

**1)- What kind of theoretical considerations inform your approach to planning and developing an art project in public space?**

Together with the mega global changes and transformations in governance and ideology, the concept of “public”, thus, the role of art and cultural institutions has been shifted. Furthermore, the understanding, reason d’etre and aim of ‘public art’ has been changed, signified in the neologies like ‘art in public domain’, ‘art in civic space’ or ‘art as public space’, etc. While ‘public art’ is a legacy of the welfare state with the conviction that art can be used as a tool for the well being of its citizens, ‘art in public domain’ is an emancipated autonomous form of contemporary art originated in the 50’s as a part of the institutional critique when artists left the Musea and galleries to go out to the streets to situate art in the hearth of life. Unlike ‘public art’, which conforms to the existing status quo and governmental programmes, ‘art in public domain’ situates itself critically in the public domain, challenging the status quo, specifically unfolding the ideological structures that we all are living in.

Hence, one of the main concerns informing my curatorial practice is the necessity to address to a specific audience (publics, networks and communities) at a specific place.

Secondly, the artwork should have the capacity to act critically and strategically to unfold the buried contrasts / conflictual situations to make them visible, thus, debatable rather than creating consensual platforms.

Another consideration is the temporariness of the artwork against the permanency to be able to comment and interfere with the ever-changing social structures especially in these transitional times.

**2)- Do you think art in public space now (again) has a greater significance than it did ten or fifteen years ago?**

I believe in the last 10-15 years, it gained a momentum as is exemplified in the emerging biennials and international exhibitions like the Liverpool Biennial GB, Echigo Triennial JP or Scape Biennial NZ focused on art in public domain. As it is the most democratic interface of contemporary art that can reach larger publics, even to the ones who do not go to the museums, galleries and other places that are designated to art, like in the 50’s, as a political act, artists feel the urge to engage directly with the publics and intervene with the public spaces.

**3)- Is there a danger of reaching a point where there are too many permanent artworks in public space?**

I think that this is the case in many European countries.

**4)- Do you view art in public space primarily in terms of the character of the individual artwork or its social components?**

I think that ‘art in public domain’ by its nature is context responsive and socially engaged. For that reason, certainly, both plays a role, however, the social components are evident part of any project in the public domain.

**5)- In your view, are the current forms of art in public space resulting in what Walter Grasskamp has called “undesired monuments”?**

Certainly, there is another aspect for the rising ‘popularity’ of “art-in-public domain” (as you asked in the 2<sup>nd</sup> question) such as the branding of public domain by certain sponsoring companies or political interests for attracting votes of specific communities or networks and groups as well as city marketing. The convention of ‘art reaching larger publics’ beyond the white cube brings a democratic facet to the distribution and availability of art for the multitudes, however, developing any project in/for/as public domain requires a critical stand and a thorough analysis and examination of the very specific situation, location and community/public against the backdrop of the larger picture. Therefore, this simplistic given that ‘art is good for people’ cannot be a starting point, a means, nor an end by itself.

It is the role of the artist and, specifically, the curator to evaluate such complex situations to decide the necessity, impact and function of a project for a specific community and place.

Furthermore, we all know that the principle of temporality is a vital aspect of any project in the public domain to keep up with the pace of the transformations going on in the society and public domain, which in turn, have a direct impact on the perception and experience of the project. Therefore, the concept of permanency of any project should be evaluated in relation to the specific case that the work will intervene with.

The third point is related to the main perspective of facilitation (rather than curation) of an art project in public domain (modeled after traditional production of ‘public art’). That was/is to create a ‘consensus’ between the concerned parties: commissioners, artists and the public. As every consensus involves compromises and negotiations as well as repression of the weakest voices (Chantal Mouffe), broadly speaking, the public art projects in this sense represent an average of aesthetic understandings of the stakeholders, which is legible for ‘everyone’, so, not really appealing to anyone, but, embellish and raise the standards of the public spaces or being the cover-up for architectural, urban and social ‘accidents’. Certainly, it has further repercussions on the artistic choices and directions by generating a concealed pressure structure on the artistic creativity, which deserves an in-depth critical research.

Hence, without assuming totalizing claims and generalizations, we can talk on the **certain** current forms of art in public domain as ‘undesired monuments’, especially the ones that are modeled after traditional production of ‘public art’, or that are instrumentalized as marketing tools by the funding/sponsoring companies and institutions as well as by the political concerns of the official bodies and authorities.

**6)- Do you see any possibility of positioning art in public space in such a way that it attracts more interest from a larger section of the population?**

Biennials, triennials or large-scale international events in other formats specifically focused on public domain and cities have this potential. They can create public sphere where local and international perspectives mingled to concentrate and debate on the urgent issues related to the society at large. Certainly, such large-scale events are used as city branding and marketing, and to attract private sponsorship, so they are the sites

of political struggles and representations as well. In this sense, the role of the curator as a critical agent registers inevitable to avoid instrumentalization of art and publics towards a populist venture.

**7)- Clearly, spectacular projects can attract a great deal of attention, in both a positive and a negative sense. How would you conceptualize a “third way”, one that constitutes neither a large-scale orchestration nor a communal project focusing exclusively on the work of a small target group?**

I think that there are two issues hidden in this question: First is related to the scale and form of the work and the second is related to the question of multiplicity and common ground. For the first question, I think that in each case the *raison d'être*, context and aim of the project has to be examined, rather than trying find a formulation that can work in any case. The second one is a part of a larger socio-political question: It is a matter of how to negotiate the specific situations and diverse claims of a small community or an ethnic group on a common ground that can bring these issues into the attention of the society at large. Actually, this is one of concerns that the artists are working today. There are several different, even contrasting responses in this respect: for instance while Thomas Hirschhorn's projects like the “Bataille Monument” (2002) or “Spinoza Festival” (2009) puts the specific issues of an immigrant community into the hearth of the society through locating it at larger spectacular contexts like the Documenta 11 or the Spinoza Festival (2009), Maider Lopez's projects like the “Polder Cup” (2010) brings diverse communities and groups from the society around a common topic (ground) like traffic jam or football and ends up usually in a spectacular event.

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