benissimo far pagare un biglietto d'ingresso, ma secondo me non è tanto giusto che gli stessi spettacoli possano essere visti anche da chi non l'ha pagato, solo restando fuori dalla transenna... L'anno prossimo non credo di comprarlo a questo punto. Infine abbiamo avuto moltissima difficoltà a mangiare: c'era solo uno stand di street food con cose molto particolari, che non a tutti piacevano e ci siamo ridotti a mangiare a mezzanotte passata in un locale perché nel parco non c'era nessun altro punto ristoro.

Detto questo, l'iniziativa è molto bella e ci è piaciuta molto. Gli artisti sono stati davvero bravissimi! Se si riuscisse a rimediare agli inconvenienti di cui sopra sarebbe davvero un evento turistico con ottime potenzialità.

Non so se devo rivolgermi a voi, ma in caso contrario vi chiedo gentilmente di riferire a chi di dovere.

Grazie e complimenti per l'evento in sé. Cordialmente,
Valeria Zucchiatti. Domenica 12 Ottobre 2014