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Table of Contents

Co-Creation and the City: Arts-Based Methods and Participatory Approaches in Urban Planning
Juliet Carpenter and Christina Horvath 311–314

Co-Creation Beyond Humans: The Arts of Multispecies Placemaking
Cecilie Sachs Olsen 315–325

Urban Drama: Power Mediation in Antagonistic Copenhagen
Jan Lilliendahl Larsen and Martin Severin Frandsen 326–339

Co-Creation From the Grassroots: Listening to Arts-Based Community Organizing in Little Tokyo
Jonathan Jae-an Crisman 340–350

Picture This: Exploring Photovoice as a Method to Understand Lived Experiences in Marginal Neighbourhoods
Juliet Carpenter 351–362

A Framework for Co-Design Processes and Visual Collaborative Methods: An Action Research Through Design in Chile
Macarena Gaete Cruz, Aksel Ersoy, Darinka Czischke, and Ellen van Bueren 363–378

From Urban Consumption to Production: Rethinking the Role of Festivals in Urban Development Through Co-Creation
Nicole Foster 379–393

Planning With Art: Artistic Involvement Initiated by Public Authorities in Sweden
Sofia Wiberg 394–404

Cultivating Urban Storytellers: A Radical Co-Creation to Enact Cognitive Justice for/in Self-Built Neighbourhoods
Catalina Ortiz 405–417

Online Podcast Production as Co-Creation for Intercultural Participation in Neighbourhood Development
Robert Barbarino, Bianca Herlo, and Malte Bergmann 418–429

From Narrative Objects to Poetic Practices: On Figurative Modes of Urbanism
Jeremy Allan Hawkins 430–439

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Editorial

Co-Creation and the City: Arts-Based Methods and Participatory Approaches in Urban Planning

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Abstract
This editorial for the thematic issue on "Co-Creation and the City: Arts-Based Methods and Participatory Approaches in Urban Planning" draws together the key themes of the ten articles in the issue. Firstly, the concept of Co-Creation is defined as a collective creative process involving artists, academics, and communities. Co-creation results in tangible or intangible outputs in the form of artwork or artefacts, and knowledge generated by multiple partners that, in a planning context, can feed into shared understandings of more socially just cities. The ten articles are summarized, and the emerging conclusions are drawn out, under three broad themes. The first set of conclusions deals with power imbalances and the risks of instrumentalization within co-creative processes. Contributors dismiss romanticizing assumptions that expect artistic practices to inevitably disrupt power hierarchies and strengthen democracy. The second set of outcomes relates to how arts-based strategies and methods can help address the translation of issues between urban planning and art. Finally, the third group of conclusions focuses on practices of listening within co-creation processes, raising the issue of voices that are less audible, rather than unheard or not listened to. In their concluding remarks, the authors recommend further research to be undertaken in this emerging field to explore the constraints and possibilities for urban planners to listen to arts-based expressions, in order to integrate a broader range of understandings and knowledge into plans for the city of the future.

Keywords
affective knowledge; arts-based methods; co-creation; communities; embodiment; listening; participatory planning; power asymmetry; situated knowledge

Issue
This editorial is part of the issue "Co-Creation and the City: Arts-Based Methods and Participatory Approaches in Urban Planning" edited by Juliet Carpenter (University of Oxford) and Christina Horvath (University of Bath).

1. Introduction

Across multiple disciplines, there is growing awareness of the importance of understanding experiential and embodied ways of knowing that go beyond conventional practices of knowledge generation. In the discipline of urban planning in particular, participatory practices have been experimented with in an attempt to move away from rational planning methodologies (Allmendinger & Tewdwr-Jones, 2005) and to embrace affective and subjective perspectives on place that can emerge through creative practices (Sandercock & Attili, 2010). While creative, arts-based, and participatory approaches are generally believed to be inherently democratic, prompt thickened understandings of place, and encourage deeper community engagement in the planning process, in many cases they can also be hierarchical or co-opted by the power-holders.

There has been growing evidence, however, that applying arts-based methods within a communicative planning paradigm (Healey, 1997) at neighbourhood level can address some of the limitations of conventional approaches to planning. Recent experimentation with co-creation, in particular, has highlighted that arts-based

methods can contribute to produce situated and affective knowledges which in turn advance more inclusive understandings of place, that transcend conventional practices of consultation (Horvath & Carpenter, 2020). In this case, Co-Creation (with an upper case C) is defined as a collective creative process involving artists, academics, and communities resulting in tangible or intangible outputs in the form of artwork or artefacts, and knowledge generated by multiple partners that, in a planning context, can feed into shared understandings of more socially just cities (Carpenter et al., 2021).

While such arts-based approaches have proven useful to complement conventional understandings through their focus on previously unexplored issues such as social connectedness, they also pose a number of methodological challenges, issues which are contemplated by the articles in this thematic issue. Whether it be through the medium of drama (Larsen & Frandsen, 2022; Sachs Olsen, 2022), storytelling (Barbarino et al., 2022; Ortiz, 2022) or photography (Carpenter, 2022), this collection highlights the quest to find adequate ways to develop arts-based approaches and test their potential to contribute to planners' understandings of local knowledge production. They also draw attention to the power imbalances inherent within the planning system, which need to be mitigated in order to move towards more inclusive and socially-just cities.

2. Contributions From Each Article

This collection of articles uses the urban arena as an experimental field to explore how arts-based methods can contribute to creating fairer, more inclusive and sustainable cities. Contributors look at a variety of contexts ranging from Scandinavia to North and Latin America as well as Western Europe, identifying stakeholders whose voices tend to remain excluded from conventional processes of urban planning. These audiences range from marginalised urban communities and grassroots organisations to non-human species and inanimate objects, reflecting an experimentation to expand the definitions of community.

Sachs Olsen (2022) explores the potential of arts-based methods to develop a "multispecies placemaking." Drawing on a performative event in Norway, her article brings together theories and practices of the evolving field of multispecies art with the more established field of socially engaged art to discuss challenges of co-creation and participation from a new perspective. It concludes with a reflection on the possibilities of arts-based methods to foster not only methodological innovation within the field of placemaking, but also to suggest a re-thinking of what placemaking is and could be.

Larsen and Frandsen (2022) also focus on performative art practice in their assessment of a method that straddles political theatre, deliberative participation, and research, entitled "Free Trial!" Conceived by a local non-governmental organisation in Copenhagen, the "Free Trial!" process highlights the role of advocacy, agonism, and liminoidity in addressing contentious issues in the urban arena. However, the authors question whether such a process can handle issues of imbalanced power relations in the city. Power is also a theme in Crisman's (2022) article on arts-based community organising in Little Tokyo, Los Angeles, which draws on the example of a grassroots-driven co-creation process to show how empowered actors can listen and respond to community voices in urban development.

Carpenter (2022) focuses on the method of photovoice in her article, as a means of revealing otherwise obscured perspectives held by communities in marginalised neighbourhoods. Based on a case study in the Downtown Eastside, Vancouver, the research shows that photovoice can potentially provide a means of reimagining place within the framework of participatory planning processes. However, she also demonstrates that there are limitations to the approach, bringing into sharp focus the ethical dimensions and challenges of participatory visual methodologies as a tool for engaging with communities in an urban planning context.

Gaete Cruz et al. (2022) take the example of urban landscape design to explore how a co-design process framework can bring together different stakeholders, in the setting of the Atacama Desert, Chile, to apply visual collaborative methods for design. They conclude that urban co-design methods have an important role to play in planning and implementing urban transformations. Urban transformation through arts-led urban development strategies is also a theme for Foster (2022), who looks in detail at the role of co-creation in arts-led strategies, taking the case of the Bristol Light Festival, UK. She highlights the important role of cultural ecologies and co-creation in urban planning practice that engages with the arts.

Wiberg (2022), for her part, draws on the example of a government-funded arts project in Sweden, which aimed to strengthen local democracy in areas with low voter turnout. Rather than discussing the project from a binary logic of empowered/disempowered, consensual/agonistic, or political/antipolitical, her contribution highlights a more complex and nuanced understanding of how artistic methods can contribute to situated knowledge production in urban planning.

In her article, Ortiz (2022) argues that urban planning and design more specifically have to innovate in their methodological repertories, to include visual, digital, and performative storytelling which can challenge epistemic injustice. Taking a case study in Medellin, Colombia, she suggests that the role of storytelling is pivotal to achieving this overall aim, as storytelling helps to foster empathy, to understand the meaning of complex experiences, and to inspire action. Similarly, Barbarino et al. (2022) also experiment with the method of storytelling, in a case study from Wiesbaden, Germany. In their case, they use the medium of podcasts to bring together

different and, at times, opposing voices to explore communicative and agonistic approaches to co-creation and urban planning.

Finally, taking a literary perspective, Hawkins (2022) highlights the increased interest in applying literary methods to spatial design, and argues for a reconsideration of narrative methods for urban planning. Drawing on work by the architects Bernardo Secchi and Paola Viganò around the concept of the porous city, in particular in Greater Paris, Hawkins makes the case for a narrative of poetic practices within planning, highlighting their value in creating rapprochement between new possible futures.

3. Conclusions

The conclusions emerging from the ten articles contained in this issue can be grouped into three broad thematic categories. A first set of conclusions deals with power imbalances and risks of instrumentalization within co-creative processes. Contributors dismiss the romanticizing assumption that artistic practices will inevitably disrupt power hierarchies and strengthen democracy. Hawkins, for example, debunks the myth that storytelling carries positive values in itself and its use automatically enables planners to impose coherence to the urban landscape. Wiberg shows that commissioned art is not the panacea that public authorities hope for: a time-intensive process subject to uncertainties, it can however facilitate dialogues and raise new perspectives. Crisman also reveals that co-creation does not necessarily involve partners involved in vertical power relations. On the contrary, his case study in Little Tokyo points toward horizontal practices between equally empowered grassroots organisations who collaboratively influence urban outcomes through art.

A second set of outcomes is concerned with how arts-based strategies and methods can help address the translation of issues between urban planning and art. Thus, Gaete Cruz et al. advocate the use of visual collaborative methods to facilitate communication between planners and communities participating in the co-design of mixed sports functions in the Kaukari Urban Park project in Chile, while Foster shows how adopting a creative and cultural ecologies framework helped actors with asymmetric power relations negotiate their different social, cultural, and economic agendas while organising the Bristol Urban Light festival. Larsen and Frandsen's assessment of the performative conflict and power-mediation method "Free Trial!" not only reveals its potential to promote an agonistic mode of participation but also points to a broader societal need, vital for a pluralist democracy, to create alternative, parallel, or counter-institutions.

Finally, a third set of conclusions focuses on practices of listening within co-creation processes, raising the issue of voices that are less audible, rather than unheard or not listened to. Carpenter, for example, highlights that the potential of photovoice to become a viable participatory planning method giving voice to the community greatly depends on planners' willingness to listen to such alternative modes of consultation. Similarly, Sachs Olsen reveals that a multispecies perspective can only fulfil its promise to establish relations of respect and solidarity if planners are ready to move away from conventional human-centric approaches to placemaking. Ortiz's case study reveals the power of storytelling methods to bring the interwoven stories of individuals and collectives to the fore and create atmospheres for "asymmetrical reciprocity" if not symmetrical power relations—but only if met with progressive attitudes to planning. Barbarino et al.'s reflection on podcast co-creation also exposes the centrality of attentive listening to giving space to emotions and personal experiences and perspectives.

This rich set of articles has brought to the fore some of the opportunities and challenges for integrating arts-based methods in urban planning. While the articles have uncovered key issues as we have outlined above, this is an area of research that is just emerging, and the findings from these articles highlight some of the gaps that need to be filled as the field of research evolves. In particular, we see great merit in pursing further research into the politics of listening, at all political scales and more broadly, to address some of the limitations of applying arts-based methods in an urban planning context. This would include exploration of the constraints and possibilities for planners to listen and respond to arts-based expressions, in order to integrate a broader range of understandings and knowledge into plans for the city of the future.

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Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflict of interests.

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Article

Co-Creation Beyond Humans: The Arts of Multispecies Placemaking

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Abstract
Placemaking, as a form of urban development often focusing on arts- and community-based approaches, is becoming a key site for responding to pressing social and environmental concerns around the development of sustainable urban futures. This article explores the potential of arts-based methods to develop a "multispecies placemaking" in which "the community" is expanded to also include non-human species. Drawing on a performative event aiming to put the idea of multispecies placemaking into practice, the article brings together theories and practices of the evolving field of multispecies art with the more established field of socially engaged art to discuss challenges of co-creation and participation from a multispecies perspective. It concludes with a reflection on the possibilities of arts-based methods to foster not only methodological innovation within the field of placemaking but also to suggest a re-thinking of what placemaking is and could be.

Keywords
arts-based methods; co-creation; multispecies art; participation; placemaking; socially engaged art

Issue
This article is part of the issue "Co-Creation and the City: Arts-Based Methods and Participatory Approaches in Urban Planning" edited by Juliet Carpenter (University of Oxford) and Christina Horvath (University of Bath).

1. Introduction

As concerns around the detrimental effects of human activities and settlements on nature, ecosystems, and biodiversity are growing, the role of the urban arena as an experimental field, institutional interface, and focal point for reworking socioecological relations is intensifying. Alongside a widespread belief in the failure of national policies to address climate change, cities are increasingly targeted by planners, politicians, social movements, activists, and scholars alike as locations for progressive visions of future sustainable life (Angelo & Wachsmuth, 2020). "Placemaking" is accordingly receiving increased scholarly attention (Courage et al., 2021; Courage & McKeown, 2019). The term relates to a paradigmatic shift in urban design, policy, and planning towards community-oriented urban development. Focusing on the co-creation of urban space by various actors, placemaking is increasingly seen as an important site for responding to pressing social and environmental concerns around the development of more sustainable cities (Raven, 2021).

To engage the "in situ" community voice in urban development, placemaking often turns to socially engaged art. This participatory form of artistic practice is well recognized for sensitizing practices of urban development to the voices and interests of marginalized groups by working on a sensory and emotional level often seen as lacking in the more technocratic language of policy and planning (see e.g., Metzger, 2010; Sachs Olsen & Juhlin, 2021; Sarkissian, 2005; Vasudevan, 2020). It opens up possibilities for transcending the reach of conventional forms of data collection, participation, and representation, and provides new ways in which urban development can better understand and respond to the needs and interests of marginalized actors. With the emergence of "planetary urbanization" (Merrifield, 2013) and because the traditional understandings of "cities" as ontological entities separate from "nature" are increasingly unsettled, calls are being made to take the focus on including marginalized actors one step further, to also include non-human actors in placemaking (see e.g., Courage & McKeown, 2019). In response to these calls, this article discusses the potential of

arts-based methods to develop so-called "multispecies placemaking." While scholarship discussing multispecies approaches to cities is growing (see e.g., Hinchcliffe & Whatmore, 2006; Houston et al., 2018; Jon, 2020; Maller, 2021; Metzger, 2014), the term "multispecies placemaking" is rarely used in urban studies, planning, and design. One notable exception is the work of Duhn (2017), who positions the idea of "multispecies placemaking" to rethink the politics of who makes places from a multispecies perspective. Building on Duhn's work, this article defines "multispecies placemaking" as an approach to community-based urban development in which "the community" consists of both humans and non-human species.

Multispecies approaches to urban planning are predominantly informed by posthuman scholarship and thinking (e.g., Houston et al., 2018; Jon, 2020; Metzger, 2014). The common thread running through this work is the Anthropocene (scientific claims that human environmental impacts are reaching geophysical levels) as a cause for re-thinking human-environment relationships, in terms of, for example, decentering the human subject and reconceptualizing non-human agency in questions of urban development and planning. Within posthuman thinking more generally, artistic practice plays an important role in re-thinking agency and human-environment relations (Davis & Turpin, 2015; Wolfe, 2021). Art has long offered social and natural science empirical objects through which to theorize nature and society-environment relations through paintings, installations, land-art, and, more recently, eco-social art and art-science collaborations such as BioArt (Daniels, 1993; Dixon et al., 2013; Fitzgerald, 2019; Kastner & Wallis, 1998; Lippard, 1983). Adding to this history the emerging field of "multispecies art" (Boyd et al., 2015) is part of a shift from using art to highlight environmental issues (as with the eco-art of the 1960s and 1970s) towards interactive works that engage humans and other species as well as artworks produced with other species. While much of the work done by posthuman art theorists focuses on an artistic practice that includes animals, multispecies art arises specifically out of the work of new materialism (Coole & Frost, 2010) and multispecies ethnography (Kirksey & Helmreich, 2010) and is inclusive of all species: human, animal, fungal, marine, plant, microbe, and so on. The evocative potential of art is recognized here for developing new ecological sensibilities and new social, aesthetic, and ethical relations with these non-human species (Boyd, 2015).

The starting point of this article is that, due to its focus on the co-creation between humans and non-human species, multispecies art could become the new form of socially engaged art in placemaking: It offers an arena in which to expand "the community voice" in placemaking to also include non-human species. To consider how this might be done in practice, the article discusses a performative event entitled The Parliament of Species, which took place at the site of a planned large-scale urban development project by the Oslo Fjord in Norway. The event brought together theories and practices of socially engaged art and multispecies art to develop and explore tools and methods for a multispecies placemaking that aimed to include the needs and interests of non-human species in the development. This article begins by discussing some of the challenges of attempting to extend the practices of co-creation to also include non-human species in placemaking. It moves on to reflect on how The Parliament of Species addressed some of these challenges and ends with a reflection on the potential of arts-based methods to foster practices of multispecies placemaking.

2. Re-Thinking Co-Creation Across the Human/Non-Human Divide

Multispecies art and socially engaged art have in common that they are art forms that are produced "with or for" other species/humans rather than "of or about" them. Hence, both point to a form of collaborative art in which "the artwork" is not necessarily an object but a process that is co-created between artists and human/multispecies participants. The term "co-creation" is key here. I define this term, in line with Brandsen and Honingh (2018), as revolving around the role of the participants as co-initiators and co-designers of the process. "Co-creation" is understood here as more all-encompassing than, for example, the term "co-production,'' which, according to Brandsen and Honingh (2018), refers to the later stages of a process, such as the implementation of outcomes and results.

While co-creation is central in both socially engaged art and multispecies art, their use and function of the term differ. In multispecies art, co-creation is used mainly as an analytical framework for challenging the hierarchy between humans and other species. That is, co-creation generally refers to the idea that humans and non-human species are intertwined in shared worlds, with both involved in the "creation" of these shared worlds. The problem, as many critics see it, is that this focus risks ignoring the unequal distribution of power between humans and non-humans: Co-creation is seen as inherently emancipative and revolutionary, with little attention given to the meaning of this co-creation and the context in which it operates, for example, in terms of how co-creation might actually intervene in human-centric processes of placemaking. Hence, multispecies art often remains remarkably disembodied, self-referential, and a-geographical (Biermann et al., 2016; Kaika, 2018; Lövbrand et al., 2015). It rarely engages with on-the-ground actors and practices in specific local and regional contexts.

Within the field of socially engaged art, critics have long warned against uncritically celebrating the idea of "co-creation" in and through art as inherently emancipative and revolutionary (Bishop, 2006; Charnley, 2011; Kwon, 2004). For example, in her influential work

Evictions: Art and Spatial Politics, Deutsche (1996) examines how aesthetic and urban ideologies were combined during the 1980s to legitimize urban redevelopment programs that claimed to be beneficial to all. Arts-led regeneration emerged as part of these programs and often focused on the instrumentalized potential of art to contribute to urban revitalization (see e.g., Florida, 2002; Landry, 2000). Deutsche points to how the mobilization of a democratic rhetoric of "creativity," "openness," and "co-creation" within arts-led placemaking often is structured by exclusions and, moreover, by attempts to erase the traces of these exclusions. These exclusions hinge on producing space as a substantial unity and, in so doing, expelling any perceived "disturbances" (i.e., homeless people) of this unity. In a similar vein, some Indigenous scholars (see e.g., Celermajer et al., 2021; Fitz-Henry, 2021; Martin, 2020) take issue with the use of Indigenous thought as a way of conceptualizing non-human agency to promote multispecies co-creation. In celebrating Indigenous thought as a rejection of colonial human-centered imperialism, accounts of non-human agency risk not only flattening the diversity of Indigenous perspectives but also silencing subaltern perspectives that do not accept these renderings of non-human agency.

In order, then, to critically scrutinize the use and practice of multispecies co-creation in placemaking, it is necessary to move beyond the focus of multispecies art of seeing co-creation as an analytical framework into examining how it can be better understood as it is in socially engaged art—as an active process of empowering and engaging with those involved. What is key here is to examine not only how urban space is shaped by multiple human and non-human actors but also to examine the processes by which these actors become engaged in the (co-)creation of urban space. The question of participation is key here, and I will discuss this question in the next section.

3. Expanding the Practice of Participation Through Arts-Based Approaches

While participation is a concept that is warmly persuasive, it often leans towards practices that have strong exclusionary effects (Holsen, 2021; Mansbridge, 1980). Critics point to how participatory practices are often guided by norms of deliberation that implicitly value certain styles of expression as orderly or articulate, thus excluding participants who do not conform to these norms (see e.g., Young, 2000). Socially engaged art is recognized for having the potential to challenge these exclusionary forms of participation by expanding the more technocratic and discursive parameters of urban planning and placemaking to include affective, somatic, and non-verbal experience (Sachs Olsen, 2019; Sandercock, 2003; Sarkissian, 2005). Albeit focusing on human participation, this form of socially engaged art has much in common with multispecies art. The latter also experiments with new ways of including marginalized voices in participatory practices, for example, by attempting to generate sites for human-non-human communication beyond verbal signaling (Kirksey, 2015). To do this, multispecies art often focuses on "non-representational" (Thrift, 2008) and performance-based approaches. Performance is understood here as an ephemeral event that cannot be represented (Phelan, 1993). Hence, it is seen to offer an unmediated authentic relationship to the world, escaping the limits and demands of the human-centered world. The problem with this idea of an unmediated practice is that it risks seeing participation as an act that speaks for itself. It thereby cuts out half the equation by sidelining the conditions that are part of participation to begin with, as well as those produced through the encounters taking place within it. For example, important scholarly work has been done to invoke practices of listening as means to recognize the "voices" of both human and non-human environmental "others" (see e.g., Duffy & Waitt, 2011; Gallagher & Prior, 2014; Kanngieser et al., 2017). However, when implemented in urban development processes, the call for greater attention to the "voices" and "languages" of nature risks being perceived simply as a form of romantic re-enchantment of the natural world (Revill, 2021). Such an understanding may pave the way for manipulation, tokenism, and "empty listening" in which "being seen to be listening" becomes a form of statecraft strategy (Ryan & Flinders, 2018, p. 137).

Hence, to challenge exclusionary forms of participation, we need to critically question how the political, institutional, spatial, and affective contexts in which the participation takes place affect the power relations among stakeholders, for example, in terms of who can participate and in which ways. Key here is that it is not so much participation itself that is the problem but the context in which the exchange of ideas and interests must take place (Hajer, 2005). Recent studies of political authority show how specific modes of "staging" delimit possibilities for deliberation and action within a given context (Coles, 2005; Hajer & Versteeg, 2012). In the next section, I will discuss how The Parliament of Species used a theatre-based approach to reconfigure the context and "staging" of multispecies participation and co-creation. This theatre-based approach is rooted in socially engaged art as well as in a long tradition in the social sciences, particularly within geography, for mobilizing notions of performance to reflect on contestations around, for example, place and identity (Johnston & Pratt, 2010; Longhurst, 2000; Nash, 2000). Performance is recognized here for offering a means through which to reveal not only the experiential, affectual and processual qualities of specific contexts, but also to provide ways to think about their power-laden politics (Rogers, 2012).

4. The Parliament of Species

The Parliament of Species was an event that I—an artist and scholar working with socially engaged art—

organized with my colleague Elin T. Sørensen—an artist and scholar working with multispecies art. The event took place in June 2021 at Kongshavn, one of the transformation sites of Fjord City, the most ambitious urban waterfront development in Norway's history. The Fjord City is located by Oslo Fjord, Norway's most densely populated blue recreation area. The fjord has suffered greatly from the development of surrounding urban and industrial areas. For decades, the shoreline of the fjord has been hardened by numerous blasting and landfill operations, resulting in concrete-dominated hardscapes that destroy the natural habitat of marine organisms. With the development of the Fjord City, the trajectory of shoreline hardening is set to continue. Until its planned completion in 2030, the development aims to establish around 9,000 homes and 45,000 workplaces, alongside an extensive harbor promenade connecting East and West Oslo.

As Sørensen (2020) notes, so far, the world undersea has been invisible to the architects and developers of Fjord City. After examining the plans for the development, she finds that any genuine effort to re-naturalize and care for the urban intertidal and the landscape under sea is mostly absent. And while participation and sustainability are key to the Fjord City development (HAV Eiendom, 2020), there seems to be no reflection on how to include non-human interests in the planning process. In response, The Parliament of Species explored how arts-based methods could be used to promote multispecies placemaking along the Oslo Fjord. The focus was on how non-human species could be included in the plans for developing a People's Park at the site of Kongshavn. The architects designing the park had previously invited the (human) public to give their opinions on what uses and users the park should cater for. The Parliament of Species expanded this notion of "the public" to also include non-human species. To do this, the event used arts-based methods such as a participatory theatre and role-play to stage multispecies encounters, posing questions such as: How can we foster new relationships between humans and nature? What can we learn about Kongshavn by perceiving it from the perspective of a rock or a bird? What non-human needs and interests should be taken into consideration in the development of the park? What does it mean to speak not only *for* other species but also *from* a multispecies perspective?

Sørensen and I recruited participants for the event through our professional and personal networks, focusing on gathering an interdisciplinary and intergenerational group of 15 to 20 people. The response was very positive, and we put together a group of participants consisting of scholars and practitioners from the fields of architecture, landscape architecture, planning, water management, political science, biology, geology, ecology, urban research, activism, and arts. The age of the participants ranged from children aged between eight and 13 to a pensioner that had just turned 80, as seen in Figure 1. In planning, the traditional way of dealing with questions of the preservation of nature is by way of expert advocacy through spokespersons such as environmental scientists, urban ecologists, and zoologists (see e.g., Tryggestad et al., 2013). By expanding this expert advocacy to include children and the elderly as part of an interdisciplinary group of citizens, we wanted to challenge the tendency of placing the authority to speak in

Figure 1. The interdisciplinary and generational participants of The Parliament of Species. Source: Courtesy of Morten Munch-Olsen.

political debate only on those who have been granted some permission to speak on behalf of others, such as planners, politicians, barristers, or scientists.

5. Methods and Data Analysis

My research on and with The Parliament of Species was oriented around participatory observation of the event itself as well as a focus group interview following the event. This approach drew on my extensive experience in using participatory research methods to examine arts-based participatory practices such as socially engaged art. Participatory methods are helpful to scrutinize practices of co-creation as those conventionally "researched" are directly involved in some or all stages of the research (Kesby et al., 2005). Participatory action research further informed this approach, focusing on how researchers and participants work together to examine a problematic situation or action to change it for the better. The research is thus done with and for, rather than *on* participants (Cameron & Gibson, 2005). Accordingly, my participant observation was just as much about me acting, speaking, and listening in addition to observing. The event was also recorded, and the recording was transcribed, providing a "script" that documented how the event unfolded during the 90 minutes that it lasted. Furthermore, I took notes, documenting my own observations and reflections on how the event played out. Finally, it was important to have the participants articulate and reflect on the experience of the event on their own terms. By conducting a 60-minute focus group interview with the participants after the event, I was able to gain insights that were not necessarily expressed or observed during the event itself. In the interests of not predetermining the interview responses, my questions were carefully worded to avoid introducing pre-given discourses within which respondents could easily frame their experience. Rather than asking if the participants "learnt anything," I asked them to tell me about how they experienced the event from beginning to end.

In my analysis of the empirical data stemming from the observations and the focus group interview, I approached The Parliament of Species not as a "finished" product or artwork but as an ensemble of practices and experiences. The focus of my analysis was on how these practices and experiences open possibilities for interventions that interweave a reshaping of intellectual landscapes with a "doing of work" in the world. Hence, my analysis enabled the discussion and development of theoretical ideas in this article to draw on experiences with The Parliament of Species, and, moving in the opposite direction, The Parliament of Species asked questions about the theoretical concepts.

6. Becoming Spokespersons and Stakeholders

The Parliament of Species used the idea of "the spokesperson" to explore how nature might find a voice within a revised democratic constitution. This idea was inspired by Macy's development of a "council of all beings" (Fleming et al., 1988) and Latour's (1993) conceptualization of a "parliament of things." Both references invoke the idea of "the spokesperson" as a vehicle for giving expression to heterogeneous collectivities of humans and non-humans.

The spokesperson is an active figure of intermediation since, as Latour (2004, p. 68) emphasises, "no beings not even humans speak on their own, but always through something or someone else." In the context of human representative democracies, we are used to this idea of the spokesperson, and we are familiar with the doubt about their capacity to speak in the name of those they represent. As Metzger (2016) notes, the distrust in spokespersons is rampant: Do they really represent those they claim for or only their own interests? The intermediary function of the spokesperson, then, is characterised by notions of translation, doubt, manipulation, and invention. Yet, the words "manipulation" and "invention" in this context need not imply malevolence. Rather, they point to how any attempt at "giving voice" to a given subject is performative; it brings the voice into being and so enables or constrains certain (re)configurations of it. As this performative process is the same whether it is humans or non-humans that are represented, the function of the spokesperson opens an arena in which an exchange between these groups can take place.

To initiate the exchange between non-human species and the human participants of The Parliament of Species, the latter were split into groups of three and encouraged to explore Kongshavn in search for multispecies stakeholders. Deciding on one stakeholder that they found that sparked particular interest, they were asked to get to know it better: Does it have a name? Where does it prefer to stay? What does it like to do? What does it need to thrive? Why is it here? How does it use the area? What kind of transformation of the site would it like and not like? This speculative process of getting to "know" the multispecies stakeholders goes beyond how the consultation of stakeholders is usually imagined in traditional forms of placemaking and planning. In Healey's (1997/2006) influential book *Collaborative Planning*, she asserts that for placemaking and strategic planning to be successful, the key task of the planner is to conduct an analysis to identify stakeholders and make sure that the planning efforts grow out of their concerns. This understanding—that stakeholders exist prior to the planning process—has been largely adopted in planning practice. The stakeholders are usually positioned as already existing "out there," and the task of the planner is to simply locate them and bring forth their "stakeholderness." But, as Metzger (2013, p. 788) points out, planners do more than simply "assist" stakeholders; they actively foster specific stakeholder subjectivities through an active practice of creating interests that work to entwine subjects and environments. Stakeholderness

should therefore be seen as a relational effect rather than an ontological property. Hence, instead of seeing the consultation of stakeholders as a faithful representation of an underlying bedrock reality, The Parliament of Species directed the attention towards consultation as a speculative and manipulative activity. It foregrounded how consultations require practical skills in generating and "staging" stakeholders. These practical skills were further explored through the parliament itself, which used participatory theatre, such as role play, to examine how the participation of stakeholders can be staged in ways that enable new ways of participating and of co-creating places across the human/non-human divide.

After having identified and gotten to know the multispecies stakeholders (including the swan family, the common periwinkle, the acorn barnacle, the grey alder, and the bedrock), the human participants gathered around a circle of wooden benches that formed the stage of the parliament. One participant from each group sat on the bench with the two other participants in the group standing behind, as seen in Figure 2. The person on the bench acted as the spokesperson for the multispecies stakeholder that the group had found and that they represented. The two participants standing behind were not to speak but simply listen in on the conversation. They could, however, at any time tap the shoulder of the spokesperson, swap places with them, and thereby take on their role. This swapping of roles highlighted the potential of the play frame of participatory theatre to open a liminal space where one is both inside and outside of a role at the same time, occupying a space that is temporarily "betwixt and between" (Ryan & Flinders, 2018, p. 144). In the introduction to the parliament, I highlighted this focus on being both inside and outside of a role by sharing what I learnt as a theatre student—that the goal of acting is not to become the character one is performing but to apply "the magical if" in terms of being able to imagine oneself in the character's shoes: What would I do if I was this character I am playing? This form of role play may foster understandings that are key to urban planning in terms of developing a sensitivity to the plurality of the stories—both human and non-human—that places are made of. For example, the participants noted how The Parliament of Species made them question the dominant story of Kongshavn being "an empty industrial site" ripe for transformation as they imagined the place from the perspective of other species: the swan family using Kongshavn as a refuge to shelter the kids from humans; the common periwinkle who "stays local" because it is not very mobile and prefers a tranquil life on the rocky shore; the grey alder branch who defines itself as "hyper local" because its family has lived at Kongshavn for thousands of years. As such, the event provided a method for training participants to develop their ability to "imagine oneself in another skin, another story, another opening of space" (Sandercock, 2002, p. 8).

Figure 2. The spokesperson and the listener. Source: Courtesy of Morten Munch-Olsen.

7. Respect Across Differences

A growing body of scholarly work is concerned with how we can imagine the city from a multispecies perspective and, in this way, better understand how non-human species make their homes in cities and render meaningful the places they inhabit (van Dooren & Rose, 2012; Von Uexküll, 2010; Wolsch, 1996). Within this work, multispecies art is often recognized for its potential to expand our understanding of the "life story" of non-human species and their "storied-experience" of non-human places. By drawing attention to non-human species as narrative subjects in their own right, multispecies art is seen to hold the promise of prompting the recognition of similarity and responsibility between non-human species and humans. This recognition is in no doubt helpful in broadening our perspectives on various place-attachments, but it might also occlude a closer examination of which actors are more important than others in making places and thus prevent understandings of the broader structures within which various actors act. The latter implies thinking through and taking responsibility for the effects and consequences of human-centric placemaking on a host of both local and non-local non-human species. To do this, The Parliament of Species did not try to achieve sameness of capacities and situations by proceeding from an "analogical," "like us" kind of thinking but rather tried to establish relations of respect across the differences between ourselves and

other species. The potential of participatory theatre in this regard is that it creates opportunities for humans to act on other possibilities for being (Ryan & Flinders, 2018). This way, it might not only help us change how we think about and relate to non-human species but might also help us become conscious of our own roles in prioritizing human needs at the expense of others and the arbitrary ways in which we do so.

For example, one of the architects in the group had become the spokesperson of a bedrock. At the beginning of the parliament, stating that he was partly speaking from the perspective of an environmentally aware architect, he emphasised that the rock did not want to be pulverised and turned into concrete but to remain in its natural shape and to be used in local constructions and interventions. During the focus group interview he admitted a change in perspective. He observed that he—and most architects he knew—have an inherent will to facilitate or programme the environment by making benches and little pavilions that no one uses, or—more generally—filling out space with hard and closed surfaces. Listening to the perspectives of the other species, he realized that the point was maybe *not* to programme the People's Park but to leave the site unprogrammed. What, then, he concluded, if the desire to facilitate or programme the environment was not oriented around the desire to leave a mark but, on the contrary, focused on not unduly interfering with things in such a way that it would be possible for them to reach their full potential?

8. The Contradictions and Paradoxes of Transformation

The realization of the architect points to what Heikkurinen (2019) refers to as a "transformation paradox" that is inherent in all processes of placemaking. One of the main aims of placemaking, from an architect's or planner's perspective, is to achieve better place-based outcomes than would otherwise have been achieved (Campbell, 2012). This aim is predominantly rooted in what Heikkurinen (2019, p. 534) characterizes as the human "will to transform," which ultimately has led the planet to a state of ecospheric overshoot. The will to transform, he observes, is closely linked to the largely accepted premise of progress, in which the purpose for the human being comes from efforts to move humanity to an improved state. But as he points out, "from the viewpoint of the Earth, it is precisely less human action (not only better action) that is needed" (Heikkurinen, 2019, p. 533).

The contradictions and paradoxes of human action in relation to the environment were highlighted throughout the parliament as the role play drew out responses that often were spontaneous, intuitive, tacit, experiential, embodied, or affective, rather than simply cognitive. For example, the spokesperson for the acorn barnacle expressed concern about shaping the shoreline so that humans could go swimming. She feared that the making of sandy or smooth surfaces left no room for the sharp shells of the acorn barnacle. The spokesperson for the common periwinkle—wanting to express her support for the perspective of the acorn barnacle—suggested that humans could just wear bathing shoes to avoid the need for smooth surfaces, to which the spokesperson of the acorn barnacle immediately replied: "Oh no! We don't like bathing shoes! That would mean that we would be stepped on—It's the certain death of both of us!" This immediate response evoked laughter among the participants, recognizing the many paradoxes and contradictions in human actions, what Broto (2020, p. 2373) describes as "the excess product of the encounter between human understanding and an unruly…world." These paradoxes and contradictions, however, remain part of humans' dynamic engagement with the world we inhabit. The point of the Parliament was not to resolve the contradictions but to acknowledge them as a step towards a heightened awareness and an active, political mode of being in the world. As Broto (2015) argues, becoming aware of contradictions may provide a direction towards broader reconfigurations of social practices and generate a desire to change. The promise of multispecies placemaking in this context is to engage with co-creation in such a way "that collective thinking has to proceed 'in the presence of' those who would otherwise be likely to be disqualified as having idiotically nothing to propose" (Stengers, 2005, p. 994). According to Metzger (2016, p. 591), this is not necessarily a question about uncritically inviting "everybody" into the placemaking process but about "staging events that open up its participants to surprising insights and unpredicted collective becomings through which they learn to be affected in new ways."

9. Cultivating Awareness, Listening, and Receptivity

To become affected in new ways, Speight (2013) suggests a move from placemaking to "place-listening" as a form of open-ended, durational, sensory, and embodied engagement with a place. She argues that while placemaking has a visually oriented and mainstream urban regeneration focus, place-listening involves what Rodaway (1994, pp. 110–111) describes as an "auditory sensitivity" that is concerned with "flows and continually changing relationships, rather than objects or parts and compositions or views." This form of sensitivity enables modes of immersion that, in turn, have the potential to help planners tune into a multiplicity of modes of being in places and their related regimes of expressivity (see e.g., Andreyev, 2021; van Dooren et al., 2016). One of the participants described how The Parliament of Species made him listen differently to Kongshavn. Being located in-between a container harbour, a highway, and railway tracks, Kongshavn is dominated by a noisy, industrial soundscape. The participant noticed that during the parliament he became acutely aware that he was not able to hear any "natural sounds" from birds, insects, waves, and

so on. He described how this realization "hit" him with a "wave of discomfort" stemming from his sense of responsibility as a human for so violently silencing nature.

The notion of place-listening can be linked to a small body of scholarship that in recent years has emerged within political theory, dubbed "sensory democracy" (Dobson, 2014; Ryan & Flinders, 2018). Scholars within this tradition have suggested that representatives of government should endeavour to become more—and differently—politically attuned by foregrounding the roles played by processes of watching, listening, and feeling in fostering, shaping, and improving traditions of democratic practice. Notable here are attempts, such as those by Dobson (2010, 2014), to move the debate away from the focus on voice and speaking in representative democracy towards an awareness of the importance and potential of listening as "a form of receptivity that breaks with or suspends existing categories, thereby making space for new or marginalised viewpoints to find their way into the political arena" (Ryan & Flinders, 2018, p. 137). In the context of multispecies placemaking, this understanding of co-creation does not simply suggest a greater attention to the "voices" and "languages" of "nature" as a form of romantic re-enchantment of the natural world. Rather, it focuses on whether the practice of listening enables marginalized voices to actually make a difference in our thinking about them (Disch, 2008). As The Parliament of Species demonstrates, the use of arts-based methods is key here as such methods offer ways to pay greater attention to a broader sensual range of experiencing a place from both human and non-human perspectives.

10. Conclusions

The Parliament of Species not only points to the possibilities for methodological innovation within the field of placemaking but also suggests a re-thinking of what placemaking is and could be. Moving beyond the will to transform, multispecies placemaking promotes urban development approaches that do not unduly interfere with places but that focus on taking care of what already exists in a place. This is by no means a passive process and demands more than the abstract acknowledgement that places are co-created between humans and other species. Rather, it requires an approach that actively intervenes in "the production of space" and "the spatially constructed order" in terms of the production of meaning, knowledge, discourses, and institutions among various actors (Elden, 2004; Lefebvre, 1974/1991). The arts-based approach is crucial here as art implies a challenge to familiar categorizations, such as established views, assigned usage, and order—what Rancière (2003, p. 201) terms "the distribution of the sensible." This distribution of the sensible is strongly linked to the distribution of places, as Rancière (2003, p. 201) puts it: "What are these places? How do they function? Why are they there? Who can occupy them?...It is always a matter of knowing who is qualified to say what a particular place is and what is done in it." The Parliament of Species illustrates the potential for arts-based methods to test and rehearse new strategies for co-creating urban space in this regard. Co-creation is understood here as an active process of empowerment rather than as a passive analytical framework. It points to how stakeholders and interests are produced as a performative and relational effect rather than an ontological property. This means that stakeholders and their interests do not exist prior to the placemaking process but are created in and through it.

The creation of stakeholders and the staging of humans and non-humans alike in participatory processes foregrounds the fact that barriers to participation in placemaking are not located in the capacities of individuals but in institutional structures that form specific contexts for participation. The question, then, is not how do we duly consider the interests of those that are deemed unable to participate, but how do we change these institutional structures and participatory contexts to enable other species to have a say regardless of their capacity to speak? In response to this question, The Parliament of Species demonstrates how arts-based methods may, firstly, establish relations of respect and solidarity with other species despite fundamental differences, and, secondly, how such relations might work back on our spatial ordering principles to open novel and productive ways of thinking about and engaging with multispecies approaches to urban space.

No doubt the practical generation of multispecies placemaking as an integral part of urban planning and development processes would demand further method development, and—not least—a structural change concerning what interactions, relationships, and knowledges placemaking depends on. While arts-based methods cannot provide such a structural change in and of themselves, they can help sensitize practices of placemaking to multispecies perspectives. The Parliament of Species is therefore merely a practical starting point for discussing how multispecies placemaking can be further developed in practice. Nevertheless, it initiates an important debate about multispecies co-creation in urban planning and thus challenges conventional human-centric approaches to placemaking.

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The author declares no conflict of interests.

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Article

Urban Drama: Power Mediation in Antagonistic Copenhagen

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Abstract
Recent research on participation in Danish urban planning has identified three typical formats of engagement: hearings, dialogue meetings, and workshops. Alongside these mainstream approaches, a plethora of less formalized and experimental formats drawing inspiration from collaborative and performative art practices have emerged. However, common to both the mainstream and experimental formats of participation is a difficulty when it comes to dealing with more strategic issues of power in the city. This article introduces and discusses the development, application, and power analytics of a format that focuses on these issues, the conflict and power mediation method Free Trial! conceived by a local nongovernmental organization as a staged court case for high-profile issues in the city, which straddles political theater, deliberative participation, and research. The article demonstrates that advocacy, agonism, and liminoidity are the core elements that make the format effective in handling contentious issues in a constructive and enlightening manner within its created arena. However, it also shows that the handling of issues of power transcends the limits of this arena. To avoid reproducing unbalanced power relations of the city in general, the core elements of the format need to be incorporated among the wider public through an autonomous organization with this as its primary aim.

Keywords
advocacy; agonism; conflict; democracy; liminoid space; participation; urban development; urban planning; urban politics

Issue
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1. Introduction: Participation, Heated Controversies, and New Arenas of Social Drama

1.1. New Formats of Participation: Developments in Public Governance, Academia, and the Art World

Public or citizen participation has been an issue of "heated controversy" for several decades, as noted in works of international (Arnstein, 1969, p. 216; Friedmann, 1987; Fung, 2006) as well as Danish planning research (Agger, 2005, 2016; Gaardmand, 1993; Tortzen, 2008). As is the case internationally (Cowie, 2017; Niitamo, 2021), demands for increased public participation made it a legal requirement in planning and urban renewal processes in Denmark through a series of planning reforms in the 1970s and 1980s (Gaardmand, 1993), and new arenas and formats of participation have since been developed. Recent Danish research has identified three typical formats of engagement: hearings, dialogue meetings, and workshops (Meilvang et al., 2018).

Alongside this development in planning and public governance, new social and participatory tendencies have emerged within both academia and neo-avantgarde art practices from the 1970s onward. Within academia, participatory action research in particular has been leading (Kindon et al., 2007), whereas the developments within the art world have been characterized as "relational aesthetics" (Bourriaud, 2002), "collaborative art" (Kester, 2011), and the "social turn" (Bishop, 2006). By seeping into the professional settings

of planning and urban governance, these tendencies have supplied public participation with new experimental arenas of interpersonal interaction, dialogue, and expression. And due to their sensuous and informal character, they are used in regard to opening planning processes to epistemologically and socially new perspectives internationally as well as in Denmark; these tendencies have primarily been articulated in local urban settings, where practices have moved away from traditional disciplines toward more situated, facilitating, and relational forms of presence (Agger & Andersen, 2018; Atelier d'Architecture Autogérée, 2007; Awan et al., 2011; Cowie, 2017; Fabian & Samson, 2016; Larsen & Frandsen, 2014; Metzger, 2011; Nyseth et al., 2019; Pratt & Johnston, 2007).

1.2. Arenas of "Cold" and "Hot Deliberation" in Public Governance: Displacing and Supplementing Questions of Power

However, when it comes to the ability of these new formats to handle issues of "heated controversy," as well as general issues of power, the new artistic and experimental formats of participation are struggling—just as their mainstream counterparts always have. They are especially struggling in two ways: First, conceived for explorative and creative purposes, most of the new formats are bent on leveling social, economic, and political power imbalances—or at least displacing them temporarily. Issues of contention and manifest strife are seen as "heated" forms of deliberation where "the stakes are set and views are strongly formed" and "stakeholders are…hardly persuaded by others' arguments" (Nyseth et al., 2019, p. 14). In pursuing more constructive interaction, these heated issues are either postponed to other phases of a participatory process or diverted into questions of dialogical deliberation—in other words, the stakes of the situation are lowered and thus turned into what Fung (2003, p. 345) terms a "cold deliberation." Second, insofar as the new formats take on issues of contention, their deliberation and conclusions are much too often marginalized in the overall policy negotiation. The otherwise well-intended and well-executed processes of dialogue thus risk being reduced to varying degrees of tokenism in "engagement theaters" (Arnstein, 1969; Kamols et al., 2021; Pratt & Johnston, 2007).

The displaced handling of issues of power in the new experimental formats—as well as the troubled handling of them in mainstream formats—raises basic questions regarding public participation. Generally understood as a supplement to the political and administrative core of public governance, both mainstream and new formats have certain perceived functions in formally facilitated processes of policy creation or implementation (Fung, 2006). Apart from the involvement of concerned parties and knowledge input, one such basic function is the deliberation on contested issues. On issues of interest to the broader public, the general legitimacy of public governance may depend on the handling of such contestation. Moreover, as Fung argues (2003, p. 345), processes of controversy—in other words, "hot deliberation"—may make for more participants and better deliberation and implementation due to the mere psychic energy invested in them. Seen from the perspective of public governance, are issues of contention not too crucial to be displaced in participatory processes? Is the handling of such urban dramas not at the very core of society? The answers to these questions come down to the basic perception and conceptualization of the overall problem of participation.

1.3. The New Arenas as Basic Moments of Social Drama

At the intersection of art, public governance, and anthropology, Turner (1982) has provided specific concepts for another perception of participation. From this vantage point, the more or less open, creative atmosphere created in participatory arenas and their temporary leveling or displacement of power imbalances in the political field outside the arena can be paralleled with the "liminal spaces" that are so crucial for the rites of passage and handling of crises in tribal societies as well as for theatrical and legal processes in modern societies (Turner, 1982, p. 9). As such, they can be perceived as basic, anthropological elements in the reflection on and development of alternative structures of society and other power relations in major issues of contestation, or what Turner terms "social dramas" in the city as such—much in line with the agonistic perception of power and democracy of this article, which will be dealt with briefly in Section 4.2. In other words, integrating Fung's and Turner's vocabularies, the new formats of participation can be perceived as "minipublics" (Fung, 2003) constituted by other ways of handling heated controversy or urban drama.

This article introduces and discusses the development, application, and power analytics of such a mini-public, which focuses on issues of contestation and power—the participatory format Free Trial! (Pulse Lab Jakarta & Participate in Design, 2017, pp. 71–74). Conceived by an NGO in Copenhagen as a dramatized legal trial for high-profile issues in the city, it straddles political theater, deliberative participation, and research. The article is written on the basis of the authors' own experiences as action researchers (Kindon et al., 2007; Larsen, 2007) and co-inventors of the Free Trial! format and includes documentation of two cases of enactment of the format—the Christiania Conference in 2004 and the high-rise hearing in 2007—in the form of field notes, mail correspondences, photos, and documents, such as white papers, newspaper articles, and official planning documents from the City of Copenhagen.

We first present the polarized, political context in which this format as well as other new formats of participation were developed. Second, we describe the specific political conflict—a governmental plan for "normalization" of the "free town" of Christiania—that led to the

conception of and the first experience with Free Trial!, and we present its central constituents. Third, we discuss the initial theorization of the first experience, drawing on theories of planning, democracy, performance and anthropology. Fourth, having moved from the outside context of division and conflict and gradually closer to the constituents of this mini-public, we move out again into the general public of the city and reflect on the experiences with negotiating the format practically in different contexts. Finally, we conclude by discussing its main theoretical and political potential—that is, other ways of handling urban drama—in the structural context of a divided urban democracy.

2. The Great Divide of Urban Politics in Copenhagen

Following a decade marked by violent confrontations surrounding urban renewal projects, the 1990s became a period of experimentation with new institutions and formats of participation in local democracy in Copenhagen. To reduce the distance between the central municipal government and local neighborhoods, an experiment with district councils (*bydelsråd*) was carried out; as a response to the conflicts surrounding urban renewal, a new so-called integrated and area-based approach was developed (*kvarterløft*). These newly invented institutional arenas (Cornwall, 2004) became seedbeds for experiments with citizens' participation and co-creation at the local level (Agger, 2005). After a decade of experimentation, the programs of the 1990s became institutionalized in more permanent but also less ambitious institutions of local democracy in the form of local councils (*lokaludvalg*) and area-based urban renewal (*områdefornyelse*; Nyseth et al., 2019), with the latter now inscribed in a new urban renewal act.

The development of the new arenas of local democracy was accompanied by a turn toward relational aesthetics in the Copenhagen scene of activism, art, and urbanism, which led to new collaborations among artists, urbanists, and institutions of local democracy, often in the form of participatory and aesthetic projects aiming to include marginalized groups or perspectives in the renewal of public spaces (Fabian & Samson, 2016; Larsen & Frandsen, 2014; Vind & Balfeldt, 2016).

While the new institutions and experimental formats of participation are arguably an extension of local welfare and democracy, they are only one side of the story of urban policy and planning in Copenhagen since the 1990s. The early 1990s also saw the birth of a new paradigm of Copenhagen as an entrepreneurial city and a new growth-oriented coalition among the state, the city, and private interests (Andersen, 2001; Desfor & Jørgensen, 2004). The result of this growth-oriented trajectory was new large-scale urban development projects, initially on the island of Amager (the Orestad project) and later along the city's harbor front. These redevelopment schemes were organized in the form of so-called public asset corporations (Noring, 2019) and public–private partnerships; they were politically adopted with a minimum of public consultation, causing a high level of public controversy and conflict with the Orestad project and a new high-rise development on Krøyers Plads in the inner harbor of Copenhagen, as conflictual epicenters of "hot deliberation" in the 1990s and 2000s (Andersen, 2001; Desfor & Jørgensen, 2004; Larsen, 2007).

The two opposing trajectories that emerged in this period produced a dualism (Andersen & Pløger, 2007) and a great divide of urban politics and democracy that, together with the high conflict level surrounding strategic urban development, haunted the city of Copenhagen in the following years. The innovative and artistic experiments with new institutions and formats of participation were confined to the level of local and neighborhood democracy, while centralized and strategic urban policy was left largely untouched as a domain of efficient policy for a narrow political elite.

The Free Trial! format was born in the context of this antagonistic climate of strategic urban development as an attempt to straddle the great divide. Emerging from the milieu between the scene of alternative urbanism and local democratic experimentation, it was an attempt to use a theatrical and deliberative format—a facilitated political microcosm, a mini-public—to deal with strategic and conflictual issues head on.

3. Initial Conception and Implementation: Playful Contention in a Staged Trial

3.1. Immediate Background: A Free Town, a Conflict, and Two NGOs

The Free Trial! format was conceived by a group named Supertanker, which was established in 2003 as a direct consequence of an antagonistic public meeting about the future redevelopment of the harbor of Copenhagen. A small group of activists, entrepreneurs, and urbanists—including the authors of this article—partly inspired by the participatory experimentation in local democracy, gathered with the ambition of showing how urban redevelopment could be handled differently (Larsen, 2007). The first step toward Free Trial! was taken when Supertanker, in 2003, was asked by the student organization PlaNet to participate in the organization of a conference about the future of Christiania, an internationally renowned alternative community established by squatters in the center of Copenhagen during the autumn of 1971, which quickly evolved into an important, liminoid space of Copenhagen. The same year (2003), the right-wing national government launched a plan for the "normalization" of Christiania. For the residents of Christiania, normalization spelt a de facto dismantling of the place as an autonomous, self-governed community; consequently, the plan was met with fierce opposition, not only from residents of Christiania but also from many citizens of Copenhagen. The situation quickly deteriorated into a hostile antagonism, where polarizing

media coverage contributed to killing off any possibility of constructive solutions, let alone dialogue (Thörn et al., 2011, p. 59).

In the autumn of 2003, the debate about the government initiative to "normalize" the free town was culminating. As civil society initiatives, both PlaNet and Supertanker were outsiders to the conflict, but they saw the question of the future of Christiania as a concern for every citizen in Copenhagen. Thus, the ambition of the conference was to soften the confrontational rhetoric in the fixed and unconstructive climate under the motto that the future of Christiania was too important to be left to the antagonistic parties alone. The idea of staging the conference in the form of a trial emerged as an impulsive answer to the question of how to give equal voice and weight to each of the respective sides in the conflict. Furthermore, the hope was that the trial format would encourage people to argue and counter argue with mutual respect, and if a playful situation could be created, an antagonistic debate just might be prevented (Supertanker & PlaNet, 2004).

However, when approached by the organizers, the residents of Christiania were very skeptical of the initiative (they were preparing their own legal arguments against the plans for normalization)—as was the case with the authorities behind the plan for normalization due to well-founded skepticism regarding the quality of a public debate. An important part of organizing the conference thus was the preparatory face of creating trust and ownership between the conflicting parties and securing that each side of the conflict would be equally represented in the proceedings. The main argument from the organizers was that the specific conflict was a matter of concern for city and country and not only residents and state and that the initiative was an invitation and a challenge from the city's civil society. As a consequence of this negotiation, the more precise form and script for the trial were a result of meetings and dialogues with the stakeholders (some of whom participated in the trial as "witnesses") as well as with journalists (who were asked to play the role of "advocates").

3.2. The Format: Panel Debate Meets Legal Trial

The result of these meetings and exchanges, the Free Trial! format, took the divided and dividing political culture of Copenhagen as the explicit premise for dialogue in order to handle its powerful habits head on. The format was basically constructed partly in reference to the conventional panel debate and partly to one of the most developed arenas for the testing of different lines of reasoning in Western civilization: the legal trial. In short, this format of dialogue and contestation drew the possibility of direct and agitating contributions of interested parties from the panel debate and the firm, objective, and polemical regulation of the legal trial. However, as opposed to the traditional trial, Free Trial! was not about right or wrong, guilt or innocence, but only a test of the sustainability of different lines of reasoning or cases. No one is accused; no one is to be convicted. There is only a case to be illuminated from different angles.

The "witnesses" (Figure 1), thus, are a panel of knowledgeable people with deep insight into the matter under scrutiny. Their task is, from a position in the hot seat and in a concise and dynamic fashion, to give their very personal and agitating outlook on the matter (number 1 in Figure 1). Then it is up to two "advocates" (trained facilitators on a certain professional and rhetorical level, preferably journalists with their acute sense of debate and of the public sphere in general) to advocate for different perspectives on the matter. Their task is to find support in or refute the statements from the "witnesses" in the service of their respective cases (2). In this way, a situation is reached in which the more or less well-founded lines of reasoning of the "witnesses" are played out against each other (3) in an objective, playful, and dynamic fashion, whereas the "procedures" of the "advocates" act as the guiding threads through it all. After different forms of cross-examination, the dialogue is concluded with the "final procedures" from the "advocates," in which the essential points of the trial are reiterated.

This works as the basis for a workshop, in which the "jury"—that is, the audience of the dialogical part of Free Trial!—now starts its "deliberation"—that is, formulating new angles on the illuminated case and concrete visions for future action (4). The process concludes with a plenary session where the different groups of the "jury" present their "verdicts" in the form of proposals for general principles or future action concerning the matter (5). After the conclusion of the "trial," the dialogue in the procedure and the verdicts are transcribed and documented in a white paper, which acts as a testimonial of the "trial's" objective, playful, and dynamic nature and thus informs and frames the ensuing public debate and political negotiations.

3.3. Dramaturgical Script

The preparations leading up to a Free Trial! are an essential precondition for a constructive dialogue. The selection of witnesses and advocates is considered carefully and in consultation with concerned stakeholders to ensure that the perspectives, viewpoints, and lines of argumentation, put forward in a "statement of claim" for the upcoming trial, are seen as legitimate. Another essential point is that the selected advocates are thoroughly briefed and prepare their respective procedures carefully through research on the case at stake and through interviews with the witnesses prior to the trial. The following list covers the most important parts of the preparations:

- Research on the core questions of the development case and consultation of key concerned stakeholders in order to create balanced knowledge, perspectives, and ownership;

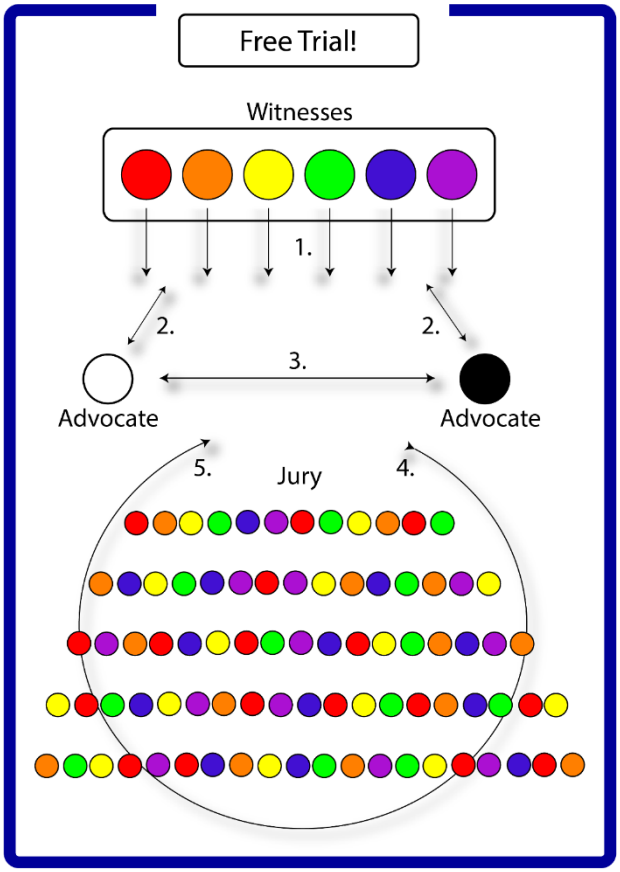

Figure 1. Free Trial! dramaturgical diagram. Source: Courtesy of Supertanker.

- Selection of witnesses in consultation with concerned stakeholders;
- Selection and briefing of advocates and dialogue with witnesses concerning the case;
- Formulation of a statement of claim based on research and consultation and in a way that leaves room for positive and negative angles on both sides of the issue;
- Common meeting with both advocates and witnesses attending the trial;
- Preparation of advocates' procedures through research and interviews;
- Selection and briefing of "trial" and "workshop" facilitators;
- Public announcement of the "trial."

Once the preparations are over, the event itself follows a precise and tight dramaturgy (Table 1), which is essential for the dynamism of the process.

4. Initial Theorization of a Mini-Public: Advocacy, Agonism, and Transition Within a Liminoid Space

The initial experience with Free Trial! was one of accomplishment. The conference ran for two days in February 2004, starting with a guided tour of Christiania and the trial proceedings on the first day, followed by the jury's deliberation (workshop) and verdict on the second day (Figure 2). The conference was an open, public event in which the participants, consisting of a mix of citizens of Copenhagen, residents of Christiania, students, and urban professionals, were invited through what Fung (2003, pp. 342–343) terms voluntary self-selection. The results of the conference were documented in a "charter" for the future of Christiania (Supertanker & PlaNet, 2004).

In this mini-public, the energy of the conflict outside metamorphosed into a drive for positive change and a sense of being able to do it together. The experience was condensed in the image of a Drug Enforcement Agency officer informally chatting with an avid hash proponent from Christiania as members of the "jury" during the workshop. Following up on this experience, a first and tentative theoretical reflection on the constituent moments of the format was made, drawing on theories of planning, democracy, performance, and anthropology. Three crucial moments in the mini-public were conceptualized accordingly: "advocacy," "agonism," and "liminoidity.''

4.1. Advocacy

A basic aspect of Free Trial! is the empowerment of minority perspectives. In the high-profile debates covered widely in the media, the issues are often molded on the same last: the powerful actors with concrete

Table 1. Free Trial! dramaturgical script.

Event	What happens?	Facilitators
Opening	The courtroom opens for participants	Atmosphere: Background music plays, and visuals are displayed on the wall
Welcome	Hosts welcome participants	Gong-gong sounds
	Facilitators introduce themselves and explain the process	The program is displayed on the wall
		The chief facilitator begins stage direction
		The advisory panel is seated
Opening procedures	The case in a nutshell: The advocates present their cases: "Honorable citizens, members of the jury, what you will now witness..''	Chief facilitator: Stage directions
Witness statements and cross-examination	All witnesses agitate for their perspectives from the witness stand: Three to five minutes per agitation	Chief facilitator: Stage directions
	Advocates cross-examine: One to two question(s) per advocate after each statement	
Break		Advocates meet with advisory panel and prepare details of procedures
Examination and hearing of witnesses	The advocates present the "evidence" for their cases through examination of the witnesses	Chief facilitator: Stage directions
	Each advocate examines the witnesses for five minutes over three rounds	The advocates confer with the advisory panels between the examinations
Break		Advocates meet with advisory panel and prepare final procedures
Final procedure	The case "in a nutshell"—The advocates summarize their arguments: "Honorable citizens, members of the jury, what you here have witnessed...''	Chief facilitator: Stage directions
Transition to workshop/jury deliberation	Facilitators thank advocates and witnesses, and introduce the workshop process and themes	Gong-gong!
	Participants locate chosen workshop tables	Atmosphere: Background music plays, and visuals are displayed on the wall
Workshop/jury deliberation	Having all placed themselves around the workshop tables, the participants shortly introduce themselves	Gong-gong!
	Members of the jury present their views on the case in light of the procedure	Workshop facilitators introduce themselves and their facilitator role
	Participants formulate future visions for development and/or concrete proposals for action	The facilitator keeps track of the time
	Participants develop, negotiate, and choose which visions and proposals to present	
Break	Participants take a break and prepare the presentation	

Table 1. (Cont.) Free Trial! dramaturgical script.

Event	What happens?	Facilitators
Presentation/verdicts	Each workshop presents their visions and proposals (three to five minutes) followed by questions from the other jurors The presentations end with closing plenary remarks and dialogue	Gong-gong! The chief facilitator gives stage directions during presentations, keeps track of time, and moderates the dialogue
Conclusion of the public hearing	Organizers thank all participants and explain the further process: Documentation, continuing negotiations?	

proposals for the development of the city versus the powerless opponents, who merely react and lead a negative campaign against the proposals. There is half a truth in this reading, but the often one-sided display in the media and at public meetings conceals another half, which is about the more or less underdeveloped visions of the "powerless." These are the kind of visions that were often mobilized in the forms of workshops that mushroomed in the late 1990s and early 2000s in "cold" forms of deliberation (Fung, 2003, p. 345) of local democratic welfare projects. But just as often, they were brushed aside when the "real" plans for the strategic development of the city were molded in "hot" phases of deliberation. In contrast to this state of affairs, within the trial, the differing takes on future urban development had to be placed on a level playing field, with equal amounts of resources to back the development of their respective visions.

This element covers two aspects of power mediation, among others. On the one hand, relatively vague or weak perspectives are given the opportunity to express themselves with the same analytical and communicative means as the relatively strong in such a way that the case is not about a thoroughly worked out "yes" and, according to some, a sneering, one-sided and reactionary "no." On the other hand, the confrontation of the respective perspectives takes place through a third party who has no vested interest in the case, but who advocates for a given cause in accordance with the agitative principles of the arena.

In planning theory, "advocacy planning" has been the exponent of this approach. One of the most vocal proponents of it was Paul Davidoff who, in a canonized article from 1965, argued against planning monopoly and technocracy and public participation as a mere "yes–no ballot" for the political consumer (Davidoff,

Figure 2. Elements of the Christiania conference. From left to right, top to bottom: Guided tour, trial, "jury deliberation," and "verdict." Source: Courtesy of Supertanker.

1965, pp. 332–333). Instead, he argued for the simultaneous proposal of alternative "policies for the future development of the community" and the participation of planners in "the political process as advocates of the interests both of government and of...other groups, organizations, or individuals" (Davidoff, 1965, p. 332). As in Free Trial!, Davidoff, a lawyer and planner, took his concept of advocacy from legal practice with its implication of "the opposition of at least two contending viewpoints in an adversary proceeding" (Davidoff, 1965, p. 333).

Apart from the political equalization and empowerment, Davidoff argued that the adversary proceeding taken from the legal sphere, on the one hand, invites positive forms of participation and mutual recognition—just as the first application of Free Trial! showed—but it also, on the other hand, allows for the existence of contention and criticism in city planning, which "has not always been viewed as legitimate" (Davidoff, 1965, p. 332)—just as in the contemporary political culture in Copenhagen. This points to the second crucial theoretical moment of Free Trial!.

4.2. Agonism

While attempting a balanced and mutual dialogue, the initial conceptualization of Free Trial! also underlined the perception of the negotiation of urban development as always marked by the presence and use of power. This perception was included through disciplined agitation. It was a clear nod to the underlying interest and engagement of all participants on either side of even the most destructive debates regarding urban development. Again, the procedure of the legal trial was seen as a way to handle and canalize the presence of power in a "heated" form of deliberation, in which agitating participants were enabled to stand by their interests and use of power in the "broad daylight" of a mini-public, where antagonistic tactics were disclosed and handled with the discipline of the legal procedure.

Partly inspired by theoretical currents within radical democracy, this moment of Free Trial! thus integrates an agonist perception of politics. It is a critique of a perception of democracy that claims the possibility of a rational consensus beyond the workings of power and, consequently, perceives popular and possibly contentious participation, beyond the parliamentary election, as "dysfunctional...for the working of the system" (Mouffe, 2000, p. 2)—just as noted by Davidoff (1965) and, in a Danish context, Pløger (2004, p. 77), regarding the daily workings of city planning. According to Mouffe (2000), one of the main theorists of radical democracy, this eradicates the basic, antagonistic nature of human relations between friend and enemy. Hence, to her, democratic politics is about the domestication of this antagonism; the constitution of "forms of power more compatible with democratic values" (Mouffe, 2000, p. 14), where the "them" is constructed "in such a way that it is no longer perceived as an enemy to be destroyed, but an 'adversary,' i.e., somebody whose ideas we combat but whose right to defend those ideas we do not put into question" (Mouffe, 2000, p. 15).

In line with the agonist perception, Free Trial! recognizes the basically antagonistic level of power, which needs to be disclosed and mediated in a way "more compatible with democratic values" than either a clear-cut "friend–enemy" showdown or a rational dialogue allegedly beyond power. At the same time, this perception opens a window onto the vital undercurrent of conflicts, which, handled in the right way, can yield an immediate energetic impact on the atmosphere of a mini-public—much as Fung (2003, p. 345) notes regarding "hot deliberation." This brings us to the third crucial moment of Free Trial!. It points not only to performance-theoretical implications but also to an anthropological and historical level that sublates the specific implications of the mini-public to another, general level, which will guide the remainder of this article.

4.3. The Liminoid and the Aesthetic Handling of Social Dramas

As noted, the effect of the initial, intuitive focus on creating a playful situation to sublimate the antagonistic dynamics of the Christiania issue was immediately affirmed in the subjective experience of the atmosphere at the hearing. This ability of different forms of dramatization to shed light on new perspectives or empower minority issues in social conflicts is well known (Boal, 2019; Hawkins & Georgakopolous, 2010). Free Trial! is akin to a political ritual, a theatrical ritual of participatory democracy like Boal's (1998) legislative theater, where the aim of the dramatic ritual is to produce novel and creative proposals for political and/or legal action.

In Free Trial!, the staging of the participants in the roles of advocating lawyers, witnesses, and members of the jury creates a partly fictional space in which participants are encouraged as well as forced to step out of their positions and roles in the real-life political conflict and to examine the case from the viewpoint of the assigned roles in the trial. This form of role-playing produces what could be termed a form of "participant objectification." By way of the assigned role as a jury, the invited public—the "spect-actors," in Boal's (1998) terms—see their own position and role in the conflict from a distance and from the perspective of a jury that has to take both sides of the conflict into consideration when forming their verdict. The opponents in the conflict are, in a positive sense of the word, "estranged" (Bloch, 1970) from their habitual selves as political subjects.

As implied in Section 1, the arena created through Free Trial! thus resonates with what Turner (1982, p. 55) conceptualizes as "liminal" or, in modern societies, "liminoid spaces." These are the intermediary spaces of ritual and performance where the habitual norms, roles, and identities in "real life" are suspended and "participants can try on new identities, new behaviors and ways of

dealing with conflicts, themselves and others" (Hawkins & Georgakopolous, 2010, pp. 113–114)—in other words, new "protostructures" set apart from and explicitly critiquing the structural norm of society, from which the liminoid space is ritually separated. It is through this, when all in the mini-public goes well, that a sense of "unstructured *communitas*" emerges; when "two people believe that they experience unity, all people are felt by those two, even if only for a flash, to be one" (Turner, 1982, p. 47)—even amid ongoing conflict and between partisans of opposite perspectives, as the Drug Enforcement Agency officer and the hash proponent at the initial Free Trial!.

As such, a liminoid space such as Free Trial! constitutes a potentially crucial moment in what Turner (1982, p. 11) characterizes as the "primordial and perennial agonistic mode" of society—that is, conflicts and "social drama." As a modern form of a "rite of passage," preceded by a ritual "separation" from normal society, the liminoid mini-public is the time and space of "transition" acting as a potential "seedbed of cultural creativity," where "new models, symbols, paradigms, etc., arise" with the possibility that these, in a succeeding "incorporation," "then feed back into the 'central' economic and politico-legal domains and arenas, supplying them with goals, aspirations, incentives, structural models and raison d'être" (Turner, 1982, p. 28).

In the following section, several applications of Free Trial! in Copenhagen in the ensuing years will be used as a means to study the practical negotiation and mediation between the liminoid mini-public of "transition" and its potential "separation" from and "incorporation" in the central domains and arenas of control and growth in Copenhagen.

5. Reenactments: The Tactics of Separation and Incorporation in the Structural Norm of Growth, Control, and Antagonism

5.1. Reenactment: Repetition and Difference

In the years following the initial conception and first experiences with the format, it was applied on several occasions in different places in Copenhagen. Hence, the first experiences and reflections regarding the potentials of this mini-public were supplemented with insights from new angles. Not only was the format repeated in different places, but it was also done in collaboration with different agents and interests (governmental, nongovernmental, and private organizations positioned across the great divide, that is, in both strategic growth and in local democracy and welfare positions) and regarding different cases or themes (Figure 3). In these different reenactments of Free Trial!, the organizing facilitators also enacted different roles within the political field of Copenhagen.

Whereas the insights from these set-ups have been hugely different, the most important of these insights came from the potential of the concept as a tool of power analysis—a tool unearthing the immanent workings of power both among different political agents of the city and between these and the group of facilitators organizing the Free Trial!. The most crucial reenactment of the format was the one dealing with a formal, public hearing

Figure 3. An advocate challenging a witness during a Free Trial! on social inclusion in May 2014. Source: Courtesy of Yann Houlberg Andersen.

regarding a new policy emanating from the core of control and growth in the city of Copenhagen: a strategy for new high-rise developments. After several conflict-ridden planning processes regarding individual high-rise schemes (the aforementioned Krøyers Plads being the most important; Larsen, 2007), the municipal planning authority invited the citizens to participate in the discussion of how and where high-rises in principle should be realized, if they were to be realized (City of Copenhagen, 2007). The insights from this case are summarized below.

5.2. Tactics of Separation: Negotiating the Preceding Balance of Perspectives

An argument often put forward in the literature on participation is that in formal, public participatory processes, one of the most fundamental problems is the equal possibility regarding the definition of the agenda (Cornwall, 2004). This problem lies at the core of the conception of Free Trial!. However, as noted already by Davidoff (1965, p. 332), balancing the perspectives on questions of urban development requires more than a deductive exercise within a small circle of planners or consultants. Nowhere was this clearer than in the public hearing on the high-rise strategy in 2007 (Figure 4).

The years leading up to the hearing left no doubt that the municipality, and in particular the Social Democrats that held the office of the lord mayor, was all for challenging the existing low-rise skyline of Copenhagen. Public opinion against high-rises was just as vocal—spearheaded by the movement "Copenhageners Against Misplaced High-Rises" established in relation to the Krøyers Plads development (Larsen, 2007). Thus, the municipality wanted a public deliberation regarding this issue of conflict and contacted Supertanker, who had direct experiences with both the specific issue and with a concept dealing with conflicts. Soon, however, the first practical negotiations regarding the hearing, and thus the conditions for the deliberation, began—the conditions, so to speak, for the "separation" of the mini-public from the structural norm of conflict in the wider city.

Initially, Supertanker planned the Free Trial! with a considerable prologue focusing on a thorough elaboration of different perspectives on the issue in dialogue with major stakeholders. The reason for this was to broaden the knowledge and balance the perspectives in the hearing as well as the ownership of it, like in the earlier conflict on Christiania. With arguments regarding time and funds from the municipality, this preparatory phase was skipped, and the balancing of the hearing was left to the central organizers and the hired "advocates" (experienced journalists). Even in this small group, it became obvious that even though the municipality, represented by the lord mayor's administration, expressed a will to deal openly with the issue of conflict, it struggled with the loss of control this entailed (mirroring a general trend in public administrations; Tortzen, 2016, p. 68). This was clearly a case of what Kamols et al. (2021, pp. 20, 29) would term an "abridged" version of Free Trial! and thus a first step in the direction of the hearing as an "engagement theatre." As a consequence, one of the appointed journalists almost quit because of the pressure to limit the frame of the debate.

Still, the hearing was realized more or less according to the reduced plan as an open event for citizens of Copenhagen and in accordance with the dramaturgical

Figure 4. Free Trial! in the ceremonial core of the Copenhagen town hall: Hearing on the high-rise strategy in March 2007. Source: Courtesy of Supertanker.

script (Figure 5). Maybe because of this reduction, the hearing was marred by few but very vocal expressions of distrust and critique toward the conditions of the hearing in general—a critique which subsequently also was voiced in the press under the headline "Undemocratic Hearing" (Hagelberg, 2007). Whereas the dramaturgical script for the "trial" was met, and the dynamics of agonism, advocacy, and liminoidity created a certain atmosphere at the hearing, the lack of democratic context influenced its real impact. The mini-public did not succeed in negotiating the democratic conditions for its "separation" from the general antagonistic realpolitik of the city.

5.3. Tactics of Incorporation: Monitoring the Surrounding Process

Having partly failed to create the right conditions for a balanced democratic dialogue at the specific hearing due to factors preceding it, other questions arose regarding the participatory nature of the hearing process in general. Two major issues were clear. On the one hand, this specific hearing was the only opportunity for the citizens of Copenhagen to take a direct part in the participatory process regarding the new high-rise strategy. This meant that, even though the municipality acknowledged the conflicts regarding the issue by staging a "trial," this, in more than one sense, "staged" trial was the only opportunity for citizens to participate directly. On the other hand, the "verdict" of the trial—that is, the produced principles for high-rise developments in Copenhagen—were only meant as inspiration for the formal procedure toward the final vote in the council.

This meant that the municipality—in this case, the lord mayor's administration, with its double stake as an explicit proponent of high-rises and caretaker of the legally sanctioned negotiation between proponents and opponents—was in more or less complete control of the entire process. This is one of the dilemmas of planning processes in most local and national governments—and a prime example of "engagement theatre" (Kamols et al., 2021, p. 29) and "radically unbalanced power" (Forester, 1987, p. 311), in which issues of power need to be mediated. But in a specific policy question, so manifestly marked by conflict, the lack of general balance, for example, through the development of alternative policy proposals, the integrity of the internal culture of the mini-public is challenged.

Despite these challenges, the Free Trial! still managed to contribute to general public and political debate on high-rise buildings that led to a principled agreement not to allow the structures in the historic center of Copenhagen. The decision was approved by all parties in the city council except the Social Democrats, and to some extent put an end to the heated controversy on the issue (City of Copenhagen, 2008a, 2008b).

Most of the artistic approaches to participation work through the creation of an atmosphere for the participants of autonomous creativity beyond the control of established interests. One of their main defects is their lack of attention to the fact that it is still in a field within the control of these interests, "the structural norm" (Turner, 1982, p. 47), that the possibilities of the liminoid visions are realized. The explicit objectification of power in Free Trial! makes this paradox clear—and

Figure 5. Elements of the hearing on the high-rise strategy. From left to right, top to bottom: Trial scenography, "cross-examination," "jury deliberation," and "verdict." Source: Courtesy of Supertanker.

forces strategic considerations and decisions regarding the political context of the specific hearing.

As a consequence of the experiences with facilitating hearings on the growth side of the great divide in Copenhagen, Free Trial! has afterward been exclusively applied to or in collaboration with positions acknowledging the importance of the democratic process in itself, that is, the local democracy and welfare positions, or the civil society—the milieu in which the format was initially developed. In relation to the Christiania hearing, the format was conceived and applied in an organizational setup that matched its internal culture: autonomous civil society organizations bent on challenging the culture surrounding political contention. So, in a way, it was on the other side, on the growth side of the great divide, seeing itself from a place outside itself—in an estrangement of its own, that it was possible to perceive and then reconceive the protostructure of the format on another level. The implications of this will be teased out in Section 6.

6. Strategic Incorporation: Demands of the Mini-Public Toward the Political Field of the City in General

As noted in Section 1, recent decades have seen a host of new experimental formats of participation in urban planning processes in Denmark. In this article, we have presented one of these formats—a format straddling theater, panel debate, and legal trial. As such, it grew out of a field of urban politics that was also dominated partly by a great divide between traditional welfare perspectives and a new entrepreneurial growth paradigm, partly by a "structural norm" of perceiving and handling conflicts in the city as antagonisms. Thus, in the above, Free Trial! has been presented in relation to the conflict-ridden cases in this paradigm that either inspired it or were the matter that it was applied in relation to.

Today, approaching the fourth decade of the entrepreneurial paradigm, the same antagonistic structures keep haunting the city. Despite so many new formats—including Free Trial!—acting as potential "seedbeds of cultural creativity" (Turner, 1982, p. 28), nothing resembling a "new culture" of public deliberation has been produced when it comes to high-profile and strategic policy and planning issues. The conflicts, their form, and the major stakeholders of the city are the same today as when the paradigm first saw the light of day in the early 1990s. Conflicts regarding the harbor redevelopment surfaced whenever yet another project emerged on the horizon during the 2010s. In recent years, the focus has shifted back to the island of Amager and its vicinity (where the Orestad development is located), as redevelopment projects such as Strandengen (2017), Stejlepladsen (2020–), Amager Fælled (2020–), and Lynetteholm (2018–) have emerged from the close-knit policy network of the municipality of Copenhagen and City & Harbor (By & Havn). And for every step, yet another antagonistic conflict surfaces.

The experiences with Free Trial! have shown that formats with artistic dimensions can make a difference in dealing with issues of power and conflict in participatory processes. Particular practical experiences with the concept have yielded insights into both the internal workings of it as a specific arena of participation (Sections 3 and 4) and its external relations to the specific workings of the field of politics in the city (Section 5). Yet, the experiences and theoretical reflections have also yielded a more general critique of the workings of the general public of Copenhagen and the mini-public's level of "separation" from and "incorporation" in the structural norm of antagonism in the city. The liminoid protostructure of "transition" may be "separated" from the structural norm, but its "incorporation" leaves a lot to be desired. The challenge to this brings the argument beyond the theory and practice of the specific level of public governance and urban planning.

The argument regarding power in formats of public participation needs to be raised to a societal level, where more general issues of contention, power, and societal development arise. By perceiving formats of participation, these being mainstream or experimental, as mere supplements to public governance, questions of power are more or less displaced by default. The legitimacy and influence of the specific participatory arena or format are already defined externally according to a form of governance whose power relations are already given by the specific political regime of a city. Thus, crucial issues of power and contestation within formal processes of participation will always, by default, be displaced from specific participatory arenas.

The question, then, is: Should participatory processes be seen as essential moments in a more general perception of participation than the one merely integrated into the disciplinary practices of governance? Should participation also be perceived as a matter of "collective action" (Cornwall, 2011), "social mobilization" (Friedmann, 1987), and civic groups "proposing their concepts of appropriate goals and future action" (Davidoff, 1965, p. 334)—and, more generally, as a moment in citizens' rights to their city (Lefebvre, 1996, pp. 146, 174), which is just as politically crucial (Mouffe, 2000) as the formal policy of public governance?

Therefore, at this point, the argument has to leave urban planning and public governance as such. The presented experiences with Free Trial! are all moments in the unfolding, social, or urban drama of Copenhagen. They are "mini-publican" mirror images of the general, public culture of Copenhagen and thus also windows into alternative developments of this culture. The experiences with the different reenactments of Free Trial! point toward the need "to create alternative, parallel, or counter-institutions as responses to the established procedures" (Spector & Kitsuse, 1973, p. 147). As such, if an experimental format such as Free Trial! is to take its dealing with questions of power in urban development seriously, it needs to point the critique within its own protostructure beyond its own limits, as part

of its "incorporation'' in the city. One major point in this protostructure is the agonistic perception of conflict. Thus, Mouffe (2000, p. 17) argues that such a perception "forces us to keep the democratic contestation alive. To make room for dissent and to foster the institutions in which it can be manifested is vital for a pluralist democracy" (Mouffe, 2000, p. 17).

In summary, the format as a deliberative mini-public with power as its manifest object moves to a more general level of power analysis, to a demand toward the general structure of urban politics in which the format is situated. Free Trial! is not only a process of agonism, advocacy, and liminoidity, it is also the active facilitation of this within a temporary mini-public in the city. The basic contradictions, which have been experienced between Free Trial! and the growth- and control-oriented positions, are real contradictions in formal participatory processes in the city in general. Hence, the logical consequence of the contradiction between the basic moments of Free Trial! and the field of politics in the city, in general, is to replicate its facilitating position on a general, public level, as an organization acting in the public sphere in order to mediate relations of power and create more balanced conditions for democratic participation.

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Article

Co-Creation From the Grassroots: Listening to Arts-Based Community Organizing in Little Tokyo

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Abstract
Co-creation has been adopted by some as a new paradigm for collaborative and participatory planning, especially through the introduction of creative and artistic practices which can disrupt the problematic power relationships latent within urban projects and knowledge creation. Co-creation research, however, has often focused on practices which connect empowered institutional actors, such as city planning officials, from the top down to less empowered grassroots and community actors. Co-creation can take myriad forms, however, and I use evidence from the Los Angeles community of Little Tokyo to, first, model grassroots-driven co-creation. Second, this example shows how empowered actors can practice "listening'' as defined within public spheres literature to better respond to grassroots-driven co-creation. Third, Little Tokyo has also been the site of another promising form of co-creation practice: horizontal co-creation across multiple grassroots actors. In sum, I argue that co-creation practices which emanate from the grassroots can provide valuable insights, further a more just and inclusive city, and deserve more attention.

Keywords
arts organizing; co-creation; gentrification; listening; Little Tokyo; Los Angeles; participation; participatory planning; public art; public spheres

Issue
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1. Introduction

Co-creation is a practice that has increasingly come to be used in public administration and urban planning as a way to engender better participatory processes and positive urban outcomes (Horvath & Carpenter, 2020). While it is practiced in diverse ways, at its core is the desire to involve end-users in the process of making—such as the residents of a neighborhood becoming the designers of a new urban plan for their community, for example. This stands in contrast to more conventional forms of participatory planning where participation is included in only specific, defined moments where feedback is requested, such as within a community workshop or public hearing. Scholars studying co-creation, such as Carpenter et al. (2021) have noted its potential in enabling marginalized communities to work toward building more just and inclusive cities. Yet many other scholars, including those who coined the term, more often focus on the ways that empowered institutional actors stand to benefit from the participation of co-creators (e.g., Ramaswamy & Ozcan, 2014, pp. 280–282).

Co-creation activities initiated and designed by institutional actors certainly have the potential to disrupt problematic binary power relations and open up new creative possibilities as some scholars have demonstrated (e.g., Pruvot, 2020). I argue, however, more attention should be paid to participatory planning and co-creation practices that, instead, emanate from the bottom up by grassroots actors. Based upon analysis of art-based community organizing and urban development activities occurring in the Los Angeles neighborhood of Little Tokyo, I first demonstrate that planning actors operating from the grassroots, such as within or for community organizations, rather than institutional actors such as city planning departments, can produce powerful visions

for the future of neighborhoods that are just, progressive, and in service of the public good. I use the term "planning actors" to identify grassroots actors who are undertaking urban planning activities, such as generating urban plans, even though they are not professionally identified as urban planners. Second, drawing from theories of listening found in public sphere literatures, I analyze Little Tokyo's demonstration of how political leaders can listen "out" to grassroots action as a form of co-creation practice rather than the typical listening "in" that occurs in conventional forms of participation such as public hearings or community meetings. And third, I observe in Little Tokyo the possibility of "horizontal" co-creation between multiple grassroots actors rather than the typical model of co-creation between institutional and grassroots actors. These findings point toward the importance of analyzing co-creation and participatory planning practices on the basis of whether actors come from institutional or grassroots spaces, as well as expand our understanding of what is possible through art-based co-creation methodologies.

2. Literature Review

Co-creation is a concept that emerged in business and management studies in the early 2000s based on the observation that the process of value creation was shifting from control by firms toward control by consumers (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004). This has been described by some scholars as a "paradigm shift" which is "propelled by advances in global communication and information technologies" resulting in a "new age of engagement" (Ramaswamy & Ozcan, 2014, p. 1). Originally defined as the creation of value by consumers (Zwass, 2010), it has come to be used in other disciplines including public administration and urban planning to describe a participatory and collaborative practice where end-users become involved in all the steps of production: This can apply to the production of goods, knowledge, or even urban development (Voorberg et al., 2015). Carpenter et al. (2021) suggest that this participatory approach better integrates and empowers end-users, pointing to co-creation's use of creative practices and the arts as a means to generate "agonistic spaces" (see Mouffe, 2013) where dissensus need not come to a neat resolution. Indeed, Horvath and Carpenter (2020) have defined a capitalized "Co-Creation" as distinct from its generic predecessor, highlighting variants of co-creation practice that emphasize critical and creative forms of shared knowledge production as one might find in participatory action research.

Planning scholars in the US, the UK, and elsewhere around the globe have noted the complex problems of power that can warp planning outcomes (Flyvbjerg, 2002; McGuirk, 2001; Stein & Harper, 2003). Co-creation practices, for all their potential in reconfiguring power relationships between actors, are still subject to these pressures. Practitioners of conventional co-creation practices can resort to activities that are structured from the top down by institutional actors, such as planning workshops or research processes which have been designed by a planning department looking to solicit collaboration from community members. To use Flyvbjerg's (1998, 2002) value-rational analytic of power, these activities are still based on the rationalities of the empowered actors and thus hold the potential to distort and suppress what, democratically, should happen based on more broadly held rationalities. Co-creation, given its currency across multiple domains, needs additional critical attention to ensure that it does not result in the kinds of cooptation noted by scholars of other forms of participation, such as corporate public affairs campaigns or participatory budgeting (see, for example, Lee et al., 2015). Extending Friedmann's (1987, 1998) normative understanding of power in planning to this practice, I argue that co-creation ought to shift power to grassroots actors as to enable and empower marginalized groups.

One potential practice within arts-based co-creation that can help resolve embedded problems of power, at least in part, is careful attention to the "politics of listening" (Alexandra, 2015; Horvath & Carpenter, 2020). A nod toward listening does not completely resolve the problematics of power, of course. Nevertheless, care toward listening practiced by empowered institutional actors can help resolve pre-existing "hierarchies, tensions, and disagreements" (Horvath & Carpenter, 2020, p. 8; see also Bickford, 1996). Indeed, scholars have long noted the importance of listening within American planning practice (Forester, 1989, 1999). Our conceptual understanding of listening can be further enriched by literature from communication and political theory which dwell on the nature of the public sphere.

Political theorist Susan Bickford was an early observer of the importance of listening: As she writes, often theories of dialogical participation primarily focus on the masculine coded act of speech rather than the feminine coded act of listening (Bickford, 1996). Yet "both listening and speaking require attention to others," and, she argues, listening "like speaking, is a creative act" that requires "conscious effort" (Bickford, 1996, p. 144). Elsewhere Bickford has analyzed the design of cities and their public spaces as engendering or inhibiting interaction, participation, and dialog, with gated developments, suburban distance, segregation, and gentrification all contributing to what might be called a listening deficit (Bickford, 2000). These deficits have serious implications for democracy and collective urban life, as the design of our cities, spaces, and institutions yield "political noise" and become unresponsive to citizen needs (Dobson, 2012). So often, interventions privilege giving marginalized communities a "voice" without considering if or how anyone will listen—while interventions that make political actors better listeners may be more effective (Dreher, 2009).

Interestingly, the very same issues identified within participatory planning and co-creation practice—namely,

the problematics of power—are the ones that must be addressed to improve listening. Scholars have pointed toward evidence showing that when people at the bottom are empowered, those at the top listen, putting time and effort into resolving differences and creating shared understanding (Dobson, 2012; Fung, 2004). Listening, in this sense, is far from the "passivity" that it is often associated with and instead becomes a proactive "act." We can differentiate between common understandings of listening "in" to unidirectional media (mass media, for example), and listening "out" to the public by situating one in spaces and places where these grassroots voices are already in play (Lacey, 2011). In other words, participatory venues do not need to be constructed from the top down so that community actors can be invited in but, rather, institutional actors can go out into urban space in order to hear what is already being spoken on the ground.

One rich source of evidence that can inform how we can understand the power dynamics of listening in co-creation practices comes from the black American cultural experience. Habermas (1962/1989) defined the public sphere as a free space of discourse separate from governmentality yet outside of the private domestic sphere. This was critiqued by numerous scholars as being simplistic in terms of its assumption of singularity and of its reliance on the experience of white, bourgeois men (Calhoun, 1992; Fraser, 1990). Communication theorist Catherine Squires (2002) expands the theoretical model of the public sphere further with particular analysis of the African American public sphere, noting the distinct kinds of speech practices that occur within what she terms enclave, counter, and satellite publics which exist in relation to dominant publics. She describes an enclave public as one that hides counterhegemonic ideas within an internally lively debate (e.g., the "hidden transcripts" of antebellum spirituals; see Neal, 1999). A counterpublic stands in public opposition to dominant cultures (e.g., the civil rights movement). And satellite publics seek separation out of preference and occasionally interface with the dominant public (e.g., black internet culture; see Steele, 2018). Through this typology, we can identify speech "on the ground" that is meant for listening (i.e., within counterpublics), for listening with permission (i.e., satellite publics), and for respectfully leaving alone (i.e., enclave publics). I revisit and use this typology throughout the article to identify when and how different art-based political practices are meant to be heard by political leaders and the general public.

3. Methodology

The data for this article comes from a larger body of research focused on arts, activism, and urban development in Little Tokyo. I have spent a little over four years as a community-based researcher in Little Tokyo, from 2018 to the present, collecting ethnographic and case study data. I did this primarily as a member of the Arts Action Committee within a community coalition organization called Sustainable Little Tokyo (SLT). Data collection included 24 semi-structured interviews with artists, cultural workers, activists, small business owners, and community leaders, a survey of 333 community stakeholders, ethnographic observation at community meetings and events, and analysis of archival, historical, and visual materials. Principal data collection occurred from 2018–2019, when I was more heavily involved in community events and activities, but I have remained a member of the Arts Action Committee and continued to contribute and observe on a less frequent basis, typically within the context of a monthly meeting. While my analysis comes out of this larger body of community-engaged research and perspective, this article focuses on a subset of these materials and methods.

The subset of methods and data used for this article, in particular, include the following three elements. First, I use case study and content analysis of published materials of the SLT 2013 community vision process to understand the nature of one example of co-creation from the grassroots, complemented with some interview and survey data. Second, I use interview responses and ethnographic data from my time in the Arts Action Committee to analyze the role of listening in the process of organizing and social change which culminated in the City of Los Angeles granting development rights for a key parcel of public land in Little Tokyo to local community organizations. And third, I use a case study methodology to consider a specific event, the Little Tokyo Cultural Organizing Workshop, put on by LA Commons, SLT, Arts and Democracy, and the University of Southern California's Race, Art and Placemaking Initiative, to understand the potentials of horizontal co-creation organized by grassroots actors engaging with each other, rather than within a top down-bottom up hierarchy.

4. Case Study Context

While there might be numerous examples of grassroots co-creation activities in communities around the globe, Little Tokyo has long used the arts as a means for community organizing, building, and development. Perhaps most importantly, Little Tokyo models practical strategies that can be adopted by other marginalized, ethnic, and immigrant neighborhoods that face similar urban pressures. But its example also provides valuable insights for the literature on arts-based co-creation, expanding it into new contexts. Similarly, the public spheres literature has historically focused more generally on a generic European or American political context. But scholars such as Squires (2002) have brought in a critical ethnic studies lens which helps create a frame of reference for understanding how these elements play out in a place like Little Tokyo.

Little Tokyo is a relatively small neighborhood in the vast expanse of Los Angeles, a few city blocks sandwiched between the Civic Core, the gentrified Arts

District, and the industrial Skid Row; yet it holds outsized symbolic importance for Japanese Americans and Asian Americans throughout the Southland (Figure 1). As one interviewee described, it remains "the mother ship" for Japanese Americans in the area. It has seen dramatic challenges over its roughly 140-year history, including redlining, racial discrimination, the forced relocation of Japanese Americans during the Second World War, seizure of lands through eminent domain, an influx of corporate capital, and current processes of gentrification.

The community in Little Tokyo has often used arts and culture as tools for building cohesion and responding to challenges. In response to the economic catastrophe of the Great Depression, for example, community members launched the Nisei Week Festival in 1934 as a shared experience of art and culture that could raise up flagging businesses (Kurashige, 2002), a tradition that continues today. Or, in response to the influx of corporate capital investment from Japan during the 1970s and 1980s (e.g., see Iwama et al., 2021), activists worked to channel these resources into cultural organizations that would benefit the community rather than investing solely in for-profit real estate developments. In recent years, as new market-rate condo buildings have gone up, community members have come up with a slogan that shows how it is not fixed but is a dynamic neighborhood that moves into the future while asking that newcomers respect its heritage and give back to the community: "Welcome to Little Tokyo, please take off your shoes."

The example of Little Tokyo highlights how models for participatory urban planning and development have changed over time. Typically, within a participatory planning process in the US, the developer of an urban project—whether it is a private developer on a parcel of land, or a public agency designing an urban plan or infrastructure project—will have a vision for that project, and then will solicit public participation in the form of input or feedback on that project. These solicitations may take the form of hearings, commenting periods, workshops, charrettes, or more, but they offer no guarantee that this input will actually be used—and rarer still will such participation reach the "top rung" of citizen empowerment because by this point, the developer already has too much invested in a project to be open to change (Arnstein, 1969). Additionally, as numerous scholars have noted, while participatory planning practices were at least in part first conceptualized as a solution for incorporating views from the disenfranchised, they are often dominated by more elite, older, wealthier, whiter, and home-owning participants—This imbalance results in outcomes from such participatory processes that favor these empowered groups, often at the expense of those who do not have the resources to participate (Fainstein & Lubinsky, 2020; McQuarrie, 2015).

Co-creation practices offer an alternative model, inviting participants in at the earliest stages of a development process so that their participation can meaningfully influence outcomes. But even here, the milieu for participation already assumes a public or private developer

Figure 1. A map of Little Tokyo's current boundaries within the context of Downtown Los Angeles, as defined by its Community Design Overlay established in 2014.

with resources who can invite participants. Might there be a form of participatory practice that emanates from the grassroots from the onset, propositionally suggesting futures from milieus that are designed and created from the bottom up? How might outcomes be influenced if grassroots actors spoke "up" on their own terms, rather than institutional actors inviting "down" opportunities for feedback? One informative example of such a practice is the SLT 2013 community vision, initiated in 2012 and continuing to influence urban outcomes to the present day.

5. Co-Creation From the Grassroots

In 2012, Metro, the transit authority for Los Angeles County, began work on its Regional Connector project, linking disparate rail lines and constructing new stations in Downtown LA. This project, heralded by many as a critical improvement in the public transit network, was, to use Flyvbjerg's (1998, 2002) terminology on power, also a representation of Metro's particular rationality and it did not reflect a positive direction for everyone in Little Tokyo. The project cut directly through the neighborhood, razing half of a city block that contained culturally significant businesses and buildings for construction and its new Little Tokyo/Arts District rail station. This compelled the community to take action: Locals noted that not only were they losing yet another block to eminent domain as has happened historically, but the rail stop could potentially drive bigger and faster changes in the area as this newfound centrality increased gentrification pressures. The Little Tokyo Community Council (LTCC), a community organization with representatives from all the different stakeholders in the neighborhood, such as residents, business owners, cultural institutions, and parishioners, began to organize a grassroots community visioning process with the help of Little Tokyo Service Center (LTSC), a longstanding community services organization and community development corporation. LTCC, in fact, had been constituted a little over a decade previously as a community response to alarm about the incursion of big-box retailers on the very same city block. Action began this time around with a community visioning process, and this effort can be understood as an example of co-creation that emanated from the grassroots up.

The SLT 2013 community vision process spanned the course of a year, with community leaders identifying the need for a community vision and formulating the vision process in 2012 after the Regional Connector broke ground, principal community visioning occurring throughout 2013, and the final report being published in January of 2014. It raised funding from the Local Initiatives Support Corporation; the Enterprise Community Partners; the University of California, Los Angeles; and JP Morgan Chase. LTSC and LTCC also pulled in expertise from the Natural Resources Defense Council and hired numerous design, real estate development, planning, and infrastructure consultants, led by the firm Mithun. While representatives from public agencies were invited to participate in this process, it was controlled, organized, and initiated by LTSC and LTCC from the bottom up. The final vision report notes the importance of its "bottom-up participatory design process" that involved "200 community members" (SLT, 2014, p. 22) principally from senior and low-income communities in the neighborhood (such as Little Tokyo Towers, Teramachi Homes, and Casa Heiwa), from community groups and businesses (such as the Little Tokyo Business Association), and from community institutions (such as the various churches and temples, and other cultural organizations). A task force which included representatives from these diverse groups was responsible for maintaining ongoing momentum on the project, while broader community input was solicited at key moments, such as a three-day community charrette held in September of 2013, and numerous meetings that were held leading up to and after the charrette.

Of particular note is that, given Little Tokyo's long history of integrating arts and urban development as described above, these cultural organizations played a key role in formulating values and ideas for the vision, suggesting an importance for the arts beyond the methodological centrality of the arts typically associated with co-creation (Crisman, 2020, 2021; Horvath & Carpenter, 2020). Additionally, arts-based methodologies were used in the visioning process as a tool for shared knowledge creation. Both of these factors played a role in SLT recognizing the importance and value of arts-based methodologies and incorporating them as a key feature of its identity as it grew over time and became more established.

The community-oriented stakeholders participating in the visioning process contrasted with both single-site private developers and public agencies. Rather than focusing exclusively on design considerations such as setbacks or responding to some kind of project that had already been partially designed, the participants were able to conceptualize holistic, interlocking goals for the future of the neighborhood. These goals, as described in the visioning document, included (a) sustaining its unique character, (b) incorporating attention to environmental considerations, (c) a "balanced, human scale" for urban development, (d) the importance of economic vitality and mobility, and (e) sustaining the "strong community fabric" that comes from its stakeholders, its heritage, and its community institutions (SLT, 2014, pp. 25–79). These interlocking elements coalesced in a vision for a "sustainable Little Tokyo" where not only its environment, but also its culture, economic vitality, and community life were also supported so that they could be sustained into the future for subsequent generations. The term proposed by a participant and adopted by the vision was "*mottainai*," a Japanese term that directly translates to "what a waste!" but also connotes the emotional and humane importance of a holistic

understanding of sustainability—especially by decrying unsustainable practices (SLT, 2014, pp. 82–87).

In the end, the process produced the kind of community plan document that a planning agency might produce, but with a distinct and culturally grounded voice which emanated from the neighborhood's shared identity (Figure 2). Participants in the process were diverse, coming from a range of ethnic backgrounds and institutional affiliations including the historic Japanese American heritage connected to Little Tokyo but also extending beyond it to include its iconic pan-Asian American cultural entities, its significant Latinx population, and its multiracial religious organizations. In my research, one interviewee described to me that Little Tokyo paradoxically needs to remain inclusive for its growing non-Japanese American community members to protect its Japanese American history: Only through a strong community fabric where everyone can participate, build shared community values, and contribute to its livelihood will Little Tokyo remain on the map. This sentiment has enabled a place-specific shared identity where, according to my survey results, 87% of Little Tokyo stakeholders saw the neighborhood's Japanese American heritage as important even though only 47% of respondents identified as Japanese American. Ultimately, the visioning document highlighted the neighborhood's Japanese American heritage, but also affirmed its diverse, multicultural identity along with the need to protect all of these aspects of its character.

Analyzing the visioning process through Squires' (2002) lens, we can see it beginning as an enclave public model. It was a tool for community members to develop their own internal sense of culture, identity, and vision for the future. It then shifted to a counterpublic model as this shared vision sparked public action. Indeed, the vision plan which was instrumental in developing the *mottainai* sense of sustainability relevant to Little Tokyo's future and which was ultimately named the "Sustainable Little Tokyo" vision gave way to a permanent coalition organization also named SLT as a partnership between LTCC, LTSC, and another major community and cultural organization, the Japanese American Cultural and Community Center. SLT, as the counterpublic manifestation of the enclaved community visioning process, forms the basis for understanding how the ideal of "listening" can work on the ground in practice in the next section.

6. Listening to Little Tokyo

One of the key insights to come out of the SLT visioning process was the identification of three major parcels of publicly owned land that could be "make or break" development opportunities for Little Tokyo, as described by one interview subject. The first parcel was the Regional Connector site which, beyond its rail station, had its remaining space open for development possibility. Additionally, there was the Mangrove site, a large, open industrial plot of land slated to be used as a construction staging site for the Metro development, and the First Street North site, a large, city-owned parking lot just to the north of the historically designated First Street North strip of buildings at the heart of Little Tokyo. Acknowledging the importance of the "unseen layer" of property rights, as one interviewee described,

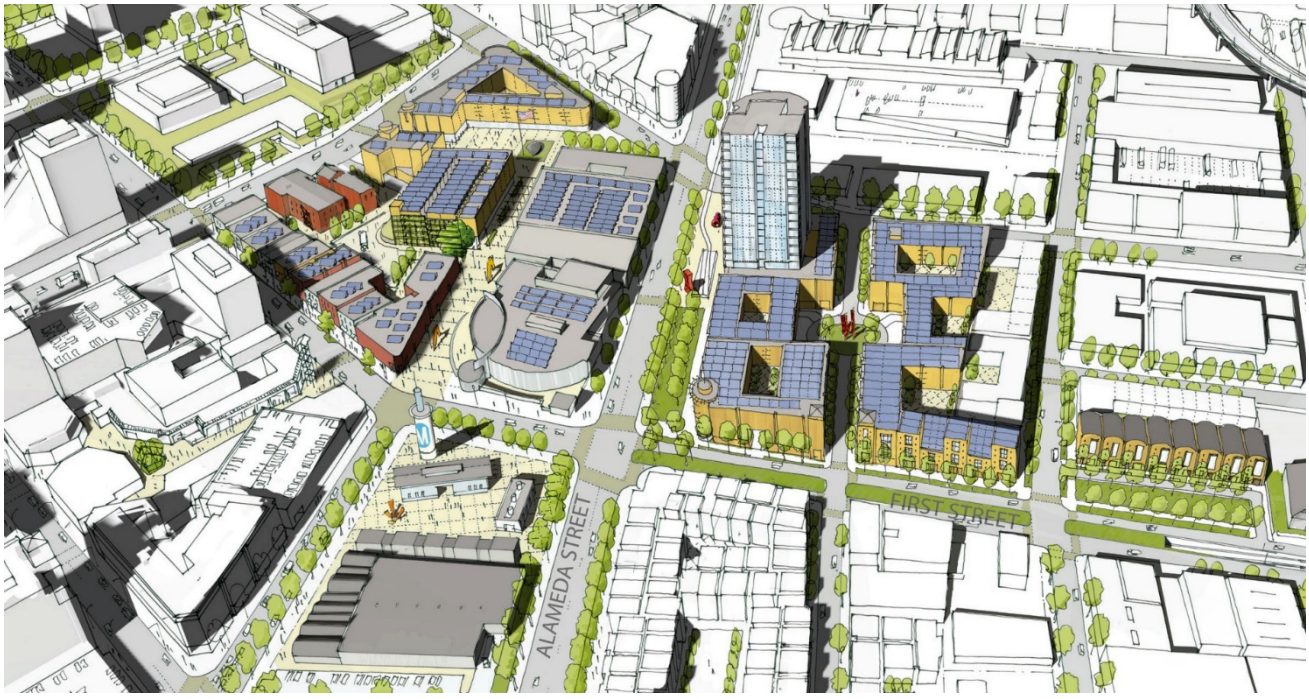

Figure 2. The conceptual design framework that came out of the SLT 2013 visioning process, focusing on new community-oriented development on three major publicly owned parcels of land in Little Tokyo. Source: SLT (2014).

community members identified that privately owned parcels were very difficult to control. On the other hand, they could use their voice and vote to pressure City Hall into ensuring that these public parcels of land were developed according to community specifications.

The SLT 2013 vision gave the community a shared rallying point, necessary for speaking with one voice that could be heard by city officials. The SLT coalition became the locus for community action in pursuit of this vision, speaking out in the form of arts events, showing up to hearings, and marches and rallies. The community vision provided an important precondition for this process to work as, often, communities are incorrectly assumed to be univocal and homogenous, leading to confusion and miscommunication when institutional actors in a co-creation process hear conflicting demands. A co-creation process that does not sufficiently allow for such enclaved public discourse before moving into a stage of public participation can thus result in failure.

A few years after launching the SLT coalition, its partners hired a full-time arts organizer whose role would be to use art and culture as a means to build political buy-in for the SLT 2013 vision. In contrast to many marginalized communities who see art with a wary eye because of its links to gentrification (Crisman & Kim, 2019), Little Tokyo's long history of incorporating arts and activism into its culture and urban development provided an understanding of how the arts could be used as a powerful tool for community organizing and speaking out. As one interviewee noted, one of Little Tokyo's strengths is in reaching out to diverse community members, and the arts can be a tool for doing that. Some early actions included initiating a public art exhibition titled "Windows of Little Tokyo" where local artists were commissioned to produce large-scale graphics about the past, present, and future of Little Tokyo that would go up in the windows of participating businesses. Another project focused on launching a podcast where local artists could share their music and issues of the day could be discussed.

One of the primary projects conducted by SLT was its ART@341FSN project when in 2018 it took over a small storefront on the historic First Street North block and held a series of dozens of arts events, from poetry readings to jazz nights. As an embedded researcher working with SLT's Arts Action Committee, I offered my archival and research skills to put together an exhibition in the space on the history of Little Tokyo's arts activism. Visitors to these art programs learned about Little Tokyo's history, what was happening in the community today, and were given an opportunity to sign up for a mailing list and learn about future actions, in addition to enjoying art. These participants may not have necessarily stepped up to an outright political event, but they were happy to engage and support in this context which felt more accessible.

Over the course of several years, this broadened counterpublic held numerous other arts events, sent petitions, marched, showed up to hearings, and ultimately pressured the City Hall to give the community control over the development of all three parcels of land so that the community vision could be realized. An Orange County-based developer was initially selected in March of 2020 to develop the Regional Connector site against the community's wishes, though community members were given a say in how the proposed building's ground-level spaces would be programmed. After multiple attempts to work with this developer, LTCC passed a formal resolution in August of 2020 in opposition to their selection, requesting that Metro restart its developer selection process, all while efforts continued to stake a claim in the future of the remaining two parcels. This unified voice proved effective, with Metro leadership withdrawing from the development agreement in November of 2020. Furthermore, city leaders passed a resolution granting a land lease to LTSC and community organization Go for Broke National Education Center across the First Street North parcel in March of 2021 and authorized joint development of both the Regional Connector site and the Mangrove parcel in July of 2021. While the outcome of this process remains to be seen, its trajectory is shaping up to align with the community vision after years of work from the bottom up.

Throughout this process, SLT and other community organizations maintained a productive working relationship with city leaders and agencies, as they have historically, while simultaneously voicing, again and again, its vision for the future of Little Tokyo. As one interviewee noted, "We've gotten better at demanding stuff—As time goes on, you get more savvy." The creative use of the arts amplified community members' voices, gathering traction in local news sources and reminding elected officials of who they represent. Where without public arts and culture, this vision may have remained a "hidden transcript" that was known to a dissatisfied neighborhood but unappreciated by elected officials; here, the use of arts and culture served to both translate and amplify this vision to elected officials and a broader public. Combining community activism with arts-based activities allowed campaigns to gain wider traction in local conversations and media, resulting in greater traction with elected officials. The city originally anticipated a conventional development process for these parcels of land but in response to this concerted effort enabled through arts-based organizing, its plans shifted to respond directly to the stated desires of the SLT vision.

I argue that this agonistic process can be understood as one means for listening "out" by elected officials. Community activists make their demands through public fora such as rallies or petitions, and elected officials respond through similarly public means such as public statements and passing ordinances. While the process does not resemble traditional co-creation processes which have both parties working together in the same room, there remains still the grassroots, co-created

vision that forms the basis for action; arts continue to play a central role, and the process pulls creative input from both grassroots and institutional actors in service of positive outcomes. The participants in this relationship collaborate as productive adversaries rather than consensus-driven actors, opening up space for multiple rationalities (see Hillier, 2003). These outcomes were by no means guaranteed: City leaders could have easily ignored the voices coming from the ground, and, certainly, the process was not always smooth. But listening ultimately yielded positive outcomes for the political futures of institutional actors and, more importantly, equitable and sustainable development that can help protect Little Tokyo from erasure.

7. Building Community Knowledge: Horizontal Co-Creation

A final example from Little Tokyo that can further illustrate the diverse possibility of grassroots co-creation practices is their potential for capacity and coalition building horizontally. While co-creation is typically modeled as a partnership between more empowered institutional actors and less empowered community and grassroots actors, it can also be modeled as a partnership across actors on a horizontal playing field. Little Tokyo has come to be known as an example of how marginalized, ethnic, and immigrant neighborhoods can band together and stake a claim for their place in the future of the city and, as such, other communities look to learn from its historical and contemporary practices.

In March of 2019, a group of community organizations from outside of Little Tokyo partnered with SLT to host, in their advertised language, a Little Tokyo Cultural Organizing Workshop, sharing knowledge on, as one handout described, "how leaders in this neighborhood have been effective in sustaining their culture despite a new wave of redevelopment and displacement." Organizing partners included LA Commons, a community-based arts organization in LA; Arts & Democracy, an organization that "builds the momentum of a growing movement that links arts and culture, participatory democracy, and social justice" (Arts & Democracy, 2022); and Race, Arts and Place, a collective of researchers focused on justice-oriented arts from the University of Southern California. Participants included numerous artists, activists, and community organizers from Little Tokyo and across Los Angeles, and leaders from other LA-based community arts organizations, such as the 18th Street Arts Center and the Los Angeles Poverty Department. Altogether, around 50 participants joined to learn and share knowledge about arts-based actions that can influence urban development (Figure 3).

Over the course of the day, we engaged in multiple art-based activities and methodologies for understanding the pressures that different communities were facing, and for collective problem solving and visioning for the future of our respective communities. Representatives from the Los Angeles Poverty Department, a noted theater group based in Skid Row who uses "theater of the oppressed" methods (Boal, 1985), led the group in theater-based exercises to think through what issues

Figure 3. Horizontal co-creation in action at a Little Tokyo Cultural Organizing Workshop organized between multiple community organizations in Little Tokyo and community and arts organizations outside of Little Tokyo.

were at stake in our communities and how to resolve these issues. A mapping exercise connected us to the place and to each other. Leaders from SLT presented the state of their campaign to influence future development on public lands in Little Tokyo. A ritual performance of connection and transformation led by noted Little Tokyo artist Nobuko Miyamoto brought us outside, and tours through the neighborhood where community leaders noted their history and key moments of challenge and activism told a story of how to overcome threats to one's place in the city. Some participants were there as conduits to communities in far-flung parts of the country, bringing new knowledge back home, while others considered how to apply these experiences to their communities in Los Angeles.

Co-creation is typically framed as a relationship between empowered institutional actors and less empowered community and grassroots actors, setting up a model for shared power and ownership across a creative process of project development that gets at questions of power and makes processes more equitable. But the example of Little Tokyo points toward practices which are already between equally empowered actors from the onset, putting together multiple grassroots entities who can collaboratively create and influence urban outcomes through art and action. While this model does not necessarily include the top-down actors who have access to development rights or levers of power, and accordingly is limited in the degree of influence it can have on things like major urban development projects, it nevertheless can be considered an important form of co-creation because it allows grassroots actors to build horizontal bridges with like-minded organizations, ultimately building up shared knowledge, social capital, and political power that can be effectively deployed in the kinds of urban actions which demand listening from the top.

8. Conclusions

Co-creation offers a set of practices for collaborative and participatory planning, especially through the introduction of creative and artistic activities which can disrupt the problematic power relationships latent within urban projects and knowledge creation. Co-creation research, however, has often focused on practices which work from the top down, connecting empowered institutional actors, such as city planning officials, with less empowered grassroots and community actors. Co-creation can take myriad forms, however, and evidence from the Los Angeles community of Little Tokyo suggest the importance of considering arts-based co-creation practices which emanate from the grassroots.

Communication theories regarding the public sphere offer a useful typology for analyzing these differing forms of grassroots co-creation: While top-down approaches operate within a conventional public sphere of the dominant culture, grassroots co-creation can operate within enclave publics, counterpublics, or satellite publics. I note that these are not fixed categories, but are often dynamic based on what phase a debate or project is in. In the case of Little Tokyo, it required a separate enclave public discourse so that it could align on a shared vision for the future of its neighborhood; then it moved into a counterpublic discourse that engaged city officials and demanded the realization of their creative plan for the Little Tokyo of tomorrow. A co-creation process that does not sufficiently allow for such enclaved public discourse can fail because empowered actors often mistakenly assume that one person or group speaks for a whole community, resulting in unwanted outcomes.

Similarly, communication scholars have long noted the "listening deficit" (Dobson, 2012), describing how discursive practices are meaningless without listening—And, as a corollary, participatory planning and co-creation practices are meaningless if they are not "empowered" (Fung & Wright, 2003). Little Tokyo used art-based actions to build power and to be heard by city officials. In this case, officials listened, heard, and responded to these demands. This is a critical component of co-creation practice that ought to be understood as a valuable form of agonistic collaboration rather than an antagonistic or negative outcome.

Finally, co-creation can occur beyond grassroots actors within a particular community to include other grassroots organizations in a form of "horizontal co-creation.'' This allows participants to build bridges with like-minded organizations, creatively producing shared knowledge, social capital, and political power that can be used in times of need. In all, these are features of a more capacious understanding of co-creation and offer broadened potential in its use by designers, planners, community organizers, activists, artists, and more in activities that can be initiated and emanate from the bottom up.

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Conflict of Interests

The author declares no conflict of interests.

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Article

Picture This: Exploring Photovoice as a Method to Understand Lived Experiences in Marginal Neighbourhoods

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Abstract
Scholars in the social sciences are increasingly turning to research questions that explore everyday lived experiences, using participatory visual methodologies to promote critical reflections on urban challenges. In contrast with traditional research approaches, participatory visual methods engage directly with community participants, foregrounding their daily realities, and working towards collaborative knowledge production of participants' situated experiences, potentially leading to transformative thinking and action. This participatory turn in research intersects with growing interests in community participation in collaborative planning and effective ways of engaging "unheard voices" in a planning context, particularly in marginalized neighbourhoods, using arts-based methods. This article critically examines the potential of participatory visual methodologies, exploring how the method of photovoice can reveal otherwise obscured perspectives from the viewpoint of communities in marginalised neighbourhoods. Based on a case study in the Downtown Eastside, Vancouver, the research considers whether and how creative participatory approaches can contribute to giving voice to communities and, if so, how these methods can impact a city's planning for urban futures. The research shows that, potentially, photovoice can provide a means of communicating community perspectives, reimagining place within the framework of participatory planning processes to those who make decisions on the neighbourhood's future. However, the research also demonstrates that there are limitations to the approach, bringing into sharp focus the ethical dimensions and challenges of participatory visual methodologies as a tool for engaging with communities, in an urban planning context.

Keywords
arts-based methods; consultation; participation; photovoice; Vancouver

Issue
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1. Introduction

Across Europe and North America, urban planning practice is facing a crisis of legitimacy. There is a mistrust of democratic institutions and scepticism in public participation, with residents feeling increasingly detached from the decision-making process. Inhabitants are experiencing a growing sense of powerlessness in the face of planning decisions that impact their neighbourhood (Brownill & Parker, 2010; Parvin, 2018). In the UK context, the Raynsford Review identifies the "continued disconnect between people and the planning process" (Raynsford, 2020, p. 10), and this sense of separation from local democratic institutions is echoed more broadly elsewhere in research carried out internationally (OECD, 2020) as well as in other national contexts such as Canada (Gurstein & Hutton, 2019).

There is a significant body of scholarly research that highlights the limitations of current approaches to community engagement (e.g., Carpenter & Brownill, 2008; Parker et al., 2014) including a paucity of inclusive processes that reach out to engage "unheard voices," despite efforts by local and national authorities to widen participation to address this democratic challenge. In parallel, there is a growing awareness in disciplines across the social sciences of the importance of broadening understandings of what constitutes "knowledge," and the value of experiential and embodied ways

of knowing, that go beyond conventional practices of objective knowledge generation. Rather than drawing a binary distinction between rational planning methodologies (Fainstein, 2005), setting them in contrast to more affective and emotional perspectives on places that emerge through creative practice (Sandercock & Attili, 2010), this article acknowledges emotions as a new way of knowing, rather than being seen in opposition to reason (Bondi, 2009). However, while emotion through creative approaches can prompt thickened understandings of place and deeper community engagement in the planning process, they can also be co-opted by power-holders, with implications for imbalances of power in the decision-making process (Cinderby et al., 2021).

This article aims to address these issues, exploring how creative approaches to engagement, taking the example of the participatory visual method of photovoice, can contribute to understandings of locally-embedded lived experiences. While acknowledging the challenges and limitations of such approaches, the aim is to critically examine the potential for innovative engagement practices to give voice in the neighbourhood arena. The research is set within the wider context of a city's aspiration to build more socially-sustainable futures, by democratizing decision-making to include voices from marginalised communities in building community-driven policies.

In the light of the complexity of planning cities in the 21st century, Rydin et al. (2012, p. 2) have identified that there is a need to integrate different understandings into the planning process, including "the insights of tacit and experiential knowledge held by practitioners and the lay knowledge and experience of local communities," brought together into new knowledge and understanding. To these different understandings, we add the knowledge that materialises through the application of arts-based methods using creative practice, to co-create new knowledge about the neighbourhood, that can feed affective and embodied understandings of the city into the planning process (Horvath & Carpenter, 2020).

The geographic focus of the research is the Downtown Eastside district of Vancouver, seen as one of the most marginalised neighbourhoods in Canada (Linden et al., 2013). The Downtown Eastside has been the focus of waves of renewal and regeneration, beginning in earnest in the lead-up to the 1986 World Exposition (Expo 86) held in Vancouver, continuing with regeneration related to the Winter Olympic Games in 2010 (Vanwynsberghe et al., 2013), and further developed through subsequent regeneration plans, most recently in 2014 with the launch of the Downtown Eastside Plan (City of Vancouver, 2018; Edelson et al., 2019). While there have been moves within the city to engage with residents about the future of their neighbourhoods, for example with the current consultation for the Vancouver Plan (City of Vancouver, 2022), there is little experience in integrating arts-based methods into city engagement, either in Vancouver or more widely elsewhere. This article, therefore, aims to contribute to current knowledge by critically examining a creative arts-based method—photovoice—as a means of engaging with inhabitants about their neighbourhood. The research explores the potential for the photovoice method to engage residents in novel and meaningful ways, and to draw out new understandings of place that have the potential to elucidate community insights into their neighbourhood and contribute to decision-making and urban futures.

The article starts by exploring the theoretical foundations for the research, before presenting the case study area of the Downtown Eastside, Vancouver, and the methodology. The findings of the photovoice community workshops are then presented, followed by the implications for the role of arts-based methods in urban planning and decision-making.

2. Participatory and Arts-Based Approaches in Planning

The interest in participatory approaches in urban planning can be traced back to the 1970s, and the epistemological shift that Friedmann (1973) characterised as a "crisis of knowing" in the discipline of planning. Although Friedmann acknowledged the important role of "expert knowledge" in urban planning, he advocated for a system of "mutual learning" or "transactive planning" in urban decision-making, combining expert knowledge with local and experiential understandings of place.

These ideas were developed in the broader social sciences in Fals-Borda's work on participatory action research (Fals-Borda, 1987), building on Freire's theory of critical consciousness in the *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970). Sherry Arnstein's (1969) "ladder of participation" became a reference point for urban planning scholars in the following decades, with others developing and critiquing the idea of "citizen control" within urban planning (e.g., Innes, 1995; Innes & Booher, 2004). In particular, Healey's (1996) work on communicative and collaborative planning (Healey, 1997, 2003) highlighted the need for different voices to be heard in a deliberative arena. Since then, there has been a growing recognition of the need to acknowledge and use the many other ways of knowing that exist: experiential knowledges, local knowledges, knowledges based on story-telling, talking and listening, and knowledges expressed in visual, symbolic, and other artistic ways, what Sandercock (1998) calls an "epistemology of multiplicity." As she notes on traditional approaches to producing plans: "Emotion has been rigorously purged as if there were no such things as joy, tranquillity, anger, resentment, fear, hope, memory, and forgetting, at stake in these analyses" (Sandercock, 2010, p. 29). Others, such as Didier and Roux (2019), have similarly demonstrated how storytelling, memory, narratives and photography are vital elements in the way that city space is appropriated and experienced.

Increasingly, artistic ways of knowing are being recognised as legitimate sources of knowledge in the social sciences and in human geography (Carpenter, 2020), focusing on the emotional and affective potentialities of creative practice in expanding understandings of the experiences of place (Leavy, 2020). Here, creative methods are defined as methods that use artistic modes of expression (using imagination to create objects, environments, or experiences that can be shared with others) to explore ideas, represent possibilities, and challenge current perspectives (Wang et al., 2017). The evocative power of the arts, and participatory visual methods in particular, can generate new insights and enhance understandings of complex social phenomena that aren't revealed through traditional approaches to knowledge generation (Mitchell et al., 2017). Applying artistic methods within a communicative planning paradigm provides a situated and affective way of understanding place that can transcend conventional practices of consultation, and address some of the limitations of collaborative planning. However, in the discipline of urban planning, the potential of creative methods has yet to be fully explored (Vasudevan, 2020). There have been some recent explorations of poetry and its connections with place and space (de Leeuw & Hawkins, 2017), experimentation with the use of theatre in urban planning research in Finland and the UK (Cowie, 2017; Rannila & Loivaranta, 2015), and applications of participatory video in urban planning (Manuel & Vigar, 2021). Others have also investigated the method of photovoice in planning research (Harris, 2018) but the key methodological challenge is to develop an appropriate approach that both draws on experiential understandings of neighbourhood and place including issues such as social connectedness, which are currently lacking in traditional consultation methods, while at the same time, providing a relevant method that can contribute to planners' understandings of local knowledge production. This involves developing alternative ways of representing planning issues, acknowledging imbalances of power that are inherent within the planning system, and working to address these power asymmetries to move towards more inclusive and socially-just outcomes.

Furthermore, the relationship between urban planning and creativity in the city is an inherently complex one. In urban studies, there is a long-noted relationship between creative practice, artistic mobilisation and processes of gentrification and displacement (Ley, 2003). When urban planning intermeshes with creative practice, these diverse agendas become intertwined. A collaboration between urban planners and developers can sit uneasily with the motivations of artists and creative practitioners, particularly concerning land use, urban space, and place. Taking a more positive perspective, some have argued that community-based artistic practice can be perceived as an opportunity for resident empowerment within socially-just urban policies (Sharp et al., 2005). For others, it is associated with the process of "art-washing" (Sheldon, 2015), where developers mobilise artists, often in collaboration with city councils, to push ahead with and support their development agendas, which can be marketed as more "palatable" due to artists' involvement. Bishop (2012) scrutinises the emancipatory claims of community art, drawing attention to the instrumentalization of participatory art processes in reaching political goals. However, others suggest that in certain circumstances, artists can work collaboratively with place-makers in regeneration projects, engaging critically with policies and making space for "radical social praxis" (Kwon, 2004), questioning hegemonic relationships in the city and allowing for engaged and radical community mobilisation (McLean, 2014, p. 2157).

Cognisant of the tensions between urban planning and artistic practice, and the critiques of artistic engagement in place-making, we aim here to explore the potential of creative practice in planning through one such method, that of photovoice. In doing so, we suggest that these creative methods have the potential to capture affective "experiences of neighbourhood" that are otherwise missed, and can therefore generate new reflections and knowledge that have the potential to contribute to city planning discourses around urban futures.

3. The Downtown Eastside Neighbourhood

The geographical focus of the article is the City of Vancouver on the west coast of Canada, a mid-sized gateway city with a population of around 630,00, set within a wider Metropolitan area made up of 21 municipalities and with a total population of 2.46 million. In socio-economic terms, it has been shaped by sustained links with the economies and societies of the Asia-Pacific region and is characterised by considerable population diversity. Some 40% of Metro Vancouver's population speak a mother tongue other than English or French (Canada's official languages), bringing a multi-culturalism and diversity that contribute to the dynamism of the city.

However, it is also a city of extremes, in particular wealth and poverty. The luxury condominiums of the wealthy waterfront residential downtown districts are just a short walk from one of Canada's most marginalised neighbourhoods, the Downtown Eastside (Figure 1). The historic heart of the city, the Downtown Eastside is distinctive in its low and medium-rise buildings and smaller-scale architecture, with a number of public green spaces including Oppenheimer Park, Crab Park, and the Sun Yat-Sen Gardens. The area has strong historic connections with Indigenous communities, being located on the unceded territories of the Musqueam, Tsleil-Waututh, and Squamish First Nations, and also has long-standing links with the Chinese community among many other ethnic minority groups.

Media portrayals provide a predominately negative portrait of the area, serving to further stigmatise an already marginalised neighbourhood (Liu & Blomley, 2013). However, a more detailed reading shows that

Figure 1. The location of the Downtown Eastside in Vancouver. Source: © OpenStreetMap contributors, CC-BY-SA.

there is considerable and growing socio-economic diversity within the population of the Downtown Eastside. More than half of the residents are on low incomes, income assistance, or dependent on social services (City of Vancouver, 2019). However, other families are on middle incomes, and are being joined by a growing affluent population, new to this historically marginalised neighbourhood, and located particularly in the rapidly gentrifying district of Strathcona (Burnett, 2014). However, those at the margins of society in the neighbourhood face complex challenges, including extreme poverty, homelessness or inadequate housing (such as the precarious Single Room Occupancy housing, often substandard, and privately rented on a weekly or monthly basis), unemployment, substance use, and physical and mental health issues. The neighbourhood has a long history of social activism and there are numerous non-profit organisations, government agencies, and voluntary sector groups that offer services and support to those in the community with particular needs.

As a unique but precarious neighbourhood, city planners have long intervened in the area (Smith, 2003), most recently drawing up a long-term plan for the area to preserve the character of the neighbourhood and improve living conditions without displacing residents. The Downtown Eastside Plan (City of Vancouver, 2018) was approved in 2014, with a 30-year vision for the neighbourhood. It was prepared through a collaborative process that drew on inputs from community groups, residents and First Nations groups, as well as local businesses, non-profit housing associations, and social service organisations. However, progress with the Plan has been patchy, and a recent consultation with the community suggested that over half of respondents considered that the plan was off-track (City of Vancouver, 2019). A key issue from the recent consultation was the continued and urgent need for more social housing in the area, with the support needed to address underlying structural issues that impact residents' housing security and wellbeing, including poverty, inequality, and marginality.

Given the area's history, the Downtown Eastside was therefore chosen as the focus for the photovoice project. The long-standing interest of urban planners in the neighbourhood and continued debates about issues of social justice and equity, in particular around the provision of affordable housing, provided the context for discussions on the future of the neighbourhood. The aim was to allow for a creative engagement with community members, to access their lived experiences, identify neighbourhood issues, and develop visions for the future of the area.

4. Photovoice: Concept and Method

Photovoice is "a process by which people can identify, represent, and enhance their community through a

specific photographic technique" (Wang & Burris, 1997, p. 369). The method involves community members taking photos of aspects of their neighbourhoods, which then act as prompts for group discussion. The technique has three main aims: firstly, to allow participants to capture images and narratives that they perceive as holding meaning, which reflect the community's assets and concerns; secondly, to promote critical dialogue and knowledge about the neighbourhood, through group discussion of the photographs; and thirdly, to engage with policymakers on issues emerging through the photos and voices (Wang & Burris, 1997, p. 370).

Wang and Burris (1997) situate photovoice within three distinct theoretical frameworks: empowerment education for critical consciousness, feminist theory, and documentary photography. Freire's concept of empowerment education for critical consciousness encourages critical group dialogue to foster understanding and critical action (Freire, 1970). Feminist theory takes as its point of departure the understanding that knowledge is experiential, and seeks to engender political consciousness in the context of unequal gendered relations (Ramazanoglu & Holland, 2002). The theoretical framework of documentary photography seeks to capture everyday scenes, people and places, as an emotional testimony of experience, narrating stories in the language of photography (Jing & Yun, 2007). As a development from documentary photography, photovoice seeks to explore both the photograph as well as the photographer, to mesh the image in the photograph with the story behind it, as told by the photovoice participant, the photographer. It is these three frameworks that were integrated by Wang and Burris into the photovoice methodology.

Photovoice is distinct from photo-elicitation as photovoice involves participants taking photos and bringing them back to the group for discussion. The participants then write a narrative or caption (adding "voice" to the photo) to accompany the image, which can be exhibited in a collective community exhibition. Photo-elicitation on the other hand takes place one-on-one between the participant and researcher. In some cases, the photos will have been taken by the participant for discussion with the researcher. In other cases, the researcher may bring along a series of photographs related to the research topic, for discussion with the participant. The researcher will interview the participants to elicit their response to the photos, through the feelings and memories they evoke (Rose, 2016). While both methods have value, this research was more suited to the method of photovoice, as a means of participants sharing their experiences through collective discussion.

The artistic dimension of the method is brought out in the participants' exploration of their ideas, both through the photos and their accompanying narratives, engaging with the media of text and image to explore visions and represent possibilities for their neighbourhood. The participants' agency and autonomy are enhanced through their own interpretation of the photos, giving them artistic expression through photography and narrative in the photovoice method. The collective discussion about the photos and their meaning within the group also contributes to dimensions that would not be present in a project based on "pure" photography as an art form. This collective approach contributes to lessening the researcher's role in interpreting the creative outputs, therefore addressing issues of hierarchy and power that can dominate participatory and arts-based research methods. Interestingly, the method of photovoice does not foreground the aesthetic dimension of the photographs, rather the photos are seen as a medium through which the participants can communicate their narrative and express their response to the neighbourhood.

A series of photovoice workshops was planned to explore the potential of the method in elucidating the community's lived experiences of the Downtown Eastside. As groundwork for the workshops, a series of 22 in-depth contextual interviews were undertaken with stakeholders in the city, including urban planning officers, community representatives, scholar-activists, and artists. These interviews provided important background for urban planning and creative practice narratives in the city and gave local context to the photovoice workshops.

The photovoice workshop series itself was carried out in partnership with the University of British Columbia's Learning Exchange, an outreach community hub located in the Downtown Eastside that provides support and skills development for local residents. In order to build relations and trust with the local community before the workshops, the researcher spent time during spring 2019, meeting with local staff and volunteering at the Learning Exchange's "drop-in sessions." Participants were subsequently recruited through posters displayed at the Learning Exchange, with the researcher available on-hand to answer queries from potential participants.

A total of nine participants signed up for the workshops, with eight completing the full six-week series. Of those, a total of five were female and three were male. Concerning their ethnic origins, four were of Asian origin, two were Latin-American, and two were of European origin. Ages ranged from early 20s to mid-60s. Although a relatively small number of participants, this size allowed for an in-depth approach to the photovoice method and detailed discussions within the group.

The photovoice exercise involved a series of six workshops, one afternoon a week over six weeks during May and June 2019, where participants could engage with both the social as well as the physical fabric of the Downtown Eastside urban environment, through photography and discussions to share their perspectives on the neighbourhood. Participants were given single-use film cameras with 24 exposures, which were developed by the researcher for the subsequent discussion sessions, together with a log sheet to take notes of photo locations and emotions. During the discussions, individuals provided a narrative for their photos, contextualised

them, and responded to questions from the researcher and other participants. This was followed by a group discussion that included the participants drawing out themes and categories. The technique facilitated the Freireian notion of critical consciousness (Freire, 1970), prompting a consciousness based on critical reflection through dialogue.

The participants' photography "mission" was defined deliberately loosely to allow for a broad spectrum of voices to emerge. As suggested by Wang and Burris (1997), participants were asked to consider two broad questions through their photography concerning (a) what they liked about the Downtown Eastside neighbourhood and saw as opportunities or possibilities there, and (b) what they would like to see changed in the future, what were the needs of the neighbourhood. Emphasising the potential of the neighbourhood, this approach also corresponded to the Learning Exchange's own "asset-based community development" approach (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993) focusing on the strengths of the area and how these could be built upon through community development. In relation to subject-matter, due to issues of privacy, consent, and sensitivities, participants were advised to avoid taking photos of people, but to concentrate on non-human subjects, in particular the built and natural environments of the neighbourhood.

Embedded within the principles of community-based participatory action research is the notion of reciprocity, that is, "an ongoing process of exchange with the aim of establishing and maintaining equality between parties" (Maiter et al., 2008, p. 321). Rather than the researcher "extracting" knowledge from research participants for their own benefit, reciprocity involves researchers attending to the issues of power and gain in the research relationship, with the aim of "giving back" to community participants to redress imbalances in power relations. In this case, rather than monetary compensation for their time, the researcher aimed to give back to the community through training opportunities within the workshop series, such as skills training in photography and a framing workshop leading up to the exhibition. Participants also gained experience in curation, being fully involved in organising and curating the community exhibition to show the photographs. The exhibition, entitled *Capturing the Spirit of the Neighbourhood*, was displayed in the public foyer of the Learning Exchange for several months during the summer of 2019 (Figure 2). The launch was combined with a Knowledge Exchange event where workshop participants, researchers, and policy-makers exchanged on diverse topics, ranging from the detail of the method to the broader structural inequalities affecting the Downtown Eastside community.

The individual story-telling and group discussions were recorded, transcribed and analysed using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006), drawing out the common themes into a coding frame that was both inductive and deductive in nature (Hennink et al., 2010). The visual data from the photographs were also analysed using the common coding frame. A process of triangulation took place with cross-referencing between the participants' photographs, their written reflections to accompany the photos, and transcripts of group discussions. Participants also took part in a debriefing session to discuss the method, and evaluate the strengths and limitations of the photovoice process.

Figure 2. Community exhibition at the University of British Columbia Learning Exchange, Downtown Eastside.

5. Picturing the Downtown Eastside: Elucidating Meaning Through Photovoice

The photovoice workshops highlighted the importance of "beyond text" methods (Beebeejaun et al., 2014) in revealing participants' understandings of the neighbourhood. In particular, they revealed how the combination of text and image prompted individual and collective story-telling that exposed participants' affective responses to place. All named participants from this point forward are denoted using pseudonyms.

A recurrent theme from the workshops was the intense vibrancy of the Downtown Eastside neighbourhood, both "above and below the surface." Residents talked about the web of friendships, acquaintances, support networks and services that exist in the area, some of them visible "above the surface," while others were more implicit "below the surface," less visible but no less strong for that. Some participants had lived in the neighbourhood for over twenty years, and had built up strong networks that they valued highly and which they were concerned not to lose as a result of recent changes in the neighbourhood. Others had less strong associations, going back less far, but felt the energy of the community in their daily interactions and observations, and referred to the unique and close-knit community in the Downtown Eastside.

Many cited the Carnegie Centre (Figure 3) as the "hub" of the neighbourhood, a community centre housed in the old public library building, and referred to by one participant as the "hub of action, where light and dark meet." This imagery of light and dark was echoed by other participants when reflecting on the neighbourhood, pointing to the contrast between, on the one hand, the strength of the friendships and community networks, and on the other hand, the experiences of the troubled lives of many Downtown Eastside residents.

Poverty, unemployment, substance use, homelessness, and inadequate housing were all cited as challenges faced by many who live in the neighbourhood. Photos of the neighbourhood made visible the darker underside and provided spaces for participants to reflect, both individually and collectively, about their meaning. As one long-term resident expressed:

> The Carnegie is witness to the timeline of Vancouver. It has seen the flow of changes both light and dark. A place of refuge, oppression, hope, anguish. (Mark)

Linked to this, there was widespread concern about social injustices in the city, manifestly evident throughout the neighbourhood. Participants' documentation of inadequate housing such as Single Room Occupancy (SRO) blocks (Figure 4) prompted discussions around marginality, inequality and neglect, themes that are embedded in the history of the Downtown Eastside. This led to calls within the group for transformational change at a structural level, and a fundamental reset of systems to support more adequately those living in challenging conditions. These comments were also linked to participants' awareness of the growing inequalities in the area, and more broadly within the city. All were aware of the significant regeneration and development taking place in the neighbourhood, with the recent arrival of high-end designer boutiques and hipster cafés sitting uneasily cheek by jowl with non-profit advice centres

Figure 3. The Carnegie Centre. Source: Photo credits are due to participant Mark.

Figure 4. SRO housing. Source: Photo credits, Juan.

and community meal programmes. One long-term resident expressed his concerns:

> Downtown Eastside, a dart in the heart of gentrification, exploitation, incompetence, marginalization, where poverty, mental illness, and social injustice are rising up, without having a solution from those who are supposed to help to improve local residents' lives. (Juan)

The photos served as a catalyst to explore challenging issues and participants' reactions to them, including the links to issues around radical solutions for transformational change that address societal inequalities, such as wealth redistribution and property transfer taxes, together with urgent programmes for increased provision of affordable housing.

A further aim of the workshops was to critically examine photovoice as a method to understand neighbourhood connections more deeply, to explore meanings associated with place, and potentially to provide a creative mechanism for decision-makers to understand more meaningfully residents' perceptions of their neighbourhood. In discussion, participants conveyed their appreciation of the photovoice process as a means of visually capturing their experiences and sharing personal and individual knowledge about the neighbourhood, stimulated by visual photographic cues. As one participant expressed: "I like this. It's not just capturing the photo, it's capturing your mind and what it brings out, what it inspires in you."

It is interesting here to consider the role of aesthetics in the method of photovoice and how the aesthetic value of photographs can be integrated into the process. Wang and Burris (1997) drew on the theoretical frame of documentary photography, but in their framing, they paid little attention to the role that the aesthetic dimension of photography plays in photovoice, and how it can help facilitate understanding and knowledge production. Photovoice broadens out the role of photography as a form of fine art, to include its role in socially and politically engaged commentary. However, aesthetically powerful images will necessarily have more impact, and thus communicate participants' message more effectively. Thus, images in photovoice can be read visually through signifiers such as the framing of the image in photographic space, the movement captured, the organisation of the image and its viewpoint. For example, Mark's photo of the Carnegie Centre (Figure 3) is taken from an unusual angle, from the roof of the building opposite, and so while the building itself was familiar to participants, the unusual viewpoint of the photo sparked discussion in the group and emphasised the Centre as a "beacon" in the neighbourhood. The aesthetic dimension has the potential to reinforce and amplify the voices of participants, both through discussion and in the curation of the exhibition through the choice of pictures to be displayed.

The photos also served as a catalyst for group discussion and kindled shared dialogue between participants about their own neighbourhood experiences and personal histories as members of the community. As a result of the discussion, participants brought forward ideas about possibilities for developing the neighbourhood in the future, including more affordable housing, upgrading poor-quality SRO buildings, and addressing

issues around women's safety. In the words of one participant: "It doesn't matter what the system does, it ought to provide housing for people with a low income. There's still a big trouble, right?"

However, without direct engagement within a formal policy-making process, the impact of such discussions can be limited. Despite efforts on the part of the researcher to embed the photovoice workshops within an ongoing planning process, this didn't prove possible due to incompatible timing between ongoing urban projects and the researcher's grant. Even engaging with policy-makers in dissemination was challenging due to officers' busy schedules and competing priorities. Engagement with policy-makers early in the process, making the case for alternative ways of hearing, seeing, and knowing, could contribute to greater engagement.

One of the outcomes of the workshop was a community exhibition curated by the participants themselves, who selected the photographs and accompanying text to be displayed, framed the photos, and were involved in the curation and hanging of the exhibition. The whole process, therefore, gave participants a voice, not only through the photos and subsequent discussions, but also through the deliberations about the selection of which photos to include in the exhibition. Again, the aesthetics of photography and the power of images were brought out in the curation of pictures to be displayed.

The exhibition launch coincided with the project's Knowledge Exchange event, where local stakeholders, policy-makers, and researchers were invited to join in discussions about the photovoice workshops, and engage about the future of the Downtown Eastside. One of the challenges recognised in the photovoice method is the difficulty of engaging with decision-makers to take part in the process. Although a range of urban policymakers was invited to participate in the event, representation from urban planners on the day was low, with the discussion mainly led by workshop participants and researchers. While discussions were productive in and of themselves, the missing link with policy stakeholders meant that the lessons from the series, both concerning content and process, weren't relayed as effectively as they could have been. An infographic setting out the photovoice method for planners was subsequently produced, but engagement face-to-face during the Knowledge Exchange event would have been beneficial.

This points to some of the challenges of the method, in particular the ethical considerations of raising participants' expectations, without being able to deliver concrete change. The researcher was mindful of the unequal power positions that existed between the researcher and participants and was explicit at the beginning of the process in recognising these and acting to mitigate against them, for example through facilitation techniques that aimed to address the potential imbalances. This involved engaging participants in the "decoding" or descriptive interpretation of the images, in them selecting photos and curating the exhibition, and taking a role in organising and contributing to the Knowledge Exchange event. But it was also important to stress to participants the context of the project, which was not linked to a particular planning initiative in the Downtown Eastside, and therefore did not have the explicit remit to deliver any lasting change in the neighbourhood. Although this was made explicit, participants commented on how the process would have benefited from the engagement of urban decision-makers in discussions about potential future directions and policy initiatives.

The project came up against a range of challenges and limitations, some of which are inherent to the method. Firstly, the issue of power asymmetries between the researcher and the participants, already highlighted, is a challenge common to other participatory methods (Mitchell et al., 2017). Secondly, there was the issue of the politics of voice—who is speaking within the process and who is listening—which links to the engagement of policy-makers and the importance of participants being heard by those with decision-making power. And thirdly, the challenge of using arts in the city and the potential for co-option and instrumentalization of participatory art practices in an urban development setting (Bishop, 2012).

For creative methods to be employed in urban planning with positive outcomes, it is essential for projects to engage with policymakers early on, a process that wasn't possible in the photovoice case study due to issues of timing. Cinderby et al. (2021) illustrate how in their case, with sufficient time and resources to engage, the use of a range of complementary creative methods was successful in involving typically excluded or hard-to-reach groups. A further factor for success is the involvement of the research team working independently of the city planning department, which helps to generate a trusting environment. With receptive city policy-makers engaged at a distance, the use of creative methods can contribute through inclusive dialogue, to the identification of more equitable context-specific solutions for more just city planning.

6. Conclusion

Arts-based methods such as photovoice have the capacity to communicate complex and nuanced understandings of neighbourhood. By drawing on creative arts-based methods, the visual language of photography can stimulate deeper insights into the community and convey meaning in a richer, thickened format. The experience in the Downtown Eastside demonstrated the value of such an approach, to enhance participants' individual and collective understandings of place and to dig more deeply into stories, histories, and memories associated with space and place. These concepts are at the heart of a more affective understanding of place that, arguably, has an important role to play in an alternative approach to urban planning, that takes account of affect, emotion, and feeling as new ways of knowing.

Photovoice, as a participatory approach that borrows from creative practice, has the potential to bring new perspectives into the urban planning process, diversifying the profile of who engages with planning and how they get involved. However, the project in the Downtown Eastside has demonstrated the difficulty of engaging with policy-makers when applying these methods in the urban arena. The challenges lie not only in embedding these more affective processes into a live plan-making project in a meaningful way, but also engaging with policy-makers in discussions about the value of such methods in urban planning consultation processes, in order to break through the traditional approaches and embed such methods in the future.

The project also highlighted some of the challenges of this method, in particular the danger, as with all consultations, of raising expectations within the community that cannot be fulfilled. Other obstacles to engaging with photovoice include the critical need for trust, empathy, and the time needed to develop these, invest in the process, and fulfil its objectives. Nevertheless, despite these limitations, photovoice can be understood as a creative tool to feed future urban imaginaries, which as this project demonstrated, can spark critical and reflexive dialogue, and thickened understanding of neighbourhood and place. Whether it is feasible to translate photovoice into a viable participatory planning method, as a means of giving an alternative voice to the community, will depend on the urban planning system itself, and attitudes within to alternative modes of consultation. But this project has shown that there are benefits of integrating photovoice as part of a range of methods, that introduce new ways to capture lived experience, that have the potential to contribute to the development of planning policy that is more sensitive to diverse community voices.

An area that would benefit from further research, is the role of the aesthetic dimension of photography in photovoice. This aspect of photovoice has been less emphasised up to the present. Further work, potentially in collaboration with humanities scholars, would contribute to understanding what the images say about places and what the added value of visual representation is compared to narrative commentary. This analysis would address the affects that photos generate in participants and others, and help understand the "affective-symbolic-aesthetic" aspects that contribute to multi-dimensional knowledge generation. This closer collaboration between social sciences and humanities scholars would help to bring out the full potential and impact of photovoice and other arts-based methods, and move towards a deeper understanding of places and the experience of place.

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Conflict of Interests

The author declares no conflict of interests.

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Article

A Framework for Co-Design Processes and Visual Collaborative Methods: An Action Research Through Design in Chile

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Abstract
With the urgency to adapt cities to social and ecological pressures, co-design has become essential to legitimise transformations by involving citizens and other stakeholders in their design processes. Public spaces remain at the heart of this transformation due to their accessibility for citizens and capacity to accommodate urban functions. However, urban landscape design is a complex task for people who are not used to it. Visual collaborative methods (VCMs) are often used to facilitate expression and ideation early in design, offering an arts-based language in which actors can communicate. We developed a co-design process framework to analyse how VCMs contribute to collaboration in urban processes throughout the three commonly distinguished design phases: conceptual, embodiment, and detail. We participated in a co-design process in the Atacama Desert in Chile, adopting an Action Research through Design (ARtD) in planning, undertaking and reflecting in practice. We found that VCMs are useful to facilitate collaboration throughout the process in design cycles. The variety of VCMs used were able to foster co-design in a rather non-participatory context and influenced the design outcomes. The framework recognized co-design trajectories such as the early fuzziness and the ascendent co-design trajectory throughout the process. The co-design process framework aims for conceptual clarification and may be helpful in planning and undertaking such processes in practice. We conclude that urban co-design should be planned and analysed as a long-term process of interwoven collaborative trajectories.

Keywords
co-design; co-design process; public space; urban co-design; visual methods

Issue
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1. Introduction

Urban design and planning practices have a long tradition of dealing with change and uncertainties (Healey, 1992; Jupp & Inch, 2012; Sanders & Stappers, 2008). Collaborative approaches have emerged as ways to cope with such complexities while dealing with power inequities towards more resilient, legitimate, context-specific, and feasible outcomes (Enserink et al., 2003; Gaete Cruz et al., 2021; Palmås & von Busch, 2015; Smaniotto Costa et al., 2020). Such approaches aim for democratic, deliberative, and participative approaches following debates such as the *communicative turn* in planning (Healey, 1992), the *cross of the great divide* (Ostrom, 1996; Parks et al., 1981), and the emergence of *new languages and landscapes* of design (Sanders, 2000; Sanders & Stappers, 2008). They represent a shift towards involving a more comprehensive range of actors and incorporating formal and experiential knowledge in dialogue and design (Sandercock & Attili, 2010; Sanders, 2000). Scholars have given special attention to new methods to initiate dialogue, awaken imaginaries, and facilitate collective knowledge co-production (Carpenter et al., 2021; Ersoy, 2017; Mattelmäki et al., 2014; Sanders et al., 2010; Sanders & Stappers, 2008).

Co-design is a term that is often used for participation in design processes where collective creativity is fostered involving users as sources of knowledge (Sanders & Stappers, 2008). The term acknowledges the diversity of stakeholders involved in design processes (Smaniotto Costa et al., 2020) while emphasising a need for active collaboration in urban design (Van de Ven et al., 2016). Tools and methods have been used to represent urban complexity for participants to visualise the diverse natural and human layers of urban spaces (Baibarac & Petrescu, 2017; Hooimeijer & Maring, 2018; Van de Ven et al., 2016). Yet public space governance is often contested and deals with multiple converging and confronting aims and requirements (Van Melik & Van Der Krabben, 2016). This is the case in multiscale and multidimensional settings where co-design unfolds in various institutional frames or arenas (Gaete Cruz et al., in press; Huybrechts et al., 2017). Moreover, in urban co-design processes, participants should feel comfortable expressing their points of view and being flexible to change their minds (Gaete Cruz et al., 2021). In collective decision-making settings, participants should be available to deliberate or negotiate when necessary (Castro, 2021). This may not be the case when actors come from diverse sectors and backgrounds or are unacquainted with design practice (Enserink et al., 2003). But when some forms of collaboration are achieved in urban design processes, outcomes are more likely to be more appropriate and locally suitable (Ersoy & Yeoman, 2020; Smaniotto Costa et al., 2020).

While many participatory methods are said to facilitate collaboration, there are different interpretations of the use of visual collaborative methods (VCMs). For example, some studies have focused on their use to communicate and exchange design ideas (Rose, 2014), initiate dialogue, or communicate experiential knowledge (Sanders, 2008; Sanders & Stappers, 2008). Some argue that the visual language is conventionally used by urban professionals and can thus serve as an additional language in which non-designer actors can communicate and collaborate (Sanders, 2009). Many studies focus on the use of VCMs in the early stages of design. However, more conceptual clarification is needed to understand how such methods facilitate collaboration throughout the design phases. The question remains of how VCMs can facilitate collaboration in the urban landscape design process in practice. This study explores the potential of VCMs as modes of collaborative knowledge inquiry, analysis, projection, and selection throughout the design processes.

In the next section, we propose a framework to conceptualise the use of VCMs in the co-design process. Then we present the case we studied and explain the methodological approach we adopted to act and reflect on practice. The results section defines the VCMs used in the co-design process and maps them in the framework. We define the contributions of VCMs in co-design processes and clarify the complexity of such practice.

2. Visual Collaborative Methods and Co-Design

2.1. The Use of VCMs in Co-Design Processes

Co-design brings designers, citizens, and people not trained in design to collaborate in design processes (Sanders & Stappers, 2008). Co-design initially focused on users as sources of experiential knowledge and has evolved towards new forms of diverse stakeholder involvement (Mattelmäki & Visser, 2011; Sanders & Stappers, 2008). In doing so, actors intervene in design processes in diverse ways, from sources of practical expertise, speakers of their aims, and collaborators in creativity, exploration, and learning (Mattelmäki et al., 2014; Mattelmäki & Visser, 2011). Such ways require integrating diverse (and sometimes contradicting) knowledge, values, aims, and skills. For the actors to effectively collaborate, they should feel comfortable expressing points of view, be willing to develop shared understandings, and have some knowledge on the subject (Metze, 2020). Urban actors often come from diverse sectors (public, private, academia, non-profit, community), have different backgrounds (formal or informal expertise), and pursue specific aims (strategic, transdisciplinary, socio-cultural; Gaete Cruz et al., in press). Co-design occurs in dynamic, multilayered, and multi-sectorial ways in transdisciplinary teams integrating formal and informal expertise (Baibarac & Petrescu, 2019; Gaete Cruz et al., 2022).

We understand urban co-design as the collaborative approach to urban design acts that involve diverse strategic, transdisciplinary, and socio-cultural actors aiming for more context-specific, legitimate, and feasible outcomes (Gaete Cruz et al., in press). Yet, despite the often recognised legitimate contributions of collaboration, bringing actors together raises many practical challenges (Switzer, 2018). They might not always understand the urban spaces and interactions to analyse and design them, which may lead to misunderstandings, conflicts, mistrust, or even the end of an involvement. In this sense, applied research studies may clarify co-design in practice.

Urban design professionals conventionally use visual language to communicate their projects. Visual representations can put information in front of others' eyes (Whyte et al., 2017) and are sometimes more effective than words (Tufte, 1997). Yet communicating with non-experienced designers is not always straightforward, and fostering collaboration involves a lot of challenges (Sanders, 2009). Collaborative processes often use visual methods to facilitate knowledge production, brainstorming, the development of shared understandings, and the engagement of the participants (Carpenter et al., 2021; Enserink et al., 2003). Different forms of VCMs are used in co-design processes to foster communication and exchange ideas by offering an additional language in which actors can communicate (Mattelmäki et al., 2014; Sanders, 2009). And while urban designers communicate

through plans, diagrams, and renders, they conventionally do so to communicate for construction or persuade in a one-way direction (Sanders, 2009).

The use of visual methods is often studied in practice because it is in their use that the main challenges and contributions can be observed. In recent years a wide variety of such methods have been studied (posters, reports, videos, storyboards, card sets, animations, pictures, diagrams, sketches, amongst others; Sleeswijk-Visser, 2009). Many studies have attempted systematisation towards conceptual clarification, yet the approaches vary widely and sometimes follow different lines of argument or theoretical traditions. Some have highlighted the value of open-ended dialogue approaches of participatory visual methods in community-based research (Switzer, 2018). Others recognise arts-based methods as knowledge co-production devices for social justice (Carpenter et al., 2021; Metze, 2020). Worth mentioning is the academic work by Elizabeth Sanders, who spent years developing an approach for the use of methods in co-design processes and proposed a map to classify design research tools concerning user participation and research (Sanders, 2006; Sanders et al., 2010; Sanders & Stappers, 2014). Although the conceptual approaches are interesting, they often fail to capture the collaborative dynamics in urban design processes. It has been said that the contributions of such visual methods need to be clarified (Carpenter et al., 2021).

In this study, we understand VCMs as methods that use visual language as a tool for collaboration in design practice. We recognise that such language is useful for the inquiry and communication of information and promotes stakeholders' engagement (Pocock et al., 2016). While some study arts-based methods to interpret personal expressions (Carpenter et al., 2021; Switzer, 2018), we aim to explore how they are boundary-spanning (Whyte et al., 2017) and prompt collaboration in design (Switzer, 2018) to set a complementary language in which everyone can actively intervene. VCMs can use a range of visual representations, from conventional urban design tools to analytical ones and even more art-based and ethnographic forms. Their value relies not only on their capacity to ignite personal expressions but to do so with others in design acts. Visual language is used to depict aspects of reality, communicate and translate information, and prompt dialogue (Metze, 2020), but most importantly, to foster ideation and creation. In working with VCMs, it is content and form that is important (Switzer, 2018), but also how collaboration is achieved in its use (Gaete Cruz et al., in press). So, while some of the VCMs in this study are relatively conventional, their open-ended content creation approach matters to co-design. In this study, we understand VCMs as those using visual language as a tool for collaboration in the design steps of research, analysis, ideation, and decision-making throughout co-design processes.

2.2. Expanding the Co-Design Process

In a previous study, we developed a co-design framework offering a landscape in which the different design steps could occur in diverse levels of collaboration (Gaete Cruz et al., in press). The framework builds on reinterpretations of the ladder of participation (Arnstein, 1969) and the design cycle (Jonas, 2007; Roozenburg & Eekels, 1995; Zwart & de Vries, 2016). We defined the levels of collaboration and the design actions of co-design. We distinguish four design actions that occur throughout urban design processes: research, analysis, projection and selection. A collaborative research approach might allow for knowledge co-production, allowing for better-informed outcomes. The collaborative analysis and synthesis of information might result in shared understandings and social learning. Accordingly, the shared projection and ideation of solutions, or part of the solutions, might improve the sense of participation. At the same time, a collaborative evaluation, prioritisation and selection of design solutions might most likely result in legitimising the outcomes. If these steps involve other actors, then different collaborative levels can be observed as: informative, consultive, participative, and long-term collaborative (Gaete Cruz et al., in press).

The design concept is commonly referred to as the process and the end result (Zwart & de Vries, 2016). Design has also been conceptualised as a timeline in which design solutions, through repetitive design cycles, evolve increasingly from one phase to another one. Some have coined that three main design phases are recognised: the conceptual, the embodiment and the detail phases (Cross & Roozenburg, 1992; Roozenburg & Eekels, 1995). In the conceptual phase, the problem is defined, and conceptual solutions are ideated. In the embodiment phase, a preliminary design is selected amongst possible spatial layouts, functional displays, and material propositions for further development. The final design phase determines specific aspects and documents the project to be built according to technical requirements, regulations and evaluations. We extended the co-design framework into the three design phases as shown in Figure 1.

We adhere to the process-oriented approaches that simultaneously conceptualise design as cyclical and linear (Cross & Roozenburg, 1992; Roozenburg & Eekels, 1995). We incorporated the linear approach in the co-design framework by emphasising that the design steps occur in a cyclical iterative way towards the development of solutions throughout the three design phases. This allows us to map and analyse the use of VCMs and how they facilitate a diversity of design actions throughout the process. Accordingly, actors may go back and forth between the steps and repeat the whole cycle several times throughout the process. We argue that such methods may facilitate collaborative research, analysis, projection, and decision-making throughout the conceptual, embodiment, and detailing design phases.

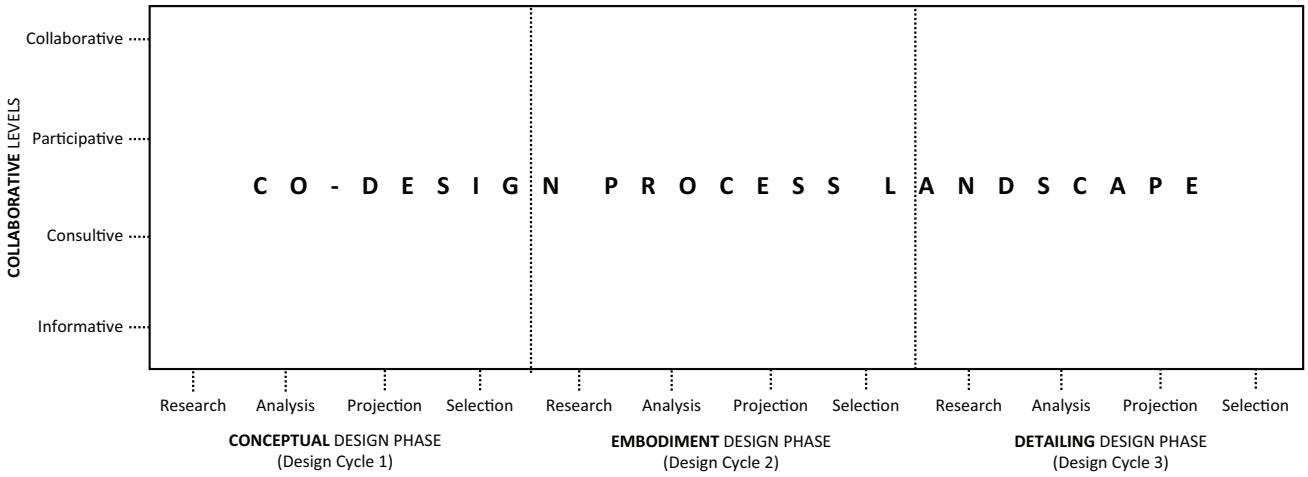

Figure 1. Framework for the urban co-design process. Levels of collaboration on the Y-axis and the design acts throughout the design phases on the X-axis.

3. Methodological Approach to the Co-Design Process

3.1. Description of the Co-Design Process From Practice

We conducted a case study of a public space co-design process while acting in practice. This occurred in the context of a public design consultancy commissioned by the Housing and Urbanism Ministry of Chile to Co-Diseño Urbano Consultants. The ministry aimed to update the Kaukari Urban Park project designed by Teodoro Fernández Associate Architects in 2012 in the Atacama Region. They acknowledged the need for updated mixed sports functions in the park.

The Slope Sports Square was designed as an open public space with skating elements and a climbing wall as shown in Figure 2. Various sports organisations were summoned as the future end users, and some had played a role in requesting such structures. We involved them early in the process as relevant actors aiming to co-design the space to prepare the grounds for future co-management and co-operation. They were actively involved throughout the embodiment and the detailing phases providing expert technical knowledge and even leading strategic interactions with relevant local sports actors.

The first author participated in the planning and development of the design consultancy. The case study for the article was selected because we could plan the process and act in practice. This allowed us to evaluate the use of VCMs. The Kaukari Urban Park co-design process had also previously been studied by the authors, and the timing of the consultancy matched this study. It is important to note that the co-design approach was

Figure 2. Work-in-progress visualisation of the Slope Sports Square. Source: Courtesy of Co-Diseño Urbano Consultants.

suggested as a mode of practice amongst the involved actors. This was a real-life rooted practice of co-design applied research in a rather top-down setting, and was thus not a completely autonomous research endeavor. This article evaluates such processes of planning and interacting in practice.

The co-design process planned to integrate a diversity of strategic, design, and assessment professionals, and the prospective users of the project. The leading actors were the ministry in charge and the design team of which the lead author was in charge. The first author played the urban designer and project manager role fostering co-design interactions.

3.2. Acting and Reflecting in Design Practice

This study was planned, conducted, and reflected upon a co-design process undertaken from 2020 to 2022. The lead author of this study was involved in the design team and was able to plan and undertake the co-design process. Such an approach allowed us to act and analyse at three operational levels: in planning the design processes, in conducting the design processes to produce the design outcome, and finally, in reflecting upon such endeavours. The steps taken in these levels are detailed in Table 1. This article reflects mainly on the use of the multiple VCMs that facilitated the co-design process.

This study took an action research through design (ARtD) methodological approach to generate knowledge from practice by acting in an actual ongoing design process (van Stijn, in press), aiming to intervene in the urban environment through problem and solution definition (Buchanan, 1992). This approach combines action research with research through design methods. Action research aims for knowledge inquiry with active participation from stakeholders in open-ended processes with flexible objectives (Baum et al., 2006; Bell et al., 2004). Research through design supports the research inquiry process where new design knowledge is generated through the action and reflection in design (Cross, 2001; Frankel & Racine, 2010; Jonas, 2007; Roggema, 2016). We acknowledge these two approaches pursue different aims and have different disciplinary trajectories, but a combined approach was appropriate to address such collaborative design-oriented research in practice.

The co-design processes ran from November 2020 until April 2022. Given the global pandemic, the process was mainly conducted in an online format. With such challenging circumstances, the process benefited from digital tools in which visual language played an important role in facilitating collaboration and design.

This study's first author was personally involved in practice with an ARtD approach. She managed the design team within the public design consultancy team. This allowed her to plan the process's co-design moments and undertake such endeavours with a collaborative and flexible mindset. Due to her expertise as an urban designer in broad innovative and multiactor urban development processes, she was able to focus mainly on how collaboration amongst the diverse actors contributed to the design process and their resulting outcomes. We acknowledge that the involvement of researchers in practice may raise legitimacy issues, but such an applied approach deepens the conceptual reflections while operating in practice (van Stijn & Lousberg, in press). To avoid personal or professional bias, the results were shared with certain involved actors for feedback and verification through interviews at the end of the process.

4. Results and Discussions

This study explores the contribution of VCMs as modes of collaborative knowledge inquiry, analysis, projection, and decision-making in design processes. First, we define the methods we used and then map them regarding their collaboration level in design steps throughout the phases. The results showed that even though most VCMs were planned for the early phases, their use was maintained throughout the whole process. The framework helps conceptualise the use of VCMs and visualise the co-design trajectories within such a process.

4.1. Visual Collaborative Methods Used in the Co-Design Process

The variety of VCMs are explained in Table 2 and some are shown in Figure 3. They are described according to the moment when they were used, the actors involved, the level of collaboration in design steps, and their main contributions.

Table 1. ARtD steps were undertaken to plan, conduct, and reflect upon the co-design process.

Operational Levels	Approach
Planning	AR approach to the collaboration of actors
	RtD approach to the design of objectives
Conducting design	AR approach to collaboration with actors
	RtD approach to the outcomes and objectives
Reflecting	AR approach to collaboration and the process
	RtD approach to evaluate the design and outcomes

Table 2. VCMs used in the design process.

	VCM	Design Phase and Description	Involved Actors	Collaboration in Design Steps	Contribution to Collaboration and Design
1	Interest and power matrix of actors	Conceptual phase. The matrix was used as a visual tool for dialogue and to sketch during the interviews with key actors to identify and classify a wider variety of actors that could be relevant to the design process and the operation of the square.	The interviewees belonged to public organisations, sports associations, local NGOs, and sportspeople. The facilitator of the citizen participation (socially-oriented expertise) within the design team leads this process.	Consultive research of actors and participative analysis of their position in the matrix.	This VCM allowed to identify and consequently summon relevant sports associations and organisations operating in the city.
2	Exercise booklets for experience registration	Conceptual phase. Pre-designed booklets (experience journals) for participants to fill in during their spare time while enjoying their sports in the park. The booklet layout addressed some specific aspects of the sports experiences, ideas and aims of the sportspeople for the square.	Diverse sportspeople filled in the booklets (skate, climb, circus art, parkour, running, walkers, cycling, football, basketball, Zumba dance, boxing, and crossfit).	Participative research of sports experiences. Members of the design team then systematised the booklets.	These booklets allowed for a shared understanding of the sports practices' feelings, experiences, and functional dynamics amongst the involved actors. These notions were then incorporated into the public space designed.
3	Sports experience and conditions matrix. (Booklet's workshop)	Conceptual phase. This interactive board (Miro online platform) was used in the meeting where the analysis and results of the Exercise booklets were presented, discussed and further systematised. The interactive board was filled in during the meeting integrating the discussed issues. In a focus group setting, the conversation tackled the sport's needs, everyday needs, and the conditions of an inclusive and public urban space.	The actors summoned to the meeting were the sportspeople, the design team, and the public servants of the ministry in charge.	Informative and consultive analysis towards the participative systematisation of the results.	The meeting aimed and contributed to finding converging issues amongst the sports, developing shared understandings about the sports activities, and empowering the collective use of the future space.

Table 2. (Cont.) VCMs used in the design process.

	VCM	Design Phase and Description	Involved Actors	Collaboration in Design Steps	Contribution to Collaboration and Design
4	Online post-its board in the Co-design workshop	Conceptual phase during the Co-design Workshop with the skaters, climbers, and circus art performers. The workshop was initiated by sharing the requirements of the sports gathered during the process. This was done on a digital board (Miro platform).	The workshop was led by the urban design team and summoned the skaters, climbers and circus art performers, and the public servants of the ministry.	Since the requirements of the sports had been discussed beforehand, the collected information was informed and consulted.	This method allowed the confirmation of the collected information and the development of a shared understanding of each sport's collective needs and specific requirements. There were no further discussions in this respect.
5	Live sketching in the park and site architectural plans (Co-design workshop)	Conceptual phase in the Co-design Workshop. The workshop followed with the live digital sketching of the lead author on a digital plan of the park and site (Miro platform).	The workshop was led by the urban design team and summoned the skaters, climbers and circus art performers, and the public servants of the ministry.	This method aimed to communicate and explain the urban park design criteria and the site's spatial and budget limitations (informative analysis).	This method helped set a collective understanding of the project's main design criteria and limitations. This allowed the levelling of expectations of the participants. This was useful for the next step of the co-design process, in which the groups had to develop a spatial layout for the square.
6	Live collective sketching of spatial layouts (Co-design workshop)	Conceptual phase in the Co-design Workshop with the skaters, climbers and circus art performers. The workshop followed with the collective sketching of possible layouts of the square using arrows and lines in smaller mixed groups on a digital plan of the site (Miro platform).	The workshop was led by the urban design team and summoned the skaters, climbers and circus art performers, and the public servants of the ministry.	This method allowed a participative analysis and projection of spatial layout sketches.	This method allowed a collective layout building forcing participants to think spatially and encouraging them to comprehend the implications of a shared public space. In this exercise, new spatial ideas were raised for the project.
7	Diagrams, plans, and renders (Revision meetings)	Conceptual phase, embodiment phase, and detailing phase. Multiple diagrams, plans, and renders were used throughout the process to communicate the project's development in formal revision meetings.	These revision meetings were held with the design team at the ministry's request. The ministry had the final decision in approving the project.	In these meetings, visual representations were used to inform the analysis of the design team, consult about the projection, and decide collaboratively on the design for its further development.	Even though these visual tools are rather conventional in this design field, we highlight the collaborative approach with which they were used to communicate the analysis and ideation, allowing for collective decision-making.

Table 2. (Cont.) VCMs used in the design process.

	VCM	Design Phase and Description	Involved Actors	Collaboration in Design Steps	Contribution to Collaboration and Design
8	Sketching in social media visuals * (WhatsApp exchange).	Conceptual phase, embodiment phase, and detailing phase. The photography and videos from social media (Instagram, YouTube) were used throughout the process to share knowledge and understanding regarding skating and climbing sports.	The design team and the sportspeople participated in this reiterative exchange of sketched visuals.	Pictures and videos were used to inform and analyse the sports practice, spaces and construction details.	Even though these visual tools were not envisioned in the planning process, they contributed to sharing knowledge in a twofold direction between the design team and the most active sportspeople.
9	Sketching in details and sections *	Conceptual phase, embodiment phase, and detailing phase. The sections and details were used to share technical knowledge and verify that the project met the skate and climbing-specific requirements.	The design team and the sportspeople exchanged sketched sections and details.	Sections and details were used to ideate and select better solutions for the specific sports building solutions in a participative way.	The early exchange of architectural sections and building details amongst the design team and the most active sportspeople allowed the development of construction solutions to implement the sports structures and elements such as the climbing wall, the ramps, protections, and sliding elements.
10	Work-in-progress renders in social media *	Embodiment phase. Some work-in-progress (WIP) renders were posted on the Kaukari Urban Park's social media, which raised many controversial public opinions.	The ministry in charge, various skaters and citizens, especially some sportspeople who had dropped the co-design process.	The WIP 3D models and renders were posted online to inform the ongoing design project.	The public exposure of draft images generated much public confusion. The images were not finished and had technical detail mistakes that gave a confusing message to the skating community. They were WIP drafts far from being ready to publish.
11	Plans and renders *	Detailing phase. The project plans and images were presented to skate organisations that demanded participation in the process (even though they had voluntarily dropped off earlier).	Involved parties were the design team, the ministry in charge, and skating organizations who had dropped the co-design process earlier.	The design team presented the project to skaters. The ministry allowed the skaters to suggest changes in the project.	The main contribution of this unplanned exchange was the acknowledgement that more beginners' skating spaces could enhance the training vocation of such a public square. Since the ministry was in charge of approving the project, the suggestions had to be taken into account.

Table 2. (Cont.) VCMs used in the design process.

	VCM	Design Phase and Description	Involved Actors	Collaboration in Design Steps	Contribution to Collaboration and Design
12	Photographs in a report *	Detailing phase. The skate organisations developed a report in which, through photography and written notes, they expressed their suggestions for new beginners' structures in the square. They requested lower skating structures such as ramps and sliding rails.	The skate organisations developed a report and submitted it to the ministry. The design team received the report and integrated the suggested beginner elements.	The visual report aimed to inform and consult about some project changes. It was a bottom-up way of proposing alternative structures for the inclusion of a beginners' area in the sports square.	This non foreseen report helped clarify the skate organisations' requests and allowed the design team to integrate the beginners' training space. Even though it did not allow for true collaboration toward design, the report format did add to the specificity of the requests with the use of visual images and notes.
13	Sketches in a printed architectural layout *	Detailing phase. The design team insisted on verifying the modified design proposal (implementating the beginners' area) with the local skate organisations. This was just accomplished after months. The architectural layout printed plan was used to explain the process, but the ministry was also willing to allow new changes to the whole project even though the consultancy was about to finish.	The skate organisations, the ministry, and the design team.	The meeting aimed to consult and verify how the project had incorporated the beginners' area. Nevertheless, the meeting resulted in a participative projection and modification of the overall layout of the square without an active participation of the design team.	The participants were allowed to sketch the printed plan and develop changes to the project without dialogue between the design team and the skaters. This resulted in somehow a prejudice to the final project. The lack of dialogue may have resulted in missed opportunities and overall sense of miscommunication.
14	Sketching in sections and details *	Towards the end of the process, in the detailing phase, the technical revisors changed, so new professionals arrived and requested a series of detailing and layout changes that had to be addressed by the design team.	The ministry professionals in charge of the technical approval of the project and the design team.	Such interactions started with a participative analysis but resulted in consultive projection and informative decision-making.	Such an approach is common when one actor (ministry) has the control over the process. In this case, some parties within the ministry felt uncomfortable with the top-down attitudes of others at the end of the process.

Note: Methods with * were not part of the initial plan.

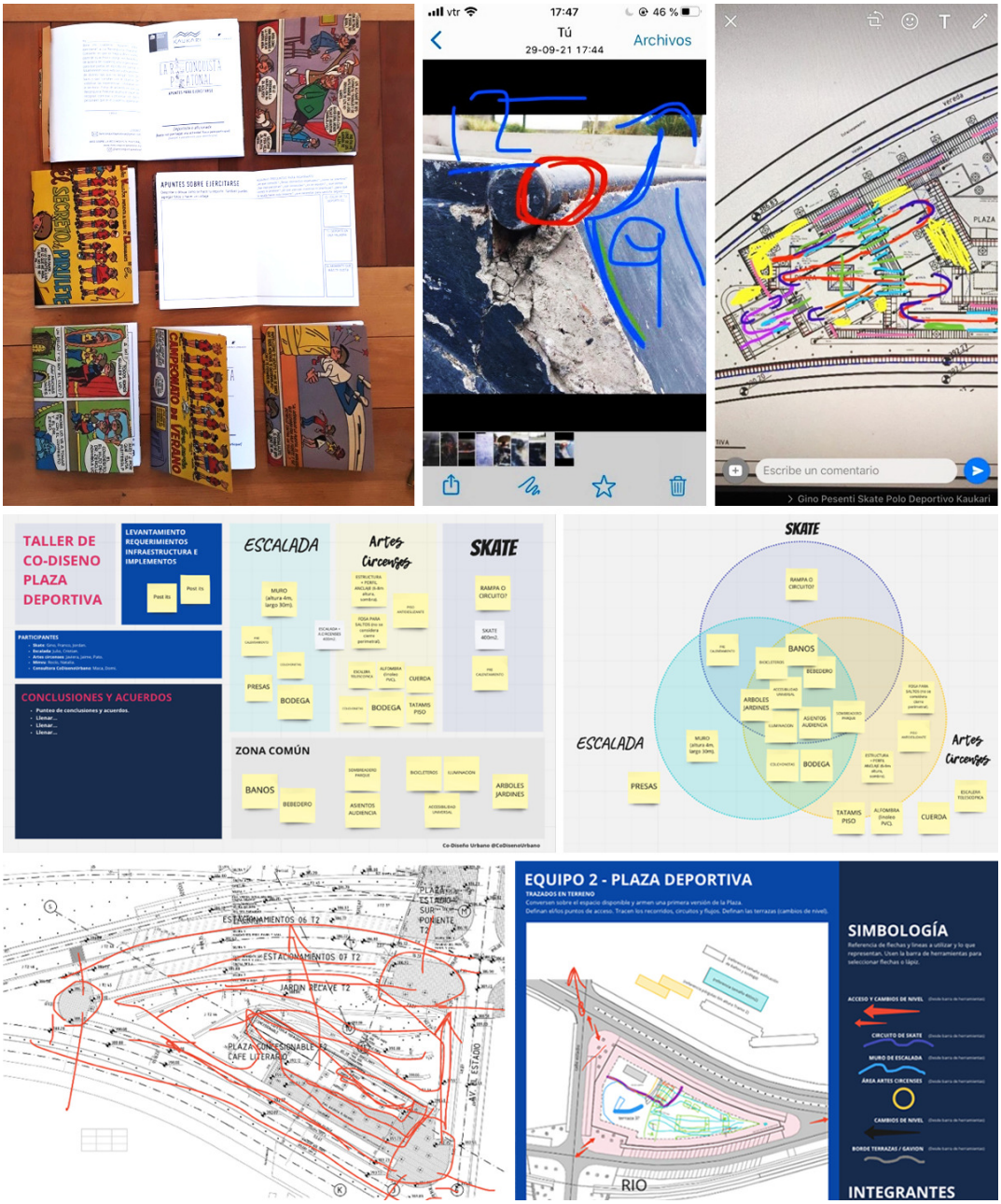

Figure 3. Some VCMs used: Exercise booklets (2), boards of sports requirements (4), live sketching plans (5), spatial layout exercises (6), and sketched visuals (8). Source: Courtesy of Co-Diseño Urbano Consultants.

VCMs were combined with either verbal or written forms of communication to explain and use them. This was the case in the report (12), in which the visual requests were further explained in the text. Also, during the live sketching (6), the design strategies and site limitations were explained verbally to the participants. Accordingly, a variety of verbal and written forms complemented the multiple VCMs.

It is worth noting that most VCMs were digital as meetings and interactions were held online due to the pandemic. Despite this, participants seem to have felt comfortable communicating, learning and using digital tools. This probably worked out because most of them are younger than 40 years old and had already worked remotely during the previous year. Also, digital meetings allowed more people to be present and available, and a couple of actors noted this during the process. Additionally, a couple of in person meetings were held without a successful attendance rate. Also, occasionally, hard-copy booklets and plans were used as non-digital devices for people to fill in or sketch. In this sense, the VCMs studied are both digital and hard copy.

4.2. Mapping the VCMs in the Urban Co-Design Process Framework

The VCMs used in the process were mapped in the urban co-design framework, as shown in Figure 4. Within

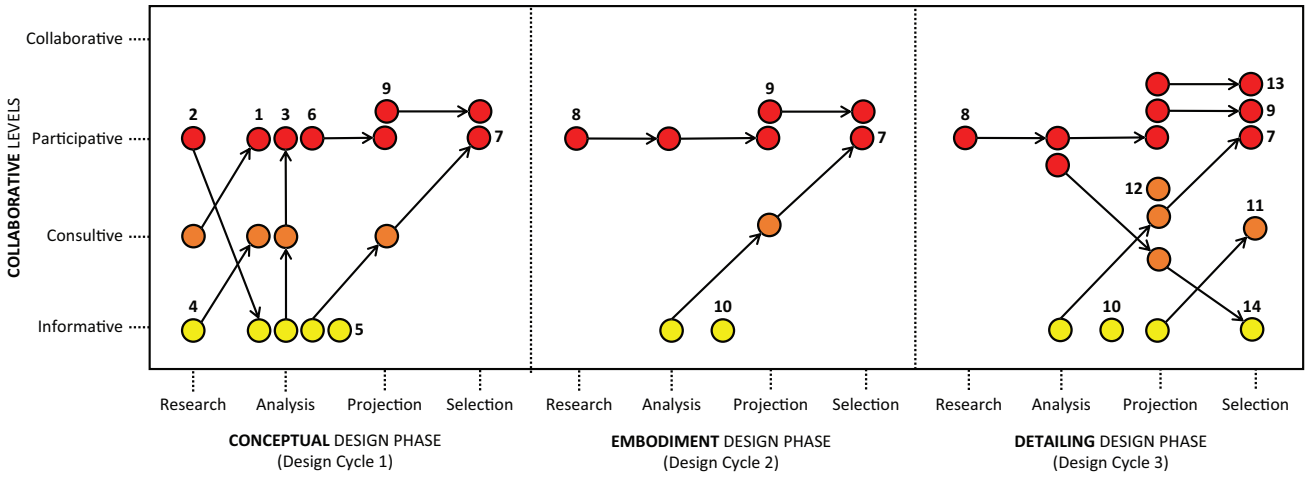

Figure 4. Mapping the use of VCMs in the co-design process framework. Collaborative levels on the Y-axis and the design cycle and phases on the X-axis.

the co-design landscape, VCMs were placed according to the level of collaboration achieved by the involved actors in the design actions. In such a way, methods aiming for knowledge inquiry were classified as "consulting research," methods to present design solutions were mapped as "informative projection," and methods aiming to generate new solutions in collaboration through time were mapped as "participative projection and decision-making."

Some VCMs were placed in one position, while others in more than one. The numbers in Figure 4 refer to the methods described in Table 2. For example, the actor matrix (1) was used as a consulting device during the interviews and a participative analytical tool in consecutive meetings. In other cases, more than one VCM was used in a meeting. This is the case of the co-design workshop during the conceptual phase, which consisted of three methods (4, 5, 6). The first (4) consisted of a presentation of the sports requirements collected and compiled using digital diagrams. Then the context-specific opportunities and limitations of the site and the projects were presented by the urban designer through live online sketches of architectural plans of the site and surroundings (5). Finally, the collaborative development of spatial layouts for the square with digital sketches and symbols on a site plan (6). The workshop lasted two and a half hours, ranged from informative to participative levels, and operated in three design steps: research, analysis, and projection. This explains that the use of VCMs sometimes concentrate at one point, while others draw a trajectory within the co-design landscape.

The fuzziness in the conceptual phase has been said to foster shared understandings and the empowerment of the participants (Sanders, 2005; Sanders & Stappers, 2008). The initial plan even considered some arts-based VCMs in the early phase to elicit experiences and foster knowledge-sharing of the participants. Those methods aimed for participants to communicate, feel comfortable, and provide personal knowledge, aims, and values that could then be considered, prioritised, and integrated into the designed outcomes. Most of the VCMs planned for the conceptual phase allowed shared pre-design and exploratory solutions (Sanders, 2014), as was explicitly requested in the design consultancy. Yet, new collaborative and design needs emerged in the following phases, so new VCMs were incorporated.

A selected group of sportspeople were involved in the early shared understandings to define the requirements of the sports and analyse the opportunities and limitations of the site. However, due to the high specificity of the designs and the lack of national sports regulations for climbing and skate structures, a more permanent technical collaboration was required and sustained in the following design phases. Other visual methods were used in a twofold direction for knowledge exchange, brokerage and design. This was the case in which conventional technical visuals that communicated the project were then used as tools for collaboration. Throughout the process, we used conventional visual tools that were at hand. This was possible because one of the skaters was trained and had professional experience in technical drafting, supporting collaboration even in detailing technical specifications.

The shared understandings and sports requirements were integrated in the spatial layouts and preliminary construction solutions during the embodiment phase. As illustrated in Figure 3, the VCMs in this phase reflect the co-design interactions within the transdisciplinary design arena (Gaete Cruz et al., in press). Such methods allowed collaboration in the revision meetings (7) and sketching in images, videos, plans, and details (8, 9) exchanged weekly using WhatsApp, Instagram, or Zoom meetings.

During the detailing phase, the most specialised decisions are made, and this is the last collaborative phase of the process. Some of the VCMs mapped in the previous phase are maintained. Nevertheless, we observe some rather unusual collaborative trajectories due to changes

in the involved actors. Sports organisations who complained were included towards the end. And some professionals in charge of the technical approvals left the process or were changed towards the end.

After the WIP renders were posted in social media, some sports organisations had to be involved in the process. This was done time-barred and affected the overall sense of collaboration. The modifications they demanded had been already decided collaboratively in the conceptual phase. At that point most of them had been involved in the process but decided to abandon it at some point. After several months, a new meeting was held in person (13), and wrong expectations were given about possible project changes. The ministry opened up the project for modifications (11, 12), disregarding the urging of the design team for closure. The changes affected the layout and project details. This occurred at the end of the detailing phase raising budget and timing issues that the design team absorbed alone. This demonstrates how co-design approaches may be disrupted when actors make use of the power they have, damaging collaboration.

Some public servants in charge of the technical approvals within the leading public organisms left the process for personal reasons. This is depicted in the collaborative descent of number 14 in Figure 4. Processes deal with human beings, so interactions are simultaneously personal and technical. Whenever someone is missing or new actors are integrated, problems may arise due to lack of awareness or willingness to collaborate. Moreover, professional boundaries often blur if participants are connected outside the spheres of the co-design arenas. This may have been the case when subjective technical requirements were demanded as norms due to the lack of national skatepark regulations. The descending line depicted in the detailing phase contrasts with the overall ascending lines observed in the previous phases. It shows one of the main risks in pursuing co-design since there are no power-free institutional settings.

We concluded that VCMs facilitated all four design acts at different collaborative levels in each phase. Some focused on the consultation of strategic actors such as citizens or public organisations, and others facilitated participative approaches to analysis and projection with the public sector and some sportspeople. VCMs allowed the different parties' information, consultation, participation, and collaboration. Yet, according to the framework, the collaborative level was achieved because participation was fostered consistently throughout the process.

4.3. The Contributions of VCMs in Urban Co-Design Processes

One of the main contributions of using VCMs in urban co-design processes is that they can be diverse and flexible enough to be used throughout the design process. There original plan evolved, so flexibility had to be kept throughout the process. Such flexibility is a prerequisite for collaborative endeavours but may also blur professional limits. This may have been the case of the sportpeople participating actively in the development of the project. They were not formally part of the team or were economically retributed. Scholars have previously highlighted such possible social justice issues in participatory endevours (Ersoy, 2017).

An interesting contribution of VCMs to the process is how they influence further steps of the process or the use of other methods. This is the case of the actor matrix (1) that allowed the identification of actors with whom we continued to collaborate. Also, the ideation steps (6, 7, 8, 9) used conventional visual tools in unconventional ways to foster collaboration. VCMs used in the analysis and ideation steps (1, 3, 4, 5, 8) contributed to shared understandings and design outcomes.

The use of VCMs also influenced the design outcomes. The booklets (3) made explicit that gathering and warm-up spaces needed in the square to complement the sports structures and that natural sunset shadows could be tapped through the position of the climbing wall against the sun. Their discussion allowed for shared understandings of the sportspeople's values, motivations, and practices, which generated empathy and a sense of community. There was an additional agreement (5, 6) on the sports' formative and performative character, considering the park's scenic and central setting, so viewports, grandstands, staircases, and gathering spaces were incorporated into the design.

Finally, in a non-participatory context like Chile, the VCMs fostered co-design in a rather top-down urban development setting led by the public sector. The pandemic might have benefitted the processes in two ways: allowing for multiple images to be sketched and interchanged digitally and making it possible for team members to collaborate while dispersed worldwide. Anyhow, striving for co-design in a context where participation is not the standard always raises practical challenges.

4.4. The Contributions of the Urban Co-Design Framework in This Study

The use of the framework as an analytical tool allowed us to conceptualize a co-design process. We observe that the starting point in the lower-left area in Figure 4 is full of opportunities. We consider informative research as a building block for further collaboration (Gaete Cruz et al., in press). From this point up, a co-design process can be mapped and analysed. The use of the framework allowed us to identify co-design trajectories and shifting arenas.

Three main co-design trajectories were recognised from this study: the early fuzziness, the collaborative trajectory, and the final fuzziness. The early fuzziness is where arts-based tools, and VCMs contributed experiential knowledge and values to the process. Previous studies have highlighted the fuzzy front end as the most fruitful co-design moment (Sanders, 2005). In the conceptual phase all strategic, transdisciplinary, design, and

socio-cultural arenas interacted. Then, the transdisciplinary design arena ascended and achieved a collaborative trajectory with sustained transdisciplinary co-design moments in the embodiment phase. Finally, we recognise a fuzziness towards the back-end that may be considered rather unconventional and certainly not desired. In this case, it happened due to the change in the professionals and sportspeople. This breakdown towards the end had a significant rise in the costs and duration of the process. This highlights the importance of maintaining communication, awareness, and willingness to collaborate throughout the process.

Some actors were recognised to have crossed the boundaries of design arenas (Gaete Cruz et al., in press). We could say that some sportspeople transitioned from the sociocultural towards the transdisciplinary design arena to sort more locally-suitable building solutions. One of the main facilitators of the collaboration achieved with one of the skaters was that he was a technical draftsman. So he knew how to understand, proofread and produce a technical design tool in the way the design team did. Using such visuals was easy and became a permanent communication language. Maintaining this long-lasting relationship throughout the process encouraged the skater to pursue strategic aims. His started to collaborate with the Ministry in charge, the National Sports Institute, and some other relevant actors in the field pursuing the implementation and early activation of the space. Somehow this depicts how an actor may transition from the sociocultural towards the transdisciplinary design arena and end up acting in the strategic one.

5. Conclusions

This study developed a framework for co-design processes to conceptualise and analyse design in collaboration. The framework follows a previous study and extends it into the three main design phases. We tested the framework by analysing a case in which the first author was involved in practice. Although a linear sequential framework, it clarifies the diverse collaborative interactions that occur in the cycles of problem-solving and solution-generation (Cross, 2018a). It depicts the variety of design aims pursued using VCMs and contributes to measuring co-design (Szebeko & Tan, 2010).

The study suggests that VCMs may contribute to co-design throughout the whole process. During the conceptual phase they mainly contribute to knowledge inquiry and collective brainstorming toward shared understandings. In the embodiment phase, they facilitate the analysis and evaluation of alternative solutions. In the detail phase, they contribute to integrating technical knowledge of experienced actors (Sanders, 2009). The analysis of planned and non-planned methods goes one step further in conceptualising the complexities of co-design processes, and the need for flexibility (Gaete Cruz et al., 2021). This study suggests that fostering collaboration and shared decision-making throughout the design phases may improve the suitability of the projects (Gaete Cruz et al., 2021).

This study from practice showed that co-design, while often understood as an idealist endeavour, has genuine and concrete benefits and challenges. One of the main difficulties experienced in the study was maintaining the awareness and willingness of the actors to maintain a collaborative approach. We conclude that awareness and willingness to collaborate are needed for the successful use of VCMs, and to achieve the aims of co-design (legitimacy, context specificity, and feasibility; Gaete Cruz et al., in press). The collaborative aim of the overall process should be known by all parties to manage expectations and deal with power issues. Such awareness and willingness will condition the availability to get involved, listen to others, and ultimately co-design. On the other hand, while some might think that co-design questions the contribution of urban landscape designers, in such diffuse collaborative settings, it may emphasise their leadership and facilitators role highlighting the value of their problem-solving and solution-generation expertise (Cross, 2018b). The previous, only if achieved with high doses of empathy.

We also conclude that co-design is forcefully a flexible process. Flexibility is needed in planning such processes, undertaking them, and evaluating them. However, such flexibility in co-design processes has drawbacks: Co-design is less linear, more time-consuming, and more expensive than conventional processes. It involves more people, activities, and innovative methods, and consequently, its management is difficult but essential. Despite the above, great democratic, inclusive, and just benefits can be achieved when co-design processes embrace their challenges and pitfalls. In doing so, more context-specific projects can be achieved, more legitimate and empowering spaces can be created, and ultimately, more feasible projects can be implemented.

In this ARtD case study, we had the unique opportunity to plan, act, and reflect throughout a co-design process. Our process-oriented approach allowed us to analyse what happened between the planned activities and experience how VCMs were used daily to exchange views, express points of view and solutions, and make design decisions. Although the process outlined is an analytical reduction of reality, it illustrates the diversity of co-design acts and allows for generalisation and further discussion. Despite being an analytical tool, the co-design process framework captures the diversity of trajectories within co-design practice.

More applied research studies are needed to fully understand how VCMs contribute to co-design processes. For instance, the use of digital and non-digital VCMs could be studied. On the other hand, the co-design process framework we developed can be used to study other non-visual methods, the evolution of collaborative images, or the use of softwares in co-design practice. It may also contribute to analyse how knowledge and

values are integrated into co-design processes. We argue the framework may be useful to plan co-design processes in practice.

Co-design may contribute to better informing the projects, legitimising the processes, and improving the appropriateness of the designed spaces (Gaete Cruz et al., in press). Further research may focus on how co-design may condition the implementation and operation phases fostering collaboration in the operation, the activation, and the maintenance of future public spaces.

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Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflict of interests.

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Article

From Urban Consumption to Production: Rethinking the Role of Festivals in Urban Development Through Co-Creation

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Abstract
Festivals infuse art and culture into the physical transformation of public spaces to support economic development, social capital, and urban vibrancy. Although these impacts align with urban planning, these projects typically engage actors outside the field such as community organisations, businesses, and artists, reflecting cultural and creative economies, where different values, motivations, and practices are continually negotiated through processes of co-creation. However, institutional planning practices have not yet effectively engaged with cultural production processes to maximise the social, cultural, and economic impacts of arts-led development. To explore this potential, this research uses participatory, co-productive methodologies to analyse the Bristol Light Festival, a collaborative partnership between business interests, city staff, and creative producers. The article begins with a discussion of the often contradictory role festivals play in urban development, followed by a discussion of creative and cultural ecologies and an overview of the co-creation process. Drawing on festival participant survey and interview data, the article discusses how the festival generated new forms of belonging in the city and other impacts that are often invisible within dominant arts-led development strategies. The article concludes with a discussion of findings relating cultural ecologies and co-creation to urban planning practice.

Keywords
co-creation; co-production; festivals; networks; urban planning; value

Issue
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1. Festivals and Arts-Led Development

Festivals have long served an important role in empowering and building communities through play, exhibition, and protest. Within the planning field, however, scholarship and policymaking have largely centred on festivals’ economic development impact (García, 2004). This focus reflects broader shifts towards developing creative-based economies and entrepreneurial styles of urban governance, where cities compete on a global stage for investment from residents, creative workers, firms, and visitors (Christopherson & Rightor, 2010; Florida, 2002; Harvey, 1989). Festivals are now linked to multiple economic development outcomes including enhanced city branding, boosting the night-time economy, increased tourism, job creation, and regeneration (Gibson et al., 2010; Quinn, 2010). With the ascendance of creative economy policies, researchers also cite the role festivals play in strengthening local arts and cultural industries by catalysing temporary clusters, encouraging networking, collaboration, and innovation (Comunian, 2017b; Gibson et al., 2010; Podestà & Richards, 2018).

Key to festivals’ economic development potential is the perception that festivals are inextricably tied to place (Van Aalst & van Melik, 2012). Local officials support festivals to market their “authenticity” across a range of geographic scales from neighbourhood regeneration efforts to globally recognised “festival cities” like Edinburgh (Johansson & Kociatkiewicz, 2011). However, as critics argue, such festivals are far from “distinctive,” but rather are homogenised, consumer-oriented events. Light festivals, in particular, are emblematic of the festivalisation of cities. Paris, Montreal, Brussels, Rome, and nearly 100 other cities have all produced their own versions of

Nuit Blanche, reflecting the mobility of the quintessential light festival as economic development strategy (Evans, 2012; Giordano & Ong, 2017). Situating festivals within broader critiques of creative city and creative class policies, critical scholars argue that festivals sanitise urban spaces for middle-class consumption leading to gentrification (Shaw & Sullivan, 2011).

Despite these critiques, other research has focused on festivals' social and cultural impacts, which also intersect with planning interests. Festivals create opportunities for people to perform diverse and collective identities, fostering a sense of belonging and solidarity (Hassanli et al., 2021; Rota & Salone, 2014; Tate, 2020). Unlike other forms of arts-based development including flagship art centres and cultural districts, festivals are temporary, often free, events. Offering cultural programming in public spaces, festivals create opportunities to interact with diverse others, promoting social inclusion (Quinn et al., 2021; Stevens & Shin, 2014). As temporary and liminal experiences, festivals have the potential to create safe spaces for risk-taking and the collective transgression of social norms. This may lead to the public expression of new collective identities and claims from marginalised voices, fostering collective action (Edensor & Andrews, 2019; Picard, 2016). Festivals also forge connections between people and places through affective, embodied, and playful experiences (Edensor, 2012). These attachments with place can promote ethical and sustainable behaviours (Alonso-Vazquez et al., 2019; Perry et al., 2020), as well as new rights to the city. As Duffy and Mair (2017, p. 4) highlight, "festival events are much more than simply a source of financial gain; rather, the processes of festivals enable notions of place, community, identity and belonging to be to some extent actively negotiated, questioned and experienced." Festivals are contested and contradictory experiences, producing spaces where urban boosterism, creative city policies, participatory cultures, affective experiences, and bodily encounters become entangled (Finkel & Platt, 2020; Weller, 2013).

Although the scholarship on festival and urban development is contested, the focus tends to be on festival impacts rather than their planning processes. This is surprising considering the ways in which urban planning has increasingly incorporated arts and creative methodologies to support both planning *processes* in addition to desired *impacts*. For example, creative placemaking and pop-up art installations are used to help communities identify challenges, visualise alternatives and develop solutions for urban development (Goldberg-Miller et al., 2020). Planners include artists to create polyvocal spaces for planning discussions by shifting power relations and enabling the articulation of more diverse perspectives, including affective and emotional considerations (Metzger, 2011; Vasudevan, 2020). Even though tensions inherent to arts and cultural planning align with longstanding debates in urban planning regarding the efficacy of participatory practices "in the face of power" (Forester, 1988), urban planning has yet to fully engage with the processes underpinning cultural production such as festivals. As a result, planning scholars and practitioners often suffer from translation issues with community arts practitioners (Chapple & Jackson, 2010; McLean, 2014). This is likely because arts-led development strategies are largely not planner-directed but rather facilitated by artists, non profits, public agencies, community-based organisations, local businesses, and educational institutions as key collaborators (Ashley, 2015; Grodach, 2010, 2011). The inclusion of different stakeholders suggests that arts-led strategies could model a more participatory and democratic approach to planning and governance (Ashley, 2021). Considering the pervasiveness of festivals in urban development, more research is needed to understand the role of cultural production methods and their implications for urban planning processes and outcomes.

To address the translation issue, this article introduces the concept of creative and cultural ecologies (CCEs) to reframe festivals as a form of cultural production to highlight the co-creative processes through which social, cultural, and economic agendas are negotiated. I then discuss the role of academics and co-productive research methods in the co-creation process to "hold space," address power asymmetries, and nudge decision-making to prioritise social and cultural aims despite neoliberal pressures. Using the Bristol Light Festival (BLF) as a case study, I discuss the implementation of researcher-facilitated co-creative processes, their perceived impact on festival planning members and decision-making processes, and whether the festival achieved its desired goals.

2. Cultural and Creative Ecologies: From Participation to Co-Creation?

CCE is gaining traction within the cultural policy field to counter trends that instrumentalise arts and culture for economic growth. Markusen et al. (2011, p. 8) define cultural ecology as "the complex interdependencies that shape the demand for and production of arts and cultural offerings," highlighting the network of diverse participants involved in cultural production and projects, which are "sustained by many different kinds of value" (Dovey et al., 2016). Like Markusen et al. (2011), Holden (2015) draws attention to the "complex interdependencies" between commercial, nonprofit, state, and voluntary participants that constitute CCEs. However, Holden goes further to argue that the concept of "ecology" provides a critical counterpoint to dominant creative economy and creative city narratives by emphasising the collective and communal dimensions of cultural production: "Cultural endeavour involves the making of meaning and the construction of social lives as well as (sometimes) the pursuit of profit" (Holden, 2015, p. 12).

In other words, CCEs are never entirely about cultural value nor completely reducible to neoliberal logics,

but rather involve collective processes of *negotiation* between cultural, social, economic, and other values. This speaks to the power dynamics at play during the cultural production planning process. While "mixed ecologies of cultural activity can work to produce new assemblages of distributed power and meaning making" (Bailey et al., 2019, p. 17), they will undoubtedly be inflected by power dynamics (Comunian, 2017a). However, as de Bernard et al. (2021, p. 18) further suggest, such insights can be used to develop:

> New participatory and deliberative approaches to policymaking: "ecological policymaking" (Gross et al., 2020) for cultural and creative ecosystems and beyond, developing sustained spaces for radically inclusive processes of information-sharing, deliberation and decision-making, in which human interdependence—and the interconnectedness of many kinds of cultural and creative activity—is a guiding principle.

In other words, cultural ecologies need to be intentionally held to produce inclusive processes, co-created values, and desired outcomes (Dovey et al., 2016). These insights challenge conventional approaches to analysing festival impacts on urban development as cultural production planning processes will likely shape whether a festival produces economic impact in addition to or at the expense of cultural democracy, sustainability, or another normative goal.

One approach to more participatory decision-making is co-creation, dominant in cultural and creative production (Dovey et al., 2016; Hearn et al., 2007) and gaining popularity in public administration and urban planning fields. Broadly speaking, co-creation brings providers and users together for a creative process of collaborative learning and problem-solving, often through the design of products, services, programmes, and places. Within the planning field, co-creation might include public sector staff, researchers, technical experts, social entrepreneurs, and those impacted by decision-making, to identify problems and develop solutions for urban challenges such as public service delivery, sustainability, and urban regeneration. Co-creation does not necessarily result in more inclusive, just, or sustainable outcomes, however. Depending on context and participants, co-creation will be inflected by power dynamics, different value systems, assumptions, and priorities (Leino & Puumala, 2021). As some argue, co-creation may actually align with neoliberal values with its emphasis on public-private partnerships and the devolution of public responsibilities to the private sector (Parker et al., 2015). For example, within the context of arts-led development, the inclusion of artists in creative city policy development does not necessarily result in recognition of cultural value or support of local artists (Ponzini & Rossi, 2010). However, co-creation can create space for subjugated knowledges to shape decision-making and development through agonistic participation processes, especially when coupled with participatory action research methods (Carpenter et al., 2021). As such, the inclusion of academics in co-creation processes may help to produce outcomes that better reflect diverse social and cultural needs, over neoliberal economic development.

To explore this potential, this research includes developing and facilitating a co-creation process for the 2020 BLF production team made up of business representatives, city arts and culture staff, and creative producers. Specifically, I explore how co-creation processes address competing interests and strengthen social and cultural values, goals, and outcomes despite neoliberal agendas. The research is underpinned by co-productive methods to (a) recognise and value the contribution partners make to the knowledge creation process, (b) improve research, analysis, and problem-solving (Leino & Puumala, 2021), and (c) ensure research methods are non-extractive and produce direct value for participants. Although "co-production'' and "co-creation" are sometimes used interchangeably to describe participatory methods for developing cultural goods and services, "co-production" is more commonly used for research. This article intentionally uses the term "co-production'' to apply to the research methodology and "co-creation" to refer to the facilitated activities with festival partners. This distinction highlights the *productive* role of academic research and the progressive potential of "co-creation" processes within planning practice.

3. Co-Produced Research Methodology

Co-productive research methods do not presume an a priori reality but rather acknowledge the ways in which every day communicative and other meaning-making practices shape urban life and have the potential "to collectively construct new lifeworlds" (Bell & Pahl, 2018, p. 108). Co-productive research often incorporates "beyond text" methods such as storytelling, photography, and other creative practices to address power asymmetries and knowledge hierarchies between practitioner, academic, embodied, and other forms of expertise (Beebeejaun et al., 2014). Further, co-productive research aligns with participatory action research that strives to empower research participants in analytical and decision-making processes as part of their right to participate in civic life (Beebeejaun et al., 2015).

Co-productive research is often critiqued by more positivist-oriented scholars who express concern regarding "research capture," the loss of objectivity or lack of evidence documenting the social impact of this approach (Durose et al., 2017). Further, co-production has a tenuous relationship within the UK's higher education landscape where universities are called to evidence how they are achieving their "third mission" of social impact in addition to teaching and research effectiveness. Some argue that these trends tie academic research more closely to neoliberal economic projects through

"knowledge transfer," "knowledge exchange," and other "commercialisable IP [intellectual property]" generating activities, especially in the field of the creative economy (Dovey et al., 2016; Moreton, 2018). However, third mission activities are not monolithic but rather reflect diverse assemblages of knowledge production and social impact (Moreton, 2016) with some research-activists embracing this "third mission" to advance sustainability and justice goals specifically through participatory and co-productive methodologies (Trencher et al., 2014).

Like cultural planning processes, co-productive research is inflected by power dynamics, privileging some voices at the expense of others (Leino & Puumala, 2021). However, by engaging researchers, practitioners, and other stakeholders in the knowledge creation process, co-production creates space for agonistic democratic practice and critical public engagement (Beebeejaun et al., 2015). Rather than being captured or co-opted into a seamless neoliberal framework, co-productive research projects are more likely characterised by tensions between academics, practitioners, and other policymakers. These critical differences in frameworks of understanding, communication styles, and motivations (Bartunek & Rynes, 2014) reflect the diversity of economic, social and cultural values and practices that can be "within, against, and beyond" neoliberal agendas (Bell & Pahl, 2018, p. 105). As such, co-productive research assumes these tensions as a given and intentionally engages with the messiness of cultural and creative ecologies that are inextricably entangled with multiple value systems. Instead of trying to assimilate difference, co-productive research aims to "hold space" to creatively and critically engage diverse forms of academic, professional, and everyday expertise in order to collectively produce new knowledge, policies, and programmes that further justice aims (Bartunek & Rynes, 2014; Pascoe et al., 2020).

Using this framework, I facilitated a workshop-based methodology developed in collaboration with other researchers at the Creative Ecologies Lab at the University of the West of England Bristol and the Pervasive Media Studio at Watershed. The workshop methodology responds to tensions within the arts and cultural field related to the dominance of neoliberal creative economy policies and intensified interest in data-driven cultural evaluation (Gilmore et al., 2017; Oakley, 2006). Within this context, arts and culture organisations are increasingly pressured to instrumentalise their impacts in terms of measurable indicators such as audience numbers and job creation, which may be inappropriate for their missions. The workshop methodology addresses these tensions by helping organisations to affirm core values, map assets, identify key beneficiaries, and explore impacts they hope to achieve despite neoliberal pressures. The methodology has been developed over time through its application in various planning contexts for different types of arts and cultural organisations such as Watershed Media Centre, MAYK, Spike Island, and Kaleider Studios. Starting in early 2019, I applied this methodology which included four workshops with the BLF team. In addition, I maintained fieldnotes, conducted individual interviews with team participants, and surveyed local businesses and festival participants both on-site and after the event (see Table 1).

Workshop and meeting notes, open-ended survey questions, on-site interviews, and team member interviews were transcribed, qualitatively coded, and analysed for themes (Saldaña, 2013). Throughout the process, I wrote analytical memos to explore the impact of the co-creation process on team decision-making and negotiation processes. Using festival survey and interview data, I analysed whether the intended goals were achieved at the event.

4. Co-Creating the Bristol Light Festival

As the hometown of Banksy, Massive Attack, and arts and cultural anchors like Arnolfini and Watershed, Bristol is internationally known for both street and contemporary art, a strong music scene, as well as diverse protest, immigrant, and tech cultures. This mashing of skills, styles, and values has resulted in a vibrant art and cultural scene, which is often visible in public space through graffiti, festivals, public art, and "playable city" installations. In addition to the BLF, Bristol is home to more than 50 regular festivals, including theatre, music, film, nature, and cultural events. Festivals range in scale from neighbourhoods to international gatherings such as Sustainable Fashion Week and the Festival of the Future City. The diversity of Bristol's festival programming speaks to the tensions inherent in festival research and their role in urban development. On the one hand, Bristol's larger events undoubtedly produce economic impact by attracting participants to the city and through multiplier effects. However, Bristol is also home to festivals that are largely motivated by other values including cultural celebration, learning, and transformation to sustainable futures.

The BLF began as a collaboration between the Bristol central city BID and a creative producer who had close ties with the area's art and music scenes. BIDs, first emerging in the United States and Canada, are quasi-public organisations focused on the economic development of a defined geographic area. BIDs are largely funded by levying an additional tax on local businesses to be used only for the targeted area such as maintenance, capital improvements, marketing and other economic development strategies. One of the BID's key priorities is to increase tourism and boost the night time economy in the central city area, which led to their support of a light festival. A local creative producer who had participated in the development of major cultural events also envisioned a light festival drawing on Bristol's cultural and creative ecology including local festival production networks, playable city projects, and digital and light-based artists. A "creative producer" materialises

Table 1. Description of research methods.

Methods	Description
Four workshops with BLF Team (five to seven members)	1. Visualisation and storytelling 2. Asset and value mapping 3. Co-creating shared values and goals 4. Co-creating the evaluation framework
Researcher meeting and participant observation notes	I maintained notes reflecting on workshops and 12 team production meetings documenting processes, conflicts, collaborations, negotiations, and outcomes.
On-site festival survey (N = 213)	Questions included where participants lived, demographics (age, gender, nationality, physical ability); motivation for attending the festival; familiarity with the installation site; assessment of installation; and impact of the festival on the site/space, city centre, and city pride. Surveyed participants were invited to describe the festival using three words.
On-site festival interview (N = 53)	In addition to on-site survey questions, participants were invited to respond to open-ended questions qualifying their assessments of the installation, site, and event overall by describing their experiences, as well as any comments not addressed by the survey.
Post-event participant survey (N = 72)	Questions included home postcode and demographic information; how often they visit the city centre; whether they participated in any other activities like eating out during the event; estimated spending during the event; whether they experience something new and learned about artists; and overall assessment of installations, installation sites, event, and city centre.
Post-event business survey (N = 55)	In addition to questions assessing their personal experience of the installations, event, and impact on the city centre, business representatives were asked about the impact of the event on their business in terms of foot traffic, diversifying customers, publicity, and sales. Businesses were also asked to reflect on their relationship with the Business Improvement District (BID).
Post-event interview with festival team members (N = 5)	After the festival, I conducted individual interviews with team members asking them to reflect on the event itself as well as the co-creation process, including changing roles and responsibilities, desired outcomes, any tensions between members, how tensions were managed, the contribution of different members, and individual and team learning.

conceptual ideas into actual cultural and creative events such as concerts, plays, exhibitions, performances, and festivals. In addition to curation and production, creative producers are often key intermediaries in CCEs, acting "as brokers, forging collaborations and relationships, connecting parts of the network together, putting people in touch with resources" (Foster et al., 2020, p. 9). Recognising that without more diverse participation in the cultural production process, the producer was concerned that the BLF would likely prioritise economic development over other goals. Subsequently, the creative producer facilitated meetings between the BID and the City of Bristol's Arts and Events Department in addition to the University of the West of England Bristol's Creative Economies Lab. I was specifically asked to develop and facilitate a co-creative process for planning, implementing, and evaluating the light festival to produce a strong partnership and ensure the priorities of artists, cultural, and community organisations, and the public sector were represented in decision-making.

The first workshop in the co-creative process asked participants to draw on their senses to envision what a successful event would look like from their individual perspectives. Participants then shared visions in a storytelling format which began to highlight diverse agendas and desires reflected in the team (Table 2). Creative producers saw the light festival as an opportunity to engage audiences. More importantly, however, the festival enabled artists to work in high-profile places, increase their visibility, and network with other professionals. Bristol City Arts and Events staff members recognised a wider range of potential impacts including a more

connected, vibrant city centre that would welcome and include diverse participants in new cultural experiences. They also understood the benefits for artists and the festival's economic development potential. However, the social impacts, specifically feelings of safety, inclusion, and belonging, were the highest priorities. City staff also envisioned a sustainable event, specifically mentioning the challenges of event consumption and waste. BID representatives desired an event that would increase city connectivity. However, their main priority was to support economic development, by boosting the nighttime economy and linking installations to city centre branding efforts.

The team then participated in a process of asset and value mapping to make visible their embeddedness in CCEs and the diverse web of relationships connecting resources, organisations, knowledge, and skill sets that could be activated through the partnership. During the early stages of the process, some team members expressed that they felt mapping their network relationships could lead to transactive and even extractive relationships. However, later stages, which included the co-creation of shared values, strengthened trust between members and created an important touchstone during subsequent decision-making. At this point, I asked team members to individually write summative words or short phrases that crystallised the values underpinning their CCEs on sticky notes. These notes were then posted directly to the asset maps. I then asked team members to work as a group to cluster similar values together to identify emerging core values they shared as a team. In this way, I was able to engage participants directly in the analytical coding process (Foster-Fishman et al., 2010) while also building trust in the partnership. Through the co-creative process, the team identified seven core values that would frame their decision-making processes

Table 2. Festival team visions and priorities.

Team member	Spatial	Social	Cultural	Economic	Environmental
Creative producers/artists	Excitement to work in other parts of the city	People are engaged and joyful	Opportunity to work with different artists	Great opportunity to platform work Increase legitimacy and visibility	Sustainable
City Arts and Events staff	Street is full Everything feels connected and engaged People experiencing new places	Diversity of attendees—Families, singles, young, and old People feel safe People feel like they belong, have ownership Evokes feelings of happiness, excitement, curiosity, inquisitive	Attracting people to experience new cultural activities Artists doing experimental, interesting things in new places	Businesses are buzzing Branding for the city	Green and sustainable event
BID	Links city centre to rest of the city Active and animated	Attracts people at different times Working with new partners		Brands the city centre through clear visual representation Celebrating Bristol successes Businesses benefit Keeps people in the city centre after work	

and goals (Table 3). As a result of the activity, the BID, who had often dominated decision-making on festival production decisions, relinquished some control and entrusted city arts and events staff members to draft job advertisements for additional creative producers, recognising their connections with the art and culture sector and the need to bring additional skill sets to the team such as curatorial expertise for public spaces, technology, artist networks, and festival event production support.

Through a process of negotiation, the team identified high-priority public spaces, potential artists, and appropriate installations best able to produce desired outcomes. During this stage, significant tensions emerged such as whether to privilege high aesthetic quality at the expense of broad cultural accessibility, public benefit versus benefit for BID members, and whether other neighbourhoods outside the city centre should be engaged through additional festival programming. The creative producers were most interested in creating innovative and culturally transformative experiences using the city as a playground. They also wanted to platform artists and Bristol's creative and cultural scene to a more global audience. Arts and culture city staff members were more focused on cultural democracy and expanding access to the arts to all areas of the city. BID representatives continually narrowed their attention to economic impact, safety, and other impacts "benefitting levy payers."

However, conflicts were negotiated by continually referring back to the values framework. For example, referencing the value of social, economic, and cultural impact, I asked team members to explore what each value would look like in practice at each installation site. Interestingly, some team members articulated visions that were previously shared by other participants. For example, BID representatives expressed a desire to see people playing and expressing joy. Creative producers spoke about increasing connectivity between sites and inviting people to new areas of the city. By the end of the process, the team prioritised several goals including diversifying visitors to the city centre, reducing unfamiliarity in parts of the city centre, activating public spaces, showcasing and engaging local creative enterprises and organisations, strengthening local pride, diversifying cultural engagement, and increasing economic activity, which reflected different priorities of each team member, and yet were shared collectively as a team.

The next phase of the co-creation process focused on developing appropriate evaluation methods and indicators for desired impacts. The methodology included surveying participants and businesses regarding their attachments to place, cultural, and urban experiences, in addition to conventional indicators like event spending. The methodology also included participant observation of how people experienced the light installations in public spaces which included pieces such as the illuminated sonic seesaws of *Wave-Field* (Lateral Office et al., 2020), *Neighbours* (Bingle et al., 2020), a reinterpretation of Banksy's (2006–) *Well Hung Lover* by local street artists, Tine Bech's (2020) *Pink Enchantment*, immersive pink smoke floating across an expansive bridge, and Olivier Ratsi's (2020) *Frame Perspective*, featuring a series of gently pulsating red frames. For each installation, the team discussed potential qualitative experiences, which included playfulness, joy, and thought-provoking and meditative experiences, highlighting the importance of cultural value in their evaluation framework.

5. Festival Impacts

Over the course of four days, the BLF attracted 100,000 people, exceeding the team's expectations. Surveys and on-site interviews suggest that the festival achieved its intended goals including increased economic spending, diversifying and attracting visitors to new parts of the city, improving perceptions of the city centre, and increasing civic pride of place. Additionally, the festival generated social and cultural impacts including improved feelings of safety, diverse social interactions, and positive affects related to new cultural experiences in urban spaces. In terms of economic benefit, 75% of participants reported that they participated in additional activities while attending the festival such as eating or drinking out in restaurants and pubs, attending other events, and shopping, with an average reported spending of £58.75 per person. Approximately half of the surveyed businesses felt that the festival diversified patrons, increased foot traffic, and improved sales (Figure 1). A larger percentage of businesses felt that the light festival improved

Table 3. Co-created values.

Accountability	Using sound knowledge, transparent processes, and open communication
Collaborative	Recognising the strength in connecting and working with diverse partners
Engaged	Effectively responding to the needs of our partners, beneficiaries, and stakeholders
Impact	Creating economic growth, social impact, and cultural value
Place	Building on local strengths, create safe and interactive places that instil a sense of pride
Innovative	Using creative processes to co-produce high-quality experiences
Legacy	Creating a sustainable partnership by learning from experiences and communicating successes

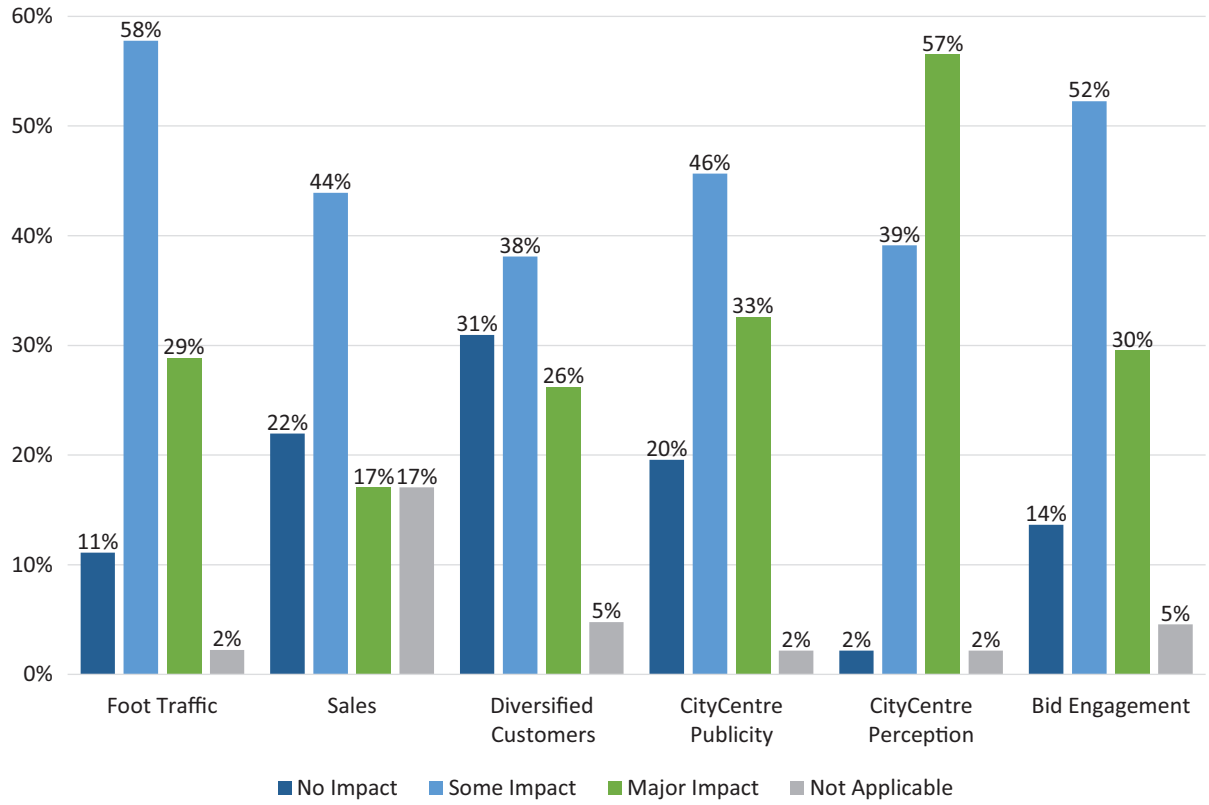

Figure 1. Perceptions of economic impact by city-centre businesses.

the perception of the city centre, a finding reinforced by the participant survey. Additionally, according to team members, the festival production crew and suppliers were all locally sourced, supporting existing research regarding the relationship between festivals and local economies (Freire-Gibb & Lorentzen, 2011; Hassink & Lee, 2018).

Unlike the aspirations of most light festivals in global cities which aim to draw tourists, 85% of surveyed festival attendees lived or worked in Bristol. However, the festival attracted a more diverse scene. Bristol city centre's nighttime economy has the reputation of catering towards young adults. Although this demographic, 21–34, was well represented, over 30% of attendees were 45 or older. Further, close to half of the participants surveyed reported that they were visiting the festival with family members, partners, or spouses. The diversity of participants, particularly families, was noted in the interviews: "The festival breathed more diversity into the regular demographic of nighttime footfall"; "It was great to see so many families in a safe space and enjoying the experience"; "I have never seen so many families out and about in the dark on a Sunday evening!"

Figure 2 shows that less than half of survey participants felt that the festival introduced them to a new place in Bristol. However, on-site interviews suggest that the festival did attract people to unfamiliar parts of the city. For example, nearly half of those interviewed had never or rarely visited Castle Park, due to perceived safety concerns: "I would not have walked these routes alone in the dark"; "I've never been to the bandstand. I've avoided Castle Park because it's dodgy but feel safe tonight"; "We walked a few different streets and have never been through Castle Park"; "It's especially good to have stuff in Castle Park as it links up different parts of Bristol I often avoid walking through at night."

Although these findings may indicate that the festival "sanitised" city centre spaces for middle-class consumption, survey and on-site interviews suggest that attendees were not avid consumers of art and culture. Over 70% of survey respondents shared that the festival was unlike other city events and was a new cultural experience. Fifty per cent of surveyed participants felt that the festival enabled them to experience the city centre in qualitatively different ways. These new experiences were often described using affective language such as "mesmerising," "euphoric," "dreamlike," "playful," and "joyful." As participants shared: "The city centre often gets a bad reputation as a place you don't want to be at during the weekend, but this festival showed it can be a wonderful and magical place"; "To experience a city at night—to purposely view something—opens your eyes and enables you to see a city [in] a different way"; "It made me look at familiar places again."

These affective experiences enhanced pride of place with 80% of those surveyed indicating that the festival created a positive reflection of the city. Participants shared comments such as, "It made me proud to be Bristolian"; "Festivals like this make it so worthwhile living in Bristol"; "The neighbours' display was truly

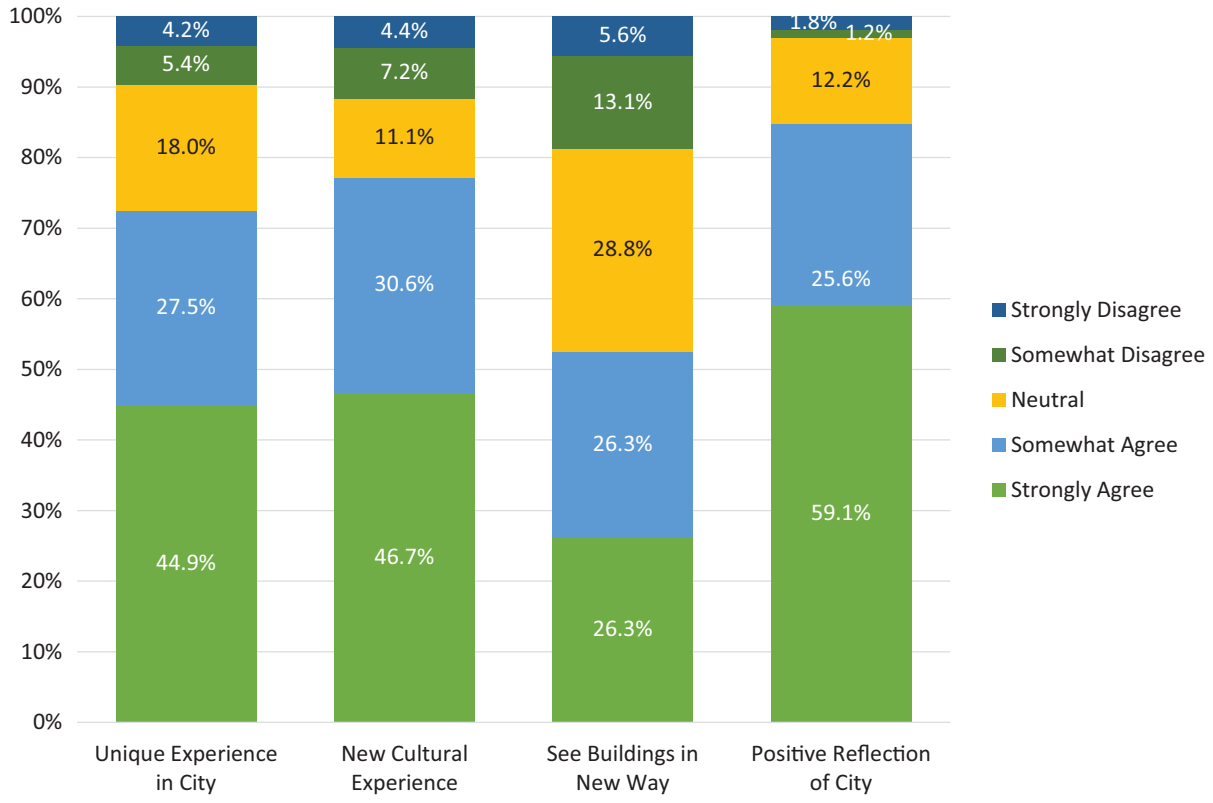

Figure 2. Festival participant experience survey.

entertaining and built up on the Banksy's mural—I'm not sure it could be more Bristolian than this!"; and "This was Bristol at its best." The survey and interview findings with festival participants support existing research that festivals, even those with commercial interests, create opportunities for new cultural experiences, creating both tangible and more intangible impacts, connecting people to place through affective and embodied experiences. As one creative producer explained:

> We're using the city as a playground….You know, it's about giving people memories about their city that are different to the everyday memories they have. And that's what lifts our souls, stops us being isolated, increases wellbeing. It's not going out and buying a new dress or the latest iPad, you know, it's those memories where you remember complete and utter joy because you saw for 10 minutes people laughing their heads off on seesaws in a square in a city centre.

6. Discussion: Learning From Co-Creation

In addition to manifesting desired social, cultural, and economic impacts, the festival produced a shared understanding of the benefits associated with co-creation processes, and subsequently an effective partnership. Team members articulated common themes including the importance of collaborating with local participants, how good outcomes emerge by negotiating through challenges, and the value of mutual learning. The case study also highlights the distinctive role artists and creative producers play in co-creating the city.

Initially, BID representatives contemplated hiring a professional events team to produce the festival, but were convinced by arts and events city staff to work with local producers. By the end of the process, all team members affirmed the importance of collaborating with partners to produce an authentic sense of place and ensure benefits land in the city.

> Ultimately, if we want to do placemaking in the place where you are, then use people who love the place in the first place. (BID representative)

> Working with local individuals was really important given the success of some of the Bristol pieces….They wouldn't have happened if we hadn't done it with local creative directors. They knew the city, they know what makes it tick and what people are going to love and what is going to make it really Bristol, which is what we really wanted it to be as well. (BID representative)

> You have to have something that resonates with local people. You can't just do a Canary Wharf like this. Well, you could, but we wouldn't want to do a Canary Wharf Light Festival, which has no references to anywhere. You could be anywhere in the world. (Creative producer)

Through the co-creation process, team members also recognised the importance of diverse participants in the planning and implementation process in terms of access to expertise, skill sets, networks, and resources. As one BID representative remarked,

> Delivering something that's so large scale in the public realm needs lots of different individuals' experience of doing that. It can't just be down to one person, which it was at that point. We started to look at what we actually need in partnership. It's going to need lots of different minds around the table to make this actually work and deliver the things that we want it to. Without that, I don't think it would have become what it was. The partnership between Bristol City Council and the BID opened access to all these creative minds and event planners that we wouldn't have known otherwise and we probably wouldn't have found the creative directors if it hadn't been for the partnership with the council.

This network of business interests, public sector representatives, and creative producers reflect the different kinds of stakeholders that make up cultural and creative ecologies, increasing access to a wider range of resources and connections. For creative producers, working with the BID created more resiliency and support for their vision, compared to traditional arts and cultural events that are often grant-funded and limited in capacity. From the BID's perspective, the creative producers were invaluable for identifying the right artists for particular spaces, responding to site-specific installation challenges, as well as professionally producing the event. Arts and events city staff members were able to effectively engage with neighbourhoods impacted by the installations as well as secure necessary site permissions. The BID's value, although certainly financial, also included access to a broader range of partners with different backgrounds, leading to new ideas, expertise in other fields such as sustainability as well as vital administrative support and capacity. As one creative producer explained:

> The thing that I thought was an absolute unique selling point about this particular project was that it was funded by the BID. It wasn't led by a cultural organisation within the city, which enabled a kind of non-competitive approach to anyone taking part….It wasn't, you know, an arts organisation struggling for their position in the sector. And all the politics were removed. So, for me, I just thought that is absolute gold dust, to be able to work across the sector from business to arts, to voluntary—like, the whole spectrum, and bring in partners from all areas.

This response suggests that creative producers felt that the value of economic growth espoused by the BID, and critiqued in creative economy literature, could actually produce cultural benefits in this specific context. For the BID, desired economic impacts required continued investment and commitment to funding the festival for three years. For creative producers accustomed to the precarity of gig-based cultural work, this commitment equated to stable employment, an opportunity to expand networks and further develop creative ideas. That stability meant that creatives, arts, and culture organisations could work more collaboratively than competitively in a field where public arts funding continues to contract. Interestingly, this was a key moment of learning for a BID representative who, through the process, developed a stronger appreciation for local artists and their needs:

> The bit that struck with me was Bristol has got an awful lot of artistic talent, particularly in the lighting area, that have never been able to exhibit in their home city. That is not right, is it? I suppose what the BID brought to [the project], and I wasn't really aware that it was remarkable in that sense, was that I had said from the beginning, "We'll do this for three years and this is the budget." I think it was a conversation with [the creative producer] that brought it home, that, actually, that just isn't the way the world works currently. Maybe that is naivety or being new to the world. I don't get why that is. Why would you not allow something to develop over a period of time?

Although the partnership recognised mutual benefits, the politics were certainly "not removed" as suggested by one of the creative producers. BID representatives dominated early decision-making processes. Conflicts between members emerged in terms of how to negotiate different priorities and agendas, which at one point meant that the partnership almost disbanded when the BID made a unilateral decision regarding staffing without consulting the other partners. However, the research does suggest that the co-creative process proved useful to identify areas of shared mutual interest and strengthen relationships between participants. As one city art and event staff member explained:

> After having the discussion around shared principles and objectives…I really understood where the BID was coming from, what their objectives are and what they want from it. I don't think, until that point, we'd really understood that. Then we also said what our objectives are. One of our objectives was to build a relationship with them. I think that, then, unlocked [things] and built our relationship a bit.

This does not mean that the co-productive research methodology created a radically inclusive process, vacated power from decision-making processes, or overcame neoliberal development agendas. Members of this small team, representing city centre business, municipal government, and creative interests all possessed high social, cultural, and human capital. This meant

that participants felt fairly comfortable challenging one another and advocating for their positions. The process also did not engage the full range of participants who could have been assembled into CCEs to co-create the BLF—e.g., radical artists, voluntary run arts organisations, rough sleepers in Castle Park—which would have required greater attention to exclusionary dynamics in the co-creative process. However, the approach does demonstrate the co-presence of different value systems that are inherent to CCEs, and, as such, how cultural development projects are full of contingencies that can be cultivated into something more critical, inclusive, and equitable. In other words, through co-productive research, academics have the potential to shape what would otherwise be overtly neoliberal initiatives, into more nuanced and socially impactful projects. In the case of BLF, the resulting event generated economic impacts. However, this was only one goal among many that was generated through the process of co-creation suggesting that festivals can address a much wider range of urban challenges related to cultural access, social inclusion, and area regeneration.

7. Conclusion

Despite long-standing connections to strengthening community and cultural life, festivals have become a mainstay strategy for city branding, increasing tourism, regeneration, and other economic development objectives. Like other arts-led development initiatives, this shift in how city planners and policymakers understand the value of festivals reflects broader concerns regarding the instrumentalisation of culture and arts-led gentrification, often as a result of creative city policies. However, the theoretical framework of CCEs enables a more nuanced understanding of festivals and their value within the context of urban planning. By applying CCE insights to the BLF, this article addresses translation issues between planning and the arts, highlights the broader range of social, cultural, and spatial impacts produced through art and cultural programming, and provides support for integrating co-creation methods within planning processes.

CCE scholars argue that because cultural production is entangled with the arts, the "public" (audiences, spaces, funding), businesses, communities, and other stakeholders, these projects require active negotiation processes, which lead to a wider range of social, cultural, and spatial impacts that are not reducible to neoliberal logics (Holden, 2015). For example, in the case of BLF, values such as "play," "joy," and "belonging" were central to programming and evaluation decisions in addition to public space activation and economic development goals. However, these kinds of cultural and social values are often invisible in urban planning narratives despite their clear connections to quality of life and well-being concerns (Oakley & Ward, 2018). This disconnect between planning and art fields is likely tied to translation issues and methodological differences (Chapple & Jackson, 2010).

Cultural production is often underpinned by co-creative processes (Dovey et al., 2016), which differ from conventional planning participation methods. Co-creation processes not only ask participants to identify challenges and provide feedback but also draw on participants' diverse knowledges, networks, and resources to actively design programmes and evaluative strategies. In the case of BLF, co-creation enabled the team to identify shared values which subsequently shaped project goals, strategies, and indicators. Values included a commitment to collaboration and creating multiple forms of value such as transformative experiences for participants, playable urban spaces as well as enhanced economic activity. By including evaluation strategies in the co-creation process, BLF team members were challenged to identify who should benefit from the festival, discuss *how* they would know people would benefit, and develop appropriate indicators. This approach ensured that desired cultural and social impacts would be explicitly addressed in programming decisions and effectively evaluated. Evaluation is often absent in planning participation where attention is focused on effective processes versus measuring outcomes potentially leading to unjust outcomes (Fainstein, 2005). As such, co-creation processes offer the potential for planning processes that align visions with collectively discerned normative values.

The case study does not suggest that co-creative processes are inherently more equitable as negotiation processes are always inflected with power dynamics. However, co-creation may offer more inclusive and participatory approaches to decision-making by enabling a project identity to emerge that does not require "consensus'' but rather a collective commitment to participating according to shared values. As the BLF case study demonstrates, co-creation methods allowed for the articulation of differences and tensions to emerge while also enabling mutual learning and understanding. More aligned with agonism, co-creation is therefore distinct from more communicative and deliberative forms of planning that presume consensus building through negotiation between individual actors (Purcell, 2009). Considering long-standing critiques of the relationship between communicative planning and its capture by neoliberalism, more agonistic approaches associated with co-creation may be more productive for acknowledging and facilitating negotiation across competing agendas.

Although the research supports the value of co-creation in arts-led development and planning processes more broadly, the research does highlight significant challenges. BLF was co-created by a limited number of participants holding privileged positions and members were not representative of all festival beneficiaries. As such, even though tensions emerged during the process, participants felt comfortable voicing concerns

and challenging one another. Different power dynamics would undoubtedly influence these interactions and potentially marginalise other participants. Further, as the co-productive research methodology was developed in collaboration with arts and cultural organisations, there has been a limited application to other fields; the workshops should be tested with a wider range of participants across different planning domains. However, these limitations point to promising research directions that further explore the relationship between planning and the arts. By linking the concept of CCEs with processes of co-creation, the article reframes the value of festivals within the context of urban planning and explores new approaches to planning processes. More critical research is needed on structural power dynamics shaping cultural and creative ecologies and their relationship to urban development, as well as how co-creative methodologies emerging from cultural production can be integrated within urban planning more broadly to support more just development outcomes.

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Conflict of Interests

The author declares no conflict of interests.

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Article

Planning With Art: Artistic Involvement Initiated by Public Authorities in Sweden

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Abstract
In a Swedish context, public authorities have, over the past 10 years, implemented a number of initiatives to make art a central part of not only sustainable development but also urban planning as a practice, process, and knowledge area. Art and artistic methods are seen to contribute with new methods for site analyses (often in combination with citizen involvement) to enhance embodied and situated knowledge and give space to critical reflection. One of the Swedish initiatives is called Art Is Happening. Between 2016 and 2018, the Swedish government assigned the Public Art Agency Sweden money to work with public art and citizen inclusion in million program areas. The initiative was framed as using artistic methods to strengthen democracy in areas with low turnout. Fifteen places around the country were selected. In this article, the focus is on one of those projects in Karlskrona, where an artist collaborated with citizens to create a public artwork and local meeting place. During the process, the artist partly lived in the area. Rather than discussing the artistic project from a binary logic as disempowerment/empowerment, consensual/agonistic, and political/antipolitical, it is examined as a process involving a mixture of both, where power unfolded in ways that were both problematic and valuable at the same time. This approach moves away from "good or bad" to a nuanced way of discussing how artistic methods can contribute to understandings of situated knowledge production in urban planning.

Keywords
artistic involvement; Karlskrona; participation; planning; public authorities; Sweden

Issue
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1. Introduction

This article focuses on artistic involvement initiated by public authorities. In a Swedish context, public authorities have, over the past decade, implemented several initiatives to make art and artistic practices a central part of not only sustainable development but also urban planning as a practice, process, and field of study.

The urban theorist Jonathan Metzger (2011, 2016) divides this growing interest into two aspects. Firstly, as one focusing on planning *for* art and culture. Here, the focus is mainly on how spatial planning can create possibilities for a flourishing cultural life and what urban planners can do to strengthen the cultural sector. This aspect has been subject to a good deal of research, for example, around how culture, cultural industries and creative practices may have the potential to create more attractive living environments and function as economic engines and drivers of urban development (Florida, 2005; Markusen & King, 2003; Sandercock, 2005). The presence of culture is in this aspect discussed as something that ought to lead to measurable outcomes (Sandercock, 2004). This has also been critically discussed by many (such as Evans, 2001; Kunzmann, 2004; Landry, 2000).

By contrast, the other key aspect this article focuses on is planning *with* art and culture. Metzger (2011, 2016) highlights the growing interest among public authorities in using art as a tool to develop the practices of spatial planning. This can be described as an interest in how artistic skills and methods can contribute to new ways of planning. As Metzger puts it, to plan *with* art changes the question from what planners can do for culture and

art to what culture can do for planners (Metzger, 2011). According to this view, artists and artistic methods are seen as contributing with, for example, new methods for site analysis, to enhance embodied and situated knowledge and allow space for critical reflection (Metzger, 2016). Artists are understood as having been given an expanded societal task, potentially functioning as instruments for political change (Sand, 2019). At the same time, there is also a critical strand of research, acknowledging the risk of placing overly high expectations on the possibilities of artists and artistic methods to solve our times' most troubling issues, such as the lack of democracy, sustainability, and segregation (Metzger, 2011; Sand, 2019).

Artists' involvement in societal development has a long history. From an art historical perspective, artistic movements have used the city, and urban society, as a venue and source of material for more than half a century. A variety of examples of socially engaged practices, such as large-scale designs, utopian visions, and bureaucratic constructions, have been initiated by artists and/or have originated in assignments from public and private institutions. Since the 1980s onwards, there is a broad ongoing debate about the role of public art in several disciplines, such as art history, architecture, cultural studies, urbanism, and human geography (Nilsson, 2018).

One branch is linked to dimensions of social involvement and addresses themes about participation, social engagement, critical spatial practices, social change, social sustainability, and community involvement (Nilsson, 2018; Zebracki et al., 2010). Enhancing social interactions through artist involvement are connected to "new genre public art," a term coined by the American artist, writer, and educator Suzanne Lacy in 1991, which refers to a public art genre that aims to include or directly engage publics in creative processes (Nilsson, 2018).

While the above aspects are important too, this article's focus is on the growing interest from public authorities to invite artists to be part of participatory urban planning projects. More specifically, it concentrates on artistic involvement initiated by public authorities and urban planning in a Swedish governmental project, Konst Händer (Art Is Happening), carried out between 2016 and 2018 by the Public Art Agency Sweden. During a period of two years, artists were invited to work with public art in an extensive way, together with local residents and municipalities in 15 locations around Sweden. One of the objectives was to create good conditions for increased influence, participation, and culture in residential areas with low voter turnout (Kulturdepartementet, 2015).

The empirical material originates from one of these processes in Karlskrona, Sweden, where the artist Johanna Gustafsson Fürst worked for nearly two years in the residential area Kungsmarken. Her work took the form of two parallel processes: a collaborative artistic process to produce a site-specific public artwork and a supportive process that was part of developing a local meeting place. During the process, she was partially based in the area.

While much has been written about art *for* planning, there is less theoretical discussion about the possible opportunities for and problems around planning *with* art (although there is a growing interest with contributions from, e.g., Borén & Young, 2017; Metzger, 2011, 2016; Sand, 2019). The existing literature dealing with artistic involvement in planning also tends to be positioned as describing artistic involvement as an engine to promote political change or purely cosmetic, distracting from real political issues.

The aim of the article is to explore possibilities and challenges with artists being part of urban planning processes and discuss how artistic involvement and possible methods can contribute to understandings of situated knowledge production in urban planning.

What happens when art is given a democratic mission and used as a tool to engage residents in certain residential areas? What kind of knowledge can artists and artistic methods create that can enable other forms of understandings of places and spaces? Can we even talk about "art in planning" when it includes such a broad variety of expressions and ways of working? Rather than using a binary logic which would distinguish between disempowerment/empowerment, consensual/agonistic, and political/antipolitical, the article has the ambition to transcend these dichotomies and discuss the case study as a process mixing both. As Chilvers (2009) states, such an approach shifts the focus from questions of good or bad and provides an opportunity for being open to "both and" rather than "either or."

2. Method and Material

The empirical material in this article is based on three semi-structured interviews with Johanna Gustafsson Fürst and the project's curator at the Public Art Agency Sweden. It is also based on written material from the artist and from evaluation reports from Public Art Agency Sweden. The interviews were carried out in 2017. During that time, I was part of a research group consisting of seven researchers from different academic disciplines following Art Is Happening. The researchers focused on different projects within Art Is Happening and had different perspectives. Some focused on civil society; others conducted interviews with curators at the Public Art Agency Sweden, while still others examined the public artwork and role of the artists. The group met regularly, read each other's texts, and discussed common findings and elements that differed in the projects. This article is based on the Swedish report that I wrote in this context. The focus is on the frames and context for the participatory work made by the artist. This includes exploring personal perceptions that she had in this process and relating it to the broader framework of the governmental project. The quotes from the interviews have been translated from Swedish to English by the author.

3. Planning with Art

3.1. Artists as an Asset

As mentioned in the introduction, there is lively and diverse research on public art in several disciplines. The recurrence of questions of democratic process, rights to the city, instrumentalisation, and other questions of the politics of urban development process are some of the themes currently being discussed (Nilsson, 2018). One way of describing the growing interest in artistic involvement in urban planning is to see it as stemming from recent decades' interest in moving urban planning from expert-driven to a more bottom-up practice—what is sometimes discussed in planning theory as the shift from urban planning as *government* to urban planning as *governance* (Borén & Young, 2017). Central to this shift is the interest in working with deliberative decision-making processes where citizens, stakeholders, and other actors are involved in the planning processes. As a result, residents are increasingly invited to participate in planning, visualising, and redevelopment processes. These participatory processes are described as having the potential to move away from rational/conventional planning methodologies (Healey, 2006; Sandercock, 2002) and create more democratic processes, where inhabitants and other actors can participate as co-creators of places and cities. Participatory work with residents is also viewed as crucial for creating inclusionary decision-making processes relating to class, race, and gender and as a way to achieve more sustainable cities and societies (Abrahamsson, 2015). Connected to this is a growing recognition that with increasing urban complexity, economic change, and socio-cultural diversity new collaborations may be required to shape the development of 21st-century cities (Borén & Young, 2017).

3.1.1. Affect

As part of the interest in finding new ways of planning, interest in bringing artists into planning processes—planning *with* art and culture—has increased. In the academic literature on art and urban planning, it is possible to find several descriptions of what artists can contribute with in urban planning processes. Artistic methods are seen as having the potential to offer creative and explorative methods of understanding and connecting with a place and its inhabitants and can therefore create other forms of listening and understandings. For example, instead of creating background data for a place based on numbers and statistics, many artists make use of bodily knowledge, paying attention to emotions and a sense of compassion, and in this way bringing embodied, affective, and emotional ways of knowing to a planning process (Sandercock & Attili, 2010). Including artistic competence in planning processes can therefore, as Sandercock (2005) suggests, be seen as a way of inviting new groups into the urban conversation, as well as introducing new forms of expression and thinking into planning processes. In line with this, Kunzmann (2004) highlights the importance for urban planners to develop new forms of knowledge for approaching society. He argues for more culture and artistic perspectives in urban planning education to help urban planning to become more creative. On the same note, Bianchini and Ghilardi (1998, pp. 195–196) state that what urban planners need "is the creativity of artists, more specifically of artists working in social contexts" and that planners, among other skills, need to develop open ended and non-instrumental ways of working. As Borén and Young (2017, p. 3) discuss, the use of "creativity" is in this context not used to find ways to be more efficiently appropriated for the goals of neoliberalised approaches, but rather "to support a more progressive and imaginative planning system, one which is more in touch with the diversity and exclusions which are increasingly marking the twenty-first century city."

3.1.2. Space for Critical Reflection

The urban scholar Patsy Healey (2006) has written that if we want to achieve a democratisation of planning processes, it is crucial to reshape our frames of reference and loosen previous assumptions. This could lead to new light being shone on old issues, and new concerns being uncovered. Artistic involvement and methods may contribute to this through creating more accessible arenas for deliberation. As artists do not usually work within the bureaucratic system, they hold the possibility of raising critical questions originating from this outsider position. They can create critical space for reflection in otherwise pressured planning processes, as well as displace and expose established norms, and in this way act as catalysts to make room for the robust and complex (Metzger, 2016; Sandercock, 2005). As Håkansson (2013) writes, the value created in a process with artists is thus not only about developing beautiful and functional public environments, but also about identifying and highlighting problems and conflicting interests. Metzger (2011) discusses this using Dryzek's (2005) distinction between "cool" and "hot" deliberative settings. He argues that artists can achieve dialogue in "cool forums" that open the possibility of listening in a way that allows positions and standpoints to change. This is contrasted with ordinary planning processes that mostly consist of "hot forums," where positions are locked, and arguments already set.

3.1.3. Imagination

Another element where artists are considered contributors to planning processes is the ability to be imaginative: to be able to offer (mental) space for speculation, desire, dreaming, and longing, as well as the possibility to leave the comfort zone and engage in dialogue with strangers (Sandercock, 2002). This ability is something

that Sandercock calls for as a way of transforming planning practice in the 21st century. She states that planning practice needs to develop the ability to "imagine oneself in a different skin, a different story, a different place, and then desire this new self and place that one sees" (Sandercock, 2002, p. 8). Another aspect of imagination can be connected to a more-than-human approach to planning. In order to address the climate crisis and make space for sustainable methods of planning, there is a need to go beyond a planning paradigm that only focuses on humans to one that also includes other species. The possibility of artistic competence in exploring embodied, affective and emotional ways of knowing could be regarded as an asset (Metzger, 2011). How do we include the perspective of a river or a moose? How can we learn to listen in new ways other than merely using words or written language (Metzger, 2014)? Metzger (2011) also points out the potential that art has for estrangement of that which is familiar and taken for granted. This can create a space for unknowing, for temporary disorder and a departure from routine ways of understanding and approaching situations. New ways of framing a problem can develop as a result, new questions may be found, and questions and problems may be viewed from new perspectives (Metzger, 2011).

3.1.4. Art as Distraction

While there is a wealth of public reports and case studies pointing towards the possibilities of artistic practices in urban planning, critical voices also feature in the literature. The point is raised that artists risk having high expectations projected onto them as saviours of democracy, charged with solving huge structural problems, such as sustainability, segregation, and participation—issues that are very difficult to solve, both individually and on a local level. This more cautious attitude can be linked to a broader critical discussion of deliberative governance models in general, where public authorities' interest in artistic involvement and participatory processes are described as part of a post-political era (Blakeley, 2010; Tahvilzadeh, 2015). This period is defined as a state where the formal structures of democracy are maintained, namely free elections, freedom of expression, and so on, but emptied of content and vitality. Politics is determined at a greater extent by opinion polls and surface appearances than by ideological positions. Instead of being the realm of agonistic battles between left and right, politics has been reduced to marketing logic and communication (Werner, 2018). When politics is mainly dedicated to management, more responsibility is placed on art, architecture, and design to counteract the dilution of democracy by creating new forms of meeting places and engagement among residents (Werner, 2018). In this state, participation may only give the appearance of democracy, one that is emptied of content and vitality as it is not allowed to challenge consensus. The processes that citizens are invited to participate in often have little or no political relevance. They are activated through the productions of public artworks, such as the construction of a new park or youth centre. However, their democratic influence rarely extends beyond the immediate area (Metzger, 2016; Werner, 2018).

Critics therefore call attention to the risk that artists will simply be cast in the role of clowns and, despite good intentions, act as a distraction from more acute political issues. This can be regarded as depoliticising management technology, where artists becoming creative play leaders invited to produce diverting events (Metzger, 2016). Rather than adding to deep conversations that may influence political decisions, they contribute to superficial marketing with a focus on producing documentation consisting of pleasing images of happy people harmoniously working together. The ability to present documentation of a successful process tends to be more important than highlighting existing conflicts and power structures (Wiberg, 2018).

Much socially engaged art is motivated with a rhetoric of inclusion and "democratisation." The idea that including art will automatically result in a favourable city is criticised for being naïve, overlooking the contested, unfixed, and socially contingent nature of space and place (Massey, 1994; Zebracki et al., 2010). Sand (2019) argues that artistic activity and art do not automatically have democratic effects, it rather depends on the circumstances in which art can work. It can lead to both political and social conflicts coming to the surface or being covered up by involving artists in the kind of aestheticisation of cities that leads to the displacement of poor groups. Spiers (2020) put forward that dialogical and socially engaged art is often motivated by the idea that it will include and listen to less privileged groups; nevertheless, at the same time, systemic variables are not questioned and changed. Marginalised groups are invited to the table but may only participate through the existing framework. There is thus no room to question the framework, risking the affirmation of an unequal order.

Another aspect is that the growing interest in using art as a solution for societal problems has grown at the same time as the welfare society is being dismantled. As an example, in the same areas where Art Is Happening involved artists as part of urban development processes, there are closures of schools, libraries, and other social services (Sand, 2019). In addition, socially engaged art is also criticised for being too pragmatic. Critics point out that there is too much focus on short-term goals, and concrete, small-scale interventions, all of which limits the possibility of artists to act as a revolutionary force ("How much politics can art take?," 2018). Rather than engaging in challenging long-term political processes where underlying structures are exposed and combated, their actions are anchored in the existing order, which means they can easily become co-opted by the system.

To sum up, artists are on one hand seen as able to go beyond conventional practices of knowledge production, creating possibilities for other forms of listening and

ways of understanding places and inhabitants. On the other hand, the inclusion of artists in planning processes is shown to involve risks: Instead of being a positive force, artistic involvement may reinforce inequality and injustice.

4. Art Is Happening

In 2015, the Public Art Agency Sweden was commissioned by the government to prepare an investment in cultural activities in certain residential areas with a focus on artistic design during 2016–2018, which came to be called Konst Händer (Art Is Happening).

The task was to contribute through artistic methods to creating meeting places and more engaging living environments in areas with low turnout, and together with local organisations in civil society work out practical examples of how post-war council housing estate areas could be artistically enriched. In the assignment it was specified that the content of the investment should be based on the residents' needs and knowledge of the place and characterised by a broad civic influence. It was also stipulated that it was an initiative for "increased democratic participation." The aim was that collaboration and participation in the processes should contribute to cohesion and increased democratic participation (Public Art Agency Sweden, 2015).

The Public Art Agency Sweden received SEK 26 million for the investment. Art Is Happening focused on post-war housing estates, which make up approximately 25% of Sweden's housing stock. The selection processes consisted of an open call aimed at society and the municipalities and regions of these residential areas. The question asked was as follows: What place or situation would you like to influence through artistic collaboration with us? The applications contained concrete proposals for places and situations that could be influenced through artistic work. One hundred and fifty-three applications were received. After a selection phase, 15 sites around Sweden were selected, of which seven of the proposals came from civil society and eight from municipalities/construction companies (Sand, 2019). At each site, the Public Art Agency Sweden invited professional (both national and international) artists to develop public artworks in close collaboration with civil society and local authorities based on the proposals. This manner of working, allowing civil society and municipalities to hand in proposals, was a reversal of the Public Art Agency Sweden's usual application procedure (Sand, 2019). In total, Art Is Happening resulted in 19 works of art in different municipalities in Sweden.

4.1. The Collective Body

The application to be part of Art Is Happening came from Mellanstaden's newly established association, within Folkets Hus och Parker (People's House and Parks), a countrywide Swedish community centre and park association. The local association Mellanstadens Folkets Hus och Park (FHPMP) had gained access to a defunct boiler plant close to a residential area in Kungsmarken, Karlskrona in Southern Sweden, which they wanted to turn into a cultural centre. They applied for, in collaboration with the local housing association Karlskronahem and Karlskrona municipality and the Swedish union of tenants, to "form a place for meeting, culture and party" that could function as "a hub in local civil society and a meeting place for everyone based on democratic values" (Werner, 2018, p. 110). Among the plans was also to renovate a dance floor nearby, an artificial turf and some small houses.

In 2016, Johanna Gustafsson Fürst was invited by the Public Art Council Sweden to lead the artistic process. She is a well-known Swedish artist that had previously worked with several artistic projects in close collaboration with civil society and inhabitants, some of them located in post-war housing areas.

Kungsmarken, located in Mellanstaden, is a residential area on a hill on the outskirts of Karlskrona, built in the 1970s. The people living here come from all over the world and have large global networks. There is high unemployment in the area. Mellanstaden consists of three residential areas: Gullaberg, Marieberg, and Kungsmarken. Between them, there is a centre and square that consist of a parking lot and closed grocery store. In the area there was a play place, gallery and studio, interior design outlet, pizzeria, mosque, second-hand shop, and Karlskronahem's local administration building, but no public meeting place. For a long time, there had been a local commitment to create a common gathering place for the area, which was brought to the fore when FHPMP gained access to Panncentralen.

Gustafsson Fürst's assignment was to create a site-specific public artwork, to share and develop methods for collaboration and, based on the submitted application, collaborate with residents and associations during the artistic process and in the development of the local community centre in the old boiler plant (Statens Konstråd, 2016). During the two years that she worked there, she periodically lived in Mellanstaden in an apartment borrowed from the local housing company Karlskronahem. She began by spending time in the area and getting to know the local people. Rather than coming to the area with preconceived questions and ideas, she allowed questions and concerns to be raised in dialogue with the inhabitants. She took private lessons with residents, in Arabic and cooking. She followed the association FHPMP's daily work and helped to create funding for the community centre, participated in meetings they had with politicians, officials, associations, and schools, among others, and joined discussions related to how the building could be renovated (as shown in Figure 1). She also shared her experiences of collective processes and acted as a support in applications for arts funding.

After a while, with the help of FHPMP, a working group was put together consisting of Gustafsson

Figure 1. Photo of the public meeting in Mellanstaden's People's House. Source: Courtesy of Nadja Braiteh.

Fürst and eight residents and workers in Mellanstaden. The group consisted of people with diverse experiences of living and working in the area, of different ages, and born in different places in the world. Some of them had lived in the area since it was built, and some had recently moved in. During the two years, they met regularly. Representatives from the local housing association Karlskronahem and FHPMP and civil servants from the culture administration in the municipality were also part of a continuous dialogue. Together, they steadily discussed and developed the project both with the community centre and the artwork. The group's work began with a two-day workshop where they jointly went through the schedule, methodology, and financial framework. The group also walked around the area, talking about their experiences of the place and noting down their feelings about the neighbourhood. They continued to meet in different forms during the entire period. It was central to Gustafsson Fürst that all those involved got paid and that a production budget was put in place.

The idea for a public artwork gradually emerged. As Gustafsson Fürst describes it:

> I felt that it was important that we create something permanent and visible, partly because the group I worked with wanted this and that we thought the place needed it both visually and symbolically. Permanence means something. It's expensive, it requires maintenance and it has to work for a long time. I can see a pattern that bothers me: In areas like these, you work with social projects where everyone is expected to have their say, and the focus is on participation and democracy. As if people were not already active or politically conscious. My experience is that it is the opposite! In newly built areas, or more socio-economically privileged areas, artworks are made without dialogue and as the situation looks now, dialogue is needed just as much there, maybe even more. (Interview, 2017-03-03)

After a period of group work, important aspects emerged: The public artwork should take the form of light art, and it should be protected from vandalism. The boiler plant had been a warehouse for Christmas decorations for central Karlskrona, while there was no investment in Christmas lights in Mellanstaden. Many residents had also experienced a lack of streetlights and long repair times for broken lamps in their area. Gustafsson Fürst explains:

> The light art we made should be there for a long time, it's not just for Christmas, as Christmas is not something that everyone celebrates. The whole idea of light and justice has been very present throughout the project. The fact that it takes a long time for lamps to be repaired in certain residential areas is political injustice. There is a fragility in the technology in the work that is both good and concerning. Unlike, for

> example, an artwork made of bronze, light art can go out and it will be plain to see if the municipality does not take care of it quickly, which will be very symbolic. (Interview, 2017-12-05)

During the process, some friction arose. One example was when representatives of the municipal corporation that managed the building that housed the People's House suddenly changed their minds and said no to the artwork. There was a period of discussions with representatives from the cultural administration and the Public Art Agency Sweden. Finally, a new location was found for the artwork, where it was given a freer position in relation to FHPMP and thus came to strengthen the entryway to the residential area as a kind of entrance.

In October 2018, the public artwork was inaugurated (as shown in Figure 2). It consists of two illuminated signs located 36 m in the air on each side of a lattice pole of the kind usually used for power lines. The lights come on at the same time as the streetlamps. On one of the signs is a light drawing consisting of an interpretation of a map of the area's residential buildings. On the other sign, the word "HERE" is written in shining letters.

Gustafsson Fürst explains:

> Placing the artwork high in the air makes it visible to the entire residential area and consequently to several parts of Karlskrona. In this way, it may benefit many people. A place is created not only through those who live in the area but also based on other people's ideas about the place. The title of the work is *The Collective Body* and that body is not only the one that shows itself in the public sphere and has the courage to act but also the bodies that do not. So, the title refers to all bodies in all places and can also be seen as a gigantic map pin marking the place. (Interview, 2017-12-05)

The public artwork creates an entrance to the residential area Kungsmarken (as shown in Figure 3), but it is also visible from far away. Karlskrona's identity is largely built on the picturesque environments in the middle of the city. The artwork points out Kungsmarken as a justified part of the city. By using an aesthetic that is close to billboards, the aim was to apply the same marketing strategies that municipalities around the country use in the competition to attract new residents and taxpayers. This was a way to highlight and critically discuss the relation between the centre and the periphery.

In her article about the processes, Gustafsson Fürst (2020, p. 22) writes:

> As an artist tasked with creating art, I'm also aware of the importance of taking responsibility for a space of unknowing and being open to the unexpected. So, I let the work follow a series of events triggered by our meetings and allowed the result to grow slowly. Even though I regard the work *The Collective Body* as a result, I don't know exactly what it does. All I know is that it's there and that it's still shining. What I knew was that something would be done and that it would be the engine to create a WE, which in turn helped me create a work. That is why the collaborations created during the process are so important to me. As an

Figure 2. Photo of the inauguration of the public artwork *The Collective Body*. Source: Courtesy of Richard Estay.

Figure 3. Photo of Kungsmarken and the public artwork *The Collective Body*. Source: Courtesy of Richard Estay.

> artist, I work for and with social spaces that are not always comfortable and conflict-free. Spaces where different areas of responsibility work together. You may not be able to sit on the kind of imaginary park benches that artists create, but they are able to produce something else. Something extra, that cannot be defined in advance, and which will be different for everyone who encounters the work, something not yet visible.

During the working process, other pressing local issues emerged. For example, the traffic situation in the area around the boiler plant was problematic. Kungsmarksvägen, a wide road with bumpy asphalt, is right next door. Cars speed by, and there is a lack of pedestrian crossings. Residents have long complained about the dangerous situation. To support that process, Gustafsson Fürst and the curator from Public Art Agency Sweden, Joanna Zawieja, worked with year seven students from the local school, Sunnadals. They talked about art in public spaces and created symbols that they consolidated into a street painting emphasising alternative uses of the place.

On the same day as the students created the street painting, they took the opportunity to test temporary traffic obstacles to reduce the speed on the street and make the "square" larger. When the speed limit was lowered, it also became possible to use the space in front of the premises as a public square. Some of those who live and work in the area pushed the issue further, which led to the traffic solution we tested later being made permanent by Karlskrona municipality.

Gustafsson Fürst writes:

> At the same time, it created a safe place for the young people to paint and caused the municipality to open its eyes to the potential of the place, which I think contributed to the solution later being implemented. Here, then, the collective artistic process of painting on a street had a knock-on effect on traffic issues. (Gustafsson Fürst, 2020, p. 18)

Gustafsson Fürst describes that it can, in one sense, be seen as an advantage that, as an artist, she does not have the same prior knowledge a planner does. This allows her to ask other questions and, for better or for worse, not see the same obstacles and limitations. In this case, she believes that there was an advantage in relation to enabling the public artwork and other changes to take place.

In her article, Gustafsson Fürst concludes:

> Art and artistic processes can make room for the political in more ways than information or representation. It can construct processes to act politically in the realm of the senses, create space for more opportunities for participation and thus accommodate more people who can participate. Space for more forms of

> care. I don't mean that art must therefore be intrinsically good or that it's even possible to know for sure what is good, but I believe that artistic processes can be powerful by alternating between different responsibilities. (Gustafsson Fürst, 2020, p. 23)

5. To Hold "Both and" Rather Than "Either or"

In the formal introduction to Art Is Happening, the public authorities state that "The investment should be based on the residents' needs and wishes about the place and is characterized by broad participation" (Kulturdepartementet, 2015). The purpose is, among other things, to strengthen culture and activities promoting democracy in "certain residential areas with low turnout" (Kulturdepartementet, 2015). As Werner (2018) concludes, "increased democratic participation" is something that is mentioned many times in policy documents regarding Art Is Happening, but without further defining what democracy and democracy-promoting measures actually are in the project. Democracy is mainly discussed as participation, where participation both becomes the problem formulation and the solution in the form of participation from citizens (Werner, 2019). Sand (2019) critically discusses that artists were given the role of solving society's problems, with more engaging living environments, increased voter turnout, a greater sense of belonging and social sustainability. Instead of being regarded as having intrinsic value, they needed to be politically useful in an instrumental sense. A focus on so-called "areas with low turnout" also risks presenting an image that there is something wrong in these areas that needs to be repaired with short-term art projects when the problem has to do with far larger structural problems that cannot be solved either locally or with temporary project fundings.

As Werner (2018) put forward, art and artistic practices are, on one hand, not often prioritised in governmental budgets but, on the other hand, placed with hopes of solving issues that society has otherwise failed to solve. From this perspective, Art Is Happening can be seen as following a pragmatic project logic where the focus was on finding concrete solutions to problems that can be solved within a short time frame. Should artists solve lighting problems? Or arrange for new speedbumps to be put in place? From this perspective, the project could be read as a distraction from "real" political issues, as Metzger (2016) has warned.

The results of Art Is Happening were reported through conferences and publications. In these, the successes and positive lessons from the projects were emphasised. Reports were published containing nice photos from *The Collective Body*, which communicated a successful participatory and collaborative process and collaboration. Communicating success stories and "happy talk" (Ahmed, 2017) can be important, but it also risks hiding frictions and negotiations that are an inevitable factor in participatory processes and which may carry important knowledge and new questions (Wiberg, 2018). This links back to Spiers' (2020) critique that inclusionary and participatory artworks seldom allow for critique or challenge of the project's operational tenets.

On the other hand, Gustafsson Fürst describes that the work in Mellanstaden enabled more space for manoeuvre compared with her previous experiences. Instead of being handed a brief for a short-term project in the late stage of a process, along with a small fee, the financial conditions in this project were reversed. She had the opportunity to be on-site for almost two years and give a salary to everyone who participated locally.

She learned about the residents' lives, became involved in the area, exchanged experiences, and allowed herself to be in an exploratory state without clear ideas about a finished product. This enabled a complex, reflective artistic sketching process to occur, which included time for careful listening and exploration. Her method could be described as a practice of intense presence, where she was engaged in a state of unconditional listening, guided by what was happening on the spot rather than by a predetermined goal.

One of the most crucial aspects was that she had the time to engage in a long-term situation of caring and listening and that her work led to both structural and visual changes. Coming from the outside, with a certain mandate, she was able to help with approaching and solving existing problems in new ways, such as the traffic situation and the community centre. The speed bump is still there, and the People's House is active. Rather than being "hijacked" and used as a distraction for "real" political issues (Metzger, 2016), you could argue that she used the commission and her role both to raise important political issues that already existed in the area and criticise the larger frames of Art Is Happening. Artists who work in similar situations can thus be seen as partly gaining agency, which can be used to raise important political issues that already exist in an area.

In conclusion, the dominant academic debate on art and planning risks getting caught up in an overly binary logic where it is either described as an engine for political change or as an anti-democratic process. In this article, I have looked at *The Collective Body* as an example of a process that contained elements of going beyond conventional practices of knowledge production and challenging existing power asymmetries while, at the same time, being part of an instrumental process. It is therefore possible to read the project from both proponents' and critics' perspectives.

To work in the intersection between art and planning is complex. It involves collaborations between different actors, handling conflicting wills and relating to different forms of knowledge ideals. In line with Chilvers (2009, p. 412), I believe there is a need for further situated studies that, in nuanced and careful ways, explore "the openings and closing that occur through relations between actors, knowledge, and power within

and outside participatory spaces" and that engage in "both and" rather than "either or."

6. Concluding Remarks: The Role of Art-Based Methods in Urban Planning

It is difficult to describe what art and artistic methods can bring to the field of urban planning without falling into an instrumental logic and without generalising the abilities of artists. There is not one way to work artistically, it can differ totally depending on who the artist is and the context and conditions for the assignment. Therefore, art in planning is not something that can be captured as "one" thing. Rather, perhaps the danger lies precisely in trying to discern one "best" method for how artists should work in urban planning contexts. With that said, a perspective that I still see as important, and where I see that art has the opportunity to contribute to urban planning is the ability to harbour *not-knowing*.

Rather than becoming better at having all the answers, art can offer urban planning a way to dare to remain in a state of not knowing. Art can add space for speculation about what does not yet exist in a way that few other traditions of knowledge are capable of, a speculation that can be both concrete and abstract. It can be about giving time to marvel at what we do not understand or creating imaginary spaces or concrete situations where unexpected leads can be followed; it can be about enabling a language other than words through which to understand the world or creating a framework where there is room to remain in the unfamiliar and abrasive and listen to what exists in new ways.

As the philosopher Jonna Bornemark (2018) describes, it is precisely when we dare to remain in a state of not knowing for a while that we also can broaden our repertoire and see other alternatives for action. It is here that we can open up a re-categorisation of established approaches and concepts. When urban planning is in many ways driven by efficiency and goal management, art can, at best, as I see it, open up other ways of relating to society.

Here, art, if given the right way of functioning, can contribute by providing explorative methods to remain engaged in difficult questions, which can be a support in planning processes.

If public authorities intend to involve artists in urban planning processes, it is not advisable to simultaneously enter into a logic requiring quick, concrete successful results. If there is a genuine interest in engaging in art and artistic practices and changing working methods, there is also a need to invite frictions, uncertainties, and failures, which can help raise new questions and perspectives.

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Article

Cultivating Urban Storytellers: A Radical Co-Creation to Enact Cognitive Justice for/in Self-Built Neighbourhoods

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Abstract
We all carry an imperative to imagining collectively more just cities, to engaging more meaningfully with multiple urban actors and their different sensibilities through their stories. Storytelling helps to foster empathy, to understand the meaning of complex experiences, and, most importantly, to inspire action. With the rise of the digital era and new technologies at hand, we have an opportunity to redefine not only the way we tell, connect, and engage with our collective stories, but also how we work together in forming them. Based on the research design project *Patrimonio Vivo | Living Heritage*, grounded in the city of Medellín, this article illustrates the dynamics and potentials of co-creation with cultural organizations and creative teams through learning alliances. Our alliance among a cultural community centre, a cooperative of architects, a grassroot organisation and post-graduate students around the world used storytelling to propel an ecology of urban knowledges. Working online during the global lockdown, we mobilised stories of solidarity, care, memory, and livelihoods through the narrative of people, places, and organisations following their trajectories as the basis for the design of spatial strategies. This collaborative work aimed at contributing to the recognition of everyday spatial practices in self-built neighbourhoods as a form of "living heritage" of the city and a key building block for reframing a more progressive "integral neighbourhood upgrading" practice. I argue that using storytelling as a co-creative methodology, based on learning alliances, we can bridge the ecology of urban knowledges to foster cognitive justice and transform the current stigmatizing urban narrative of self-built neighbourhoods.

Keywords
co-creation; cognitive justice; Medellín; storytelling; urban knowledge(s)

Issue
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1. Introduction

"We are having a conversation with the territory," says Luz Mila Hernandez, community leader. Orley Mazo, also a community leader, concludes: "We are equal here."

This article is itself a story of co-creation. The thematic issue that this article belongs to argues that co-creation processes using arts-based approaches can offer a renewed methodological strategy for planners' understandings of local knowledge production. It suggests that using storytelling as a co-creation methodology, based on learning alliances, offers an opportunity to bridge the ecology of urban knowledges to foster cognitive justice and transform stigmatizing urban narratives about self-built neighbourhoods. The role of storytelling is pivotal in achieving this aim since storytelling helps to foster empathy, understand the meaning of complex experiences, and inspire action (Ortiz & Millan, 2019). Impressions like that of Luz Mila and Orley on the digital co-creation process signal the potential of engaging differently to imagine just cities. With the rise of the digital era and social distancing, new technologies at hand have redefined not only the way we tell, connect, and engage with stories, but also how we work together. In this context, planners are required to go beyond framing themselves as persuasive storytellers about urban change and embrace the radical potential of digital co-creation with cultural organisations to

bring new repertoires and allies to fight for socio-spatial justice. Harnessing the radical potential of co-creation through art-based methods allows challenging the often northern focussed, depoliticized, and a-spatial perspective on collaborative and communicative planning theory (Ortiz, 2012).

This article addresses the following questions: How can we foster the radical potential of co-creation for urban planning and design using storytelling? How can urban stories and storytellers contribute to foster cognitive justice? Planning scholars often frame storytelling as a strategy of persuasion (Mäntysalo et al., 2019; Throgmorton, 1996, 2003), to gauge power narratives and ideology (Davoudi et al., 2019; Shepherd et al., 2020; Zanotto, 2020), as a pedagogical tool (Baum, 2017; Forester, 1999, 2009; Sandercock, 2003), and to envision the future (van Hulst, 2012) to inspire collective action. Though there is much discussion around the possibilities and caveats of using storytelling for planning, less has been discussed about its potential in cities of the Global South or the potential links with cognitive justice and strategies to work with the capacity of non-planners for storytelling, as well as their own imagination.

This article is based on my experience coordinating the research-based design project *Patrimonio Vivo | Living Heritage* during the global lockdown during the Covid-19 pandemic. Through a trans-local learning alliance, the project was anchored in the neighbourhood of Moravia, situated in the city of Medellín, Colombia, and aimed to contribute to the recognition of everyday spatial practices in self-built neighbourhoods as a living heritage of the city. This alliance was made up of partners from the Cultural Centre of Community Development of Moravia, the grassroots collective Moravia Resiste, the architect's cooperative COONVITE, and master's students from the University College London (UCL), from the building and urban design in development (BUDD) programme. This project demonstrated that self-built neighbourhoods are sites of urban planning innovation and collective agency, challenging orthodox urban planning narratives that argue otherwise (Ortiz & Millan, 2019). Moreover, it showed that critical pedagogy is needed for cultivating urban storytellers and that we need to frame urban planning and design as a progressive co-creative process.

The first section of this article sets out a brief literature review on co-creation and storytelling in urban planning. In this section, I also locate the conceptual underpinnings of the nexus between cognitive justice and the ecology of knowledges (de Sousa Santos, 2014) yet to be brought more explicitly into urban planning debates. The second section sets out the method of framing digital co-creation through trans-local learning alliances. This section illustrates the premise of how to engage with multiple urban actors that operate across built environment scales, and who are placed in an asymmetric power–knowledge constellation. The third section explains the site of engagement. In this section, I explain Medellín as the setting of the co-creation story. I explain how the city has become a story of best practice in planning and Moravia a story of experimentation on slum upgrading. The fourth section delves into the characters of the co-creation process and the relevance of storytelling for them. The fifth section focuses on the resulting stories narrating the living heritage of the place. It summarises the polyphony of plots that gave the basis for the design of spatial strategies developed through the project. The conclusion discusses the generative nature of the co-creation processes to reframe the stories from and about self-built neighbourhoods. This article aims to contribute to urban planning debates by centring the radical potential of storytelling as a bridge for the ecosystem of knowledges to foster cognitive justice.

2. Co-Creating Through Urban Storytelling

2.1. Co-Creation and Storytelling

The role of storytelling as a means for persuasion and empowerment in urban planning is not new. Sandercock (2003), in her seminal piece "Out of the Closet: The Importance of Stories and Storytelling in Planning Practice," argues about the importance of stories in planning practice, research, and teaching. She explains that stories help planners to expand practical tools, sharpen critical judgement and widen the circle of democratic discourse. The corpus of work of storytelling within spatial planning defines this process as one that can be highly vexed by myriad interests—often incompatible with each other—particularly when it comes to defining the cultural landscape and its meanings (e.g., Devos et al., 2018; Forester, 1999; Sandercock, 2003; Throgmorton, 1996; van Hulst, 2012). Van Hulst (2012) points to two strands of research: storytelling as a model *of* planning (the way planning is done) and storytelling as a model *for* planning (the way planning could or should be done). The first refers to storytelling as an important and everyday activity that takes place in all kinds of formal and informal social interactions, which slowly but steadily finds its way into plans. In the second, storytelling is used as a tool to create spaces of democratic and inclusive co-construction of stories of different lived experiences and emotions. This second reading of storytelling enables actors to share understandings of what their situation is and what can be done, it allows new options they had not thought of before. Nonetheless, the capacity of non-planners for storytelling, their imagination, and the role that non-discursive stories play is often overlooked. This shows the need to innovate on how to amplify the potential of storytelling and resonates with my own interest in using storytelling and urban narratives as a strategy of co-creation to seek cognitive justice and decolonise planning (see also Ortiz, 2022).

Co-creation has its roots in the fields of private sector innovation, social innovation, design, and the communicative turn in planning theory. Co-creation promises

the potential to break down hierarchies between local government, business life, universities, citizens, and other stakeholders for a multi-directional approach to problem-solving (Leino & Puumala, 2021). For Leino and Puumala (2021, p. 783), "the notion of co-creation emphasises innovation and creativity and as such it implies potential for fundamental change in regard to the roles, positions, and relationships between stakeholders." The framing of this intention is why hardly anyone would oppose its use and why it has become such a large part of the public sector and policymakers' rhetorical toolbox. It has been translated into the form of experimental living labs, civic hackathons, and citizen juries (Mulder, 2012; Tortzen, 2018) in response to the digital societal turn. Yet its conceptualisation in urban planning and governance remains fuzzy.

Co-creation in urban planning builds on the collaborative and communicative planning approach (Forester, 1999; Healey, 2007; Innes & Booher, 2010). For urban planning, co-creation aims at strengthening social cohesion in polarised, fragmented, and individualized societies to develop better solutions to improve quality of life (Leino & Puumala, 2021; Šuklje Erjavec & Ruchinskaya, 2019). Recent debates frame co-creation as a modality of participation (Lund, 2018), as a co-learning process (Šuklje Erjavec & Ruchinskaya, 2019), and as a collaborative urban knowledge creation process (Seo, 2022). Despite the contributions of recent literature, most authors acknowledge a lack of systematic theoretical development in the "co-creation field." These studies have shown that main gaps remain in understanding co-creation enabling conditions and impact, how power symmetries are addressed, and how to bridge knowledge creation and knowledge use. Overall, co-creation debates tend to focus mostly on service and/or solution-driven discussions, Global North contexts, and tend not to question the status quo of liberal democracy and racial capitalism.

A more transgressive approach to co-creation can be linked to a different intellectual genealogy. As Degnegaard (2014) reports, co-creation was coined in the early 1990s to focus on co-creating shared meaning from a social constructivist, intervention, and narratives approach. Co-creation is key for group psychotherapy and narratives are pivotal for the co-creation of meaning. In the early 2000s, within the context of transformative dialogue, the co-creation of new realities was understood as a precondition to negotiate public controversies. To address the shortcomings of the literature on co-creation, Carpenter et al. (2020), drawing from Mouffe (2013), frame a method for an agonistic practice where art and politics are intertwined. This perspective posits the politicisation of co-creation can be enacted to work together through conflict bringing art-based methods that trigger open interpretations and unlock collective imaginations around city making. Horvath and Carpenter (2020, p. 45) re-define co-creation as "collective creative processes resulting in tangible or intangible outputs in the form of artwork or artefacts, and knowledge generated by multiple partners that feeds into shared understandings of more socially just cities." They advocate using this approach as a form of resistance against oppression, referring to de Sousa Santos' (2014) ideas around southern epistemologies. Since co-creation looks for an epistemic shift, this requires linking it with ideas of cognitive justice that refer to counteracting practices of silencing or devaluing alternative forms of knowing and living that do not conform with assumptions about the authority of scientific knowledge.

2.2. Co-Creation, Cognitive Justice, and Ecology of Knowledges

A radical approach to co-creation in planning requires grounding on the principles of cognitive justice. Yet the links between urban planning and cognitive justice are less explored in current literature. Visvanathan (1999) coined the term "cognitive justice" to frame the normative principle "the right of different knowledges to coexist so long as they sustain the life, livelihoods, and life chances of a people" (Visvanathan, 2021, p. 1). Cognitive justice is an invitation to reinvent democracy in a plural, intellectual and playful way (Visvanathan, 2021). This notion not only proposes a framework of connections to respond to the violence of "epistemicide" (de Sousa Santos, 2014, p. 237), as the erasure of other ways of knowing and different forms of knowledge outside the Western eurocentric canon but also to consider diverse communities of problem-solving (Visvanathan, 2009). In this line, in the seminal book *Epistemologies of the South: Justice Against Epistemicide*, de Sousa Santos (2014, p. 324) claims that "there is no global social justice without global cognitive justice." Thus, cognitive justice "points to a radical demand for social justice, a demand that includes unthinking the dominant criteria by which we define social justice and fight against social injustice" (de Sousa Santos, 2014, p. 327). For Visvanathan (1999, p. 3) the principles of cognitive justice are:

> (a) all forms of knowledge are valid and should co-exist in a dialogic relationship to each other; (b) cognitive justice implies the strengthening of the "voice" of the defeated and marginalised; (c) traditional knowledges and technologies should not be "museumized"; (d) every citizen is a scientist; each layperson is an expert; (e) science should help the common man/woman; (f) all competing sciences should be brought together into a positive heuristic for dialogue.

How can we put into practice cognitive justice in the context of planning? Co-creation can be seen as a strategy to catalyse cognitive justice through engaging with the "ecology of knowledges" (de Sousa Santos, 2014) relevant for imagining just cities. The notion of an ecology of knowledges helps us to operationalise cognitive justice as it "aims to provide epistemological

consistency for pluralistic, propositional thinking and acting" (de Sousa Santos, 2014, p. 232). Engaging with the ecology of knowledges requires direct involvement with counter-hegemonic globalization agents and multiple clashing conceptions of alternative societies against the unequal relations caused by capitalism, colonialism, and patriarchy. De Sousa Santos (2014) suggests that the type of knowledge central to ecology of knowledges is *knowledge-as-intervention-in-reality* rather than *knowledge-as-a-representation-of-reality* starting from the compatibility between cognitive and ethic-political values of the ones involved in a shared endeavour. Learning from feminist and post-colonial thinking, he asserts that all knowledge is context-dependent, local, partial, and situated to challenge universal and abstract hierarchies imposed by colonial history. This acknowledgement points toward an impulse for co-presence and incompleteness as a precondition for co-creation.

Stories are a pivotal means for the circulation of urban knowledges and bridging ecologies of knowledges. Ecology of knowledges recognises that all knowledges are testimonial and have a polyphonic nature that seeks to promote rebellious subjectivities (de Sousa Santos, 2014). Non-hegemonic knowledges based on oral traditions preserve wisdom about wealth, ways of life, and symbolic universes that can survive the hostility of extractivist processes of urban development. The role of orality and storytelling have been accounted for by decolonial scholars and activists such as Linda Tuhiwai Smith, who urged us to produce knowledge "that recovers subjugated knowledges, that helps create spaces for the voices of the silenced to be expressed and 'listened to,' and that challenge racism, colonialism and oppression" (Tuhiwai Smith, 2021, p. 41). Nonetheless, non-hegemonic and hegemonic knowledges are interdependent and can nurture a plurality of conceptions of emancipation and dignity. Stories capture the wealth of knowledge for social emancipation preserved in oral traditions. Storytelling conveys a common sense since it is a non-disciplinary everyday practice that connects with the "enjoyment, the emotional with the intellectual and the practical" (de Sousa Santos, 2014, p. 38). Co-creation through storytelling processes enables a valuing of the testimonial aspects of knowledge and the encounter of diverse temporalities of territorial knowledge as a basis to mobilise alternative interventions.

3. Framing Co-Creation Through Trans-Local Learning Alliances

I frame learning alliances as a collective space for enabling an ecology of knowledges as a learned struggle. The key premise is that all the partners are active learners using the universities' authority to create and legitimate knowledge that works towards cognitive justice (Gaventa & Bivens, 2014). Learning alliances (Lundy et al., 2005) are based on university-community partnerships in a recognition of the interdependence of scientific and non-scientific knowledge. However, a key challenge for effective co-creation in a learning alliance is the ability to bring together multiple actors operating at different scales and times in asymmetric power relations (Ortiz & Millan, 2019). In the context of urban planning, Moreno-Leguizamon et al. (2015, p. 16) have argued that:

> A learning alliance is an innovative methodology that can contribute to multicultural planning by (1) promoting the involvement of new planning stakeholders and the institutionalization of learning alliance outcomes, (2) ensuring capacity-building strategies, (3) emphasizing documentation and dissemination as innovative practices, and (4) strengthening the network capacity of a community.

Drawing on these ideas, we explore how urban design and planning can foster cognitive justice as a necessary condition to advance urban justice.

An integral part of operating in learning alliances that strive for cognitive justice, is an ability to simultaneously operate from multiple places of enunciation where "knowledge aims to turn into a transformative experience" (de Sousa Santos, 2014, p. 25). I call it a trans-local learning alliance to head the joint work of organisations and participants that operate in different locations, whose learning and ability to innovate derives not only from their different interests and backgrounds—but also from the lived experience of the interconnections and singularities of multiple urban trajectories. A trans-local learning alliance problematizes the dichotomic views of a Global North and South and engages with the patterns or resemblance and singularities that cities across the globe encapsulate (Ortiz, 2018). It relates to de Sousa Santos' (2014, p. 256) invitation "to consult social reality through different cognitive maps operating at different scales." A trans-local perspective in learning alliances contributes to challenge dichotomous geographical conceptions such as North-South by focusing on non-hierarchic interactions and configurations across scales.

The project *Patrimonio Vivo | Living Heritage: A Tool to Rethink Moravia's Future* was based on a living heritage approach, using storytelling, to uphold a different story of Moravia and responded to threats of displacement couched in terms of urban transformation. During the pandemic, our learning alliance was constituted between the Cultural Centre of Community Development of Moravia (CDMC), the Moravia Resiste Collective, the Cooperative COONVITE, and master's students from UCL, from the BUDD programme, whose students were in over 15 countries across the world. In early 2020 and 2021, we ran a practice engagement module of the BUDD master's programme based on long-term connections with these organisations based in Medellín. This project was co-funded by UCL and the CDMC, and the time of participants besides students and volunteers was

remunerated. Our shared aim was to uncover the living heritage of the neighbourhood of Moravia to leverage it as a tool to counteract eviction threats by changing the narratives of stigmatization over the place. Our departing premise was premised on an idea that Moravia, instead of being erased, as it was, could be considered a place of "living heritage" of Medellín.

We used the framework of living heritage (Polious, 2014) to challenge narratives about stigmatised communities and places. We had, as driving research-based design questions, the following query: How could the territory of Moravia in Medellín be framed as living heritage and, consequently, what type of socio-spatial strategies can be imagined responding to the current urban transformation?

In addition, we operationalised the notion of living heritage through four thematic lenses selected with our partners according to their challenges: (a) care systems; (b) memory and migrations; (c) recycling landscapes; and (d) community communication. We focused on transformative strategies in which communities are the initiators and drivers of urban development interventions rather than the objects of them. We agreed to produce an "atlas of living heritage" to contain the stories and spatial imprints of the rich legacies of the neighbourhood (see Figure 1).

The digital co-creation work was designed to enhance the richness of the ecology of knowledges present in the alliance. We engaged in three key phases of co-creation: preparation, exchange, and output generation/dissemination. In the preparatory phase, we co-created an organising committee with a representative of each partner organisation to undertake the set-up of the collaboration. We wrote and shared a bilingual terms of reference, a strategy for communication, and a code of ethics of engagement to convey the scope and operationalization of the joint work. Our master's students dedicated two months of preparation prior to engaging with partners by devoting time to readings, guest seminars, and workshops to map out the socio-political configurations and the territorial dynamics of the place. In parallel, each organisation in Medellín selected and updated participants on the terms of reference and the expectation about the learning alliance. As a result of the pandemic, we had to include training on the use of digital tools, particularly for senior community leaders, and at the same time address the asymmetries of the digital divide experienced in low-income households making sure community members would have access to digital devices and data.

The phase of engagement relied on synchronous sessions and asynchronous activities during four to five weeks of intense collaboration. Around 120 participants were part of this collaborative process, with 60 members active each year. Each team was assigned a thematic lens and had 15 members on average: Of these, two to three members were community leaders, two to three members were CDMC staff, two were COONVITE members or volunteers, and six to eight were UCL students. Given that participants were spread in different time zones, we had a rhythm of three plenary encounters of two to three hours per week, in which we framed the scope of the phase, providing guests' thematic inputs and tutorials for each team's work. The co-design process was built as an incremental progression on understanding the challenge and teamwork dynamics to substantiate the proposal of multi-scale socio-spatial strategies. Each team defined their work plan and a distribution route of the

Figure 1. A re-imagined Moravia for the living heritage atlas, drawn by Miguel Mesa for Patrimonio Vivo | Living Heritage project.

asynchronous tasks. We proposed five stages, one per week, guided by the following questions:

1. What will we do and how?
2. What is our design/research question and method?
3. What is our proposed socio-spatial strategy?
4. How to (re)present our socio-spatial strategy?
5. How to synthesise and communicate our strategy to a broader audience?

Using incremental and simple phases helped the diversity of participants to navigate the teamwork amid the pandemic uncertainties.

The phase of output generation and dissemination involved policymakers and urban planners. To involve influential city-making actors, we organised webinars and invited city councillors, local researchers, local officials, and international guests from the Global Platform Right to the City and Habitat United Nations. These public events served to showcase the living heritage framework to address the upgrading of self-built neighbourhoods but also political commitments to amplify the proposals co-created by the alliance. As a result, the main strategies and priorities raised in the living heritage atlas became part of the debates of the newly formed, in 2021, negotiation board for discussing the urban renewal project. It allowed an encounter of diverse temporalities of territorial knowledge as a basis to mobilise alternative interventions to strengthen the local community assets instead of interventions that erase the existing place and displace its dwellers proposed by the urban renewal project for the neighbourhood.

4. Medellín and Moravia: Stories of Urban Despair Turned Into "Best Practice" and Experimentation on "Slum Upgrading"

The city of Medellín served as the site of inquiry. Medellín has been portrayed in the last decades as an example of best practice on how local states could address in tandem violence and informality after a deep crisis caused by deindustrialisation, narco-trafficking, and extreme urban violence (Ortiz, 2019). Since urban planners rely on best practices to inspire action and based on its lessons speed up effective urban interventions (Ortiz & Millan, 2019); the city's strategies have been emulated in several cities (Duque & Ortiz, 2020) across the world. The city's transformation in the last decades responded to broader shifts in its governance actively involving local government, decentralised quasi-public entities, military powers, economic elites, and grassroots organisations. A decisive convergence of local state public investments in traditionally excluded self-built neighbourhoods of strategic iconic architecture, mobility infrastructure, and strategic urban projects was used as the linchpin strategy to increase accessibility and generate symbolical inclusion under the banner of social urbanism. Notwithstanding the city's achievements and its international recognition, Medellín remains one of the most unequal Latin-American cities and the territorial control of non-state armed actors still poses challenges to local governability schemes.

Most of the success story of Medellín derives from the local state interest in social infrastructure and the creation of a public aesthetic through a particular kind of slum upgrading. In this context, Moravia has been an exemplary case of the state's experimentation with neighbourhood upgrading approaches. Moravia is a centrally located territory of 42 hectares occupied by over 45 thousand inhabitants mostly living under precarious urban conditions and high population density. It is adjacent to the Aburrá River and was built on top of the former public garbage dump in the late 1970s. Some areas of the neighbourhood were built by a process of incremental land squatting in the early 1950s because of processes of rural-urban migration and the intensification of violence in the country. Moravia has experienced different periods of urban change. The first period was from 1954 to 1982, when an incremental process of land occupations accounted for the neighbourhood's formation and subsequent consolidation. The second period was from 1982 to 1993, when the state established a relationship and began negotiations with the neighbourhood's social organisations due to increased interest in its land. The third period, from 2004 to 2011, was characterised by a multi-sectoral slum-upgrading urban initiative known as the Integral Improvement Plan of Moravia (PPMIM) and aligned with the social urbanism policy of the city (Ortiz & Yepes, 2020a).

Moravia, despite the upgrading efforts, has endured long-term eviction threats. In 2014, the municipal strategic spatial plan declared the neighbourhood as an urban renewal site. Its strategic location and the increased pressure to densify the lowlands of the valley have prompted resistance and social discontent among Moravia's inhabitants. For urban planning, the so-called informal settlements have been considered a nuisance, something invisible, a set of places that need to either be evicted or comply with state standards for the built environment. Some slum upgrading programmes have dignified the life of its dwellers while others have fallen short to address the social and symbolic dimensions of urban marginalisation. The PPMIM included seven programmes which considered issues of housing construction and upgrading, public space, tenancy and legal rights, socio-cultural development, strengthening of local economies, and health issues. Moravia inhabitants claim the urgency to continue to implement the agreed upgrading plan. This highlights how the long-term nature of processes of upgrading risk the continuity of territorial interventions and often become a legitimation strategy of removal. Thus, official narratives of urban change mask the multiplicity of urban knowledges and people's stories. Beyond these stories of best practice, we need to involve a plurality of voices, the adaptation to local idiosyncrasies as well as the collective memory of people, places, and institutions.

5. Characters: Learning Alliance of Urban Storytellers

A learning alliance grounded in the ecology of urban knowledges frames its participants as storytellers and learners. For a co-creation process to contribute to cognitive justice it requires trust, commitment, care, respect, knowledge, and responsibility—the characteristics of an ethics of love (Sweet et al., 2019). Our learning alliance's main characters are four organisations: two are anchored in the neighbourhood (Moravia Resiste, a collective group that brings together various social organisations of Moravia for the protection of their territory, and the Centro de Desarrollo Cultural Moravia [CDCM], a semi-public organisation devoted to supporting cultural and educational activities); the other two, operating across different geographies, are COONVITE, a cooperative of architects working on the social production of habitat and the construction of the commons for good living in places where the architectural practice usually does not reach, and the BUDD students.

We agreed to bring participants of different ages to enable an intergenerational learning experience, particularly with the more experienced community leaders and the young generations of inhabitants of the neighbourhood and undergrad students from Medellín.

Moravia Resiste is a collective that advocates the protection of the right to stay put. They focus on expanding the public debate about urban development, questioning who is benefiting from the urban renewal projects and strengthening their leadership to keep up the constant struggle to live with dignity. Their aims to engage with the learning alliance were: (a) to showcase their spaces of encounter, co-creation, negotiation, and struggles; (b) to exchange lessons from similar international experiences; and (c) to enable dialogue with the Moravia communities that were leveraging cultural expressions to inform their collective strategic action. As community leader Luz Mila Hernandez put it in our online interview of 2021, when asked about the alliance:

> We believe communication with the state is broken. They use technical words, do not know the community, and don't understand that people need to learn about the territory daily….This co-creation process using storytelling reaffirms the trust we have with each other. It helps us resist and reframe Moravia's legacy to the city.

Her testimony highlights how the "technical" planning language contributes not only to the disconnection between the state and its citizens but also prevents learning about the visions of urban transformation. In this sense, storytelling can play a significant role to translate and reframe urban knowledges and aspirations.

The CDCM is a cultural state-owned space run by a non-governmental organisation and Moravia's inhabitants. The construction of the CDCM in 2008 was one of the territorial interventions negotiated with the inhabitants as part of the PPMIM. In essence, they are a cultural development centre with a community approach, connected to the world, and envisioned by themselves as *la casa de todos* ("everyone's house"). CDCM operated as a strategic enabler of the alliance. Their aims to engage with the learning alliance were (a) to co-create a reflexive approach that builds relations with the past in relation to everyday use of memory and artistic expressions and (b) to explore ways for communities to appropriate their knowledge based on narratives about their territory. As Maria Juliana Yepez, CDCM knowledge manager, put it, in our online interview of 2021:

> For us, cultural management usually focuses on artistic practices, but in this co-creation process, we focused on the everyday practices of the inhabitants. We inquired about the territorial interventions in the neighbourhood since they have also shaped the culture of the place. A place that has been autoproduced and self-managed.

From this testimony, it is relevant to highlight how the co-creation process opened the perspective on understanding territorial interventions as a shaping force of cultural expressions. Moreover, the use of storytelling to bridge with collective memory and everyday practices helped to grasp the role of self-management in the living heritage of the place.

COONVITE is a cooperative of architects working on unlearning formalist dogmas and unfriendly visions of architecture and valuing ancestral and popular knowledge. Their aims in joining the learning alliance were: (a) to explore an exchange of experiences between popular and academic knowledges; (b) to identify ideas of memory of the neighbourhood in tangible and intangible projects to make its territory known; and (c) to narrate and document what Moravia means and enable spaces to continue nurturing and expanding the idea of memory for a promising future. As Juan Miguel Gomez, COONVITE lead, suggested, in our online interview of 2021:

> To work around living heritage in a city like Medellín is important to start to value and love the diversity we are. A city where converge many longings, processes, pains that the institutions are indifferent about….To frame the living heritage of Moravia is not only what we want to remember but also what we want to become, to generate new narratives.

His testimony brings attention to the role of generating new narratives as a precondition to imagining a spatial prefiguration of the place. It also renders relevant the power of living heritage stories to counter local state indifference to the cultural richness of the neighbourhood.

The BUDD programme is a master's course that works at the intersection of critical urban theory, critical design studies, and Southern urban practice. The main aims of the programme to the learning alliance were: (a) to

offer a pedagogic experience that could enhance learning processes by connecting teaching, research, and real-world communities; (b) to address research-based design that has an impact on the city decision-making process inspired by popular education and critical pedagogy; and (c) to enable an overseas practice engagement that seeks to ground applications of abstract concepts and furthers critical thinking through a sequence of inter-subjective encounters. As I expressed in conversation with fellow partners in my role as academic and lead of the project:

> We need to recognise the living experience of each one in the territory but also the diverse sets of backgrounds, expertise, and leadership to sustain a co-creation process….The stories of the trajectories and continuities of community practices allow us to grasp the living heritage of the neighbourhood as a step to achieve recognition.

Here I point toward the interconnectedness between recognition processes and the pedagogical angle to deepen the ability to identify and trigger potential spaces of opportunities for a just and inclusive socio-spatial transformation.

6. Polyphony of Plots: Narrating the Living Heritage of the Place

The ecology of knowledges is polyphonic. We embraced a polyphony of plots to convey Moravia's multiplicity of stories. We co-created stories of solidarity, care, memory, and livelihoods. We decided to focus on a research-based design process to produce an atlas of living heritage. We felt that an atlas could contribute to "create realities, allow us to make visible certain territories and to mobilise imagined geographies" (Ortiz, 2020, p. 4). We portrayed some practices of living heritage that deserved to be protected and departing from them we proposed strategies of socio-spatial interventions that enabled us to tell another story of Moravia to the city. The different strands of work allowed us to bring to the co-creation process students, musicians, anthropologists, children-books storytellers, social communicators, community leaders, and graphic designers, and liaise with a youth-led audio-visual collective—RedTina—from Moravia to portray relevant stories of characters, places, initiatives, and other interconnected things. I will present some excerpts of the stories co-created by different teams combining people from each organisation of the learning alliance:

6.1. Stories of Memories and Migration

Memories are central to understand the living heritage of Moravia. Using life stories of inhabitants, located in different sectors of Moravia, the team traced the trajectories of migration and forced displacement. Deep listening was required as well as co-developed networks of trust with the members of the team living in the territory. In Figure 2 we can see excerpts of some of the stories and the main causes of the interviewees' journeys and their relationship with memory. Getting at the spatial imprint of collective memory can be hard to express working remotely, yet, for locals, it has a very different approach. As El Chino, a male Moravia's inhabitant, forcedly displaced from the Pacific coast explained:

> You can read memory everywhere you look in Moravia, it is reflected in each corner, in each house, in the destitute, in the people that have been part of the struggle. However, we need to really try to have a concerted idea of memory that installs itself within the larger memory of the city and serves as a platform on which to build the continuity of the neighbourhood. Moravia knows about politics but hasn't instituted itself as a political body.

This testimony allowed us to understand how memory is carved in every corner and has a very political meaning. Also, the tensions between individual and collective memory are key to addressing the integration of the rest of the Medellín's narrative. For the ones working remotely during the pandemic, the focus on life stories gave an emotional texture to the spatial analysis of the place, compensating for the sensorial deprivation.

6.2. Stories of Solidarity and Mobilization

Community connections are central to revealing the living heritage of a place. In the case of Moravia, these connections were mostly based on solidarity and social mobilization. In contrast to the above examples, the team working around community connections decided to document the story of the Moravia Resiste collective itself. You can read their conversation (and see also Figure 3) prompted by the question: How were they born as a collective?

> Orley: Moravia Resiste appears from the misinformation about the urban renewal process, arising from this reality the need to inform the community in a clear way about what was happening.
>
> Luz Mila: Moravia Resiste is a means of conversation between the state and the community. Communication was lost in Moravia. The state [would] not enter the territory and, if it did, it was in a conflictual manner. But after opening the doors of communication through the dialogue tables, agreements were reached at the community level, [which brought] recognition to the territory by opening the conversation to the outside.
>
> Julieta: I received Moravia Resiste as an inheritance when I was growing up. I was interested in the

Figure 2. Life stories of migration. Source: Drawn by Memory and Migrations Team cohort 2019–2020 for Atlas of Living Heritage.

Moravia Resiste struggle after completing a workshop where I learned what the urban renewal proposal meant. Moravia Resiste, for me, is a platform of resignification where you question all the things that are taken for granted. We try to find that meeting point where we rely on the academic part to deconstruct what has been built and review what exists. Within this process, Moravia Resiste became my family.

The conversations with the members of Moravia Resiste highlighted the intergenerational dynamic of the collective. Moreover, it was important to understand the mobilization strategies through their trajectories of communication dynamics, places, activities, and even objects (the bicycle and the megaphone, the pot and the spoon, the audio mixer, etc.). Thus, the co-creation process needed to allow for collective stories to emerge.

Figure 3. Moravia Resiste Collective. Source: Drawn by Community Connections Team cohort 2020–2021 for Atlas of Living Heritage.

6.3. Stories of Care and Intergenerational Responsibility

A core element required to recognise when delving into living heritage was the tracing of the continuity of care of a place. In Moravia, care is made up of people's efforts, their bodies, gestures, habits, and unwritten rules. Particularly, the role of women has been pivotal to sustain collective life (see Figure 4). We talked with five community leaders, mainly women, about their long-term struggles and how they have cared for the neighbourhood while their main needs were not being taken care of. Irma, one of the senior leaders, said: "When one feels like you're being taken care of, you can take care of others." The stories around care also revealed various visions and aspirations, as Cielo Holguin, a young leader, explained:

> The proposal we have is having leadership schools that never disappear from the territory. A leadership school that aims for a generational relief but with a powerful strategy, where older leaders share with the younger ones, because under the guidance of the older ones, the new leaders may grow stronger. It should be a place to gather, where the knowledge and the experience of all are valued.

In Moravia, care is embodied through collective and continuous action; in fact:

> The sheer act of reproducing and maintaining life stood as an act of resistance against violent power dynamics. The active will of preserving life under these circumstances, through a matriarchal social structure, engendered an increase in the political agency of the community. (Ortiz & Yepes, 2020b, p. 45)

Care is the beacon to maintain community networks throughout various displacement, eviction, and change trajectories. Care has been linked historically to defending its right to have decent housing and to remain in this self-built sector, which is mainly managed by the community.

6.4. Stories of Livelihoods and Circuits of Things

Stories about the continuities of use of a place are central when employing a living heritage approach. The teams working around livelihoods focused on how the practice of recycling moved and circulated through Moravia as a tradition of recycling that should be celebrated. A core element of challenging the stigma around recycling was to frame recyclers as essential workers whose knowledge is crucial in the fight against the climate crisis. For instance, the story of Yessid, a young male inhabitant who works as a recycler, was shared in an online interview, illustrating part of his journey with the recycling cart and expertise:

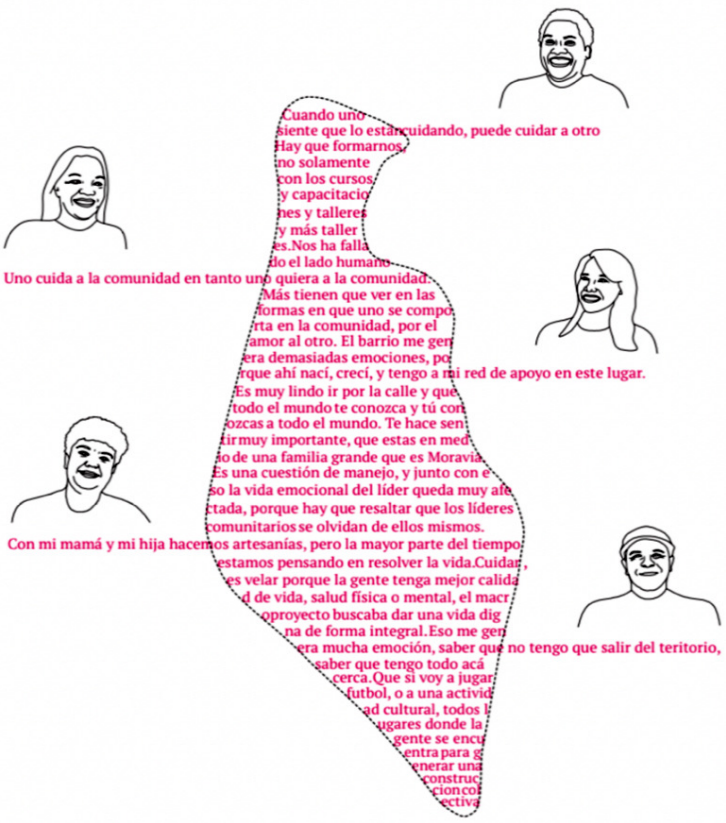

Figure 4. Moravia's map weaved with community leaders' stories. Source: Drawn by Care Team cohort 2020–2021 for Atlas of Living Heritage.

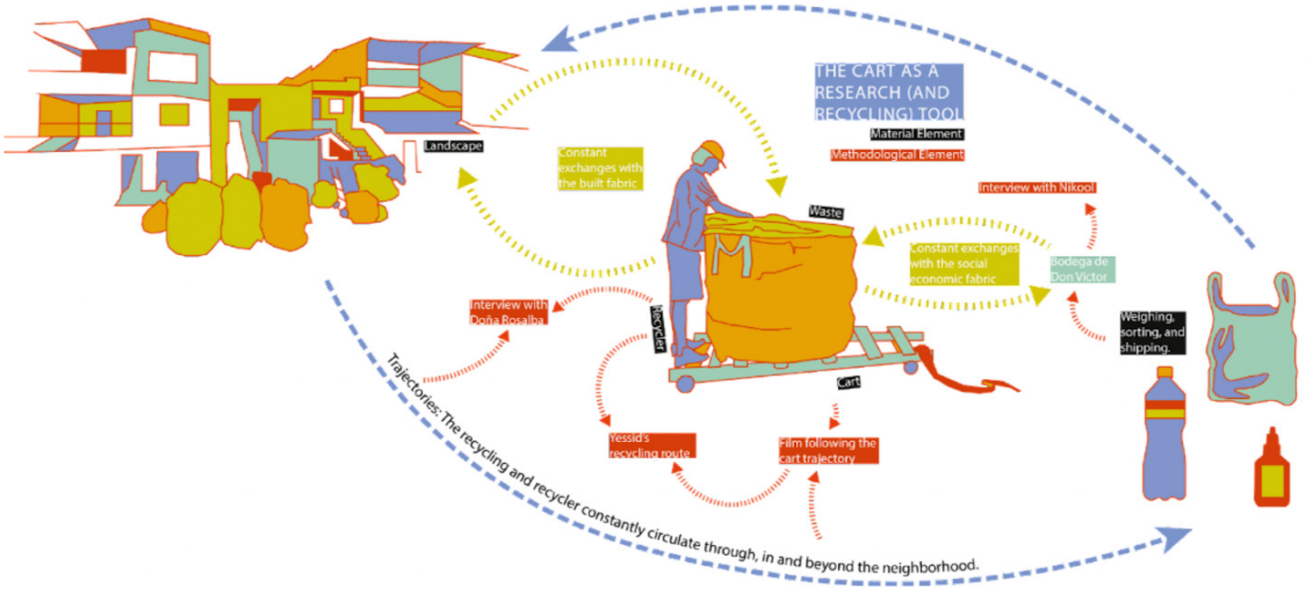

Figure 5. Circuits of recycling in Moravia. Source: Drawn by Livelihoods Team cohort 2020–2021 for Atlas of Living Heritage.

> Yessid, a young man who began recycling out of necessity, continues to recycle today, and through this practice has managed to contribute to his family's livelihood. He keeps his roller cart in the warehouse, from here he begins and ends his daily work routes, manoeuvring the roller cart he built himself. Along the way, he stops at waste collection points and occasionally stops to greet recycling co-workers and assist them, if necessary. Yessid's knowledge ranges from the task of choosing the ideal material, designing, and building the best *carro de rodillo* to manoeuvring it and successfully transporting material in *tulas* [large bags made by joining several sacks together] around the city, to collecting, separating, and categorising the collected material.

As shown in Figure 5, The story of Yessid and his cart became a research tool to understand the trajectories and materiality of the recycling process. Along with this story, the team also gathered other stories from important local characters to understand how each of them works in tandem and represents much more than their individual selves while being equally important sources of recycling knowledge. Telling their stories is one of the starting points toward making recycling knowledge in Moravia visible in a different way. Their stories gave us insights into how recycling knowledge moves around and what role it plays in the larger network of actors across Moravia.

7. Final Reflections

This article has argued that spatial justice also needs to be addressed in tandem with cognitive justice. In doing so, planning requires decentring expertise to embrace co-creation with storytelling as a key methodology to bridge the vast ecologies of urban knowledges. It has contributed to addressing the gaps identified in the co-creation and storytelling literature in planning.

The project Patrimonio Vivo | Living Heritage has shown two key lessons for planners in response to the following guiding question: How can we foster the radical potential of co-creation for urban planning and design using storytelling? The answer is that planning education requires pedagogical interventions to cultivate how urban stories and storytellers can contribute to foster cognitive justice. Since non-hegemonic knowledges are based on oral traditions, storytelling is an important tool for propositional thinking, driving research-based design. Urban planning and design need to find more creative ways to value the testimonial aspect of knowledge. This project demonstrated that to foster the radical potential of co-creation in shifting the narrative of stigmatized places, such as self-built neighbourhoods, there is an urgent need to centre the living heritage aspects contained in stories of care and intergenerational responsibility, stories of memories and migration, stories of solidarity and mobilization, and stories of livelihoods and circuits of things. In this way, storytelling contributes to the recognition of everyday spatial practices and the agency of dwellers in neighbourhood upgrading as a path for progressive urban planning and design.

How can urban stories and storytellers contribute to fostering cognitive justice? The answer is that the use of trans-local learning alliances frames a more egalitarian modality of co-creation. It requires engaging with the plurality of knowledge-as-intervention with partners that share similar ethical-political commitments. This approach, rather than flattening power asymmetries, allowed us to create atmospheres for "asymmetrical reciprocity" (La Caze, 2008) in the ecology of knowledges. New affective cartographies emerged among participants

despite the sensorial deprivation and digital inequalities of digital literacy and connectivity experienced in the project as explained in the description of the preparatory phase. As Gloria, a community leader, said when asked about the main learnings: "There are other ways of communicating and doing things, and that distance and language are not barriers when you want to get things done.''

The trans-local approach also was valued as crucial for learning, as Leslie, one of the younger community representatives, put it: "Inhabiting a territory does not make you know all the knowledge of the context; it is important to listen to the voices, the different visions, perspectives, and imaginaries. The external view is fundamental to make sense jointly." In this sense, co-creation needs to be underpinned by an embodied and reflective ethics of engagement. In summary, this article has shown possible ways to foster the radical potential of co-creation for urban planning and design linked with a more radical genealogy of co-creation as a practice that stems from an aspiration to generate shared meaning and navigate transformative dialogues of the ecology of urban knowledges.

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Conflict of Interests

The author declares no conflict of interests.

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Article

Online Podcast Production as Co-Creation for Intercultural Participation in Neighbourhood Development

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Abstract
This article describes the usage of an online podcast workshop as an arts-based research method to reflect on intercultural participation. The podcast workshop was co-developed by researchers, local civil society actors, and administrative employees and deployed in a research infrastructure based on real-world labs. We show how the online podcast workshop as a research tool elicits co-creation with agonistic as well as communicative practices. The podcast combined practices of making with socially engaged research, using digital storytelling. It aimed at enhancing intercultural dialogue and participation and was used as an opportunity for voices that are not sufficiently represented in local public discourse on neighbourhood development to become recognised and challenge marginalisation. Based on one online podcast workshop, the article addresses new possibilities for collective and collaborative action during the Covid-19 pandemic and frames the podcast as a moderated place for exchange and reflection in the digital space. The podcast workshop intended to foster further discussion on the topic of intercultural participation and was conceived as a tool for empowerment that participants can use for further conversations and exchange in their communities.

Keywords
arts-based research; co-creation; design research; intercultural participation; neighbourhood development; podcast; real-world labs; storytelling

Issue
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1. Introduction

Participatory approaches in urban planning try to democratise knowledge production by including civil society actors but also struggle to resist neoliberal usurpation. On the other hand, collaborative processes often require the cooperation of experts as moderators, facilitators, or even knowledge producers, which intensified during the Covid-19 pandemic, since contact restrictions made in-person participation with narrative or performative approaches difficult to realise.

In this article, we show a possibility to address this conflict by presenting an online podcast workshop as an auditive arts-based research (ABR) method (Finley, 2008; McKenzie, 2008), to enhance a collaborative approach to knowledge co-creation between researchers and civil society actors, to generate, curate, and transmit knowledge on intercultural participation in neighbourhood development. As co-creation in the field of participation in urban planning, we refer to a process that goes beyond information and consultation as degrees of tokenism—as depicted by Arnstein's (1969) ladder of participation—to enable likewise agonistic (Hillier, 2003; Yamamoto, 2018) as well as communicative planning practices (Healey, 1997; Innes & Booher, 2004) between researchers and participants to shape neighbourhood development (Gualini, 2015; Özdemir, 2019).

Our aim is also to display how an online podcast workshop as an ABR method enhances the reflection and participatory exploration of intercultural participation

through digital storytelling (Allan et al., 2018; van Hulst, 2012). Even though no artist was involved in the design of the podcast workshop, we frame it as an ABR method, as designers were involved and because it elicits stories and emotions, thereby creating a digital space where negotiation and conflict, as well as expert and public knowledge, co-exist.

The online podcast workshop was developed as part of the research project INTERPART—Intercultural Spaces of Participation. Drawing on the tradition of real-world labs and their transformative, transdisciplinary, and participatory character (Schäpke et al., 2018; Wanner et al., 2018), the goal of the three-year project was to investigate what constitutes intercultural spaces of participation, what access barriers for intercultural spaces exist, and how institutional change can be initiated for more inclusive participation practices. Therefore, we conducted public interventions in the German cities of Berlin and Wiesbaden by developing and testing hybrid and digital participation formats to promote interculture in participation and improve participation in urban development (Huning et al., 2021). In the field of urban planning and design, intercultural participation goes beyond interactions between homogenous ethnic communities and also targets the situational and changeable everyday cultures of various social milieus (Terkessidis, 2018).

As one of the interventions during the three years project, the online podcast workshop is a digital participation format conducted eight times. In an iterative process, the workshop design and its outcome were reflected by the participants from civil society and further developed after every podcast episode until we reached the five-step approach presented in this article. Due to this research procedure, we only discuss the results of one podcast workshop from Wiesbaden, which has been achieved with the five-step workshop design.

After introducing our point of view on the separation between expert and public knowledge in planning and co-creation, this article gives an overview of ABR methods in lab approaches, urban planning, and design research. It follows an explanation of storytelling as an approach to realise intercultural participation on neighbourhood scale. The methodology section describes the design of the online podcast workshop and its integration in the INTERPART real-world labs. In our findings, we present the results of the podcast workshop we conducted in Wiesbaden and reflect on how co-creation via storytelling enhances communicative and agonistic ways of dealing with intercultural participation.

2. Expert vs. Public Knowledge in Planning and Co-Creation

The role of planners as experts and producers of objective scientific knowledge has been criticised by communicative planning (Healey, 1992, 1997; Innes, 1995). City dwellers with their specific local public knowledge wanted to participate in urban planning, shape their neighbourhoods themselves, and realise a call for democratic participation in planning. Through negotiations and joint consensual decision-making between experts and the public realm, communicative planning tries to stimulate this democratic endeavour with caution, because it never represented a claim to complete validity (Habermas, 1984).

Later on, communicative planning was criticised by agonistic planning, which argued that it is precisely this pursuit of consensus that undermines democratic participation because social power relations and conflicts within negotiation and knowledge production are not sufficiently considered and are still dominated by experts. The agonistic critique argues that this state of the post-political hinders conflict and societal transformation and reproduces hegemonic knowledge that leads to the structural stabilisation of neoliberal policies in urban spaces (Hillier, 2003; Swyngedouw, 2011).

On the contrary, agonistic planning has been seen as an approach toward re-introducing democratic momentum through conflict. Public knowledge especially obtains the possibility to constitute and articulate itself in a model of adversarial dialogue (Mouffe, 2005) with planners and experts, e.g., in participation of marginalised voices in neighbourhood development.

The outlined dualism between communicative and agonistic planning approaches, as well as between public and expert knowledge, has been criticised for lacking differentiation and practicality in planning (Gualini, 2015; Innes & Booher, 2004; Özdemir, 2019). Following Özdemir (2019), we argue that also in co-creative research practice, a clear separation between agonistic and communicative approaches is inappropriate because both can co-exist in the same participation process. We show how the online podcast workshop combines both communicative and agonistic moments to enable co-creation. Thereby, we focus on how it has dealt with the position of conflict (in a communicative or agonistic way), at which stage of the workshop conflict occurs, and which role the INTERPART researchers as experts take.

3. Arts-Based Research, Podcasts, and Storytelling

3.1. The Podcast as an Arts-Based Method Within Lab Approaches

ABR has been linked to transdisciplinary and transformative qualitative inquiry since its introduction in the 1990s, especially through the integration of action-oriented and politically situated perspectives (Chilton & Leavy, 2014; Finley, 2008). A general definition of ABR provided by McNiff (2008) emphasises the systematic use of artistic processes as a way of understanding and examining experience by researchers and participants. Through the use of visual, performing, literary, sound, or new media arts, ABR aims at creating participation and collaboration with

people or communities in a research process beyond academia or the boundaries of distinct disciplines.

In doing so, ABR aligns with a transformative way of socially engaged knowledge production to relocate inquiry at the personal, local, and everyday level and to initiate change on different scales—for participants and communities themselves, or society as a whole (Finley, 2008; Wang et al., 2017). The core characteristics of the application of ABR are the collaborative collection of data using artistic methods or the communication, translation, and dissemination of results of a research project (Coemans & Hannes, 2017). Its ability to elicit emotions, individual or collective reflection, and a variety of dynamic power structures makes ABR methods especially useful to reach marginalised people (Ward & Shortt, 2020). ABR shares this objective with participatory action research (Tolia-Kelly, 2007). The common transformative and transdisciplinary foundation between ABR and experimental research infrastructures like real-world labs (Schäpke et al., 2018) makes it useful to take a closer look at the application of ABR methods in the field of lab approaches. Therefore, we want to give a brief overview of ABR methods used in lab approaches which contribute to research and practice in urban planning and design. This literature review serves to contextualise our research experience with the podcast workshop as an auditive ABR approach to participation and neighbourhood development.

Visual ABR methods like photo elicitation have especially been used in lab research (Kück, 2020; Sahakian et al., 2021). Due to the long tradition of mapping approaches in design, geography, and planning, real-world labs (Räuchle & Schmiz, 2020) also use participatory mapping as a visual ABR method. Performative ABR approaches in real-world labs evolved recently (Ziehl, 2021), but are still an exception within the canon of methods. In addition, the use of diaries became a method to elicit stories and feelings in lab research (Korsnes et al., 2018). When it comes to storytelling approaches in general, lab approaches contributed to their application in empirical fieldwork (Allan et al., 2018; Seydel et al., 2021). Audio-based methods, especially the use of podcasts, have been a relatively new approach to ABR co-creation and only a few publications using podcasts in labs have inspired the creation of our podcast workshop (Allan et al., 2018).

3.2. Podcasts in Urban Planning and Design Research

Recently, podcasts have become research tools in urban planning and have gone beyond communicating and discussing academic research results or hosting public debates (Rogers & Herbert, 2020). "The podcast-as-method" (Kinkaid et al., 2020) aims to create a space of affective engagement between diverse voices, spoken words, and emotions of researchers and participants. This helps the listeners of the podcast, the speakers, and recorders to encounter opinions and results differently than with text (Kinkaid et al., 2020). The podcast as a collaborative approach relies not only on the recordings but is influenced by critical reflection and comments of the co-creators before and after the production to enrich the curation of the final audio output (Rogers et al., 2020). In this sense, a collaborative podcast production is a methodological endeavour which is based on digital storytelling and interlinks different textual, visual, and audible ways of collecting data (Gallagher & Prior, 2014). Even though technical skills in podcast production limit access to this medium, podcasting is political, not only in the informative output but also in its process of production. In the tradition of community radio, podcasts serve to create a local democratic public sphere, because content can be distributed without being too dependent on journalistic gatekeepers (Rogers & Herbert, 2020). This presents an opportunity for voices that are not sufficiently represented in local public discourse on planning and urban development to become recognised and challenge marginalisation. On the contrary, the growth of the podcast as a medium has led to the increased distribution of questionable content and fake news, which did not compete with scientific standards of comprehensible knowledge production. This is important to consider when using podcasts in general, and also in urban planning and design research.

Additionally, in design research, especially in participatory design, where researchers and practitioners gather around issues of collaborative design, auditive and audiovisual approaches and techniques (Raijmakers et al., 2006) combine practices of making with research practices. Participatory design engages more and more with public issues and everyday life (Björgvinsson et al., 2012). When working with and for communities, participatory design and research aim to design ways and infrastructures that enable the community to (a) co-create their own narrative-based interpretations and (b) appropriate and further develop technological means for self-organisation—as a "design after design" approach (Ehn, 2008, p. 92). This approach takes into consideration the ongoing process of adapting things and infrastructures to the needs of the community even after the design research project ended. Such infrastructures foster a process in which ideas, needs, and values are collaboratively negotiated. Developing "enabling systems" (Manzini, 2007, p. 240) as, for example, media catalysts for media empowerment means focusing on enhancing interaction and exchange around the issues and needs of the community while implementing them as research tools.

3.3. Storytelling in Planning and Design Research

When conceptualising and implementing the podcast workshops, the basic ideas of storytelling proved to be very useful. Storytelling can be related to urban planning in several ways. Since plans shape the intended use of the city or a specific place, they always tell a story

about the future (Throgmorton, 1992; van Hulst, 2012): What kinds of buildings will be at the site? What will they look like? What kind of people will use the place and what exactly will they do there? Plans anticipate these visions—at least implicitly—and illustrate them, e.g., as textual descriptions or drawings. A second, and for this article even more relevant connection between storytelling and urban development refers to a different group of narrators and can also be used as a method in planning: The stories that residents tell about a city or a neighbourhood reveal how they use the space, what images they associate with it, and how they evaluate the space (Sandercock, 2003). Storytelling is a socio-cultural practice (Ricoeur, 1984) and residents' everyday narrations can be valuable sources in research contexts and planning practice. Furthermore, narrative methods are very suitable in participation processes because they are low-threshold approaches to collecting information—especially for people who are more difficult to reach through other methods. Hebert (2020, pp. 275–276) explains that "stories are more inclusive than plans: They can invite an unlimited number of participants to contribute to a collective fiction, rather than just taking note of seemingly finished drafts from experts."

Stories from everyday life are not static but are subject to change with time and context. What and how a story is told depends, among other things, on the listener—a crucial effect the podcast takes up. The listener—even if only imagined—influences the framework in which the narrator sets the story and which key message they convey, either intentionally or unconsciously (Halbwachs, 2008). The narrator also impacts the level of detail in the narrative because they need to convey just the right amount of information for the dialogue partner to understand the story. In this way, the narrative situation becomes a process of negotiation between the participants. Urban and regional planning picked out the benefits of storytelling a few years ago and are now increasingly using these formats as a creative and low-threshold method, like storytelling salons, narrative blogs, storytelling walks—and podcasts (Seydel et al., 2021).

In design research, narrative research takes stories as a basis for data collection and analysis (Golsteijn & Wright, 2013). Narrative storytelling is therefore an effective means of understanding the complex individual experience (Müller, 2018). This research modality also facilitates knowledge translation and transfer (Wright & McCarthy, 2010). Especially as a method in design ethnography, narrative storytelling makes latent knowledge that is not immediately visible or graspable tangible, newly accessed and combined in the process of inquiry and co-creation (Müller, 2018). Narrative storytelling in group discussions such as a podcast aims to develop its own narrative dynamics, in an exchange with two or more people. From a sociological perspective, group discussions are "communicative constructions of reality" (Reichertz, 2013, p. 8).

4. Methodology

4.1. The Research Framework: Real-World Labs

Within the INTERPART project, real-world labs have been established as research infrastructures for transdisciplinary and participatory research (Schäpke et al., 2018).

The central characteristic of real-world labs is their experimental character, whereby temporary changes are tested in defined areas of everyday life (Wanner et al., 2018). Experimental interventions are the sites where collaborative knowledge production in real-world labs takes place (Beecroft et al., 2018). The experimental interventions engage stakeholders from different fields, such as researchers, designers, civil society initiatives, community organisers, and administrative employees. In the interventions, methods of co-creation like various storytelling settings, an interactive multilingual installation (Herlo et al., 2021), a board game, and the podcast workshop have been developed and applied—always considering the importance of the local context by developing spaces of encounter and collaboration that were rooted in the everyday life of those partaking in the inquiry (Wanner et al., 2018).

The participatory character of real-world labs gives rise to new possibilities for collaborative problem identification and subsequent action. Real-world labs are an approach that focuses on social change in real-world contexts (Schäpke et al., 2018). Committed researchers and practice partners come together, driven by a common topic, and limited by time and place. They address problems that directly affect coexistence in social, ecological, or political terms (Bergmann et al., 2021) while linking theoretical-scientific knowledge and experiential knowledge.

Within the INTERPART interventions, storytelling played a central role: Narrative spaces were designed as physical spaces for encounters that invited participants to talk and reflect about living together in the neighbourhood. As a further development of narrative formats, a podcast was finally planned to be co-created in a workshop setting in the neighbourhood. The podcast was developed to focus on a moderated dialogue between participants from local civil society initiatives and intermediary actors, like community organisers. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the podcast workshop became an online podcast workshop that was developed iteratively in several steps using digital storytelling.

4.2. The Workshop Design

The first step was to invite participants from the neighbourhood, like civil society initiatives and community organisers that were already involved in the research project INTERPART and would like to discuss specific topics along with our research questions. After forming groups of two participants for each episode, INTERPART produced a series of eight episodes with participants

from different backgrounds as community managers, residents, refugees, or administrative employees.

The process was divided into five steps (see Figure 1):

- A preliminary discussion with the participants of each episode, usually two participants together with one or two researchers (two hours on Zoom), to understand the podcast format and to find out together what exactly interests the participants with regards to the research questions, what concerns and moves them personally, and what they would like to talk about.
- A reflection of the topics discussed in the preliminary talk, as well as preparing and sending out a guide for the specific podcast.
- A web-based recording session, using the web tool Zencastr, of two hours, with two participants and one or two researchers.
- Post-production by the researchers, adding moderation, a follow-up interview with the participant, and—after approval by the participants—publishing with the castbox.fm platform.
- An online focus group discussion with the discussion participants, as well as neighbourhood management and municipality officials. In the focus group, the podcast served as a participatory and narrative format to reflect on situated knowledge of participatory practices.

The aim of the online podcast workshops was to co-create knowledge through the podcast as a collaborative qualitative data collection method and therefore as an inclusive research tool that allows communication and knowledge production at eye level. In this way, a place for exchange and reflection was created in the digital space. The conversations were intended to foster further discussion on the topic of intercultural participation to enable different stakeholders like civil society actors, community organisers, or administrative employees to elicit stories bridging different socio-cultural milieus—even beyond the end of the project. The core of each of the eight podcast episodes was a conversation between two participants from the mentioned stakeholder groups facilitated by two researchers.

The five-step workshop design was developed iteratively and adapted after each episode, incorporating feedback from participants to continuously improve the workshop. In the described five-step-design, the podcast workshop was therefore applied only once for a podcast episode staged in Wiesbaden's neighbourhood Biebrich, which serves as a single case study. To elicit stories on intercultural participation and enhance inclusive neighbourhood development, we conducted the online podcast workshops with participants already known from our INTERPART real-world lab in Wiesbaden-Biebrich. Biebrich is a working-class neighbourhood located at the inner-city periphery, characterised by labour migration and a long history of taking part in federally funded participation projects for urban renewal. The focus on one case study influenced our results because two civil society actors from very different fields observed participation and neighbourhood development—one from the

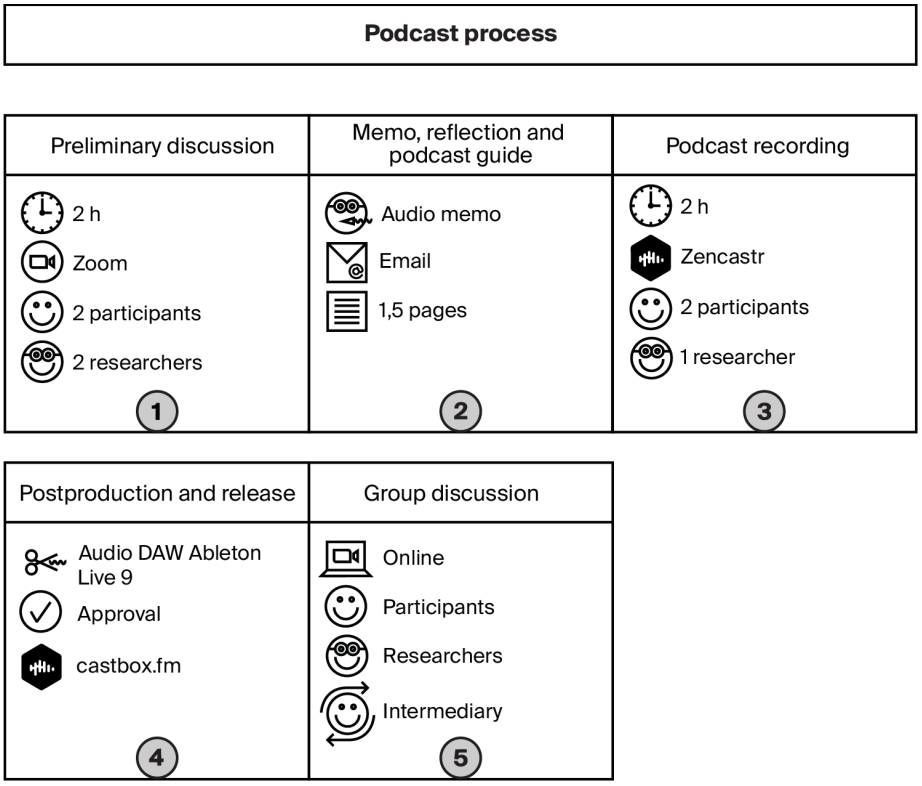

Figure 1. Podcast process. Illustration by Zeynep Keskin. Source: Autor*innen-Kollektiv INTERPART (2021).

field of youth work and the other from an initiative that explicitly deals with urban development. Other podcast episodes in which, for example, only community organisers talked to each other, focused more on professional experiences with concrete participation formats.

Existing literature using podcasts as qualitative inquiry discusses their power concerning knowledge production of aspects of place and its transmission (Kinkaid et al., 2020; Scriven, 2022). Detailed ethnographic approaches to analysing podcasts are just emerging (Lundström & Lundström, 2021), which is why we based our analysis of the podcast workshop on the methodology of triangulation, influenced by research on public radio (Pompeii, 2015). To demonstrate how the co-creation of knowledge on intercultural participation within the online podcast workshop can be exercised, we analysed recordings, transcripts of podcast recordings, and participant observation of the podcast workshop, using grounded theory coding (Charmaz, 2006). The triangulation of different data sources and between methods enriched the quality of knowledge (Denzin, 2009; Flick, 2011). A contiguous approach of open and selective coding of textual and audio representations helped us to identify codes that depict divergent understandings of intercultural participation or commented on inclusive neighbourhood development. The coding helped to categorise stories that have been highlighted in the curating process, concerning conciseness of the statement, aesthetic of language, and sound quality.

The podcast workshop as a research tool was important on three main levels: first, the process of dialogue and co-creation of knowledge, where participants discussed intensively but also became familiar with such a tool for their community-driven purposes; second, the curatorial and post-production process—including decisions about representation strategies, emphasis on specific statements, and dramaturgical decisions; third, the podcast and workshop as a transfer format, making the discussion available for the general public.

5. The Online Podcasts Workshop

5.1. The Podcast Episode Wiesbaden-Biebrich

The INTERPART project team produced eight podcast episodes in which researchers and participants engaged in dialogue on shared topics of neighbourhood development that were important to both of them but on which they had different perspectives. The participants addressed the following topics, which evolved from all eight podcast workshops:

- Places of encounter in the neighbourhood and how they can be strengthened through conscious design;
- The arrival of new residents;
- Communication, which can promote but also prevent exchange;
- The importance of language for conflict resolution and a sense of belonging;
- The role of intermediaries, mediators, and translators in processes of arrival but also participation;
- The clash of (supposed) opposites and the problem of attributing needs or characteristics to certain people.

These topics evolved from all podcast workshops conducted.

The following overview of the 45-minute podcast episode we analyse sheds light on the issues raised, how different perspectives evolved and were negotiated, and how personal attitudes relate to the respective backgrounds and specific knowledge that emerged from them.

The two participants live or work in the same neighbourhood, but they had never met before. Both share a strong attachment to the neighbourhood. Despite similarities, the podcast reveals differences between the two persons, leading to an intensive process of negotiating positions and collective reflection. One person is a co-founder of an initiative that works for the development of the neighbourhood and largely consists of white educated middle-class people with prior knowledge about urban development. The second participant has been working in a local youth centre for a long time with a focus on open youth work. The professional and biographical backgrounds as well as the social references of the participants turn out to be important for the course of the conversation.

The podcast begins with a playful, creative introductory question to learn more about how the two participants perceive the neighbourhood. They are asked to describe the neighbourhood as if it were a person. They both get involved in detail and draw different portraits: on the one hand, the neighbourhood is described as a present, strong woman who has experienced a lot, is empathetic and self-confident, appreciates the (culinary) advantages of the neighbourhood, and likes to communicate with the open-minded residents. The counter-image was a portrait of the neighbourhood as a middle-aged person, with youthful verve, but also traces of age—for example, attractive monuments, but also neglected buildings. Her clothes are conservative and somewhat worn, but every now and then a colourful piece of fabric or a special adornment peek out.

In the next section of the podcast, the person from the citizen initiative contrasts these portraits with the external image of the neighbourhood. She mentions the (perceived) discrepancy between the charming landscape and attractive historic buildings on the one hand and a population structure that is often perceived as problematic on the other. Both women distance themselves from the problematic view and consider it important to focus more on the qualities and potential of the neighbourhood. However, the person from the youth centre to whom a migration experience is often ascribed

in her everyday experience takes up the rather casual mention of this categorisation by her counterpart by questioning and deconstructing it.

The final section of the podcast discusses whether the question of where another person comes from is still allowed to be asked. One dialogue partner is aware of the problematic nature of this question but sees herself as restricted in her sincere interest in other people and their history. In her opinion, the tabooing of this question leads to tense situations instead of personal exchange. Her interlocutor does not consider this to be a fundamental taboo but takes up the emotional level and uses vivid examples of her own and others' experiences to describe when and why this question can lead to individual injuries and social discrimination.

5.2. Communicative and Agonistic Co-Creation for Intercultural Participation

In the following part, we discuss the design of the online podcast workshop as an ABR method and how it contributes to communicative and agonistic co-creation in the field of intercultural participation between researchers and participants (Özdemir, 2019).

The preliminary discussion as one of the first steps in the podcast workshop was designed as a video conference via Zoom. The participants went to separate break-out rooms to answer two questions selected by one of the two moderating INTERPART researchers. After each question, the researcher helped to summarise what was said and translated ideas and often diffuse interests into questions. This "mirroring" served to identify expectations and bring the participants' own positions to the fore, before talking to each other. After the break-out session, the participants and the researcher discussed together which questions should be addressed in the recording session. The position of conflict was articulated in the beginning in an agonistic way, enhanced through the role of the researchers as facilitators and translators who helped to formulate and clarify the participants' own opinions. In the end, negotiations around the right questions for the recording formed a communicative space.

The recording session also took place in an online conference room and was not designed as a live broadcast. We decided on this procedure to balance the different positionalities between researchers and participants in terms of podcast experience and technical skills. Only after the curation and editing of the whole podcast episode could a bigger picture be seen. The participants would then decide for or against a release of the episode. In addition, a carefully edited podcast episode offered the advantage that the central content could be better emphasised and backed up with sound and moderation. For editing and post-production, we used the software Zencastr. The researcher started the conversation by initiating a dialogue between the participants via prepared questions and short, open-ended follow-up questions. The moderation was recorded afterwards, making the position and attitude of the researchers visible in a transparent process of co-creation (Rogers et al., 2020). The participants referred to each other vividly and different stories on the importance of migration in a neighbourhood evolved. Both participants were emotionally involved and very committed to understanding the other's perspective and sharing their personal experiences, feelings, and pains. This illustrates the difficulty of talking about (supposed) intercultural differences in Biebrich, which are often justified by ascribing migration experiences to a person—even though the respective people define themselves by many other and often also shared categories. They agreed that there is an insider/outsider perspective which structures dominant ascriptions of Biebrich. People from outside often state that migrants shape the neighbourhood. The insider's perspective sees this description as under-complex because many people are actually German citizens with parents who migrated. From an insider's perspective, it hardly matters where people come from and whether they have migrated, but outsiders still see the migrant-native divide as natural and meaningful. The second step of the podcast workshop built an agonistic space. The participants thought critically about their own position and tried to re-evaluate it. The researchers, as experts, delivered the technical support for the recording. Only the moderation added later can be interpreted as a communicative approach because it framed the argumentation subsequently.

The recording session was followed by an off-the-record discussion among participants and researchers. The participants developed new, broader arguments on intercultural participation, not directly linked to the questions in the recording. However, this content was not included in the podcast but led to an atmosphere of greater serenity and openness on the part of the participants. The character of the discussion was dominated by negotiation to temporarily solve conflicts. Therefore we assigned it to the communicative approach. In an online follow-up conversation after the recording session, the two researchers reflected on improvements in the workshop design and identified consensual and conflictual content. They also discussed possibilities concerning how to order and frame the statements of the participants in the moderation added afterwards. This curatorial process was mainly in the hands of the researchers and participants only decided at the end if and why they agree on the chosen stories, sounds, and how they had been arranged. The researchers decided, for example, how to frame one statement of the participant from the white middle-class neighbourhood initiative, who has clear difficulties with being told generally not to ask people where they come from. The researchers decided against a direct intervention, e.g., by saying "stop, that can't be asked without offending someone" and then directly addressing racist tensions the question might contain. The researchers rather focused on

awareness of the impact of different positionalities in the social field of the neighbourhood and how hurtful confronting questions with an othering tone can be for those affected by racism. In addition to conflicting content, the researchers also highlighted the importance of reflection and dialogue in co-creation, which must be respectful to hear the needs of marginalised voices. The follow-up conversation became a space of reflection where decisions were made to exercise the transformative power of the podcast workshop in favour of co-creating narratives for and with marginalised voices (Ward & Shortt, 2020). Other formal decisions in the co-creation process that supported the transformative nature of the research were a larger speaking role for the participant from the youth centre and requesting her permission before releasing the recording at first, including the subsequently added moderation. The online follow-up conversation was primarily shaped by a communicative approach to resolve the conflict around the decision to structure the podcast episode in favour of racially marginalised voices. Also, the whole expert-driven process of curating, producing, and delivering the final cut of the episode enclosed conflict.

The last part of the podcast workshop was a focus group discussion via Zoom with all participants from Biebrich who contributed to one of the eight podcast episodes. It provided an opportunity for all participants to give feedback and clarify their statements after the podcast episodes had been finalised. The participant from the youth centre emphasised who exactly performs othering, people who are aware that they are speaking from a position of power and who are rarely ignorant or lack reflection. The moderators articulated what they had felt and discussed in the follow-up conversation on their own, and participants had the chance to reply. The person from the white middle-class neighbourhood initiative reflected that the question of origin may interest her because ethnocultural diversity is not perceived as normal in her everyday life, especially at work. She also recognised the importance of language as a positively connoted skill in the youth centre, which dominates over the categorisation by origin. The focus group helped to validate or sharpen results on intercultural participation, and the group discussed the extent to which the researchers' interpretations seemed consistent to them. In the last step of the podcast workshop, communicative and agonistic characteristics also co-exist. After the different podcast episodes had been released, participants had again conflicting arguments and engaged critically with each other. Negotiations to resolve conflict only occurred in the examination of the researchers' interpretations. In general, the agonistic approach dominated in the first steps of the podcast workshop before and during recording, but also after the release. Communicative approaches led the process of co-creation after the recording, when technical and curatorial support was needed, and when the decision on publication was pending.

Empathic communication was central to the podcast workshop: Attentive listening made it possible to give space to emotions and personal experiences (Kinkaid et al., 2020). Different positions of conflict and the co-existence of agonistic and communicative approaches make the process of co-creation successful. This is especially important where narratives of intercultural participation evolve so that a dialogue between different positions can emerge. It was not just the outcome that was important about the podcast, i.e., the individual episodes that were published online. Rather, it was the entire process from initial contact through the validating focus group that turned the podcast workshop into a narrative space, where reflection on intercultural participation could happen through personal stories. Even with the publication of the audio files, the process is not complete: As a digital and disseminable product, the podcast enables experiences and insights from the process of co-creation to be shared online with other listeners.

For the participants, the podcasts can be used for the self-presentation of their work as civil society actors, and it can be a foundation for a long-term exchange in neighbourhood initiatives to open up new fields of work (Ehn, 2008). The podcast also serves as a source of information for fellow residents, or as a medium to address policymakers and local authorities.

The reach of the collaboratively developed podcast workshop—as a digital storytelling approach—also extends beyond the original group of researchers and participants who take part in a podcast episode. In the wider context of the INTERPART project, administrative employees from Wiesbaden and Berlin have been interested in digital storytelling as a new approach to participation. During the Covid-19 pandemic, it became one of the few narrative participation approaches which could be exercised without violating contact restrictions. They gave feedback on the changing podcast workshop design and the results the podcast conveyed concerning intercultural participation. Thus, they enrich the transdisciplinary character of the whole podcast workshop, which included researchers from academia, participants from civil society initiatives, and local administrations.

6. Conclusion

In every podcast episode, only a small amount of the recorded material from the online workshop made it to the final cut, even though it held good content. That does not have to be disadvantageous, but it shows that there are different levels which influence podcast co-creation, and which must be considered in the podcast workshop as an auditive ABR method. It is not only content that is important, but also the quality of the spoken word and the creative compilation of a podcast, or how it has been produced, with whom, and for what purpose. In our work, the process, transfer, and curatorial level have been influential in using the online podcast workshop as

an appropriate method to elicit digital co-creation and intercultural participation.

The workshop as a process combines online co-creation with storytelling to enable public participation during pandemic times when in-person exchange became difficult. The stories in the podcast episodes made different and conflicting voices of a neighbourhood visible and thereby contributed to reflection on intercultural participation between people with diverse everyday lives. We showed how co-creation through our online podcast workshop can be enabled with agonistic (Hillier, 2003; Yamamoto, 2018) as well as communicative approaches (Healey, 1997; Innes & Booher, 2004) and that it is difficult and often not feasible to divide them in an intercultural participation process in neighbourhood development. This goes hand in hand with the fact that researchers, as experts and participants, assume both agonistic and communicative positions in co-creation (Özdemir, 2019).

The finished podcast episode helps to transfer and disseminate participation results through the strength of digital auditive media: Podcasts are easy to listen to and easy to share. Content is transferred by different voices and can refer to different personal connections towards the content. Therefore, podcasts operate as research tools and as community-building formats (Ehn, 2008). Participants can adapt the concept of the online podcast workshop or podcast series in general to co-create new content.

The curatorial level of the online podcast workshop highlights the design quality of a podcast episode as an auditive product, but also the normative interventions in content creation. Moderation helps to frame complex results, can produce communicative or agonistic narrative spaces, and translates or summarises content to make it accessible for potential listeners.

As our example from Biebrich shows, a podcast can reflect "situated knowledge" (Haraway, 1988) in co-creation by interventions through moderation and post-production. With the selection of the material and the framing by the moderation, we tried to make power asymmetries visible, e.g., by highlighting awareness and the problems of othering, instead of simply putting two positions side by side without comment. This supported a cautious intervention in favour of one participant, who has been marginalised in the particular situation of the recording session. The framing through moderation created an agonistic space for dialogue during the podcast workshop and enhanced the critical reflection of privileged white middle-class positions to re-evaluate another understanding of racial discrimination.

The execution of the normative curatorial role was handled with great care and was respectful towards all participants who opened up to us during the workshops. The shared responsibility and decision-making on questions, conflicts, and especially the release of the final cut of the podcasts demonstrates this. Nevertheless, the curatorial work of designing a podcast episode, the process of co-creation, and the knowledge transfer influence each other and have to be considered equally.

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Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflict of interests.

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Article

From Narrative Objects to Poetic Practices: On Figurative Modes of Urbanism

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Abstract
In the context of increased interest in literary methods for spatial design, this article argues for a reconsideration of narrative methods for urban planning. It holds that when narrative is taken not as a reified object but as an active mode, in which a strategy for organizing the phenomenal world allows for form to be created from and within the profusion of signs, the importance of heterogeneous non-narrative elements comes into full force, in particular around figurative or metaphorical language, even or especially within the narrative frame. Drawing on work from Bernardo Secchi and Paola Viganò on and around the "porous city" figure and the Greater Paris international consultations, the article makes a case for a narrative of poetic practices. By identifying the polysemic agency of the poetic function, the territorial figure becomes not a comparison between two terms, but a complex linking of similarities in multiple dissimilar states, creating an effect of rapprochement with new possible futures.

Keywords
figurative language; metaphor; mode; narrative; poetics; urbanism

Issue
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1. Introduction

Over the last decade, calls for literary methods in spatial design (Havik, 2014) have brought together a diverse group of practitioners, scholars, artists, stakeholders, and community members seeking fresh approaches to planning and renewed understandings of urban situations. In many cases, the justifications for this interest have been as diverse as the parties involved, ranging from concerns for a more adequate representation of the qualitative dimension of urban space to a pursuit of social justice made by breaking with conventional top-down planning modes. The full range of activities around literary practices in design could be characterized in multiple ways: as reactions against data-driven and rationalist planning methods, as a necessary revitalization through encounters with other disciplines, or as still another twitch in the long tail of post-modern thought around the collapse of grand narratives. All of these characterizations may be equally true, but in the conscious return to the writing of urban space, I am reminded of Pérez-Gómez (2016, p. 201), locating the problem with conventional modes of architectural representation not in their remoteness from real situations, but "in the nature of their disconnect from language" and so from the linguistic imagination.

Renewed attention to the linguistic character of spatiality has concentrated particularly on narrative and has been manifest in new publications, such as the *WritingPlace* academic journal, and new research activities, such as found in the COST Action CA18126 Writing Urban Places. The latter argues for "the value of local urban narratives—stories rich in information regarding citizens' socio-spatial practices, perceptions and expectations" (COST Association, 2018) and can be situated within broader trends seeking to create meaning, empower communities, and provide tools for local stakeholders to (re)appropriate the built environment through creative and alternative practices (Awan et al., 2011; Carrière & Schalliol, 2021; Courage & McKeown, 2019),

but with a focus on narrative strategies and the peculiar affordances of storytelling in design contexts. Overall, we can see in these recent developments a centering of narration that attempts to take into account everything from narrative practices for critical knowledge production (Rendell, 2010), to the transformative role of narrative for reimagining urban situations (Niculae et al., 2021), with a strong emphasis on research and significant outstanding questions in terms of its pertinence in operational planning modes.

How exactly does narrative function in relation to planning to make meaning or produce knowledge from, within, or of the built environment? What is the relationship between how narrative represents urban dynamics and how it invents them? By what processes do narrative practices affect spatial change, and to what extent? What aspects of a narrative allow it to empower a community, rather than fall prey to appropriation?

In this article, I intend to avoid essentialist arguments about the nature of narrative to look rather at how planners engage it as a mode of comprehension and production, in senses both implicit and explicit. The aim is to see how narrative, as conceived and/or embodied in theory and practice by urbanist figures such as Bernardo Secchi (Milan, 1934–2014) and Paola Viganò (Sondrio, 1961–) provides a specifically strategic ordering of the phenomenal field across temporal scales. I hypothesize that a reading of these planners that understands narrative as primarily modal and strategic will reveal the character of such practices to be neutral in themselves, as their effective value is deeply dependent on how the practices deploy non-narrative elements. Notably, I would like to argue for a poetics of narrative practice in planning, in the sense that the production of new urbanities can be conditioned by the *poiesis* embedded and operating within narrative structures. The hope is that such a reading will affirm contemporary interest in narrative methods for urban planning while opening up a reflection on the critical value of the poetic practices in the production of future situations, all while maintaining awareness of certain tendencies within the narrative mode toward totalizing positions.

2. Reading Form in a Profusion of Signs: From Narrative Objects to Narrative Modes

In a collaboration that began in the academic context of the Istituto Universitario di Architettura di Venezia in the 1980s and expanded into practice with the founding of an architecture and urbanism agency Studio, in 1990, Secchi and Viganò developed interscalar and interdisciplinary approaches to design that have impacted both our lived narratives of urban spaces and the professional narratives of urbanist practice. In terms of narrative methods, their work on the International Consultations for Greater Paris is of particular interest, including retellings of lived experiences by inhabitants in comic book or storyboard forms, the writing of "micro-stories of the future" for new urban development strategies, and the elaboration of broad territorial development scenarios for a "post-Kyoto" Parisian metropolis (Secchi & Viganò, 2011, pp. 38–39, 2013, pp. 46–47). These explicit instances fit an understanding of narrative methods for which I will give a working definition as strategies for spatial intervention that make principal use of the logical structures of narrative, as well as the particular affordances of story forms as a means of knowledge and design production. In Secchi and Viganò's work, these methods help give accounts of territories as they exist and have been planned and practiced, while also contributing toward projections into possible futures. At the same time, it is critical to situate these explicit practices within a broader comprehension of narrative, developed in theoretical writings and carried into practice, so as to see the full extent of the narrative mode in their work.

When Secchi (2000/2011, p. 18) writes that urbanist practice has almost always acquired meaning from within a narrative, his phrase carries a compound sense: One can understand how professional narratives position a practitioner's methods in contrast to other planning approaches, but also how a territorial narrative as told by practice is mean-making for both the territory and the practice itself. As a theoretician, Secchi tells a compelling story of the history of 20th-century urbanism and the urbanist-cum-investigator, scenario writer, communicator, and mediator—It seems almost inevitable that he simultaneously defines his practice, explicitly and implicitly, as deeply narrative.

Central to Secchi's understanding of the role of narrative in urbanism is his conception of the built environment as it is discovered by the urbanist. He describes how the majority of the earth's surface is marked by a multiplicity and a plurality of signs intentionally printed by those who preceded us (Secchi, 2000/2011, p. 13). One can see that what he describes is a profusion of signs, layered in Corboz's (2001) conception of the territorial palimpsest, and from which the urbanist must draw in order to craft a persuasive story for the continuous and conscientious modification of the state of the territory and the city (Secchi, 2000/2011, p. 15). This layered mass of remnant signs is an image of abundance, but also one of chaos and disorder, at least up until the practicing urbanist finds a means to trace a new line of development in or for the territory. The urbanist narrative, in Secchi's telling, would be made *from*, *within*, and gazing *beyond* the mass of signs toward a new future situation; it is an act of organization, of ordering.

Since the 1970s, the debate in literary theory and the humanities over what narrative is, how it is coincident or not with story, which objects hold narrativity, and how narrative representations can be said to represent reality or truth values has provided countless attempts at defining the narrative object. In parallel, devotees to the narrative cause have argued that storytelling is a quintessentially *human* act (Gottschall, 2012) and in some cases even can be seen as an evolutionary adaptation (Boyd,

2009; Gottschall & Wilson, 2005). Across these attempts to grapple with narrative, with a few rare exceptions (Fludernik, 1996), we find notions of event, sequence, and causality. Even theoretical work attempting to question the primacy of coherence in narrative ends up re-presenting it in a "latent" form, re-emerging in phases of interpretation (Freeman, 2010, pp. 167, 180).

In the case of urban planning, is not necessary to essentialize the causal sequence of narrative in order to consider its strategic value. As Sartwell (2000, p. 9) describes it, the narrative "strategy for organization" would be one that "gives form, or displays form, or imposes form." In a pointed critique of the dominance of narrative in contemporary thought and scholarship, Sartwell argues that a human desire to pursue meaning in coherence, as a sort of coping mechanism for reality, leads narrative thinkers to impose formal linguistic unity on what he qualifies as a predominantly nonverbal reality. Not only critics of story, though, but also leading scholars reference a particularly *strategic* aspect of the narrative act. Fludernik's (2009, p. 2) introduction to narratology explains that "narratives are based on cause-and-effect relationships" which are "applied to sequences of events." Though she also offers accounts of narrative theories that place less importance on sequentiality, Fludernik (2009, p. 2) states, or even admits, that "narrative provides us with a fundamental epistemological structure that helps us to make sense of the confusing diversity and multiplicity of events and to produce explanatory patterns for them." In both cases, in Sartwell's (2000) critique and Fludernik's (2009) introduction, narrative offers strategic tools for sense-making within fields of experience.

Returning to Secchi (2000/2011) and his vision of the urban environment as a profusion of signs left by past generations and (re)discovered by planners, one can see how theoretical arguments for the sense-making function of narrative apply to spatial practice. Secchi and Viganò (2013, pp. 31–37) make use in practice of a wide variety of methods, not limited to narrative practices, to confront, read, and reinterpret the city as an experiential field, and their work on Greater Paris includes no shortage of procedural and mathematical approaches. In certain explicitly narrative exercises, however, the practitioners reveal a tendency towards storytelling that can at first appear simply illustrative and yet suggests a deeper narrative underpinning. In one studio document for the Greater Paris consultation, titled "Social Porosity," Secchi and Viganò's (2013, pp. 38–39) studio presents what first might appear like a mosaic of 12 portraits of local inhabitants, each depicting a brief excerpt from an interview with the subject, with their statements presented in speech bubbles, much like a comic book or storyboard. While laid out in a non-hierarchical form, with no obvious sequence, each portrait first offers up a micro-narrative of its own. In one, a man recounts how the arrival of the metropolitan express line created a physical separation between social classes in the neighborhood; in another, a woman claims an increased concentration of immigrants in the area has taken part in recent years in the displacement of the middle-class; and in another, a man tells of social conflict and shares that a boy had been killed a few years back. Though they can be read individually and in any order, a narrative begins to emerge across the full array: a story of neighborhoods divided by heavy infrastructure, unequal distribution of wealth and services, and the concomitant social tensions. Even with its non-hierarchical layout, Secchi and Viganò's (2013) "social porosity" storyboard draws a shared narrative from the broader field of experience that, while relying on inhabitant's testimonies, revises the standing images of mobility and equality in the French capital. It is worth noting here that Secchi and Viganò do show willingness and effort to include the knowledge, the experiences, and the daily lives of local inhabitants in their work, and that the personal testimony that provides material for the "social porosity" storyboard can be understood as a participative dimension of the work, if not clearly a democratically created and/or co-narrated text, nor taking the forms of a structured approach to co-design (Gaete Cruz et al., in press). At the same time, it begins to suggest how co-authored urban stories might be possible for narrative methods in planning, with multiple voices being represented in a non-linear form.

To pursue the value of shared agency, however, it is critical to understand narrative not as an end product, with a discrete set of attributes, but rather as a mode, whose logical structures sculpt fields of possibility and action. Bal (2017, pp. xx–xxi), in her seminal introduction to narrative theory, writes that "narrative is a cultural attitude…not a genre or object but a cultural mode of expression" and that her theory of narrative "cautions against the reification of modes as things." In so doing, she argues against any intrinsic value for the narrative object—including any sense of the inherent goodness or indelible falsity of story—in order to examine the effect of narrative as enacted and, it is important to note, as interpreted. As such, an authoritarian planning body does not earn benevolence or legitimacy or even efficiency by the simple virtue of making use of narrative in a top-down planning model, but neither does a grassroots collective gain competence solely on the basis of using story forms to share knowledge. In both cases, the narrative mode would carry certain affordances, such as the capacity to synthesize across diverse events, but does not establish an intrinsic value for the products of the methods used. As such, if we set aside a hunt for the attributes of a narrative object in exchange for an understanding of narrative as mode, which is to say as a particular structure for agency, we arrive at a narrative logic in practice, one that organizes the frames through which human beings forge intelligible forms *from* and *within* the wild profusion of reality, and, in the case of planning, in anticipation of possible futures. In this way, my interest is less in *what* story Secchi and Viganò are telling, and more in how their storytelling methods

impact our understanding of the material choreography of the city, conditioning our ability to intervene in situations to come.

As Bal (2017) suggests, such an understanding of narrative as mode would forgo essentializing claims about the pertinence of narrative methods in urban planning. And yet, in a recent study of narrative planning, Ameel (2021, p. 2) reminds us that "narratives that are created, told, and circulated in the context of urban planning eventually turn into the stone, glass, and concrete of the built and lived city; they guide and define the material realities" of the built environment. This idea hinges on "a view of narratives as frames of knowledge that describe reality but that also prescribe how we are able to make sense of reality, and how we are able to frame our possibilities to change the world" (Ameel, 2021, p. 4) The sense-making apparatus employed in the narrative mode conditions our understanding of the built environment, and in this way "narrative is not only descriptive but also prescriptive and normative—it not only reflects back on the world but also shapes the world by guiding the way we speak and think of reality" (Ameel, 2021, p. 26). To consider it another way, narrative may not have an intrinsic value, but the narrative frame operates as a field in which value is at stake, conditioning the space of possible action.

3. Porous City: Describing a Poetics of Narrative Practice

The Greater Paris of today is not porous, Secchi and Viganò (2011) declare in their work on the Greater Paris International Consultations, encountering in their study not just the city of Haussmanian boulevards and radioconcentric development, but also a geography of asymmetrical wealth distribution, a landscape broken by impassable barriers, a city checkered with enclaves, and space dilated by "*terrains vagues*" (Secchi & Viganò, 2011, p. 151). In this confrontation with the territory, the urbanists encounter a rupture between prevalent received imaginaries and their experience of the French capital. This experiential break can be cast as the first event in a story sequence, one in which the urbanists are first readers and then interpreters of the terrain, moving forward under the sign of porosity.

Throughout their work, Secchi and Viganò (2011) make references to textual notions: the *reading* or *description* of the territory, the *interpretation* of its signs, and the *scripting* of future situations. In *The Porous City*, the book covering their contribution to reflection on Greater Paris, they read the city across scales, from the architectural to the territorial, they describe its infrastructural and hydrographic networks, they put it in relation to established and emerging global metropolises, and they set it against the backdrop of the Kyoto Protocol on climate and in the context of socio-political stakes for the city, as understood at the end of the first decade of the 21st century (prior, as it may be, to the peak of the migrant crisis in 2015). This primary act of description establishes a prefigural context for a Greater Paris oriented towards a more socially and ecologically conscious future. These descriptions, accompanied and partially constituted by careful image-based research, set the grounds for work on five prospective scenarios, a projectual position, five strategies to realize that position, and a proposition for a new spatial structure organized in three types of space, notably deploying a strong metropolitan transport structure, connective vegetated space, and hybrid spaces combining biodiversity functions with urban dynamics. The whole concludes with a statement—a confession?—that the book is too impractical to be taken as a project, but that it should be understood instead as a *testimony* to the research undertaken, with testimony itself constituting a particular sort of story (Secchi & Viganò, 2011).

The textual and particularly narrative character of the overall work in *The Porous City* is substantial, but I want to consider the role of extensive but non-exhaustive description. What is description, besides the act of giving a name to what is, a detailing of the existing so that it gains relief against the broader phenomenal field (for a full survey of philosophy of language dealing with description, see Ostertag, 1998)? Viganò (2010/2016, pp. 125–131) makes a claim for the critical role of description in forming a discourse on the territory, despite a range of critiques regarding the inadequacy of any description vis-à-vis the real, with discourse formation underpinning the cognitive possibilities for the spatial project as knowledge producer. Secchi, on the other hand, is not always clear in his conception of the role of description, seeming at points in his career to lambast so-called descriptive urbanisms for their sterility. As Grigorovschi (2016) has shown, however, in the appearance of a false debate between Corboz and Secchi, each respectively defending the role of description and of narration, the latter urbanist was in fact criticizing pretensions of descriptive *objectivity* in contrast to urban narratives which allowed subjective forms of knowledge to find expression. To paraphrase, Secchi was not dismissing the importance of description for transformative urbanism but was dissatisfied with so-called objective approaches that lacked the creative imagination necessary to reveal something new in projectual, prospective visions of the urban (Grigorovschi, 2016, pp. 211–214). In a sense, Secchi was advocating a kind of *creative* description, going beyond a simple mimetic relation to the existing.

Interestingly, Viganò (2010/2016, p. 129) portrays literary description as not narrative but rather rhetorical, which could lead us to think that she saw it more as a style for persuasion, and thus manipulable, rather than as a representation of real situations. It can be argued that a confusion of terms exists around what are often called rhetorical devices when they are employed, for example, in description. I would argue that a device such as a simile is not rhetorical in essential terms but can take

on persuasive functions within the context of a rhetorical mode. To consider a simile rhetorical in the middle of a non-persuasive lyric poem, for example, would be to mistake the importance of the modal frame in which we find any given device. By strict analogy, I would compare this with the case of musical modes, where identical notes perform distinctly different roles in each different mode despite no other discernible difference beyond a framing context. Likewise, description can function in a rhetorical mode but is far from being limited to it.

Despite the seemingly ubiquitous presence of description in various traditions of realist fiction, and the strong presence of recognizably descriptive language across narrative objects, the narrative mode, with its concern for the sequencing of events, does not itself do much to describe. Description behaves rather as a non-narrative interruption in the temporal flow and scale of the story while being embedded in the logical ordering of the narrative text. As Bal (2017, p. 59) points out, the vast majority of embedded material in a narrative text is in fact non-narrative, including descriptions, yes, but also assertions, discussions, asides, and others. She shows how descriptions end up being necessary for narrative—with their qualification of objects, production of motivations, and expression of relations—but precisely in their relative separation from narrative functions (Bal, 2017, pp. 26–27). Since we are not treating narrative as a static object, but rather as an active mode, we are not obliged to essentialize description either. Instead, we can see how description is matter integrated into a seemingly unified story, which itself is rather more a manifold collection of materials arranged in a form which offers intelligibility. When Secchi and Viganò (2011) describe the asymmetrical territory of Greater Paris they encounter in their research for *The Porous City*, their descriptions of urban functions and materials are practical and necessary non-narrative elements deployed strategically in the narrative they write in search of a more socially and ecologically equitable metropolis. It is not the descriptive passages themselves so much as the narrative mode which makes it possible to employ description to these ends.

Such an understanding allows for Ricoeur's (1983/1984) often-quoted qualification of narrative as a "synthesis of the heterogeneous" to function without completely annihilating the elements, materials, or forces at work in the urban narrative. A careful reading of the philosopher's work on narrative could certainly open up nuanced understandings of how disparate elements participate in the story, but a great many interpretations and appropriations of Ricoeur's work tend towards pulverizing any notion of differentiation. Lussault, for example, declares that within and through the plot, the intrinsic heterogeneity of the world of phenomena with which the author is confronted is overcome, because these phenomena are classified, hierarchized, qualified, and integrated in the globalizing and finalizing order of the narrative (Lussault, 2013, p. 844). Lussault's sense of narrative, while not strictly falling outside the field of possibility, especially in the age of the contemporary storytelling industrial complex, is more a warning against oppressive practices than it is a tool for spatial invention.

Short of outright oppression, a fraught field of possibility is produced through the methods Secchi and Viganò employ in their work on Greater Paris, principally through the synthetic behavior of narrative. Much as with the "social porosity" storyboard discussed above, narrative strategies do tend towards a synthesis of multiple viewpoints into something resembling a coherent storyline, in this case, a series of interviews coalescing around the story of a city divided by heavy infrastructure and uneven distribution of resources. Perhaps the most totalizing narratives of *The Porous City*, however, arise precisely in the moments that, at first blush, appear to be just rhetorical, or *merely* descriptive, when Secchi and Viganò—in giving an account of the socio-spatial realities of the metropolis—tell a new story of Paris, in terms of what it has been, how it has been understood, where it might be heading, and the futures they propose as being among the most desirable. As can be seen in the presentation of their territorial strategies, Secchi and Viganò offer (re)qualifications of Greater Paris that sculpt a futural narrative for planning. In their strategy for a biodiverse approach to porosity, for example, they describe the parks, forests, and natural spaces of Greater Paris as monuments, reservoirs of biomass, and critical (infra)structural features of the territorial landscape to be reconnected in a continuous network of biodiversity (Secchi & Viganò, 2013, pp. 212–220). With the highest percentage of impermeable ground surfaces and highest built density in the country, the French capital is most often narrated for its architectural character and its mineral aspects, with the native flora and geological landscape overlooked or undervalued. The qualification of the critical importance of landscape features contemporaneous with the study, as well as in the projected strategy, provides a particular re-valuation that changes not only our imaginary of Greater Paris but also the grounds for agency in planning. In many ways, this can appear liberatory, particularly in how *The Porous City* narrative allows Secchi and Viganò (2013) to recast Paris as a site for increased biodiversity, where new social equity can arise from an isotropic redesign of the transport system, where new attitudes toward living with water can mitigate the deleterious consequences of climate change, and where old housing stock can be repurposed for an energy-efficient future.

At the same time, the synthetic function of narrative presents problems that cannot be easily dismissed by the urbanist as narrator. If the city remains a profusion of signs, verbal and otherwise, the city narrated by even the most gifted and sensitive practitioner will remain one that is focalized through an individual perspective. When Secchi and Viganò (2013, p. 245) argue for a Greater Paris of interlocking transport networks of differentiated speeds and local insertion—a city of

different but articulated idiorhythms—they are telling a story that still claims the authoritative position of the specialist, commissioned by an organ of the French state in this case, and which synthesizes a broad array of points of view through the filter of the adopted planning model, along with other affective conditions. In other words, the multiplicity of Greater Paris is always consolidated into Secchi and Viganò's voice (itself a synthesis of their collaboration together, along with their colleagues and students) and takes on a hierarchical aspect. And yet, even resting as it does on learned authority, and frequently hinging on declarative statements, the narratives told by Secchi and Viganò are as easily appropriable as any other (Mongin, 2013). The logic of the narrative mode, by synthetizing phenomena through a nuanced but unified perspective occupied by Secchi and Viganò, lends itself here to reappropriation and reuse.

This is partially a problem of embodiment, in that deliberately synthetic narratives tend towards totalizing and universalist positions, which are not a-contextual but far less situated than, for example, a personal account of spatial practice. When Secchi and Viganò (2013, p. 187) declare, for example, that "Paris is a floodable city. Everyone remembers the famous flood of 1910; but one often forgets that there was in the past other important floods in 1924, 1945, 1955 or 1982," the relative accuracy of the statements does not change that the totalizing narrative voice speaks from something like an Archimedean point, encompassing not only all of Paris in a simple sentence but also a century of hydrographic history. This may be a necessary and useful strategy for human cognition and communication, this generalizing function, but it carries with it the problems of any omniscient voice, recounting with authority from an impossible vantage. When Rendell, expanding on Haraway's (2010, pp. 18–20) notion of situated knowledges, engages in "site-writing" as a critical spatial practice where the practitioner assumes a subject position immersed in the spatial context within and through which she writes, the embodied entanglement of the speaker prevents certain aspects of the totalizing narrative from taking control. In other words, I am arguing that writing as a particular subject with a particular body in a particular space prevents a story from easily assuming the authoritative positions that work against the democratic potential of narrative practices in urban planning.

An example of a more embodied and singular narrative practice can be found in Secchi and Viganò's (2012–2013) proposal for the development of the neighborhood along the Canal de l'Ourcq, in the context of the extended work on the Greater Paris consultation. Working the terrain, the urbanists collected stories from inhabitants around the site. From narratives they collect, Secchi and Viganò write a series of micro-stories of the future, one of which is published later as a phased narrative told by one inhabitant, Mohamed. In his story, Mohamed leads readers from his family apartment, recently renovated with a new balcony for added living space, to follow the canal as far as a warehouse reconverted into a small business incubator. Speaking at points in language suspiciously like that of a planner ("Water management is now allowed by meadows which contribute to the landscape design of the park and which offer in this way a large diversity of vegetation to inhabitants"; Secchi & Viganò, 2013, p. 46), the narrator reveals a desirable future for his neighborhood in a narrative told on a human scale, taking place around the Canal de l'Ourcq and situated in spatial experience. This narrative is not totally impervious to appropriation—no language could ever truly be—and there is even room for questioning whether the text is not an appropriation in itself, instrumentalizing the voice of Mohamed to tell of a future which suits the planners. At the same time, it provides a way of understanding the field of possibility for transformation of the neighborhood and its post-industrial heritage towards more socially just and ecologically minded urbanities, while resisting certain aspects of the authoritarian narrative that characterizes much top-down planning.

4. The Palimpsest Again: Towards a Narrative of Poetic Practices

By considering the non-narrative elements of story as both radically other than the narrative function as well as constitutive of it in their difference, we arrive at the possibility of a poetics of narrative practice. This possibility could resist certain of the more pernicious and oppressive aspects of story, while maintaining its remarkable power to create form *from*, *within*, and *through* the phenomenal world. Viganò (2010/2016, p. 131) uses the term "discourse," broader than narrative, whose development for her is marked by "the selection of situations, images, figures, metaphors, descriptions, and stories" assembled into "a sequence of arguments that structures the interpretation and becomes the medium through which, and in which, the interpretation takes form." But while this view continues to target the rhetorical dimension of urban practice, and with good reason, we can still see how the narrative mode can function in such a sense, organizing diverse elements into, if not an argument, a vision, a story.

The full implications of a narrative mode that accommodates radically non-narrative elements would require seeing how planning narratives depend on how this other material is deployed in a story structure for their efficacy. If we remember Secchi's criticism of the supposedly sterile description of urbanisms aiming to give objective accounts of the territory, we can recall his demand for creative imagination and, as Grigorovschi (2016, p. 213) puts it, a different kind of attention which would involve a power of interpretation capable of revealing the new. In other words, against a dry approach to a purely mimetic description of the territory, Secchi sets what I identify as *poiesis*, the productive function in the descriptive act.

One way of characterizing what lacks in the supposedly objective account of the territory is the figurative dimension, which would allow for a movement from one notion to another, from the existing territory to possible futures. Secchi himself was deeply interested in figures, writing that they are not always used in a descriptive sense, i.e., simply to evoke what is poorly known, but very often they have a role of construction and organization of our thought. This notion of construction is important since for Secchi (2000/2011, p. 18) a figurative description of the territory has the aim to alter our perception so as to give us access to new situations. The figure, here, constructs a conduit between two states that are objectively non-identical—between the real and the possible territory. This is another way of naming the metaphorical function of language, of thought, which brings together, in conceptual space, the similar in the dissimilar.

For Pérez-Gómez (2016, p. 181), the principal medium of invention for design attuned to both human needs and the environment is "poetic or literary language, the language whose elemental unit is metaphoric sentence." Citing Aristotle, he argues that metaphor, by "implying an intuitive *active* perception of similarity in the dissimilar," gives us "the very structure of knowing" (Pérez-Gómez, 2016, p. 182). Emerging from embodied consciousness, metaphor orients us in the conceptual field while also liberating language from its logical structures to become material again, the stuff available for crafting new understandings. We can see this in operation in the figurative language used by Secchi and Viganò.

In an essay on the use of metaphor in urbanism, Secchi (2013, p. 125) explains that the role of metaphor is "to give a meaning to what we are provisionally unable to understand." Later in the text, he relates a story of how a concept that he and Viganò had been developing for mobility network circulation, drawing inspiration from the movements of liquids in sponges, was eventually studied by collaborating mathematicians. Trying to model sponge dynamics, the mathematicians made links to a parallel research project they were conducting on capillary irrigation in the brain, so that eventually the terms "brain," "sponge," and "mobility network" came to mutually influence the researchers' conceptual understanding of the other terms (Secchi, 2013, p. 132). This is pertinent to our understanding of how Secchi and Viganò, when collaborating, make use of the metaphoric function of figures to shape their projects. According to Secchi (2000/2011, p. 19), figures cross, at the cost of some resistance, the space that separates discursive practices from the concrete results of interventions on the city, the territory, and society. In this way, relations are constructed between what we indicate, in simplifying, as the real and the words used to say it. For example, when the pair makes use of the figure of the "sponge" to describe local, low-speed, deeply connective, and highly permeable networks, the physical possibilities of footpaths and bike lanes that make up a local active mobility plan take on new meaning in both conceptual and real space (Secchi & Viganò, 2013, p. 244).

In studying Greater Paris through the metaphor of porosity itself, Secchi and Viganò (2011) draw the existing territory of the Paris agglomeration closer at once to several dissimilar situations—the porous Naples described by Benjamin and Lacis in 1925, the isotropic future of Paris described in *The Porous City*, and the myriad echoes of their plans as embodied in later projects for urban porosity, including in student designs and academic research. In the latter category, a 2018 collective volume, *Porous City: From Metaphor to Urban Agenda*, gathers essays studying exactly Secchi's claim, how figures provide a crossing between the discursive realm and the material plane of the city (Wolfrum, 2017).

This epitomizes what Havik (2021) identifies as the horizon of possibility for poetic design approaches, the capacity to "dissolve boundaries, break down dichotomies, and find more productive ways to deal with and even embrace ambiguity." Part of what the example of the porous city reveals, however, is that the real conceptual power of the metaphoric function of language, as a logic of rapprochement, involves much more than the initial two terms often assumed to be at play in the figurative apparatus. While classical models of the metaphor are often broken down into *vehicle* and *tenor*, we see instead that what lends the metaphor of porosity its capacity to evoke or even provoke complex new relationships is how it draws into proximity a multiplicity of dissimilar states. Havik (2021) likens it to the moment of innovation in both science and art, "when seemingly unconnected or even contradictory ideas, images or strains of knowledge momentarily resolve." At the same time, metaphor explodes any notion of linear coherence, crossing scales, temporalities, and even media and modes, to rearrange the conceptual field in an instant. Pérez-Gómez (2016, p. 197) considers that "emerging poetic language is inherently innovative and open" due to the fact that "its very nature is polysemic and metaphoric," and it is this polysemy which we find in the layers of porosity in Secchi and Viganò's vision for Greater Paris and its analogues.

The conceptual layers of the metaphoric figure bring us back to Corboz's (2001) image of the territory as a palimpsest, which helped structure Secchi's (2000/2011) understanding of the strata of signs left to be discovered by the attentive urbanist. This territorial metaphor "of the stratified space in which relationships are crafted and reciprocal adaptation between the territory and population occur," Viganò (2020, p. 169) writes, "gives rise to places where its intensity and depth become monumental." The contact between the different strata, each representative of a different territorial state, each with their heterogeneous contexts of cultural and entropic forces, stands as a materialization of the metaphorical function of language and its power to bring the disparate into contact without a necessary loss of complexity. Under the auspices of the palimpsest, the art at work

in a poetic approach to planning is not that of the lone urbanist imposing form on the profusion of the city, but rather the shared work of tending to the layers, in the continuous and conscientious modification of the landscape to which Secchi (2000/2011, p. 15) referred. This is what draws the narrative of urbanism for Secchi and Viganò into poetic practice, the iteration and reiteration of transformative description that produces knowledge and opens up new situations for the urban landscape.

5. Conclusions

Narrative methods, understood as a set of planning strategies that take the narrative mode as an organizing principle for intervening in the territory, carry no essential value of their own, depending so firmly on non-narrative and particularly on figurative or poetic devices to engender change in conceptual and physical space. This is a critique in the sense that, despite a fashion for both the reification of the story object and the subsequent polemic against its failings (citing constrictive *telos*, the overreliance on coherence and continuity, and vulnerability to appropriation), I want to argue for better understandings of how narratives take effect. In my view, this bypasses a series of objections which find examples of narrative which differ from the supposed norm, so that instead of insisting that urban narratives are or are not coherent, we are able to see how working in a narrative mode tends towards drawing coherent forms in the urban landscape, while remaining attentive to the risk of the totalizing function of such syntheses. At the same time, the instances and spaces of narrative interruption, the transformative descriptions, and the metaphoric images, among others, gain purpose in the figurative scheme, rather than as problems to be resolved. This leaves an opening for urban practice that can be both narrative in its mode of operation and poetic in its production of new urban knowledge. Secchi and Viganò demonstrate in their practice how this can reverberate widely across related disciplines, as we have seen in multiform iterations of urban porosity.

Returning to Mohamed's micro-story of the future, we might catch a modest sense of what is possible in the narrator's journey. Along the way, Mohamed offers small but evocative figures, rhythming the narrative into a vibrant image: a new living space glazed and lit like a greenhouse, the ground outdoors liberated from sealants to play the role of a shared garden, an urbanized space offering easy access to transport and mixed functions, and a canal bank lined with pontoons where Mohamed thinks to bring his children fishing (Secchi & Viganò, 2013, pp. 46–47). As the gaze toward a future situation, the metaphoric content of this micro-narrative may avoid grand gestures and fully utopian visions. On the other hand, it brings us closer to a possible future, where the palimpsest remains in place, but we are able to glimpse its porosity and the ways in which we might move through it.

Afterwards, the abiding question of the practical application of these narrative methods remains unresolved. To the extent that the human being can be considered a storytelling animal, planners such as Secchi and Viganò have always narrated their practice and practitioners like them will continue to do so without any special need for explicit methods of narration. In this sense, the transparency of Secchi and Viganò's narrative impulse when projecting future scenarios for Greater Paris, for example, is to be expected as a base mode of human cognition and communication. On the other hand, when we turn towards the possibility to draw narrative away from its totalizing tendencies, away from synthetic coherence, and begin to consider the profusion of signs in the phenomenal field as it might be represented in a plurivocal and shared narrative, at that point such methods are neither implicit nor transparent. Secchi and Viganò's (2011) "social porosity" storyboard, in this sense, might be the best example in their work on Greater Paris of how the narrative mode can produce knowledge and a form of shared narrative through multiple voices. While it may leave questions as to how exactly to *act* in the wake of its appearance, and how to create urban spaces which respond to such a plurivocal text, the story emerges and offers stakes for planning. In this case, the call is for a break in the hard divisions that separate people and create unequal conditions for living, and so Secchi and Viganò's reply with the figure of porosity establishes its meaning.

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Conflict of Interests

The author joined the COST Action CA18126 Writing Urban Places at the beginning of 2022 but had not yet participated in any network activities at the time of the submission of this article.

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