

PUBLIC ART VS. ART IN PUBLIC SPACES

Does art need to be signposted to or framed within an institution in order to be experienced? How can the exhibition framework expand, quietly and sensitively, into public spaces? Low-key art in public spaces is free to be local and transitory - it could be as simple as an image placed in the window of a corner shop, a photograph on a noticeboard or as complex as a durational performance in a local park. Self-initiated, people-led explorations into interrupting the rhythms of the everyday landscape.

Propose an intervention. What could inhabit the space, the in-between? How would this effect the landscape? What assembled ecologies can be developed by integrating artworks into the everyday and how could this help shape our understanding and encounter with the world around us?

SPACE-COMMONING IS NOT SIMPLY THE SHARING OF SPACE, CONSIDERED AS A RESOURCE OR AN ASSET, BUT A SET OF PRACTICES AND INVENTIVE IMAGINARIES WHICH EXPLORE EMANCIPATING POTENTIALITIES OF SHARING.⁽²⁾

SENSORY ASSEMBLAGES

The landscape of an exhibition and the relationship between the artworks on display act as a microcosm, a constructed space of interrelated 'things' drawn together to cohabit as a non-living enclave. A network of relational connections; the space influencing how the work is experienced, the artwork changing the structure and function of the space.

By expanding the field where art can occupy, we are dispersing the exhibition ecosystem, unfolding a human-made framework and encouraging it to flow into the expansive physical world.

(2) Stavros Stavrides, *Common Space: The City as Commons*



RETHINKING RELATIONSHIPS

The following terms can be useful in thinking about repositioning art, the relationship it has to its surroundings, and the value we place on conventional exhibition settings:

Assemblage: a collection of things - matter and non-matter - typically experienced together in a specific time and place.

Ecosystem: a shared environment of living and non-living things

Institutional Critique

The practice of critiquing institutional through questioning and dismantling the power structures which impact how art is displayed, experienced and discussed.

Mutualism: an ecological relationship where each species benefits from the other - an extension of symbiosis where two elements exist closely together.

**S L O W
D O W N
.
T A K E
N O T I C E**



***An introduction to
interrupting public spaces with art***

AN OPEN INVITATION

Situate yourself, be still and pause. Breathe in.

Not those evasive, shallow breaths that briefly circle round your nasal cavity, drifting aimlessly in and out.

Breathe with intention. Slow, deep breaths that create space in your lungs, expanding into the sides of your rib cage until your skin stretches around your back.

Now, what do you see? Allow the potentiality of the space and its attributes to unfold into focus. Soften the boundaries between where art 'should' and where it 'could' situate itself.

NOBODY LIVES EVERYWHERE; EVERYBODY LIVES SOMEWHERE. NOTHING IS CONNECTED TO EVERYTHING, EVERYTHING IS CONNECTED TO SOMETHING ⁽¹⁾

Reclaim space, ground and commons to unfold temporary interventions which displaces the function and creates new connections between the place and people who move through it.

ENCOUNTER EVERYTHING

If you're reading this inside, what impact would the weight of the room - the air and temperature - have on viewing a painting or drawing here and now? How could a sound piece change the experience of where you currently stand and what can you hear already? How would these vibrations interact with each other and travel through the room?

If outside, how does the air feel against your skin? What work would you want to experience in this space and how would the sun, the rain, the wind shape this experience?



Look at these images. What potential spaces do you see where art could interrupt?



(1) Donna Harraway, *Tentacular Thinking*: Anthropocene, Capitalocene, Chthulucene

POPULATING PLACES A 'HOW-TO' GUIDE IN 6 EASY STEPS

1. Find a space.

This could be somewhere people move through everyday, or somewhere less traveled. Accidental encounters actively encouraged. Consider spaces above, below and in-between.

2. If you are not producing the work yourself, find a collaborator to help realise your project.

Collaborate on interventions that adapt to the existing environment without causing damage or creating risk to people using the space.

3. Install your work.

If you aren't seeking permission, early mornings are best. Ensure you have the appropriate fixings that will allow your interruption to situate itself without becoming permanent.

4. Depending on your approach and location, document your work in-situ.

Sit, wait and watch to see if anyone interacts with your project. This is not about your ego, also consider leaving the work anonymously.

5. Remove your work after a determined period of time.

This could be anywhere from a few minutes to a few hours, a week, a month, a year. Evaluate the space you are using and how the work impacts and works with the environment.

6. Do it all again.

Once you start to see places that can be populated with work, you'll find it hard to stop. Be considerate of the ethical and environmental implications of the work, materials and locations you explore.