

FUNDACIÓ

CENTRE DEL VIDRE DE BARCELONA

The FCVB, Future Cluster of the Glass in Catalonia

The Glass Center Foundation in Barcelona- now the FCVB - it is an independent institution, that was born with the objective of being a place for the encounter, the dialogue and the enrichment of the art, the industry and the development of the art glass industry.

The beginning of the Foundation goes back to 1987 when in an agreement celebrated with the Decorative Arts Foundation - FAD- the Center of the Glass of Barcelona is created. In 1989 it becomes the School of the Arts of the Glass and in 1990 it is born the Center of the Glass of Barcelona Foundation.

The FCVB has become a creative and dynamic laboratory that besides to become rich with innovating visions, contributes with educative projects of vanguard. For example, by the request of the Ministry of Education the Foundation advised on the project for the creation of the formative cycles of the glass. Once the results for this project were published in the BOE, it derived in a request to the Educational Department of the Generalitat de Catalunya to elaborate the curricula of the five glass cycles in Catalonia.

One of the intentions of the FCVB from its creation has been to educate and to form the new generation of artists, which will be in charge of innovating and creating competitive products at the national and international level. These new artists will be also in charge of anticipating the possibilities that the artistic glass has and recognizing the patrimonial wealth the glass work has. This pedagogical work has been valued in Catalonia, and this is why the Center has received orders varying from the design and production of show windows for houses, to the restoration of objects of private collections and the restoration of modernist glass art.

Within these works it is important to mention: the show windows of the offices of Telefónica in the Square of Catalonia of Barcelona. The show windows of the Josep Pallac Library. The show windows of the Church of Bon Shepherd of Barcelona. The Restoration of the glass collection of the Museum of the Decorative Arts of Barcelona and the restoration of the modernist show windows of the district of Sants-Montjuïc.

For the Foundation, the formation at a very high level has been one of its priorities. The work and the research made during the last ten years has taken the Foundation to establish an international network of contacts and exchanges with different research and

teaching centers worldwide, which count with the collaboration of the Center to establish pedagogical and investigation lines of work.

Nowadays, the Foundation has several pedagogical offerings: the occupational formation, the monographic courses, workshops and tailored courses to professionals, organizations and companies. The Occupational Formation is aimed to unemployed young people and it is subsidized by the European Social Fund and the “Departament de Treball, Industria, Comerç i Turisme” of the Generalitat of Catalunya. The monographic courses, which count with a wide formative mixture, are directed to people with artistic restlessness including craftsmen, professionals of the glass or professionals in other disciplines.

In its beginnings the Foundation participated in multiple research projects. Among others are the Reconstruction of the Processes for the Development of “Cloisonné” Show Windows for the restoration of the collection of the show windows of the Museum of Modern Art; the creation of systems of noise shielding and conservation of show windows; the development of molds for series of glass blown for the industry; and the Project of international investigation about glass “à façon of Venise”. This last project was directed by the Museum of Corning (EUA) in collaboration with the Museum of Toledo, Ohio (EUA), the Museum of Boijmans Van Beuningen of Rotterdam (Holland) and the Museum of Kunstsammlungen of Veste Coburg (Germany).

Almost after two decades of work - of doing continuous research, teaching and diffusion of the glass art; of having alumni that are well-known internationally; of having worked to make everybody more sensible and perceptive about the richness of the wealth of the patrimonial past that exists in Catalonia - the Foundation Center of the Glass of Barcelona continues with the idea to impel a renewal current to continue energizing the glass.

During the last two years the Foundation has been carrying out a process of renovation and adjustment from the original principles to the present world. Through a reorganization of its functional structure, the Foundation expects to be able to dedicate its efforts to new activities and to refocus the traditional ones. This process has derived in the execution of different activities that allows the foundation to find some of new line of activities and simultaneously to find different agents to collaborate with in the future.

It is for that reason that at the beginning of 2007 the Foundation assigned to a third party the elaboration of its Strategic Planning with the purpose of evaluating the results obtained until now and marking the guidelines to follow in the future.

For this mission, the Foundation commended to Dr. Juan Antonio Duro, PhD in Economics and Enterprise Sciences with a specialization in General Economy, who was selected as part of an agreement signed by the FCVB with the Universitat Rovira i Virgili Foundation.

Next, we reproduce the interview that the Glass Bulletin did to Juan Antonio Duro in reference to the Strategic Planning of the Foundation.



Question. Why is it necessary the development of a Strategic Plan for the Foundation?

Answer: The development of a Strategic Planning is important for any institution, company or foundation because it is a self-reflection exercise that allows to model the future that a company wants and how to do it. It is a reference tool for the present and future that is helpful not only for the company that carries it out but also for all the stakeholders. Therefore, the strategic plan is a declaration of the intentions, a way and a commitment on how to achieve those goals, to know where the company is going and what is doing to be there.

- What were the basis for the design of the “Strategic Architecture” for the Foundation?

Part of the motivation was the positioning of the Foundation as the point of reference in the sector of the artistic glass in Catalonia and through its Catalan identity to present it in the exterior. In order to carry out this mission the Foundation fixed a two year limit term from the 2008 to the 2010 and drew up a map with three great targets:

- 1- The products of the Foundation.
- 2- Its paper like a dynamic actor to put in connection the different agents who interact in the glass sector.
- 3- Changes in the internal structure of the Foundation.

- As far as the products of the Foundation, the Strategic Planning makes emphasis in fortifying the formation...

The Foundation has an important comparative advantage because it has a tradition in the monographic formation in glass techniques. The new strategic planning is betting for a regulated professional formation that allows the Foundation to give a jump in the education level.

Also within the objectives it is recommended to create products or to collaborate in specialized educative products. For example by granting credits of glass techniques in superior degrees, for example in the scope of the design and the architecture or to collaborate in degrees or post-degrees.

For this purpose, the Foundation has already contacted the Polytechnical University of Catalonia and the School of Design of Barcelona to be able to develop this type of collaboration in superior formation. However, the proposal for the strategic architecture goes beyond formative products and it considers to develop and to operate other products like research, advising and tourism.

On the other hand, the new strategic planning makes special emphasis in intensifying the network of relationships with the different agents from glass cluster, industry, professionals, administrations, institutions, centers and craftsmen.

- How can the Foundation get involved with the industry?

For example, by developing tailored formation programs according to the company. The Center has the capacity to organize courses that fulfill the requirements that need each company. Additionally, by providing a technical advisory service, for it the foundation counts with a network of professionals specialized in the different scopes of the glass. In addition, the Foundation counts with more than ten years of experience allowing it to offer consultant services related with subventions for internationalization, formation and investigation.

- Why is it important that the Foundation acts like a dynamic agent in the world of the glass in Catalonia?

The Foundation must exert its function in the glass sector that is to connect the different actors who interact in the world of the glass, which is the Glass Cluster in Catalonia. This is, to take advantage of the background and the experience that the Foundation has.

Traditionally the Foundation has been tied to the artisan world and from the Strategic Planning, it is recommended to open to the industry, combining creativity with production. In the scope of the professionals the Center also can be a dynamic agent, mainly in the construction sector by the boom that this has in the use of glass, which is being used by architects, designers and decorators, among other professionals.

- The third point of the Strategic Planning makes emphasis in the changes in the internal structure of the Foundation; to what changes do you refer specifically?

There are multiple points to take care of here. First, it has to do with the financial flows. Currently, some of the budget of the Foundation is bound to a subvention of the City council, which is decided under plenary and renewed every year. The Strategic Plan proposes that the subvention changes its nature and instead a permanent subvention is obtained. In addition, it becomes necessary to increase the cash flows received from the offering of private services.

Another fundamental aspect is the new campus of the Foundation. A relocation for the Foundation it is proposed keeping in mind that the new site has to be well located and within the city of Barcelona.

- Finally, which are the perspectives of the Catalan glass at the industrial and artisan level?

The future seems to be very hopeful. In the first place, regarding the artisan group, the possibilities are open to establish a narrower bond with the industry. Until now, the artisan sector had left a little aside the reality of the industrial sector. But the new necessities created around the artisan sector, associated with the necessities of innovation and creation of new products, mean for the artisan sector a great opportunity to combine creativity with production.

On the other hand the artisan world is global, and evidently in particular the one of the glass has a great potential in terms of tourist operation. It is not so much about the glass made products like integrators of the tourist product, but rather the process of preparing the glass products. The idea is to sell the development of glass art as a new experience for tourists. We understand that this aspect has an enormous potential in our case, given the great capacity of attraction of the city of Barcelona.

Finally, it would be good to emphasize the importance that are acquiring the glass in the scope of the residential construction, with the new demands of glass products for the “interiorism” (glass furniture), the new glass generation of layers, introduction of future intelligent glasses, the glass decorated in different variants, the photovoltaic panels or the organic glass. As it is possible to be seen, the great demands will be associated with the innovation of the product. The companies that make a bet on the innovation and the creativity, combined with the professionalized management, will have the best perspective in the glass industry.

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