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PUBLIC ART & PUBLIC SPACE PROGRAMME: LEARNING, BUT DOING!

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ABSTRACT

This paper explores possibilities for linking experiential urban design education with placemaking as an approach to public space improvement in the context of post-socialist countries. It does so by analysing educational, spatial and social rewards and challenges of doing placemaking through public art, derived from experiences of the urban design educational programme Public Art & Public Space (PaPs) at the Faculty of Architecture in Belgrade. The research is based on two experimental projects, "Step to the River" and "Belgrade Boat Carnival", and evaluates their short-term and long-term placemaking effects in the Sava riverfront area in relation to the main goal of the project – to produce positive change in space and community through experiential urban design education that uses participatory public art projects as a tool for placemaking.

Key words: public space, placemaking, urban design, public art, education

IL PROGRAMMA PUBLIC ART & PUBLIC SPACE: IMPARARE, MA FACIENDO!

SINTESI

Questo paper esplora le possibilità di connettere educatione esperenziale di design urbano con il Placemaking entro un approccio di miglioramento dello spazio pubblico nel conntesto delle repubbliche post-socialiste. Si analizzeranno le sfide e gli insegnamenti educativi spaziali e sociali del doing Placemaking attraverso l'arte pubblica, derivata dalle esperienze del programma Public Art & Public Space (PaPs) della facoltà di architettura di Belgrado. La ricerca è basata su due progetti sperimentali "Step to the River" e "Belgrade Boat Carnival", valutando i loro effetti a breve e lungo termine di Placemaking lungo le sponde del fiume Sava in relazione all'obiettivo principale del progetto: produre cambiamenti positivi nello spazio e nella communità educatione esperenziale di design urbano che usa progetti di arte pubblica partecipativa come strumento di Placemaking.

Parole chiave: spazio pubblico, placemaking, design urbano, atre pubblica, educazione

INTRODUCTION

"Placemaking is an act of doing something. It's not planning, it's doing. That's what's so powerful about it." Fred Kent, Project for Public Spaces

In recent years, placemaking has become theoretical and normative framework for planning, design and management of public spaces that make disciplines of urban design and public art converge. This approach aims to reverse the process of urban space production from producing non-places to creation of feeling of the authenticity of space. A body of literature has emerged that explores placemaking as planning as well as design strategy. As an approach to urban development, placemaking is widely accepted and institutionalised in western capitalist democracies: but what about post-socialist countries?

Serbia is a post-socialist country in a multilevel transition: from autocracy to democracy, from socialism to capitalism, from collectivism to individualism. This means that the society is facing substantial changes at all levels and that uncertainty is the only certain thing in everyday life. Serbian cities and public spaces share the same destiny.

Because of that, design and maintenance of public spaces in Serbian cities stays at a low level and these spaces are not adequately recognised as important for urban development. Public art is not sufficiently developed and exits only in traditional forms of monuments, individual sculptures, murals, and some graffiti works. At the same time, there are some cultural and natural urban spatial "treasures" that can be presented and celebrated, some lovely public and semi-public spaces that wait to be rediscovered, ordinary or marginal public spaces that can be improved – so there is a need for making of places. Unfortunately, neither public nor private sector has public space qualities on their agenda, and the third sector, which plays an important role in placemaking process in developed countries, is not active enough in this field in Serbia.

In that context, creating capabilities to recognise potentials of small and big, ordinary and unique, green and built public spaces, and developing skills to enhance them through various forms of public art – become an important part of urban design education. But more than that, in the context of multilevel transition, undeveloped institutions and economic scarcity – it is worth asking a question: how can urban design education contribute to making of places, and by doing so contribute to better living in post-socialist cities?

In order to answer this question, we are going to present and discuss results in placemaking, based on two interrelated experimental projects in a riverfront area in the centre of Belgrade that were conducted by educational interdisciplinary programme *Public art & Public space* (*PaPs*)². This programme was founded at the Faculty of Architecture, University of Belgrade in 2003 based on the assumption that urban design education can do more for both students and communities by not only designing – but actually *doing* spatial interventions and events in space that can bring positive changes to places and people. Its purpose is to conduct experiential urban design education by focusing on public spaces and using public art as a tool for doing placemaking.

The first two parts of the article define the conceptual basis of *Public Art & Public Space* educational programme. The first part is focused on placemaking as a framework for contemporary urban design and public art. It presents the concept of placemaking and identifies important issues that make disciplines of urban design and public art converge in making of urban places. In the second part of this article, the idea of *learning by doing* in urban design education, that stands at the heart of experiential learning approach, is analysed and discussed in relation to its potential to initiate positive spatial and social change.

The third part of the article first presents *Public Art & Public Space (PaPs)* programme: its history, approach to urban design education, goals, and fields of action. Afterwards, two annual projects, "Step to the River" and "Belgrade Boat Carnival", as experiments in *learning by doing placemaking*, will be presented and discussed in relation to their short-term and long-term contribution to placemaking. It will be done by focusing on educational, spatial and social rewards and challenges of doing placemaking in *PaPs* projects.

By focusing on the role that non-formal experiential academic education can play in making of urban places, we hope to contribute to the body of knowledge on placemaking as spatial planning and design strategy.

PLACEMAKING AS A FRAMEWORK FOR URBAN DESIGN AND PUBLIC ART

Public spaces are social spaces that are open and accessible to people. They are simultaneously part of urban open space system and part of public sphere. As such, they can serve as integrative element of urban structure. Beside their aesthetic and functional importance, public spaces have different social functions and are constituents of urban identity.³ They operate as arenas for social

¹ In western capitalist democracies two discourses have emerged in relation to placemaking. On the one hand, placemaking is a set of processes by which cities shape their position and identities, generate economic growth by attracting desirable populations and creating cities as tourist destinations. Another discourse conceptualise placemaking as a grassroots process of place creation through which people create and assign meaning to spaces.

² www.publicart-publicspace.org

interaction and places for cultural exchange. Vitality, activity and awareness shape the publicness of space (Jacobs, 1962), and spatial rights of access, freedom of action, claim, change and ownership (Low, 2002) also contribute to this purpose. Public spaces can be shared or contested, abandoned or used, on permanent or temporary basis. These places are also "containers of collective memory and desire [...] and places for geographic and social imagination to extend new relationships and sets of possibility" (Corner, 2006: 32).

Placemaking is a multifaceted, people-centred approach to planning, design and management of public spaces. It aims to reverse the process of urban space production from producing non-places to creation of feeling of the authenticity of space. Therefore, this approach is based on the local community's assets, inspiration, and potential, and uses them in order to create good public spaces that invite greater interaction between people, and foster healthier, more social, and economically viable communities. It is both a process and a philosophy of acting in human environment (PPS, 2012). The concept of placemaking can be applied at various spatial scales as it is "both an overarching idea and a hands-on tool for improving a neighbourhood, city or region" (Project for Public Spaces + Metropolitan Planning Council, 2008). It can be used to improve various spaces that comprise gathering places within a community such as: streets, sidewalks, parks, buildings, etc. Since personal and cultural identities are related to these places, the role of urban design as socio-cultural process (Madanipour, 1996) and art as collective identity generating and enhancing practice become crucial to placemaking (Tilley, 1994).

Urban design involves placemaking as creation of a setting that imparts a sense of place to an area. This is achieved by "establishing identifiable neighborhoods, unique architecture, aesthetically pleasing public places and vistas, identifiable landmarks and focal points, and a human element established by compatible scales of development and ongoing public stewardship". (The Center for Design Excellence, 2013) Urban design is the process and the product of designing and shaping built environment: cities, towns and villages. It is focused on making connections between people and places, movement and urban form, nature and the built fabric. Therefore it unites all the built environment professions, including urban planning, landscape architecture, ar-

chitecture, civil and municipal engineering in shaping and managing urban environments. When fully integrated into policy and planning systems, urban design can inform land use planning, infrastructure, built form and even the socio-demographic mix of a place. In order to do this, urban designers need to address technical, social and expressive concerns, through visual and verbal means of communication. (Madanipour, 1996) Although urban design operates from the macro scale of the urban structure (planning, zoning, transport and infrastructure networks) to the micro scale (street furniture and lighting) – much of urban design is concerned with the design and management of public spaces and the way they are used and experienced. (Protocol for Australian Cities, 2011)

But placemaking is more than just creating better design of public spaces since the possibilities for making places solely through physical design are limited (Seamon, 1993). Placemaking facilitates creative patterns of activities and connections (cultural, economic, social, and ecological) that define a place and support its ongoing evolution. In that sense, "placemaking is how we collectively shape our public realm to maximise shared value" (PPS, 2012). In that sense, an effective placemaking process capitalises on the local community's assets, inspiration, and potential, ultimately creating good public spaces that promote people's health, happiness, and well being. At the same time, as a multi-cultural and inter-cultural act, placemaking can be interpreted as increasing density and intensity of meanings of the public space, and public art can have an important role in achieving this goal.

Throughout the history, art in public spaces was used to contribute to collective memory and creation of meaning of spaces. Public art occupies public space and therefore it is intended to be physically and freely accessible to the public. It relates to the context in which it is sited and can be site-specific or audience-specific. It can be placed indoors or outdoors, be of large or small scale, and exist as permanent or temporary artistic intervention. Public art has diverse meanings,⁴ but one relation always exists: public art occupies, signifies and shapes form and activities in public space and as such contributes to publicness of place.

Relation between urban design and public art has been widely debated. Usually, there are a number of expected roles of an artwork in public space.⁵ To name just a few: adding visual quality to a built environment,

³ There are two broad traditions of urban design thought and they stem from different ways of appreciating design and the products of design process: visual artistic tradition and social usage tradition. Visual artistic tradition is narrower, product-oriented and focused on visual qualities and aesthetic experience, rather than cultural, social, economic, political, and spatial factors and processes contributing to successful urban places. The social usage tradition emphasizes the way in which people use and sense space. (Carmona at al., 2008)

⁴ Definitions of public art explore its meaning in relation to: art, urban design, landscape and social intervention. In art and public policy literature the term *public art* has been referred to various art interventions in public spaces – from government commissioned monumental sculpture to subway graffiti. In general, public art is often used as an umbrella term covering any art that is not displayed in art galleries or museums. (Hunting, 2005)

^{5 &}quot;In United States, public art is often used to energize urban design – to comment on sites in order to help one see and experience them in new ways. Artists often collaborate on infrastructure for utilitarian purposes, and work with architects, landscape architects, urban designers and engineers to execute their projects." (Cohen Ch. et al., 2002)

increasing cultural awareness, making works of contemporary art more easily reachable for general public, attracting tourists, visually marking a site of communal importance, generating a sense of pride and belonging to groups that are using it, etc. (Đukanović, Živković, 2008) But, does public art add up or supplant urban design? Is it simply urban ornamentation, or a tactic attempt to redeem poor architecture and urban design? (Loukaitou-Sideris, Banerjee, 1998) In contemporary urban setting, that is becoming filled with non-places, public art gains a new role in respect to urban design – that of a "placemaking agency" (Tilley, 1994).

Although contemporary public art and urban design practice is most often fragmented between various professions, the focus on placemaking reveals the need for new approaches and practices for designing cities that include different design professionals (artists, architects, planners, urban designers, landscape architects etc.) who collaborate during overall design process. This public art and urban design approach is characterised by comprehensive and complex collaboration of different design disciplines which work together on equal basis on projects that aims to enhance the quality of urban environment.

Public art and urban design converge in creative and participatory placemaking as an evolving field of inter-disciplinary practice that uses the power of art projects and urban design process to serve community's interest, while driving a broader agenda for change, growth and transformation in a way that also builds character and quality of place. In this approach partners from public, private, non-profit, and community sectors strategically shape the physical and social character of a neighbourhood, town, city, or region around arts and cultural activities. Creative placemaking animates public and private spaces, rejuvenates structures and streetscapes, improves local business viability and public safety, and brings diverse people together to celebrate, inspire, and be inspired. (Gadwa, 2012)

This new connection was enabled by recent development of participatory public art as an approach to making art in which the audience is engaged directly in the creative process, allowing them to become co-authors, editors, and observers of the work. In this new conception of art public space is understood not only as a social space that is generally open and accessible to people, but as an action field for improving visibility, respect and conditions for various cultural practices (Rosaldo, 1999). Using various forms of public participation, public artists explore capacities of the existing social system to enable self-realization of diverse cultural subjects in the given society, and work on widening of its horizons (Honneth, 1995). The art of placemaking is therefore based on premise of connections – between people and cultures, between eras in history, between materialism and mythology, and between disciplines. (Fleming, 2007)

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING IN URBAN DESIGN: LEARNING, BUT DOING – WHAT?

Learning by doing means learning from experiences resulting directly from one's own actions. Actions do not only follow thinking – they induce thinking. The thinking generated from action is relative to the action and this recursive practice is the essence of experiential learning. This principle has been used in many forms, including: learn-by-doing, learning from experience, practical experience versus book learning, the practice-theory-practice dialectic, proof upon practice (Reese, 2011). It is contrasted with learning from listening lectures, reading instructions or watching others perform. Experiential learning does not replace traditional methods of learning. Instead, experiential learning should be designed to improve one's understanding by giving one freedom to explore and find the learning path that is most suitable for him or her.

Though it has variety of interpretations, the concept of learning by doing is usually associated to John Dewey's theory of experience. He advocated that education be based upon the quality of experience and suggested that, in order to design effective education, we must understand the nature of how humans have the experiences they do. Dewey believed that for an experience to be educational, certain parameters had to be met. The most important were - continuity and interaction. Continuity refers to the notion that humans are sensitive to and affected by experience. The experience comes from and leads to other experiences, propelling the person to learn more (Dewey, 1938). Interaction builds upon the notion of continuity and explains how past experience interacts with the present situation, to create one's present experience (Neill, 2005). Dewey's hypothesis is that your current experience can be understood as a function of your past experiences which are interacting with the present situation to create an individual's experience. Interaction occurs when the experience meets the internal needs or goals of a person (Dewey, 1938). Besides educative experiences, Dewey recognises experiences as possibly mis-educative and non-educative: mis-educative being one that stops or distorts growth for future experiences, and non-educative - one in which a person has not done any reflection and so has obtained nothing for mental growth that is lasting (Dewey, 1938).

Building on Dewey's work as well as on Lewin, Piaget, Freire and James, David Kolb frames his own Experiential Learning Theory (ELB) – based on the principle that a person would learn the best through discovery and experience. He provides holistic model of learning process – Experiential Learning Cycle. It consists of four stages: 1) concrete experience (learning cycle begins with doing something in which the individual, team or organisation are assigned a task: key to learning therefore is active involvement). 2) reflective observation (taking time-out from *doing* and stepping back from

the task and reviewing what has been done and experienced), 3) abstract conceptualisation (process of making sense of what has happened and involves interpreting the events and understanding the relationships between them) and 4) active experimentation (learner considers how they are going to put what they have learnt into practice). For learning to be useful it should be placed in a context that is relevant to the person. If one cannot see how the learning is useful to one's life then it is likely to be forgotten very quickly. (Kolb, 1984)

The concept of *learning by doing* is widely recognised and practiced as a teaching perspective in urban design education. It is based on recognition that urban design (as well as architecture and urban planning) is a discipline oriented towards practice and production of urban space. In that sense, although planning and design theory make important part of curriculum, basic unit in most bachelor and master urban design academic programs is urban design studio. Work in urban design studio enables students to connect theoretical knowledge with urban design methods and techniques while working in a specific urban context. (Milovanović Rodić, D. et al., 2013) It is a problem-based learning approach (PBL) that offers not only information but also thinking strategies. It involves students in problem solving, therefore increasing their interest in the subject. Besides transferring information, this approach makes knowledge more memorable (Altomonte, 2012).

Orientations towards sustainability and placemaking in urban design theory and practice give support and add another dimension to learning by doing approach. They put forward the need for broadening the basis and creating synergies in making sustainable urban places. This means that communication and collaboration of all interest groups and individuals is prerequisite for sustainable placemaking. In this way learning by doing in urban design education means not only learning theoretical concepts and developing artistic and technical skills, but also learning how to communicate and collaborate with various stakeholders, professionals and broad public in the process of placemaking. And this can be done properly and effectively only in natural setting of working together on real-life urban problems. Therefore many contemporary urban design curricula are developed around partnerships with local authorities and citizens in testing solutions for real problems through students' design projects. In this way students learn about diversity and conflicting nature of urban development values and approaches (Archeworks, 2011).

Unfortunately, great majority of these marvellous projects exists only as vision (in printed or digital format) and are, at best, presented through exhibitions and publications. At the same time, hidden potentials

for improvement explored in students' works – remain hidden in urban reality. And this destiny is not very different from the destiny of urban design projects done by professionals, especially in context of economic decline and political tensions that characterise most countries in transition. The gap between vision and reality continues to exist.

Based on Dewey's assertion that education also has broader social purpose, which is to help people become more effective members of democratic society,⁶ we argue that urban design education can do more for both students and communities by delivering small, incremental but real *spatial interventions* that bring positive changes to places and to people. In that sense it is not only *learning by doing* that is important for urban design education focused on placemaking – it is *doing* that really matters. Temporary spatial interventions and events can have integrative role in placemaking and enable establishing connections between academia, local authorities and citizens.

It is with that idea that *Public Art & Public Space* programme was established at the Faculty of Architecture, University of Belgrade in 2003.

PUBLIC ART & PUBLIC SPACE PROGRAMME FOR NEW URBAN DESIGN EDUCATION AND PLACEMAKING

Public Art & Public Space Programme (PaPs)

Public Art & Public Space programme (PaPs) was established with an idea of linking experiential urban design education with placemaking, in order to improve public spaces in Serbian cities. It is focused on exploring potentials of both central and marginal public spaces through small space interventions and events, with a goal of enhancing their meaning, use, and value.

Simultaneously recognising the importance of public art in placemaking, and being aware of its neglect in the context of Serbia, the aim of PaPs programme is to integrate public art in urban design education and to use it as an integrative tool in placemaking. In opposition to linear process of designing public spaces through hierarchy of design disciplines, PaPs programme intends to promote interdisciplinary public art and urban design process that respects the skills of professionals from complementary design disciplines. Being based on the placemaking as theoretical and normative framework, the *PaPs* programme also affirms collaboration between design disciplines, local community and authorities while working on various projects in the civic realm (Živković et al., 2005).

The PaPs programme was initiated after success of

⁶ He argued that the one-way delivery style of authoritarian schooling does not provide a good model for life in democratic society. Therefore students need educational experiences which enable them to become valued, equal, and responsible members of society. (Neill J., 2005)

the workshop conducted by members of the Faculty of Architecture, University of Belgrade and New York City *Percent for Art* programme, organised in October 2002 in Belgrade. It became an official programme at the Faculty of Architecture in April 2003. Although the Faculty of Architecture is the programme's founder, University of Arts and Faculty of Forestry, Department of Landscape Architecture participate in it on an equal basis. (Živković & Đukanović, 2007)

After the curriculum reform at the Faculty of Architecture in Belgrade, it has become possible to establish elective courses within bachelor and master studies. The first master's programme within the new curriculum was "Art in urban public spaces – Public Art & Public Space" (2006/2007). But *PaPs* experiential learning programme continued to exist both as supplement and as alternative to the official formal curriculum.

The objectives of *Public Art & Public Space* project are (Đukanović et al., 2005):

- Improving public spaces in Serbian cities as well as spaces with cultural, historical and natural values;
- Interdisciplinary work: collaboration between the faculties of Architecture, Fine arts, Applied arts, Landscape design, Performing arts, etc. in educating new generation of professionals that can collaborate in overall urban design process;
- Working on collaboration between design professions and local authorities, communities and institutions in urban design process;
- Awareness-raising and education in the field of public art and urban design;
- Integrating public art into the process of urban planning and urban design.

The main activities of *Public Art & Public Space* project are:

- Planning, design and realization of public art projects through interdisciplinary students' workshops and actions that involve experts and public in all stages of work;
- Public presentations of projects;
- Lectures on public art, design of public spaces, public participation and public space design process;
- Supporting activities and presentations that promote public spaces and public art.

In the following text two annual projects – experiments in *doing* public art will be presented and discussed in relation to their contribution to placemaking.

PaPs experiments: Learning and Doing Placemaking through Public Art at Belgrade's Riverfront

Context

Belgrade is the capital and the largest city in Serbia with a unique position at the confluence of two international rivers – the Sava and the Danube. These two rivers divide urban territory into three areas while, at the

same time, integrate it around centrally located Big War Island. The city was predestined to develop in relation to its rivers and to become an important merchant city.

Industrialisation introduced new activities on the waterfront, such as industrial and port complexes, railroad and central railway station. These massive structures made the city turn its back to the rivers. Belgrade's commercial and business centre moved to the top of the hill. In 1961 the new Belgrade Port was formed on the Danube, leaving existing industrial facilities on the Sava riverbank obsolete. The era of overall waterfront decline started.

Although located in downtown Belgrade, Sava riverfront area remained abandoned for decades. Beautiful but shabby buildings and derelict port structures, that stood as witnesses of waterfront's merchant and industrial past, became symbols of Belgrade's vision to finally descend to its rivers. Numerous development proposals of Belgrade descending to its rivers were created. Being vulnerable to political and economic fluctuations, they ended up stuck between seductive visual presentations of new iconic architecture and the grey reality of abandoned warehouses and post-industrial waist (Živković & Đukanović, 2010).

That was the very reason for showcasing central Sava riverfront within *Public Art & Public Space* (PaPs) educational programme. Two experimental projects that we are going to present were based on the premise that while waiting for those large development projects to be carried out, there are many small but important steps that can be taken in order to connect the city and the river. The area around the old Sava Port was chosen for planning, designing and delivering spatial interventions and events that were supposed to revive interest for various "gifts" that Sava riverfront can offer to the city life.

Working hypotheses to be tested in these experimental projects were:

- Interdisciplinary work is possible among students of different faculties from the University of Belgrade and the University of Arts.
- Motivation for realization of individual public art project can energise participants to establish links and collaborate with institutions, community, private sector, media and citizens.
- Temporary spatial installations and events can have long term positive effects on transformation and placemaking of urban space.

Specific hypotheses were developed for each experimental project. Hypothesis for the Project No. 1: "Step to the River" (2003) was that it is possible to deliver density of public art interventions through experiential learning workshops and, by generating diversity of experience of space, establish a cultural path from the city centre to the riverfront. For the Project No. 2: "Belgrade Boat carnival" (2004) hypothesis was that it is possible to generate a big event of excellence as a collective *oeuvre* of students' workshops, public, private and civic



Figure 1 – "Step to the River" project (PaPs, 2003)

sectors, that would exceed previous experience of the Sava river and riverfront area and thus, change their meaning.

Project No. 1: "Step to the River" (2003)

The aim of the first of the *PaPs* projects was to bring people from the city centre to the riverbanks by using public art densification strategy. The idea was to sprinkle pedestrian pathways with magnetic "art dust": small-scale but numerous temporary public art interventions and events, which will lure people into taking these shortcuts between the existing public spaces. The purpose was not to speed up the walk but to make it more enjoyable, thus enhancing the urban experience.

The experimental project "Step to the River" was conceived as a simultaneous presentation of the results of 13 workshops. These workshops were conducted by interdisciplinary teams of students that worked with the team of mentors, local community and officials. The project was structured in 3 phases: initiation, concept design, and realization – each having its own spatial and media results that were presented to the public, thus generating support for the next phase. Uncertainty related to the budget and timing resulted in a two-tier project: big vision (the optimal solutions) and small but possible (low-cost project proposals). Three academic institutions, 7 national public institutions, 15 local pub-

lic institutions, 2 institutions from the civic sector and 22 private sector participants were included in realization of the project.

The one-day event "Step to the River" (a series of public events on the chosen pedestrian paths) took place on the 12th of July 2003 and was opened by the city mayor. A wide range of public art installations and performances included: turf (grass) labyrinth set up on the streets leading to the Sava river, choir concerts, theatre plays, workshops for children, redesign and reuse of local trams, video art, fashion and music shows on railway wagons in the old Sava Port, waterfront party and boat tours (Table 1, Figure 1).

Considering the lack of professional experience in organising public events as well as the lack of budget, more than 2,500 people that attended the event and rather surprising media attention have to be viewed as a remarkable success of the project. After decades of living in oblivion, the old Sava Port belonged to the people again, at least for a day. By increasing density of events, the intensity of urban experience and recognition of the place increased as well.

As a result, *Public Art & Public Space* programme gained political, institutional and media support for its next experimental project – "Belgrade Boat Carnival". It was to be managed by experienced students that in a new learning cycle would become tutors and managers of the project.

⁷ Each of these stages had material results which were presented to public institutions and local citizens with an idea to gain their active support. Several lectures on public space and public art were organized for the same purpose.

[•] *Phase 1 – initiation:* Defining goals, objectives and fields of action. Identification of public spaces and analysis of their potentials for public art, done by students of the Faculty of Architecture. *Result: Catalogue of public spaces in the old city centre*.

[•] Phase 2 – conceptualization and design: 13 workshops were organized as interdisciplinary teams of students who worked together with interdisciplinary team of mentors on developing design solutions for the chosen sites. Result: Catalog of projects – digital simulation of public art interventions in space.

[•] Phase 3 – realization: Design projects were adapted to the chosen path to the river and the budget, and realized at the concrete locations. Result: one-day event on 10 locations forming a path to the river.

Table 1 – "Step to the River" project – workshops (PaPs, 2003)

	WORKSHOP	Intervention in Public space	Art form
1.	Follow the sign	Graffiti on Tram 2	Visual
2.	Singing Tram	Concert in tram with grass floor	Music/tactical
3.	Green way	Turf (grass) street labyrinth, green balls, green signs	Visual/tactical
4.	STEP	Light cubes illumination	Visual
5.	Wagons	Music and fashion show	Visual/fashion/music
6.	(En)Lighting	Various lighting performances on the way to river	Visual
7.	Visions	Various video performances on the riverbank	Visual
8.	Kosancicev Venae for children	Workshops and theater play for children	Visual/theater/tactical
9.	Tourist guides	Actors as tourist guides through real and imagined Belgrade	Theater
10.	Boat/illumination party	Music and video show	Music/visual
11.	Look: A river!	Photo and children's drawings exhibition and concert	Visual/music
12.	Billboard Gallery	Photography	Visual
13.	Media	Project presentation - graphic and video material	Graphic and video design

Project No. 2: "Belgrade Boat Carnival" (2004)

The second *Public Art & Public Space* experimental project was shaped by the recognition that neither citizens nor experts recognised aquatorium of Belgrade as a public space. At the same time, although various institutions had separate jurisdiction in this area, the absence of care was visible everywhere: polluted river and its banks, stranded boats, abandoned floating houses. To solve this problem, it was not enough just to have numerous small public art events. Intensity of the (public art) action strategy was important in order to make fun-

damental and long-lasting change. It was necessary to think BIG. (Đukanović & Živković, 2013)

Therefore, after bringing people to the river, the following event aimed at keeping them by the river in the same area (the old Sava port and the opposite riverbank). Apart from organising numerous small events and exhibitions on the riverfront, the idea was to make the Sava River the main stage and to present it as an attractive public space. The goal was to make an event of excellence which will celebrate rivers of Belgrade; a memorable event that will change the meaning of the space and improve relation between people and the river.

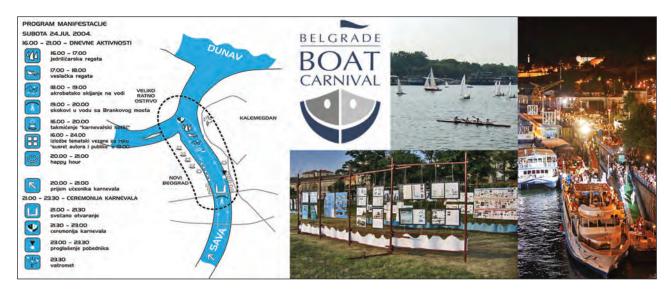


Figure 2 – "Belgrade Boat Carnival" project (PaPs, 2004)

Table 2 – "Belgrade Boat Carnival" project – workshops (PaPs, 2004)

	WORKSHOPS	Intervention in Public space	Art form
a	CARNIVAL CEREMONY	•	
a1	communication and	no	no
	participatory work with boat		
	owners and clubs		
a2	organization of carnival	no	no
	ceremony		
a3	realization of carnival ceremony	carnival boat promenade	no
b	WATER EVENTS		
b1	I am sailing	sailing boat promenade	no
b2	Rowing, rowing	rowing and kayak promenade	no
b3	Water skiiiili	water skiing promenade	no
b4	Bridge jumping	bridge jumping	no
b5	Belgrade from the river	boat sightseeing tour around Belgrade	no
С	RIVER BANKS EVENTS		
c1	kids carnival	costumed kids event	music/visual
c2	enlightening	light cubes illumination	visual/performance
c3	exhibitions	spatial installations for exhibitions of students	visual
		work	115 441
с4	carnival caldron party	competition of cooking of fish soup with live	music visual
		music	
с5	carnival beer party	old beer truck with live music	music/visual
c6	happy tram	Graffiti on Tram / line no. 2	visual
c8	enlightening the sky	firework	performance and visual art
c6	promotional points	sponsor promotional points and installations	no
d	MEDIA AND PR	pomotional pomo una motamations	110
d1	contacts with medias	no	no
d2	press material preparing and	no	graphic, photo, video and web
GZ.	distribution		design
d3	press conference preparing and	no	no
as	realization		
d4	BBC logo design competition	no	graphic design
d5	design and production of	billboards	graphic, photo, video and web
	promotional material		design
d6	preparing an distribution of	no	applied art
	material for communication		
	with stakeholders		
d7	WEB site	no	web art and design
d8	PR activities	no	no
d9	marking sights	guidepost, signboards and markers	graphic design and visual art
d10	press clipping	no	no
dll	post production	no	graphic, photo, video and web
	' '		design
e	MANAGEMENT		
el	conceptualization and initiation	no	no
e2	planning and scenario	no	no
e3	finding and motivating of	no	no
	target groups and relevant		
	stakeholders		
e4	budgeting	no	no
e5	negotiation	no	no
e6	contracting	no	no
e7	teams building and organization	no	no
e8	following of realization	no	no
e9	security organization	no	no
	1 Jecurity Organization	Ino	1110

This is how the idea of Belgrade Boat Carnival (BBC) was born. Belgrade has never had a carnival tradition, and neither had Serbia. At the same time, the idea of a carnival was a logical solution for a city regionally recognised as the "City of fun". The First Belgrade Boat Carnival took place on 24th of July 2004 and included: daily events on the river (water jumps, sailing boats, rowboats and jet ski parade), events on the riverfront (student design exhibition, children's theatre and workshops, boat models exhibition, fish soup cooking competition), and the final event: 250 boats in a carnival parade (Table 2, Figure 2). Thirteen academic institutions, 24 national and 23 local public institutions, 25 institutions from the civic sector and 37 private sector participants were included in planning and delivering the project. Approximately 100,000 people attended this one-day event and it was followed by more than a hundred journalists. It was one of the most attended events in Belgrade that year.

The BBC event dramatically increased density and diversity of use in the area and showcased possibilities for its further development. The results of the both *PaPs* projects were also presented at several national conferences and exhibitions, gaining wide public attention and several prizes. All this led to diverse long term spatial and social effects that are going to be presented.

Epilogue: 10 years after Step to the River + Belgrade Boat Carnival events (2014)

Ten years after realization of presented *PaPs* projects, changes in the area are visible. For a long time neglected and under-used post-industrial space became convivial and lovable *public place* (Figure 3). The educational, spatial and social effects of these projects are identified and summarised below.

The main educational accomplishments of two *PaPs* projects were a new generation of young professionals experienced in placemaking, interdisciplinary and collaborative work, and project delivery. Students that participated in experiential PaPs projects started their own active engagement in the field and continued to work on improvement of public spaces and placemaking in three main ways. Some of them became tutors and managers of other PaPs projects delivered in Belgrade (BBC, Sremska Street), Užice and Negotin.8 Others initiated their own NGO with a focus on public space improvement and development: "Refraction team" in Pančevo,9 "EVOLVE" society for urban development in Gornji Milanovac, etc. The third group of ex-PaPs students started their professional practice in public and cultural institutions, working on research, evaluating and initiating projects in local public spaces (Municipality of Savski venac, Cultural centre of Pančevo). The other, equally important, educational accomplishment is education of public authorities, and is going to be presented in more detail, together with social effects.

The main spatial effects include institutionalisation of "Belgrade Boat Carnival", redevelopment of *Beton hala* area and placemaking activities in the nearby Savamala area, and reconceptualisation of the waterfront in urban planning documents.

- Institutionalisation of Belgrade Boat Carnival as the official city event ¹⁰: After the great success of the initial event in 2004, Belgrade Boat Carnival became an official Belgrade annual summer event. Since 2005, it has been run by the Tourist organisation of Belgrade and supported by the City Government. Belgrade became a member of the Federation of European Carnival Cities. Last year the Belgrade Boat Carnival was held for the 10th time. In 2013 PaPs was rewarded by Tourist organisation of Belgrade for the exceptional contribution to tourism in Belgrade.
- Beton hala area started to re-develop: Diversity of public art interventions and activities, number of visitors that attended "Step to the River" and "Belgrade Boat Carnival" events, and their broad public promotion, confirmed the importance and high development potential of the old Sava port. As a result, private investors, as well as the city and state governments, were stimulated to invest in reconstruction of buildings and public spaces in the port area. In 2006, some parts of the old Sava port facility (Beton hala) were converted into an exhibition space, a jazz club and an exclusive shop. Many concerts, exhibitions and other cultural events started to take place in the port area, confirming the cultural character of the new city-river integration. This is still work in progress with a city government support confirmed through organising international competition in 2010.
- Placemaking started in nearby Savamala area: PaPs events showcased hidden potentials of riverfronts but also shed some light on the values of adjacent areas. PaPs projects had important educational effect of on public officials who, after having positive experience with PaPs events, were more open for new initiatives in place activation and transformation. In 2007 Cultural centre Magacin and in 2009 Cultural centre Grad started to work strongly supported by the City Municipality of Savski venac. In 2012 Mikser house and Mikser festival were initiated on the same basis.
- Reconceptualisation of waterfront space meaning and importance for urban development. The river

⁸ See: http://www.publicart-publicspace.org

⁹ Project delivered as collaboration between *Refraction team* and *PaPs* was included in Archive of the European Prize for Public Space, see: www.publicspace.org/en/works/d106-plato-na-trgu-kralja-petra-l

¹⁰ See: Tourist organisation of Belgrade official site. http://www.tob.rs/en/news.php?id=497



Figure 3 – Placemaking process at the Sava riverfront continues – 10 years after "Step to the River" and "Belgrade Boat Carnival" projects (source: Tourist organisation of Belgrade)

Sava central waterfront area is now recognised as one of main tourist attractions of the city and integrated in strategic urban development documents: City of Belgrade Development Strategy (Stojkov B., 2011), Belgrade Tourism Development Strategy (Institut ekonomskih nauka, 2008).

The main social effects of *PaPs* projects can be identified in two broad domains: improving the basis for intersectoral collaboration and for interdisciplinary work on placemaking.

Improving the basis for intersectoral collaboration in placemaking - considers improvement of relations between sectors (public, private, and civic) and change of their attitude towards public spaces. Positive experiences of taking part in PaPs events contributed to the raise of confidence in non-formal cultural actions and the importance of quality public spaces. General visibility and importance of civic sector and placemaking through temporary interventions increased, enabling greater official support from the local and national governments. Similar events were organised in other cities, initiated by civic sector in collaboration with PaPs (e.g. Academica – Užice¹¹). Also, new civic sector placemaking organisations were initiated by ex-PaPs students ("Refraction Team", "Evolve"). Due to positive effects of PaPs projects, private investors also became aware of economic and promotional potential of temporary installations and events and the number of investments in the area increased.¹² Another important social result was the development of pro-active approach to placemaking in the Ministry of Culture and Media, City of Belgrade and city municipalities of Stari grad and Savski venac. 13 Involving leaders and members of national and local governments (e.g. Ministers of Culture and Media, the Mayor of Belgrade, president and members of the Executive Board of the City of Belgrade, presidents of city municipalities of Stari Grad and Savski venac,) in the process of PaPs project conceptualisation, design, and realization had educational influence on them. Short time after realization of initial PaPs projects, the initiatives for new placemaking through public art came from local governments of these two city municipalities in which PaPs members were included as researchers, designers, or consultants.14

• Improving the basis for interdisciplinary work considers maintenance of the relationships (established during PaPs events) between universities and faculties, which enables further interdisciplinary work in joint placemaking projects.

Discussion

The role of experimental projects "Step to the River" and "Belgrade Boat Carnival" in placemaking of the Sava central riverfront will be discussed in relation to their short-term and long-term educational, spatial, and social effects. Although these two events can be compared from both educational and placemaking point of

¹¹ www.academica.rs/academica/Umetnost_u_javnom_prostoru_2012_ elektronsko-izdanje.pdf

¹² The number of service and retail firms in waterfront area increased from 3 in 2003 to more than 50 in 2013 and it is continuing to grow (based on internal *PaPs* mapping).

¹³ See the official web presentations on: www.savskivenac.rs, www.starigrad.org.rs

¹⁴ Besides several research and design projects and events, this colaboration resulted in two publications: "Placemaking" with municipality Stari Grad and "Public space 4 Public art" with municipality Savski venac

view, we are going to interpret them in this paper as a part of Kolb's model of experiential learning cycle (ELB) and part of broad placemaking process.

Although the initial impulse for the first PaPs project was to induce positive change in space, Kolb's model of experiential learning cycle emerged as a possible interpretative framework for doing placemaking as a part of urban design education. In this way, "Step to the River" project can be interpreted as Kolb's concrete experience stage of doing something. Key to the learning was participants' active involvement in project preparation, presentation, and realization. Reflective observation stage followed the project's realization, opening communication channels between students, tutors and local authorities. The results were presented at several national exhibitions and conferences and, in that way, professional and wider public reaction contributed to making sense of it all. This helped students and their tutors to interpret the events, evaluate and relate them to theory (Kolb's abstract conceptualisation stage). Active experimentation stage, in which learner considers how to put what has been learnt into practice, developed in three directions: first - in which students became tutors and project managers of the next "Belgrade Boat Carnival" project; second - in which they initiated their own NGOs, and third - in which they got actively involved in placemaking through professional practice in public institutions. Unfortunately, feedback from participants was not systematically gained and cannot be used for drawing firm conclusions on learning effects on students. Nevertheless, the facts about experienced students' further proactive involvement in the field confirms the importance of an overall approach of *learning through experiences* of doing things that really matter in the specific context.

The short-term effects of "Step to the River" and "Belgrade Boat Carnival" in relation to educational, spatial, and social aspects of placemaking are presented and evaluated in Table 3. From the educational perspective, it is important to acknowledge that in both projects students managed to achieve a high level of interdisciplinary work (though the problem of authorship occurred) and gain experience from project realization. Collaboration with local communities and other interest groups existed, but the level was lower in "Step to the River" project comparing to "Belgrade Boat Carnival". This can be explained by the situation where local community's identity was not established and active citizenship was not nurtured. In this way, PaPs projects can be seen as making pioneering contribution to active collaboration with local communities in Serbia. In spatial terms, both projects succeeded in delivering diversity, density, and intensity of interventions. The results thus support both specific hypothesis: a) that it is possible to establish a cultural path from the city centre to the riverfront through experiential learning workshops that generate density and diversity of experience of space, and b) that it is possible to generate a big event of excellence as a collective oeuvre of students' workshops and their collaboration with public, private and civic sectors. Finally, from the social perspective the results confirm that motivation for realization of individual public art project can energise participants to establish links and collaborate

Table 3 – Evaluation of short term effects of "Step to the River" and "Belgrade Boat Carnival" projects

GOALS	OBJECTIVES PROJECT - SHORT TERM EFFECTS			
		Step to the River	Belgrade Boat Carnival-BBC	
EDUCATIONAL:	Interdisciplinarity	+	+	
Experiential Issues in urban design education	Collaboration	+-	+	
design education	Project realization	+	+	
SPATIAL:	Diversity of interventions	+	+	
Activation and transformation of spaces; Enhancing visibility,	Density of interventions	+	+	
changing meaning of space	Intensity of interventions	+-	+	
SOCIAL: Establishing links, enabling	Interdisciplinary work- Establishing inter-faculty links	+	+	
participation and collaboration	Public participation	+	+	
	Collaboration with local community	+-	+	
	Collaboration with public sector	+	+	
	Collaboration with private sector	+-	+	
	Collaboration with civic sector	+-	+	
+ high, +- medium , - low				

with institutions, community, private sector, media and citizens

When discussing the long-term effects of PaPs projects on placemaking, probably the most important positive educational effect is the establishment of new generation of young professionals that now uses their skills in interdisciplinary and collaborative work. They work in public, private and civic sectors on improvement of public spaces and placemaking. Since at the moment no information on their experiences exists, further research should be carried out in order to gain insight into ways and fields in which ex-students implemented their knowledge and skills on placemaking obtained through PaPs projects. From the spatial point of view, long term contribution of PaPs projects to placemaking can be discussed in relation to the form, use, and meaning of space. After showcasing alternative potential uses of riverfront area, the investments and cultural activities in the area increased. They brought substantial functional and formal changes to some parts of the riverfront area (e.g. Beton hala, adjacent Savamala area). In general, due to overall change in character and intensification of use, the public perception changed from neglected industrial area in decline to new city leisure quarter. But some parts of the area have not gained further attention from public, private or civic sector, and have not changed. This indicates some constraints of temporary projects in delivering long-lasting changes that should be considered in further research and action. The main placemaking social rewards that stem from "Step to the River" and "Belgrade Boat Carnival" events are raising general awareness on importance of placemaking, and non-formal initiatives to contribute to that goal. PaPs projects had an important integrative role in establishing links between different educational institutions and sectors in the process of placemaking. They also had an important educational role for local governments that lead to development of their proactive approach to placemaking.

Finally, we would like to direct attention to some lessons learned from these projects as both educational and placemaking endeavours, that can be used for future study and work in placemaking through experiential education. The first one concerns choosing strategic locations, which means focusing on spaces that many people perceive as important and in which interests of public, private and civic sectors can overlap. The second one concerns taking opportunities from which synergy of individual and political goals in working on placemaking can be established. In case of Belgrade, enthusiasm for urban spatial improvement, shared by all the participants, was rooted in social and political changes in the country. The new democratic city government, the academics, public institutions and private investors had the same goals: to change the attitude towards urbanity and to bring public spaces back to the citizens. The third one concerns working with uncertainty in which it is

necessary to be realistic, creative, to make alternative solutions and presentable projects that enables continuity of the placemaking process. The last one concerns the very *process of placemaking* in which involvement of various actors enables them to both shape places and learn about placemaking.

CONCLUSION

In order to explore possibilities for placemaking in a post-socialist countries such as Serbia, in which public spaces are not adequately recognised as important for urban development and therefore are neglected and underused, where the third sector as a possible carrier of placemaking is not sufficiently developed, and where public art as a tool for placemaking is not fully recognised – this paper examined possibilities for linking alternative, experiential urban design education with placemaking.

Educational, spatial and social rewards and challenges of doing placemaking through experiential urban design education were analysed based on experiences of urban design educational programme *Public Art & Public Space* (*PaPs*) at the Faculty of Architecture in Belgrade. The research was based on two experimental projects, "Step to the River" and "Belgrade Boat Carnival", and evaluated their short-term and long-term placemaking effects in the Sava riverfront area in relation to the main goal of the project – to produce positive change in space and community through experiential urban design education that uses participatory public art projects as a tool for placemaking.

Public Art & Public Space experimental projects showed that well planned, temporary, public-oriented projects can be seen not only as creative exercises in urban design education, but also as generators of significant spatial and social effects. They can contribute to changes in form, function, and meaning of space. By constantly attracting people, they can create more familiarity with public spaces and raise awareness of their importance for the quality of city life. From the social perspective, they can educate citizens, local and national governments, and contribute to establishing links between different sectors in the process of placemaking.

The lessons learned from these projects show that, when *doing* placemaking through experiential urban design education it is vital to: choose strategic locations, take opportunities for creating synergies, work with uncertainty through realistic, alternative and presentable small projects, as well as to focus on involving various actors/sectors in the very process of placemaking, since it has both motivational and educational effects on participants. Besides examining these issues, further scientific research should examine learning styles of different participants and relate it to the issues of interdisciplinary work and collaboration; focus on gaining more insights into the ways in which ex-students implement their

knowledge and skills obtained through participating in placemaking projects; and investigate factors that shape the willingness of different sectors and actors to get involved in placemaking process.

This research has showed that, by focusing on learning by doing placemaking, experiential academic education can induce and catalyse the process of placemaking on strategic locations in cities, such as central riverfronts. This is important to acknowledge because, in the context of multilevel transition, undeveloped institutions and low level of community engagement in public life, experiential academic programs and projects can work as a substitute for underdeveloped institutions of public and civic sectors that usually lead the process

of placemaking in capitalist democracies. In this way, placemaking as spatial planning and design strategy can be implemented in post-socialist cities adjusted to their specific institutional capacities to induce and govern positive socio-spatial change.

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PUBLIC ART & PUBLIC SPACE PROGRAM: UČITI SE, PA TUDI DELATI!

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POVZETEK

Da bi ugotovili možnosti za kreiranje prostora (Placemaking) v postsocialističnih državah, kot je Srbija, kjer se na javne prostore ne gleda kot na pomembne dejavnike urbanega razvoja, kjer tretji sektor kot možni nosilec kreiranja prostora ni dovolj razvit in kjer javna umetnost ni ustrezno vrednotena, raziskujemo v tem članku možnosti za povezovanje alternative, empirijskega izobraževanja v urbanem dizajnu s kreiranjem prostora. V članku analiziramo izobraževalne, prostorske in družbene možnosti in izzive kreiranja prostora skozi javno umetnost, ki izhajajo iz izkušenj izobraževalnega programa na področju urbanega dizajna Public Art &Public Space (PaPs) na Arhitektonski fakulteti Univerze v Beogradu.

Raziskava temelji na dveh eksperimentalnih projektih, "Korak proti reki" ("Step to the River") in "Beograjski ladijski karneval" ("Belgrade Boat Carnival") in se nanaša na vrednotenje njunih učinkov, ki ju imata na kreiranje prostora v osrednjem priobalju reke Save v Beogradu. V članku predstavljamo in analiziramo procese, projekte in posege v javnem prostoru priobalja. Ocenjujemo njihove kratkoročne in dolgoročne učinke glede na glavni cilj projekta – da s pomočjo empirijskega izobraževanja v urbanem dizajnu in z uporabo javne umetnosti prihaja do pozitivnih prostorskih in družbenih sprememb.

Rezultati obeh projektov potrjujejo začetne domneve: a) da se gostota prostorskih in umetniških posegov lahko zagotovi s pomočjo delavnic empirijskega učenja in da se lahko na podlagi večje raznovrstnosti doživljavanja prostora vzpostavi kulturna pot od mestnega središča do priobalja, in b) da je možno generirati velik dogodek kot kolektivno delo študentskih delavnic v sodelovanju z javnim, zasebnim in tretjim sektorjem. Rezultati potrjujejo, da je interdisciplinarno delo možno in da utegne motiviranost za realizacijo projektov participativne javne umetnosti spodbuditi udeležence, da vzpostavijo zveze in sodelujejo z institucijami, zasebnim sektorjem, mediji, lokalno skupnostjo in občani.

Z distanco desetih let od eksperimentalnih projektov PaPs socio-prostorske spremembe v coni priobalja podpirajo tezo, da so dobro načrtovani, začasni in širši javnosti namenjeni projekti ne le vaje kreativnosti temveč generatorji pomembnih pozitivnih prostorskih in družbenih učinkov. Prispevajo lahko k spremembam oblike, funkcije in pomena prostora, s tem da nenehno pritegujejo ljudi, jih povezujejo s prostorom in dvigajo zavest o pomenu javnih prostorov za kakovost življenja v mestu. Iz družbene perspektive lahko ti projekti pripomorejo k izobraževanju občanov, krajevnih in mestnih oblasti in prispevajo k vzpostavljanju vezi med različnimi sektorji v procesu kreiranja prostora.

Empirijsko akademsko izobraževanje, osredotočeno na učenje z dejavnim kreiranjem prostora (Placemaking), lahko spodbudi in pospeši proces ustvarjanja prostora in hkrati deluje kot nadomestek nerazvitih institucij civilnega sektorja, ki v kapitalističnih demokracijah običajno vodijo ta proces.

Ključne besede: javni prostor, kreiranje prostora (Placemaking), urbani dizajn, javna umetnost, izobraževanje

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