

Celebrating vibrant places

There is a need for public spaces that foster social interaction, community engagement and the physical and mental health of the city's inhabitants. These places not only generate economic benefits, but also contribute to reducing crime and improving safety, while strengthening the sense of belonging and identity of the community.

community engagement, healthy environments, **public space**: a crucial component of placemaking, quality of life, well-being

A Delicious Place



The Vertical Garden transformed the square into a vibrant place

Partners: Urban Gorillas
Location: Kaimakli neighbourhood, Nicosia
Date: July - September 2020

The Pame Kaimakli festival hosted a series of events centred on the theme of food as a socio-cultural and placemaking activity. The festival's centrepiece was the creation of a Vertical Garden, a community garden located in the central square of the neighbourhood. This garden served as the venue for various activities such as performances, communal dinners, a pop-up cinema, and a meeting point for both residents and visitors.

A-Pla(y)ce



Taking students to explore the neighbourhood alleys



Observing the behaviour and play of children



Taking students to explore the neighbourhood alleys



Taking students to explore the neighbourhood alleys

Partners: Faculty of Architecture, University of Ljubljana and Prostorož
Location: Bežigranski Dvor district, Ljubljana
Date: March - May 2021

The neighbourhood lacks a consolidated social history and identity. Alleys are spaces that have great potential for creating places to socialise and play. Architecture students, mentors, experts, and children worked together to transform alleys into a playscape. Activities included consultation meetings with community representatives, new facility design and the realization of a "placemaking" intervention.

A Weaved Place



Painting and drawing workshop for children organized by PlayART



"The value of Bellvitge", by students from Institut Bellvitge (winner of an audience award)



"Fill the void", by Anna Trasserra, student at the School of Architecture La Salle



Sound installation "Listening lines", Alejandro Artigas and Jimmy Solórzano

Partners: School of Architecture La Salle
Location: Bellvitge neighbourhood, L'Hospitalet de Llobregat (Barcelona)
Date: November 2022

The ES_CULTURA festival turned the Plaça de la Cultura in Bellvitge into a vibrant hub for artistic expression, with the participation of students from local schools, architecture students, artists, local residents, and civic organization members. Throughout the two-day event, the square and its surroundings were transformed through sculptures, murals, film projections, sound installations, as well as music and dance performances.

A Wish-full Place



public space



Installation at City Plaza, Nicosia. Wishes written in origami pieces

Partners: Urban Gorillas
Location: City Plaza, Nicosia
Date: October-December 2021

City Plaza is an old shopping centre located in Nicosia that once housed a bustling major department store and attracted a number of visitors, but in recent years it has experienced a decline. To revitalize the space and encourage people to rediscover it, ephemeral interventions are taking place. In this intervention, visitors were invited to participate in origami workshops and write their wishes on folded papers. These messages were then thrown onto hanging canvases, filling in this way the space with people's wishes.

October 2019

November 2019

December 2019

January 2020

February 2020

March 2020

Kick-off meeting
Barcelona

Building engaged communities

Living in community involves commitment, caring, and togetherness. When people have common interests, strong bonds are created that can lead to a shared sense of identity. If they feel like they are part of a larger group with shared values, they are more likely to work together towards common goals, care for each other and invest their time and energy in building resilient and sustainable communities.

commitment, care, collective identity, common interests, **community building:** engaging people to create spaces responsive to their needs and desires, place attachment

A Visionary Place



Partners: City Space Architecture
Location: Porto-Saragozza neighbourhood, Bologna
Date: September-November 2020

The goal of the parklet is to enliven public spaces through creative and educational projects. This new public space serves as a community hub, offering a venue for social interaction, artistic performances, and communal gatherings. Additionally, the parklet has been instrumental in fostering a sense of community through the creation of a Facebook page, where valuable insights and lessons about the experience of creating this new public space can be shared with other communities beyond the neighbourhood.

A Happy Place



Transforming Pieremans playground into a lived space. Source: Alive Architecture



Setting up the participatory design process. Source: Alive Architecture



Designing on the site with residents. Source: Alive Architecture



Discussing the proposals in the place. Source: Alive Architecture

Partners: Alive Architecture, in collaboration with BRAVVO
Location: Marolles neighbourhood, Brussels
Date: April - June 2021

With the aim of making Pieremans' playground a liveable and happy place, a series of events were held to get to know the interests and wishes of the residents. During these events, ideas and problems were identified and discussed, and participants wrote them down on sticky paper and stuck them on a model of the site. Four workshops were organised to test the proposed ideas. The transformed spaces were inaugurated at a community event, where a collective meal was prepared to celebrate the outcome of the project.

A Future Place



Award ceremony at the Amigos da Luz association



Jury members announcing the winners



The sounds of fado resonated in the place



Reading of the awarded texts by winners

*"I always said and proudly I'm from the neighbourhood, Yes sir!
 I was raised with respect In the neighbourhood, we felt love
 We had the time for everything Studying, working, living together.
 We had great fun
 In moments of leisure we decorated the streets and jumped over the fire we burned artichokes we played well
 There were three associations it's sad because they ended I congratulate you for the project you started
 The history of our neighbourhood that was told in a book I advise you to read it a lot has been changed"*

Authored by a 63-year-old female resident

Partners: Universidade Nova de Lisboa
Location: Padre Cruz neighbourhood, Lisbon
Date: September-November 2021

Universidade Nova collaborated with the Amigos da Luz association to organize a literary contest "My neighbourhood... my place" that allowed young people and adults to share their experiences of living in Padre Cruz neighbourhood through prose and poetry. The winners read their texts in a prize ceremony that was held in a parking area in front of the association, which was transformed into a stage for a few hours. Between readings of the texts, a young musician delighted the audience with his fado songs on guitar. The event brought together the local community and provided an excellent platform for artistic expression.

April 2020

May 2020

June 2020

July 2020

August 2020

A Sound Place in Lisbon

A Confined Place

Perception and representation of space in time of confinement with photographic media

A Confined Place

Artistic interventions in times of lockdown with hybrid media

Reinforcing a sense of place and belonging

A sense of place is a unique combination of visual, cultural and environmental factors that give a location its distinct character. This encompasses the memories, emotions, and perceptions that people associate with a place, making it special and meaningful to them. When communities cultivate and celebrate the unique qualities and characteristics of a place, they can foster a sense of identity, promote well-being, and drive economic growth.

collective memory, place identity, **sense of belonging:** creating places that foster a sense of pride and ownership among community members, sense of place

A Hidden Place



A hidden place: Bežigranski Dvor, Ljubljana



Winning proposal by Oriol Gracia Vallés and Lara Jana Gabrijet Milanović



Building the proposal on the site



Painting the fence on-site

Partners: Faculty of Architecture, University of Ljubljana and Prostorož
Location: "Krater" area, Bežigranski Dvor, Ljubljana
Date: March - June 2020

A series of events was planned to re-discover a long-forgotten place, involving residents, teachers from nearby schools, parents, and relatives of children and young people, as well as passers-by. However, due to COVID-19 restrictions, residents could only participate through distant communication. Based on their suggestions, architecture students proposed creative and thought-provoking interventions to make the site attractive to a wide audience.

A Place of Our Own



Students learning carpentry skills in the shelter

"Sense of place is what makes one city different from another, but sense of place is also what makes our physical surroundings worth caring about."

Edward T. McMahon



New furniture pieces assembled onsite



The shelter upgraded with fresh furnishings

Partners: KU Leuven Department of Architecture
Location: Bodegem Foyer shelter, Brussels
Date: April - May 2021

Bodegem Foyer is just one of many homeless shelters located in the centre of Brussels. Architecture students, shelter residents, neighbours, and activists have collaborated to transform the shelter, upcycling the materials found in the building into new furniture pieces. Students and residents received training in furniture building with ecological materials in a workshop held in the shelter. The outcome was a more hospitable living environment that fostered an increased sense of ownership and belonging among the residents.

A Happy Place



Planting plants with children from the neighbourhood. Source: Alive Architecture



Children painting the freshly installed fence. Source: Alive Architecture



Painting balcony planters. Source: Alive Architecture

Partners: Alive Architecture, in collaboration with BRAVVO
Location: Marolles neighbourhood, Brussels
Date: April - June 2022

To make Pieremans playground more attractive to residents, permanent urban interventions were carried out, including the construction of an urban garden and a fence to protect it. In the alleys of the Cité Hellemans, residents painted and installed planters on the balconies of their homes. These renovated spaces were celebrated with an inauguration event that included food, music and video projections showing the transformation process.

A Place of Our Own



Students and residents infusing vitality in the shelter

Partners: KU Leuven Department of Architecture
Location: Bodegem Foyer shelter, Brussels
Date: November 2021

KUL students organised a participatory action to paint a mural on the wall in the lobby of the Bodegem shelter, which included the personal stories of the residents. The creation of the mural provided an opportunity to apply our community engagement methodologies, encouraging residents' involvement in creating a visual identity for their shelter and making it "their place".

sense of belonging

community building

September 2020

- A Confined Urban Vision
- A Delicious Place Vertical Kaimakli Gardens
- City street conference

October 2020

- A Calm Place Sensory walk
- Dinner and Concert, Place de la Reine
- A Visionary Place Parklet in Bologna

November 2020

- A Hidden Place becomes delicious
- LOOP Barcelona
- Newsletter #1

December 2020

January 2021

Evoking sensory awareness and a feeling for our places

The senses play a crucial role in our perception and understanding of places. They allow us to experience and learn about the unique qualities and characteristics of a place, such as its aesthetic, cultural, social and environmental features. Sights and sounds can evoke feelings of excitement and energy, smells can bring back childhood memories, and textures can evoke a sense of rootedness and continuity, connecting us with the past. In this way, our sensory experiences help us to connect with the places we inhabit.

foodscapes, sensorial spaces, soundscapes, **space perception**: : seeing, hearing, touching, tasting, and smelling the environment around us

A Calm Place



After the walk, leaving traces of the reflections. Source: Alive Architecture



Courtyard of Maison des Arts during the dinner and concert. Source: Alive Architecture



Reflecting on the experience of the sensory walk. Source: Alive Architecture



A community dinner with Turkish food. Source: Alive Architecture

Partners: Alive Architecture and KU Leuven Department of Architecture
Location: Schaerbeek district, Brussels
Date: October 2020

In this sensory walk, participants were able to improve their spatial awareness by focusing on sounds, smells and textures. They were taken to various locations in the neighbourhood to perceive the calmness. Participants were blindfolded to increase the sensitivity of non-visual senses. The walk ended in the garden of the Maison des Arts, where participants reflected on their experiences and wrote them on a red ribbon to create a collective art installation.

A Weaved Place



sense of belonging



Taking a walk through La Florida district with residents of various ages and social groups

Partners: School of Architecture La Salle
Location: La Florida neighbourhood, L'Hospitalet de Llobregat (Barcelona)
Date: June 2021

During a walk through the neighbourhood, members of Espai Jove Sidecar, a community initiative aimed at preventing the social exclusion of young people, and the neighbourhood association Districte IV met to explore the area. Throughout the tour, older residents shared their memories and explained how the neighbourhood had been transformed over time. These stories were unfamiliar to many of the young people, most of whom came from other countries. At the end of the walk, participants placed printed photographs taken along the way on a map and shared their experiences.

A Reconnecting Place



Co-creating a choreography to perform a flash mob



Recording the sounds of the neighbourhood

Partners: Universidade Nova de Lisboa
Location: Rego neighbourhood, Lisbon
Date: January-September 2022

A programme of co-creative activities around sound and movement was designed with and for children and young people from the Passa Sabi association. The activities included the creation of a music piece inspired by the neighbourhood soundscape, a sound walking experience to capture the sounds, the co-creation of a choreography, and a flash mob performance to showcase the music and dance created collaboratively.

A Delicious Place



"Sensory experiences are intimately intertwined with perceptual memories that mediate the present moment of experience in various ways: by multiplying, judging and dulling the sensory encounter".

Monica Degen



Tagliatelle-making workshop followed by dinner at the local cultural space Thalami. Source: Urban Gorillas

Partners: Urban Gorillas
Location: Kaimakli neighbourhood, Nicosia
Date: September 2020

During the Pame Kaimakli Festival, a series of video stories revolving around the theme of food were presented. The videos documented various artist-led initiatives that used theatre, storytelling and performance to engage migrants and residents in culinary activities. The videos were screened in a pop-up cinema alongside videos created by A-Place organisations on themes of food, community and public space.

February 2021

March 2021

April 2021

May 2021

June 2021

A Pla(y)ce in Ljubljana

A Weaved Place Competition for mobile place activators

Urban Visions festival: Beyond the Ideal City

A Happy Place, Brussels

A-Place Mapping Experiences Contest

A Weaved Place Urban walk in La Florida neighbourhood

Paper at AMPS conference

A Confined Place Exhibition, Barcelona

Growing sustainability awareness

Raising awareness about the presence of nature in our daily lives, naturalising the city and promoting the circular economy are fundamental aspects to foster sustainability and build a more environmentally responsible society. Communities can contribute to a sustainable future by incorporating green infrastructure, educating people, encouraging recycling, promoting renewable energy sources, and using non-polluting transportation.

carbon footprint, nature, sustainable practices, vegetation, **urban ecology**: a place includes natural systems, resources, and habitats that exist within and around it, waste

A Re-place



Partners: Faculty of Architecture, University of Ljubljana and Prostorož
Location: "Krater" area, Bežigranski Dvor, Ljubljana
Date: March - April 2022

Residents, visitors, activists and community representatives were invited to discuss their ideas on the revitalisation of the area known as "Krater". Architecture students designed and installed public infrastructure using materials found in the area. Their proposals were based on circular design and reuse of materials, going beyond the conventional take-make-waste extractive model.

A Hidden Place



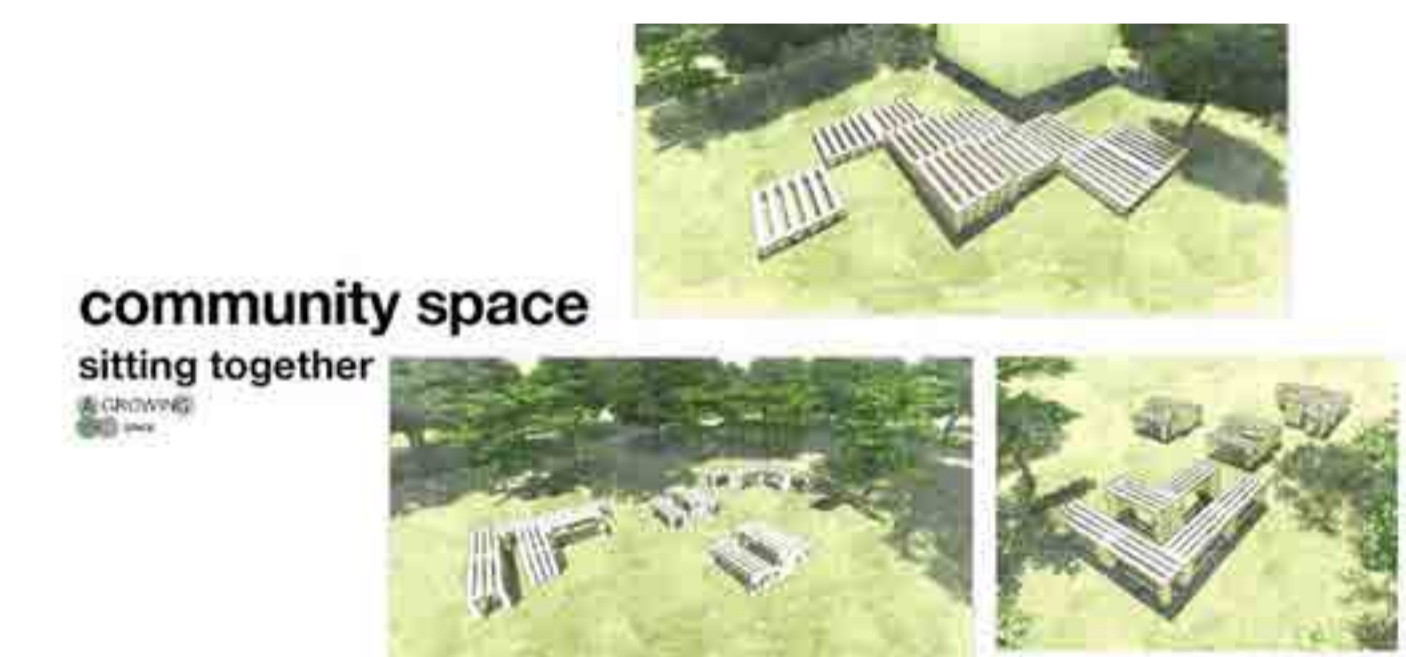
Looking for plants and painting the fence with local residents and young people



Preparing the table napkins for the community dinner using the invasive plants



Natural surroundings to transform into a place



Creating a place in nature and with nature

Partners: Faculty of Architecture, University of Ljubljana and Prostorož
Location: "Krater" area, Bežigranski Dvor, Ljubljana
Date: August 2020

To transform an empty space into a liveable place for people, Prostorož collaborated with the local community to explore the potential uses of plants found in the area. A meal (burek) was organized using local plants, which allowed people to discover the flora, its origin, and its impact on the environment.

A Seedling Place



Creating a community herbal garden. Source: Urban Gorillas

Partners: Urban Gorillas
Location: Kaimakli neighbourhood, Nicosia
Date: April-July 2022

During the Pame Kaimakli festival, the Forestry Department and the Municipality of Nicosia collaborated in a series of urban reforestation actions. A Vertical Garden was created along the disused railway tracks with 100 aromatic plants planted by neighbours. This temporary installation became permanent, and residents took turns caring for the plants, creating an attractive and sustainable place. They also planted 70 small trees in public spaces, schools and cultural institutions.

A Seedling Place



Installation at the Venice Biennale

Partners: Urban Gorillas, Alive Architecture, City Space Architecture and ProstoRož
Location: Cyprus pavilion, Venice Biennale
Date: October 2021

The installation at the Cyprus Pavilion of the Venice Biennale 2021 was a continuation of the Vertical Gardens installed in Kaimakli, Nicosia. Visitors to the Biennale were invited to plant and tend a community garden with seeds brought from A-Place partner cities. There was also an activity that involved Biennale visitors in a planting initiative shared through A-Place's social media.

July 2021

August 2021

September 2021

October 2021

November 2021

December 2021

A Visionary Place Exhibition at the parklet
A Seedling Place Venice Biennale

A Delicious Place
Community Dinners

A Future Place
Poetry / Prose Poetry Contest

A Weaved Place Public debates at Tecla Sala

Article at Annales

LOOP Barcelona
Urban Visions Festival

A Place of Our Own Open Mural

Newsletter #2

A Future Place Workshops "My Neighbourhood... My Place"

A Weaved Place Mapping the territory: Photographic survey

A Weaved Place Mapping and constructing places

A-Place Mapping Artwork Contest