

Public Art Research Report (2018)

A report on the current state of research
on public art in the Nordic Countries, and
in a wider international context.

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Section A: Contexts

‘Public art can be understood as a variety of forms and approaches that engage with the sites and situations of the public realm’

Claire Doherty, *Out of Time Out of Place: Public Art (Now)*,
London, Art / Books, 2015, p. 13

‘Public art is peculiar in that it integrates the site as part of the content, which makes the ontological nature of public art complex and contested. One can basically find as many views on public art as there are subjects in its public.’

Martin Zebracki, ‘Beyond public artopia: public art as perceived by its publics’,
GeoJournal, Volume 78, Issue 2, 2013, pp. 303–317.

1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose

This report provides an overview of the current¹ state of research on public art in the Nordic Countries, as well as within the wider international context. The key purpose of the report is to identify where the needs and opportunities are for the development of a research programme to support the further development of public art paradigms, policies and practices within Sweden. The report is commissioned by the Public Art Agency Sweden, and has been prepared by researchers based at Södertörn University and at Valand Academy, University of Gothenburg, between June and September, 2018.

1.2 Definition 'Public Art'

As indicated in the opening citations above, one by a public art curator and the other by a geographer, public art is an open and contested term. It is commonly used to broadly designate artistic works that have been specifically realised within/for the public realm. This includes works that are ephemeral and works that have an enduring nature (often described as 'permanent' to signal an expectation of the long term endurance of a work over generations). This wide spectrum that exists between works that endure for only a few hours, or even a few minutes, to works that are conceived as enduring over centuries, or even millennia, also includes a wide range of different modalities in terms of the internal temporality of a given work (episodic, cumulative, or subject to changing conditions of visibility) and the spatial qualities of a given work (site-specific, mobile, dispersed, fixed-in-place, place-defining, digital/virtual and so forth). The journal *Public Art Dialogue*, established in 2011, provides an indicative example of the inclusive approach to public art "defined as broadly as possible to include: memorials, object art, murals, urban and landscape design projects, social interventions, performance art, and web-based work".

The term 'public' (and consequently the terms 'public art' and 'public realm') is an extremely complex term because of the centrality of public / private constructions in Western political, legal, social, economic and cultural history. It is also a term whose meaning differs within the Western world, for example in the Nordic countries where it has specific connotations proceeding from the term's historical ties to the modern welfare state and the idea of the people's home (*'folkhemmet'*). It may also help to note here that within modernity the conceptual ordering of spaces and behaviours according to a public/private dichotomy is something that has been imposed upon other cultures through colonialism, often displacing other ways of ordering space and behaviours. This adds a further level of complexity to the

¹ We have focussed primarily on sources from circa 2000 to present, however on occasion we have made reference to pre-2000 sources where these have some relevance for ongoing research projects or describing the context of these.

term when it is deployed as a term of global analysis.² In the context of public art, 'public' can range in its designation from simply indicating artistic work that is placed 'outdoors' (i.e., not contained within a closed architectural structure) to pointing to the artistic work as the result of the actions of state agencies, an outcome produced by public bodies. It can also function as a way to identify the availability in principle, of the artistic work, to access by the denizens of a given locale without restrictions of private ownership or limiting conditions of viewership. However, public art also includes work that is integrated with architecture; realised through the agency of private and non-state actors; and can be subject to highly specific restrictions on viewership, participation and access, and so the above constructions are not definitive.

The term 'public-ness' has become central to discussions of contemporary public art, as a way of indicating the larger semantic field of the term 'public' that recognises the centrality of the mobile distinction of public and private within the Western construction of personhood, politics, and the respective rights and responsibilities of citizen, state, nation, market and civil society.³ This focus on the competing interpretations of 'public-ness' emerges in recent decades in an International and Nordic context when the agency of specific publics, communities, and non-governmental participant groups and organisations, has become activated within a wide range of new approaches to public art, often described as 'socially engaged'.⁴

In terms of *public art research*, we are concerned then with research from a range of disciplines and professional contexts that substantially addresses some aspect of public art, broadly conceived, as per the preceding paragraphs. Our approach has been to seek out a broad sampling of such research – without making a claim for exhaustive coverage – in order to provide an indicative overview of the current state of knowledge and thereby to identify the needs and opportunities for further research.

It would seem that already, at this very early stage in the report, we can recognise that there is some further work to be done to establish a clear delimitation of the field of public art that systematically assembles the competing constructions of this broad domain of practice within an integral formulation. This will be a key foundation for any research programme that seeks to establish itself across all the relevant disciplines and professional practices active in the public art field.

² This presents a challenge that is much more than simply locating equivalent constructs for 'public-ness' in non-Western languages and contexts. It presents a question as to the relationship between modernity's construction of public/private distinctions (as central to logics of organisation for the political, the social, the economic and the cultural) and the historical processes of colonisation that enable and for some determine the unfolding of modernity, and the construction of 'the West'. For a discussion of these complex issues in a contemporary art framework see Maria Hlavajova and Simon Sheikh, *Former West: Art and the Contemporary After 1989*, Boston, MIT, 2017

³ The journal *Open. Cahier on Art & the Public Domain*, produced in the Netherlands by NAI Publishers and SKOR | Foundation for Art and Public Domain from 2004 until 2012 is a good example of this, as is much of the work presented in the UK based peer review journal *Art and the Public Sphere*. See also the material described below in Section 5.5. Also of interest in this regard is the continuation of *Open* in the form of the independent *Open! Platform for Art, Culture and the Public Domain*, see <http://www.onlineopen.org/>

⁴ See Section 3 and 5.5 below.

1.3 Methodology

The report is based on two strands of survey and analysis: **(i)** research produced within the Nordic countries, and **(ii)** research produced in the wider international context. Both strands have focussed on academic sources, as traditionally construed, such as peer-reviewed conference papers, articles, dissertations, monographs, anthologies and professional journals. We have drawn upon a sampling of research from a broad range of disciplines (art history, urbanism, planning, architecture, social science) as well as taking under consideration the work done by various public art agencies. In addition to this we have included artistic research about public art in a broad sense as well as various cooperations between artists and academics, as well as other non-institutional actors. In the overview of the Nordic research **(i)** we have delimited the scope of the field by a definition of research based on some form of textual presentation in academic publications or other closely related publication platforms. This means that projects by art groups, art schools, museums and various public agencies which did not result in some form of research publication falls outside the scope of this survey as does the research of the private sector, such as that produced at architectural offices. However, in the survey there are many examples where the scientific publication is only one form of dissemination and where the research also resulted in an exhibition, a work of public art, an activist intervention, a participatory act and so on. While, in the overview of the research from wider international contexts **(ii)** we have drawn upon a slightly more inclusive sampling of research from both academic and non-academic sources, that takes account of the same broad range of disciplines (art history, urbanism, planning, architecture, social science) as well as taking under consideration the work done by various agencies, independent practitioners and research platforms that operate beyond a traditional academic model of enquiry, and disseminated in various formats that attempt to bridge research on public art with wider publics, beyond academia. The rationale for taking two slightly different approaches is motivated by the differences within the two domains, and also by way of indicating the substantial role of non-academic players within knowledge production centred on public art in wider international contexts.

In both the Nordic and international context important research has been done within a more traditional academic contexts, while there has also been a significant role played by agencies that operate either between academic and non-academic institutional frameworks or directly within the public realm as embedded forms of knowledge production. Examples of the former include *Situations* and *ixia* in the UK, and *LAPS, research institute for art and public space*, in the Netherlands; while examples of the latter include the former *SKOR Foundation for Art and Public Domain*, in the Netherlands (closed 2012), *Creative Time* in the USA and *Les Nouveaux commanditaires* in France. In the Nordic context there are the examples of *Skissernas museum* and *Statens konstråd* in Sweden, *KORO - Kunst i Offentlige Rom* in Norway, *KØS - Museum for kunst i det offentlige rum* in Denmark.

In addition, the research on public art in both the Nordic and the wider international context has seen a significant development of practice-led and practice-based methodologies which typically entail partnerships between academic and non-academic players, and so there is an

epistemic pluralism that characterises this aspect of the field, with no one set of knowledge protocols adopted as definitive.

For strand (i) we have sampled research publications according to the above definitions and informed by the conditions of the commission understood as a tentative standpoint towards the open and broad notion of public art discussed above. The gathering of the material started with a search on various research databases linked to the Nordic countries. Due to our open and tentative standpoint towards what constitutes public art, this search includes apart from key words such as 'public art' also a long list of closely related terms such as 'art in the public realm', 'public sculpture', 'participatory art', 'cooperative design', 'graffiti', 'street art', 'urban creativity' etc. In Swedish, Norway and Denmark the search also included translations of these terms to the native language whereas in Finnish and Icelandic only the English terms were used due to our lacking language skills. The consequence of this is that articles about public art written in Finnish and Icelandic were not considered in the survey, apart from cases where such articles were accompanied with an alternative English title and/or an abstract. This is, of course, regrettable yet necessary given the remit and limitations of the report. Apart from searching on research databases we also scanned literature lists of relevant publications as an attempt to broaden our scope and include relevant publications which did not appear in the databases. We also contacted academic and non-academic actors, experts on the different fields of public art and asked them for recommendations of what they considered as key contributions. These combined methods led us into an overview of the current research field. However, we are still very much aware that we may have omitted and/or missed some important contributions here.

For strand (ii) we have sampled a range of sources including: master and doctoral research project abstracts; a range of academic and professional journals; landmark conferences, books and anthologies; and a set of exemplary and high-profile research projects and platforms. In identifying which sources to include within our sampling, we worked with the following selection principles: (a) seeking typical research outputs and instances that were representative of particular research traditions, disciplinary approaches, and/or modes of enquiry – hence the focus on master and doctoral research project abstracts; (b) seeking exemplary research outputs and instances that demonstrated significant innovation, achieved centrality within particular research communities and/or otherwise stood out as manifesting a unique contribution or intervention in the field of public art research. In order to be able to formulate judgements with respect to these criteria, it was necessary to begin with a very open and wide survey reading of materials. This initial survey took account of bibliographies used in public art education and training; the advice of domain experts accessed through an initial planning meeting in the Public Art Agency in 23 March 2018 and through international professional networks connected to the journals: *Art & The Public Sphere*, *OPEN* and its successor online publication *Open!* and *Public Art Review* and to a range of other platforms such as Publics Helsinki, publicart.ie, and *ixia*. We prioritised English language resources based on the dominance of English as an international standard language in public culture research, however, we also made some provisional surveys of Lusophone and Francophone sources in order to check for divergences with respect to non-Anglophone research

traditions. We should also note that in many cases, researchers addressing non-Anglophone case-studies often located themselves within institutes of higher education in the UK and USA.⁵ There is also a substantial focus on Anglo-American sources, which is partly a reflection of the substantial work that has been done in this context and also determined by the greater availability of these sources as well as our own language skills.

Having employed this sampling process, our next step was to describe the current state of knowledge with reference to a series of pre-agreed content headings. These headings are: Policies and organisation (% for the arts etc); Public art – architecture; Public art in planning and urban development -urban and rural development (includes landscape architecture and urban studies); and Public art and social involvement – (critical spatial practices, participation, social sustainability, ethnography etc). These headings were adopted based on the initial proposal from the research commissioner, to identify the needs and gaps with regard to these specific dimensions of public art policy and practice. In the course of our analysis we also identified the need for a further heading, which is 'Research on public art in general and across all artistic expressions' as a heading with which to capture issues which did not so readily fit within the initial set of four headings.

Having described the current state of research under these headings, we then tried to identify gaps in our current knowledge. This was based on three analytical lenses: **(a)** what are the gaps explicitly identified in the sources? **(b)** what are the gaps suggested by a comparative analysis across sources from different national contexts and from sources from across different disciplinary contexts? and **(c)** what are the gaps that may be identified by taking account of the specific questions and issues emerging within the professional field, within contemporary public art commissioning processes, and within the attempts to develop policy? (i.e., challenges that appear in professional practice but which do not appear to find clear resolution or address within the available research.) For the analytical lenses of **(b)** and **(c)** we drew upon the expertise of the Public Art Agency, and of practitioners in the field.

1.4 Outline of sections and content

In Section 2 we provide some keywords that recur across the research literatures as an aid to reading the main body of the report, and as a way to introduce some of the themes that appear in the research surveyed. In Section 3 we provide a schematic mapping of research

⁵ Our initial selection was first focussed on the location of the case studies (where the projects or public art examples take place) and not so much on which university the research belongs to or the researcher comes from. It may be worth indicating then that in terms of the selection bias to material realised within institutions of higher education in Canada, US, UK we have the following pattern approximately: 50% in section 5.1, 75% in section 5.2, 60% in section 5.3.; 80% in section 5.4; and 50% in section 5.5, There is clearly a need for further work in mapping the field of public art research, something that requires international cooperation to address bias in both the availability and the selection of sources. This bias reflects a bias to both Anglophone sources and the volume and availability of sources through institutional digital repositories. However, it is also a challenge for future research to address this bias, through a considered approach to international collaboration outside the Anglophone context.

contributions within both the Nordic and the wider international context, as a preliminary to the separate treatments that follow of the Nordic and of the wider international contexts with respect to the specific thematics. In Section 4 we provide a detailed overview of public art as a research object and problematic in key disciplinary and professional contexts within the Nordic Countries. Section 5 profiles research in the wider international context with respect to a series of thematic headings identified as of specific interest for the commissioner of the research report. Section 5 is substantially longer than Section 4, and that reflects the differences in volume of material produced in the Nordic and in the wider international contexts. Section 6 'Gaps in Our Knowledge' identifies where there are possibilities and opportunities for further research. Finally, in Section 7 we provide a summary of the report in both Swedish and English.

2. Key terms and concepts

In this section we provide short glosses on some key specialist terms that appear in the research and that may not be familiar to the general reader. The terms covered include:

- Biennial
- Commissioner / Curator
- Graffiti
- Monument / Counter-Monument
- New genre public art
- Participation
- Percent-for-art
- Public culture / public space / public realm / public-sphere / counter-public-sphere
- Site specificity
- Social turn
- Street art / unofficial art / illicit public art

Biennial

'Biennial' literally means occurring every second year, is a shorthand term for a large exhibition format often employed in contemporary art, typically taking place over several sites and venues within a city, and lasting for several weeks to several months. The first biennial was the Venice Biennale initiated in 1895 and was in the post-war period followed by many others such as the Bienal de São Paulo in 1951, which was modelled after the Venice Biennale. In the 1990s the number of biennials grew significantly, and the biennial format has become a key condition of global contemporary art. With the expansion in the number of biennials to more than 250, there has also been an expansion and development of the biennial format to include extensive public programming and for the biennial to become an important forum for the commissioning of temporary and long-term public art works. A notable case is that of the Liverpool Biennial which developed a *Five-Year Public Art Strategy*⁶ in 2017.

For an information resource in respect of biennials see <http://www.biennialfoundation.org>

Commissioner / Curator

A commissioner, in the context of art in the public realm, is the role of a person or an agency who instigates a public art process and who is formally the agent that invites the production of art in the public realm. The commissioner role can be enacted by both private or public bodies, and may be a public authority, a private developer, a private citizen, or a development agency established by public-private partnership, or a collection of citizens / residents who initiate a public art process. Increasingly within the independent arts sector, within community-based activism and within artists' self-organisation we see instances of self-commissioning or unofficial production of art in the public realm. While 'commissioner'

⁶ <http://www.biennial.com/news/liverpool-biennial-liverpool-bid-company-announce-five-year-public-art-strategy>

designates a specific role within a formal public art process, the term 'curator' has broader application as both a discrete profession in the contemporary art system, and as a broad set of tasks that may overlap with aspects of the commissioner role. The curator role within a public art process refers to a range of activities that bridge between processes of commissioning, of selection, of production, of mediation, of public engagement and so forth. The term 'curator' has been increasingly centralized within the wider discussions of the contemporary art field, having become prominent in the 1990s. The term is linked to wider debates about the relationships between curating as a question of exhibition-making or the care and stewardship of a collection, and the curatorial as an expanded version of the curator role that links the curator to the wider question of public-ness, research practices and the (since the 1990s) massively expanded discursive productions of the art system.

Graffiti

The term is derived from the Italian word *graffio* ('scratch'), giving rise to *graffiti* ('incised inscriptions', plural but often used as singular). As a practice it has a long history, that predates Western modernity. However, in contemporary usage with respect to art in the public realm, graffiti most often refers to a subcultural image culture developed in relation to the US hip-hop-scene in the 1980s. Apart from indicating a specific image culture, graffiti can also convey a negative sense of illicit or undesirable marking of public spaces. The visibility of graffiti art within commercial and official art contexts is something that becomes notable from the 1980s onward. However, graffiti arguably remains something of an object manqué with respect to official culture and art in the public realm. In Sections 4 and 5 of this report we note some recent research on graffiti art and the issues that it raises for ideas of art in the public realm.

Monument / Counter-Monument

The conventional sense of monument is as a structure or building that is built to honour a special person or event, or of a building, structure or site that is an important part of history. Historically, and contemporarily, a key function of art in the public realm is the production of monuments, which often combine landscaping, architectural, sculptural and textual elements within complex semiotic-structures that may also serve as sites of formal civic ritual or public festival.

While much of the research discussion of art and the public realm might appear abstract and removed from the day-to-day affairs of non-specialists, the monument is one dimension of art in the public realm that has garnered international visibility in mainstream political and media debate, and that has often become a talking point within everyday life. Media coverage has been triggered by recent controversies on university campuses such as 'Rhodes Must Fall' (#RhodesMustFall)⁷ and the various campaigns to remove or modify American Civil War and Confederacy era public statuary in the USA. One especially notable event has been the

⁷ 'Rhodes Must Fall' is a student protest movement that began in March 2015, as a campaign directed against a statue of the British colonial figure, Cecil Rhodes, sited at the University of Cape Town in South Africa. The campaign for the statue's removal gained global media attention and resulted in a series of movements and campaigns to 'decolonise' education. See the volume written by Rhodes Must Fall Movement, Oxford, *Rhodes Must Fall: The Struggle to Decolonise the Racist Heart of Empire*, London, Zero Books, 2018.

extraordinary public violence of the 2017 protest in Charlottesville, Virginia, initially triggered by the plans to remove a statue of the Civil War era figure, General Robert E Lee. In recent decades the term counter-monument has been invoked as part of a range of public art practices that critique or contest the dominant modes of official commemorative practice. Although these practices define themselves by opposition to traditional state memory practices and monumentality, they have also helped to reinvigorate public debate and professional interest in commemorative practices, structures and landscapes. Quentin Stevens et al note that the 'terminology and analysis in scholarship on counter-monuments have remained relatively imprecise with writers in English and German employing the term 'counter-monument' or *Gegendenkmal* in different and sometimes confusing ways.'⁸ Rather than a definitive term, counter-monument may be taken to note a practice that seeks in some way to contest or revise the traditional terms of civic commemoration through 'permanent' structures.

New genre public art

'New genre public art' is a term, coined by the American artist, writer and educator Suzanne Lacy in 1991 to describe a mode of public art practice that in some way seeks to activate publics or to move beyond what may be termed the 'passive broadcast model' of public art whereby the role of the public viewer is not to be a target of a specific meaning or narrative embodied in a public work of art, but rather to become in some sense directly engaged by the work. The term was specifically designed to displace the conventional reduction of public art to a sculpture situated in a park or a square. In Lacy's coinage there was also a strong sense of new genre public art operating in a different institutional logic than that of the patrimony of the 'city fathers'. The term was mobilized within a wider polemics and politics of cultural democracy and citizen activism that characterized the North American culture wars of the 1980s and 1990s. The term was first used in a public performance at the San Francisco Museum of Art and later in Lacy's book *Mapping the Terrain: New Genre Public Art*, San Francisco, Bay Press, 1994.

Participation

The term 'participation' is one of the centrally contested terms of contemporary art. On the one hand, it points to the proposition that non-artists may participate in the process of realising an art project or making an art work. On the other hand, it invokes a wider politics about a range of problems including: cultural inclusivity addressing class, race and other systems of hierarchy and exclusion; the nature of collective decision-making and democratic processes in the cultural and the political sphere; and the critique of the 'genius' figure of artistic authorship. The term 'participatory' is connected to a wider series of terms ('social practice', 'socially engaged practice', 'collective practice', 'the social turn', and 'the new urban practitioner') that while bearing different meanings all point to a common multi-dimensional problematic.

⁸ Quentin Stevens et al., 'Counter-monuments: the anti-monumental and the dialogic' *The Journal of Architecture*, Volume 17, Issue 6, 2012, pp. 951-972

That problematic may be summarily indicated as the question of how the processes and practices of art, including those emerging from historically elite cultural formations or ‘high’ art, may operate in a way that moves beyond elite culture but, importantly, does so in a way that will not reduce art practice to the commercial or depersonalized terms of mass culture, popular culture and/or the experience economy. One of the ways in which the term is contested, is that for some the discussion of participation in art seeks to replace aesthetic criteria by ethical criteria. Another way in which the term is contested in contemporary art, is that it is seen as serving the interests of national and local governments in retreat from their social responsibilities, who offload tasks of social care onto non-governmental agents (such as artists and official and unofficial artistic programmes) who pacify the citizenry with participatory projects. Another way in which participation is challenged, is in terms of the way in which it appears to produce a particular kind of co-option of the citizen so that critical disagreement and inequality is simply managed out of sight by comfortable but vacuous rhetorics of participation and inclusion. See also the entry on ‘the social turn’ below.

Percent-for-art

‘Percent-for-art’ is a shorthand term for a range of different legislative and policy frameworks that specify a use of a fixed percent of total costs in major capital projects for use in artistic and cultural commissioning. These frameworks can operate at national, regional or municipal level and typically apply to public or public-private partnership capital projects. In the USA these policies have been in existence since 1959 when the municipality of Philadelphia created one of the first percent-for-art ordinances.⁹ One important innovation in percent-for-art frameworks has been the pooling of resources from several closely related capital projects—e.g., the percent-for-art resources from each of the public buildings in a major urban area redevelopment scheme—to create a large scale urban area public art programme over a several years.

Public culture / public space / public realm / public-sphere / counter-public-sphere

This network of terms is taken together in one group as their usages interact with each other in complex ways.

‘Public culture’ may refer simply to the arts and cultural production in a society that is supported primarily through state subsidy or municipal funding for the arts. However, it also has an expanded sense as referring to the general conditions of a society’s wider cultural life, as realized in the public sphere and the public realm. ‘Public culture’ in this expanded sense pertains then to those aspects of the cultural life of a society that are realized collectively, and not solely in the terms of personal conduct in the intimate life of friendship and family, nor of exchanges in the market place. One gloss on the term is provided by the Duke University based academic journal *Public Culture* that describes its remit as a forum for “the discussion of the places and occasions where cultural, social, and political differences emerge as public phenomena, manifested in everything from highly particular and localized events in popular

⁹ <https://www.phila.gov/ExecutiveOrders/Executive%20Orders/EO%20814.pdf>

or folk culture to global advertising, consumption, and information networks.”¹⁰ However, the term is not well resolved, and so there are many variations in actual usage. Nonetheless, it can function as a helpful shorthand for pointing to shared collective experiences of meaning in society that include but are not limited to the arts.

‘Public space’ is a broad term for designating those spaces in a society that are in principle open to any member of the society to access, and that are not subject to restrictions or circumscribed by the ownership or by the control of particular individuals. It is a term that has different specificities in different juridical and legal contexts, but it broadly indicates open access to all people without restriction. This might be seen to raise questions as to whether there can be, properly speaking, public space in an apartheid regime for instance. The term public may also be understood as a broad indication of the generalized principle of open access, but one that is an ideal type, rather than a description of actually existing spaces. ‘Public realm’ is closely related to the term public space, but also carries the added sense of the infrastructures, especially the built environment, that shape and delimit public space.

‘Public sphere’ is a term that is used in English as the equivalent for the German term ‘Öffentlichkeit’ used by the philosopher Jürgen Habermas in his highly influential (1962) book *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit. Untersuchungen zu einer Kategorie der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft*.¹¹ ‘Public sphere’ refers to the areas in social life where individuals can come together to freely discuss, exchange opinion and identify societal problems, and through these open discussions influence political action. There is a strong sense of people coming together in a principle of equality of debate, while bracketing out their inequalities and differences in levels of power and wealth that otherwise mark their social standing. This term has been given central importance in a range of academic disciplines, and in the discussion of public art, because of the reception of Jürgen Habermas’s highly influential book. The public sphere as Habermas outlines it is a historical construction that comprehends a whole range of different social occasions and so indicates not just space but also discursive and behavioural protocols. Habermas’ work has been the object of extensive debate and criticism, but nonetheless the term has a lasting significance as a key construct in a wide range of studies.

One example of the critical response to Habermas, is in the work of scholars who have used the terms ‘counter-public’ and ‘counter-public-sphere’ as a means to rethink and re-work, Habermas’s thought, particularly with reference to the real inequalities that structure social relations. Nancy Fraser (1997) invokes the idea of counter-public as “parallel discursive arenas where members of subordinated social groups invent and circulate counter discourses, which in turn permit them to formulate oppositional interpretations of their identities, interests, and needs”. (p. 81). The idea is that counter-publics come into being around the already existing social exclusions that structure any social order, but that in coming together in a counter-public-sphere, there is the possibility for subordinated groups to produce a different account of their own position, away from the dominant view of the mainstream or dominant social powers, and so not addressing those dominant powers. This

¹⁰ <https://www.dukeupress.edu/public-culture>

¹¹ Translated into English as (1989) *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*.

theme of counter-publics and counter-public-spheres has been very important in feminist, anti-racist, queer, and decolonial art practices. The basic import of these two terms—‘counter public’ ‘counter-public-sphere’—is to challenge the universality of ‘the public’ as obscuring the systemic subordination and exclusion of certain positions and social groups.

Site specificity

A site-specific work of art is designed for a specific place and is understood to be damaged or destroyed once relocated to another site. The term was elaborated by artists working in the 1980s, particularly in the context of land art (where artists sought to produce works that were in responsive to, and attuned with, the landscape and the general conditions of the environment into which the work was placed. The key idea at work in site specificity is that the work of art is purposively fitted to the constellation of the site. The site is often understood in a multiplicity of registers that includes: formal considerations (the physical qualities, and appearance of the site); the historical dimensions (the meanings and narratives connected with the site); the social dimensions (how people encounter or inhabit the site); and so forth. As Nick Kaye expresses it a site-specific work might articulate and define itself through properties, qualities or meanings produced in specific relationships between an ‘object’ or ‘event’ and a position it occupies.¹²

Social turn

This is a term that is used to point to the widespread emergence of art practices that in different ways seek to re-think and re-construct the social relations through which the work of art is realized, circulated, accessed, and experienced. There exists a wide range of terms to designate art practices that depart from the formal model of the modernist, autonomous work. These include ‘socially engaged art’, ‘social practice’, ‘community art’, ‘community-based art’, ‘collaborative practice’, ‘collaborative art’, ‘interventionist art’, ‘dialogic art’, ‘littoral art’, ‘relational art’, ‘contextual art’, ‘new genre public art’ and ‘activist public art’. These terms, in different ways, give prominence to: the repositioning of spectatorship; collaboration in authorship; and/or participation in production.

These various emphases on changing the social dynamics of art processes (who is involved in art production; the kinds of social interaction, exchange and forms of consumption set up by art making; and the pathways to encounters with art works) are often posited as standing in contrast to an older model of art making. This older model is sometimes described (in a very simplistic and reduced way) through images of socially isolated artists producing in privacy, making discrete mobile works of art, that are then displayed in specialised and somewhat exclusive social spaces such as galleries and museums.

The forms of practice identified under the heading of the social turn are not restricted to familiar spaces of art production and distribution such as the gallery, museum, studio, public park or city square. However, participatory practices may often draw upon these sites.

¹² Nick Kaye, *Site-Specific Art: Performance, Place and Documentation*, London and New York, Routledge, 2000.

Furthermore, as has often been pointed out, the widespread growth of social practice overlaps with an expansion in exhibitionary platforms (see the entry for Biennial above), scattered-site temporary public art schemes, city marketing through art festivals, arts based placemaking, temporary public art commissioning agencies and changes in arts policy. These overlapping developments seem to provide the conditions of possibility for the greatly expanded field of the social turn in the last two decades. See also the entry on 'Participation' above.

Street art / unofficial art / illicit public art

These three terms do not mean the same thing, but they are related in that they seek to designate different forms of artistic practice that operate outside the formal conventions of official public art programmes. 'Street art' is a term often associated with graffiti art, but has a more general meaning of work that has been realized in public space often without official sanction, and in a wide range of forms not limited to the specific visual languages of graffiti.¹³ 'Unofficial art' is a term that covers the same basic sense of street art, in designating work that is not sanctioned, however, it is not restricted to the particularity of the street, or even to location in public space in general. 'Unofficial art' is a shorthand term for artistic expressions that may or may not be legible as artistic within the dominant cultural conventions, but which is recognized by some group within society as a form of artistic expression. One interesting example is that of the unofficial art generated within China in the late 20th century by experimental artists working outside official cultural institutions and policies, which subsequently became adopted by the state and incorporated into official representations of Chinese culture.¹⁴ For art in the public realm, the question of unofficial culture pertains to the ways in which agents outside the formal apparatus of art institutions and state institutions create cultural expressions that achieve recognition for some social group outside the authority of these institutional relays. 'Illicit public art', has the specific quality of being art in the public realm that is realized through the breaking of the law or other systems of rules or customs. While street art and unofficial art may often also be 'illicit' in that they entail the breach of certain laws or rules, they are not so by definition. In practice these three terms are often used interchangeably, perhaps because they point to an underlying tension which is that of the relationship between formal institutions and informal grassroots or self-generated cultural expressions.

¹³ For further theoretical discussion about the distinction between street art and graffiti in a Nordic context see the scientific report issued by Urban Utveckling on commission from BRÅ and written by Swedish art historian Jacob Kimvall *Fri konstnärlig plattform eller sanktionerad brottskultur? Utvärdering av öppna graffitiväggar som möjlig brottsprevention* (2016). This report is available at https://www.bra.se/download/18.37179ae158196cb1728b25a/1495110021838/2014_0144_Utva%CC%88rderin+av+lagliga+graffitiv%C3%A4ggar.pdf.

¹⁴ Meiqin Wang, 'Officializing the Unofficial: Presenting New Chinese Art to the World' *Modern Chinese Literature and Culture*, Vol. 21, No. 1, 2009, pp. 102-140.

3. Public Art Research

The field of public art research globally may be divided in a number of different ways. For example one may divide according to academic discipline, or methodological approach, or national context, or key thematics and so forth. The thematics that we have adopted to structure our review of the currently available research on public art in what follows, are based on an agenda that has been identified by the Public Art Agency (Statens konstråd). These headings adopted for the report emerged from discussions that began with a preliminary meeting of experts convened by the Public Art Agency on 23 March 2018. The meeting comprised; Prof. Sara Arrhenius, Kungliga konsthögskolan; Associate Prof. Håkan Nilsson, Södertörn; Prof. Mick Wilson, Akademin Valand; Dr. Monica Sand, ArkDes; Prof. Catarina Gabrielsson, KTH; Dr. Magdalena Malm, Statens konstråd; Alba Martinez, Statens konstråd; and Giorgiana Zachia, Statens konstråd.

Before arriving at this set of headings this group discussed a tentative preliminary overview of the complex field of public art research. This provisional mapping was based on a very basic division along the lines of different modalities and traditions of public art research. We provide this summary overview here by way of introductory context for the more specific headings that follow, and in order to contextualise the two slightly different approaches to selection of sources adopted in the two strands of the review.

3.1 Academic sources

In order to build a provisional mapping of the field of public art research we may note that perhaps the greatest volume of research contributions on public art come from academic sources, and specifically from the disciplines such as art history, architecture, cultural studies, urbanism, geography, and the social sciences more broadly. This work includes both hermeneutic research¹⁵, that may be seen as characteristic of historical and interpretative disciplines such as art history and cultural studies; and qualitative and quantitative research that might be seen to appear more often within the work of the social sciences such as geography and urbanism. A journal such as *Art & The Public Sphere*, that is predominantly oriented to research of an interpretative nature, employs the traditional forms of academic peer review, and produces material that draws upon art history, art criticism, art theory, cultural studies, and urbanism. This might be contrasted with a journal such as *Public Art Dialogues* which defines its *modus operandi* as that of “a scholarly journal, welcoming of new and experimental modes of inquiry and production” featuring “both peer-reviewed articles and artists' projects.”¹⁶

Across the different disciplines, different modes of enquiry appear to correlate with different underlying problematics. For instance, the development of a line of enquiry on public art

¹⁵ By ‘hermeneutic’ research we mean to indicate enquiries that are concerned with questions of meaning and interpretation and the changing historical and social frameworks of meaning making.

¹⁶ <https://www.tandfonline.com/action/journalInformation?show=aimsScope&journalCode=rpap20>

within the discipline of geography from the 1980s onward, may be seen to correlate with an expansion in the economy of public art, particularly in the North American and European contexts, and a need to build an evidence base for policy agendas, and/or a critical reflex to challenge policy claims. The research that initially emerged in this context, examined how creative practices may act as drivers of urban development and regeneration, a research programme that was boosted in recent decades by the subsequent rise of *Creative Cities* discourse.¹⁷ This work often manifests a methodological orientation that centres on the perceptions of art in urban public space from the perspectives of its producers and planners, and in terms of measurable outcomes and socio-economic impacts. By contrast, within the disciplines of art history and art criticism there have been lines of enquiry that tend to focus on the experiential qualities, contextual reception and semiotic dimensions of public art projects, and consequently an emphasis on methodologies drawn from critical theory and applied aesthetics. Miwon Kwon's hugely influential (2002) *One Place After Another*, and Grant Kester's (2004) *Conversation Pieces* might be taken as exemplary in this regard.

However, as a preliminary observation it is also important to note that methodologies do not appear to neatly correlate with disciplines, and some disciplines tend to have a greater anchorage within fields of practice beyond the university, e.g., architecture. This can mean that the work of knowledge production within some disciplines is articulated to a greater degree with practices beyond the university, and disseminated in ways beyond the traditional paradigm of peer review etc. An example of this would be the '*Observatório de Favelas*' ('Slum Observatory') in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, which is a social organization that undertakes research, consultancy and public actions to produce knowledge and elaborate political proposals focused on slums and urban issues within the framework of Lefebvre's 'Rights to the City'.¹⁸

To the important contributions to the discussion of art in the public sphere, outside of the strict academic context we find the Public Art Agency's recent *I det gemensamma* (edited by Anna Nyström and Anders Olofsson, Art and Theory Publishing, 2017), an anthology where several public art projects are discussed and followed from various perspectives, including those of artists, commissioners, philosophers, architects and art historians. Other important contributions include the anthology *Radical Re Re Re Re Rethinking* (edited by Maria Lantz and Staffan Lundgren, Konstfack Collection, 2015) and *Design Act: Socially and Politically Engaged Design Today - Critical Roles and Emerging Tactics* (edited by Magnus Ericson and Ramia Mazé, Sternberg press, 2011) both including many aspects of artistic research

¹⁷ Emerging from the late 1970s onward in the work of agencies such as the Partners for Livable Communities Economics of Amenity in the USA and finding an early formulation David Yencken's 'The Creative City' *Meanjin*, Vol. 47, No. 4, Summer 1988, pp. 597-608, this discourse has been boosted by the success of American urban studies theorist Richard Florida's work on the creative class and the creative city. See the Partners for Livable Communities, Robert McNulty, Dorothy Jacobson, Leo Penne, *Economics of Amenity*, Pub Center Cultural Resources, 1985; and Richard Florida *The Rise of the Creative Class. And How It's Transforming Work, Leisure and Everyday Life*, NY, Basic Books, 2002; and *Cities and the Creative Class*, London and NY, Routledge, 2005.

¹⁸ For *Observatório de Favelas* see <http://observatoriodefavelas.org.br/en/>; For the rights to the city see Lefebvre (originally *Le Droit à la ville*, 1968). See also the 'World Charter for the Right to the City' adopted by World Social Forum, Porto Alegre, January 2005, <http://www.righttothecityplatform.org.br/download/publicacoes/World%20Charter%20for%20the%20Right%20to%20the%20City.pdf>

from fine arts, design and craft. *Placing Art in the Public Realm* (edited by Håkan Nilsson, Södertörn University Press, 2012) includes contributions from theorists and practitioners that problematize the notion of 'public realm'. *Taking Matter into Common Hands - on Contemporary Art and Collaborative Practices* (edited by Johanna Billing, Maria Lind and Lars Nilsson, Blackdog Publishing, 2007) includes important discussions about participatory practice in art. Ina Bloms's *On the Style Site: Art, Sociality and Media Culture* discusses site specific and social art forms in terms of a 'style site' understood as a "mediatic site ... associated with global information networks of contemporary capitalism".

3.2 Research contributions from advocacy within the sector

Another source of research is the material produced from within the advocacy and policy spaces, though this is a relatively smaller volume of material relative to that of the academic sources indicated in 3.1 above. This contribution often entails basic empirical enquiry such as establishing national or regional data-sets for public art (e.g., the number and scale of commissions within a given period; and developing an evidence base to inform policy.)

An interesting example is *ixia*, which was established as a public art think tank in the UK with support from the Arts Council England (ACE), and defines its mission "to promote and influence the development and implementation of public art policies, strategies and projects by creating and distributing knowledge to arts and non-arts policy makers and delivery organisations within the public and private sectors, curators, artists and the public".¹⁹ *ixia* generated in the early 2010s a series of surveys empirically mapping the public art sector in a way that was essentially itemizing data to inform and enable other research and policy construction.

Related to this kind of rudimentary empirical mapping, is the work of private and public agencies in building catalogues of public works of art, such as the Smithsonian American Art Museum's research database on the Inventories of American Painting and Sculpture, that includes a cataloguing of 'Outdoor Sculpture by State/City'. The Smithsonian's online databases include material generated by the survey project 'Save Outdoor Sculpture!' that documented and photographed almost 32,000 sculptures in the United States in the early 1990s.²⁰ More recently there has been a highly ambitious initiative by the "Big Art Mob" in the UK, to map public art works globally, beginning with an online database initiated in 2006, re-launched in 2012, and which now appears to have suspended operation.

Although operating without an advocacy agenda as such, we should note here also the emerging role of 'big data' enterprises such as Google in developing online databases of arts and culture.²¹ In Denmark, KØS has digitized a part of its collection of sketches and preliminary studies for public art works which are made available as entries in an online database which in many cases also comprise information and photographs of the finished public art work.

¹⁹ <http://ixia-info.com/about.html>

²⁰ See <https://sirismm.si.edu/siris/ariquickstart.htm>; and <https://americanart.si.edu/research/inventories/outdoor-sculpture>.

²¹ <https://artsandculture.google.com>

Skissernas Museum, the Swedish counterpart to KØS, has also digitized its entire collection and most of its archive. As of yet, the digital collection is reachable on site or on request, but there are advanced plans in place to make all of this data available to the public through the web site.

3.3 Research contributions from practice within the field

It is a key feature of development within the field of public art production, that increasingly commissioning platforms and public art projects have adopted a research orientation in their own right, so that public art research is not the exclusive prerogative of academics. Through practice-led and action research methodologies, often entailing a collaboration between academic and non-academic researchers in the direct contexts of public art commissioning and production, there has been an important expansion of public art research activity in the last two decades. This work can often integrate public art commissioning programmes within an inter-disciplinary and inter-institutional research process. One example of this is the year-long temporary public art series in New Zealand, *One Day Sculpture* (August 2008 – March 2009), a collaboration between *Situations*, Bristol, UK and Massey University, Wellington, New Zealand.²² This project also generated an anthology which sought to expand on the “conventional notions of encounter, performativity, publicness, photography, materiality, space and place in relation to contemporary public art”.²³ In a Nordic context there is also the example of joint research initiatives across networks of museums, curators, artists and city officials such as the *Art Incorporated* organized at KØS and the Municipality of Køge which resulted in an exhibition, a publication as well as “a concept behind a new urban development project” in Køge.

An important subdivision within this arena comprises works of public art that are framed as research actions in their own right. This is a matter of specific art projects and curatorial projects that constitute the actual work of public art making or commissioning as a process of enquiry in its own right. Examples of this mode of work include SKOR’s collaboration with the municipality of Utrecht in a vast multi-million euro programme of public art commissioning, production and enquiry ‘*Beyond Leidsche Rijn*’ (2001-2009).²⁴ On a smaller scale, but also operating directly as a research process within an ongoing durational public art project, Jeanne Van Heeswijk’s *Het Blauwe Huis* / ‘*The Blue House*’ (2005-2009), engaged in a series of research arcs on urbanism, place making and the dynamics of local decision making in emergent communities.²⁵ Both of these projects - *Beyond* and *The Blue House* - are documented by Paul O’Neill and Claire Doherty in their important volume *Locating the Producers* (2009) which is in turn the outcome of a research project initiated by the platform *Situations*. *Locating the Producers* is a very important exemplar of combined cross-case- study approach to research on public art. The volume is also very important for demonstrating the close interaction across many different modes of public art research, and

²² <http://www.onedaysculpture.org.nz/>

²³ David Cross and Claire Doherty, *One Day Sculpture*, Kerber Verlag, 2010.

²⁴ <http://www.beyondutrecht.nl/index2.php?taal=en>

²⁵ http://www.jeanetworks.net/files/esy/i_0019/Paul_O_Neill__The_Blue_House.pdf

the existence of widely dispersed, though extensively networked, communities of practice within public art research internationally.

Other examples of enquiry the work of the London-based German artist Kathrin Böhm, who through collaborative public art projects such as *Company Drinks* and *Myvillages*, is investigating the proposition of geographers Katherine Gibson and Julie Graham that a region of everyday economy beneath the visible economy of capitalism—the ordinary daily cultures of trade and in-kind exchange outside of wage labour and commodity markets—may constitute a ‘public realm’.²⁶ In this way, current research by artists is further extending the expanded definitions of public art cited above.

Another example of this embedding of research practices within actual public art projects in the Nordic context is Kerstin Bergendal’s *PARK LEK* project (2010-2014) in the suburban municipality of Sundbyberg, Stockholm, that investigated the possibilities of extending local democracy and the agency of residents in contesting segregation via means of a multi-phased and independently initiated public art project.²⁷ *PARK LEK* as a research intervention, is in turn explored through the volume *Public Enquiries: PARK LEK and the Scandinavian Social Turn*, London, Black Dog Press, 2018.

Within the mapping of research that follows in **Sections 4** and **5**, in addition to the academic materials surveyed we also provide where appropriate indicative examples of the research contributions made by practice in the field.

3.4 Note on this provisional mapping

This provisional mapping of three distinct modalities of research, should be treated as a heuristic device rather than as a definitive model, but it will hopefully prove useful for introducing the analyses that follow. We should note here that the material described under **3.1** represents the largest corpus of research, and within the Nordic contexts is the most developed as described in **Section 4** below. The material described under **3.2** above is perhaps the least developed in general, and this would indicate one area where a modest investment in research activity might generate a substantial return (see **Section 6** below). The material indicated under **3.3** is of increasing importance, both within the Nordic and within the wider international context. It is an open question as to the differences and similarities with respect to research via practice in the field, between the Nordic context and other international contexts. It is beyond the scope of our initial survey to make any clear judgement in terms of the relative volume, role, and levels of recognition by academic researchers of the contribution made by artist-researchers operating public art practices as research actions in their own right. However, we can note the importance of research contribution by practitioner-researchers active in the field of public art, in both the Nordic and the wider international context.

²⁶ Kathrin Böhm, *Trade as Public Realm / Economy as Public Space*, Copenhagen, Denmark: Trade Test Site, 2016.

²⁷ <http://www.parklek.com/>

A final observation that may be made here is the preponderance of case study as a preferred methodological device across **3.1** and **3.2**. The work gathered under **3.3** is by nature rooted in action research and practice-led / practice-based methodologies, and so case study may be seen as a logical consequence of that methodological orientation. However, for the material gathered under **3.1** and coming from such a wide range of disciplines, the preponderance of case study as a preferred *modus operandi* would seem to indicate something about the general level of underdevelopment of the public art research field, and the absence of a well-defined research programme. In the absence of such a well-defined programme, case study would seem to allow researchers in different disciplines to address public art without the need to resolve the fundamental questions of definition and related conceptual difficulties, that taking public art as a research object might otherwise be seen to trigger.

Section B: Research Overviews

4. Nordic Countries: Overview of Public Art Research

Although the material at hand suggest that the subject 'public art' is most frequently found in art history and architecture discourses, it is a topic that concerns many disciplines. This research is often informed either by legal questions or of questions concerning the role of art in a broader context. Katja Lindqvist, currently associate professor at The Department of Service Management and Service Studies, Lund University has for many years been dealing with the relationship between economy, politics and arts. In this research she has been looking into the consequences of "governance" in public art. Governance is a broad political term that in this context might best be explained by the ways government can work and influence when the power of the nation state is challenged both by globalism and regionalism. For instance, in the paper "Governance of public arts organisations in Europe" (2008) Lindqvist is "concerned with public arts organisations, i.e. arts organisations that have government as principal, directly or indirectly." Her research, then, is focused on the circumstances that concerns (public) art, rather than the effects of art. A comparison is the dissertation *U/Skrevne regler: En undersøgelse af det kulturpolitiske fundament, de administrative rammer og den kunstfaglige legitimitet af kunstnerisk udsmykning under Kunstcirkulæret* (Københavns Universitet, Det Humanistiske Fakultet, 2017) by Lotte Sophie Lederballe Pedersen. Pedersen also looks into the relationship between several different stakeholders and the negotiations conducted between them. The thesis analysis of both art and of key concepts in relationship to the public management through Kunstcirkulæret and shows how these processes reproduces and naturalizes certain practices and excludes others.

In the research of Swedish art historian and conservator Karin Hermerén relates the management of public art to questions of maintenance. Her licentiate dissertation *Den utsatta konsten: att förvalta konst i offentlig miljö - etik, lagstiftning och värdeförändring* (Göteborgs universitet, Institutionen för kulturvård, 2014) surveys commissioned public art in Sweden during the 20th century. Based on critical observations about lacking knowledge about the management of public art among property owners and other agents Hermerén argues "that the art purchased with public funds should be subject to public and shared responsibility for its protection and care, for example by amendments to the Heritage Conservation Act.". In their book *Experimental Preservation* (Zürich: Lars Müller Publishers, 2016) Jorge Otero-Pailos, Erik Fenstad Langdalen & Thordis Arrhenius expands on the discussion of public art management by linking it to "non-monumental strategies" and other contemporary approaches to conservation.

The discussion about commissioned public art, understood in the more traditional sense of being placed in parks and squares can be found in Gunnar Sørensen has in "Oslos utsmykninger" (Kunst og Kultur 01/2010, Volum 93). Sørensen discusses how such an assembly of art in Oslo (in total 1100) may "reflect ordinary people's artistic tastes, but are more likely to reflect the various political and artistic ideals typical of this period." A theme he develops in the book *Fargelegg byen! Oslo kommunes utsmykninger* (2009). Most of the research conducted in this field (over the period covered in this report) discusses art in discursive terms. Jessica Sjöholm Skrubbe's dissertation *Skulptur i folkhemmet: den offentliga skulpturens institutionalisering, referentialitet och rumsliga situationer 1940-1975* (Uppsala universitet, Konstvetenskapliga institutionen, 2007) deals with the public sculpture

during the period of the Swedish welfare state and the role it was supposed to play, but, as Skrubbe formulates it: "this process turned out to be a highly gendered power structure, as the practice of public sculpture became a male monopoly." A similar conclusion is found in Gärd Folkesdotter & Anna-Karin Malmström-Ehrling, *Spegel, gravsten eller spjutspets?: offentlig konst och genus* (2007) at the department of Gender Studies, Uppsala University. The report concentrates on a different selection and focuses on questions about the shaping/forming of gender through art. In her dissertation *A hero's many faces: Raoul Wallenberg in contemporary monuments* (Stockholms universitet, Humanistiska fakulteten, Historiska institutionen, 2009) art historian Tanja Schult approaches commissioned public art from the perspective of monumental studies and memory culture. This study traces the appearance of the Swedish diplomat Raoul Wallenberg as a heroic figure of public monuments across the globe. Schult highlights temporality and audience response as crucial for discussing monumental art in the public realm and its possibility to construct a memory culture to futurity. Oona Myllyntaus's article "Visual Arts Education Reasoning the Acquisition and Placement of Public Sculptures – Case of the Public Sculptures of the Jyväskylä City Art Collection in 1977-2007" (*Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 2012, Vol.45) discusses the commission of public sculpture in the Finnish city of Jyväskylä focusing on the way it negotiates between educational and aesthetic criterias. Barbro Bredeesen Opset's dissertation *Franske toaletter og Wergelands blomster En studie av nasjonale forestillinger i Eidsvoll 1814s utsmykkingssak for Wergelands hus* (Universitet i Oslo, Institutt for lingvistiske og nordiske studier, 2017) attempts to bridge the theoretical gap between public art and monumental studies through issues of national identity and representation.

A large part of the research that we have encountered is directed towards more temporary art forms, be it in the form of graffiti or in participatory projects. In the dissertation *Göra plats: graffiti, kommunal förvaltning och plats som relationell effekt*. (Institutionen för landskapsarkitektur, planering och förvaltning, Sveriges lantbruksuniversitet 2016), landscape architect Emma Paulsson uses case studies of graffiti to investigate how place is enacted through the interplay between user activities and municipal management practices. In her own words, "The thesis thus argues that actor-network theory can be a fruitful way to overcome the dichotomies and develop an understanding of graffiti and municipal practices as entangled and shaping each other." Ethnography methodology is also deployed in the dissertation *Painting the City: Performative Cosmopolitanism and the Politics of Space and Art* (Stockholms universitet, Humanistiska fakulteten, Institutionen för mediastudier 2018) by media historian Tindra Thor, which approaches graffiti and street art through a performative ethnographic lens. Thor analyzes not only the works, but also community shaping through aesthetic performance. Drawing on the concept of aesthetic cosmopolitanism the study places particular emphasis "...upon the tensions related to gender and the ways in which such tensions factor into the social relations within these artistic communities and the aesthetics they produce."

Art historian Jacob Kimvall has studied graffiti for many years and in his dissertation *The G-Word: Virtuosity and Violation, Negotiating and Transforming graffiti* (Stockholms universitet, Konstvetenskapliga Institutionen, 2014) he focused on the discourse surrounding it through three case studies, the zero tolerance of Stockholm in the late 90's being one of them. Peter Bengtsen has studied street art as a form of public art in numerous books, essays and

conference papers. His recently published *Street Art and the Environment* (Lunds universitet, Avdelningen för konsthistoria och visuella studier 2018) “suggests that street art, partly due to its unauthorised placement in everyday settings, is well-suited to shift attitudes and behaviours”. Bengtsen also investigates the different ways in which online viewing affects the way art is perceived as well as discusses its potentials for art production. Bengtsen is also coordinating together with sociologist Erik Hannerz a transdisciplinary research project about “urban creativity” defined as an umbrella term “referring to activities within, or in direct relation to, the city” (e.g. street art, grafitti, urban foraging, parkour, skateboarding and guerilla gardening). Riina-Mari Lundman approaches questions of urban creativity from the viewpoint of cultural geography in her dissertation *Exploring creative geographies: urban art and the cultural uses of public spaces* (University of Turku, Faculty of Science and Engineering Department of Geography and Geology Geography Division, 2018). The dissertation examines case studies about different forms urban art that has taken place in the Finnish city of Turku discussed on aesthetic, political and legal terms. Lundman argues that while “urban art can be employed to challenge the conventional uses and orders of urban spaces ... there are many rules and regulations governing spontaneous actions in cities and there exist internal codes and etiquettes about the creative practices themselves.” An interesting approach to urban creativity and non-commissioned public art is taken by Gísli Björnsson (et.al) in their book chapter “Skærulist í þágu jafnréttis?: framlag karla með proskahömlun til jafnréttisstarfa” [Guerrilla art and the quest for equality: the contribution of men with intellectual disabilities to equality work] (*Netla – Veftímarit um uppeldi og menntun*, Menntavísindasvið Háskóla Íslands, 2017). The study focuses on guerilla art performed by intellectually impaired persons in Reykjavik to raise questions about the potential of public art to shape spaces of equality. The authors also argue that their publication aims to create “a space within academia where people with intellectual disabilities are recognized for their contribution to the generation of knowledge about equality and disability”, which should also make them recognized as actors in discussions about public art.

The questions of artistic place appropriations in urban environments has been researched by art historian Kristin Samson in a number of publications over the past decade. Her article “Claiming Participation – a comparative analysis of DIY urbanism in Denmark” (*Journal of Urbanism: International Research on Placemaking and Urban Sustainability*, Vol 9 issue 2, 2016) co-written with Louise Fabian discusses how activist tactics for the aesthetic appropriations of public space has been redeployed as a governance policy for urban planning in Copenhagen. A discussion along the same lines about the role of art can be found in Hjørdis Brandrup Kortbek’s “Contradictions in participatory public art: Placemaking as an instrument of urban cultural policy”, (*Journal of Arts Management, Law and Society*, 2018) where Kortbek argues that when instrumentalized, participatory public art engenders contradictory encounters, which “challenge the cultural political effort to democratize art and culture.” Æsa Sigurjónsdóttir’s article “Óræð inngríp og pólitísk orðræða í borginni: Listaverkið í almannarými og áhrif útisýninga í Reykjavík” [Agnostic Interventions and Political Discourse in the City: The Artwork in Public Space and the Impact of Outdoor Exhibitions in Reykjavík] (*Ritið*; 18(2), 2018) raises similar questions about the branding and commodification of public art. In her study of public art in Reykjavík Sigurjónsdóttir still find traces of agonistic practices and the critical potential of art in the public realm to encourage critical debate about political and social issues.

Ruth Woods addresses the branding and placemaking of public art in her dissertation *Shopping with Art: How Art Creates its Role in Public Places*. (Norges teknisk naturvitenskapelige universitet 2012) Focusing on public art in shopping centers the dissertation “questions why particular public works of art were chosen for the shopping centers”. Woods also works with an ethnographic method to understand how viewers or shoppers react, or fail to react, to public art in these hyper-commercialized spaces. The issue of art and gentrification is addressed by the sociologist Oddrun Sæter (et.al) in the article “Artists and Gentrification in Specific Urban Contexts. A Case Study from Williamsburg, New York”. (The International Journal of the Arts in Society Vol 6 issue 6, 2012). The study which is based on an extensive field work in New York problematizes the common Public Art Research Report (2018) assumption about artists as pioneers in gentrification processes. Instead they want to draw attention to the ways “artists are ‘thrown’ into different positions: as victims, as creative resources in cultural strategies, innovation, and so on”. Kristine Samson’s article “Becoming Public: Critical interventions and emergent urban spaces in São Paulo” (conferences paper, 2013) addresses the relations and differences between gentrification processes and activist urban creativity in Latin America. Combined these two articles open different ways for re- addressing this topic of gentrification and public art in a Nordic perspective.

Sabine Dahl Nielsen addresses issues of participation and performativity in public art in her dissertation *Kunst i storbyens offentlige rum : konflikt og forhandling som kritiske politiske praksisser* (Københavns Universitet, Det Humanistiske Fakultet, 2015). The thesis investigates the potential of public art to work as an antagonistic political agent in both non-commissioned interventionist practices and institutional public art. She employs case studies of street art, interventionistic art practices and participatory art to argue for an understanding of public space as a multiple and socio-politically determined category. This understanding is grounded in theories of public space and commonality offered by Chantal Mouffe, Rosalyn Deutsche and Jean-Luc Nancy.

Many research publications approach questions about art and social inclusion. In the article “Velkommen udenfor! Den offentlige kunst og iscensættelse af mødesteder i byen” (Periskop, Nr. 17, 20.04.2017) urban theorist Line Marie Brunn Jespersen looks into these issues in a comparative perspective about relational and performance-oriented public art in Copenhagen and Rotterdam. She approaches artworks which in her view “appear to be primarily playful, fun and spectacular, and do not express a strong or explicit political view, but ... hold a potential for reflection on social conditions, cultural processes and prevalent notions in public space”. These concerns are also shared by visual culture scholar Helene Illeris whose research topics includes public art, art education and subjectivation. Her article “Subjectivation, togetherness, environment. Potentials of participatory art for Art Education for Sustainable Development (AESD)” (InFormation - Nordic Journal of Art and Research, 6(1) 2017) investigates public art in the role of shaping subjectivities governed by ideals of ecological concern and sustainability. Art historian Birgitte Thorsen Vilslev offers a historical perspective on these issues in the article “Bo, bygge og besætte - Social kunst i Danmark omkring 1970” (Periskop no 17, 2017) about collective public art practices by artists and architects during the counterculture of the 1970s. Siv Mie Buhl and Werner Hansen’s article “Home is to be understood: The role of contemporary art museums facing

current immigration challenges" (in *Flucht und Heimat* ed. Birgit Althans, Jörg Zirfas, Juventa Verlag 2018) shows the way public art institutions negotiated with the democratic ideal of a social public art in relation to immigration. The paper focuses on the collaborative project "Art in Exile" by Contemporary Museum of Art (MFSK) in Roskilde which involved artists with refugee status, local volunteers and members of the museum staff. Buhl and Hansen aims "to uncover the institutional and social challenges associated with the undertaking of a democratic project such as Art in Exile, where shared control and ownership over content is intended to follow from an equal collaboration across cultures, languages and social backgrounds." The paper also discusses to what extent this collaborative institutional art project succeeded with its intentions of democratizing art and making a socio-ethical contribution. Timo Jokela places a perspective on public art and sustainability in the Scandinavian North with a mixed method of ethnography and art education. In the article "Crafting Sustainability: Handcraft in Contemporary Art and Cultural Sustainability in the Finnish Lapland" (*Sustainability*, 10(6), 06.2018) written together with Elina Härkönen and Maria Huhmarniemi examines cases of handcraft-based contemporary art in the Finnish and the Swedish Lapland. The authors argue that these practices "with place-specific intergenerational and intercultural approaches create an open space for dialogue where the values and the perceptions on cultural heritage can be negotiated." In a similar vein the transdisciplinary research team of Satu Miettinen, Daria Akimenko and Melanie Sarantous's article "Narrative-based art as means of dialogue and empowerment" (*Mediations: Art & Design Agency and Participation in Public Space*; Royal College of Art, 2016) investigates ways to employ scientific ethnography and artistic research in action-based investigations about community-based public art. Based on their field work the authors presents a framework "for creating empowering art through narrative processes."

In her dissertation *Public art: urban learning*, (Oslo School of Architecture and Design, 2017) architect Charlotte Blanche Myrvold addresses the role of public art in the urban redevelopment through the case of Bjørvika on the seaside of Oslo. The dissertation argues that art generates knowledge about dimensions in the city that otherwise remain unarticulated and that it thus performs an "epistemological critique". Myrvold discovers qualities in art beyond its ascribed roles and conclude that is able to inhabit multiple and even contradictory positions." Architect Catharina Gabrielsson's dissertation, *Att göra skillnad: det offentliga rummet som medium för konst, arkitektur och politiska föreställningar* (Kungliga Tekniska högskolan, 2007) addresses the public space as a medium (artistic and communicative) and as a projective screen of society. By discussing in-depth the refurbishment of Stortorget in Kalmar, she argues that the Public Space cannot be reconstructed, it must continuously be reinvented in relationship to democracy. Laura Uimonen's (Tampere University of Technology) book *Taidetta suunnitteluun : taidehankkeet ja taidetoiveet suomalaisessa kaupunkisuunnittelussa*, 'Art into planning. Art projects and art wishes in Finnish urban planning' (Aalto University. 2010) speaks about the role of art as a tool for urban planning from a Finish perspective. She focuses on urban planning projects where artist collaborate with a network of actors including "planners from various public institutions and companies, officials from public art administration, and invited experts". Using ethnographic methods such as in-depth interviews this study discusses the problematics of cooperation as difficulties of working in a situation which is characterized by an ongoing negotiation between expectations coming from artistic, institutional and commercial fields.

Even Smith Wergeland's dissertation *From Utopia to Reality – the Motorway as a Work of Art* (Oslo School of Architecture and Design, 2013) deals more with the visualization of public space than with art as such, focusing on representation of motorways. This discourse and its visualization strategies, argues Wergeland, "made a huge impact on the planning of Oslo in the postwar period." Christina Pech's dissertation *Arkitektur och motstånd: Om sökandet efter alternativ i svensk arkitektur 1970-1980* (Stockholm: Kungliga Tekniska högskolan, 2011) researches similar overlaps between the field of art and architecture in Sweden. The dissertation traces attempts to find alternatives to the dominant functionalist paradigm in early postmodernism and the quest for vernacular styles in the shaping of institutional and public spaces. Mari Ferring's dissertation *Den levande väggen: Färg och arkitektur i svenskt 1970-tal* (KTH, Skolan för arkitektur och samhällsbyggnad 2011) also focuses on the 1970s and the relation between colour and architecture in public space. She puts forth the argument that "the focus on colour in the 1970s helped to build a bridge and unleash a new discussion on how architecture and habitats should be designed in order to acquire significance in people's lives. The choices of colours underlining the expressions of structure, authenticity and collective was gradually replaced by a striving for harmonic space, tradition and individuality." Hans Kiib's article "Detoured City Design as tool for Aesthetic Urban living" (Aalborg University: Department of Architecture, Design and Media Technology) compare the intentions and methods of contemporary art installations in public space with the historical situationist movement. The article "advocates for development of 'relate architecture' in permanent architecture as well in temporal urban installations and the conclusion is, that this kind of architectural design may contribute to reflection and provide new demands to the performance of our urban environments in general."

Recent research has also come to reformulate the concept of public art on the basis of digital media technologies. Linda Ryan Bengtsson's dissertation *Re-negotiating social space: Public art installations and interactive experience* (Karlstads universitet, Fakulteten för ekonomi, kommunikation och IT, Avdelningen för medie- och kommunikationsvetenskap 2011) studies Scandinavian public art installations "to explore how interactivity plays into the relation between humans, technology and social space." The study problematizes the presumption that digital technology leads to a sense of placelessness arguing that "it may as well enhance space by converging with existing spatial references. The mediated and the actual may re-enforce each other (...)". Tanya Søndergaard Toft has published a number of texts about what she labels urban media art. Her dissertation *Contemporary Urban Media Art – Images of Urgency A Curatorial Inquiry*, (Department of Arts and Cultural Studies, Copenhagen University 2017) examines "how artistic interventions work towards a critical understanding and exploitation of this new condition of technological reality" in terms of temporality and affect. Tofts exploration into these questions about the role of art in the posthuman intelligent cities as an editor of anthologies such as *What Urban Media Art Can Do, What Why When Where & How* and the forthcoming *Digital Dynamics in Nordic Contemporary Art*. Jukka Sihvonen's book chapter "Public Art and Time" in the anthology *Machineries of Public Art. From Durable to Transient, from Site-bound to Mobile* discusses how art employing media technology in public space may shape experiences of speed and rhythm.

Btihaj Ajana's (Aarhus Institute of Advanced Studies/King's College London) article "Curating Public Art 2.0: The case of Autopoiesis" (*Arts & International Affairs* vol 2 issue 1, 2017) examines the link between public art and Web 2.0 technology. Her article explores artistic uses of internet platforms focusing on issues of democracy and citizen participation. She also draws forth a critical reflection about tensions between the virtual and the physical, local and global in her analysis of a digital public art project. In their paper "Creator-Centric Study of Digital Art Exhibitions on Interactive Public Displays" (Proceedings of the 16th International Conference on mobile and ubiquitous multimedia, November 2017) Hannu Kukka (et. al) researches the potential of digital media as an exhibitional platform in public space. Grounded in a mixed-method of survey response and in-depth interviews that authors that the digital curation "have the potential to challenge traditional paradigms of art gallery practices and public urban spaces as a stage for consumption and commerce". David Rynell Åhlén offers a historical perspective on these issues in his dissertation *Samtida konst på bästa sändningstid: Konst i svensk television 1956–1969* (Stockholms universitet, Humanistiska fakulteten, Institutionen för kultur och estetik 2016). Rynell Åhlén draws attention to the way state television was used as a medium for the dissemination of art during the rise of the Swedish welfare state in the postwar period. The dissertation shows how television were set to function as a medium for using art to achieve cultural democratization which is an aspiration that this study also problematizes by emphasizing the conflicts and problems in the practice of arts programming.

Outside the traditional field of academic research, two categories deserve extra attention; the research departments at various museums and artistic research. In this case we have looked at museums directed to the public realm. Skissernas museum and ArkDes in Sweden as well as Koro (Kunst i Offentlige rom) in Norway have resources and assignment to facilitate research. Over the last decades, Koro organized a large number of public lectures, conferences and seminars both directed at specialized audiences and at a larger public. The organization also entered into various collaborations either directly or by financing with other institutional and non-institutional actors.²⁸ The themes range from more general discussions about public art in relation to architecture, temporality, economics and so on as well as a more practice-based perspective on how to develop public art projects. Senior adviser at Koro Dan Wiersholms's critical essay "'Stivnede øyeblikk'? Et essay om vilkårene for kunst i estetiserte maktlandskap" (Oslo: Koro, 2009) reviewed Koro and public art in Norway focusing on issues of power and politics. ArkDes has hosted research on public art through collective artistic practice often focusing on links between art, urban development and architecture. The research has been presented in exhibitions, seminars and publications.²⁹ When it comes to KØS, the museum for public art in Denmark, the research is developed on various platforms including research-based exhibitions and catalogues, seminars, Ph.D. positions and post-docs. Its past research touches upon topics such as memory culture, urban

²⁸ For more information about Koro visit <https://koro.no/>.

²⁹ For a brief overview about artistic projects hosted by ArkDes see Monica Sand (ed.), *Forskning i centrum* (Stockholm: Statens centrum för arkitektur och design (Arkdes), 2014). For information about Arkdes publications see <https://arkdes.se/publikationer/>.

development, audience response, institutional and the relation between contemporary public art and other institutions.³⁰

Artistic research is another complex field, not least when it comes to research result, i.e. the research is not about the art works, the art works are the research. Another challenge is of course to make a distinction between art that builds on research and art that is (part of a) research. The guiding principle for the selection in this survey has been to include art projects if they are either part of a Ph.D. program or funded by research institutes.

The artistic research Aril Berg deals with public art and material-based art education at public institutions. His dissertation *Artistic Research in Public Space. Participation in material- based art* (Aalto University School of Arts, 2014) explores the different ways “material- based art can become an integrated part of a place as a transformative social force” by employing participatory ethnography at a different institutions. Berg also researched the relation between art and mental care presented in the article *Forming Life: Aesthetic Awareness in Mental Health Care* (in *InFormation: Nordic Journal of Art and Research*, 01 December 2013, Vol.2(2)) co-written by Boel Christensen-Scheel and Mette Holme Ingeberg. The article investigates how “[an] aesthetic environment and activity could be seen as formative to the “inner landscape” [of the mental ward], and that different forms of sensuous activation and interaction could help patients escape communicative isolation.” The potential of art to transform the aesthetic environment of public institutions is also the focus of the KORO-based research project *Giv os i dag... Når kunsten går i kirke* directed by Lene Bøgh Rønberg. This project resulted in an exhibition at KORO, artistic interventions at churches in Denmark and a publication. The aim of this project was to analyze artistic strategies at churches after 1950 as well as the potential of contemporary artistic practice to enter a critical and experimental negotiation with churches today.

Several artistic research projects explores art and urban development. Roland Ljungberg’s *Kunskaps- och vattenrum: Delprojekt i Konstnärlig upplevelsepark för hållbar utveckling* (Konstfack, 2014) is a theme based project about water as a form of knowledge and experience. This research project develops a series of metaphors intended as strategies for provoking new ideas and visions in plan-making processes focusing on issues of sustainability. Apart from a scientific report, Ljungberg’s project also resulted in an exhibition at Konstfack showing a prototype water park designed to be adaptable to other locations. A

³⁰ These themes developed in the following projects: *Transit* (2019-2018), *Hvad gør kunst på hospitaler? / What does Art do at Hospitals?* (2017), *Magt minder mennesker/ Power, Memory, People. Memorials of Today* (2014), *Giv os i dag... Når kunsten går i kirke / Give us Today... When Art goes to Church* (2012), *Det’ vores kunst/OUR art* (2010). For more information about these projects see: Anna Manly, Sara Ravn and Lene Bøgh Rønberg (ed.) *What does Art do at Hospitals?* Exhibition catalogue. (Copenhagen: KØS Museum of Art in Public Spaces, 2017) Mette Haakonsen, Anna Manly og Lene Bøgh Rønberg (ed.), *Power, Memory, People. Memorials of Today*. Exhibition catalogue. (Copenhagen; KØS Museum of art in Public Spaces, 2014) Christine Buhl Andersen, Anna Manly and Lene Bøgh Rønberg (ed.), *Give us Today... When Art goes to Church*. Exhibition catalogue. (Copenhagen; KØS Museum of Art in Public Spaces, 2012) Christine Buhl Andersen, Ulrikke Neergaard and Louise Trier (ed.), *Our Art. Public Art Projects & The Danish Arts Foundation*. Exhibition catalogue. (Copenhagen; KØS Museum of Art in Public Spaces, 2010).

related project was *Platsens poetik : ett konstnärligt forskningsprojekt om gröna platser och tillhörighet* (Stockholm: Sveriges arkitekturmuseum, 2015) developed by Emma Göransson (et.al.). The aim of this project is “to investigate how green spaces may become visible and used to create attachment to landscapes and places otherwise experienced as foreign.” Focusing on a suburban park in Stockholm, *Platsens Poetik* experiments with the potential of art to enforce the sense of belonging identified as key for a sustainable social development based. The common is also the topic of the multidisciplinary research project *Föreställningar om det gemensamma* [Performing the common] (Berlin: Revolver Publishing, 2015). In her introductory essay Karin Hansson explains how the project set out “[from] the differences and similarities in the meaning and experience of the common and public rooms with a view to understanding the economic and global structures”. Beside a publication *Performing the common* also resulted in exhibitions at Husby Konsthall and at Moderna Museet in Stockholm. In her dissertation/research project *Potential of the Gap*, (Tromsø Academy of Contemporary Art and Creative Writing, 2018) Lisa Torell has worked performatively with method, place and audience. She has used the inherent structures of places, or its specific functions both as a material to be used and as a method together with the gap. To sharpen a now, in the present and to create a “new place”. Over the last decade, Swedish artist and researcher Monica Sand has investigated and reflected upon the gaps and in-between spaces hidden in urban environments. Her dissertation *Space in motion: the art of activating space in-between* (Stockholm: Kungl. Tekniska högskolan, 2008) works through “rhythmic processes” such as walking, weaving and swinging to activate and capture “spatial, temporal and theoretical dimensions of the in-between”.

Bodil Axelsson and Karin Becker’s *Art through city space* (Linköping: Linköpings universitet, Tema kultur och samhälle, 2010) investigates themes of urban mobility and art in public space in collaboration with a constellation of Swedish and international artists. This research theme sets out to reinvigorate a debate about art as a catalyst for rethinking the movements and flows of city environments. The project also resulted in several public art works. In the article *Mobilising participation in the work of art: Sound Machine by Esther Shalev-Gerz* Axelsson and Becker discusses Esther Shalev-Gerz collaborative art work Sound Machine also included in *Art through city space*. The article discusses “different modes of engagement with participating non-artist subjects - such as the women who provide ‘cultural memory’ of earlier forms of work and engagement with technology - as well as other forms of participation essential for Sound Machine’s conceptual, technical and institutional development”. Merete Røstad’s PhD project *The Participatory Monument – Remembrance and Forgetting as Art Practice in Public Sphere* at Oslo National Academy of the Art investigates collective memory and remembrance through artistic research and practice in public sphere. The project has resulted in the temporary works ‘Peoples House’ and ‘Chamber’ that expand the understanding of memory by exploring it as an embodiment of sensorial practice and as an extended social vocabulary. ‘The Participatory Monument’ is articulated as a methodology for art and research that emphasises and activates how memory resides in our everyday rituals and social relationships.

Kajsa G. Eriksson combines fashion design and contemporary art in her doctoral dissertation *Concrete Fashion: Dress, Art, and Engagement in Public Space* (Göteborg: HDK, School of Design and Crafts, Faculty of Fine, Applied and Performing Arts, University of Gothenburg, 2009).

The dissertation aim is to develop “studies of performance and identity processes, where dress and appearance play a significant role (...) [and] to study how these types of practices can be used to explore and open up the creative processes in shared situations and public spaces”. This aim is researched at art institutional and public spaces where the performatic dressed body is deployed as both an artistic medium and ethnographic instrument. Anne Louise Bang takes quite another perspective on textile design and the public realm her dissertation *Emotional Value of Applied Textiles* (Kolding: Design School; 2013). She approaches the public realm as a space of production arguing in a constructivist vein for the integration of art and industry. She writes: “The objective is to operationalize the strategic term ‘emotional value’ as it relates to applied textiles. The procedure includes the development of user- and stakeholder-centred approaches, which are valuable for the textile designer in the design process.” In her dissertation *Recycle: About Sustainability in Glass Craft and Design* (The Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts Schools of Architecture, Design and Conservation, 2017) Maria Sparre-Peterson connects scientific and artistic research in a collaborative approach to glass craft. Through artistic research the dissertation aims to explore “theories, methods and practices around glass craft and design and sustainability in relation to a series of activities including personal experiments, teaching, interventions in public spaces and collaborative experiments together with students, colleagues and users.”. Outi Turpeinen discusses similar questions in her article “Creating a new city centre with craft-based public art” (*Craft Research*, Volume 5, Number 2, 1 October 2014) on the basis of a case study about a public art project in Tikkurila, Vantaa, Finland. She discusses how craft-based public art may serve as a tool urban renovation also focusing on the production process and attempts for negotiating the value of craft in dialogues with the industry and public art management.

5. Wider International Contexts by Research Themes

This section provides a mapping of the research on public art realised within wider international contexts. It employs a series of sub-headings to help organise the overview, these have been agreed in dialogue with the research commissioner as indicated in the Introduction in Section 1 above. These subsections are as follows: **5.1** Policies and organisation (% for the arts etc.); **5.2** Public art and architecture; **5.3** Public art in planning and urban / rural development; **5.4** Public art and social involvement; and a final subsection that gathers material that does not sit under the first four subheadings in section **5.5** Research on public art in general and across all artistic expressions. In each case we begin with descriptions of research projects realised at doctoral and masters level, as a means of identifying recurrent themes and problematics, and then turn to indicative examples of non-academic research with respect to the given thematic. Throughout we have tried to communicate something of the enormous breadth of public art research and to show the multiplicity of disciplinary frames, research problematics, and theoretical models within which enquiries into art and the public realm have been produced. This multiplicity of approaches is evidence of the rich potential of public art as a space of knowledge work, but it also indicates something of the challenge of generating an integrated and systematic overview of that knowledge. It may be helpful to underline again at this point that research on public art does not constitute an integrated research field and does not share a widely adopted common research problematic. However, as the breadth of material that is surveyed throughout this report also indicates, there is perhaps no necessity to impose a single overarching research agenda, beyond finding ways to foster cross-interrogation and cross-pollination between different disciplines and different research agendas. This is something we shall return to in Section 6 when we come to identify gaps in our current knowledge and possible opportunities for further research.

5.1 Policies and organisation (% for the arts etc.)

Under this heading we have collected and sampled research contributions that concern the policies and organisational models and practices for public art commissioning and production. This subsection on research from the wider international context, into public art policy and organisational practices, includes perspectives on percent-for-art schemes and city-wide or urban-area-based programmes for public art. This research focus on the policy and organisational aspects of public art is apparent in a little under 10% of the material sampled, indicating a relatively underdeveloped area of enquiry when compared to many of the other headings employed within this mapping.

The themes that appear in research under this broad heading include: organization of publics (audiences) via public institutions/museums; planning programmes for public art in university campuses; policies for public art production via art biennials and institutional 'off-site' programmes; private ownership of public art; percent-art programs beneficiaries and its justifications; public art policy development for communities, social inclusion in public art galleries; public art commission for community redevelopment; and crowdsourcing perspectives for production of public art. A notably under-represented issue within

the literature sample was the question of alternative forms of collective or community commissioning and case studies in this regard.

There is considerable research on how public art policy and public art commissioning processes operate in relation to urban and rural regeneration processes, with cases of urban regeneration appearing much more often in the literature. (We consider this issue here from the perspective of organisational strategies, and in 5.4 below we look at research on the substantive relationships between public art and urban/rural regeneration.) There appears to be less research activity in evidence from the sample, with respect to research on alternative commissioning strategies; longitudinal studies of possible impact of percent-for-art in regional and national contexts (i.e., outside the specific temporalities and priorities of regeneration projects); and with respect to the relationships between the organisational cultures of commissioning agencies and the nature of public art programme outcomes.

Michael Robert Grenier's (2009) University of Minnesota doctoral dissertation in Education, *An analysis of public art on University campuses: policies, procedures, and best practices* is based on an investigation of policies, procedures and practices of public art programmes on the campuses of research universities. The 'Public Art on Campus Survey' was conducted with public art administrators working with universities, to understand tendencies in public art programming in the university landscape. The comparative analysis indicated among other things that there are no significant differences between public and private institutions or between the categories of institutions operating within a percent-for-art framework and those that do not operate within a state where a percent-for-art rule applies. It was found that public art programmes are considered part of the university's role and a dimension of university life appearing as part of institutional master plans and operating as strategic initiatives that provide a "democratic shield" for university administrators and decision makers. According to Grenier's affirmative analysis, such programmes are seen to result in the physical embodiment of institutional mission and contributing to maintaining the places where the community can learn, live and dialogue within a environment rich in meaning. This research suggests that, within the United States of America, the organisational culture of the university as commissioner and initiator has a greater determining effect on the outcomes of public art programmes than the specific mechanism of the percent-for-art rule.

In another USA-based study, looking specifically at the impact of a percent-for-art scheme, Lauren Davis in her (2009) masters dissertation, based on case studies in downtown Los Angeles with artworks commissioned through the Community Redevelopment Agency of the City of Los Angeles, "Reconsideration of permanent percent for art works in the public sphere", argues that artworks commissioned for permanent integration into the public realm through percent-for-art programs have processes and considerations that have more in common with fields such as architecture and urban design, than with the commissioning of artworks for inclusion in personal collections, museums, or galleries. Davis further proposes that a useful method for evaluating percent-for-art public art production is architect Robert Harris' "Remodeling Theory", in which the artwork's value is systemized through a consideration of its relevance to the surrounding environment.

Addressing an already existing, and internationally widely employed, alternative to percent-for-art public art commissioning in the form of biennial public art programmes, Dany Louise's (2015) University of Brighton, MPhil dissertation on *Destination Biennale: an examination of the interface between biennials of art and public policy within a neo-liberal context* examines whether biennials are expressions of policies that conform to neoliberalism, or are able to function, within their limited sphere of influence and particular context, as a form of "resistance", and what it might mean to approach them as such. Louise questions the dominant interpretation of the art biennial format as an instrument and catalyst for regeneration, using the Liverpool biennial as a case study, complemented by exploration of the Folkstone Triennial and the Istanbul Biennial. Louise proposes that the influence of the biennial format is more operative in a symbolic register than in a direct and quantifiable manner. She argues that biennials are sometimes perceived to have impacts aligned with neoliberal urban policy goals, rather than having demonstrable and actual impacts. She argues that the existing literature on the correlations between art biennial format and neoliberal urban policy, does not take sufficient account of the competencies, experience and professionalism of high-level arts managers who work to deliver these large scale urban arts events. She proposes that the relationship between policy and arts delivery is essentially functional and perceived to be mutually beneficial; and that without the constraints and motivations that public policy brings, she further proposes that there is no obligation for the arts, in production or presentation, to have any relevance or benefit to a wider public. Overall, this research contribution suggests that the existence of cultural policy and other public policy agendas, even while being partially implicated within the broad nexus of neoliberal rhetorics, may allow art biennials to 'resist', within their limited sphere, the trend towards economic instrumentalism seen to be characteristic of neoliberal urban policy.

Turning to the non-academic strands of research activity looking at questions of organisational process, embedded within commissioning and production processes, the example of Deveron Projects in the small rural town of Huntly, in Aberdeenshire, Scotland is of interest. Deveron Arts was established by Claudia Zeiske, Annette Gisselbaek and Jean Longley in 1995 and later re-named Deveron Projects. As well as organizing artist residencies, Deveron Projects has created a major collection of contemporary art in the town, and established a research network and publishing programme to test and profile their 'town is the venue' methodology. This presents an interesting example of a reflexive organisational strategy for realising art in the public realm that is explicitly established as a research process. The system of residencies which result in the creation of public art are based on research into topical issues—economic, social, political—that affect both the local community and the wider world. Their methodology cites the work of Sir Patrick Geddes, the Aberdeenshire born 'father' of town planning, and his model of society as a bio-diverse, interconnected system. Deveron Projects employs Geddes' model of 'PLACE / WORK / FOLK' to inform their commissioning strategy and have also attempted to develop the model as a transferable practice. As Claudia Zeiske, long term director of Deveron Projects describes this process in 'The Town is the Venue: Art, Community and Place':

For town is the venue, we started with the selection of a topic. As opposed to a venue, which is a building in which the physical parameters define the logistical possibilities of each event or project, when the town is the venue, the possibilities are set by the social, cultural and geographic character of the town. Getting the topic right was

fundamental, as the topic is what creates a relationship between an incoming artist and the local community. As the public for Deveron Arts was mainly people living in the constituency of Huntly, the topic *had* to engage them.³¹

The explicit framing of a commissioning and curatorial methodology, and the attempt to specify this as a transferable methodology with specific application to the Northern regions of the UK, constitutes a significant research contribution that is disseminated by means of publishing and networking.³²

5.2 Public art and architecture

Under this heading we have collected and sampled research that relates to public art and its relationships with architecture. The research contributions with respect to the relations between public art and architecture comprise approximately 5% of the academic dissertations sampled internationally. This is somewhat surprising as we had anticipated, given the close professional linkages between a broad range of public art practices and architectural practices, that there would be a substantial academic research corpus to be accessed on this question. However, it might be important to note that a greater volume of research on public art and architecture appears to be available in the form of journal articles, monographs and anthologies.³³

Much of the inquiry with respect to public art and architecture is focused on integration, sustainability and value-interactions between built environment, artwork and the actors/participants/viewers/residents/users of the built environment within which the artwork is situated. Available research under this heading tackles public art and architecture via design of public spaces in hospitals, beachscape architecture and its public space, designing public spaces as part of urban regeneration, design tools for integration of public art in a built environment, landscape architecture and public art, the value of public art in landscape architecture. C. Y. Huang's (2009) Delft University of Technology masters dissertation in industrial design on the "*Development of a design tool for the integration of public art in a built environment*" focuses on developing a design tool for architects to facilitate the design process of integrating public art into the building project. The research is based on a proof-of- concept approach through developing a prototype design publication developed and tested in the context of a Taiwanese building project, the Wei-Wu-Ying Center for the Performing Arts in Kaohsiung. This project typifies the emphasis in research on public art and architecture on the theme of integration. This theme of integration is also manifest in

³¹ Claudia Zeiske, 'The Town is the Venue: Art, Community and Place', in *Territories and Practices in Process*, Revista Mesa, 2011, <http://institutomesa.org/RevistaMesa/the-town-is-the-venue-art-community-and-place/?lang=en>; see also Zeiske, Claudia, *The Town is the Venue: A Methodology for the North?*. Rovaniemi, University of Lapland, 2013.

³² <https://www.deveron-projects.com/about/research-zone/>

³³ For interesting further research on this see: Doina Petrescu (Ed.) *Altering Practices: Feminist Politics and Poetics of Space*, Taylor & Francis 2007; and Albena Yaneva (Ed.) *Actor-Network-Theory Approach to Archaeology of Contemporary Architecture*, Oxford University Press, 2013.

a research focus on the interaction between different professional roles—the artist and the architect—in the construction of the built environment. Jennifer Overton's (2005) University of Georgia (USA) dissertation on *"Dialogues in public places: a conversation between landscape architecture and public art"* explores the historical exchange of ideas between environmental art and landscape design between 1975-2005. Citing landscape architect and historian, Catherine Howett's 1976 thesis on *"Vanguard Landscapes: The Environmental Art Movement and Its Significance for Landscape Architecture"*, Overton argues that cross-disciplinary collaboration is required to address the diversity of aesthetic, environmental and social conditions of "place".

An interesting example of this theme of integration of public art within the architectural environment, is Gerrit Strydom's (2008) University of Cape Town, School of Architecture, Planning and Geomatics, MLA dissertation on *"The value of public art in landscape architecture"* that seeks to establish a framework for identifying and designing spaces for public art, through generating design guidelines. This kind of research proposing the value of integration between art and architecture can often manifest a tendency to impose a technical-administrative process or protocol as the means to integrate artistic works.

Another recurrent focus in the discussion of architecture and public art is their co-productive relationship in urban regeneration, as exemplified in Corinna Dean's (2014) the London School of Economics doctoral dissertation in sociology on *"Establishing the Tate Modern Cultural Quarter: social and cultural regeneration through art and architecture"*. Taking Tate Modern as its case study, local planning policy and its wider ramifications are examined. As part of the research process Dean embedded herself within key grassroots organisations (Better Bankside and Bankside Open Space Trust) working directly or alongside Tate Modern; and with the local community, in order to gain close access and multiple vantage points with which to observe the policy and planning processes. Another interesting methodological feature of the research is combination of an architectural and art theoretical analysis with visual and spatial analysis using photographic images posted on the social networking site Flickr as well as photographic images of the regeneration area generated by the researcher. Dean concludes that the regeneration process generates a highly specific construction of the 'public' in practice that is not reducible to the theorizing of publics in art discourses or in traditional urbanism.

Turning to the non-academic contributions in respect of research on public art and architecture, the Vienna-based collaborative art and architecture practice *Transparadiso* is exemplary of the ways in which the intersection of architecture and public art provides a rich zone of interdisciplinary enquiry in the field. *Transparadiso* operate as an architectural agency, as an art collective, as a pedagogical and research platform, and as a producer of public art projects through official and an unofficial self-commissioning processes. In their practice they have elaborated a combined public art, architectural, and planning methodology that they describe as 'direct urbanism'. The essential proposition in this research enterprise is to overcome the dichotomy between planning and urban activism, by investigating art and artistic strategies as durational processes within urban development, on an equal level to conventional planning strategies. Emerging from the interdisciplinary practices of art, architecture and urbanism, the key themes within this model include: socially engaged and

process oriented urban development strategies; addressing current urban issues as complex societal issues; and emphasizing public space as space for (non-exclusive) appropriation by the inhabitants / users of the space. This research contribution is manifest in publications, editing of special editions of journals, proof-of-concept works in the public domain, conferences, and also further disseminated through a range of pedagogical projects.³⁴

Another interesting example, although operating in a different register to the urban area design and architectural production of *Transparadiso*, is the ongoing project 'Support Structures', the work of the architect Céline Condorelli and the curator Gavin Wade is of interest in demonstrating a foundational form of enquiry into the conditions of art and architecture as fundamental orientations to the condition of 'public-ness'. *Support Structures* is described as a critical enquiry into 'what constitutes support', and addresses 'questions for art and architecture practices on forms of display, organization, articulation, appropriation, autonomy, and temporariness', and 'the manifestations of blindness' towards these issues. In contrast to enquiry that proceeds primarily on the basis of conceptual analysis of the conditions of 'public-ness', this work proceeds, through an amalgam of art and architectural processes, by way of the extended material figure of 'support structures' and a knotting of theoretical and practical concerns through the production of manuals and other guides to practice.³⁵

5.3 Public art in planning and urban / rural development

In this section we have collected and sampled research contributions that pertain to public art and planning with a special focus on the role of public art in urban/rural development including material in respect of landscape architecture and urban studies, art and environment, and the construction of the "value" of public art. The investigation of public art with respect to planning and development agendas and within the context of ecological, urbanist and development studies more generally was evidenced in approximately one fifth of the material surveyed from the international context.

Among the research questions and topics addressed under this heading we have found material on: public art and urban and rural regeneration; commissioning policies and planning; public art, sustainable communities and urban environments; redevelopment of suburbs; public art and wellbeing; public art for deindustrialization of urban space; public art and regeneration of public space; festivals and cultural events like carnival in relation to urban/rural regeneration/development; planning strategy for public art; urban development and integration of art into public space; commissioning as collecting strategy; place-making and public art; and ecology and environmental art. A notably under-represented topic within the research sampled was the question of minority' place-making and the relationship between public art commissioning and urban spatial and functional segregation.

³⁴ See <http://www.transparadiso.com/> for a full listing of textual materials generated by Transparadiso; and also for a range of practical projects realised by the collaboration.

³⁵ See <http://www.supportstructure.org/>; see also Céline Condorelli, *Support Structures*, Sternberg Press, 2009; and Céline Condorelli, *bau bau. Ediz. bilingue*, Mousse Publishing, 2017.

As an example of available research under this heading we may start with archaeologist James Richard Bruce Dixon's (2011) University of Bristol, Ph.D. dissertation *Public art and contemporary archaeology in the context of urban regeneration: ongoing change in central Bristol 1940-2010*. This study is focused on one public art scheme in Cabot Circus, Bristol (UK), and seeks to demonstrate how public artworks actually create their own multi-layered sites through a process of enrolment and implication of a wide network of factors; physical, spatial, temporal, political and more. Departing from the works of Bruno Latour and John Law, his research investigates the specifically created sites of environmentally autonomous artistic interventions by recasting the limited 'Actor-Network Theory' as a practical research methodology especially suited to studying the nature of this 'active' public art and its role in ongoing processes of urban regeneration. The research draws particularly on contemporary archaeology, and its close links with anthropology and material culture studies, to develop a contextual approach to researching public art that, in particular, takes close account of multiple temporalities and the simultaneity of different networks' enrolment and implication. As a result, this research may outline the potential for archaeologists to engage with urban regeneration in a way that uses public art as the catalyst for a deeper engagement with, and understanding of, ongoing change and its relationship to daily life in the contemporary city.

Community planner Rayson Wong's (2014) Ryerson University, master of planning in urban development dissertation *The Purpose of Public Art in the Canadian Suburb: An Evaluation of Markham's Public Art Program* is based on challenges faced in suburban public art planning, and takes the city of Markham's 2014 public art program as a case study. The project proposes a model in which suburban municipalities, with smaller populations and lower developmental demand than urban cores, should incorporate a variety of funding tools to effectively sustain their public art programmes, prioritizing the efforts on engaging the public in all aspects of public art commissioning process. The research suggests that, in a suburban development context early engagement of local publics in the public art process can enhance the collateral benefits and impacts of public art programming.

The urban planner Friderike Sitas in his (2015) University of Cape Town, Architecture and planning Ph.D. thesis *Becoming otherwise: two thousand and ten reasons to live in a small town*, identifies that public art research is mostly commonly encountered in the literature on urbanism as public sculptures. HE contrasts this with the expansion of public art practice to include a range of critical, subversive and experimental practices that interact with the public space of cities in different ways. He argues that such practices have been engaged critically in the fields of fine art and cultural studies, predominantly in the global North, and that these have not yet fully entered the field of urban studies, especially with reference to the global South. Through an analysis of three examples from the Visual Arts Network South Africa's *Two Thousand and Ten Reasons to Live in a Small Town*, he argues that experimental, inclusionary and less object-oriented forms of public art offer useful lessons for public art practices and urbanism more generally. The public art of *Two Thousand and Ten Reasons to Live in a Small Town* demonstrated that affect impacts on how people can access complex spatial issues and perform citizenship. Furthermore, as part of a larger epistemological project of 'southerning' urban theory, the thesis argues that intersecting conceptual threads from three bodies of literature: public space, public art and public pedagogy, is important. The project advocates that public art can harness an affective rationality that fosters alternative

ways of knowing and acting in/on the urban, thereby offering public art as a unique pedagogy for exploring and deepening citizen understanding of urban life.

Continuing with these research claims for the possible benefits of public art within wider development processes, sociologist Fiona Maeve Blackman's (2014) Durham University, Ph.D. dissertation *The Angel of the North: Public Art and Wellbeing* is centered on the public artwork *The Angel of the North* (1998), by artist Antony Gormley, located in Gateshead, UK. The research investigates its impact on wellbeing by exploring what outcomes were intended, the extent to which these have been realised, and why and how these outcomes occurred. As an important part of the culture-led regeneration of the town of Gateshead, the artwork reflects, according to Blackman, the local authority's work to improve wellbeing in a non-material sense. Blackman shows that there are various types of audience for the artwork, presenting a complex picture of impact varying by residents' characteristics and circumstances, and playing into people's everyday lives and life events in different ways. Local identity, home and home-coming, and pride and confidence are intrinsic to its effects, but it is also linked to a global status as an image and brand. In a related manner, but with reference to a non-Anglophone context, public art coordinator Jennifer Alene Henning's (2011) University of Southern California, master of public art studies dissertation *Bilbao's use of art and culture as a remedy for deindustrialization: the implications of redevelopments homogenous use public art* is focused on the city of Bilbao, Spain. Responding to deindustrialization and economic decline the city undertook a redevelopment plan to transform wasteland into a cultural destination for the global tourist. The utilization of public art was then explicitly envisioned as a commercial commodity within this redevelopment plan. Public art became part of the visual branding scheme used as a marketing tool to attract cultural tourism. The research seeks to demonstrate what is at stake in such projects and practices.

Artist and curator Peter John Merrington's (2016) Newcastle University Ph.D. dissertation *Festival as process: art, territory, assemblage and mobility in North East England 2003-2012* examines the geographies of a AV Festival (a festival of contemporary art, film and music) in North East England between 2003 and 2012. She poses that the arts festival offers an important site to examine how cultural encounters are produced and performed through a set of entwined place based imaginaries. The research examines how the curatorial practice of AV Festival was situated within its locality. Analysing the ecology of relations that created AV Festival demonstrates how the artistic ethos of a new cultural organisation was shaped to mediate the perceived demands of the regional cultural economy of North East England. There is particular emphasis on how the festival was deployed as a strategy towards economic and social regeneration. Two significant artwork commissions are examined in order to show how AV Festival developed a particular practice of situated artistic commissioning. Finally, the thesis emphasises mobility as a critical concept for understanding the arts festival. Set against the multiplication of arts festivals, including visual art biennials, in Europe and beyond over recent decades, and a broader festivalization of cultural institutions, the thesis makes a significant contribution to the field in offering a re-conceptualization and possible genealogy of festival. The thesis reimagines festival as a relational process, showing how festival necessitates a continual assembly and dispersal within the production, renewal and consumption of public culture.

Clare Healy's (2008) University of London, doctoral dissertation *Is public art a waste of space?* An investigation into residents' attitudes towards public art in Harlow is unique in the sense that it is preoccupied with the residents' understanding and behaviour around and towards public art in Harlow, UK. As the voices of the public are typically absent from the critical literature, this study seeks to address this gap through two main questions: firstly, the extent to which the advocacy for public art relates to the attitudes held by the public; and, secondly, the degree to which public art functions as a landmark for local residents. In addressing these questions, research was undertaken in Harlow, a new town that has integrated public art in its wider planning processes. Resident attitudes were collected through questionnaires followed by two focus groups. The study shows a clear appreciation of local artist Henry Moore, whose sculptures were felt to give something unique to Harlow. Yet the proliferation of 'parachute' art was believed to limit public art's ability to create a sense of place. The research found that residents found it hard to relate to more abstract public artwork, placing value in sculptures that reflected the town's history in order to develop a sense of identity. One interesting outcome of the research was that public art in general is poorly used as a landmark for urban navigation.

Another example of this otherwise under-examined question of the interaction between residents and public artworks, is provided by geographer and urban planner Thejaswini Jagannath's (2017) University of Otago, Dunedin, master thesis in planning on *People's Interaction with Public Art in Public Spaces within New Zealand*. This enquiry is based on six public spaces within New Zealand that Jagannath investigated with respect to how these spaces influence and promote people's interaction with public art. The enquiry was organised through questions such as: (i) How is public art structured and organised within public spaces? (ii) What is people's interaction with public art in public spaces? (iii) What is the connection between public art and urban regeneration? (iv) What are the public art policies of Auckland, Christchurch and Dunedin? The outcomes from these semi-structured interviews indicated that people are more likely to interact with public art based on factors such as the time of day and the weather. The number of people interacting with the public art in each of the public spaces varied depending on the amenities and facilities that the public spaces offered around the public art. Some interview participants indicated that if people do not have a public space they can enjoy and feel comfortable in, suggesting conviviality, then it is unlikely that members of the public will find the public space interactive or find the public art sited there of relevance.

As a final example of academic research under this heading, we take the urbanist Junjung Cui's (2016) Université Paris Nanterre, doctoral dissertation *Plastiques urbaines, entre paysage et culture : recherche sur les aménagements urbains intégrant l'art dans l'espace public des villes de la province du Guangdong, Chine* ('Urban forms, between landscape and culture: research on urban development integrating art into the public space in the cities of Guangdong province, China'). In the context of the highly accelerated urban development of Guangdong (South of China), and in particular the regional capital Guangzhou, the rapid and radical transformation of landscapes raises a number of questions about the relationship between societies and their environment, the local peoples and the living places, art and the city. Cui's paper asks what is the role and work of art within wider conception of the city and its form? In what forms and in what ways does art contribute to the integrity of urban

form? Cui proposes that through artistic interventions in public space, the artist is capable of restoring it in situ, mutual communication between people and places, and then considers what approaches and possible ways are available to address these issues? The research poses these questions against the backdrop of a heavily Westernised urban vernacular being imposed on Guangzhou in the last thirty years, realized in tandem and in tension with what are termed 'traditional' Chinese sculptures. Cui argues that a polarisation arises between the modern Westernized architectural forms and the traditional Cantonese art creating a dilemma between the two systems as to how they may formally coexist in the contemporary city. Cui argues for a re-visiting of Cantonese architectural and urban practices with reference to a new local contemporary urban form using the traditional skills of artisans to overcome the dissonance between Westernized architectural context and Cantonese regional sculpture.

With reference to non-academic research in respect of the role of public art in urban and rural redevelopment, an exemplary practice is that of Dutch artists and activist Jeanne Van Heeswijk who in projects such as *Het Blauwe Huis* / 'The Blue House', IJburg, Amsterdam (2005-2009), and *Freehouse*, Rotterdam (1998-) has positioned the public art project as a central form of enquiry into how residents may exercise agency in the co-production of urban form. Van Heeswijk and her collaborators explore how public art practice may both contest the dominant terms of urban development planning and, at the same time, advance a development agenda that operates on a basis of local democracy and challenges local communities to take agency. *Freehouse* is based in the Afrikaanderwijk, one of the first neighbourhoods in the Netherlands with a majority of immigrant background residents, primarily of Turks, Moroccans, Surinamese, and Antilleans, many of whom immigrated in large numbers in the 1970s to work at the dockyard. This is an urban area marked by the complex and (most often) officially disavowed racial politics of the Netherlands.³⁶ In the 1970s and '80s, the Afrikaanderwijk experienced a series of tensions between 'native' (white) Dutch and so-called 'foreign' residents over scarce housing resources; landlords were accused by some white Dutch residents of renting to migrant workers and excluding native Dutch. The city has developed different racialised policies to respond to housing and development issues, often instituting policies that limit the number of 'foreign' residents within neighbourhood limits. In response the art project *Freehouse* draws upon Henk Oosterling's idea of *Rotterdam Vakmanstad* (Rotterdam Skillcity)³⁷ by tapping into existing informal economies of craft and production as part of a resident-led development process (which directly challenges the class and racial biases and social displacements of gentrification and urban 'renoviction'³⁸ projects connected to these housing policies and to wider 'creative cities' urban development policies and practices.)

That these interventions are explicitly framed as processes of research is a consistent feature of these art projects, and is further accentuated by the organisation (within the art projects)

³⁶ For a discussion of the specifics of Dutch racial politics see Gloria Wekker, *White Innocence: Paradoxes of Colonialism and Race*, Duke University Press, 2016.

³⁷ See https://www.henkoosterling.nl/pdfs/VM_publi_binnenwerk2.pdf (Dutch language source.)

³⁸ The eviction of the tenants of a building, or of the residents of an urban area, on the pretext that a large-scale renovation, redevelopment or renewal project is necessary, but where the long term intention is the permanent displacement of certain communities.

of transdisciplinary research conferences, seminars, workshops and dissemination strategies that seek to engage both academic and non-academic knowledge workers in claiming a role for the denizens of the city in shaping the city. *Freehouse* is remarkable in that the art project has evolved over two decades, and in 2014 the project was formally transferred from the status of self-initiated collaborative public art work to a formally constituted Wijk (Neighbourhood) Co-operative based on community self-determination.³⁹

5.4 Public art and social involvement

Under this heading we have gathered a range of research projects that address questions of participation, social engagement, critical spatial practices, and social sustainability with respect to public art and public art commissioning processes. The material gathered and sampled from the wider international context under the admittedly broad heading of 'social involvement' constitutes just under 40% of the academic material reviewed. It is clear that the question of participation (and of the 'social turn') in contemporary art has been an overarching thematic in critical debate and in enquiry for more than a decade. Among the specific themes addressed by material gathered under this heading we find: public art and 'public-ness'; public art debates; art and counter-publics; site-specificity and public art; democracy through art; public art and *extramuros* ('outside the city walls') aesthetics; art and dialogue (negotiation and conflict); crowdsourcing and production of public art; public art deconstructing 'non-places'; performative art practices in urban and rural areas; participation through commission; genealogy for collaborative practices; public art and pedagogy; community and conflict; and public art and social change.

Andrea Baldini's (2014) Tempe University Ph.D. dissertation *Public Art: A Critical Approach* provides a philosophical analysis of public art based on examples in the USA and Italy, focusing on what 'public-ness' might mean, drawing out the implications of this for the nature, appreciation and value of public art. By examining how public art and its value(s) relate to the public domain in the context of pluralistic democracies, his dissertation contributes to a fuller understanding of an important aspect for future public art practices while arguing that what makes an artwork public is the context within which it is received: public artworks are received within a public sphere, that is, the public-art sphere, rather than within artworld institutions; [...] public artworks address a multiplicity of publics and are received within a multiplicity of public-art spheres. Ultimately, Baldini argues that public art's value is a function of its capacity to promote political participation and to encourage tolerance. A different example of research focused on 'public-ness' is that of artist Sylvia Helena Furegatti's (2017) University of São Paulo Architecture and Urbanism Ph.D. dissertation (Brazil) *Art and Urban Space: Constituents Elements of Extramuros Aesthetics in Brazil*. The focus here is on the 'constituent' aspects of practice and discursive forms in contemporary artistic action in urban space in Brazil. Anchored in the move of the contemporary art object to the *extramuros* space (meaning space 'beyond the walls', an alternate expression for 'public space') and studying the specific urban elements brought into play in the context of mega-urban formations,

³⁹ See <http://field-journal.com/issue-1/yank>

Furegatti proposes a genealogy for the multiple forms of public / urban art engendered by mega-urban complex city forms.

Another predominant research focus under this heading concerns methods of mapping urban space through interventionist approaches, and linking the mapping of urban space with the question of local democracy and political imagination. Adam C. Park's (2014) University of Sheffield Architecture and Urbanism Ph.D. dissertation *Performing as mapping: an examination of the role of site-specific performance practice as a methodology to map and/or reimagine sites of urban regeneration* examines the role of site-specific performance as a methodology or set of tools to 'map' sites of urban regeneration, seeking to build further links between performance and the spatial practices of architecture and urbanism. The research builds upon Jane Rendell's call for the field of architecture and urbanism to embrace methods from public art and performance in order to operate as 'critical spatial practices'. The research is based on three case studies, combined with empirical and practical work with performance makers in complex and contested sites in northern England. This is supported by a survey of contemporary performance practices that directly address themes and sites of urban regeneration. Using the twin lenses of mapping and participation, the thesis demonstrates how performance(s) can articulate the multiplicity of stories, experiences, and potentials in marginalised or 'interstitial' urban sites. A similar example is artist and architect Richard Goodwin's 2007 University of New South Wales Ph.D. dissertation *Porosity: The Revision of Public Space in the city using public art to test the functional boundaries of built form*. Goodwin's research tests through his artistic practice, seeks to classify spaces which exist deep within the skin or fabric of privately owned city buildings, a key part of the concept of 'porosity' in urban form. The primary vehicle for this interrogation is the use of public art in the form of a set of games called 'Porosity Games'.

Portuguese artist Carla Cruz. Cruz' (2015) Goldsmith University of London practice based Ph.D. *Democracy: a (non) artistic intervention? Attempts to perform democracy through art* examines the role of art at the construction of new democratic understandings and practices. Looking at theories around radical or fundamental democracy and the possible role of art within democratic practices, this research proposes specific models of practice for the enhancement of democracy through new public art methodologies. Another research that focuses on performing democracy was generated by Art and Gender researcher Riánsares Gomez Olmedilla's (2013) University of Utrecht Ph.D. dissertation *Deconstructing 'Non-spaces': Inquiries into Contemporary Public Art in Budapest from a Feminist Point of View*. The project examines different public art interventions developed in Budapest, Hungary. Olmedilla's approach addresses aesthetics, activism, identity and history. The study explores dialogical approaches to the artwork and examines concepts of 'democracy', 'public-ness' and 'identity' operated in each of the projects studied. Using these analyses, the thesis explores public art in terms of its potential to disrupt the gender dichotomies of urban space. The study, anchored in a feminist politics, aims to explore how the different interventions analysed, redefine public space through horizontal participation.

Charlotte Sophie Hope's (2011) University of London Birkbeck Ph.D. dissertation *Participating in the wrong way? Practice-based research into cultural democracy and the commissioning of art to effect social change* is an important contribution to the

understanding of egalitarian and collaborative practices in the field of public art. Through her practice-based research curator Sophie Hope argues that cultural democracy as a way of thinking contests dominant models of commissioning art to effect social change. Hope analyses four projects and proposes a set of criteria for describing cultural democracy as a critical practice. She differentiates cultural democracy from the democratisation of culture, the latter she identifies as providing free, accessible professional and standardised culture to all. The socially engaged art commission is, she argues, an example of the democratisation of culture based on predefined economic, aesthetic and social values. In Hope's view, cultural democracy disrupts expected forms of participation, and this prompts her to consider the implications of increasing dependency on a culture of commissioning art to effect social change that might perpetuate, rather than radically rethink, social injustices.

Dublin-based artist Ailbhe Murphy's (2010) University of Ulster practice-led Ph.D. dissertation *Tower songs: Critical coordinates for collaborative practice* explored the possibilities within collaborative arts practice for creating an interdisciplinary form of evaluation to address the centrality and complexity of negotiation in collaborative art practice. The challenges for artists operating in this field were considered in light of the mainstream critical debates within socially engaged arts practice (Kester, Bishop, Kwon, etc.) which, Murphy argues, tend to organise the field along a series of binary oppositions such as: process vs product; aesthetics vs ethics; participative vs collaborative practice and intersubjectivity vs autonomy. Murphy proposes a theoretical frame drawn from feminist and post-colonial theory in order to problematise how the knowledge practices of the social sciences encounter the negotiated practices and critical models developed within socially engaged arts practice. The question of evaluation of collaborative projects is then described through the methodology of Vagabond Reviews and the review of a large scale community-based street spectacle called the *Night of the Dark Angel*. This leads Murphy to argue against the predetermined models of formal evaluation rooted in social science frameworks, and in favour of a transversal reading of the collaborative experience, rooted within the field of practice, when trying to assess collaborative public art.

An important contribution to the field of participation within public art is found in performer artist Anna Wilson's *All together now: exploring politics of participation in the arts* (2011). Her dissertation examines the increase and diversification of participatory art practices that have occurred over 1990-2010. It presents a typology dividing participation into four divisions: i) participatory commissioning and consultation, ii) interactive participation, iii) social participation and iv) collaborative participation. The formalisation of each approach considers how participation is actually created, who owns the work (or with whom it is identified), and how much agency or control is allocated to the participants. It also looks at the participatory action involved in each approach and how this functions in terms of the creation of the artwork. Engaging with a range of arts practices, from visual arts to theatre (and forms that work between and beyond such categories), it focuses on the various uses of 'participation', as a term, an ideology, a discourse and a practice. She notes that a perceived 'loss of the social bond' is often sought to be repaired through participatory work. Similarly, participating in the arts is frequently perceived as evidence of the 'democratisation' of art. The research seeks to problematise these conventional perceptions. Considering these same ideas of participation but more specifically focused on social inclusion within community arts

practice, Miriam Sari Jakel's (2016) University of Manchester Ph.D. dissertation *Youth weaving networks beyond community borders: lessons learned from Caja Lúdica, a community arts process and networking initiative in Guatemala* provides a possible framework for analysing participatory processes. Jakel's thesis examines a youth community arts network and its non-profit founding organisation, Caja Lúdica, in post-conflict Guatemala. It asks three questions: What are the practices of Caja Lúdica and the Community Arts Network in Guatemala?; what are youth protagonists' experiences?; and what contribution can their practices make to debates on community arts in challenging environments but also in other parts of the world? By using Deleuze and Guattari's rhizome theory it highlights notions of networking, local protagonism and collectivity as key for more sustainable practice with youth and the arts.

Over the last decades it is noticeable that cultural institutions active in the local planning for public art have started to adopt participatory art practices as they seek to address issues such as community cohesion, social inclusion or to engage diverse groups that are perceived as marginalised in some respect. This provides a tendency for such work to be ameliorative, seeking consensus and possibly erasing conflicts, which is in contrast to the generative role accorded to conflict in many artists practices. It is important to highlight here Anthony Gordon Schrag's (2016) University of Newcastle upon Tyne Ph.D. dissertation *Agonistic Tendencies: the role of conflict within institutionally supported participatory practices*. Defining 'conflict' as the iterations of power that challenge the certainty of our hegemonies and/or our place within the world, it aims to address the instrumentalisation of the practice and asks: how can conflict be productive in participatory art practices? Through practical enquiries enacted through a series of carefully considered residencies in institutions which influence or enact participative arts practices (for example, a local authority, a museum, and an educational establishment), the project uses the notion of conflict to problematise the discourse around institutionally enacted participative projects and, in particular, the intent of the institutions and/or its underlying policy. The research is significant as the vast majority of participatory artworks now occur within institutionally-supported contexts via funding from arts-council and trusts, or through educational/outreach remits. This work draws upon Chantal Mouffe's notion of agonistic pluralism to inquire into the relationship between institution, artist and public. This agonistic conflict is productive in ensuring the agency of all participants (including those within the institution), but also in exploring the critical, ethical and political potentials of this way of working. Schrag's research converges with artist, critic and curator Mark Wilsher's (2010) Norwich University of the Arts Ph.D. dissertation *Negotiation theory and the critique of dialogue in dialogical and relational art*. Wilsher's research focuses on dialogue and negotiation theory as alternative model for socially engaged art practices. Three models of the public realm are explored and related to forms of public art making. Hannah Arendt's space of appearance and action is shown to relate to the Modernist sculpture of the 1970s, which forms the subject matter of one body of drawings. Mikhail Bakhtin and Jürgen Habermas provide the central notions of dialogue and the discursive public sphere, which are then shown to underpin much relational art through a detailed examination of Nicolas Bourriaud's *Relational Aesthetics* (2002) and Grant Kester's *Conversation Pieces* (2004). The third model explored is that of Chantal Mouffe's 'agonistic public realm'. This leads Wilsher to propose modified approach to participatory art processes through his re-working of the Harvard Negotiation Project model of conflict resolution and negotiation.

If we turn for a moment to non-academic research platforms, one experimental initiative warrants particular mention here, *Les Nouveaux Commanditaires* ('the New Patrons'). This is a programme initiated in France (based on an approach to public art developed by François Hersin in the late 1980s at the *Fondation de France*) and now operating in many different national contexts. The programme investigates the proposition that citizens can achieve an 'equality' of agency with artists and other professionals in the public art process. This is based on the belief that 'over two centuries after the democratic revolutions, citizens still remain the great absentee from the art scene even though this is the terrain where they could freely exert, test and solve their fundamental cultural needs'. To address this, *Nouveaux Commanditaires* has engaged in a proof-of-concept demonstration process through developing and implementing a specific protocol 'that defines the roles and responsibilities of the players who carry out an action together, the goal of which is the creation of artworks in all fields'.⁴⁰ As part of this protocol, it is also proposed 'that researchers in various fields contribute towards recognition of the necessity of art, by putting the undertaken action into perspective and basing it on an intelligent reading of the situations at stake that will be better shared'.⁴¹

It is clear then that research on social engagement in contemporary public art is extensive, and there are a great many sources to choose from in this regard. However, one particular nexus of research contributions and contestations in the North American context, centered around the work of Mary Jane Jacob, Grant Kester, Claire Bishop, Gregory Sholette and others warrants special mention because of the agenda-setting nature of the work within the wider international context, no doubt due to a residual American cultural hegemony in respect of contemporary art discourses. One interesting project is the *Chicago Social Practice History Series* which provides a multi-volume mapping and genealogy of socially engaged public art practices with particular reference to the specific context of a single city, Chicago, but with a wide field of reference in the Americas. This project is not so much an enquiry in the history of art as a basic mapping and outline genealogy of practice, as such it may be suggestive of strategies for regional and national mappings of the socially engaged public art field. The series now comprises of: Abigail Satinsky, *Support Networks*, 2014; Mary Jane Jacob, *A Lived Practice*, 2015; Daniel Tucker, *Immersive Life Practices*, 2014; Rebecca Zorach, *Art Against the Law*, 2015; Stephanie Smith, *Institutions and Imaginaries*, 2015; and Bill Kelley Jr., *Talking to Action: Art, Pedagogy, and Activism in the Americas*, 2017 (all published by the University of Chicago Press).

The work of Kester and Bishop, both Professors of art history, the former since 2000 at the University of California, San Diego (having previously been Editor at *Afterimage* 1990-1998, based in Department of Art History, University of Rochester, New York) and the latter in the Graduate Center CUNY, joined in 2008, (having previously taught at Warwick University and the Royal College of Art, London.) is based on the production of case studies and the elaboration of theoretical analyses or reconstructions of the aesthetic, responding in different ways to the work of the French philosopher Jacques Rancière.⁴² This work manifests a shift

⁴⁰ <http://www.nouveauxcommanditaires.eu/en/44/protocol>

⁴¹ *ibid.*

⁴² Claire Bishop, *Participation*, London, Whitechapel/MIT Press, 2006; Claire Bishop, *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship*, London, Verso, 2012; Grant Kester, *Conversation Pieces: Community and Communication in Modern Art*, University of California Press, 2004; Grant Kester, *The One and the Many: Contemporary Collaborative Art in a Global Context*, Duke, 2011.

away from the model of the discursive public sphere (heavily influenced by Habermas's foundational work), to a foregrounding of aesthetic, sensory and embodied modes of public-ness. It also marks a development beyond an early generation of participatory public art theorising signaled by Suzan Lacy's proposed category of 'new genre' public art⁴³ which was in part responding to new experiments in the field including Lacy's own practice, and the practice of figures such as Mary Jane Jacob, particularly the 1993 *Culture in Action* programme in Chicago. Finally, coming in the wake of Kester and Bishops work, but providing new critical terms for socially engaged public art enquiry, Sholette's work is connected to research, pedagogy and practice in the field. In his article 'Delirium and Resistance After the Social Turn' in *FIELD: An Online Journal of Socially Engaged Art Criticism*, 2015, he points to the proliferation of socially engaged practice education and commissioning programmes and links this also to a crisis in the public sphere: 'In truth, the public sphere, as both concept and reality, lies in tatters.' He points to the 'unchecked economic privatization' of all aspects of the lifeworld, proposes that the rise in the number of Non-Governmental Agencies (NGO) attempting to realise and maintain civil society "does not reveal a healthy social sphere, but more of a desperate attempt at triage aimed at resolving such complex issues as global labour exploitation, environmental pollution, and political misconduct all of which no longer seem manageable within the framework of democratically elected state governance." The basic tendency of this body of research is to problematise the social turn, while actively embracing the insights and knowledge gained from practice in the field, and while also avoiding any 'nostalgia' for a bygone age of fixed public monuments. A consequence of this work is to return us to the basic questions about the specific nature and valency of 'art' and 'the public realm' in a way that links the question of public art as a site of social engagement to the wider questions of contemporary political, economic and social conditions.

5.5 Research on public art in general and across all artistic expressions

We are describing this as a category or heading for 'misfits', not in any pejorative sense, but simply as a way of addressing those aspects of the available research on public art that do not conform, or fit neatly, to the series of headings that we have adopted for the purposes of the report. With respect to the wider international context, under the heading of public art in general and this 'misfit' category we have gathered and reviewed material addressing questions of the counter-monument and commemoration; research on unsanctioned art and alternative modes of public art intervention outside official cultural frameworks; questions of the artist role(s); virtual public art; and curatorial practices on public art. This diverse body of material constitutes just under 30% of the material surveyed leading us to understand that we could, in a later instance and a future iteration of the report, further organize this material into a system of separate headings. Themes that appear in this material include: public art and commemoration, performative monuments, neo- and counter-monumental practices; public protest and activism through public art, interventions in the public space; the role(s) of the artist within the public realm, within public institutions, artists as historians, unsanctioned public art, graffiti and street

⁴³ See Suzanne Lacy (Ed.) *Mapping The Terrain: New Genre Public Art*, San Francisco, Bay Press, 1994.

art; conservation of graffiti, muralism and public art, vandalism of public art, web-based public art; accessibility in museums through podcasting, public art as public pedagogy; and public art as resistance, production of public space (counter space) by art collectives.

The first cluster of research contributions tend to employ historical accounts as a key part of elaborating an argument for the potential role of public art in generating spaces of political symbolic encounter and actual dialogue. Mechtild Widrich's (2009) MIT Architecture doctoral dissertation on *Performative monuments: public art, commemoration, and history in postwar Europe*, departs from the concept of the "performative" monument. The performative monument is a mode of public performance and artistic action in public space, enacted by historically aware individuals as a form of commemoration, and generating interactions with those publics that encounter, often spontaneously and without prior announcement, these actions. These performative monuments are described as building upon notions of agency in the public realm and of the political responsibility that accompanies that potential and capacity to act in public space. The dissertation proposes a historical reading whereby public performance art in European contexts in the 1960s is described as providing a critical impulse for new forms of commemoration that are then realised in the 1980s. Widrich claims that performance, in contrast to the monument in its ephemerality and dematerialization, did not neutralize the monumental but reinvented it as a new practice: one that involved the audience explicitly through conventional transactions. Drawing attention to the empirical shift from performance to monument production in the work of post-world war II Central and Eastern European artists, and to the theoretical continuity that makes this shift possible, Widrich examines the interconnections in the passage from confrontation to commemoration through a variety of heterogeneous but related documents: photographs and eyewitness accounts of early performance, interviews and press accounts, plans and drawings of unrealized monuments, and 'performative' documentation which includes photographs modified through drawing, painting, or collage techniques to involve their viewers in a collaborative re-imagining of the role of commemoration in public space.

This kind of research, employing historical and genealogical analyses, to produce a critical paradigm for public art practices is found in multiple disciplines and many different national contexts. Zoya Kocur's (2013) University of Middlesex (UK) School of Art & Design doctoral thesis on *Art collectives, Afro-Cuban culture, and alternative cultural production, 1975-2010: the performative interventions of OMNI Zona Franca and the struggle for space in the Cuban public sphere* presents an analysis of the appropriation of public space by cultural producers in Cuba, with a focus on art collectives, in particular, OMNI Zona Franca. Kocur discusses OMNI's work in the context of the history and formation of a nascent movement for civil society in Cuba. Situating OMNI's work in a longer history of Afro-Cuban cultural production as well as within the history of art collectives, this study demonstrates how OMNI's participation in the public sphere relates to social practice, appropriation of space, counter-cultural activism, and the forging of a wide coalition of civil and artistic alternatives among diverse communities. The struggle over public space and the attempts by artists to create an autonomous public sphere in Cuba have led to continual conflict with the state. Producing new social relations, the collective's practice is offered as an example of how art and cultural production is inaugurating alternative counter-public spaces in the context of a demand for a more inclusive and representative public sphere.

Noah Leon Simblist's (2015) University of Texas (USA) art history doctoral dissertation *Digging through time: psychogeographies of occupation* looks at the ways in which artists have dealt with history of the Israel-Palestine and Lebanon region and its impact on the present. This contribution also employs the paradigm of artistic practice in the public realm as a form of counter-monument and counter-public sphere. Noting that the historiographical impulse has a particular resonance for many artists (Avi Mograbi, Gilad Efrat, Ayreen Anastas, Amir Yatziv, Yael Bartana, Omer Fast, Khaled Hourani, Dor Guez, Campus in Camps, and Akram Zaatari) making work about the Middle East, Simblist describes the tendency of artists to act like historians, manifesting an "archival impulse", whereby they use found photographs, film or documents to intervene in normative representations of history. Public conversation is a medium at the core of most of these artistic practices. Simblist argues that these artists challenge the tendency to address historical trauma in public art practices through repetition, compulsion and melancholia, by engaging collective memory, producing counter-memorials and counter-publics.

While these contributions address the contested historical imaginaries manifest in different public art practices, another area of research that also deals with contestation, focuses on the way art in the public realm – both official and unofficial – may act as a site of political contestation and raise questions of legitimacy, inclusion and address (who is conceived of as "the public" or constituency responding to art in the public realm). Samantha Lynn Alfrey's (2013) Fordham University (USA) art history masters dissertation "*Occupy Plop Art: Public sculpture as site of antagonism*" departs from the term "plop art" (designating the modernist, abstract sculptures installed as ornament in an architectural plaza) as an example of public art practice that lacks engagement with those publics that the works are meant to serve. Alfrey argues that "plop art" has on occasion been used or co-opted by citizens for both artistic and political ends. Alfrey notes that the "plop art" sculpture can become a symbol for an entity with which citizens want to converse. In a reading of this modernist sculptural tradition that cuts against the grain, Alfrey suggests that plop art can be redefined in terms of the types of engagements that it creates *post facto*. While addressing public art practices other than "plop art" Tanina Drvar's (2005) Concordia University, Montreal (CA) art history masters thesis on "*Vandalism and public art in Montreal: a discussion of works by Mark Lewis and Robert Prenovault*" also proposes that public art works become occasions of the agonistic public sphere, through the vandalism that they may solicit. Her study discusses two works of public art which were vandalized in Montreal: Mark Lewis' *What is to be Done?*, which was a scaled down plaster replica of a statue of Lenin exhibited in Park Lafontaine in 1991, and Robert Prenovault's *Les Territoires Simultanés*, a project installed on a vacant lot on St. Laurent boulevard during the summer of 1993. She discusses these artworks and the reactions they solicited in relation to discourses on public art and public space, and propose that the vandalism to these may in fact be a way of reclaiming space, as a manifestation of what Henri Lefebvre has called the 'rights to the city'. Another example of the reading art in public as an occasion that may generate an agonistic public sphere is Holly Ryan's (2013) City University London doctoral dissertation *Bringing the visual into focus: street art and contentious politics in Brazil, Bolivia and Argentina*. In this research contribution from a political science rather than art historical perspective, draws on case study research undertaken in Bolivia, Brazil and Argentina, to argue that street art is utilised strategically and instrumentally in protest, in mobilising publics and catalyzing public opinion. Interestingly,

this research while situated within an International Politics department, specifies the sensory (i.e., the aesthetic) dimensions of unofficial street art as a key factor in its political agency.

While the focus of much research on graffiti art and unofficial street art has tended to prioritise issues in relation to the contestation of the dominant authorities of the city, Erin Julia-Zieren Wooters Yip's (2014) Savannah College of Art and Design, Arts Administration, masters dissertation on *"Conservation of 'Graffiti' in top art markets: municipal preservation of illicitly created public art in Hong Kong, New York City and London"* takes a different approach and considers the convergence of graffiti art with the agendas of city managers." This contribution seeks to identify the incidents and administrative processes of municipally preserved works of illicitly created art ('graffiti' or 'street art') in the top global art markets of Hong Kong, New York, and London. Government sponsored preservation of unplanned public art of illicit origins has traditionally been interpreted as outside the domain of heritage preservation, however Yip profiles a handful of extraordinary unofficial public artworks that have, due to a unique set of administrative functions and political contexts, come to be embraced as official public works. The study also explores the unique set of administrative problems created by these circumstances.

Turan Aksoy's *The concepts and practices of urban mural painting since 1970: artists' perspectives* (1996). Although more than two decades old, this comprehensive study of mural art within the context of a broader debate on public and community arts, still has a claim on our attention because of its interesting employment of a mixed methods approach, and its attempt to situate the mural not as an expressive act but as an outcome of complex negotiation and local social process. Drawing on extensive literature review, survey questionnaires, and direct experience in practical work, Aksoy suggests that the dominant aim of modern urban muralists is to "democratize" art, and "humanize" urban spaces. Aksoy, proposes that to develop a more critical language and understanding of art in urban places there is a need for connection with (urban) sociology and (local) cultural studies. This proposal for further research, although more than twenty years old, arguably has continuing relevance in terms of setting an agenda for future research. Another example of research on urban muralism, produced ten years after Aksoy's work, is John Kenny's (2006) University of New Orleans (USA) Urban Studies, doctoral dissertation on *"The Chicano Mural Movement of the Southwest: Populist Public Art and Chicano Political Activism"* is an in- depth study of the murals produced by *el Movimiento* in San Diego, California, as part of the populist civil rights movement of the late 1960s in the Southwest United States. Again, activating the widely recurring themes of counter-publics and unofficial culture, Kenny examines the social environment into which these murals intervened (the public sphere, the intellectual territory of high art and the elite system of private and government cultural patronage). The works are examined with respect to the effect of these wider contexts upon the mural content and conversely, the effects of these murals upon these contexts, with particular attention to the question of diversity in the high art and museology of the United States. Staying with the theme of diversity and again in the North American context an area of enquiry that we see as already substantially developed is that of the research into the pedagogical dimensions of public art, and into pedagogical forms as modes of public art practice. This also returns us to the question of research on performative public art works with which this section began. Tania Picasso's (2008) University of Southern California (USA) master of public art studies dissertation on *"Public art as liberatory pedagogy through*

performance methodologies" focuses on public art works realized as performance, as framework for social justice and public education. Drawing upon Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, her paper examines the work of performance art collective, *La Pocha Nostra*, Asco, an East Los Angeles-based conceptual performance group, and Suzanne Lacy's Oakland project titled *Code 33*.

One area of development that we should note here is a growing research focus on the production and dissemination of public art through the internet or via mobile digital networks. Denitsa Petrova's *Public Art 2.0: developing shared platforms for creativity in public spaces* (2016) is an indicative contribution in this regard. This study considers the attributes of Web 2.0 as a methodological framework for public art. The research is based on two case studies: the *Big Art Mob* (2006) and the *Bubble Project* (2002). Petrova's study explores parallels, connections and synergies between public art, artistic practice beyond the gallery context, and Web 2.0, the Internet platform for user-generated content, online communication medium and host for web-based communities. Using the analogy of "Public Art 2.0" Petrova proposes a paradigm of public art as open source- a process of creation, encouraging multi-authorship and shared creativity. Another indicative example in this area is Connor McGarrigle's more recent (2012) Dublin Institute of Technology (IE) doctoral dissertation on "*The Construction of Locative Situations: The Production of Agency in Locative Media Art Practice*"⁴⁴ which is part of an ongoing research project into the reordering of public space through new technologies, that attributes a specific agency to artistic practices that use digital network technologies in a critical and counter-cultural manner. In this research sub-topic it is notable that research often takes the form of research and development work, with proof-of-concept and action-research as key research strategies reflecting the proximity of the research process to the research object. The research paradigm here tends to be drawn more from engineering and computer science than from the humanities, though often these research practices hybridise between technology research and development work, and the critical humanities. An important, and as yet only emergent line of enquiry, is the impact of new digital networking techniques, such as blockchain (the distributed database system that underlies digital crypto-currencies such as Bitcoin) on the (already fraught) private / public domain distinctions in digital spaces. As one researcher, Rachel O'Dwyer has noted, while the lines of development of blockchain-based contracts are "still too immature to make any sweeping claims about the future of property relations, we could speculate here that these proposed business models for cultural goods point towards a new kind of monetization of culture."⁴⁵ The transformation in the conditions of privatization of culture online by the application of new blockchain technologies (i.e., a move beyond the older paradigm of intellectual property rights management of DRM) will have implications for the changing conditions of public culture online. It is to be anticipated that research on public art will be drawn into this area by the pull of artists' practices extending to this space also, just as happened in the emergence of mobile digital networking and of the internet previously.

⁴⁴ <https://arrow.dit.ie/appadoc/32/>

⁴⁵ Rachel O'Dwyer, 'Does Digital Culture Want to be Free? How Blockchains are Transforming the Economy of Cultural Goods', Ruth Catlow et al., *Artists Re:Thinking the Blockchain*, 2017, p. 306. <http://torquotorque.net/wp-content/uploads/ArtistsReThinkingTheBlockchain.pdf>

Finally, within this section, we would like to note some research that is investigating the question of public art from within the framework of practical production and commissioning itself. The public Tel Aviv and New York based art performance group *PUBLIC MOVEMENT* may serve as a clear example of a public art practice conceived of as an enquiry into the conditions of 'public-ness'. The group announces itself as follows:

PUBLIC MOVEMENT is a performative research body that investigates and stages political actions in public spaces. The movement explores the political and aesthetic possibilities residing in a group of people acting together. It studies and creates public choreographies, forms of social order, overt and covert rituals.⁴⁶

The basic premise of *PUBLIC MOVEMENT* is that the performance of public-ness is intrinsically bound up with questions of the political and of the forms and protocols of the state. As they indicate: 'The phenomenal performative relationship between the state and its cultural institutions' which they see as 'perhaps best exemplified when the declaration of the State of Israel was staged at the Tel Aviv Museum of Art in 1948' is at 'the heart of Public Movement's research'. As well as concrete performance works that enact a kind of 'proof-of- concept' instantiation of these claims, *PUBLIC MOVEMENT* is also engaged in publishing projects and, as with other practice-based research projects discussed above, proposes a transferable practice methodology. In their *Solution 263: Double Agent*, authored by Alhena Katsof and Dana Yahalomi (seemingly the group's main initiator and driver) they present what they describe as 'the necessary tools to activate Debriefing Sessions and in doing so trains future Agents in a series of one-to-one exchanges gathered from work in the field.... (to) explore the possibility that to activate art in the political field, an agent may be a double agent.'⁴⁷ It may be interesting to note here the increased emphasis on the public museum in *PUBLIC MOVEMENT*'s development from an initial grounding, almost exclusively, in street performance.

⁴⁶ <http://www.publicmovement.org/>

Section C: Future Research Needs and Opportunities

6. The Gaps in Our Knowledge

If one is to make some tentative conclusion from the survey of public art research in the Nordic countries it seems like research is less occupied with policies and organization for the arts (i.e., how and why certain works of art were placed where they were, and by whom, and how they were funded) and more occupied with what one might call the consequences of the art in question (i.e., participation, reception and ideological questions about ideals/ideas disseminated by the works). This becomes striking when looking at the research conducted about what may be called, in want for a better term, 'traditional public art', i.e. art commissioned and placed in the public realm. Fewer researchers are concerned with why the art in question is placed where it is, who commissioned it and how it was funded. One finds several more who discuss the role of art in the public realm as carrier of various ideological and/or educational content and how this content is perceived by the recipients. However, there is much recent research done about the role of art as an actor within a network of other public organisations and institutions in planning and architectural projects viewed from a contemporary and historical perspective.

While the research of public art in the abovementioned projects is understood in terms of communication and performativity, it is in other cases also understood as being in dialogue with the 'receiving' public. It sometimes concerns how social conditions have been addressed already in the planning stage or it discusses the future of public art in terms of sustainability and craft. In the study of these complex relationships the commissioning institution also becomes negotiated. However, when it comes to participation and ethnographic perspectives in general, researchers seem to turn to art forms other than official public art for their empirical material. Graffiti, for instance, is more often discussed for its role in various social contexts, for its possible critique of the single 'author-artist' and a site for alternative forms of creativity, than for its esthetic and/or ideological content. This also accounts for numerous reflections about participation as a method of research about public art such as the collaboration between academics and artists as well as with a wide range of other actors and audiences.

Participation is also a topic where researchers discuss temporary interventions in the public realm. Here one finds both arguments for how this art can be understood to inform and produce heterogeneity, be it commissioned or unsolicited and many critical voices that point to the instrumentalization of said tactics. Here, one also finds discussions about the role of the artist, as the facilitator of openness and discussions, as a vehicle of gentrification and as a victim in a larger scheme. This is also a field that engages many of the artistic researchers, both as active agents where the research partly is the temporary invention, and as a way of discussing the possibilities of future public art.

The public sphere is often discussed in terms of its changing function and (diminishing) role. While the role of art in this case sometimes is discussed as an instrument to keep the public *public*, the very changes of public sphere are in other projects understood as unavoidable and that it thus has to be reinvented rather than preserved. Here, we also find discussions

about what bearings the 'postnational' state (can) have for public commissioned art. Some researcher focusses on the notion of the public sphere in relationship to the digital realm. We here find expansions of both public art and public realm, as the latter becomes more and more hybridized through digital media technology and the various 'platforms' that it brings.

Turning to questions of a more straight-forwardly empirical basis, the value of constructing national data-sets for the study of public art appears to be one area that could prove useful to support and enable a wide range of different research initiatives. The kinds of empirical mappings produced by *ixia* in the UK provide an interesting reference point here. While not without certain risks of standardization, it would seem important to have reliable data-sets on public art commissioning in the national context and this would seem a relatively easy undertaking within the Swedish context. Indeed, the model of *ixia* (an organisation which appears currently to be in hiatus) might be worth examining more closely, especially as it seems to overlap in some ways with aspects of the broad mission of the Swedish Public Art Agency.

If we refer now more broadly to the research realized in the wider international context, there is a situation broadly similar in outline to that of the Nordic context. It is noticeable that while many researchers converge on acknowledging an expanded field of public art practice, there is not much evidence of a strong agenda to construct an overarching definitional framework for public art. However, there is considerable energy put into elaborations on what is at stake in the term 'public', whether construed in terms of Habermas's discursive public sphere, Mouffe's agonistic public sphere, critiques of the neoliberal erasure of the public sphere, in terms of the putative instrumentalization and colonization of all social relations by market logics, or in terms of an expansion of public spaces to include the digital realm. We also note a general tendency in research in the wider international context to prioritise the perspective from the agency of those positions that actively produce (or determine the conditions for production of) art in the public realm (local authorities, commissioners, artists, planners, etc.) with respect to the perspective of those who live with, and who inhabit, as it were, art in the public realm.

In terms of research into policies and organisation, with particular reference to percent-for-art practices, there is clearly a need for further research, and a challenge to develop a comparative framework for national and international cross comparative study and research. There is also the intriguing implication from Michael Robert Grenier's (2009) research on the commissioning of public art in university campuses that the culture of the commissioning organisation is perhaps more determinate for the outcomes of a commissioning process rather than the specific funding or policy regime that is operative. This would seem to warrant further interdisciplinary research to test this proposition by bringing a variety of perspectives into play.

With respect to research on public art and architecture we can see that there is tendency to position enquiry with reference to questions of stylistic forms and aesthetic interactions. However, there is clearly a sense in which the expanded conception of public art when taken as a research focus within architecture, has a capacity to generate interesting avenues of enquiry. It would seem that a relatively simple place to begin here might be to empirically map and catalogue the different ways in which art and architectural commissions

have been structured, rhetorically constructed, evaluated, implemented and experienced by different stakeholders, within both the Nordic and the wider international context, (i.e., produce a description of the professional field as a point of departure for other research projects and as a resource for professional education and training.)

There is a lively and diverse research on public art in planning, and in urban and rural development contexts, and there is clearly a need for some meta-level analyses that might begin to provide a clearer sense of the potential knowledge base here that might be useful to agencies of development and to target communities of development projects. The recurrence of questions of democratic process, rights to the city, instrumentalization, and other questions of the politics of development process suggests that there is a political problematic that any research on the question of public art and development must engage in some way or other. But given the many case studies available, perhaps there is a need for more work on synthesizing overviews and identifying the priorities for future case study work. Having noted the broad tendency in the research surveyed to prioritise the perspective of the producers of public art, when it comes to questions of public art and social involvement it has overwhelmingly been cast as a question about participation within the decision-making process that produces art in the public realm, or about participation directly within the art process itself. There remains a space for more work in terms of possible strategies for working with 'publics' to investigate experiences with art in the public realm, to explore the networks of affects, meanings, and experiences that are engendered and operationalized by art in the public realm, whether that art originates as official culture, illicit intervention, or self-organised initiative from different publics and counter-publics. There is again here an opportunity to consider the 'participatory' dimensions of research into, and evaluations of, socially engaged and participatory public art practices.

In Section 3 above, by way of making an introductory contextualisation of research on public art, some preliminary observations in respect of methodology were proposed. Based on the work that we have now surveyed in more detail, we can confirm that case study is the most common research instrument in evidence. We can also note that the presence of comparative case study, especially comparing across national contexts, is something that is relatively underdeveloped, and again this suggests a possible avenue of future research. Again, we would note the significance of the (2009) *Locating the Producers* volume as indicating the potential of an international comparative case study as a way to progress a more ambitious research programme for public art. This also argues for the need for international collaboration, especially if we are to take serious the wish to conduct research into the actual experience of 'publics' that are instantiated around particular public art works and programmes.

The research evidences a significant role for non-official culture, illicit art interventions in public space, and self-organised initiatives, (this includes graffiti, although in comparison with the Nordic context it does not appear to have the same level of research focus internationally and this may reflect an important cultural specificity). This would suggest that an important avenue of future research will be to explore the relationships, tensions, and interactions of official and informal public art cultures. It is perhaps through practical research in the field, positioned at various intersections of official and independent public art, that this question might be developed. In the field, in the midst of actual art practices as they unfold,

the contest between different institutional cultures of legitimacy (whether the contest over legitimate knowledge production, or legitimate cultural value) is a dynamic process unfolding in the public realm, and as such presents itself as an important place to do research on precisely these questions of legitimacy and value.

This scenario also points to a fundamental opportunity that research on public art should consider, which is the question of how research in public art is doubly encoded in the questions of 'public-ness'. Any publicly funded research enterprise will typically be asked to consider the questions of its public contribution, role and impact as, in some important sense, 'public' knowledge. Public art research also faces this question in a way that has the potential to resonate in interesting ways with the basic object of research, public art. If research into art in the public realm wishes to consider questions of 'public-ness', it would seem logically necessary to connect this question to the status of the research itself as a form of knowledge work in the public realm. This is not to impose a demand for a singular research paradigm or research culture, but to identify an opportunity in public art research to have the object of research act upon the research enterprise itself in interesting ways, especially with respect to way enquiry might be framed and enacted different publics.

The discussions about public art in a broad sense do not constitute any single, self-reflexive field of knowledge in the Nordic nor in the wider international contexts. These discussions instead seem to be scattered among and across multiple disciplines and subdisciplines which often do not acknowledge that they engage with a similar set of concerns and phenomena. A similar lack of communication seems also to characterize the relation between researchers within the Nordic countries where there is a tendency not to consider research about public art conducted in the larger Nordic context either through textual references or collaborative projects.

This is not to suggest that all dissimilarities could or should be smoothed over. On the contrary, the need for heterogeneity of research approaches cannot be stressed enough. What may be lacking can therefore be said to be strategies for connecting researchers coming from different disciplines and countries to intervene and communicate about the questions of public art. Such attempts at making this research field come together (while at the same time respecting the disciplinary and geographical differences) seems as a quite adequate response to the heterogenous and multifaceted nature of public art research as profiled in this survey. This could proceed by re-using and combining traditional concepts and methodological traditions and/or inventing new concepts as points of commonalities which enables even further differentiation of the field.

7. Summary

There is an extensive and rich variety of research on public art both within the Nordic context and within the wider international contexts. Research on public art is conducted across a wide range of disciplines that includes, but is not limited to, art history, art theory, philosophical aesthetics, urbanism, sociology, geography, architecture, planning, economics, public administration, and cultural studies.

This research is conducted in a wide variety of modes that bridges from formal academic research to practical research in the field by non-academics, often working in partnership with academic players. There are also a wide range of examples of public art commissioning programmes and individual public art projects that are designed as research actions in their own right.

While there is no single fixed and widely adopted definition of public art there is a widely established recognition of the expanded nature and wide variety of practices that currently operate as public art.

There is a great potential for developing public art research by fostering greater cross-reference within the different disciplines and research cultures addressing public art topics. There is a need to promote and develop interdisciplinary, inter-institutional and international cross connectivity in public art research while actively working to maintain the rich diversity of research approaches and research priorities. However, public art research does not need to be constituted as a separate sub-field or sub-discipline, but rather as a lively interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research space that maintains connectivity to other research questions. Public art research currently appears at the stage of development where integrative mappings of existing knowledge would seem to be required in order for substantial research programmes to be advanced.

There is a need to balance the research emphasis on the perspectives of the productive actors (artists, commissioners, curators, agencies, etc.) with the perspectives of the 'public' (variously understood as 'users' / 'receivers' / 'audiences' / 'participants').

There appears to be significant opportunity to build upon an existing preponderance of case-study as the preferred methodology for public art research by developing comparative case study frameworks and by developing national and international data-sets. There would appear to be some considerable potential and already existing initiatives for building shared data-sets enabling public art research, and several museums are actively developing online databases in this regard and there are international precedents that may be learned from and built upon in this regard.

Given the role of public art and public art research in addressing a wide range of contemporary societal urgencies and issues (urban change; local democracy; political, cultural, and social inclusion; local urban economies; social sustainability; official and un-official cultures; historical memory; cultural heritage; collective meaning and civic belonging etc.) this research space requires further programmatic development and specific project and infrastructural resourcing.

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