



607457-CREA-1-2019-1-ES-CULT-COOP2

Quality assessment report / Evaluation materials 2020-21

Deliverables 5.2 and 4.3

CREATIVE EUROPE Cooperation Project Agreement number 607457-CREA-1-2019-1-ES-CULT-COOP2

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A-Place

Deliverable 5.2 Quality assessment report /

Deliverable 4.3 Evaluation materials

2020-21

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30 March 2022

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Executive Summary

This document contains quality assessment of the placemaking activities carried out during the second year of the project, from October 2020 until December 31, 2021. The document is comprised of two parts: Deliverable 5.1 "Quality Assessment Report", corresponding to the result of the evaluation of activities carried out by the partners, and Deliverable 4.3 which includes transcripts of materials made available by the partners for evaluation.

The report is organised into the following sections:

- **Evaluation materials**, with a summary of the materials provided by partners to be analysed by the evaluation team, and those publicly available, which have been used for this purpose.
- **Methodology**, describes the methodology followed in the evaluation and its relationship with the evaluation framework proposed in Deliverable 5.1
- **Analysis of the placemaking activities**, including a **description of Loop Festival and collaborative activities**, based on the evaluation materials available.
- **Conclusions and recommendations** for the next iteration of placemaking activities.

Finally, **Annex 1** includes the evaluation materials (transcripts of videos and interviews) and **Annex 2**, a guideline with the evaluation criteria to be adapted to each placemaking activity.

1. Introduction

1.1. Purpose and target group

This evaluation report (2020-2021) aims to describe, analyse and interpret the impact of the activities of the 2nd year of the project on places and people. As in the previous report ([Deliverable 5.2/4.3 2019-2020](#)), the purpose of this evaluation is, on the one hand, to find out to what extent creative participation (e.g., inclusion, creativity); social involvement (e.g., place meaning, place attachment); and community building (e.g., interculturality, sharedness, joint activities) were supported by the placemaking activities and, on the other hand, to assess their influence on changes related to social discourses, socially engaged artistic practices and space-place transformation. Moreover, a further goal is to understand the levels of cultural involvement of residents in the activated spaces, and the degree of transformation of these spaces, permanent or temporary. On another level, this report can provide the project partners themselves with insights that enable them to recognize the potential of the activities carried out to transform places, helping them to overcome some of the difficulties encountered.

1.2. Contribution of partners

La Salle-URL, AA, UG, NOVA, UL, KUL, CSA and Loop provided the evaluation team with assessment materials (e.g., videos, interviews, questionnaires, photographs, maps, etc.) related to the local placemaking activities carried out in the period 2020-2021. In some cases, the speeches recorded on videos, especially the materials made available on the project's YouTube Channel, were transcribed by the partners (see Annex 1).

1.3. Relationship with other activities in the project

This report followed the "Plan-Implement-Reflect" model on which A-Place is based. The evaluation was based on the activities described in [Deliverable 4.1-4.2 "Local Placemaking Activities 2020-21"](#), as well as materials provided by the partners, including interviews with the participants in the activities, questionnaires to the stakeholders, and self-reflections provided by the partners concerning the implementation and development of the activities in their settings.

In [Deliverable 5.1 "Quality Assessment Plan"](#), we proposed a theoretical framework that included ethnographic, phenomenological and aesthetic aspects as part of the evaluation. Also, the framework included the methods and tools to be used in the evaluation work: semi-structured interviews, interviews, focus group discussions (FGD), surveys, socio-ethnographic note taking, concept mapping/participatory cartographies, and reflective narratives. Despite previous rigorous planning, extensively discussed and adjusted with partners, the work in the field revealed the impossibility of applying multiple methodologies of assessment, specifically with regard to certain specific disciplinary areas. The partners are dealing with mixed activities, mostly placemaking, but events that also involve artistic practices, which made it difficult to apply a single assessment model with the same evaluation tools for all cases. In addition, it is important to mention the difficulties caused by the continuous or periodic restrictions resulting from the pandemic (e.g. difficulties in engaging institutions and organizations, restrictions in access to public space, communication problems with local stakeholders, etc). In 2021, the effects of the pandemic were not as severe as in 2020, although many activities remained constrained by security measures.

Under these circumstances, as in the previous year, the procedure regarding the collection of assessment materials by partners followed the non-mandatory guide prepared to facilitate a more flexible evaluation framework than that initially proposed (see Annex 2). According to this

guide, each partner could create the most appropriate framework and choose the most adequate tools considering the materials collected. Therefore, the evaluation contained in this report is based on the specific methodologies adopted by partners in their placemaking activities.

It is noteworthy that it was possible to carry out many activities in public spaces, with the presence of people, and even involve the participation of communities. The collection of material to support the evaluation, such as interviews, audiovisual recordings of activities, photographs, etc., was also more prolific than in the first year of the project. As in 2019-2020, some of the results of this evaluation can serve as a basis for further work with different communities in the near future.

2. Evaluation materials

2.1. Materials provided by partners

In this section we provide the lists of materials made available by the partners for evaluation, as well as the respective links in the case of materials published on the project's website or on social networks. Some audiovisual materials made available were transcribed by some partners, as is the case of La Salle's and NOVA's videos. The transcripts have been attached to this Report (Annex 1).

- "A Weaved Place" in L'Hospitalet (Barcelona)

The partner provided different materials for assessment, including three videos and respective transcripts (See Annex I).

- Events and outputs
URL: <https://www.a-place.eu/en/placemaking-activity/14>
- Creating and learning in public space
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_inMkrkP1E
- Artistic practices in public space
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MXrZ-LQJL8I>
- Making public spaces meaningful
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DtJpjP446I>

- "A Happy Place" in Brussels

The partner shared some links to social media, namely to the news about the "Les Marolles" general project, as well as links to the Bravvo Association, and Social Housing Institution. The events organized in collaboration with these institutions are described on the A-Place site (see: <https://www.a-place.eu/en/placemaking-activity/35>)

- Events with outputs
<https://www.a-place.eu/actions/Placemaking%20Activity/34>
- Additional information about the contract of Quartier durable 'Les Marolles'
<https://www.bruxelles.be/reamenagement-dinterieurs-dilot-dans-les-marolles>
- Additional information about the partner institutions
BRAVVO: <https://bravvo.bruxelles.be>
Social Housing Institution: <https://logementbruxellois.be>

- "A-Pla(y)ce" in Ljubljana

The partners provided a variety of material, including records of the initial presentation of activities; records of presentations in workshops and lectures; photos, mapping materials of the place and other documents developed by students; space analyses made by students' groups, and other written material used and/or prepared by students; questionnaires for visitors and residents, analyses of the questionnaires answered by 46 household, and 106 residents, 26 under the age of 15; invitations and posters, as well as a voting report on votes on playmaking proposals by children in kindergarten; a template observation list and 19 observation reports; several invitations (for residents to presentations by students; for kindergarten teachers to presentations by students; Voting invitation poster; Voting report (votes on playmaking proposals by children in the kindergarten).

- Events and outputs
<https://www.a-place.eu/en/placemaking-activity/34>

- "A Place of Our Own" in Brussels

The partner provided some links to audiovisual materials.

- Events and outputs
<https://www.a-place.eu/en/placemaking-activity/38>
- Open Mural: Pre-Engagement
<https://www.a-place.eu/en/placemaking-action/74>
- Up-cycled Furniture Workshop: A video reportage on the event.
- A joint event with "A Seedling Place" (with Urban Gorillas): Photo reportage from the event.
- Open Mural: Video and photo reportage of the event
<https://www.a-place.eu/en/placemaking-activity/39>

- "A Future Place" in Lisbon

Regulations, publicity posters and registration forms (written and online) are some of the materials alluding to the first stage of preparation of the activity "My Neighbourhood... My Place". The implementation phases - the Contest, the Soirée and the workshops - were recorded using photography and video. The photography workshop resulted in a virtual exhibition that allowed a reflection on the impact of the activity on the perception of young people from Bairro Padre Cruz.

- Events and outputs
<https://www.a-place.eu/en/placemaking-activity/36>
- Poetry and Prose Poetry Contest "My neighbourhood... my place" (Contest regulations, registration form and poster)
<https://www.a-place.eu/en/placemaking-action/58>
- Soiree to present the winners of the contest "My Neighbourhood... my Place" (Video)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vb0eBdPOaP0>
- Workshops "My Neighbourhood.... My Place" (4 Slideshows)
<https://www.a-place.eu/en/placemaking-action/77>
- Virtual exhibition "Neighbourhood Through My Lens" (Virtual exhibition)
<https://www.a-place.eu/en/placemaking-action/78>

- "A Seedling Place" in Venice and Nicosia

The following materials were also uploaded to the Project website:

- ASeedlingPlace* Digital Repository
<https://www.a-place.eu/en/placemaking-action/82>
- ASeedlingPlace* Initiative in Venice Biennale
<https://www.a-place.eu/en/placemaking-action/83>

- Venice Biennale
<https://www.a-place.eu/en/placemaking-action/64>
- Greening the city workshops
<https://www.a-place.eu/en/placemaking-action/67>
- Final Event: Urban Entrepreneurship Workshop
<https://www.a-place.eu/en/placemaking-action/68>
- The new world of hyperlocal food, Benjamin Greene
<https://www.a-place.eu/en/placemaking-action/63>
- Guided Walk
<https://www.a-place.eu/en/placemaking-action/65>

- “A Visionary Place” in Bologna

The partner provided links to social media, namely some posts on a Facebook page.

- Events and outputs
<https://www.a-place.eu/en/placemaking-activity/17>
- Placemaking activities
<https://www.a-place.eu/en/placemaking-activity/17>
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/parkletviacuriel13dbologna>
- Art exhibition organized by a neighbour, U R R U N, and promoted by the collective Mezcla
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/parkletviacuriel13dbologna/posts/378896873549777/>
- Visit by the Finland environmental artist Nina Backman
<https://www.a-place.eu/en/placemaking-action/60>
- Farewell celebration party with live music
<https://www.facebook.com/events/5289643082170>

- Loop Barcelona 2021

In 2021, Loop Barcelona opened a second call for works (See <https://www.a-place.eu/en/open-call/35>), having selected three projects, subsequently carried out by Screen Projects. The final result was the production of three videos involving people of different nationalities and socio-cultural contexts: *"Beans, Rinsed Twice"* (Inês Neto dos Santos & Bella Riza), *"I Can Only Dance To One Song"* (Arash Fayez), and *"La Carpa"* (David Bestué, Roser Corellawere). These videos were projected as part of the Loop Festival program (See <https://www.a-place.eu/en/news/65>), which ran from 15th to 21st November 2021. The Project also sponsored the premiere of the audiovisual trilogy *"Terrapolis"* (2021) by Sitesize (See <https://www.a-place.eu/en/news/43>). David Bestué (artist) and Roser Corella (filmmaker) will also develop a collaborative film project *"Estructura"* (See <https://www.a-place.eu/en/news/42>) departing from the urban context of L'Hospitalet de Llobregat, and exploring the notion of placemaking.

A-PLACE VIDEO PRODUCTION 2021 (Commissioned project)

- *La Carpa* (David Bestué & Roser Corella, 2021)
<https://vimeo.com/647665858>

A-PLACE VIDEO PRODUCTION OPEN CALL 2021 - (ex-aequo)

- *I Can Only Dance to One Song* (Arash Fayez, 2021)
<https://vimeo.com/646377290/c6086a5392>
- *Beans, rinsed twice*, (Inês Neto & Bella Riza, 2021)
<https://vimeo.com/647666855>

PROFESSIONAL MEETINGS 2021

- A-PLACE: Embodying space through memory.
<http://loop-barcelona.com/activity/a-place-embodying-space-through-memory/>
 - A-PLACE: Place-making through body moves.
<http://loop-barcelona.com/activity/a-place-place-making/>
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3. Methodology

The methodology adopted in the assessment of the 2020-2021 activities is the same as that described in the previous report ([Deliverable 5.2/4.3 2019-2020](#)). This evaluation was previously designed based on two criteria: the relevance of the activity and its impact on places and their communities. As described in [Deliverable 5.1 "Quality Assessment Plan"](#), the assessment plan addressed questions to find out to what extent values such as creative participation, social involvement and community building were taken into account in the planning and implementation of the activities. Since most of these values depend on cross-cultural social processes, we proposed these types of questions to understand their limits and influences: "What does the space/place offer so you can meet/get to know each other? What more could it offer? Have the activities helped to evidence the above-mentioned values (e.g. creative participation, social involvement and community building)"? Have the activities strengthened the communities, and the groups involved? Have the activities increased the sense of belonging among the groups involved"?

Evaluation was predominantly qualitative, although quantitative data was also considered in some cases, although it may not be relevant due to post-Covid circumstances. The qualitative analysis was based on texts, transcripts and recorded material, as well as on interpretations of data provided by partners. Whenever possible, the data available on the project website (e.g. recorded material, interviews, posts on social media, etc.) was also taken into account, and the assessment team reached conclusions and recommendations on the basis of this evidence and reasoning. Above all, an attempt was made to understand if the basic questions could be answered and how the activities fulfilled the objectives.

The material made available allowed us to conclude that, in most of the creative placemaking actions and others related to it, it was possible to fulfil most of the objectives and criteria defined in D5.1, namely "situated learning, sustainability, sensorial experience, community building, tradition, temporality and performativity". However, as the impact of the evaluation must be considered over three phases - planning, implementation and reflection - the information was analysed taking into account the constraints and limitations caused by the second year of the pandemic, as well as other constraints identified by partners and collaborators, such as planners, artists and citizens.

3.1. Methodological approach

The approach to the evaluation process took into account the following data and contexts: a) the project's programme, its objectives, and the assessment plan b) the data available on the project website, including photographs, audiovisual material, catalogues, reports, etc. c) the creative outputs of placemaking activities (e.g. activities and related recordings such as videos, festival contests and programmes, etc.) d) stakeholders' surveys, following a common questionnaire based on the structure of evaluation (See Annex 1) and e) reflective narratives of other participants in the placemaking process, including artists, collaborators and other partners who were not directly associated with the project.

However, since the quality evaluation of placemaking is determined by indicators that are part of the creative process itself, and underpinned by levels of participation, social involvement and community building (also described in Deliverable 5.1 as values), the present evaluation reflects the participants points of view, as well as the evidence generated from the activities such as actions, stories, outputs, etc.

3.1.1. Key concepts

Quality evaluation. According to the theoretical description in [Deliverable 5.1 "Quality Assessment Plan"](#), quality evaluation means: "(a) a creative participatory planning approach (Cilliers & Timmermans, 2014) (b) a social production of heritage, both visible and invisible, that promotes and sustains a community's engagement with both the physical and social characteristics of the heritage (Giaccardi & Palen, 2008) and (c) a building of social capital (Kelkar & Spinelli, 2016) and communities (Lepofsky & Fraser, 2003) as a result of participation and engagement".

Social impact. In Table 6 of [Deliverable 5.1](#), the social impact is described in three levels (e.g. plan, perform and reflect) with different objectives (e.g. increase social engagement/inclusion, change/increase users' connection to the space/place, promote/enrich understanding of placemaking as an essential aspect of living together), target groups (e.g. local communities, diverse permanent/temporal users, and policy makers, local communities and others such as artistic groups, academics and students), and relevant impact factors (e.g. assessment methods and criteria are also different for each stage). Thus, the social impact is basically described through the impact indicators: emergence of inter-community discourse or different ways of interacting with each other; creation of a sense of place and emergence of different types of place sense/making experiences; references to placemaking in the authorities' future plans and/or discourses; reference to place-making transformation potential in terms of community building; reference to placemaking transformation potential in terms of socially engaged artistic practices.

Basically, it can be said that quality evaluation and social impact evaluation differ from each other, either by the focus of the actions (internal or external), or by the impact measurement factors that are also reflected by internal or external agency of the activities.

3.1.2. Evaluation frame

The evaluation of every placemaking activity carried out in each city is presented in this report according to the following structure and sections:

1. **Introduction.** Description of the placemaking activity and motivation, according to the Project's programme.
 2. **Quality evaluation: The process of creating art, meaning, place and community.** This section encompasses:
 - **Participation and creativity of participation.** This section refers to the quality of social participation and creation of values (e.g. inclusiveness and creativity, for example) promoted by placemaking activities within communities.
 - **Social engagement and community building.** Concerning placemaking, social engagement encompasses the participation of stakeholders, in different phases of the activities, as well as the strengthening of the sense of place, and place attachment. As for community construction, the most relevant idea is that communities are dynamic social constructions whose boundaries are defined by common values. In this context, cultural and artistic experience can be important in creating intercultural communities of senses, for example.
 3. **Social impact assessment: The social impact of the placemaking practices.** This section includes: a) "social discourse" b) "socially engaged artistic practices" and c) "space-place transformation".
 - **Social discourse.** Although theorists are unanimous in their belief that it is difficult to determine the cultural impact of an activity, either due to its ephemeral nature or other factors, the change in socio-cultural discourses about a given place can be an indicator of the impact caused by activities such as those
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carried out within the scope of the project. Thus, the comparison between talk before and after the activities can be a good indicator of their impact. Discourse can take different forms: it can be linguistic, but it can also take the form of an object or an image. Urban art can be an example of cultural discourse, since graffiti is, frequently, an expression of contradictory feelings about one place; an answer to... or a rebellious gesture.

- **Socially engaged artistic practices.** The mobilization of art as an agent of change is particularly evident in cases where the artistic practices socially engage.
- **Space-place transformation:** From a conceptual point of view, space may be considered as objective and empirical, thus mappable, but somehow separated from a kind of human affective experience. Space can also be understood as both a physical and social landscape. But most public urban spaces are actually non-places in the sense that people do not have a strong attachment to them. As with place, people can identify some generic qualities frequently referred to as neighbourhood, territory, location, milieu, locale, region, in the sense that a place is a social construction with specific meanings and other characteristics such as cultural and social interaction between people, and an organized and institutionalized political life. One of the main objectives of the project's activities is to contribute to the transformation of many spaces that tend to lack meaning into places that can be recognized by their inhabitants or users as places of sharing and social and cultural interaction.

This methodology applies to all activities, but in some cases, it was not possible to answer the leading questions in order to delimit the scope of the assessment. The specificity of most of the activities, and the corresponding data for assessment did not facilitate the use of a common, broader evaluation matrix, as proposed.

PART A. Placemaking Activities



1. "A Weaved Place" in L'Hospitalet (Barcelona)

1.1. Introduction

L'Hospitalet de Llobregat is a city adjacent to Barcelona and a part of its Metropolitan Area. A small town surrounded by farmland at the beginning of the twentieth century, it became an industrial centre in the 1960s, attracting migrant populations from Catalonia, other regions of Spain and other countries. Subsequently, it suffered deindustrialisation. Today, the neighbourhoods of L'Hospitalet are as diverse as the local social groups that inhabit them and, in part due to the metropolitan transport infrastructures that dissect it (railways, motorways), the city can be characterized as a socially and physically fragmented territory.

In order to create a common reflection on the sense of place and collective identity in the city of L'Hospitalet, "A Weaved Place" brought together architecture students and faculty, local artists and citizens in several activities: analysis of the sociophysical territory jointly carried out by students, faculty and residents, and participatory activities in public spaces and premises of cultural and civic associations.

In 2020, the lockdown prevented the execution of most activities planned for public spaces and amenities and activities involving the participation of residents. Consequently, the plan was restructured and all the activities were implemented online, including a) Mapping the territory: A (digital) exploration of L'Hospitalet through the gathering of online documentation and information and the creation of blog posts containing reflections on the collected materials, and b) Signifying the territory: Online interviews with local representatives with the aim of exploring the social and cultural setting and identifying key actors and organizations who work towards a stronger sense of place in L'Hospitalet.

In 2021, it was possible to perform some of the activities programmed for public spaces (see "Mapping and constructing places" (<https://www.a-place.eu/en/placemaking-action/85>) and "Urban walk in La Florida neighbourhood" (<https://www.a-place.eu/en/placemaking-action/75>)). The previous exploration of the sociophysical territory conducted online during lockdown provided a starting point for the onsite activities carried out in this second year.

1.2. Quality evaluation: The process of creating art, meaning, place and community

1.2.1. Participation

For the series of activities carried out in a public space in 2021, namely in the Bellvitge neighbourhood in L'Hospitalet, the partner invited both high school teachers and their students to explore the public space and identify significant places. Regarding participation, the partner considered that the response from the three schools involved (Institut Bellvitge, Institut Europa, and Col·legi Pare Enric d'Ossó) was very positive. A programme for the pupils was prepared by the partner with the collaboration of the school teachers. It consisted of a) identifying places with a special meaning and describing them with a text and a photograph in [A-Place: MAPPING](#) on a printed map b) explaining the places and the meanings associated with them to the architecture students of La Salle in a session that took place in the public space and c) collaborating with architecture students in the design and construction of "sculptures" to be placed in the selected locations, expressing the ideas associated with them.

On another level, the partner organized an urban walk in the neighbourhood of La Florida, with the collaboration of civic organisations working with migrants (Sidecar), cultural associations (Contorno Urbano) and neighbourhood associations (Districte IV). The walk was a learning

opportunity for the partner team and participants, since older residents explained to the newcomers how the neighbourhood had changed, and identified negative or positive aspects of public spaces. The walk was mapped with photographic images captured during the activity.

1.2.2. Creativity of participation

In order to promote the inclusion of both collaborators and participants, and maximize their creativity, the partner prepared introductions for each event, in order to explain the purpose of the activities. School teachers participating in the activity guided their pupils in the process. Faculty members of La Salle visited the schools and explained the tasks to be done. Working with secondary education students required continuous adaptation to the needs of the different schools and subjects.

Lecturers involved in artistic undergraduate degree courses could integrate the A-Place proposed activities in a way that best fitted into their academic curriculum, using photographic or pictorial techniques to identify and represent a place, or sculptural objects to mark it and change the space. As for the students, they were invited to identify places which were meaningful for them, and to reveal the stories and personal experiences they associated with those places, that is, describing places of celebration (weddings, birthdays, etc.), or those associated with dangerous or unpleasant events or emotions, etc.

A study map of the Bellvitge area was installed in the schools and civic centre to gather information about the places and their significance. Students also had access to A-Place: MAPPING to upload their images and texts. At the end of the activity, the maps were placed in the lobby of the neighbourhood's civic centre.

A similar process took place in the La Florida neighbourhood: the partner put up a map of the area to visit in the Sidecar association, and the route to follow was discussed with the participants. The walk was documented by the participants, and the photographs they took during the walk were printed at a local shop. At the end of the tour, the photographs were placed on a map located in Mataballs, an abandoned site which is being revitalized by Contorno Urbano with the participation of citizens and students.

All these processes of preparation and implementation of the activities reveal a deep involvement of the participants, as well as a capacity to adapt to the changing circumstances. Creative steps, either on the part of the La Salle team, or on the part of direct collaborators, including the participants in the activities, are an indication of creative participation, possible only through the joint design of the activities.

1.2.3. Social Engagement and Community Building

The activities were designed and implemented by La Salle A-Place team, in close collaboration with the local schools. The initial proposals were considerably comprehensive, allowing adaptations and other creative contributions by the collaborators. For example, teachers adapted activities to integrate them dynamically into their specific programmes to respond to curricular needs. It is also important to mention that the local students came from different socio-cultural backgrounds. And, with regard to the exploration of places and design of interventions, mixed working groups were set up that included architecture students of various nationalities, from Europe and America. These differences between the participants were very positive factors with regard to multicultural approaches to urban spaces.

From one point of view, cultural differences are triggers of cultural enrichment of the experience, as they enhance the integration of "the other" and, consequently, the construction of inclusive communities. In this regard, organizing groups of students from different educational levels and origins was adequate, as it provided and encouraged the recognition of different senses and emotions associated with places. Positive meaning-making is all the more effective the wider the recognition. Creating meaning and value in a fragmented or uncharacterized urban network is the

first step towards developing more collaborative communities with affective connections with each other and with the places themselves. In "[A Weaved Place](#)" activities carried out by students and residents with different cultural backgrounds allowed both students and participants in the urban walk to become aware of spaces that are used for celebrations or religious rituals.

In addition, through [A-Place: MAPPING](#) it was possible to create an "emotional" map of the public spaces surrounding the participating schools. Students gave value to spaces which they unthinkingly pass in their daily routines, although they enshrined a specific value to them. By identifying and describing these meanings, other peers are now aware of them.

Another example is the participation in the La Florida exploratory walk of two organizations that work with groups from different origins and backgrounds, one which works with ageing local residents and the other with young migrants. During this walk, they had the opportunity to exchange experiences and perceptions of the spaces they share on a daily basis.

The urban walk was an opportunity for many of the older participants to remember their personal stories as residents, allowing other participants to imagine how their life was in the past, on those streets and squares. Thus, personal experiences and physical places became interconnected. It must be said that the places for the exploratory walk in La Florida neighbourhood - the routes, buildings and public spaces - were chosen by the residents, and also by the members of the participating associations.

1.3. Social impact assessment: The social impact of the placemaking practices

1.3.1. Social discourse

An analysis of the discourse of the participants and the cultural and educational agents in the activities provided in the videographic records contributes to an understanding of a change in the narratives about the places: a space that was previously uncharacterized and without beauty is now more beautiful and even mysterious and attractive, particularly for children and young people. Some senior citizens also expressed their satisfaction with the beautification of these public spaces that they frequent in a daily basis.

1.3.2. Socially engaged artistic practices

The activities conceived by the La Salle School of Architecture clearly contributed to a critical reflection on the relationships between places and communities, through the arts, in order to understand the very meaning of public spaces before and after the placemaking activities. The process of creating and installing sculptural pieces in the Plaza de la Cultura (e.g. "Meeting Point"; "Connecting Tentacles"; "Fence"; "Communication"; "Jellyfish"; "Treeangular"; "Static Pedals"; and "Flower Garden") as part of collaborative learning activities, brought together architecture students and school pupils who were able to exchange ideas and creative experiences such as the transformation of a water fountain into a jellyfish swept by the sea waters to the square; or a tube that worked as a communication line between people sitting on two benches speaking different languages, etc. (See "Making public spaces meaningful" at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DtJpjP446I>). The partner considers that their interventions in public spaces helped make residents aware of the deficient conditions of the places but also of their potential for urban intervention. Also the meeting organized by the partner at the Art Centre Santa Tecla with the residents' associations, school members and municipality, was an important action to tackle the problems of urban planning processes, and to discuss the social and political concerns regarding the future of the urban spaces of the neighbourhood (See "Creating and learning in public space" at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_inMkrkPIE).

1.3.3. Space-place transformation

The spaces involved underwent a transformation, from a physical point of view: the beautification with plants, the installation of sculptures whose shapes simulated the trees that the space does not have, are some of the transformations proposed by the students, and which were also perceived by the visitors of these public spaces.

The exploration and discovery of the hidden meanings of these spaces, and their subsequent sharing through artistic and creative forms, also had a transforming effect on the students' own perception; many of them were unaware of the spaces surrounding the schools they unheedingly pass every day. According to the La Salle team, the objects placed in previously empty, disconnected spaces, transformed the perception of both passers-by and the participants in the activities. In this sense, it could even be said that there was a double transformation: that of space itself and that of the perception - the image and the meaning - of the spaces.

2. "A Happy Place" in Brussels

2.1. Introduction

Capital of Belgium and the European community, "exciting" Brussels is an example of a cosmopolitan city where one can meet people from different social environments from all over the world. The ancient and famous working-class district of Les Marolles, located in the vicinity of Brussels City centre, is known for receiving people from the artistic community and also those in need of assistance. Social residences constitute close to one third of the housing in the area. It is a place with a highly developed sense of community, where the first movements for renovation and reorganization started.

Being aware of the necessities of the district and, in order to improve the quality of living in the area, the City of Brussels developed an initiative called "Contract de quartier durable Marolles". A Request for Proposals (RFP) was issued as part of a project to enhance and develop an outdoor public space between two social buildings managed by the "Logement Bruxellois". The RFP was jointly won by Alive Architecture and Bravvo, the Institute for social inclusion of the city of Brussels.

The idea was to reconstruct and transform the abandoned Pieremans playground into an enjoyable place for the local citizens, connecting it to the surrounding areas, including the famous Cité Helemans, a historical complex of social housing, known for its Art deco architecture. The goal was to use 2021 to develop the basic design together with the community, and in 2022 to start work on site, similarly involving the citizens.

2.2. Quality evaluation: The process of creating art, meaning, place and community

2.2.1. Participation

In the first year of this project the planned work focused on the Pieremans playground. Between April 2021 and September 2022, Alive Architecture and BRAVVO organised 10 events (workshops) out of the 18 initially planned. These events can be divided into three blocks:

The first took place on 29 September 2021. It corresponded to the inauguration of Phase 1 of the project which took place in the Pieremans playground, when the walls were painted. Under the leadership of Choe Saelens (an important illustrator and street artist), the team finished the first phase of painting the walls. At that time, the team from the Centre de Jeunes baked some pancakes that were distributed free of charge to the participants. The purpose of the activity was to engage the younger generation in giving value to the space itself with the collaboration of an important artist (Choe Saelens) and members of the organization team. The second, which took place during June 2021, consisted of four workshops (always on Wednesdays) in which some ideas from the previous workshops were tested. In these events, the whole team together with the participants, mainly children living in social housing nearby, were involved in three actions: (1) painting a place to play in the current playground (2) painting the walls surrounding the playground in an effort to embellish it and (3) co-constructing a railing in order to prevent children from running into the street. On 18 August 2021, the whole group, together with the local artist Saelens extended the wall painting. On this day, they also tested the fence and observed the reactions of the users with the space.

The aim of these workshops was to reinforce the use of the space by children and to make the area safer. Based on the favourable results obtained, they hope to carry out permanent

interventions and a participatory intervention process during the autumn of 2022, more precisely in September 2022.

The third moment occurred between 14 April 2021 and 5 May 2021. In this phase, Alive Architecture in collaboration with BRAVVO organised 4 workshops to define what would be tested during June and realised in 2022. On 14 April 2021, the team contacted the people on site to raise the issues and some ideas to be implemented. On 21 April 2021, the survey led to a discussion about a model while participants and organisers drew games in chalk in the open space. All the findings made at the two events were voted on during a third event on 28 April 2021. Finally, on 5 May 2021 the whole team interacted with the participants to discuss some of the possibilities raised for transforming the space.

All these events aim to discover the interests and necessities of all the participants involved. In 2022, the project will be extended to the alleys in the Hellemans social housing scheme.

2.2.2. Creativity of participation

Before we move on to the creativity of the participation itself, it is important to analyse how the participation of the different groups in the placemaking activity took place. It is worth noting that in the ten activities that took place, the participants were of various nationalities. Although the target participants were children, young people also participated not only by preparing pancakes, but also by helping to build the gate or being present at the events. As the participants in the placemaking process had the chance to interact naturally in both co-painting and co-planting, the process was very inclusive.

Regarding the creativity demonstrated by participants, we need to consider three scenarios: the painting of the ground and walls; the planting of some plants by local inhabitants and also the construction of the gate to make the space safe for children. The involvement of everyone, together with the Alive Architecture team and BRAVVO, contributed to making the actions a reality. The whole process of carrying out these tasks was inclusive, allowing everyone to actively participate.

It is important to highlight that no specific guidelines were provided for these workshops. Thus, the participants were able to engage directly in the tasks of painting, building and planting. In fact, all activities were carried out together with the project team. The aim for next year is to create a set of guidelines so that the project can continue without the presence of the project leaders.

2.2.3. Social Engagement

"A Happy Place" aims at re-appropriating the abandoned Pieremans playground and the streets of Cité Hellemans through co-design, co-construction and collective activities for children, and their families. Objectively, this activity cycle demonstrated a high degree of social engagement: 1) the activities were conceived by the A-Place partner Alive Architecture in collaboration with a local organization, Bravvo, the Prevention Service of the City of Brussels 2) the activities included both a co-design element and a co-construction element that actually engaged artists as well as children, and their families, thus making them part of the design and implementation, rather than mere participants 3) the activities also facilitated the participation of other A-Place members, by including planting and play, two themes of placemaking activities carried out by other partners.

Importantly, the four co-design workshops were conceived and implemented in such a way that the local population was really involved, attracting their interest which intensified from one workshop to the next. In the first, Alive Architecture and Bravvo began by engaging passers-by, drawing their attention to the space and informally collecting thoughts and ideas. Subsequently, they visualized those ideas with objects and drawings on the ground. With this collectively created material, they produced images and asked participants to vote and discuss the possibilities for the transformation of the site. In the co-construction workshops, they engaged

participation from all, creating alternative activities for children who did not want to participate in the construction.

From the point of view of engagement, one of the most interesting actions was the testing by the participants of the fence built to prevent children from running onto the street. This action consisted of an element of analysis: participants observed reactions of users to the fence and their observations will inform permanent interventions in the future. It will be interesting to assess the results of this action in the near future.

The combined actions of discussing, creating, planting, building, painting, playing and eating during the workshops seem to have stimulated the appropriation of this formerly unused space. According to Alive Architecture, young people locally continued using the space "outside the moments where the activities took place", which is, in reality, their goal: to create change that lasts beyond the placemaking activity.

2.2.4. Community Building

One of the objectives of the activity was to foster intercultural dialogue: to strengthen and complexify community ties by bringing together people from different age groups. This objective seems to have been achieved since young people and their families were brought together to create a better playground for themselves and their loved ones. They participated together in the collective actions of design and construction, as well as in the celebration of the success of the project, of a job well done: the inauguration.

An intelligent way of engaging different age groups and keeping them interested in the activity was to find alternative and age appropriate activities for all: games for small children and baking pancakes to feed all the "workers" by the young people of the Centre de Jeunes. These people and groups exchanged their different cultural expressions through play, sound, dance and discussion.

2.3. Social impact assessment: The social impact of the placemaking practices

2.3.1. Social Discourse

It not possible at this point to assess this dimension, as we did not have access to residents' discourse (young people or adults) about the playground before and after the activities related to "A Happy Place". As the activity will continue in 2022, it will be interesting to have access not only to the photographs, but also to the content of the discussions held during the workshops and the statements on the impact of the changes experienced.

2.3.2. Socially engaged artistic practices

Even though the approach of "A Happy Place" constitutes, according to Alive Architecture, "a common way of working within" the practice of Architecture, we believe that the success of its implementation and the high degree of social engagement stimulate residents and local stakeholders, public and private, to reflect on the relationship between places, situated arts and communities and the opportunities this collaboration offers to improve local public life. Additionally, well documented reports about cases of actual participation of local people in space design and construction processes can contribute to the ongoing debate about participation across several disciplines dealing with urban issues (architecture, sociology, geography, anthropology and political science).

"A Happy Place" is a clear case of a placemaking activity that has the potential to contribute to more reflexive and participative local planning agendas, since it shows that it is possible to engage residents, even young people, in thinking, discussing and acting on their living environment. Furthermore, Alive Architecture not only implemented these temporary actions, but

they also engaged with the institution in charge of the transformation to discuss the long-term transformation of the site.

2.3.3. Space-place transformation

The before and after photographs of "A Happy Place" show a clear physical transformation of the space. The photographs also show that this transformation resulted from collective, shared thought and action by the A-Place partner, two local institutions (Bravvo and Centre de Jeunes), an artist and residents, many of them children. According to Alive Architecture, "The project allowed us to generate an appreciation of the existing playground." There is a clear potential for a conversion of an unused space into a shared, collectively appropriated place, but it is too soon to assess the results. Certainly, we will have more data in 2022.

3. "A-Pla(y)ce" in Ljubljana

3.1. Introduction

"A-Pla(y)ce" in Ljubljana was the placemaking activity cycle, placemaking site and student workshop of the second year of the A-Place project (2020-21) -, planned, prepared and implemented by the University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Architecture, and prostoRož, as a follow-up of the previous year's activity cycle (2019-20), ["A Hidden Place"](#).

The Bežigranski dvor neighbourhood in Ljubljana was again the location selected for the second year, establishing thus continuity with the previous year's activities. More specifically, "A-Pla(y)ce" was focused on the alleys between a fenced construction pit - the location of "A Hidden Place" - and a residential area. The business-residential neighbourhood Bežigranski dvor was built 26 years ago on the location of demolished artillery barracks, which had existed on this site since the Austro-Hungarian Empire until Slovenia's political independence in 1994-1996, maintaining weak or almost non-existent ties to past development and thus lacking in terms of social history and place-based identity.

Despite their transitional character, these alleys are the spaces where people pass, meet, chat and where children play, giving them a vibrant energy that seemed to offer potential for the planned placemaking activity cycle, which aimed at engaging families through practices related to children's play.

As in the previous year, the planned work was to be carried out throughout the entwinement of two types of A-Place placemaking activities: a *learn-place* and a *spot-place*. The "Learning spaces for reflection" (*learn-place*) were developed in the framework of a workshop that consisted of weekly sessions with guest lectures, debates with different user-groups and reflections on the participatory design, on understanding the needs of children, on safety issues and inclusiveness of the placemaking activities, in order to discuss and properly understand the potentials and meanings of the place that would hopefully be revealed by the planned events and interventions. The *spot-place* on-site activities, consisting of the "placemaking by playmaking" activities and events, conducted by prostoRož and implemented throughout the preparation of the physical interventions by students, aimed at establishing and demonstrating the potential and connection with the local community. This was primarily directed at young people, but also at their parents/grandparents and kindergarten teachers.

The aims of the Ljubljana team, in accordance with the overall objectives of the A-Place project, were: a) the development and implementation of creative placemaking activities that would help to reveal the multiple meanings, the value and social potential of (the chosen) place by means of a student workshop, several local interventions and events, involving not only the students and teachers but also the multi-generational residents and local community b) the creation of interdisciplinary learning spaces that would combine creative design practices with professional and scholarly points of view and c) the fulfilment of the generic placemaking objectives (community building, intercultural dialogue, collaboration and other exchanges between partners, capacity building) through the implementation of the various placemaking on-site actions.

3.2. Quality evaluation: The process of creating art, meaning, place and community

3.2.1. Participation

From March 2021 to June 2021, the team in Ljubljana prepared and implemented a series of activities that were centred around a two-month workshop and several events/interventions in

the Bežigranski dvor neighbourhood, involving the students of the Faculty of Architecture and the Academy of Fine Arts and Design of the University of Ljubljana, the team members from the Faculty and from prostoRož, guest lecturers, guest critics from the local community, teachers and children from a local kindergarten and also, to some extent, parents, other residents and passers-by.

On 16 March 2021, a student workshop was launched at the Faculty of Architecture in Ljubljana with the catchy concept of "placemaking by playmaking". The workshop attracted students from different levels from the Faculty of Architecture and from the Faculty of Fine Arts and Design programmes, and also some Erasmus exchange students. The members of both partner organizations - Tadeja Zupančič, Špela Verovšek and Matevž Juvančič from the Faculty of Architecture, and Maša Cvetko and Naja Kikelj from prostoRož - guided students through an exploration of the site (Bežigranski dvor neighbourhood alleys) and its socio-cultural context. Students were introduced to placemaking via a series of lectures, debates, site visits, mappings and interviews. Subsequently, they were asked to propose interventions and on-site events destined to engage the local community and eventually, wider audiences.

For the purpose of introducing and understanding the challenges of "playmaking", enlightening the planning and implementation processes of "playscapes" while debating the balance between the potential and qualities of the place, the landscape architect Maja Simoneti from the IPoP, Institute for Spatial Policies, was invited to give a lecture at the workshop. It was followed by another lecture delivered by Prof. Matija Svetina from the Department of Psychology at the Faculty of Arts and Design in Ljubljana, an expert on environmental psychology and child behaviour, focusing on observation and mapping techniques and also discussing the "playmaking" potential of the neighbourhood alleys. Her lecture contributed to make students aware of child and adult behaviour and helped them to find specific needs in the playgrounds. In the following month, during an advanced design phase of the playscapes, another guest lecturer, Mr. Slavko Rudolf, was invited to share his experience as an expert on outdoor playground safety.

During the workshop, students were encouraged to visit the alleys, to get some first impressions, and to explore the surrounding of the neighbourhood. Unfortunately, in 2021 the world was still dealing with the Covid-19 pandemic and Ljubljana was not an exception. In March, these visits were affected by the restrictions, so group size was reduced or the site was explored individually. At the end of March until the beginning of April (28th March - 8th April), it was possible to organize some field trips for small groups of architecture students to meet the children from a local kindergarten. It was an occasion to watch them play, but also to talk and play with them. Subsequent discussion between students, moderated by the mentors from prostoRož and the Faculty of Architecture staff in the workshop, (via zoom), was complemented by opinions and testimonials from kindergarten teachers previously gathered by the participants. In the following two weeks, interviews were conducted to get the opinions of teenagers, adults, (kindergarten teachers and parents), other residents and passers-by. The purpose was to gather their impressions on the alleys, the expectations of youngsters, and the parent's needs, to generate ideas for the future of the alleys. It was also a way of establishing connections with the local community.

In the last part of the workshop, students used the collected and analysed information to plan possible interventions. The students were led by the team members and by invited critics that helped review the proposals and make suggestions to enhance them.

Finally, the proposals for interventions were presented and exhibited in the neighbourhood community centre. Due to Covid-19 restrictions, attendance at the exhibition of proposals and interventions was limited to community representatives. Nevertheless, they managed to gather the opinions of residents or visitors on the proposals.

Once again, during this second year of the project, the team in Ljubljana made considerable efforts to involve the academic community - mostly students but also researchers and teachers

at the University – experts (guest lecturers) and members of the local communities – the children, their teachers and parents, but also residents of the neighbourhood and passers-by. The current pandemic limited the attendance at public interventions and outreach activities, but with the use of digital media and the necessary adaptations, for example dividing the students in several small groups, they managed to reduce the negative impact of Covid-19 restrictions.

3.2.2. Creativity of participation

In order to properly evaluate the creativity of participation, different factors must be taken into consideration, from the availability of materials to the ability to adapt the planned activities to the given circumstances. The team ensured that a variety of materials and approaches were available, primarily to the architecture students. Besides receiving information about the history and geography of the Bežigranski dvor neighbourhood, the students were introduced to the planning process of playscapes by an licensed landscape architect and spatial planner (Maja Simoneti), who made them aware of the importance of public participation, sustainable development, green space planning and spatial literacy. The expertise of an environmental psychologist and specialist in child behaviour, Dr. Matija Svetina, who introduced students to techniques to observe children playing, and the knowledge of an expert on outdoor playground safety, Mr. Slavko Rudolf, were fundamental to understand the challenges and possibilities of a well-designed playground, particularly in terms of safety, equipping students with the necessary multidisciplinary knowledge.

To complete this theoretical, scientific, technical and practical knowledge, the students explored the site taking photographs, drawing maps, talking with residents, playing with the children, and talking to teachers and parents. Through these direct contacts they were able to analyse the physical and socio-cultural environment as a preliminary step to conceiving, planning and implementing interventions *in situ*. The interaction with children was particularly important because engaging with them while playing certainly stimulated new perspectives and the creative imagination of the students.

The process was certainly inclusive in the sense that participants were given opportunities for true interaction and participation. Despite the constraints of the ongoing pandemic, students were able to discuss concepts, ideas and challenges with mentors, experts, residents, teachers and community representatives. In reality, adapting to these constraints, without losing the ability to interact and engage with each other, was a positive aspect to consider. Not only were students given the opportunity to express their views and ideas, but residents, parents and other people were also invited to engage in the discussion of the “placemaking by playmaking” proposals and activities.

3.2.3. Social Engagement

To assess the social engagement values of these activities, one must know who was effectively engaged in defining, re-defining and implementing the placemaking practices. Besides the team members - prostoRož and UL FA - who had conceived and had been monitoring the project since the beginning of the activities, the students also had the opportunity to engage in the conception, planning and implementation of the on-site interventions. In a certain way, the teachers, parents and other adults, mostly residents, also had the chance to influence the re-definition of the activities in the sense that they were allowed to give their opinions and inputs, particularly via the interviews conducted by the students but also in conversations at the meetings of students and kindergarten pupils.

Concerning place meaning and place attachment, which are different ways of understanding the new symbolic meanings ascribed to a place and the actual bonds between people and place, the most effective contributions might have come from the exploration of the site by the university students, mostly when they had the opportunity to play and interact with the children in small groups. Engaging in such activities certainly raised awareness concerning the physical, sensorial

and even affective dimensions of the place, which contributes to the emergence of symbolic meanings in connection with the space. The exhibition of students' proposals to residents, represented by their community representatives, followed by a lively discussion concerning the possibilities and options concerning the implementation of new features for the playground, also contributed to stimulate the imagination and to provide new prospects for the future of the place. Once again, the limitations caused by Covid-19 restrictions made it more difficult to intervene more effectively and reach out to more people. Even so, the team adapted and still managed to successfully involve the community.

3.2.4. Community Building

With "A-Pla(y)ce", the Ljubljana team maintained the values of community building in all phases of planning, implementation and reflection of the activities. Not only in the learning spaces, mostly during the two-month workshop course and the early visits to the neighbourhood alleys, but also in the on-site activities themselves, when students played with children and when they installed or at least exhibited their temporal interventions. The values of interculturality, sharedness and inclusion were fostered by the team mentors and instilled in the various stakeholders. In the earlier phases, in the lively debates and opinion sharing after each guest-lecture, and after the on-site exploration, all participants were given the opportunity to express themselves and share their different cultural backgrounds (exchange students certainly had different perceptions and opinions about the place and what to do there). Most importantly, participants were brought together to work towards a common goal: making the alleys more attractive and safer for children to play. While playing with the children, the students had the opportunity to experience the joy of sharing the place with them.

Students were not residents, nor the main beneficiaries of the eventual transformation of the alleys into valuable places. Therefore, it was important to promote community building values among residents, teachers and children. The temporal interventions, or at least their exhibition followed by lively discussion and opinion sharing the possible transformations of the place, certainly helped to foment the feeling of working towards a common goal, while exchanging their worldviews, hopes and expectations and creating a common sense of belonging to this particular place, where children would play safely. There was little information available on the composition and cultural diversity of the neighbourhood and the residents that bring their children there to play, so it is difficult to assess the actual extent of interculturality. Notwithstanding, choosing play and "playmaking" as a way to produce common values and inclusion was very insightful, because it is a valuable strategy to promote cultural exchange between young people, teachers and their parents, thus creating opportunities for the growth of a common sense of belonging.

3.3. Social impact assessment: The social impact of the placemaking practices

3.3.1. Social Discourse

Before the workshop itself, in the preparatory phase, the students of the Faculty of Architecture and the Academy of Fine Arts and Design Faculty (both part of the University of Ljubljana), responsible for the presentations of the "A-pla(y)ce" proposals, could listen to the representatives of local communities, and collect ideas for the organization of the activities. Some guest speakers and professionals, kindergarten teachers and NGO members also participated at this stage.

Students could discuss the activities to be carried out and make suggestions, together with the participants. There was a great engagement not only from the community, but also from other actors who could express doubts and ask questions. The local public was also invited to collaborate and intervene directly in the preparation of events on the project's website.

The proposals were analysed by community representatives who had the chance to get the opinions of residents and visitors about the proposals. Evidently, due to the pandemic, there was a reduction in the number of people who could participate in voting.

It is important to note that social discourse was established by mixing contributions from various individuals, not only from the community but from others involved during the previous implementation phase of the workshop.

This multi-representativeness in the elaboration of the workshop was essential for the success of *learn-place* and the *spot place*. In the former, which occurred from workshops with lecture from guest speakers, some placemaking practices would be discussed (participatory design, security and inclusion issues, etc).

In the latter, of note is the direct participation of the local community itself "placemaking by playmaking", with the involvement of students, children, young parents, grandparents and kindergarten teachers.

One of the aims of "Apla(y)ce" was to improve social engagement and discourse through the promotion of values and knowledge in a critical and reflective way through sessions via zoom and on-site events. Due to the pandemic, student contact with the interviewees was via teleconference in order to establish a dialogue between what they wanted and what they expected in the future.

3.3.2. Socially engaged artistic practices

The students who participated in the architecture and art practice workshop had the chance to gain new knowledge and exchange experiences with the people involved. These students were trained to collect and analyse data, to learn to observe and record people's movement and children's behaviour.

In the final stage of the decision-making process while negotiating the concerns that different social groups had about the use of the alleys, students and other participants had to pay attention to broader social and economic concerns, becoming more aware of the diversity of needs.

3.3.3. Space-place transformation

The fact that some community representatives had participated in choosing topics of interest for the previous design of the workshop thereby co-constructing it, was important for their engagement in the placemaking project.

Moreover, the themes addressed in the *learn-place* were relevant for the community. In the *spot-place*, the connection with the local community was also a reality, since the activities developed by students involved residents of the community: children, young people, parents/grandparents and kindergarten teachers. During the activities there was a gradual development towards the implementation of the spatial intervention.

4. “A Place of Our Own” in Brussels

4.1. Introduction

“A Place of Our Own” in Brussels, was planned as a civic forum and a cycle of placemaking activities: “Up-cycled Furniture Workshop”, “A Seedling Place: A joint event with A-Place partners, Urban Gorillas”, “Open Mural: A participatory event”, an “Exhibition and Talks: An open event in collaboration with local cultural associations”. These activities were carried out by KU Leuven Faculty of Architecture (See: <https://www.a-place.eu/en/placemaking-activity/38>) with the collaboration of other local partners, namely NGOs, citizens, artists, researchers and governmental bodies, as well as A-Place partners, with the main objective of the co-transformation of an all-male homeless shelter in Brussels.

This civic learning space was an opportunity for citizens and students to discuss the meanings of place which the artistic-architectural installations aimed to reveal. Designers, artists, sociologists and DIY retailers participated in the planning of activities. According to the partner, these preparatory meetings supported a bottom-up spatial design and production by a consortium of activist architects, architecture students, social workers, and shelter residents. The academic team partner of A-Place worked together with students and dwellers in order to engage them in the process of transformation of the shelter. In addition, these learning places embedded in the community had the potential to influence and change mindsets of all those involved.

One of the partner's goals was to draw attention to the right of housing, in particular in Brussels, a city that harbours numerous solidarity network practices, diverse in culture, and with an expansive universe of spatial activism responding to prevalent socio-spatial injustice(s).

“A Place of Our Own”, using the partner's words, is the first of several actions planned to promote knowledge exchange on the meaning and difference between “home” and “place” by means of artistic installations created by the student-artists, artists and designers. In this context, KU Leuven's team prepared and administered a Master's elective course - “Altering Practices for Urban Inclusion” in conjunction with the placemaking activities, which included performances, discussions and exhibitions. As described by the partner, the site and social analysis, as well as spatial and visual representation of the architectural transformation, were tasks integrated into the programme of the course. As is the case with any ideal learning place, this one was based on the principle and practice of social inclusion. For example, the partner worked with the Salvation Army in order to open up the activities to homeless people.

4.2. Quality evaluation: The process of creating art, meaning, place and community

4.2.1. Participation

In the planning phase, the identification of candidate participants was carefully followed. The Bodeghem shelter included a diversity of residents with different cultural backgrounds, languages, ages, and educational levels. This cultural and social diversity was taken into account in the planning phase and in the following ones. Additionally, the students involved came from the international Master's degree architecture programme, which brought more cultural backgrounds, knowledge and languages to the project. The partner also points out the case of the integration of a deaf person, who participated in the drawing workshop every Wednesday during a month. Thus, it can be said that the objective of participation was reasonably fulfilled.

4.2.2. Creativity of participation

As described by the partner, the approaches used in the participatory activities were guided by two principles: “Do it With Others” and “Learning-by-doing”. These skill-building approaches allow participants to learn from each other, from their environment and through a series of experimental processes. They used different re-cooperated materials like wood and metal for the building interventions, seedlings for planting events, as well as all kinds of paints and drawing material for the artistic mural workshops. Regarding the guidelines to support creativity, of note are the co-learning phases before starting the co-creation. These phases encompassed the participation of skill-building expert who provided students with the skills they needed to change the living environment, adapting places to the needs and desires of the residents. From this point of view, the activities were very inclusive, but also flexible and adaptable to changing circumstances.

The prefix “co-” (which means “together”), chosen by the partner to describe the activities, reveals the capacity of agency and interaction of the actions developed. Also during the first phase of the drawing sessions, there were exercises to understand which facilitated engagement between residents and students. At a certain moment, board games were introduced to change the group dynamics while continuing the same drawing exercises.

4.2.3. Social Engagement

Concerning the engagement in the planning and implementation of 2nd year activities, the partner refers to the primacy of the KU Leuven project partners, who defined and adapted the activities, whenever this proved necessary. In addition, the implementation and participatory strategy was planned in detail by the partner, with the co-adjuvant of the skill-building expertise. As described by the partner, the activity was very participatory and interactive from the beginning, which allowed the re-adaptation of activities according to the transformations that the participants wanted in the homeless shelter. It was also possible for any participant to lead an activity at some point. This possibility constituted, in a way, an appropriation of the space by participants and, in this way, the creation of bonds with the place.

4.2.4. Community Building

People from different cultural backgrounds were brought together to reach a common goal. The seven languages spoken in the activities demonstrate the cultural diversity of the participants and of the need to develop forms of exchange and communication, since language is also performative. The activities brought together the diversity of residents living in the all-male shelter and the international Master’s degree students. At the open mural event, residents created a pancake station to share food with neighbours and, at the same time, to engage them in the painting. The art workshops and the planting sessions were opportunities for many of the participants to exchange experiences and knowledge, particularly in relation to their respective languages. Teaching quickly became a shared experience, with everyone instructing everyone else. For example, many residents taught students to write and pronounce sentences in Arabic. The students themselves were encouraged by the diversity of backgrounds within their group and they naturally began to host dinners at their homes, each time sharing a different food culture.

4.3. Social impact assessment: The social impact of the placemaking practices

4.3.1. Social Discourse

According to the partner, the closure of the centre was scheduled for 31 March 2021. If we consider this previous decision of the public authorities, the discourse and narratives associated with the shelter were not positive at the outset. Thus, the partner assumes that it was thanks to their intervention, in conjunction with other socio-cultural networks, that the space was re-modeled and remained open. The physical transformation of the space, as well as the socio-cultural interaction promoted by the activities, certainly contributed to a transformation of the discourse around that space. Only a positive understanding of a space could contribute to reinforce its value. The partner

is convinced that the role of academics was very important because it added transparency to the project, so that the shelter could remain open and accommodate the homeless community in Brussels. This achievement was the basis of the partner's decision to continue the initiated transformation with the collaboration of other institutions.

4.3.2. Socially engaged artistic practices

The contribution of artistic activities to the opening of new debates around the relationships between spaces-situated arts-communities took place on two levels. On the one hand, the artistic and skill building interventions shaped a path for the residents to take over the development of their spaces. This eventually meant that these activities awakened and strengthened values of belonging to the place, associated with ideas and aspirations for well-being and pleasant homes. On the other hand, people were given tools to change their living environment, while creating new relationships with the transformed spaces. As for the contribution of the artistic activities, it is worth mentioning that, for the planning processes of the shelter, the partner worked with the architect in order to "design" the needs and desires of the residents. It is expected that this transformation of the shelter could inspire other shelters to apply a more open design strategy and to involve residents in the renovation projects. The artistic activities carried out by the partner enabled sharing stories and experiences among the residents of Bodeghem and contributed to breaking stereotypes and negative discourses associated with the homeless community. In turn, the presence of the students led to a positive attitude on the part of the residents, and the staff of the homeless shelter were surprised by the positive influence on other people's perception of their place.

4.3.3. Space-place transformation

It is clear that the activities carried out by the partner contributed decisively to the physical transformation of the shelter. From the partner's point of view, the activities were part of a transformation process that gave rise to new a relationship between residents and other regular or occasional visitors, which could be extended to other shelters in the city.

5. "A Future Place" in Lisbon

5.1. Introduction

Second year activities took place in "Bairro Padre Cruz" (meaning Father Cruz neighbourhood), located in the north of Lisbon, one of the 13 neighbourhoods of the parish of Carnide. Built in 1959, the houses are both pre-fabricated constructions using asbestos-cement, ("lusalite") and, since the 1960s attractive "alvenaria" or brick houses - in a very rural landscape. In the 1990s, the resettlement of residents from the area of Campolide, who had been evicted due to the construction of a new strategic highway (the "Eixo Norte-Sul"), hastened the construction of low-income housing and greatly increased the number and diversity of residents in the neighbourhood. It became a territory marked by demographic, social and cultural contrasts and tensions that have been a challenge for urban planners, but also a problem for social and cultural agents. The population is very heterogeneous, and sometimes extreme socio-economic differences bring about tension and conflict. Because of this, the neighbourhood has been the focus of several interventions by different socio-cultural agents, including the Lisbon City Council. Currently, a process of urban rehabilitation is being carried out with the aim of rescuing some of the most challenged areas of the neighbourhood.

In accordance with the general objectives of the A-Place project, the objectives of the planned activities were: a) to develop and apply placemaking practices and principles, with activities based on the notions of memory, oral story-telling and community experience of a neighbourhood under permanent change b) to promote, encourage and implement cultural and art-based activities (such as a poetry and prose contest, but also later other creative endeavours that might link literature to theatre and music) in a neighbourhood in which cultural activities have been mostly carried out by sport clubs c) to foster and stimulate further academic research and knowledge dissemination practices that will bring together students, researchers, teachers and other professionals d) to develop and inspire interculturality, social and cultural exchange between all kinds of residents, from children to senior citizens, but also teenagers, young adults and middle-aged people e) to help diminish the degree of isolation of some inhabitants and fragile groups, such as the elderly, promoting interaction between generations and raising awareness about the importance of public space f) to foster the transmission of memories and life experiences between older and younger generations, while stimulating young people to express their concerns and expectations about the future of the neighbourhood, and g) to improve and deepen the level of understanding of the socio-cultural problems of this neighbourhood, helping local communities to improve their self-awareness and knowledge of their own history, fears and hopes.

The programme of activities entitled "A Future Place" aims at unfolding the social and cultural potential and expectations to improve the neighbourhood with different creative and learning activities, such as: a) an award-winning poetry and prose contest, under the theme "My neighbourhood... my place", open to all generations of residents of the Padre Cruz neighbourhood b) a re-collection of memories, oral stories, opinions and perspectives about the neighbourhood's past, present and future, and c) workshops for creative writing, photography, illustration and sports leadership techniques. The workshops were the prizes for the participants of the poetry and prose contest and could be attended by the residents of the neighbourhood, and by the competitors who could choose to enrol in one workshop.

The Padre Cruz neighbourhood is very heterogeneous and naturally diverse but, as already mentioned, this diversity is sometimes a source of social and political tensions. The event that was proposed and implemented was an opportunity to momentarily suspend the differences and bring out the community dimension of the neighbourhood - even though, anecdotally, on the day

of the *soirée* there was a manifestation of the underlying tensions when a resident wanted to park her vehicle in the "square", and an argument arose since she couldn't because of the temporary appropriation of the space by the event. Nonetheless, people from different backgrounds and age groups were brought together and shared a celebrative moment. Not only was the reading of the participant texts a way of sharing their respective memories and perspectives on the neighbourhood, but it certainly triggered memories and emotions in the other attending residents.

Following the distribution of the prizes, the reading of the texts, the musical performances - *fado* songs that also connected this event with previous traditional festivities of the past where "*Fado* nights" were in order - and the speeches of jury members, there was a convivial moment where residents, team members and other local stakeholders could exchange views on what had just happened, on recollections of the neighbourhood's past and the discussion of the neighbourhood's future, while sharing food. These joint and shared activities were successful ways of promoting the values of interculturality and sharing good ways of fostering a sense of belonging, which is the intention of this creative placemaking cycle.

5.2. Quality evaluation: The process of creating art, meaning, place and community

5.2.1. Participation

The first contact with "Bairro Padre Cruz" was through the President of the cultural association Amigos da Luz, who introduced the team members of the School of Social Sciences and Humanities of NOVA University of Lisbon to the current state of affairs of the neighbourhood, but also to the activities of the cultural association (mainly based on their sport interests, such as a football team with teenagers and young adults, but very much interested in diversifying their cultural activities). Then the preparation of a first activity, which would be a poetry and prose contest was discussed with team members, deliberating on the best way to plan and implement this contest, and how to involve neighbourhood residents.

The poetry and prose contest "My Neighbourhood... My Place" was prepared and launched over the summer of 2021, with several possible themes: "Memories of the neighbourhood", "Living in the neighbourhood", "Learning in the neighbourhood", "Creating in the neighbourhood", "Coming to and leaving the neighbourhood", "Being together in the neighbourhood", "Working in the neighbourhood". The response to the call was very positive, with 18 participants, the majority from residents of the neighbourhood but from different generations: 12 children/teenagers, aged between 12 and 15, and 6 adults, between the ages of 30 and 63. Although the possible formats to enter the competition were poetry, prose, music lyrics (song, rap), visual or mixed-media (photography, graffiti, drawn text, a combination of words/symbols/drawings) and other possible formats (video, etc.), all entries received were written texts about or reflecting their experiences in the Padre Cruz neighbourhood.

After the reception of the proposals, the jury, composed of three members, Marta Fiolíč (a PhD student at NOVA FCSH), Rosalice Pinto (a team member) and Fátima Freitas (a sociologist who had already conducted research and had written a book on the neighbourhood), met online and debated the merit of the proposals. Following a recommendation from the cultural association, the jury decided to give qualitative prizes divided into two prize categories, "young" and "adult". Moreover, the jury took the decision to produce a brief statement concerning the quality and content of the texts that would be read at the spot-place event. Due to the Covid19 scenario at the time, the meetings between the jury were in part held online.

On the 25th of September, a "soirée" was dedicated to the distribution of prizes and the actual prize ceremony of "My Neighbourhood... My Place". All the participants, distributed according to the different categories, received a certificate and direct access (the actual prize) to the various

workshops organized by the partners at the Amigos da Luz Association. The prize ceremony was held in the "square" created by the U-shaped building where the Association Amigos da Luz and several other associations and institutions are located. This square is actually the parking area for users, workers and personnel of this multi-purpose building, but occasionally at weekends it is turned into a venue for community festivities and other events, such as "Fado nights", and a children's playground.

The participants at the *Soirée* were the residents of the Padre Cruz Neighbourhood, some students from NOVA University of Lisbon, 3 faculty members from NOVA FCSH, members of Amigos da Luz Association and two guests, a juror (the aforementioned sociologist) and a young *fado* singer. The main coordinator of the A-Place Project was also present and participated in the delivery of certificates to participants in the contest. The placemaking event comprised not only of the distribution of prizes, but also the reading by the contest competitors (or by someone else in the case of the author's absence) of the submitted texts, interspersed with three musical performances of *fado* songs, by a young singer who had already performed in previous events organized by the association.

At some point, the jury took this opportunity to say some words concerning the texts, their quality and mostly their connection to the neighbourhood. It was also a moment of interaction and conviviality, as at the end of the event the residents, the participants and organising committee shared food and engaged in conversation.

5.2.2. Creativity of participation

Again, the circumstance around living with the restrictions imposed by the undergoing COVID19 crisis conditioned opportunities to explore the locations and engage more deeply with the residents and the local community in general. Many of the early interactions were made via zoom. Nevertheless, there was a fruitful and creative interaction between the team members and the Amigos da Luz Association represented by Sónia Duarte, who was not only welcoming and amenable, but really enthusiastic about the ideas that would boost the cultural life of the neighbourhood and encourage children and teenagers to engage in it.

The idea of this placemaking was actually to create opportunities not only for these children, and teenagers, but also adult residents of the "Bairro" who have different cultural backgrounds, to engage with each other and with the neighbourhood's memory and identity. Another aim was to promote their creative potential with suggested themes and activities, although keeping them sufficiently open and flexible in order to include their own inputs. By creating a poetry and prose contest, the members of the Lisbon team wanted to give this creative freedom, the possibility for the residents to express themselves, their memories, their dreams, their fears and their hopes concerning a sometimes very tense daily life. The idea of creating different categories, showing an openness towards various types of formats of participation, or new formats that could be proposed by the participants themselves, was aimed at promoting as much creativity and inclusion as possible. The residents adhered enthusiastically - 18 participants across a wide age range - which shows how stimulating these kind of activities can be.

In every phase of the placemaking activity cycle, the participants were, of course, able to express their views freely and always give their original input, which helped to shape and develop the activities.

5.2.3. Social Engagement

During various moments of the placemaking cycle, from planning to implementation and reflection, the partners, principally the team members from NOVA FCSH (NOVA University of Lisbon) and the Amigos da Luz Association, had the opportunity to engage in the definition, adaptation and implementation of the activities and goals. Of course, other partners from the local schools, Municipal Library Natália Correia and from the Carnide Parish Council also were included in certain aspects of implementation and the necessary adaptations of the placemaking

activity, particularly concerning the actual spot-place event. In a certain sense, we could say that even the participants of the contest were able to engage in the re-definition and implementation of the contest and the *soirée* inasmuch as they were free to choose when and how to participate, and they were certainly the ones who provided the content and the form of the proposals. In workshops, the participants had the opportunity to deepen their engagement and exchange points of view with each other.

It should be said, though, that restrictions imposed by the current pandemic made it more difficult to involve people outside of the academic and institutional community, and in future activities there should have a stronger and deeper involvement from local residents.

Notwithstanding these limitations, the placemaking activities involving the contest and the prize ceremony were to some extent successful in creating the conditions to foster place meaning and place attachment values, which are of course essential to the intended level of social engagement. By stimulating their imagination and even some healthy playful competition with a contest, and by channelling their creativity towards their own experience, their own histories with the neighbourhood, the participants were given the opportunity to ascribe new meanings to the place where they were born, where they came to live or where they work, learn and play. The occasion of the *soirée* brought together several members of the local community, including residents from different backgrounds and age groups and workers and members of associations and institutions, where they could express themselves, and share this celebration – a celebration not only of the contest participants but actually a celebration of the neighbourhood brought to life by their affective experiences, and their memories of other past events, while creating new memories that have the power to foster those place attachment values that are the objective of these activities.

Nevertheless, and despite their positive effects, these activities are inadequate occasional, isolated events, whereas what the community requires is more continuous stimulation and a set of opportunities to engage socially and culturally. This is exactly what was pinpointed by Fátima Freitas – the sociologist who had been exploring and trying to understand the neighbourhood for some time already – in a subsequent interview made by team member Patrícia Pereira. For a deeper and more effective fostering of the place meaning and place attachment values, a more consistent set of interventions and activities should be set in motion, not only by the Lisbon team members of the A-Place project but also by local agents. In fact, the “A Future Place” in Lisbon placemaking cycle plans the continuation of these activities in a way that will certainly contribute to these goals.

5.2.4. Community Building

The Padre Cruz neighbourhood is very heterogeneous and naturally diverse but, as already mentioned, this diversity is sometimes a source of social and political tensions. The event that was proposed and implemented was an opportunity to momentarily suspend the differences generating a sense of community and belonging, albeit temporarily.

5.2.5. Social Discourse

This is a neighbourhood that has often been associated with negative discourses, on various levels: it is a social neighbourhood where residential agglomerations of low social status coexist, and which were associated, in the recent past, with actions of delinquency. Many of the families who live there come from other continents, namely Africa and, more recently, from Asian countries. Others are refugees from countries at war. In this context, people tend to live in isolated groups and there is little mixing between groups. In the preparation phase of the “A Future Place” Contest, the objective of which was to obtain the maximum participation of residents of the Bairro, we were told by different cultural agents that it would be difficult to involve a large number of people. In reality, initially, we only had 7 entries but, on the day of the *Soirée*, this rose to 18. The low expectation regarding participation was due to the fact that the

activities required creativity, such as creative writing or photography, which are less common issues for the people. The "Associação Amigos da Luz" has focused mainly on sport, and most people's initial reaction to the contest was: "I'm embarrassed", "I'm not capable", "I don't know how to do it", "I don't want to show my work". However, attitudes and discourse towards the next activity - the workshops which constituted a prize for the contest, but which ended up being open to the community - seem to have changed. In fact, the number of participants in the different workshops increased to a total of 32 [Photography (8) Illustration (9), and Creative Writing (9)]. The workshop dedicated to sport - Sports Leadership Techniques - was the one which, surprisingly, attracted fewest participants (6). The participants' opinions registered by the team were positive, some expressing their pleasure at being involved in a different activity, and association members who accompanied the activities considered it a very positive venture, much appreciated by the participants, particularly younger residents.

5.2.6. Socially engaged artistic practices

The activity was conceived above all as a relationship between the arts and learning. More than creating works of art, it was about developing the motivation of a group of children and young adults towards aspects of creativity associated with the arts, namely poetry and poetic-prose, but also photography and illustration. The idea of transforming the perceptions of residents in relation to their place - Bairro Padre Cruz - was the motto for the contest. The workshops also highlighted the learning dimension: that is, learning to see places through the arts, albeit at an early stage. This was the possible lesson transmitted by the virtual exhibition "[Neighbourhood Through my Lens](#)" that included the work of the participants in the Photography workshop.

By involving a public unused to the practice or enjoyment of the arts in their everyday lives, the activities contributed in a very positive way to broadening the cultural horizons of a population whose needs are not limited to basic needs (food, housing, etc.), but who also reveal a desire to have access to culture and education.

The involvement of trainers who also develop activities in the field of arts, such as Illustration, certainly contributed to opening up new lines of thinking about the relationship between places, situated arts and this specific community. This was also achieved through the participation of researchers who had conducted research on the Padre Cruz neighbourhood, such as the Sociologists Fátima Freitas, and Maria Santos, the Educational Sociologist who first introduced us to the Association, and this specific community. A further contribution came from the participation of students with affinities with the arts, and uses of space and the construction of the idea of place through communication processes, as is the case with Raquel Lourenço's ongoing work for her doctoral thesis.

At the same time, since this is an activity that involved academia, it is to be expected that in the medium term, the visibility of these simple and apparently insignificant activities can contribute to reopening the debate on the need to re-evaluate solutions to resolve pressing social and cultural issues, in Bairro Padre Cruz, or in other neighbourhoods which face the same problems, due to the increase in the number of immigrants and refugees, etc., many with problems of unemployment or low income.

5.2.7. Space-place transformation

The geographical space activated by the activities of "A Future Place" was a square in front of the headquarters of the Associação Amigos da Luz. This is a public space usually used as a car park and, occasionally, for popular celebrations promoted by the Association itself. It is a space of passage, uncharacterized and unplanned. It was in this place that the second activity of "A Future Place" - a "Soirée" - took place, with the public presentation of the works submitted to the Contest "My Neighbourhood... My Place", some of which were read by the participants themselves. The "Soirée" also had the participation of a young music student and fado singer - Martim Saragasso D'Aires - who generously participated in this activity, as a volunteer.

This activity transformed the space at least for an afternoon. The inhabitants of the neighbourhood, and in particular the users of the Association, lived the space in a different way, appropriating the place. The words of the contest participants and the music of Martin Aires invaded the space, in clear rivalry with other sounds and noises (e.g. radio sounds, voices and shouts, etc.) coming from other areas of the Bairro.

For a short period of time, the square was a stage for music and words, some more poetic than others, and the memories of the participants at the Soirée. It was also a space for socializing over a snack in the late afternoon. The Coordinator of the A-PLACE Project, Leandro Madrazo, who was also present, opportunely suggested that the space could be transformed through the subsequent use of the exterior walls, and the fixation of posters alluding to the activity. But this visual transformation of the place will not be possible as other entities who share ownership of the space are not receptive to this transformation.

However, we can say that there was a change: what might have changed is the way people in the neighbourhood look at that particular space. The event also changed the perception of that space by those who went there for the workshops, namely the trainers and the students.

6. "A Seedling Place" in Venice and Nicosia

6.1. Introduction

"A Seedling Place" is a series of actions that aspire to transform places and empower communities through collective actions of planting. The project took place at the Venice Biennale 2021 and through actions taking place across the A-Place network. The activity was inspired by the installation "Vertical Gardens", realized by the partner in September 2020 in Kaimakli, Nicosia, within the framework of A-Place. In Kaimakli, a structure was installed in an underused public square, an activity that sought to respond to the new realities of social distancing and the need to redefine the role of public space in its capacity to connect communities. The structure acted as a trigger for a socially diverse neighbourhood to reimagine their public spaces, starting from the simple act of planting and tending a garden. The same concept was used in the installation at the Cyprus national Pavilion at the Venice Biennale, which acted as a scaffold to a collective garden where visitors participated by planting, tending and growing seeds and cuttings. The project expanded into a digital format called, "ASeedlingPlace*", a repository for the activities organised by Urban Gorillas and other A-Place partners. "A Seedling Place" was also the subject of "Urban Entrepreneurship: Greening the city workshop" that included walks and lectures with students from the University of Cyprus, which focused on the importance of greening strategies as a creative way of nurturing a sustainable urban future.

6.2. Quality evaluation: The process of creating art, meaning, place and community

6.2.1. Participation

The activity was structured on three levels: co-creation, education, and engagement. The partner sought to involve students, general audiences, and visitors to the Biennale. The participation and representation of different social groups was pursued through the following activities: two workshops with students (one in Cyprus and one in Japan) and lectures on urban greening initiatives entitled "Why are Cities Beautiful? The cultural dimension in urban development" (with Sergio Galasso) and "Green Urban Entrepreneurship: A solution oriented approach" (with Michalis Loizides). According to the partner, the collaborative planting activity at the Venice Biennale particularly attracted the participation of young visitors. And at the A-Place site the partner announced that Urban Gorillas had launched a Digital Planting Repository called ASeedlingPlace*. On this issue, the partner provided several photographs on their social media channels, namely Facebook and Instagram (See: <https://www.facebook.com/aseedlingplace> and <https://www.instagram.com/aseedlingplace/>).

6.2.2. Creativity of participation

Creative participation as a principle was the idea behind the activity and respective presentation structure of "A Seedling Place" proposed for the Venice Biennale. For the partner, the action worked as a "scaffolding" for a community garden to grow in the heart of Venice, as part of the Biennale. Visitors were provided with seeds and tools to tend a garden in the Cyprus National Pavilion, in an effort to promote inclusion as well as the creative and autonomous actions of visitors. Guidelines were made available to the participants, so that they could reach their maximum creativity potential. In short, the process embedded participation and was inclusive for those who wanted to participate. The activity in Venice also created opportunities for discussion and enthusiasm to

plant. At another level, and stated by the partner, the collaborative activity, involved partners from the A-Place placemaking organisations, and included the distribution of over 1,400 seeds in carefully assembled packets to visitors of the Biennale. The packets contained mixed seeds from four countries, and visitors were invited to participate in a global planting activity and post photographs and updates on a digital repository ASeedlingPlace* on social media, created for this purpose. The digital repository also reports global activities related to planting, and invites and inspires visitors to participate in planting actions and post results, comments, stories and videos about greening initiatives happening in their community. The objectives of the digital repository are to promote and disseminate planting actions from around the world in weekly posts, and to inspire people to take up the simple action of creating a garden in their communities. Regarding the educational context, it's worth mentioning the projects developed by the students in order to engage communities in creative ways, and to improve the quality of their urban environment through greening initiatives, such as productive roofs on schools, or gardening initiatives at schools engaging the elderly and children etc. The guided visits and lectures also created awareness amongst the students and a desire to become part of the planting activities.

6.2.3. Social Engagement

Building on their Vertical Gardens installation, created for the 2020 activity "A Delicious Place", Urban Gorillas continued by proposing collective actions of planting in 2021. Vertical Gardens consisted of a structure designed to hold 200 plant pots while providing seating, which was previously lacking in a church square in Nicosia. This former action promoted social engagement at a local scale, while "A Seedling Place" aims at a more delocalized engagement with different groups spread around Europe and beyond, who will then, hopefully, engage in local planting themselves. This results in an interesting complementarity and a local-global continuum for thought and action.

"A Seedling Place" promotes social engagement during 4 different moments:

1) Implementing: while the concept of the activity was solely a result of Urban Gorilla's work, the implementation involved 6 other teams of A-Place: 4 other teams who participated in the preparation and events at the Venice Biennale and 6 teams who contributed seeds for the seed packets distributed in Venice;

2) Reflecting and learning: students from Nicosia were engaged in the workshops promoted by Urban Gorillas about Greening Cities and related issues;

3) Planting: collective planting occurred during the workshops and in Venice, but also in the homes and significant places of people who took away packet of seeds from Venice. Thus, students and visitors to the Biennale were engaged, but potentially also their families and friends. One can think of the engagement potential of the seeds when considering the example of a group of French-speaking teachers featured in one of the videos shared by Urban Gorillas, who said they would plant them at their school.

4) Sharing: sharing occurred when people planted and tended to plants side by side, either at the pavilion in Venice or at their homes, but also later, when they share the progress and results of planting in the #aseedlingplace digital repository.

Finally, this activity stimulated the creation of place meaning and place attachment by creating a reference and inspiration for the gardens people may want to invest in and spend time (collectively) planting and tending in their homes and communities. This creates the potential for people to create additional layers of (shared) meaning in those spaces, and of becoming more attached to them. One limitation we identify in this activity is the uncertainty: will people plant the seeds they took home, thus replicating the placemaking activity locally, engaging with more people and impacting more spaces? Will those seeds and those planted at Venice grow in the pots and gardens?

6.2.4. Community Building

Community building seems to be at the core of the “A Seedling Place”, beginning with the implementation that engaged several partners of A-Place and allowed them to meet face to face, work together, talk and share both work-related and personal experiences, both meaningful and trivial, as can be seen in the videos shared for evaluation purposes.

Planting collectively can be seen as a community building activity in itself, either in local communities or in translocal communities composed of people who share a defining characteristic (like the community of architects at the Biennale for example), but are diverse in other aspects of their cultural backgrounds (country, age, gender, social class, etc.). As Urban Gorillas described in their self-evaluation materials: “collaborative activity in Venice created an opportunity to observe a diverse crowd (the Biennale visitors) react to a simple idea and momentarily create a sense of community by capturing people’s imagination, envisioning a global garden composed of the ASeedlingPlace* seed packets dispersed around the world. Even if the seeds don’t grow, the act of connection momentarily created a sense of community between complete strangers.” Furthermore, if seeds are taken home, they may be used for more collective planting.

In this placemaking activity, the exchange of cultural expressions was achieved by contact between people planting together (exchanging different planting traditions and ways of doing) but also by the content of the packets of seeds distributed which contained seeds from the four partner teams (involving an exchange in types of plants, traditions and processes). The feedback regarding these exchanges is expected in the months to come, based on reported planting results.

Since “A Seedling Place” is an activity that builds on the Vertical Garden from “A Delicious Place” (2020), it seems only fair to introduce in this report an element of evaluation of that previous activity that was not possible earlier. As the partners from Urban Gorillas state in their self-reflection materials, local community members continued to tend to the garden after the activity, and collectively resisted its dismantling by church authorities, which we can interpret as evidence that the garden contributed to community building. As mentioned by the partners, “The results of this method became evident when following up on the original vertical garden which was created in Kaimakli. A year after its installation, community members were still watering and tending the garden, but more importantly, when church authorities moved to dismantle and remove it, community members organised and collected signatures and actively worked to keep the structure in place. Tending to the structure over the past year has created a sense of ownership and a shared space in the neighbourhood, and through this bonding has guaranteed in a way its long-term sustainability.”

6.3. Social impact assessment: The social impact of the placemaking practices

6.3.1. Social Discourse

Social discourse

It is not possible to analyse this dimension of the activity at this point due to the lack of discursive material. However, this will hopefully become possible once the participants begin to share their experiences in the #aseedlingplace digital repository. Hence, some analysis of the social discourse associated to this activity should be integrated in next year’s report.

At this point, we can say that both the Biennale installation and activities and the workshops produced and reproduced a fair amount of discourse about urban sustainability and the role of engagement and co-creation in envisioning a shared greener future. It will be interesting to analyse how this discourse will be mobilised and interpreted in the #aseedlingplace digital repository. For this analysis to be possible, it is important that the partners provide the materials containing the social discourses produced within the activity.

6.3.2. Socially engaged artistic practices

The collaborative activity developed for the Cyprus National pavilion at the Venice Biennale, which, according to Urban Gorillas, is “a barometer of ideas and thoughts on the current state of architecture and the arts”, was conceived as a thought-provoking piece attempting to answer this year’s theme, ‘How will we live together?’ through the “notion of embedded engagement and collective processes”. In that sense, the videos of the activity show that both the planting and the distribution of seeds created opportunities for discussion and for imagining different visions of how collective gardening movements could impact how we live together in urban contexts, and more specifically in public spaces. These discussions address social, ecological and political concerns that go beyond the act of planting seeds and creating a beautiful, enjoyable garden, and are crucial for urban planning processes that address contemporary challenges of social inclusion and participation, climate change, ecological, spatial and social sustainability, and justice.

6.3.3. Space-place transformation

As for the social discourse dimension, the space-place transformation dimension can only be assessed in the future, when the planting at the Biennale and the 1,400 distributed seeds flourish and are shared on the repository. At that point, it will be possible to evaluate whether some spaces have been transformed - become greener - and if the actions of planting and tending them, as well as their new configuration, have somehow contributed to change people’s relationships to them.

At this point, we can only say that “the seeds have been planted”, both literally and figuratively, for the students participating in the workshops and the visitors at the biennale were exposed to the social, environmental, and cultural potential of community gardens in cities.

7. "A Visionary Place" in Bologna

7.1. Introduction

The main objective of "A Visionary Place" was to implement a parklet in front of City Space Architecture's operational headquarters in the Porto-Saragozza neighbourhood. This parklet is a non-profit space, open to all, where free events for audiences of different ages, including those organised by the community itself, can be hosted. This parklet was the first one built in Bologna. The aim of the space was to organise various events and promote the community's own initiatives, as well as to create intergenerational engagement (particularly to link elderly and young people) and to bring together different social groups. During the second year of activities, City Space Architecture organized art and community events to strengthen participation and engagement, after the severe restrictions imposed by the Italian Government during the pandemic and several months of care and dedication throughout the winter.

7.2. Quality evaluation: The process of creating art, meaning, place and community

7.2.1. Participation

The parklet created by City Space Architecture (CSA) was a public space for socio-cultural activities that occupied three car parking spaces in the Porto-Saragozza neighbourhood. The main objective of the activity was precisely to promote community interaction and civic participation in a space that was, until then, a non-place, a space of passage. In this sense, through the various activities CSA developed in the second year of implementation, both online and offline, as described by the partner, the parklet attracted architects and designers, environmental scientists, artists and curators, pedagogues, lawyers, academic scholars, and local residents. The activities fostered community engagement - especially amongst the elderly and young people - and brought together different social groups and experts, involving them in public discussion about the importance of creating meeting spaces for people, namely in the suburban context. The partner described the engagement that happened in various forms, such as informal chats at the parklet, promoting the initiative by word of mouth, sharing by local residents via social media, and also through cultural events organized by CSA. For example, on May 2021, the space underwent a temporary intervention and transformation with the installation of an art exhibition organized by a neighbour, U R R U N, and promoted by the collective [Mezcla](#). And, on July 21, 2021 the Finnish environmental artist [Nina Backman](#) visited the parklet in Bologna and gave a lecture at City Space Architecture's headquarters on her [Silence Project](#) (See: <https://www.a-place.eu/en/placemaking-action/60>). Later, on the 29th July, she was also present at the [Farewell party](#) with live music to celebrate this ephemeral but very significant public space.

7.2.2. Creativity of participation

The partner used various information strategies on the activities with the aim of maximizing creative participation and socio-cultural involvement. People were introduced to the concept of temporary transformation, tactical urbanism, and nature-based solutions in the urban context. The CSA Facebook page shared content and other information on parklets implemented in other cities, seeking to make readers aware of issues of mobility and sustainability of urban spaces, regarding public use. This Facebook group has more than 200 followers (222 in January, to be more precise), including experts in the field and academics (See <https://www.facebook.com/groups/253106679462131>). Both communication processes and activities were very inclusive and open, since the local residents were invited to join the activities and even create their own activities to be temporarily implemented, like short meetings, cultural

performances, and exhibitions. In order to get the maximum commitment from residents and visitors, CSA prepared a strategically thought-out communication campaign, which was disseminated through social media (See <https://www.a-place.eu/en/placemaking-action/61>). They also provided the preconditions for participation and interaction to be spontaneous processes that took place both during the day and at night, especially during the summer of 2021 (June, July 2021). We can conclude that there was creative participation and incentives for civic and cultural action.

7.2.3. Social Engagement

The partner was the main promoter of the goals by implementing the activities. With the initial objectives in mind, CSA received the comments and suggestions collected through social media taking them into account in the processes of carrying out the activities. The partner reported the enthusiasm of people all over the world who were interested in the space, including people in Bologna, Campeche, London, Portsmouth, Baghdad, Bogotá, Bucharest, Beirut, Quito, Melbourne, Auckland, Tokyo, Sydney, Montreal and Famagusta (See comments included in report D.4.1 and 4.2). Even though the activity has not fostered permanent links to the intervened space, due to its ephemeral character, it can be said that there was a creation of new meanings associated with a space until then only associated with the idea of parking.

7.2.4. Community Building

Firstly, it is important to mention that "A Visionary Place", and in particular the parklet activity, was designed with a common objective: to understand the crucial role of public space in urban and suburban contexts, and the contribution to the implementation of more effective strategies aimed to improve the quality of life in this city. In this way, the activities were made possible precisely through the mobilization of citizens of different ages, with various educational levels and social status, including artists, specialists in urban planning and the population in general, all of whom contributed to the activation of the space. This local project, supported by the A-Place project effectively engaged a wider community - either through virtual platforms or on-site - and perhaps contributed to building a local community of place lovers and placemakers in Italy and beyond, generating interesting cultural dialogues around common or dissimilar experiences in non-spaces that are very common all over the world, such as car parks. To assess the importance of a debate around this type of appropriation of public space, it is worth making a brief comparison with another of the activities of the A-Place Project, in this case "A Future Place" in Lisbon. The soirée "My Neighbourhood... My Place" took place in a space commonly used as a car park by some residents of Bairro Padre Cruz, a fact that led to a small incident on the afternoon of the show, when a resident, angry about not being able to park her car in her usual spot, reacted violently and unpleasantly to the appropriation of the space for cultural purposes.

7.3. Social impact assessment: The social impact of the placemaking practices

7.3.1. Social Discourse

In a way, the previous comparison is a possible motto for the question of discourse related to public spaces. In Bologna, as in Lisbon, some citizens value spaces according to their own parking needs, encouraging a pro-development discourse in relation to spaces for this purpose, while others feel that cities are losing places for socializing and leisure. As in Lisbon, and probably in many urban places around the world, it is urgent to change mentalities, so that the discourse about public spaces can also change. "A Visionary Place" empowers the debate on the need to change mindsets and discourse. More sustainable cities are only possible with the civic awareness of their inhabitants, and it is possible that the Bologna Parklet has contributed, if not to a change in the discourse around that space, then at least to raising awareness of an urban planning problem that is increasingly urgent to resolve. For the

partner, the main issue was public space and how it could be used and shared again in a safe and healthy way, particularly after the outbreak of the pandemic.

7.3.2. Socially engaged artistic practices

According to the partner, despite the small scale of the intervention, the activity was a fruitful starting point for an urgent debate on the fair use of public spaces and, in particular, on the promotion of an ecology of places that favours community interaction and the creation of pleasant spaces to live together and to share experiences. In this sense, the presence of artists, and the promotion of their performances as art-based events at the parklet, had a relevant impact on the cultural experience of the place. And it was also a call to change utilitarian perspectives based on common sense, due to the exponential increase in car traffic in cities with the resulting increase in air and noise pollution. For the same reason, the parklet initiated a discussion on how bottom-up initiatives can contribute to transform urban spaces for the better, improving the relationship with places. With this activity, the partner intended to address urban planning processes in a critical manner, namely by drawing attention to social and political concerns with the planning of an urban public space. However, the parklet was not supported by the Municipality of Bologna, and CSA had to pay a fee for the occupation of the land for 10 months (about 5,000 Euros). As a consequence, CSA faced enormous difficulties during the implementation and development of activities. The fact that this is the first parklet implemented in Bologna may have been one of the reasons for the poor receptivity of municipal authorities to the event. But the impact of the activity was not entirely null, as now that the parklet has been dismantled, local residents and community organizations have begun to question the possibility of installing other parklets.

7.3.3. Space-place transformation

Measuring and/or evaluating the level of transformation of the spaces activated by placemaking activities requires time, and also some continuity of experiences in the intervened places. In spite of this, the partner noticed that the parklet started to be understood by residents as a positive and pleasant place. The partner states that on the last night before dismantling, a resident thanked them for the activity. Also a few months after the start of the activity, the parklet began to appear in the eyes of residents and passers-by as a familiar visual landmark, as well as a pleasant space to stop or meet up with neighbours and friends. This is, perhaps, symptom of a slight change, but many of the important and radical transformations carried out in big cities, started with small gestures and decisions of small groups of citizens concerned with the future of places.

PART B. Festivals



1. LOOP Barcelona 2021

1.1. Introduction

LOOP Barcelona is a platform for the dissemination, discussion and creation of audiovisual artworks with a focus on contemporary art practices related to video, film and the overarching concept of the moving image. The festival is one of the most prestigious activities of Loop Barcelona and, in the context of the Project, it has an essential contribution both in the process of creating works related to the perception and experience of public space, and in the organization of debates on these same themes, with a very relevant impact See ["A Weaved Place. Screening of Film, Territorial Analysis and Debate"](#)).

The festival supports artistic productions, and one of the main objective of LOOP Barcelona is also to help artists to achieve those experiential aspects that are the hardest to observe in material terms, that is, all the underlying and forgotten aspects that form an integral part of the use, meaning and construction of place. In 2020 LOOP Barcelona created a special section dedicated to the A-Place project, exclusively dedicated to exploring, advancing and establishing creative placemaking practices, as well as to the exchange of knowledge on this topic.

Following a [second open call for work](#), carried out in 2021, and in response to the Call, Screen Projects produced three videos involving people of different nationalities and socio-cultural contexts. The videos - *"Beans, Rinsed Twice"* (Inês Neto dos Santos & Bella Riza), *"I Can Only Dance To One Song"* (Arash Fayez), and *"La Carpa"* (David Bestué, Roser Corella) - were presented at the [Loop Festival](#) exhibition which ran from 15th to 21st November 2021. The Project also sponsored the premiere of the [audiovisual trilogy "Terrapolis \(2021\)"](#) by Sitesize.

We are aware that there are cultural structures and events that are difficult to assess, especially when they involve high artistic levels. Festivals are events in this category. However, this is not about evaluating the art itself (e.g. the films and videos, or even the film programming), but about assessing the way in which the event mediated by art contributed to the creation of the identity of public spaces, as well as its contribution to strengthening lines of interaction and human conviviality.

1.2. Quality evaluation: The process of creating art, meaning, place and community

1.2.1. Participation

The three videos produced for LOOP Barcelona include people of different nationalities from different socio-cultural contexts. The partner considers that the creative participatory process itself is an example of participation involving different people coming from different social and cultural backgrounds. The narratives of the films are examples of a diversity of voices, experiences and life stories.

The artists were also involved in a self-reflection on the works developed. This was the case of David Bestué. The artist took the project *"La carpa"*, developed with Roser Corella, and led a public conversation under the title ["A-PLACE: Embodying space through memory"](#), raising questions around memory, oral transmission and space. In this meeting, the following questions were raised and discussed, which are also at the base of the creative work: "How can architecture and its absence work to trigger memory?"; "How can bodies and minds act as vehicles for memory in that regard?"; and "When the building goes away, can we still make the remaining space a place?". This first work will continue with the collaborative film project

[“Estructura”](#) departing from the urban context of L’Hospitalet de Llobregat, through which David Bestué (artist) and Roser Corella (filmmaker) will seek to explore the notion of placemaking.

Another meeting, [“A-PLACE: Place-making through body moves”](#), was also an important moment of discussion and participation involving artists, partners and the general public.

Arash Fayeze led a conversation exploring the role of music in forming a sense of belonging to a location, which is the main concern of the project *“I can only dance to one song”*. His work portrays accounts of displacement rooted in the experience of migrants through sound and movement, and his work is an attempt to formulate some important questions on the contribution of arts to the process of creating places, such as “How to keep a connection with one’s own roots while using a language that could be understood globally (such as dancing)?”; “How can cultural exchange instead of complete assimilation be a strategy to remain connected to one’s origins while living in a new environment?”; and “What are the roles of music and body as cultural vectors in a displacement situation?”.

1.2.2. Creativity of participation

Each artist has his own creation process and methodology. However, in this case, there was a common procedure: all artists established contacts and connected with the neighbourhoods. It can be said that the materials and approaches made available for them as participants was the reality itself, including the social contexts. The tasks required a long production time, and the video projects were previously explained to the engaged people. LOOP also wrote support letters to help artists and make some contacts possible. As for the guidelines for participants, they facilitated a conceptual framework to the artists to carry out their work, so that they could reach their maximum creative potential. In the Open Call, the framework was established in the terms and conditions. In the case of the commissioned video, there were preparatory meetings and the goals of the project were as discussed with the artists, David Bestué and Roser Corella. The three artists submitted conceptual proposals prior to developing their work. Based on the partner’s description, it can be assumed that the process was very inclusive, and the meetings and discussions around the purpose of the activity also ensured the necessary adaptations to the objectives. For example, there were script adaptations by the artists, taking into account the material conditions. This was the case of the documentary directed by David Bestué and Roser Corella, based on a memory and a story about the existence of a mobile theatre. The structure was not found, as it was lost, so Bestué and Corella had to adapt their narrative. The partner accompanied the three projects during the entire duration of the production with regular conversations, meetings and emails.

1.2.3. Social Engagement and Community Building

The festival team involved people from different cultural backgrounds committed to a common task and goal, that is, to produce artwork that can transform, if not the spaces themselves, then at least the image that the inhabitants of the area have of these places. The team made up of artists, collaborators, etc. participated at different stages of the creative process. Everyone contributed to define the tasks, as well as to re-define and implement the activities and their goals. The participatory process of creation, for example interviews for the videos, resulted in effective involvement of participants and creators, as well as project team members. The activities stimulated the creation of place meaning and place attachment, through the interviews and the participation of those in the videos. The screening sessions and debates were also actions to promote participation and place attachment.

1.3. Social impact assessment: The social impact of the placemaking practices

1.3.1. Social Discourse

The partner suggests "*La Carpa*" as an example of how discourse about a place - a mobile theatre, in this case - can change under the influence of a creative process. As stated, before starting the project, artists believed in the importance of finding the architectural structure of the theatre. But, during the research process, they understood its architectural complexity, and also realized that the residents of Hospitalet de Llobregat objected to it in the neighbourhood. The inhabitants wanted, instead, to use the space otherwise. In the end, the video "*La Carpa*" seems to have opened up new questions, which intersect with contemporary problems, namely about the need for a mobile and ephemeral structure, given the urgency of installing other social and cultural structures. In this context, and taking into account this new perception, the questions to be answered (or perhaps not), in the research and creative process were changed: "What could have been done with it?", "What happens when a cultural or artistic project does not respond to the needs of a neighbourhood?", "Could the information of this theatre with its remarkable architectural characteristics have changed the future of La Carpa?", "What role does oral memory occupy, today, in its (in) existence?", " Could this video change that memory?".

1.3.2. Socially engaged artistic practices

The video "*La Carpa*" is an example of an activity and an artistic piece that clearly contributed to opening up new lines of thinking about the relationship between places, situated arts and communities. The search for the physical structure of the theatre, more than a simple narrative that involves both factual and fictional aspects, is a construction of the cultural memory of a place, a contribution and a heritage of the human footprint in spaces that can be empty at any time, or be invaded by nature, in its wild process of reconfiguration of landscapes. The artists did not find the portable theatre they were looking for, but they discovered the neighbourhood's rejection of the structure. Therefore, it can be concluded, that "*La Carpa*" opens questions about the relationship of people with places and structures, about urban planning for social purposes, and the needs and conditions for preserving certain projects, as well as about cultural heritage and oral memory as an approach to people's experiences, in the past, and in the present.

1.3.3. Space-place transformation

Even if the partner does not believe that a video transforms a "real" space, they admit that artistic works operate on a symbolic level, opening questions, creating debate, and bringing to the present stories and personalities that are often forgotten, or whose work has not been properly recognized. This way, the transformation takes place on the plane of memory which, through art, can (re)constitute or reconfigure itself, creating new meanings for places and people's artwork, and leaving images and perceptions of the present-past to future audiences of these arts. In his book *Confessions*, Saint Augustine describes "the fields and spacious palaces of memory (*campos et al lata praetoria memoriae*), where are the treasures (*thesauri*) of innumerable images, brought into it from things of all sorts perceived by the senses." (Augustine apud Yates, p. 46). Film, photography, and visual images in general can be considered prostheses of memory, extensions that, like the images proposed by Saint Augustine, are "palaces" in which impressions and emotions from reality are preserved. In this sense, films about places - such as those created in the context of the A-Place project, are important documents to shape the meaning and experience of a space, while at the same time constituting a cultural heritage.

PART C. Collaborative activities

In 2020-2021, there were several collaborative activities: "A Seedling Place" organized by Urban Gorillas and involving some partners (See: <https://www.a-place.eu/en/placemaking-activity/37>) ; the "Glossary" involving all partners and which is still a work in progress (See: <https://www.a-place.eu/glossary>); the "A-Place: MAPPING" (<https://www.a-place.eu/explore>); and four "Open Debates": "Crear Lugares - Creating Places - Art Centre Tecla Sala, L'Hospitalet"; "A-Place a Year After: Are We Constructing Places?"; "Activating public space"; and "Creation and communication in times of lockdown" (<https://www.a-place.eu/debates>).

Other collaborative work included partners participation as Jury members for film and photography competitions, including 'A Confined Urban Vision', an A-Place's competition on migrants, refugees and displaced communities, or the A-Place video production led by Screen Projects. Some partners expressed themselves positively regarding the collaborative activities developed. For example, KU Leuven participated in networked projects like "A Delicious Place" and "A Seedling Place", by organising events in relation to the themes raised and connecting them to local organisations in Brussels. This partner is quite "satisfied with the progress of the project and the cooperation with partners, in multiple ways and activities". They consider that "all these activities were opportunities to exchange ideas and learn from each other, while shaping the same objectives and collaboratively contributing to the development of common interests".

The same partner explained their difficulties in opening up their activities - and particularly "A Place of Our Own" - to the participation of other partners. They justified the limitation with the characteristics of the activities, and of the intervened spaces, since they worked with a vulnerable community in a homeless shelter, and their objectives were to empower the residents to place-make within their shared environment. The partner also worked with students who served as facilitators and participants, promoting interaction both from outside and within that specific community. Nevertheless, the partner expects to open up the forthcoming activities to the other partners, namely "A-Just Radio" planned for the beginning of 2022. This activity - a series of podcast episodes - was designed having in mind the possibility to involve the A-Place partners. For its part, Nova suggested that partners replicate the activities of "A Future Place", in particular "My Neighbourhood... My Place" in their cities and neighbourhoods. The proposal was accepted by La Salle.

Conclusions

In 2020-2021, A-Place, and the general recommendations for subsequent activities, follow the two main evaluation criteria used throughout the document: 1. Quality evaluation: The process of creating art, meaning, place and community; and 2. Social impact assessment: The social impact of the placemaking practices. The assessment of the 2021 activities, as well as the conclusions and recommendations, result from viewing, analysis and interpretation of the materials provided and/or available at the A-Place website and social media platform, as well as the information in Table 1 - Assessment guide (See Annex 1), completed by the partners. The assessment was more accurate in the case of activities where more detailed information, which determined different levels of reflection between activities, was received. However, in some cases, the materials received did not go beyond a basic description and identification of agents and actions.

The most relevant conclusion is that it was possible to resume face-to-face activities, in a quasi-normal regime, despite the uncertainties caused by the extension of the COVID-19 pandemic. This positive sign had very productive results, with activities being reasonably immersed in the communities and spaces intervened or activated through placemaking. It can also be concluded that the level of imagination and creativity of partners and collaborators remained high, with the production of artistic pieces, but also socio-cultural and ecological placemaking activities of high impact, albeit at a local level in some cases, (See, for example "The Weaved Place" and "Loop Festival" for the artistic influence, and "A Visionary Place" or "A Seedling Place" in the case of socio-cultural and ecological impact).

Even so, due to the distancing rules established in public events, most of the activities seem to have taken place with a small number of participants, which did not prevent their enthusiasm and involvement, or the fulfilment of the initial objectives of those activities. Once again, digital platforms were an important instrument of mediation, especially in educational or dissemination contexts, as was the case with some debates, workshops and festival juries, etc.. This apparent limitation was actually transformed into an asset due to the possibility of easily involving partners, collaborators and audiences from various locations.

Revisiting the recommendations of the previous report, it can be concluded that the partners made an increased effort to fulfil these, namely with regard to paying attention to the participation of a diversity of local representatives and of local communities at large, in the definition of placemaking goals and in the placemaking activities, but also with regard to the diversity of modalities for participation. Increasing the debate within the consortium is one of the main objectives and expectations for 2022. In order to fulfil the task, intensified collaboration is recommended, both in terms of creative work and in terms of socio-cultural, academic and other activities that lead to the activation of public spaces, or to the debate around the transformation of these same spaces.

Quality evaluation: The process of creating art, meaning, place and community

In the second year of A-Place Project (2020-2021), participation in the activities was clearly positive, both in terms of community involvement and interaction between the project teams and the population of the neighbourhoods and places involved. The involvement of social and cultural partners with communities has also increased, and the same has happened with the number of spectators and active participants in the proposed and developed activities, even though it has not been possible to obtain more concrete statistical data. The creative processes and artistic pieces were also more substantial, mainly due to the various competitions launched by some partners.

With regard to the “Quality evaluation: The process of creating art, meaning, place and community”, “A Weaved Place” is an relevant example that includes both creative and urban placemaking intervention procedures. In 2020-2021, the partner carried out several activities, including a “Competition for mobile place activators” (See: <https://www.a-place.eu/en/placemaking-action/44>), an “Urban walk in La Florida neighbourhood” (See: <https://www.a-place.eu/en/placemaking-action/75>), “Mapping the territory: Photographic survey” (See: <https://www.a-place.eu/en/placemaking-action/76>), “Signifying the territory: Video” (See: <https://www.a-place.eu/en/placemaking-action/84>), “Mapping and constructing places” (See: <https://www.a-place.eu/en/placemaking-action/85>), and “TERRApolis”, the first video production of a trilogy dedicated to the city of L’Hospitalet de Llobregat (See: <https://www.a-place.eu/en/media-production/4>).

The festivals also had a significant impact on the consolidation of artistic and socio-cultural interventions associated with the spaces and neighbourhoods of the cities, mainly due to the partners' concern to adapt the themes of these cyclical events to the specific objectives of the project. “Loop Barcelona - Screen Projects”, “Pame Kaimakli” and “Urban Visions. Beyond the Ideal City” all contributed to different perceptions of urban spaces, shaping audiences' experiences and memories, as well as bringing international artists to the Project.

Based on evidence, including the results of open calls, competitions, and festival programs, etc. one can say that creativity of participation achieved a reasonable level.

Social impact assessment: The social impact of the placemaking practices

Raising the question “How can we assess or measure change?”, and writing about “Assessing Arts for Social Change” Kim Berman (2017) says that “textbook methodologies often presume that there are rational and objective ways of analysing data for research purposes.” (p. 135). Assessing the socio-cultural impact of placemaking activities may not be exactly a question of research, but it is quite rightly integrated into a theoretical-practical reflection, insofar as it seeks to glimpse the effects of artistic and/or placemaking practices on the transformation of physical and urban environment of places, or to comprehend the transformation of participants' attitudes and mentalities towards their neighbours or towards a public space. This way, Berman’s assumption is also the dilemma that the A-Place Project has been facing since its very beginning: to assess the social impact of placemaking is not an easy task, because transformations require time and continuity, and the impact may not be immediately noticeable. However, as claimed by Berman, “in general, artists are able to imagine and create other realities as part of their creative practice, and this allows for imagining solutions rather than focusing on problems”. She claims that “artists who engage in artistic collaborations with identified communities can bring into the field additional qualities—such as aesthetics, multiple modalities, imagination, alchemy, and reciprocal processes of becoming—that can enhance, deepen, and enrich practices of engaging social change.” (p. 136). Having this in mind it is easy to recognize the usefulness of Berman’s described principles and methods - such as action research, cooperative inquiry, participatory action research, narrative inquiry or action learning, etc. - in different contexts of evaluating creative processes that seek to involve communities in changing public spaces. Although Berman’s theory is very specific, and related to evaluation and arts-based assessment in South African social challenges and contexts, a final reflection on the processes of interactivity and evaluation in A-Place activities, reveals some similarity of procedures, especially with regard to the participatory processes, whether in creative activities or in placemaking, and in other more hybrid ones. The same procedures intersect learning and urban intervention in specific places, both with clear objectives of socio-cultural and space-place transformation. That is, the A-PLACE Project has been applying art-based methods as possible instruments of social change and strengthening identity by performing the construction of places of community and sharing.

The above mentioned methods favour the recognition of collaborative art when working at a socio-cultural level, and enhance the exchange and sharing of knowledge between partners and communities. These processes involve reciprocity and interconnectedness, and the participatory

action presupposes that citizens may be active co-creators of art and knowledge that transcends both the boundaries of academia and those of "art for art".

Concerning the objective of space-place transformation, most of the activities triggered the transformation of spaces, although in some cases this transformation was temporary, as for example in "A Visionary Place" or "A Future Place". On the other hand, some of the actions of "A Place of Our Own" (as described by the partner), "A Weaved Place" (See: "Mapping and constructing places: URL: <https://www.a-place.eu/en/placemaking-action/85>) or "A Happy Place" (See Inauguration Phase 1 URL: <https://www.a-place.eu/en/placemaking-action/72>) - interventions in the public space, gave rise to permanent transformations or, at least seasonal ones, as in the case of gardening.

The transformation of space into place also happened at the level of perceptions. This means that many spaces that were previously "invisible", like all the places of passage which Marc Augé called non-places, gained visibility during the placemaking intervention in the spaces. This transformation of perception is also positively reflected in the discourse about places, which thus become more appreciated and even appropriated by people.

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Annex 1 - Transcripts: Media, materials and discourses

Table 1.1. A Future Place

ACTIVITY	A Future Place
ACTIONS	Soirée "My Neighbourhood... my Place"
LOCATION	Amigos da Luz Association, Bairro Padre Cruz, Lisbon
DATE	25 th of September 2021
STAGE	
SOURCES	https://youtu.be/vb0eBdPOaPQ
Participants	<p>NOVA University of Lisbon Staff: Maria Irene Aparício; Ivone Ferreira, Nuno Fonseca, Rosalice Pinto, Patrícia Pereira; and Ph.D. Students: Marta Fiolić;</p> <p>A-PLACE Coordinator: Leandro Madrazo;</p> <p>Associação Amigos da Luz Staff: Sónia Duarte; participants of the contest and residents of Bairro Padre Cruz;</p> <p>Fátima Freitas (Sociologist, as a member of the competition jury)</p> <p>Maria Santos (Educational Sociologist, as a mentor of the activity)</p> <p>Special guest: Martim Saragasso D'Aires</p>
Type of data	Video
Description	Event recap video
Transcription (Action 1)	<p>Sónia Duarte (Amigos da Luz association): <i>Let's start our soirée "My neighbourhood...my place" organized by the Amigos da Luz association, A-Place project, and NOVA University of Lisbon. Many writers from our neighbourhood participated and therefore we are going to present what each one of them wrote about their experiences living here in the neighbourhood.</i></p> <p><i>The Poetry/Prose Poetry Contest "My neighbourhood... my place" aimed to reflect poetically about the past, present, and future of Bairro Padre Cruz through texts about the neighbourhood and its places, written by its residents.</i></p> <p>Fátima Freitas (sociologist, writer): About ten years ago, I visited the neighbourhood for the first time, and I feel that the neighbourhood was not what it is now. But from the beginning I felt that the neighbourhood kept a secret. What I felt the first time I walked in was that the neighbourhood had some kind of mystery that I didn't quite know how to grasp or decode. I developed work in</p>

	<p>the neighbourhood which resulted in a book about the neighbourhood, and I started to realize what it is - that mystery is the way the neighbourhood lives in people and people live the neighbourhood. There is an indigenous proverb that says that everyone's boat is in their heart. And I think that here everyone's neighbourhood is in their heart, and in the way we live and inhabit it, and take care of it.</p> <p><i>The jury evaluated and awarded 18 texts written by the residents of Bairro Padre Cruz divided into several categories: Memories of the Neighbourhood, Being reborn in the Neighbourhood, Playing in the Neighbourhood, Living in the Neighbourhood, Creating in the Neighbourhood, Future of the Neighbourhood, Learning and Playing in the Neighbourhood.</i></p> <p>Rosalice Pinto (researcher): The feeling of some of the texts we read was filled with memory. They were very interesting, especially the ones written by adult contestants. But what I saw from younger competitors was a look towards the future and an optimistic look. And that I think is very important, and we need it. We are going through a very difficult time right now. This year will be a year of recovery in all sectors, and you are a part of this recovery, this new generation. And the sport that you practice is also an action that improves you yourself, your neighbourhood, and improves your family. It made me very happy. I wish you success and think that everything will work out just fine. That is our goal. You showed in your texts an optimistic view about the future.</p> <p><i>♪ A cloth ball in a pond A mischievous smile, a kick Running on the slope, an arch And the sky in the eyes of a kid.</i></p> <p><i>A slingshot that shoots in hope A cunning dodger in short pants And the strength of being a child...</i></p>
Other information	

Table 1.2. A Weaved Place. Interviews

ACTIVITY	A Weaved Place
ACTIONS	A discussion "Creating and learning in public spaces"
LOCATION	L'Hospitalet, Barcelona
DATE	27 th of October 2021
STAGE	Evaluation
SOURCES	https://youtu.be/_inMkrkP1E

Participants	Alba Teodoro (Espai Jove Nou Sidecar) Maite de la Concha (Asociación de Vecinos Distrito IV) Marc Romero (Col.legi Pare Enric d'Ossó) Lluís Esteve (Pla Integral Les Planes-Blocs Florida) Nevenka Pavic (La Gloria Factoría de Arte)
Type of data	Video
Description	A discussion that took place in the Art Centre Tecla Sala, Hospitalet, on October 27, 2021 with representatives of civic associations and educational institutions interested in carrying out joint activities with artists and architects to transform public spaces.
Transcription	<p>Marc Romero: With the A-Place project, which we are halfway through now, we'll do the last part next week, what we've discovered, or what we see at this halfway point, is that students have discovered what happens around their school. We've students from various parts of Baix Llobregat and they don't know the space. They come by metro, go to school, and then take the metro again. With this project, they've discovered what surrounds their school. We've realised that the space where they have their break has changed. They used to meet just in front, but now that they go to the Plaça de la Cultura, they go past the Rambla and go up to the market. This relationship with the space is really beneficial for them.</p> <p>Maite de la Concha: We have a very nice district, with a lot of potential, a lot of possibilities, but all projects need to be adapted to the needs of the territory and the people. The results of this research will lead to a participatory process so the maximum number of citizens, and residents, can give their opinion on what they want for their district - how they would include this project in their space and in their lives.</p> <p>Alba Teodoro: The main interest of the educational team is that the young people work on the concept they have of owning their district, I mean, they feel like they belong in their district and they are exclusive, they are not able to see that there is an otherness in their district, they can't recognise that. Through this type of process, the final work, the sculpture, or the final product is an excuse, it's a medium to work on this recognition process, of linking with others, which when we don't stop and reflect on, we tend not to do.</p> <p>Lluís Esteve: The Hospitalet Town Council promotes public, municipal policies to reclaim the public space, enhance it, bring art to the streets, make people feel proud of their district and to organise things in the La Florida and Les Planes districts that appeal to other citizens of Hospitalet and the metropolitan area. By recovering spaces that had deteriorated and making them into public parks, or embellishing the facades of our district, we are boosting the self-esteem in the district and ensuring participatory processes in which different people from the district meet to collectively create an artistic process. In many cases the process is much more important, the synergies and connections between all the participants, than the final product, which, obviously, we also try to ensure enhances the district.</p>
Other information	

ACTIVITY	A Weaved Place
ACTIONS	An intervention "Making public spaces meaningful"
LOCATION	L'Hospitalet, Barcelona
DATE	9 th of November 2021
STAGE	Evaluation
SOURCES	https://youtu.be/_DtJpiP446I
Participants	The pupils from local high schools, together with architecture students
Type of data	Video
Description	This intervention took place on Tuesday, November 9, 2021, in the Bellvitge neighbourhood of L'Hospitalet, in the Plaça de la Cultura and its surroundings. The pupils from local high schools, together with architecture students, made spaces and objects that go unnoticed in people's daily lives, visible. The created objects refer to personal experiences and associations with other places; they turn overlooked spaces into meaningful places.
Transcription	<p>Leandro Madrazo: Today is the last part of a process that started months ago, between schools in Bellvitge and the La Salle School of Architecture. The aim of the process is to develop links between residents and the places and spaces they inhabit. A-Place is a European project we're conducting, run by La Salle School of Architecture, in which 9 organisations from 6 European countries participate. The project is funded by the Creative Europe programme. It is about discovering how people use spaces, discovering what is associated with the spaces they inhabit.</p> <p>Isabella Jaramillo: We are in the square to create elements that can be used or artistic elements so people come and create attractive features in these empty spaces.</p> <p>Duygu Demiroglu: We saw this place as lonely and quiet and we wanted to make it more attractive so it brings more people here.</p> <p>Yorick Neuts: There are some kids here and they know some places that are not used or not used to their fullest. We have a kind of pillar there and the kids said to us: "It looks like a jellyfish, but not completed.", so it would be a jellyfish of tubes.</p> <p>Emilia Piccione: We'll make tentacles with tubes which will be interlinked in the lampposts that are there. The idea is to link the car parks of the residences with the square and the boulevard. Now they're disconnected. The tentacles symbolise these links. It is also a way of bringing life to the space, with plants. We'll see if these tubes can be used later as installations for water.</p> <p>Duygu Demiroglu: We will use pipes today to create something like a sculpture of</p>

	<p>abstracts trees, because we saw that this square is covered with trees.</p> <p>Isabella Jaramillo: We will simulate some trees, as that is what we see around this area. We want to create a sculpture which represents these trees.</p> <p>Micaela Days: My project is called "Static pedals" as there are benches in this part of the square that have pedals for people to cycle when seated on the bench. So, the idea is to do the opposite, putting pedals so that people can rest on the bench. There's the ambiguity of having a bench where you can exercise and another where you can rest.</p> <p>We are also working with a school from here. The students from La Salle University work with students from the school in Hospitalet.</p> <p>Marcela D'Angelo: I'm from the Pare Enric d'Ossó school. We're helping the students from the architecture university to do a project which doesn't count towards our grades, but it helps us in the subject of "Volume". It helps us to use colours, ranges, volume and spaces.</p> <p>Carolina Bernal: My project is about a series of organic shapes like steps. It's called "Meeting point". It's on a boulevard that the students and parents use a lot. The neighbours' reaction, they'll stare at it... it will be noticed and questioned. When we were building it a lot of people stopped to ask about the aim of these sculptures, why there and what for. It's simply to bring life to the place and to be a reference point.</p> <p>Leandro Madrazo: It's also an exercise in communication - communication about ideas, experiences and metaphors. Associations with other places, what these objects make us think.</p> <p>Neighbour: Well look... showing the kids how to plant flowers and that kind of thing. It's great, because I like nature, gardens. I've collaborated a lot here, planting trees. They seem to be very interested in what they are doing.</p> <p>Leandro Madrazo: We are carrying out different types of activities and using different media. Physical installations, as we see here. But also video production, photography, literary exercises. It is taking place in various European cities. In our case, we selected Hospitalet as a case study, but there are also activities in Lisbon, Bologna, Brussels, and Nicosia, within the European programme. The main aim of the programme, which lasts 4 years, is to create an archive of experiences linked to the creation of places in which the work done in these 4 years will be available for other organisations, other artists, who want to continue the task. All of this work is being archived and shared on our digital networks.</p>
<p>Other information</p>	

ACTIVITY	A Weaved Place
ACTIONS	Artistic practices in public space
LOCATION	L'Hospitalet, Barcelona
DATE	26 th of October 2021
STAGE	Evaluation
SOURCES	https://youtu.be/MXrZ-LOJL8I
Participants	Xavier Aparicio (Agencia de Desarrollo Urbano, Ayuntamiento de Hospitalet) Esteban Marín (Contorno urbano) Nevenka Pavic (La Gloria Factoría de Arte) Elvira Pujol, Joan Vila Puig (Sitesize) Claudio Zulián
Type of data	Video
Description	A dialogue that took place at the Art Centre Tecla Sala, Hospitalet, on October 26, 2021. The session was moderated by the A-Place coordinator.
Transcription	<p>Esteban Marín: The ecological cultural centre that we manage in L'Hospitalet de Llobregat is a space that comes from an abandoned municipal plot that we have transformed into an ecological centre where we have designed the building and its programming with the neighbours. This is allowing us to work as a sort of citizen lab, to create more participatory urban planning and to spotlight some of the neighbourhood's issues and deficiencies, such as access to education, culture, use of public space, conflict management, and public space diversity... That's the line of work we're into nowadays. About 120 people come every week. From gardening workshops, green-oriented digital manufacturing, hip hop, dance, or culture workshops for young people, artists in residence... It's a cross-cutting project that allows us to reimagine that space and also to generate knowledge to be able to reimagine other spaces in the city or to export our knowledge elsewhere.</p> <p>Joan Vila Puig: Well, our take on art in relation to urban contexts has always been one of process-based work. The way we see it, our contribution to the significance of the city is an open process. And this is sort of our vocation - to reshape our relationship with the place.</p> <p>Elvira Pujol: For a few years, maybe the strongest part has been the learning. The projects have become collective learning processes. L'Hospitalet is an obvious example: a hundred years ago, this place was almost completely agricultural soil. Less than a century after that, the territory has been massively populated and urbanized. These sudden changes in the history of a place makes us question what the meaning of human communities in these spaces is, and what it means to live in a city.</p> <p>Claudio Zulián: Cinema has had a decisive influence, not only on the way we look</p>

at cities, but also on the city formation. We just have to look at the importance of Metropolis in the Art Deco style of architecture. Cities have always had these two-fold natures, that is well represented in Metropolis: the divinity that swallows people, engulfs them, and the heavenly place, the perfect city, the Jerusalem on Earth. In that place between heaven and hell, the passage is done through images, both the real specific ones from the city and those which have origins in art, culture and cinema, so that citizens can imagine and learn how to read their own experience in the city.

Nevenka Pavic: Our work is mainly done in "trencadís" because we think this is a technique that works very well in public spaces, since it has proper maintenance conditions. But more importantly, there's a very industrious craftsmanship to it, and it requires a lot of work and some technique. We try to convey that when we make our collaborative murals, because we think that artistic education is something very important for a person's complete development. So, these collaborative practices don't just enhance a space, they also dignify it, relocate it, and make it a place. Mainly, we believe that through these practices and education, we can transform our environment, and the people... and leave a legacy.

Leandro Madrazo: We're here as part of A-Place. A-Place is a project that began two years ago. There are eight organizations. It's coordinated by La Salle School of Architecture. It was born from a previous experience with the Loop Festival, where during several years we developed some activities under the name UMVA (Mobile Unit of Video Architecture), in which Claudio also took part, and the students of our courses used video as a tool to analyse public space in order to observe it from the outside, but also to introduce themselves into its own dynamic. Those were 3rd year students. We've taken L'Hospitalet as our case study, where we've been developing these activities over the years. The common ground for this Project is the concept of place. The concept of place in opposition to the concept of space. For several decades, in literature, in environmental psychology and in sociology and architecture, from the sixties, and seventies, we have been able to read about this contrast: place and space. Something that brings us back to the ancient Greeks and the concepts of Khôra and Topos. The space as something that exists in the first place but has no meaning. And the idea of place, in contrast, as space with meaning, space with symbolism and experiences. The space we call place. I wish to ask this question that's very wide and that each of you can address differently in relation to your work: Does this contraposition between space as something meaningless, ready to receive something, and the place as something that has already become meaningful, mean something to your work?

audio Zulián: I'm under the impression that the idea of space has a functional use, but lacks existence. The space is that which is undetermined. It is like a surface. And that neither exists on Earth nor in outer space. On Earth all we have are defined spaces, historicized spaces. Even if we understand history as natural history, geological, marked by the eras of our planet and the accidents like the one occurring right now in the Canary Islands, but also if we understand it like the places where humanity has lived. We must remember that in Europe there are only two primary forests remaining: one in Poland and one in Galicia. The others are not primary forests, which means that all the trees that we see, all the places we call nature, one way or another, have been produced by human activity. There's no such thing, we haven't got access to any type of nature that hasn't been produced by humans. As I see it, from the experience perspective, to talk about spaces does not make a lot of sense. Behind the idea of the word "space" and the understandings of a surface on the globe or a city that is available to be determined through an action, what we can see is the erasing of what was there as a place, as a story, and the imposition of a project. The project will not be a benign one, born out of reason. Nowadays, since Nietzsche and the deconstructionists, we know that the projects will have interests, even if those are legitimate and come from a democratically elected organization like a city council or a parliament. But still, they are things that will be enforced on that place. And they will do so through an erasing. And the word "space" points out this erasing. So, the neutrality that this term means may (and generally does) hide the will to not think about what was there before. That's why I think we

should handle this term with extreme care.

Joan Vila Puig: What we must look into is how space and place are oppositions that exhibit a struggle. A struggle that is a constant debate that can be an erasing, as you said, but can also be a resignifying. When someone paints a wall and then someone paints graffiti, then a banner, and so on, we're constantly resignifying and acting. Something that interests me about the idea of place is a permanent fragility, which allows or forces us to define place as that which we can build, that which should be made, which doesn't simply exist. That would be the space. The space is already there, this remains. But the place must be built or done. It belongs to orality, it isn't written, that has survived and that maybe we must rescue nowadays.

Elvira Pujol: It must be public space. When it becomes a public space, then it'll be a park. Until then, it's a place that doesn't belong to the middle-class white citizen. If it's not normative, then it's not public space. By the time it becomes a standardized space, a normative space, then it'll be public space. And if you're not suitable for that public space, you will be kicked out, because you're poor, you're a gipsy, etc. This definition has been very enlightening to understand what public space means from a critical perspective, like Manuel Delgado's.

Leandro Madrazo: Joan Subirats wrote in an article yesterday: "Cities are not just places. They are spaces of possibilities and weaknesses. Thus, they are spaces of conflict." A term that's one of Manuel Delgado's favourites, by the way. Space of conflict, public space, but not an empty one. Space that is given some sort of value or judgement, meaning, history, memory,... How do you see the concept of public space? Let's leave the more philosophical issues aside. How do you see your works in relation to your idea of what is public space?

Esteban Marín: All the areas around the rail tracks and the scars of the city are spaces of conflict. This is where civilized urbanism ends and some misuse begin, and more dangerous conflicts arise. We work in conflicts in public space, and we always end up in the same areas, the most contentious, on the fringes, which is where the most interesting things happen. We found ourselves facing conflicts such as misuses of the space. We get that a lot from neighbours. "This space is being misused, because it's noisy, it's dangerous, etc.". Those places with an sell-by date are almost outside the law. But they are the most fun to work in. And where most conflicts are created. Now we are working on a study about urbanism from the point of view of a gender and we are spotting spaces where people feel unsafe. Most of them are next to the rail tracks, in the fringes, in the city scars, and lots of conflicts are generated every day. Some have space deficits, like poor lighting, and others are more serious, like, drug use in La Florida. We've been there for a long time, but people who come there with us sometimes are shocked because they thought this didn't exist anymore. That reality is right there, in the city. But it seems to drain through the cracks. Even if we don't see it, it's there.

Xavier Aparicio: We must think that the property of that soil is not municipal. The owner may be the ministry, or the regional government, depending on the infrastructure. And what they have, is protection. And the General Metropolitan Plan labels them as "system protection". And their function is almost to do nothing, only to be there to serve the infrastructure. Those spaces have become urban waste. I understand the public space not only as the specific area enclosed within its urban boundaries. Rather, it is defined by the buildings around it and the uses of those buildings. We can have the best park in the world, with the nicest design by the fanciest architect, but if we don't attract people because it doesn't have certain uses or activities, it will become an urban wasteland. It's not the same to have a park with the most beautiful fountain, or a park for cultural activities. When there's life on the streets, when there are activities going on, the streets are safe.

Nevenka Pavic: That project with the pillars. I've lived in L'Hospitalet for twenty years, and during that time, nobody has looked after it. It was dark, at weekends it was filthy, dangerous,... By doing that intervention, the space was radically transformed. It was a place where nobody wanted to go, or even to pass by. But now people say: "I don't need to take the subway, but I just like to come here to

take a walk. Because it's so nice that every day I find out something new." And then you realize that it does have meaning. And as inhabitants of this city, with growing concrete, we must call for this type of action.

Claudio Zulián: L'Hospitalet, like many other peripheral cities, is a tough dense place. It has a history of immigration, sometimes crime, due to poverty. Several times I've seen demands being made of artists to fix all that. Which is something totally beyond our capacities. And that demand becomes some sort of makeup. "Let's put some makeup there, because no one can fix it". If there are needles it is because there are drug addicts. If there are addicts it is because some people, mostly due to poverty, can't live properly in the city. I don't think that art should only do good, and cover things up. I think we should do something else. I understand that from the perspective of urban planning and the city council, we must make the space inhabitable and try to make it liveable. And I understand that one could bear the contradiction that is to try to fix only a part and not the whole problem. For example, many gender studies underline that even more. Because when they say: "We want to make the city safer", what they are doing is putting makeup on the city. Because we are improving the lighting systems instead of fixing the causes that made the city unsafe for some people. And although city councils may dream about perfect urban planning, the tools to achieve that aren't always available to them, because it's not their jurisdiction. For instance, now I'm working with unaccompanied minors. But it doesn't matter how the city council wants to offer shelter because the laws are made by the parliament and the state. I believe that the artist does not only deal with good, it also deals with evil. It also deals with the tragic, the unresolved, by insisting on talking about it, since it isn't being fixed. And we must defend that. Because the possibility of talking about that is what allows those problems to stay in the spotlight. Artists often shed some light on unresolved issues, it is not sabotage at all, it is not a futile provocation. It's a very important thing. It's to say: "This has not been solved, and to put makeup on it, is disastrous".

Leandro Madrazo: When reading about placemaking, sometimes we see this point: It's about fixing what doesn't work. Waste spaces that nobody cares about, where there are safety and accessibility issues, then the placemaking comes, the artist comes, and then it becomes what Claudio suggested: makeup for what didn't work. But what does "function" really mean? The key is to define when something is "functioning" or not. When people go there and buy that space, does that mean that the space is working? In the film industry they say that a movie works when that movie makes money at the box office. Is public space working when commerce is activated? I think it was Nietzsche who said that all cities should have a space with nothing in it, just to look at, as if there were in Barcelona or L'Hospitalet a space with nothing in it, just to be with yourself.

Joan Vila Puig: Thinking about art and city, or culture and city, we could say that a city is cultural not only if it has proper facilities, proper museums, or if it takes care of its artists, but if the city is a piece of art itself. To me, that would be the ideal. The meaning of culture in our world is expressed in the city, that is the complete artificiality, it is the highest form of artifice, the one that summons us all and keeps us together even though the conditions are tough and it's not really rewarding. This empty space that you mentioned already exists. It's a huge void of communication, what we have. We neither have chances to listen to each other, nor to meet, nor to expect the unexpected. Art, in most cases, instead of doing things, should not do anything, just wait and see, and accompany things that can be magical.

Claudio Zulián: Gangster movies are fringe movies. They are placeless movies, the movies of the rail tracks in the periphery, the abandoned industrial areas, etc. In this sense, American culture has had enough power to be able to resignify all that without faking it. I admire that. Because it hasn't featured that as a very tidy place where you can go have a walk after the gangster movie. No. It's still a dangerous place, it's still a gangster place. But it's featured as a place that belongs to you as an American. Deal with it. So, some cultural media have this capacity not to heal the wound, but just to name it and to keep it open. Because keeping it open is what allows us to think about it again and again, not to pretend it's closed. Plaça Pastrana in El Carmel, which now has a subway station, is a

place that has always been dangerous. I was there recently and asked: "Has this place been fixed?" and they said "No way!". They have built the subway station, a urbanized square, etc. But there's something about that place that seems to have a temper. It attracts violence and delinquency. But why? Because El Carmel is a very poor neighbourhood. Let's not pretend that some of the people there have gone crazy, violent and begun to take drugs. No. It's a very poor and tense place, and thus in the few public spaces there are, this is expressed.

Elvira Pujol: With the libertarian anarchist culture, the immigrants from Murcia, and the more recent ones, from Latin America, the same will happen. All the culture that these collectives generate will not have a visible memory. And I think this is the big problem, and as people who work in art and culture we must acknowledge that there used to be expressions that have been made invisible. And one of our goals, if we should have any, is to show that. The culture of the marginal, the culture of what hasn't been expressed, of what's not in the museums, the culture of what's not named, what's not important.

Leandro Madrazo: The issue of multiculturalism. Does it make sense to talk about community and place when unity is in crisis? And the other issue is the memory archaeology in connection with your work.

Esteban Marín: L'Hospitalet has a fixation with multicultural murals. It's a fixation this city has had for many years, sometimes without knowing what they really mean, or what positive aspects they have. What they do is to paint a facade saying "We are a very diverse city, with more than 100 nationalities". I believe in La Florida there were 122 or 123. But the city council sometimes doesn't understand what positive aspects that really has. And they end up doing things like World Tapas. That's fine, but... Or the Culture Forum. From their perspective, they can't really see how these other cultures and wisdoms can contribute.

Xavier Aparicio: We must distinguish municipal property from private property. As Nevenka mentioned, her intervention was made on pillars whose function is to support the escalators, which at the same time, are used to cross the rail tracks. They fulfil their task: to hold it together. People used to see that as an urban wasteland: the pillars under the roof, supporting an escalator. I believe that since Nevenka's intervention, that has been an accomplishment. The lighting has improved, the space has improved, and people even meet there. I had never seen that before. People used to pass by those pillars quickly. Nowadays I often go there. Only through such intervention do people gather there. I think that all these interventions are made with a lot of love, like the wall in La Florida Torrassa, or in the facades at La Florida blocks. It points out a concern, but it's also a good first step to improve urban spaces, through several art forms. I believe all this can really improve the spaces, and there are facts that support this.

Esteban Marín: I have important criticism regarding the project in La Florida blocks. It's a project of facades that is taking place in La Florida blocks. What happens is this phenomenon of the "parachute artist", where the artista does a fake participatory process which consists of one single session with one collective. Sometimes the dialogue becomes just: option A or option B. Only five people attended. They paint it and it has a huge impact, because it's a big wall. Then they disappear, and it left there forever. This is a project that is being criticised by residents because they don't see it as their own. Because there hasn't been any type of dialogue, and the artist hasn't done any research. There is a major conflict between this kind of public art and the community, that sometimes isn't interested and is getting nothing out of it, even though it could be an interesting tool. In our case we were developing a community project there, but we realised that those issues can't be fixed with art. It's not my responsibility and it's totally beyond my capacities. What we did was to give that space to other organizations that work with drug users so they would do talks, activities, etc. But that is totally beyond our reach. It's our responsibility but it also isn't. I can't completely change a space through art. That's why I agree with you: I'll do my best. The good part is: if I can't make it, I'll ask for help.

Elvira Pujol: What I see here is an imbalance: the artists are required to do impossible things on ridiculous budgets, with two or three people in teams, who

	<p>do their best, who have to justify a grant, and submit thousands of projects in order to finance the projects, looking for support in both the public and the private sector. Then in the end, you wonder: maybe art can provide some things, but not under these conditions. Because the artist's health can't handle this situation. In other countries these processes are taken care of, art workers are asked about their needs. Here, we're very far away from that. It's not reasonable to work like this. And this is one of the reasons there should be more projects like Contorno Urbano, in L'Hospitalet, but there aren't because it's very difficult to carry them forward. They take a huge amount of effort. Since we have a public vocation, we long for a public payback, not just the acknowledgement of our work. We want projects to be funded. Nevertheless, we'll carry them forward anyway, because they're vocational but this can't be the way it works, because you'll be able to do a project, but no more than that.</p> <p>Leandro Madrazo: When artistic activities happen in a public space and involve communities, they lead to training, education. They teach something that is not noticeable at first sight and require a process, to people from different backgrounds. From primary and secondary students to adults at education centres. This allows us to overcome the existing limits between educational degrees and people of different ages and backgrounds. Interventions in public spaces allow you to carry on training that you couldn't do in a structured system.</p> <p>Nevenka Pavic: What happened in La Torrassa - Florida was an occasional activity I was asked to do as part of Our Garden, and it was tremendously successful. The people were so interested, because they knew about the pillars, as we'd been doing other things in the neighbourhood, the planters, etc. So a senior citizen, or a young person, - whoever walks by, notice it because the "trencadis" is a very Catalan thing. So on the one hand, it has a good acceptance because they recognize what they see. It's not too strange to them. And on the other hand, the educational side of it, to teach more through the arts. We need to do it more. But at least in the short term, we have a solution to make our environment nicer and life-friendly. Problems will continue. But a garden begins with a seed. If we don't plant that seed we can keep complaining eternally. And as citizens we have the responsibility to demand a public space that we feel is our own. One way or another. If you don't want to, you don't have to participate. But if you do, you'll be there. And the best way to take care of things is to feel them yourself.</p> <p>Joan Vila Puig: There is no creation that isn't also a learning process. We learn how to recognise ourselves, what we are not. We learn about other realities. So art and education should be two sides of the same coin. We must take education outdoors and into the city, combine them into a whole. But at the same time we have to take good care of the responsibilities of educational administrations regarding arts and the dignification of our work.</p>
Other information	

Annex 2 - Assessment guide for partners

Quality evaluation: The process of creating art, meaning, place and community		Activity - materials available:
Participation	How was participation and representation of different social groups in the placemaking activity pursued and to what extent was it achieved?	
Creativity of participation	What materials and approaches were available to the participants?	
	Were guidelines to the participants made available so that they could reach their maximum creativity potential?	
	Was the process inclusive? Was there continuous adaptation of the goals and tasks?	
	Were participants in the placemaking processes and activities given opportunities for authentic interaction and participation?	
Social Engagement	Who was engaged in defining, re-defining and implementing the activities and goals?	
	If and how did the activities stimulate the creation of place meaning and place attachment?	
Community building	Were people from different cultural backgrounds brought together under a common goal?	
	Did people share and exchange cultural expressions?	

Social impact assessment: The social impact of the placemaking practices		
Social discourse	What discourse is associated with the place and the activities, both before, during and after activities?	
Socially engaged artistic practices	How did the artistic activities contribute to opening up new ways of thinking about the relationship between places, situated arts and communities?	
	How did the artistic activities contribute to approaching urban planning processes in a critical manner, paying more attention to wider social and political concerns beyond the established boundaries of each realm?	
Space-place transformation	How did the activities contribute to transform the space and people's relationship with it?	