

Process of co-production of a cultural collection by the artisanal collective

« Talentos Artesanales »

Co-production for individual and collective empowerment

Introduction

In 2019, in Lima, a co-production work of a cultural mini-collection was carried out with the association of craftswomen "Talentos Artesanales" and the students and professors of the University PUCP of Lima.

Co-production is a step in a wider process of accompanying a collective. And the objective goes beyond the simple co-production of a final product.

The objectives of this work were:

- ❖ To have a common tool to achieve cohesion, union, unity within the group Talentos Artesanales.
 - By creating a homogeneous mini-collection for all members of the association.
 - By embracing creativity and innovation, combining tradition with modernity.
 - By embedding the craft in its new territory, Lima, rediscovering the local culture of the city.

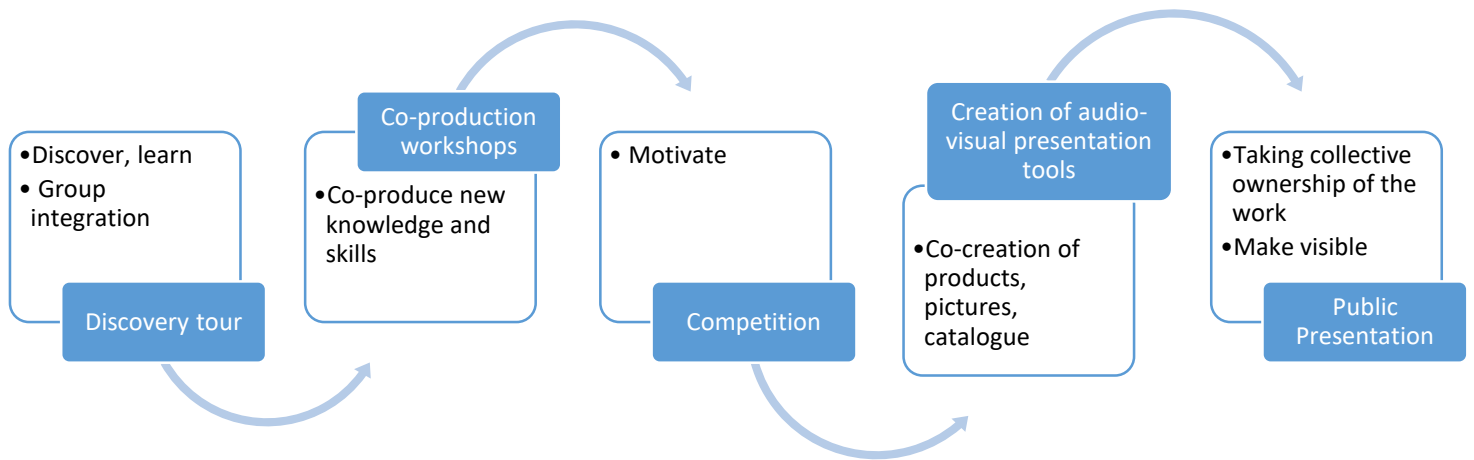
Talentos Artesanales

Talentos Artesanales is an association of women artisans from Lima representing the handicraft culture of all Peru, from the coast, the Andes and the Amazonian forest. The association was formed in 2015 as a network to share experiences between 7 groups of women artisans. It now has 23 members who have organised themselves with the aim of seeking collective solutions to the challenges of the sector:

- The valorisation and transmission of the craft culture to the new generation (through experiential and interactive workshops),
- The creation of new sources of income for artisanal producers in the framework of the concepts of solidarity economy and fair trade,
- The structuring and organisation of artisans into collectives or networks to increase their possibilities and defend their rights.



Summary of the process of co-production of a cultural collection by the artisanal collective Talentos Artesanales



We will now look at the details of each step:

The discovery tour

A discovery visit is an inspiring visit. It can be a visit to a group of women artisans to learn about their experience or a visit to a local market to see how they present their products. In our case, we made two discovery visits to archaeological sites in Lima (called "huacas").



To promote this dynamic, a visit to the Pachacamac sanctuary, situated in the south part of Lima district, was organised. This visit was interesting to discover :

- an ancient local culture, the Ichma culture,
- an initiative of local women artisans who transpose the iconography of this culture into their contemporary handicrafts and sell them in the museum shop.

Then a second visit was organised to the remains of the Inca Trail and the huacas on the campus of the PUCP University in Lima.

Beforehand, to prepare for the visit, it is important to :

- Find a group or a place that could inspire your group.
- Think about travel and your budget.
- Prepare for this visit by discussing with the women what they need to observe or ask.

Good practices :

This type of visit promotes inter-knowledge between group members. During the meetings, the craftswomen sometimes do not have time to talk, they come from far away (1 hour or more), they stay late, there is no time for informality. During the discovery visits, they spend time together on the bus to the site, they have lunch together, they walk around the site or in the museum, etc. This generates informal discussions between them. Beyond the "technical" objective of the visit, it generates links, human relations, and even friendship.

To be improved:

Collective and individual follow-up is necessary after these visits. For collective follow-up after a visit to a cultural site and for creative purposes afterwards, we recommend

- Collect the photos that the artisans took during the site visit and print them.
- Organise a workshop so that they can express what they have remembered, select from the photos the drawings/icons of the ancient Peruvian cultures discovered that they find most representative and that they like, and start to design models or products with this inspiration.
- Organise a workshop to analyse the proposal of craftswomen who already use icons from ancient Peruvian cultures: what they like, what they think is feasible for them, how they could organise it.
- Then comes the individual follow-up. Beware, this can take time! In our case, with 23 partners, it was difficult to implement this individual follow-up stage.

Co-production workshops

A co-production workshop is a space and time for production that brings together actors from different backgrounds, who enrich each other.

In our case, it was in the framework of a collaboration with our partner Axis Arte, a laboratory of the art faculty of the PUCP university, its professors and students, that we initiated a collective process, inviting an archaeologist from the same university.

Step 1: After a guided tour of the existing huacas on the campus by a resident archaeologist of the university, we received documents from the university containing historical, graphic and archaeological elements.

Step 2: With the support of a student designer, we started design work to teach the artisans how to:

- To create a collection,
- make a book,
- Research the theme that inspires us.
- Identify the designs and elements that should be reflected in the craft products, design them and adapt them.
- Knowing trends and fashion.

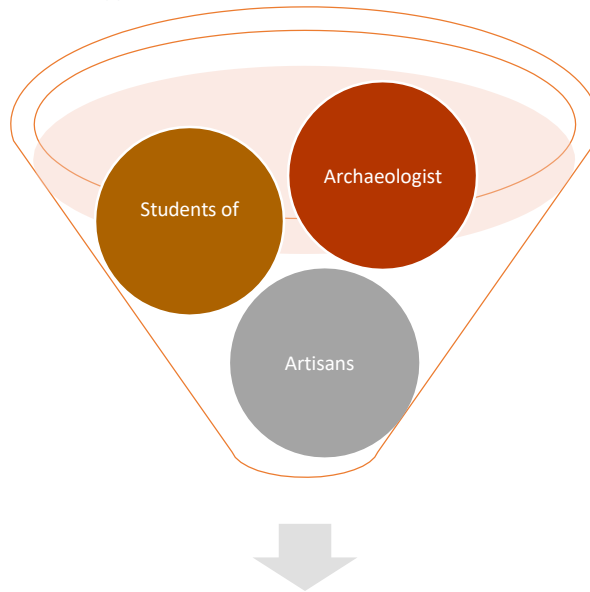
Stage 3 - CENTRAL: This work was completed by a 4-hour workshop of co-production to generate ideas with the group of students of the the Faculty of Art. The students themselves prepared the workshop, with the support of the teachers, within the framework of their course, with the following schedule:

- Presentation of the archaeologist on the ancient local culture (Maranga), its symbols, its iconography, the history of this culture linked to the sea and the desert,
- Student presentation about design innovation,
- Application via the design of an innovative product with elements of the local Maranga culture.



This practical workshop allowed each artisan to develop at least one idea of a new product.

It was a dialogue of knowledge between 3 types of actors:



Co-production between :

- Design students, young people explaining the tools they use to create.
- Archaeologists who transmit history, iconography, symbols, graphic explanations put back into context according to the period, analysis of colours according to the raw materials of the time.
- Craftswomen who know their techniques, materials, craft lines.
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To be improved:

That co-production also takes place between the craftswomen themselves. That they can support and advise each other.

"It would be nice if all of us could bring ideas and advice to other fellow craftswomen for the next time. With empathy, without fear of copying each other. That is to say, I could advise a fellow craftswoman who knit for example." Linda Echevarria - Joyesol

"It would be nice for the next time to help each other as artisans, to make suggestions, to accompany each other." Karen Pérez

Competition

The idea is to organise a small creative competition to motivate and reward the efforts of the craftswomen in developing new craft and cultural pieces.

The university's archaeologist organised an event, HuacaFest 2019, to inform students and the general public about the huacas on campus and the Inca Trail that runs through it. For this event, CENCA and the students proposed a presentation of the co-production process between the artisans and the students as well as the valorisation of the artisans, in the form of a small competition with 3 prizes of s./300 (about 80€) for the following categories:

- The best student/artisan collaboration,
- The best performance,
- And the creativity award.

The funds were provided by the Academic Directorate for Social Responsibility.

Several craftswomen developed their handicrafts from the sketches with the motivation of being able to present them publicly at the competition. A public presentation and a competition are great incentives. And you don't need a big budget.



Is the competition a mistake or not?

It was an initiative of the PUCP, not Talentos Artesanales, so working with allies, there are sometimes elements that we don't control.

The cohesion of the group weakened somewhat with the competition. This encouraged competition between the craftswomen.

But we also managed to motivate several craftswomen to actually make their Maranga piece, to go from a sketch to a real object.

For another time:

Form mixed teams of women artisans who work together to compete.

Creation of a catalogue

The catalogue is the final product. It is a tool for presenting "to the outside world" the Talentos Artesanales association of craftswomen, its members and their mini-collection, the result of a co-production work .

What is in the catalogue?

- A presentation of the association Talentos Artesanales
- A text on Lima, its cultural wealth and urban inequalities
- A text on Maranga culture
- Presentation of each member of the Talentos Artesanales association with photos
- Presentation of the products made by the craftswomen in the framework of the co-production.



Good practice:

Each craftswoman was asked to submit a piece of handicraft designated according to the Maranga culture. Until then, the participants in Talentos Artesanales had never been forced to do anything. Everything was voluntary and some activities might be more beneficial for some than for others. But the obligation was not negative. It was seen more as a framework for completing the collection.



To be improved:

The work of writing and editing the catalogue was mainly done by CENCA. It would be good in future experiences to involve the participants more in the writing of the texts, perhaps with a writing workshop. Writing oneself is an important step towards ownership.

Highlight the co-production process with external partners in the catalogue, with text or visuals.

Public presentation

A public presentation is a key moment to present the final product of a co-production to stakeholders and external actors.

Why organise a public presentation?

- ❖ Recognition of the group's efforts,
- ❖ The appropriation of the co-production process by the group,
- ❖ Recognition of individual and collective impacts,
- ❖ questioning of the authorities responsible for the handicraft sector.

This stage could not take place face-to-face in the first semester of 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the more than 3 months confinement situation in Peru. But a virtual workshop was organised in June 2020, co-organised by Talentos Artesanales and the university, with the aim of showing that ancient Peruvian cultures can indeed allow the craft world to modernise.

The artisans were again supported by students to prepare their presentation speeches and test the new technologies for this first virtual presentation.

The screenshot shows a mobile application interface for a virtual event. At the top, there is a navigation bar with icons for home, calendar, and social media, along with notification counts (9+, 9+, 4). The main content area features a promotional banner for "HuacaFest Maranga 2020" with the subtitle "Caminos uniendo Personas" and "CICLO DE CONFERENCIAS VIRTUALES". The banner includes the event date and time: "Jueves 18 de junio de 2020 10:00 am", the description "Artesanía inspirada en la iconografía de las culturas Lima e Yschma y en las huacas de Maranga.", and the title "Presentación del Catálogo Mini Colección Maranga 2020". The banner also displays the "Talentos Artesanales" logo and social media icons for YouTube, Instagram, Facebook, and Zoom. Below the banner, there is a calendar widget showing the date "18" and the time "JEUDI 18 JUIN 2020 DE 17:00 UTC+02 À 20:00 UTC+02". The event title "Presentación del Catálogo Mini Colección Maranga 2020" is displayed below the calendar. At the bottom, there are logos for the organizing institutions: "DIRECCIÓN DE INFRAESTRUCTURA", "DIRECCIÓN DE ASUNTOS CULTURALES", "INSTITUTO NIWA-AQUERO", "Talentos Artesanales", and "PUCP".

How did this co-production process contribute to the individual emancipation of the women artisans and the collective emancipation of the Talentos Artesanales association?

In order to observe and begin to analyse the impacts of the co-production work, we conducted 4 interviews with artisans of Talentos Artesanales (Gissela Angulo, Karen Pérez, Linda Echevarría, Silvia Huamán). The questions were organised in 3 blocks in order to observe changes at a personal level, at a group level and at a more structural level.

The changes are evident at the personal level, which allows us to talk about individual empowerment of the participants in the process: new knowledge, development of capacities, self-worth, confidence. On a collective level, we see that the co-production process is a strengthening of the group. On a more occasional basis, it is used to take action and to launch small awareness-raising actions with the authorities of reference.

Analysis of changes at the individual level, for the group, for collective action

FRAMEWORK FOR OBSERVING CHANGES AND IMPACTS OF CO-PRODUCTION

	Individual Empowerment	Strengthening the group	Recognition of the group by external actors
KNOWLEDGE	<p>Technical capacity building:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sketches - creation process - Making a book <p>- Cultural research</p> <p>- Knowledge about an ancient culture and local</p>	<p>Demonstrate its capabilities to other actors.</p> <p>Strengthens identity: Peruvian, artisanal, cultural</p> <p>Appropriation of their own culture. More cultural discourse.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cultural value - Cultural collection - Selling objects that have an identity - Bringing a culture to life 	<p>Recognise for the craftswomen that their supervisory ministry has a responsibility to develop this kind of initiative and thus demand that their rights be respected (training, promotion of what is produced)</p> <p>By giving them something themselves: a professional final product, produced with the support of the academy.</p>
FEEL/WANT	<p>Valuation</p> <p>Respect</p> <p>Pride</p> <p>Recognition</p> <p>Self-esteem...</p>	<p>Inter-knowledge, integration into the group, group union.</p>	
EMPOWERMENT	<p>Security, trust in cultural information... ...until saying that they can enhance the value of the artisanal work to the customer, i.e. transmit the values of "consuming locally, consuming responsibly".</p>	<p>Legitimacy</p> <p>Support from the academy. Allows you to knock on doors</p>	

Individual empowerment

Individual emancipation defined by developing KNOWLEDGE, RESENT and WANT as well as the POWER TO ACT.

KNOWLEDGE

The craftswomen clearly express that in this co-production process they have "learned". They developed new technical skills to innovate in their craft production: developing a product through several creative steps, doing research, drawing sketches, transforming iconography into products, etc. These are technical skills, learned by doing with the students and then practicing on their own. These are technical skills, learned by doing with the students and then practising on their own.

*"[I developed skills] in **investigation**. I read a lot about the Maranga culture throughout the process. And I continue to research other cultures." - Karen.*

"We have learned to transpose its cultures and iconographies onto our craft lines, in my case textiles. It helped us to make our products better, more stylish, more aesthetic." - Gissela

"I learnt a lot about how to develop a product from the first drawings, sketches to using tracing paper, paper lining to draw." - Silvia

This more technical knowledge is complemented by historical and archaeological knowledge of an ancient Peruvian culture.

"Reproduce iconographies, with knowledge of the culture. Knowing what we are reproducing." - Linda

FEEL - WANT

In addition to capacity building, co-production has an impact on the personal development of the women artisans. They are proud of what they have achieved, because they did not think they could do it. But with encouragement and support, they take up the challenge. This has a strong impact on their self-esteem.

The exchange with the students also allows them to value their own knowledge and abilities, and thus their own almost always difficult path. They come out of this process stronger and more motivated.

"It gave us a lot of strength. And it has given us a different view of what we can do, of our art. It motivates us, makes us feel valued, recognising our work and our life trajectories. We are women of a certain age and they realise what we can achieve and succeed. It motivates us, lifts our self-esteem." - Linda

"I am proud. It is ours and we can value it. It's a proud feeling because this culture is mine." - Gissela

POWER

Knowing, feeling, wanting, all of this enables them to act. They feel confident that they can do something with what they have learned.

"It made me feel better. I feel safer because I felt we were walking on safe ground regarding the Maranga culture. I really trusted the information that the archaeologist gave us." - Karen

Strengthening the group

CULTURAL DISCOURSE

It can be seen that this work also allows for the appropriation of an important theme for the craft: its cultural value. The development of cultural knowledge and skills that should be reflected in a collection of handicrafts has strengthened the cultural discourse of the craftswomen. They feel that they can take ownership of their own culture, an ancient culture of the city where they live and develop their activities, and make it a strength.

"We wanted to make a collection with our Peruvian cultures. Why? To highlight our Peruvian culture and make something that represents us." - Gissela

"I have appropriated a Peruvian culture. It's mine and I have to assume it. With this Maranga collection, we are giving life to our culture." - Gissela

They recognise that they can add more value to their products through culture. They have changed the way they express themselves on this subject. They now use the expressions "cultural collection", "identity", "cultural value", which they did not do before. And this openness to culture, to what belongs to them, also allows them to transmit it to the outside world. And they have more confidence in the value of what they sell.

"Now we have products with cultural value that can be sold at a higher price. We are revaluing our culture and selling identity. It's another vision." - Linda

GROUP UNION

The artisans express that this collective exercise has strengthened the union of the members of the association. It facilitated inter-knowledge, integration, thanks to several moments in group, more informal than a meeting. It has allowed more contacts, more exchanges and also to develop the same knowledge, the same skills. This is a key stage in the structuring of the group. The group started to build up its own capacities and knowledge, to develop its own resources. Producing knowledge in a collective way allows them to acquire elements that characterise the group, elements that differentiate them from other groups. A group identity is created. It strengthens the links between individuals and gives the collective a solid base. The final product, the catalogue, also generates unity, as it is a common tool they now have for the visibility of the association.

"It was a key step to doing more things together." - Karen

"It was a great emotion. It united us. It allowed us all to get together at the university several times, to communicate with each other. We all talked to each other, we helped each other in the creation. - Linda

"It helped us to know each other better, to know each other's products. It helped us to be more united. It was an important process for the union of the collective." - Gissela

LEGITIMACY AND COLLECTIVE TRUST

The artisans also say that this collection and the corresponding catalogue give them legitimacy to present their work. They have a tool to demonstrate their abilities and their value. And also an element that allows them to act, to knock on doors.

"This catalogue was made with the support, the backing of the university, on a culture they studied in their curriculum. I feel stronger to talk to the authorities with this work together." - Gissela

"It also served to demonstrate our capabilities, our professionalism, our creativity." - Silvia

"Having a collection helps us in our representation to the outside world, that they recognise us." - Karen

"This is used to knock on doors. With this collection, they take us into account." Linda

"It is a tool that allows us to make our work, our culture and our innovations visible. To make ourselves known." - Gissela

Recognition by external actors

The individual empowerment of members and the strengthening of the group have made it possible to present themselves to the authorities with confidence, to interact with them without shame, without feeling "less". The women artisans recognise what the authorities should give them. But they also know that they have value and that they have something to offer.

"It has allowed us to get to the Ministry or other public entities with something to propose. It has helped us to see things in a different way, in the sense that we are not only asking for help from public actors like Mincetur or PromPeru or the Ministry of Culture. Now we can also give them something. It is both giving and asking. It means that we can give something while they make it easier for us to get something else. I give you something and with your help it will have even more potential. It is their responsibility to disseminate our work, even if it is done without their help. They realise and we realise that we can do things on our own, without their help. We are stronger now. And on top of that, I can demand that my rights be respected and that they help me with the distribution."

- Gissela

It is interesting to note that during a meeting with the Ministry of Tourism, the ministry of reference for the handicraft sector, the presentation of the Maranga mini-collection and its co-production process with the academy attracted attention. This is a new dynamic for an association. The Ministry even wanted to support Talentos Artesanales in some of its initiatives or to agree to participate in a workshop organised by the association and the university to reflect on the law on crafts and the strategic plan for the development of crafts (cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic).

