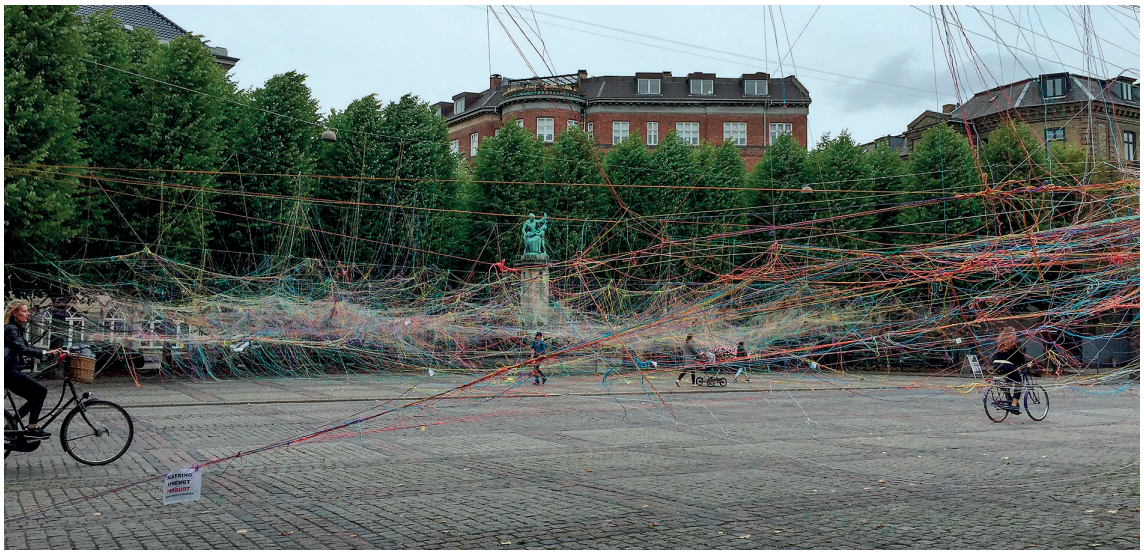
JYU DISSERTATIONS 248

Johanna Tuukkanen

Curatorial Practice Embedded in the City

A Case Study of Curating New Genre Public Art in a Festival Context



UNIVERSITY OF JYVÄSKYLÄ
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

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Esitetään Jyväskylän yliopiston humanistis-yhteiskuntatieteellisen tiedekunnan suostumuksella
julkisesti tarkastettavaksi yliopiston vanhassa juhlasalissa S212
elokuun 7. päivänä 2020 kello 12.

Academic dissertation to be publicly discussed, by permission of
the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences of the University of Jyväskylä,
in building Seminarium, Old Festival Hall S212 on August 7, 2020 at 12 o'clock noon.

JYVÄSKYLÄN YLIOPISTO
UNIVERSITY OF JYVÄSKYLÄ

JYVÄSKYLÄ 2020

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Cover photo: Karoline H. Larsen's "Collective Strings", Thomas Plads, Copenhagen, Metropolis
Photograph: Johanna Tuukkanen, © Johanna Tuukkanen 08/2015.

Permanent link to this publication: http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-951-39-8219-5

ISBN 978-951-39-8219-5 (PDF)
URN:ISBN:978-951-39-8219-5
ISSN 2489-9003

ABSTRACT

Tuukkanen, Johanna
Curatorial Practice Embedded in the City – A case study of curating new genre public art in a festival context
Jyväskylä: University of Jyväskylä, 2020, 164 p.
(JYU Dissertations
ISSN 2489-9003; 248)
ISBN 978-951-39-8219-5

This research investigates curatorial practices of new genre public art in a festival context. The aim of the research is to understand and produce new knowledge about recent and current practices of curating after the social turn of the arts, and contribute to the conversation about redefining curating and its current practice. The research explores the role of the curator in the production process of new genre public art and analyses how curatorial practice engages with the complexities of the urban context. The research is multidisciplinary and multi-methodological: drawing on art research and theory, cultural policy and cultural studies. Methodologically, it is a qualitative multiple case study. The cases are four art festivals: Metropolis (Copenhagen, Denmark), Steirischer Herbst (Graz, Austria), IHME Festival (Helsinki, Finland) and PLACCC Festival (Budapest, Hungary). The empirical data consists of interviews, case introductions, observations, photographs, festival catalogues and websites. The method of analysis is qualitative content analysis. The key findings of the research can be summarised in three points. First, curatorial practices of new genre public art in a festival context can be defined as a performative and non-representational practice embedded in the city. As a practice, it is thoroughly dialogical and based on an ongoing dialogue between the curator, artists and the city. Secondly, there are three political agendas of the studied festivals: the art world, the socio-political, and the urban agenda. Although overlapping, they demonstrate that in the festival context, curatorial practice reaches to these three areas because it is informed by the festival's political agendas. The third key result is that the curators' aims to create encounters holds a potential for politics. These encounters, immersed in the everyday, connect curatorial practice to ideas of potential, possibility and experimentation.

Keywords: curator, festivals, new genre public art, public space, urban space

TIIVISTELMÄ (ABSTRACT IN FINNISH)

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Tässä väitöskirjassa tutkitaan uuteen julkiseen taiteeseen liittyviä kuratoriaalisia käytänteitä festivaalikontekstissa. Tutkimuksen tavoite on ymmärtää ja tuottaa uutta tietoa viimeaikaisista ja ajankohtaisista kuratoriaalisista ilmiöistä taiteen sosiaalisen käänteen jälkeen sekä osallistua keskusteluun kuratoinnin uudelleen määrittelystä ja sen tämänhetkisistä käytännöistä. Tutkimus käsittelee kuraattorin roolia uuden julkisen taiteen tuottamisen prosesseissa ja sitä, kuinka kuratoriaaliset käytännöt osallistuvat urbaanin kontekstin kompleksisuuteen. Tutkimus on monitieteistä ja -menetelmällistä liittyen taiteentutkimukseen, kulttuuripolitiikkaan ja kulttuurintutkimukseen. Menetelmällisiltä lähtökohdiltaan tutkimus on laadullinen monitapaustutkimus. Tapaukset ovat Metropolis (Kööpenhamina, Tanska), Steirischer Herbst (Graz, Itävalta), IHME-festivaali (Helsinki, Suomi) ja PLACCC-festivaali (Budapest, Unkari). Empiirinen tutkimusaineisto koostuu haastatteluista, tapausesittelyistä, havainnoista, valokuvista, festivaa-lien luetteloista ja nettisivuista. Aineiston analyysimenetelmänä on käytetty laadullista sisällönanalyysia. Tutkimuksen keskeiset tulokset voidaan tiivistää kolmeen kohtaan. Ensinnäkin tutkimus osoittaa, että uuteen julkiseen taiteeseen liittyvät kuratoriaaliset käytännöt festivaalikontekstissa ovat kaupunkiin kiinnittyneitä performatiivisia ja ei-representaationalisia käytäntöjä. Käytännöt ovat läpikotaisin dialogisia ja perustuvat jatkuvaan kuraattorin, taiteilijoiden ja kaupungin väliseen dialogiin. Toiseksi tapausfestivaaleilla on tutkimuksen perusteella kolme poliittista agendaa: taidemaailman, sosio-poliittinen ja urbaani agenda. Vaikka ne ovat osittain päällekkäisiä, agendat osoittavat kuinka festivaalikontekstissa kuratoriaaliset käytännöt ulottuvat näille kolmelle alueelle, sillä kuraattoreiden toiminta perustuu festivaalien poliittisille agendoille. Kolmas keskeinen löydös on, että kuraattoreiden tavoitteet luoda kohtaamisia sisältää poliittisen mahdollisuuden. Arkipäivään uppoutuneet kohtaamiset liittävät kuratoriaaliset käytännöt ajatuksiin potentiaalista, mahdollisuudesta ja kokeilusta.

Asiasanat: festivaalit, julkinen tila, kaupunkitila, kuraattori, uusi julkinen taide

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my supervisors, professor Pauline von Bonsdorff, professor Anita Kangas and senior researcher Tuuli Lähdesmäki, for their willingness to provide supervision, reading and commenting my writings, offering valuable advices and all their support during the process of research. I am deeply grateful for their invaluable help in clarifying my argumentation and encouraging me even when the effort to finish this dissertation, while working full-time, felt overwhelming.

Special thanks should also go to everyone who participated in the Finnish Art Education Doctoral Studies network (FADS), including professors, postdoctoral researchers and visiting researchers, and especially my fellow doctoral students from the Aalto University, the University of Jyväskylä, and the University of Lapland, for the encouraging and inspiring conversations. I offer my warmest thanks to all the doctoral students of art education and cultural policy at the University of Jyväskylä for reading and commenting on my writings. I would like to thank especially Aleksi Lohtaja for commenting on the draft of this manuscript and providing indispensable knowledge, support and encouragement in the process of completing this research.

My sincere gratitude goes to PhD Taru Elfving and professor Felicity Fenner, the reviewers of the final draft of this thesis, and in particular to Taru Elfving for undertaking the crucial role as the opponent of my dissertation. I am deeply grateful for PhD Elfving's and professor Fenner's suggestions to further improve my work.

I am deeply indebted to the Niilo Helander Foundation, the University of Jyväskylä and the North Savo Regional Fund of the Finnish Cultural Foundation for making this research possible by providing funding during the process, as well as to Alfred Kordelin Foundation's Jyväskylä Fund for funding my travels to the case festivals.

Finally, I would like to thank my family and friends who have in various ways supported me during the research process and accompanied me on this journey of growing and developing as a researcher. I am very grateful to you for enduring me during the moments of disbelief and stress. I would like to thank especially artist Madeleine Flynn and artist, PhD Tim Humphrey for opening their home in Melbourne for me to conduct research in two periods and for providing such an empathetic, supportive, yet critical atmosphere to think and write. Thanks is also due to my employer ANTI – Contemporary Art Festival and colleagues in Kuopio, Finland, who have supported me through flexible working conditions and collegial solidarity. I would like to specifically thank my partner Pekka and my children Justiina and Zulani for your moral support and understanding, and for enabling me to fully immerse myself in the research at times.

Helsinki 30.5.2020

Johanna Tuukkanen

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1 INTRODUCTION

In thinking about contemporary artistic practices that can be encountered in urban spaces as part of the everyday, for about 20 years I have been fascinated by art's potential in creating unexpected encounters and the diversity of the forms and manifestations of those encounters. In my professional life, this fascination and excitement led me into founding a site-specific contemporary art festival and working as its artistic director, thus working as a curator long before I was aware of the educational possibilities of becoming a professional curator. In the late 1990s, I had hardly heard the word curator. It was a word that I associated strongly to the visual art world and as someone coming from a performing art background and being interested in all forms of artistic practices that explore relationships and ideas of site and space, and not those of only visual art, I certainly did not identify as a curator. Needless to say, many things have changed in the field of art but also in my own thinking.

The observation that many contemporary forms of making art have radically shifted towards site-specific and socially engaged practices in public spaces, often described as the social turn in the arts in the 1990s and 2000s (Bishop, 2006, 2012), led me to study art education and cultural policy in order to further explore the manifold relationships between art and public space. It was not until then that I became interested in researching the role and practices of the curator in the processes of programming site-specific and socially engaged artworks which I locate under the concept of new genre public art. I started to consider the curator in the context of new genre public art as a moderator of the interaction between art and urban space and of the dialogue between the different actors related with them, and a kind of mediator and steerer of conversation. Urban space with its continuously changing uses and variables from weather to roadwork, traffic and people on the street, is an uncontrollable context which inevitably poses numerous challenges not only for the artist, but also for the curator. This is an under-researched area of curatorial studies although various art and cultural events are regularly organised in public spaces and they have become more common internationally during the 2000s. The curator, working in the context of new genre public art, has to take into consideration public space,

its uses, commercialisation and privatisation, as well as different procedures related to permissions which may significantly affect their artistic interests. Working in urban space also raises questions of audience. How to define and reach an audience? And what about participation and engagement with the artworks? The curators are also dealing with questions of power as they are influencing what happens in urban spaces and their action has a direct impact on the field of artists.

Along with this shift of contemporary artistic practices towards social engagement (see, for example, Jackson, 2011) and increasing interest in site-specificity, the role of the curator has also evolved. The forms and practices of curating, understood here as ways of planning and organising art exhibitions, programmes, events and festivals have also changed, and the importance of curating has increased in the past decades. This period from late 2000s and early 2010s is also often referred to as the curatorial turn, implying the rise of the independent curators of international mega biennales such as Hans Uhlrich Obrist and Okwui Enwezor, and the increasing number of new education programs in curating all over the world, the high amount of books and journals published on and about curating as well as the number of conferences, talks and events organised on curating and the curatorial. Curating has also spread from the art world context to all kinds of sectors where content is managed and mediated. Today, various things from playlists to food and coffee can be curated for you. While in this respect it is trendy to be doing research about curatorial practices, this research found its starting point from my realisation that curatorial practices in recent literature focused heavily on object and exhibition based practices (see, for example, George, 2015; O'Neill, 2012; Reilly, 2018; Smith, 2012). Considering the site-specific and socially engaged contemporary artistic practices, there is surprisingly little existing research about the practices of curating artistic programs which take place outside museums, galleries or theatres, or so-called traditional spaces and institutions of art. There are few exceptions, such as *Curating Context – Beyond the Gallery and into Other Fields* edited by Magdalena Malm (2017) and Paul O'Neill's and Claire Doherty's (2011) *Locating the Producers*, but the focus is mostly on public art commissions, exhibitions and single projects. While there are similarities in curatorial practices regardless of the context, a set of entirely different questions and challenges arises when working in urban spaces in the framework of new genre public art, which directly impacts the curatorial practice. It is not the same thing to curate in a museum and in an urban space. This presumption is partly related to my own professional experience as a curator. I have worked as a curator in several contexts since the early 2000s, but it is my work as the co-founder, artistic director and senior manager of ANTI - Contemporary Art Festival in Kuopio, Finland, that has formed my pre-understanding of the research topic and through which I have gained expertise in the fields of curatorial practice and new genre public art. ANTI Festival is also the forum through which I actively work in the field as a curator, and is something which I have done through the entire research project.

Another distraction that sparked this research was that most of the curatorial research is discussed only in the art world context and especially in the context of visual art. Although debated, questioned and re-contextualised, the idea of exhibition making in the centre of the literature of curatorial praxis still prevails (see, for example, Obrist, 2014; Reilly, 2018). These observations further demonstrate the urgency of my research as the curators of new genre public art in a festival context are engaged with a significantly different set of questions. Considering new genre public art, which I use in this research as an umbrella concept for socially engaged, participatory and/or activist artistic practices in the urban spaces, may include artworks that are not visual art and do not take the form of an exhibition. The works can be performances or performative events that utilise forms and strategies of live art, theatre, dance and performance art or for example, sound art. In general, the concept of performativity in contemporary art highlights the ephemeral and unique situation of experience in which physical presence of the experiencer is significant (see, for example, Sederholm, 2000, p. 62). Curatorial literature discussing exhibitions mostly in a museum or biennale context seems inadequate to address the curatorial practice in the context of new genre public art that takes place in urban spaces often outside traditional cultural institutions both in the literal meaning of the outdoors, on the streets and/or within local communities but also outside institutional structures.

It is through these observations that this research begun to develop. Being genuinely interested in the role and practice of the curator in the context of new genre public art, I set out to a research process that would address the above outlined questions and observations (see also Tuukkanen, 2017). Acknowledging both the social turn in the arts and the curatorial turn of the 2000s (O'Neill, 2007), this research aims to understand and produce new knowledge of these recent and current phenomena of curating after the social turn of the arts. It looks at the role of the curator in the production process of new genre public art and how the curatorial practice engages with the complexities of the urban context. As I am focusing on practices, it was important to select cases that were reoccurring, allowing the consideration of the role of the curator over time. There is a vast number of projects that are constantly produced in the framework of new genre public art, but I was not interested in discussing a single, one off project. Neither was I interested in an audience development or participatory project that many museums organise in relation to their exhibitions, as their starting point is often an exhibition and/or main motivation educational. These projects, however artistically interesting and meaningful, often seem subservient to the exhibitions. From these considerations, I chose festivals as cases. The four case festivals are annual and focused on, or at least with a strong commitment to, urban space. Alongside producing new knowledge of the curatorial practices of new genre public art in a festival context, this research discusses the potential of participation of various publics in these processes, as audience is an integral part of urban space.

Next I will describe my understanding of festivals as processual and political forms of cultural production and give a brief overview of what curating

means before presenting the research questions and outlining the structure of the research.

1.1 Curatorial Practice in a Festival Context

Many contemporary researchers write about the festivalisation of the cultural field (see, for example, Richards, 2007; Hitters, 2007; Négrier, 2015; Bennett et al, 2014), and eventification of programmes of cultural institutions as a recent phenomenon of cultural production. In terms of cultural policy, festivals are considered ever more significant and they play an increasing role in the field of cultural production (Cudney, 2016). Festivals are increasingly in charge of producing cultural events and offering platforms for cultural participation (Herranen & Karttunen, 2016, p. 7). Traditionally, a festival is conceptualised as an entity or a series of cultural or artistic events or performances which usually lasts longer than a day, is often organised annually or biannually and usually, but not always, in the same place (Falassi, 1987). My research demonstrates that the interviewed curators' conceptualisation of festivals differs from this traditional, more narrow definition which does not recognise the processual nature of festivals, accumulating over years and decades. The interviewed curators do not consider festivals as single entities but as a processual artwork itself which continues, evolves and develops from edition to edition.

But festivals as such are of course not a contemporary phenomenon. From an anthropological perspective, festivals have functioned as celebratory and carnivalesque meeting places that enable temporary liberation from norms and hierarchies (Bahtin, 1995, pp. 6-12). The medieval carnivals as public celebrations were sites of play where everyone was equal regardless of social status or class and they thus promoted communality. The very nature of a carnival can be described as regenerating and rebellious which can still be traced in some festivals, especially in connection to different subcultures (Cudney, 2014). Festivals can also be understood as a form of collective effervescence because they can be seen as a space and time separated from the mundane everyday and as intensification of the collective being (Durkheim, 1912 [1995]). This aspect of consolidating a sense of community was part of the arts festivals in ancient Athens and the revolutionary festivals at the time of the French revolution (Giorgi, Sassatelli & Delanty, 2011, p. 1; Shiner, 2001, pp. 171-175).

However, the contemporary understanding of a festival is more limited, which has to do with economical and socio-political transformations in society. The so-called festival boom took place in second half of the 20th century and was related to the economic and social situation as well as technological and cultural developments after the Second World War. Festivals contributed to building the post-industrial economy and developed into a valuable component of cultural economy. Today, festivals are part of the experience economy and have an ever more significant role in the tourism industry as well. This has led many cities to utilise festivals for boosting their attractiveness as they can be understood as part

of the urban function. (Cudney, 2016, pp. 29-31; Giorgi, Sassatelli & Delanty, 2011, pp. 18-22.)

When people gather in an urban space, they create festival like use of the space which disrupts what is considered normal. Festivals have a long history in political theory, especially in France. From the French revolution to 1968 and recently Nuit Debout movements, festivals, instead of political discussions, as interventions in the urban space can act as a catalyst for change (Grindon, 2013; Ross, 2015). The cases of my research are festivals that have a strong commitment to urban space, and I understand their function as political because their activities disrupt and interrupt the normal, everyday activities of urban space. This interpretation is central in my conceptualisation of the case festivals as political. Henri Lefebvre's concept of revolution-as-festival re-conceptualises social movements' cultural forms of collective political participation and highlights the role of aesthetics in social change as analysed by Gavin Grindon (2013). Inspired by the Dadaists', Surrealists' and Situationists' experiments between art and political action, Lefebvre developed the concept of festival in his 1962 essay on the Paris Commune which he called the greatest festival of the 19th century. Although the cases of this research are organised, professional arts festivals, from this perspective it can be argued that festivals, especially those taking place in urban spaces of cities, are intrinsically political. This does not require artwork that aims to be explicitly political because the political aspect is in the interruption of the regular use of public space. My understanding of the political potential of festivals is based on Jacques Rancière's (2004, 2010) concept of dissensus and his theorisation of art and politics as dissensual activities that hold the potential to disrupt the given distribution of the sensible. In Rancière's aesthetic regime, as analysed by Joseph J. Tanke (2011), the aesthetic functions as an ongoing reminder that there is no single meaning in what we experience through our senses which leads to the conclusion that for art to be political, it does not need to address "political" content. As aesthetic art, it can be understood "as the occasion for an experience that disrupts the results of domination in everyday life", and thus already contains its own politics. Based on Lefebvre's and Rancière's thinking, in this research I understand the case festivals as processual and political forms of cultural production that are organised as a series of regular, annual or biannual, events. In addition to understanding festivals as forms of cultural production, they can be simultaneously conceptualised as a product, which according to Mervi Luonila (2016, p. 27), implies that festivals are products of activity that are based on content and creativity and which enable encounters between artworks and audiences.

The conceptual history of festivals connected to political potential and social change constitutes my main reason for selecting festivals as cases in this research. Although the differences between festivals and for example contemporary art biennales can be wavering, their origins are different. Whereas biennales are strongly connected to the art world, festivals' conceptual history is characterized by ideas of communality, play and rebellion (see, for example, Sassatelli, 2011, pp. 13-17, Papastergiadis & Martin, 2011, p. 48). This conceptual

history has helped me to define my focus on festivals and, through site-specificity, on festivals producing and presenting new genre public art.

The artistic programmes discussed in this research can be located in the framework of new genre public art. The curators of the case festivals are in charge of those programmes and thus their practice within the festivals sits in the intersection of organising and producing art and creating experiences for the audience. The specificity of the festival context creates a repeating but temporary framework which is defined by the fleetingness of consuming and producing art without the established production structures of art institutions (see, for example, Allen et al, 2005). The political and often activist nature of new genre public art sets the framework for the curatorial practice, but it is also influenced by the festival context. Site-specific festivals understood as temporary interventions and interruptions of the urban space further reinforces the political aspect of the curatorial practice. The case festivals that organise artistic events in several urban spaces are contributing in various ways to the urban development as they leave both physical and mental traces in the urban spaces, are connected to places and communities, are part of many people's lifestyles and they have an influence on both individual people and societies (see, for example, Cudney, 2016, p. 50). As a phenomenon connected with urban geography, festivals modify the social structures of the city and transform urban space. This connection to the city and urban space sets the foundation for the curatorial practice of new genre public art and highlights the importance of this research. Indeed, as I have demonstrated above, curating for urban spaces in a festival context is not the same practice as to work as a curator of an art institution.

Curating is a fairly recent phenomenon in the art world, especially as a highly specialised profession with its own university level degrees and diplomas. Traditionally, since the late 18th century, curating referred to caring for collections with its Latin root *curare* which translates as "to take care of" (Obrist, 2014, p. 25). Historically, the role of the curator has developed from caretaker of collections to an independently motivated practitioner in the art world (O'Neill, 2012, p. 2) and contemporary curators select artworks and direct their display in exhibitions as well as write labels, catalogues, press releases and educational materials (see, for example, Graham & Cook, 2010, p. 10). This is the role best known as the selector and interpreter although the role these days also includes producing, commissioning, educating, managing and organising (George, 2015, p. 2). When looking at the verbs related to the curatorial practices they often include, for example, to produce, present, select, organise, arrange, disseminate, mediate, distribute, know, explain, discuss, promote and historicise which describe the manifold activities that work of the curator includes today (see, for example, Graham and Cook, 2010, p. 303; O'Neill, 2012, pp. 1-4).

The curatorial discourse is generally divided into three phases which Paul O'Neill (2012) traces from the 1960s and opens the discussion towards the curatorial as a contemporary rhetoric in *The Culture of Curating and the Curating of Culture(s)*. The first discourse can be described as "curatorship" focusing on exhibition-making from the 1960s, which marks the gradual change since the

1920s from the traditional role of the curator as a carer who worked with collections behind the scenes. This phase demystifies the curatorial role and can be understood as an extension of the neo-avant-garde of the late 1960s. The second phase, often referred to as "curating" in the 1980s and 1990s, brings the curator to a more central position as the author of exhibitions, whereas the third phase of the "curatorial", starting in the late 1990s, is defined by O'Neill as the period from which onwards it is possible to trace the history of curatorial practice.

According to O'Neill (2012, pp. 4-5), the late 1960s to early 1970s were a transitional moment in the understanding of the curatorial gesture which could be seen in the role adopted by independent curators of which Lucy Lippard, Seth Siegelaub and Harald Szeemann are famous examples. The concept of the curated exhibition, including the idea of the group exhibition form authored alone by the individual curator, was established during the 1970s. By the end of the 1980s, "to curate" began to articulate "curating" which describes the more active involvement of curators in the processes of artistic production in which the exhibition functioned as a method and distinctive way for curators to present themselves and where curators were building up their own views incorporated with universal commentaries about art within a curatorial craft. In O'Neill's analysis, this trend continued into the 1990s which has been described as the "curator's moment" by Michael Benson. This is when some individual curators reached a kind of hyper visibility and the number of curator-focused publications and conferences increased significantly, thus contributing to the perception of curatorial practice as "an internationally networked mode of individual creative practice". In the 1990s, the biennale model provided an even higher profile for certain curators as it became a progressive and productive space for gathering the transcultural and global art world together.

When curating is occupied with making exhibitions and more generally with ideas of display, the curatorial emphasises the enactment, dramatization and performance of the actual event, exploring everything that the curator does in the process of setting up, whether intended or unintended, and understands it as an event that produces knowledge (Martinon, 2013, p. ix). One of the key contributors of thinking and developing the curatorial as a more performative and dialogical model, is curator Maria Lind (O'Neill, 2012, p. 116). Whereas Lind (2011) describes curating as "business as usual", the curatorial suggests ways of working that reach beyond art so that it is possible to disrupt conventions by positioning art in relation to different settings, time frames and themes. It is also possible to assume the curatorial approach from different perspectives and positions in the art field such as from an editorial, educational or from the viewpoint of communication. A more deconstructive idea of the curatorial is offered by Irit Rogoff (2006), who describes it as an opportunity to unbound the work from all categories and practices that limit its ability to explore what is not yet known or that which is not yet a subject in the world. Another term that has recently gained momentum is "paracuratorial" which was initiated by curator Jens Hoffman (cited in Smith, 2012, pp. 228-229) by which he referred to activities,

often educational, that are not connected to curating when understood as making exhibitions. It's a close synonym for the curatorial, but less expanded.

Alongside Paul O'Neill (2012), Terry Smith (2012) has also focused on contemporary curatorial discourse and its vitality, exploring the meaning of contemporaneity for curators in *Thinking Contemporary Curating*. However, both Smith and O'Neill, like much of the curatorial literature in general, talk about objects, their selection and display along communicating about them to different target groups or publics mostly in the framework of exhibitions, and I will therefore not focus on those discussions here further. In the context of new genre public art and dialogical aesthetics more broadly, the focus is usually not in creating objects but in the process. And when the focus is on creating programmes for urban spaces and understanding the whole city as a context, the frame is not a defined art space and the display of objects within that space. This point, although somewhat obvious, is important to make, as much of the curatorial research is very much still occupied with the idea of an exhibition and objects within it. Beryl Graham and Sarah Cook (2010, p. 157) call it "the default zone", which is the museum. Another default that can be traced in the curatorial discourse is the exhibition. Working in the urban context means that it is not only the curator who is making the decision of artworks and their display, but the practice is more about negotiation which leads to collaborative and dialogical modes of practice. In their analysis of biennales and cities as platforms for global dialogue, Nikos Papastergiadis and Meredith Martin (2011, p. 57) also point out that the curator needs to be able to set in motion questions that emerge both from the core of artistic practice and interact with non-artistic issues which adds a new level of social negotiation and a more robust awareness of the interplay between art and politics to the curatorial agenda. The points of collaboration and process are also put forward by Graham and Cook (2010, pp. 114-116) in relation to socially engaged art, as they ask whether the experience of curating socially engaged art could be applied to curating interactive media art which is the focus of their book *Rethinking Curating - Art after New media*. They (Graham & Cook, 2010, pp. 137-138) argue that instead of placing objects in space, the curator provides a platform for participation and it is thus necessary for the curator to understand dynamics of a process and how platforms work. This requires skills ranging from social skills to understanding of political systems and demonstrates the need for collaboration as a useful mode of curating. Curating participatory works is humbling and demands an approach which is very different from the traditional solo connoisseur. The curators need to place a great deal of trust into artists and the audience.

Graham and Cook (2010, p. 156) further divide curatorial practice to different modes which are working in museums, creating platforms for engagement, curating a festival, running a lab, public art commissioning through arts agencies, publishing and broadcast and adopting modes from artistic practices. According to Graham and Cook (2010, p. 216), festivals have contributed to the significance of the role of the curator as author as well as the widening of the role of the curator from the selector of artworks to a producer of

them (Oguibe, 2001, p. 131; Marincola, 2002 cited in Graham & Cook, 2010, p. 216). These modes of curating demonstrate that curating has moved far beyond the conventional art museum and that distribution means much more than display within contemporary art (Graham & Cook, 2010, p. 243). This also implies that the separation between production and distribution or exhibition in the curatorial process is more difficult to maintain (Graham & Cook, 2010, p. 247). This is also related to the fact that many artists are running their own spaces or independent organisations, self-curating their projects, working in cooperatives and collectives and thus acting as curators or artist-curators (Graham & Cook, 2010, pp. 247-254; O'Neill, 2012, p. 105). Many artist-led practices include a strong emphasis on collaboration and the level of audience engagement, and Graham and Cook (2010, pp. 276-277) actually encourage curators to not only follow the artists but share their skills and collaborate more. They (Graham & Cook, 2010, p. 284) argue that collaboration within the process of curating is a tool to address the challenges related to the multiple roles that are required from curators which also contributes to building up specific skills and knowledge. Exchange, conversation and changing roles between artists and curators is seen as a positive development that can enhance hybrid collaborations which they see as essential for curating new media art. The convergence of curatorial and artistic practices in the 1990s builds on the concept of curator-as-artist that also takes into account the exhibition making as a widened field including dialogical, pedagogical and discursive approaches (O'Neill, 2012, p. 6).

O'Neill (2012, pp. 116-118) describes this practice as performative, as since the 1990s, curatorial methodology has developed to a more performative and dialogical way of working and the exhibition space has become a question to be renegotiated by everyone participating in the process. This can be understood as a counterreaction to "the heavily authored mega-exhibitions" in the 1980s. Performative curatorial practice enabled a new frame to experiment, discover new forms of collective activity and gave rise to self-management in the field of contemporary art. The late 1990s also saw a rise of co-curating or group curating as a response to the single exhibition author model (Obrist, 2014, p. 33; O'Neill, 2012, p. 79).

Although Graham and Cook (2010) focus on the questions related to curating new media art in their research, their observations are useful for my research as well. They draw an interesting connection between socially engaged practices, including new genre public art and new media art, which is related to the adaptation of new technologies or artistic forms. This leads to the consideration of these art forms as "new" or "avant-garde" and sometimes "not art" which creates a challenge for the curator as these art forms are considered to be in a constant state of emergence (Graham & Cook, 2010, pp. 284-286). The new also dates quickly, and there is a gap between the emergence of the artwork and the acceptance by art institutions. As process-based artworks are rarely collected, it also results to the lack of base from which to write the history. Graham and Cook (2010, pp. 303-305) conclude their research by stating that the best way to

curate is to understand the specificities of the artwork instead of applying a theory on it.

Considering curatorial practice within the wider field of cultural production, it can be stated that it has become normalised, established and reached a certain hegemonic position (O'Neill, 2012, p. 122). But curatorship is not without contradictions or tensions. There is an ongoing debate about what it is that separates the curator's work from the work of the artist with the new generation's view of curating as creative authorship and discursive coproduction, against the historical idea of the curator as the carer of a collection (O'Neill, 2012, p. 127). Similarly to Graham and Cook (2010), O'Neill (2012, p. 129) ends his analysis of the curatorial discourse in the prevalent discursive, pedagogical and dialogical approaches to exhibition production. This implies that curators work closely with artists and that instead of the traditional triad between artist, curator and audience, there exists a variety of possible relationships.

As this brief outline of the history of curatorship within the field of contemporary art and literature review reveal, the discourse is very much centred around the idea of exhibition making within the visual arts field. It is curious that some of the large-scale exhibitions of the 1980s investigated various spaces outside the museum and gallery contexts of which Skulptur Projekt Münster, which began in 1987, and Many Jane Jacob's festival Places with a Past in Charleston, US, a few years later in 1991, are examples of. The question of space around the artwork began already in the 1950s and 1960s, when the place it was assigned to determined its significance (O'Neill ,2012, p. 30). Interestingly, although Skupltur Projekt Münster focused on site-specific artworks in various outdoor spaces in the city of Münster and the artworks in Places with a Past are considered as temporary public art in the framework of new genre public art, in curatorial discourse they are referred to as "exhibitions". Their responsiveness to the local, spatial and historical contexts is acknowledged (see, for example, O'Neill, 2012, pp. 29-30) but the specificities of the curatorial are not further explored. For example, the issue of OnCurating.org 11/11 magazine that focused on public sphere, public space and public art, is mentioned in curatorial literature as a kind of curiosity of the recent curatorial endeavours (see, for example, Smith, 2012, p. 19). Other examples of curatorial projects extending the impact further than the characteristics of the exhibition which are frequently mentioned include Documenta 10 (1997) and the 9th Istanbul Biennial (2005) where the curators organised various activities such as performances and events, discussions and lectures, publications and site-based projects with bigger importance (O'Neill, 2012, p. 81). Since then, there obviously have been many more biennials and large-scale exhibitions adopting similar strategies (see, for example, O'Neill, 2012, pp. 81-85). However, they are still considered and discussed as extensions of the main exhibition, be it in the context of a biennial or a museum. However, they do exemplify that curatorial practice is more than the presentation of artworks including various activities of knowledge and discourse production (O'Neill, 2012, p. 81).

As O'Neill (2012, p. 89) describes, today, curatorship is understood as a wide category that encompasses diverse organisational forms, models of co-operation and structures of collaboration in the field of contemporary cultural practice which contain productive qualities that earlier have been considered to belong to artistic production. This marks the curatorial activity as durational, transformative and conceptual by which O'Neill implies "keeping things in flow", in between and flexible. He (2012, p. 95) also states that the curatorial is always dialogical, meaning that the exhibition form is a result of processes of co-operation, exchange and coproduction that have made it possible.

It is acknowledged that there is a vast number of curatorial models that transcend the group exhibition as the primary end form of their praxis (O'Neill, 2012, p. 104). In curatorial literature these are referred to as unconventional curatorial strategies because they are perceived to operate counter to museum conventions and historical exhibition paradigms (O'Neill, 2012, p. 105). Jim Drobnick (cited in O'Neill, 2012, pp. 105-106) points out that this lineage is commonly connected to the conceptual art of the 1960s but overlooks the period between the late 1960s and 1990s when curatorial practice became more engaged and artists begun to use curating as a medium in the 1980s. According to Smith (2012, pp. 98-99), "the curatorial" is currently being replaced by "the infrastructural" by which he refers to the infrastructural activism since 1960s and especially the role of alternative spaces, artist run cooperatives and site-specific organisations, which have only recently become valued within the art world as creative, transformative and essential. Smith (2012, pp. 178-179) considers the infrastructural activism as a response to the demands of contemporaneity, becoming contemporary. His list of values and activities of contemporary curatorial discourse include; rethinking the practice of making exhibitions, reimagining museum, relating to the history of curating, co-curating with artists and focusing on participatory and activist curating beyond the art world. Along these issues, Smith mentions rethinking spectatorship, engaging viewers as co-curators and the challenge of curating contemporaneity itself. This research focuses on the last activity on Smith's list, namely to the work focused on the outside-the-art world, participatory and activist curating, as well as rethinking spectatorship and engaging viewers as co-curators. There is a definite lack of discussion and further analysis of this curatorial practice. Smith's (2012) book functions as an example of this lack, as although this kind of engaged and activist curating as he calls it, is mentioned as a contemporary curatorial discourse, there are about 5 pages dedicated to the subject of it. One example of research that considers the role of curator in participatory and socially engaged artistic practices is Karen Gaskill's (2010) PhD thesis *In Search of the Social - Toward an understanding of the Social Curator* which I will discuss in section 5.1.

The professional education for curators is a rather recent phenomenon and there are different routes and various educational backgrounds into working as a professional curator. Penelope Curtis, the former director of Tate Britain, has said that a curator does not require training because the job is mostly based on practical intelligence (sited in George, 2015, p. 18). Graham and Cook (2010, p. 10)

trace three different educational routes that are related to the variable roles of the curator. Many curators have a background in art history with additional courses in museum studies which emphasises working with collections and interpretation. The second educational route is through art administration including finance and management with emphasis on events and the third is what they call contemporary curating which can be variable but is often with a focus on critical or cultural theory. O'Neill (2012, p. 2) describes 1987 as a historical mark in understanding curatorship because then the arts centre Le Magazine in Grenoble, France, opened the first postgraduate curatorial training program in Europe and when the Whitney Independent Study Program in New York, US, renamed the Art History/Museum Studies element as Curatorial and Critical Studies. Through these educational programmes, the practice of curating became a possible field of academic studies and a potential choice of career. This period also marks the increasing number of contemporary art exhibitions globally which opened up a new market for curators. The 1960s paved the way for the institutional shift of the curatorial function, resulting in numerous curatorial training programs from 1987 onwards, and the early 1990s can be described as a period of institutionalisation which is the first phase in the emergence of a new contemporary curatorial discourse (O'Neill, 2012, p. 38).

In light of this brief historical overview of the role of the curator and the recent discussions on the idea of the curatorial, it is important to point out that the curators interviewed for this research should be considered as independent curators. Most curators work for institutions, such as museums, as subject specialist or collection-based curators or as a head of department within a cultural organisation. They can be also employed as guest curators by the institutions or for example by biennials. It is often the independent curator who is able to more freely define the roles that they take on and specialise for example in public projects and events or public art. (George, 2015, pp. 6-8.)

Considering that many curators work in visual art institutions, it is understandable that the curatorial literature is mostly occupied with the default zones of the museum and the exhibition. But when acknowledged that within the field of cultural production, festivals have gained increased significance, it is not only important but urgent to study the role of the curator in a festival context. The so-called independent art context is increasingly important also in light of the institutional critique which is a position adopted by many curators, artists and other professions within the cultural field. Curatorial practices also need and deserve to be discussed beyond the visual art context, that of the museums, galleries and biennales (which might include performances or other events, but which are not the main focus). If we accept that the boundaries of art forms are increasingly dissolving and that the quest for the curatorial encourages the curators to experiment and challenge that which is known, inevitably this results in understanding the curatorial practice as a profession that is not limited to any specific artistic field or certain institutions only. The meaning of the dialogical curatorial practice also needs to be further defined when the curatorial is not focused on some form of exhibition making. Little research has been conducted

to analyse the current curatorial practices in the framework of new genre public art in festival contexts. It is these gaps in knowledge that this research aims to contribute to.

1.2 Research Questions and the Structure of the Research

New genre public art today is understood to include a wide range of socially engaged artistic practices like site-specific art, live art, performance and dance in public spaces. It is often encountered as part of the everyday in urban spaces, which poses several challenges to the curator as outlined in the beginning of this chapter. Working as a curator in the framework of new genre public in a festival context relates to questions of art, urban space and politics, and it is my aim in this research to analyse the specificities of this curatorial practice through empirical data and thus contribute to the understanding and requirements of curating today. I am interested in how the curatorial practices intervene or are connected to urban space. It is important to note that my aim is not to analyse artworks as such or to define contemporary curatorial discourses but to produce new knowledge about curatorial practices in the framework of new genre public art and through this contribution to participate in redefining the current understanding of curating and curatorial practices. Based on these considerations and gaps in the knowledge that I have demonstrated, I have formulated three research questions:

1. What are the typical curatorial practices and roles in the context of new genre public art, and regarding their implementation, why?
2. What are the curators' aims in relation to urban space; and how do they discuss power and the political?
3. How do the curators see the relationship between new genre public art and urban space, and how is this manifested in their choice of artworks?

The main concepts of the research are new genre public art, production of space and political. Through these concepts the research opens up to dialogical aesthetics as well as festivals while the main focus is on the curator and urban space. I consider new genre public art, the profession of curators and arts festivals as phenomena of the art world. New genre public art takes place in the urban context and I will be discussing it through dialogical aesthetics; a critical framework developed by Grant H. Kester to understand socially engaged artistic practices that frames this research. The urban context poses questions of conceptualisation of space which I refer to as production of space, as well as understanding and defining the political. When we are thinking about the engagement and participation of people in art in urban space - art that might be activist and potentially political, it is important to define how political is understood. In my thinking, I rely on the political theory of Jacques Rancière and his writings on art and politics. My understanding of urban space is based on

Henri Lefebvre's theory of social production of space and his theorisation of the urban. The concepts of the curator and festival are overlapping, because this research focuses on curatorial practices in a festival context. It is in this intersection, that I analyse and discuss the practice of curators and the agendas of the festivals.

This research focuses on curatorial practices in the context of new genre public art. In my view, all three theoretical discussions are required because new genre public art calls for discussions of not only art, but also urban space and the political. When discussing artistic activities in public spaces, especially ones that foreground engagement and dialogue of diverse people and communities, all these theories are needed. It is in the intersection of these three larger theoretical frameworks and research traditions that I utilise these theories. However, it is important to point out that it is not possible, and it is certainly not my aim, to describe these large and complex theoretical discussions and traditions thoroughly in this research. I will describe them in the theoretical chapter to the extent that is necessary for this research to be positioned in the intersection of them. I consider Kester, Rancière and Lefebvre as companions with whom I discuss the contemporary phenomenon of curatorial practice of new genre public art. The aim to analyse and discuss something current and ongoing is always problematic but this is what Kester, Rancière and Lefebvre have done in different fields and with the support of their contributions on art, politics and space, I attempt to contribute to a contemporary phenomenon. They have all also been influenced by artistic practices and on the other hand affected them. Kester's aim to understand contemporary artistic practices as dialogical has had a great impact on understanding the aesthetics of participatory and collaborative practices. Ranciére has become a significant philosopher in the art world during the past decades and his contribution to the discussions between art and politics, as well has historical analysis of art, are very important especially in the context where art has strong connections to social and political life. Lefebvre, on the other hand, is a key philosopher of spatial theory who has written extensively about space as fundamentally social and processual, offering fruitful conceptual and practical tools to analyse space. It is important to also keep in mind that the contemporary art field is not isolated from theory and the interviewed curators, the artworks they curate and the art world in general, have also been affected by theoretical writings and developments. The artworld develops hand in hand with theory which was proposed already by Arthur Danto (1964) in the essay "The Artworld", in which he described the artworld as an atmosphere of art theory in which practices and thinking are connected. Because the case festivals of this research are art festivals, and the interviewed curators are art experts working in art organisations, namely festivals, in my view they can be considered within the art world context. This is so at least following Howard S. Becker's (1982, p. X) idea of the art world as being composed of the various people who are involved in the production, commission, preservation, promotion, criticism and selling of art: "the network of people whose cooperative activity, organized via their joint knowledge of conventional means of doing things, produce the

kind of art works that art world is noted for". However, as this research will show, the activities of the curators and festivals are networked beyond the traditional institutions and actors of the art world because site-specific art renews and challenges traditional art institutions. This kind of practice in the context of new genre public art pushes the boundaries of the classic definition of the art world, and this is why my understanding of the art world could be called the art world expanded. This keeps the focus of this research in the professional field of producing art through art festivals and art curators but also indicates that new genre public art requires an expanded and more widely networked understanding of the art world.

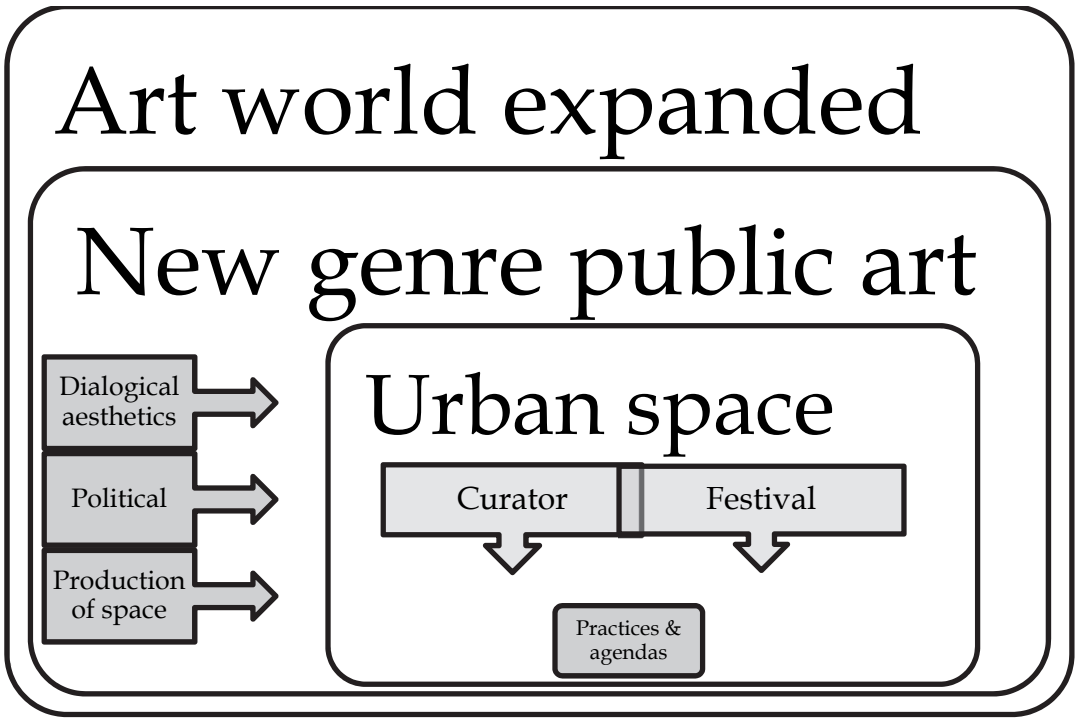

TABLE 1 Relationship between the main concepts used in the research

My research is multidisciplinary and multi-methodological relating to art education, cultural policy and cultural studies. From the methodological and science philosophical starting points, this research is a qualitative multiple case study. The cases are Metropolis (Copenhagen, Denmark), Steirischer Herbst (Graz, Austria), IHME Festival (Helsinki, Finland) and PLACCC Festival (Budapest, Hungary). The empirical data consists of 5 interviews that I conducted with the curators of the case festivals, my observations of the festivals and the photographs I took during my visits. I also utilised the festivals' websites, publications and brochures to achieve a thorough understanding of them. I used the content analysis method to analyse the interviews and photographs.

This research is divided into six chapters. In this first Introduction chapter, I outline the background and motivation of the research, my understanding of festivals as processual and political forms of cultural production and then focus

on the phenomenon of curating utilising literature of contemporary curatorial discourse, especially by Paul O'Neill (2007, 2011, 2012), Terry Smith (2012) and Beryl Graham and Sarah Cook (2010). This chapter also introduces my research questions, outlines the main concepts and the structure of the research.

In the second chapter, I outline the theoretical framework. I first focus on Suzanne Lacy's (1991) concept of new genre public art which she discusses in *Mapping the Terrain: New Genre Public Art*. By going through Lacy's conceptualisation quite thoroughly, I demonstrate how the concepts of audience, relationship, communication and political intention form the construction of history of new genre public art, and how it is defined as activist and often created outside the institutional structures through direct engagement with audiences while addressing social and political issues. I think it is important to focus on Lacy especially because new genre public art as a concept was originally coined by her. I then move on to dialogical aesthetics and describe how Grant. H. Kester (2004, 2011) develops "a new aesthetic and theoretical paradigm" in which the understanding of artwork is processual and durational and can be considered as place of discussion and negotiation in *Conversation pieces - Community + communication in modern art* and *The One and the Many: Contemporary Collaborative Art in a Global Context*. By going through the historical background of new genre public art and dialogical aesthetics, I conceptualise them in the continuum of neo-avant-garde which has strong connections to social and political life, which brings me to further discuss the concept of politics. Although in their use of political, Lacy and Kester refer to artistic works that often deal with political themes aiming towards emancipation and equality, my understanding of politics in this research is based on the theorisation of Jacques Rancière (2003, 2004, 2009, 2010), for whom politics is not a matter of what people receive and demand, but rather what people do that challenges the hierarchical order. I go through the central arguments of Rancière's understanding of politics and describe how he uses concepts of police, distribution of the sensible, political, subjectification, democracy and dissensus. I also describe Rancière's historical analysis of art which he has divided into three phases of ethical regime, representational regime and aesthetic regime of art. I then continue by discussing the conceptualisation and construction of space which I base on the theorisation of Henri Lefebvre and especially his seminal book, *The Production of Space* (1991). I describe the spatial triad and Lefebvre's notion of the everyday before discussing his understanding of cities and urban in *Writings on Cities* (1996). I end the chapter by describing Lefebvre's rhythmanalysis as an embodied approach to perceive and experience urban space and by discussing the contribution of non-representational theory by geographers Nigel Thrift (2008) and Ash Amin (2002) in order to grasp the performativity of practices. Thrift's approach to the politics of everyday life through non-representational theory highlights the significance of bodily experience, material relationships and practices. Amin is considered one of the key urban thinkers who has written extensively about social and cultural life in cities. Although significant thinkers in their own right, Amin and Thrift have also

written together and in this research, I refer to their book *Cities: Reimagining the Urban* (2002).

The third chapter outlines the research, the methodologies that I have used, my own position, and describes the empirical data of this research. I begin by describing multiple case studies as a research type and approach and the process of making this research. I then continue by explaining interview and observation as methods of gathering empirical data and content analysis which I have used as a method of analysis. I used thematisation in the analysis of the interviews and first came up with three themes of festival context, curatorial practice and urban space. From these themes, I further sub-themed the interview data after reading the data several times. The festival context I sub-themed to four categories which are 'political but not activist', 'dialogical and social', 'following the structures of the art world' and 'audience'. The theme of curatorial practice was sub-themed to three categories of 'curatorial practices', 'curators' power in the art world' and 'curators' power in the public sphere'. Curatorial practice encompasses the practical side of curating, curators' power in the art world discusses how the curators see their power within the art world and their organisation, and curators' power in the public sphere focuses on curators' power in the city and the urban space. The sub-themes of urban space included 'curators' ideas about urban space and new genre public art', 'connecting the local & the global' and 'practice embedded in the city'. After this, I reorganised the sub-themes so that thematically linked discussions are presented together in the analysis chapter. Having described the research type and methodologies used in this research, I elaborate on my own position as researcher and curator and then I move on to the introduction of the empirical data. I describe the empirical data which consists of interviews, observations, photographs and introductions of cases

In the fourth chapter, I focus on the content analysis of the empirical data. It is here that the voice of the curators, through quotes and my own observations, are most present, which sets a slightly different tone for the chapter. The chapter is divided into two parts. In the first part I analyse the interviews, and this is where the interviewed curators are in focus. First, I present the characteristics of curating new genre public art that outlines in very practical terms what the curators do, what kind of requirements the work imposes on curators and why. I then continue by discussing curators' perspectives on urban space and their understanding of audience. In this section I describe the different connections that artworks have to the city and what this means in terms of the curatorial practice. I then discuss how the curators consider audiences as citizens rather than spectators or audiences. In the third section I define the festival context through three political agendas that I have identified through the analysis. In the last section of the first part, I describe festivals as dialogical actors and discuss their collaboration with the city, the dialogical festival framework, festivals' engagement with communities and the importance of networks. The second part of the analysis chapter is where I introduce the case festivals. Each brief introduction is followed by my observations including some photographs.

In chapter five, which is titled Rethinking curatorial practices, I present the key findings of the research and discuss the implications of dialogical festivals and their political agendas on curatorial practices and describe the practice as thoroughly social and dialogical. I continue with the elaboration on the power of the curator both regarding the artistic field and urban space. I describe the curatorial practice of new genre public art as rooted in everyday life and embedded in the city followed by discussion about the connections between this curatorial practice embedded in the city and framework of the urban. Throughout the chapter, I also refer to my observations and photographs of the case festivals when appropriate. I conclude by describing the curatorial practice of new genre public art as performative and showing that the political potential lies in curators' aim to create encounters. These encounters are embedded in the city and immersed in everyday practice and they can be described as non-representational. This means that curatorial practice is connected to potential, possibility and experimentation.

Chapter six is a concluding chapter in which I elaborate on the research findings and my own practice as a curator. I also discuss the limitations of this research and offer ideas for further research.

In this Introduction chapter I have outlined the background and my motivation for this research. I presented my processual and political understanding of festivals and gave a brief historical overview of the phenomenon of curating based on recent literature and research on curatorial discourse. I also introduced my three research questions and the main concepts used in this research and covered the overall structure of my work.

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In this chapter, I outline the theoretical framework of my research. This research focuses on curatorial practices in the context of new genre public art and I begin by describing the concept of new genre public art as outlined by Suzanne Lacy. I continue with going through dialogical aesthetics, a critical framework developed by Grant H. Kester to understand socially engaged artistic practices which in my view is very useful in understanding the engagement of diverse communities and people in the processes of creating artworks. In my thinking of politics, participation and spectatorship I rely on the political theory of Jacques Rancière. As new genre public art takes place in urban spaces and as the cases of this research are festivals focusing on the urban context, it is important to describe how I understand and use the concepts of space and cities in this research. My understanding of space, cities and the urban is based on Henri Lefebvre's theory of social production of space. In depth philosophical analysis of Lefebvre's theory of the social production of space is not the focus of this research and my attempt is not to open Lefebvre's spatial theory here thoroughly as many thinkers and researchers have done that already. However, his theorisation of space is useful for understanding the concept of space and how I understand the case festivals and curators to be contributing to the social production of that space. I will also discuss Henri Lefebvre's rhythmanalysis as an embodied approach to perceive and experience urban space.

When we are discussing artistic activities in urban spaces, especially types that foreground direct engagement and dialogue with audiences, all these theories are needed. However, it is important to point out that it is not possible, and certainly not my aim, to open up these complex theoretical discussions and traditions thoroughly in this research. It is in the intersection of these three larger theoretical frameworks and research traditions that I utilise these theories. In this chapter, I discuss these three theoretical frameworks and discussions to the extent that it is necessary for this research to be positioned in the intersection of them. In my view, the discussion of curatorial practices in the context of new genre public art cannot take place only in the art world context, utilising only theories of art and referring only to curatorial discourses, because the practice

takes place in the context of cities and is rooted in the ideas of social activism and collaborative working methods, thus emphasising the urban and social aspects. This multidisciplinary approach to understanding and discussing curatorial practices of new genre public art can also be considered as my contribution to the research field of curatorial practices. Regarding practices, I understand them as non-representational and utilise contributions of non-representational theory especially by contemporary geographers Nigel Thrift and Ash Amin in my aim to grasp the performativity of the curatorial practices.

2.1 New Genre Public Art: Activism and Dialogue

New genre public art is a concept originally coined by American artist Suzanne Lacy in 1991. In her seminal anthology *Mapping the Terrain: New Genre Public Art*, Lacy (1995, pp. 19-20) defines new genre public art as activist, usually created outside the structures of art institutions by interacting with audiences about issues that have social and political relevancy in their lives. It is this engagement, both in form and intention, that separates new genre public art from monumental public art which usually implies sculpture and installations sited in public spaces. In *Mapping the Terrain* Mary Jane Jacob (1995, p. 56) describes new genre public art also as temporary or transitory which highlights the significance of festivals in the processes of producing these artworks. "New genre" characterises art that departs from traditional boundaries of media and it has been used since the 1960s (Lacy, 1995, pp. 19-20). Although Lacy writes about visual art, she mentions that new genre public art might include a variety of mediums such as installations, performances, conceptual art and mixed-media art. According to Lacy, it also has the potential to attack boundaries of art forms, and artists working in the framework of new genre public art often work with experimental forms with a developed sensibility about audience and social strategy. When "new genre" is understood as art that is connected to emergent art forms, in my view new genre public art can be considered as constantly emerging and tightly connected to contemporary artistic practices. In this sense, new genre public art is a very relevant concept for my research, and I utilise it as a wide umbrella concept under which the artworks that are mentioned in this research can be situated. Because my aim is not to analyse individual artworks, it is justifiable to use this wide concept throughout this research. This is also why I have chosen not to further discuss the variety of artistic practices and their histories, such as community art, activist art or socially engaged art that can be located under the broader concept of new genre public art.

In the context of new genre public art, the "public" does not refer only to the idea of public space. For Lacy (1995, p. 20, Italics original), "the inclusion of public connects theories of art to the broader population: what exists in the space between the words public and art is an unknown relationship between artist and audience, a relationship that may *itself* become an artwork.".

Mapping the Terrain focuses on the USA and it is in this geographical territory that Lacy (1995, pp. 21-24) traces the history of public art from the 'cannon in the park' during which sculptures were on display glorifying a biased version of national history which was broken in the 1960s by the high art world that saw urban areas as potential new exhibition space. Moving from the focus of public art on art history, to the establishment of percent-for-art programs and then on the location of the artwork, site became a key element in public art in the 1980s. Lacy defines site-specific art as art that is "commissioned and designed for a particular space, taking into account the physical and visual qualities of the site". From this focus on the location, artists began to pay more attention to other aspects of site, including its history, sociological context and ecological questions but according to Lacy, only metaphorically and without engaging audiences markedly differently than a museum. By the late 1980s, public art had become a recognisable field with its own conferences and literature which was interrupted by the economic recession, deepening urban troubles and a distrust of art leading to attacks on public art and its funding sources at the same time. A famous example of this kind of controversy is Richard Serra's Tilted Arc where the public's opinion came into conflict with the artistic expression leading to the removal of the artwork eventually. This moment brought to the forefront that the public arts administrator with intermediary skills differentiates from the skills of the artist.

Lacy (1995, p. 24) sees the development of exhibiting art in public spaces as advanced but states that for most artists, art critics and collectors were still the main focus of attention and in fact, they remained closely connected to the system of art institutions. She is also critical how public art has been financially supported by these institutions and through them, the art market. That's why Lacy (1995, pp. 25-26) points out, that there is also an alternative reading of the history of public art which could be discussed in relation to several avant-garde and activist groups that were connected to diverse, often marginalised communities, leftist politics and feminism, and interested in collaborative working methods and questioning the notion of audience. Artists began to challenge the conventions of galleries and museums through Happenings and other experiments in the late 1950s, breaking out of the museums and studios, experimenting with cheap and ugly materials like garbage and incorporating new technologies as well as for example, ecology and political issues into art. This same reading of the early 20th century avant-garde and then situationist international, fluxus performances and activism (especially the peace movement and feminism) of the 1960s and 1970s, is generally described by art historians as the period from which the roots of land art, site-specific art, community art, live art and dialogical art can be found (see, for example, Heddon & Klein, 2012; Keidan, 2004; Kester, 2004; Kantonen, 2005; Johansson, 2004). Thus, Lacy defines two trajectories of public art, namely public art that remained connected to the established museums, institutions and the art market, and new genre public art which is characterised by activism, engagement with communities and collaborative working methods.

During the following decades, popular culture also became attractive to artists as well as identity politics, which was part of the activist art born out of the "general militancy of the era" (Lacy, 1995, pp. 26-29). Lacy sees it as inevitable that artists who were interested in informing and in change moved to the public sector through the use of public space. Feminists artists were concerned with questions of effectiveness, how to reach a more expanded audience and support its engagement with new and often difficult material, but also how to assess the audience's transformation or change as a result of an artistic work. Art was considered as a neutral meeting place for people coming from diverse backgrounds, and feminist artists valued collaboration highly as a practice. There was a lot of exchange among feminist and Marxist artists, as well as artists from diverse cultural backgrounds who were working during the same decade. From slightly different viewpoints they arrived at similar ideas about art as communication and the formulation of specific audiences, which form the basis of new genre public art. For Lacy, it is precisely the concepts of audience, relationship, communication and political intention that form the construction of the history of new genre public art. The interest in new forms of public art was further provoked by deepening health and ecological crises and many artists began to look for strategies to raise awareness of issues such as AIDS, pollution and environmental destruction utilising diverse media such as performances, photo-texts, paintings and installations.

Although activist in nature, Lacy (1995, p. 30) notes that it is possible to make new genre public art by artists in any point between the political extremes. However, through the history of avant-garde forms and the social background of artists who were attracted to its practice, it is generally positioned as liberal or radical. Issues such as opposition to racism, violence against women, censorship, AIDS and ecological damage can be described as much as a traditional leftist agenda as they are the subject matter of new genre public art. But new genre public art is not connected only to certain themes, topics or sites, but more about "the aesthetic expression of activated value systems".

New genre public art's references to the broader context of political and social life is connected to a more connected role of the artist (Lacy, 1995, pp. 31-32). If traditionally the space between the artist and the person experiencing the artwork was filled with the art object, in new genre public art it is the relationship between the artist and audience that fills the same space. It is this relationship that is the artwork for some artists (Lacy, 1995, p. 35). It is obvious that this kind of artistic practice requires a different set of skills from the artist compared to the modernistic understanding. These are focused around communicative skills; listening, empathy and an ability to include other voices in artistic processes (Lacy, 1995, p. 36). In fact, the audience becomes an active part of the construction of the artwork as a participant or even a collaborator which marks a significant shift from the traditional notion of late modern art where artists made works for themselves, each other, selected critics and potential buyers (Lacy, 1995, p. 37). This also implies that the notion of an audience is not a given, neither singular, and Lacy (1995, pp. 37-38) divides audience into integral participants, occasional

viewers and the art world itself. The presence of a diversified audience brings to the forefront again, the issues connected to power, privilege and the question of authority of representation, which forces us to reconsider the functioning of the artwork in social contexts as well as the roles of the artists in those contexts in the public sector (Lacy, 1995, p. 39). When the notion of the public begins to be a prominent figure in the art making equation, any place from newspapers to public restrooms, from shopping malls to the sky becomes a potential staging area of art. This vast variety of sites enables a broader reach of diverse audiences but also a more integrated role for the artist in society (Lacy, 1995, p. 40). Another important point that Lacy (1995, p. 40) makes about new genre public art, is that along with artists' aspirations for change, the discursive aspects of the artworks become as urgent as the aesthetic. This means that activities such as media appearances, educational events, discussions, exhibitions, demonstrations, consultations and written works were not considered separate activities but integral to the artwork.

Lacy (1995, pp. 41-43) does not discuss the role of the curator in great detail but she does bring it up to point out that the role must be reconsidered in the context of new genre public art. In her view, the curators participate actively in the ethos and assumptions of the art and are understood to contextualise and expand the artist's reach. Whether working inside or outside of institutions, they present and promote the artwork to the art world and the culture at large. Lacy describes curators as bridge builders who link artists' thinking and doing to the daily lives of people. In doing this, the curators support the artists' belief that art can play a larger and more central role in setting the public agenda. Curators who experiment with presentational venues and curatorial styles, can also be understood as educators for the profession, new audiences and for artists. Lacy calls them facilitators who manage opportunities for artists to work within a community, arrange resources and plan educational and informational activities. She mentions Sculpture Chicago's Culture in Action, curated by Mary Jane Jacob, as an example of an expanded project in which the curator envisions and coordinates extensive public media and artistic approaches to themes and issues. According to Lacy, new genre public art requires "an integrative critical language through which values, ethics, and social responsibility can be discussed in terms of art".

It is inevitable that the evaluation of new genre public art calls for a different set of considerations than artworks following the modernist or post-modernist tradition. A self-evident question concerning the intention of the artist, is of course, is it art or social work (Lacy, 1995, p. 45)? It is difficult to say how an artist's intentions can be seen in the concrete artworks as they can demonstrate a successful work but fail to reveal the multiple layers on which art operates. This means that it is important to understand the artistic process as a container of meaning which implies that it is not sufficient to only look at the end product, focus on the intentions of the artist or elaborate the impact of art.

Above I have outlined how Lacy conceptualises and defines new genre public art. Next I will I will focus on how new genre public art, as well as other

socially engaged artistic practices that involve people and communities – as the medium or material of the work – in discussion, collaboration or social interaction, can be analysed utilising dialogical aesthetics. Developed by American art historian Grant H. Kester (2004), dialogical aesthetics aims to understand contemporary artistic practices as dialogical and dialogical art as collaborative, created in and through a dialogue with the artist, the audience and the context in which the work is created. Interestingly, it seems that Lacy was formulating this aesthetic approach in the beginning of the 1990s, which Kester developed about ten years later into a theory of dialogical aesthetics. Kester's approach is art historical, so in this sense this connection is not surprising. In fact, it demonstrates the continuum on which art and theories inform each other and develop side by side.

Kester (2004, p. 11) aims to understand dialogical projects as a form of art practice that has its own specificities and characteristics that are connected to other art forms as well as activism. If the 1960s and 1970s saw artists increasingly interested in exploring forms and methods of direct interaction with audiences and questioning the appropriateness of the white cube as a context of their performances and installation, the 1980s can be described as the emergence of a second generation of activist artists who were powered by various political protests (Kester, 2004, pp. 124-126). New ways for public and community-based work were created by artists and collectives in the 1980s and early 1990s and many artist-run exhibition spaces, media art centres and journals that were initiated can be understood as alternatives to commercially driven galleries and stagnant museums. Kester (2004, pp. 128-129) situates the emergence of new genre public art to this period, marking it as a major departure from earlier models of public art, and mentions Lacy's *Mapping the Terrain: New Genre Public Art* as an influential anthology of the 1990s. As did Lacy, he also points to the Culture in Action: New Public Art in Chicago by Mary Jane Jacob, which was held in 1993, and its significance in collaborating with diverse individuals from all kinds of cultural and social backgrounds in decision-making processes.

Created often outside the traditional art institutions, dialogical artworks are based on conversation, collaboration and exchange as part of different communities and situations. What Kester (2004, pp. 8-14) aims to do in *Conversation pieces - Community + communication in modern art*, is to develop a new aesthetic and theoretical paradigm about the artwork as a process where exchange, discussion and negotiation take place. Kester's use of the concept of dialogical art practice is based on Russian literary theorist Mikhail Bakhtin's argument that an artwork, in his case a novel, can be viewed as a discussion that contains several meanings, different interpretations and various viewpoints. He focuses on artworks that define dialogue itself as aesthetic which is different from collaboratively produced paintings and murals, etc. These works demand a change in how artworks can be understood and a reconsideration of the aesthetic experience as durational instead of immediate. Similarly to Lacy, in Kester's view the idea that an artwork openly aims for engagement and participation, or that its form is created in collaboration with audiences, marks a shift from the

modernist and postmodernist understanding of art. It also requires a different approach and attitude from the artists when they give up the familiar idea of art as self-expression and begin to explore intersubjective engagement which Kester characterises through vulnerable receptivity and empathy.

With origins in the history of art and various links to cultural activism, dialogical artworks are connected to both the tradition of community art in the United Kingdom and new genre public art in the United States (Kester, 2004, p. 9). While these artworks can evoke openness towards contemporary forms of experience along the tradition of avant-garde, they challenge the assumption that avant-garde art is unavoidably shocking and un-understandable. While Nicholas Bourriaud's (2002) relational aesthetics focuses on artworks based on communication and exchange mostly in gallery and museum contexts, dialogical aesthetics talks about art as an "open space within contemporary culture" (Kester, 2004, pp. 68-69). This is also why Kester's thinking is more relevant for my research. Art as a space for critical questions and interpretations to be articulated that might not be tolerated elsewhere. Another important approach to analysing these works is related to recognising their most important characteristics and then finding linkages to qualities of aesthetic experience that were lost or forgotten during the modern period. For Kester, these include "a critical time sense that takes into account the cumulative effect of current decisions and actions on future events and generations" which "represents an attempt to think outside, or beyond, immediate self-interest". Another important aesthetic concern is related to a form of spatial imagination which can be observed in the ability to conceptualise and illustrate complex social and environmental systems. The third aspect offered by Kester "is a concern with achieving these durational and spatial insights through dialogical and collaborative encounters with others".

With such a strong emphasis on dialogue and collaboration, it is important to keep in mind that Kester (2004, p. 69. Italics original) does not argue that any conversational encounter constitutes a work of art. The key element is not the dialogue itself, "but the extent to which the artist is able to catalyse emancipatory insights *through* dialogue".

Kester (2004, pp. 108-113) defines two interrelated areas in which the definition of a dialogical aesthetic must be pursued. They are on one hand the exploration of speech acts and dialogue, and on the other hand an inquiry of ethics that is related to the intersubjective exchange and identity formation. An important influence for Kester has been German philosopher Jürgen Habermas and especially his work on the relations between human identity and communicative interaction. The Habermasian concept of identity is formed through social and discursive interaction which, according to Kester, can help us understand the position of the artist in dialogical aesthetics. If the artist is typically viewed as the heroic figure, in dialogical aesthetics the artist is "defined in terms of openness, of listening -…-, and of a willingness to accept a position of dependence and intersubjective vulnerability relative to the viewer or collaborator". Habermas's concept of discursive interaction suggests that there

are two main differences between a dialogical and a more traditional understanding of aesthetic experience (Kester, 2004, pp. 111-112). The first one concerns the claim for universality. Dialogical aesthetic does not aim toward "universal or objective foundation" but rather on producing "local consensual knowledge that is only provisionally binding and that is grounded instead at the level of collective interaction". The second difference is related to the connection between identity and discursive experience. As opposed to participating in dialogue through the individual experience of 'liking', as in conventional aesthetic experience, in a dialogical aesthetic, "subjectivity is formed through discourse and intersubjective exchange". This implies that discourse is not "a tool to be used to communicate an a priori "content" with other already formed subjects but is itself intended to model subjectivity".

The encounters theorised by Habermas take place in the context of the public sphere, which is a space of competing opinions and clashing interests in which, through argumentation, the final position that manages to compel the assent of other parties, wins (Kester, 2004, pp. 112-113). Kester is aware of the limitations and criticism of Habermas's theorisations, and he is especially critical towards the assumption that as rational subjects, human beings respond only to reason and argumentations. Habermas also denies the discursive legitimacy of nonverbal, gestural and emotive communication and various power relationships.

Kester (2004, pp. 115-16) points out that dialogical projects can strengthen solidarity among individuals, challenge stereotypical images of communities and create a more nuanced understanding of those amid the general public. The concept of "empathetic insight" is a necessary part of a dialogical aesthetic and it can be generated through both verbal and non-verbal, bodily interaction. In fact, although Kester discusses throughout the book the notion of dialogue, it does not refer only to verbal dialogue. On several occasions he also refers to corporeal interaction as central to a dialogical aesthetic.

Keeping in mind the significance of communities in discussions related to new genre public art and dialogical projects, it is of course important to ask what a community is or can be. In literature related to socially engaged artistic practice, there is a tendency to see community as entirely positive or negative, either as a redemption of so-called community values or as dangerously essentialising (Kester, 2004, pp. 129-130). Kester sees communities as a significant organising principle to fight capitalism and conservatism and wonders about the position of artists in this wider cultural and political field, how they manage on one hand the interests of a specific community and on the other the questioning of the coherence of identities that belongs to the tradition of the avant-garde. Kester (2004, pp. 140-142) calls for an understanding of complex ethical questions and mentions politics of race and class as examples of the challenges that artists face when operating in the liminal zone between art, activism, and social policy.

This question of criticism and evaluation of dialogical artworks and new genre public art has inspired many critics and researchers after the publication of *Mapping the Terrain* and *Conversation pieces - Community + communication in*

modern art. One of the most visible debates in the art world has been between Claire Bishop and Grant H. Kester, but Bishop (2004, 2006) has also criticised Bourriaud's (2002) relational aesthetics. Bishop claims that collaborative artworks cannot fail because their aim is to reinforce social bonds. She is critical towards the emphasis on the process and collaborative working methods, stating that they result in art that is politically correct and fades all possible conflicts and disagreements to the background. Bishop's criticism points to important questions around ethics and politics in socially engaged artistic practices but in my view, they cannot deny the significance of dialogical aesthetics in aiming to understand and recognise the aesthetic and artistic value of collaboration and dialogue. And Kester is certainly aware of the problematics of dialogical artistic processes. However, I do agree with Bishop (2006), that the question of politics in collaborative practices should be critically analysed as supposed to perceiving them automatically as important gestures of resistance. Bishop (2012) also relies on the work of Jacques Rancière in her discussion about the relationship between politics and aesthetics like I am also doing in this research.

The question of audience

In the context of new genre public art including socially engaged or other participatory practices, the question of audience is extremely important and complex at the same time. In the framework of more traditional art forms and art venues, audience is usually considered to consist of people who come to experience a finished artwork, whether they are art objects in museums or galleries, or performances on stages of theatrical venues. Naturally audiences can experience artworks in a variety of public spaces as well, and it is important to note that people's engagement with arts and culture takes place in different settings and through different models of provision (Grossick & Kaszynska, 2016, p. 25).

Often the experiencing of a finished artwork is referred to as "receiving", but this passivity is criticised for example by Jacques Rancière (2009b, pp. 13-17) in his seminal book *The Emancipated Spectator*, in which is he makes the point that the spectator also acts, observes, selects, and compares; linking what they see to other things they have seen elsewhere. The emancipated spectator actively interprets and translates the elements that the artwork offers. Rancière is critical of art that wants to emancipate its spectator because it presupposes ignorance and passivity. Rather than a transmission of knowledge, the artwork is an autonomous "third thing" that is verified together by the artist and the spectator. The collective power shared by spectators comes from this capacity and power of anonymous people to translate what they perceive and experience on their own and not from the fact that they belong to a collective body or the same form of interactivity, whether the performance is about making or looking at art, or for example about speaking or teaching. Although the traditional mode of spectatorship has been reconsidered by many other thinkers as well, Rancière's important point throughout his work is the notion of equality which he also assumes in regards of art's spectators. This is very important to point out because

the interviewed curators share a strong belief that everybody should have access to contemporary art and that the audience in the urban context is as important as the audiences reached by art institutions. As I will later elaborate in the analysis chapter, the curators also assume equality between audiences because they believe that contemporary art can be meaningful for everyone, not just the elite art audience.

In tracing the history of modern art, Kester (2011, pp. 21-22) argues that it has begun to function as a privileged site of reflection on the forces of modernism, what he calls "quasi-autonomous space of commentary and engagement", whose criticality is possible precisely by art's gradual displacement from its previously integral cultural role in premodern society. Now occupying the margins of society in terms of cultural relevance, it allows the artist the distance required to recognise the flaws and limitations of modern life and to reveal those constraints to the viewer. By the impact of modernity on human subjectivity, Kester mentions damaging effects of the violence of industrial production, the brutal means rationality of the market, divisive class structures, oppressive forms of political totalitarianism and the displacement and destruction of indigenous cultures. Thus, the history of modern art can be viewed as an ongoing struggle to develop compensatory cultural responses to the destructive and dehumanising effects of modernity. In *The One and The Many*, Kester (2011) is tracing a shift from an aesthetic discourse focusing on questions of visual signification, to the one which is concerned with the generative experience of collective interaction. This collective interaction is closely related to audiences and their relationship to art and more generally to how the concept of an audience is and could be understood, which are central questions for new genre public art as artworks often experiment with new forms of collectivity and agency, similar to some of the artworks Kester also discusses in his book, such as Park Fiction in Hamburg where the artists created an imaginative game as a process of participatory urban planning.

According to Kester (2011, pp. 32-33), relational art holds the viewer at a distance and actually places the artist in a position of oversight and control compared to dialogical practices, which surrender some autonomy to the collaborators. This is related to art's danger of being subsumed to the condition of consumer culture, propaganda or entertainment. Kester recognises tensions between two movements in relational practice. One is between the specular and the haptic and the other between the work as a preconceived entity and the work as improvisational and situationally responsive. He argues that Bourriaud and Bishop privilege the first movement over the second in order to preserve the legitimacy of relational practice as a hereditary expression of avant-garde art which leads to relational projects to retain a textual status in which social exchange is choreographed as an a priori event for the consumption of an audience "summoned" by the artist as described by Bourriaud (2002, p. 29).

This textual model of art production where the artwork functions as a hermeneutic device intended to destabilise fixed oppositions via some form of embodied conceptual provocation, is based on rapprochement between

neoconceptual art strategies and post-structuralist theory in the 1990s. This approach is based on repetition where the artwork replicates a vision or idea of the artist which is then presented to the viewer. Although there is an interactive dimension even to static artworks, this interaction involved in textual production is primarily understood either in terms of contemplative decoding or somatic disruption. (Kester, 2011, p. 36.)

Kester (2011, pp. 36-38) argues that we are currently witnessing an attempt to rearticulate the specificity of the aesthetic in relation to both the viewer and other cultural and political practices and a kind of disappointment with the existing parameters of avant-garde. This, in Kester's view, can be seen in artworks that aim to renegotiate the condition of art's autonomy in order to shape a new paradigm, where we encounter a reciprocal relationship to other fields of political and cultural action and discover practices centred on immersive interaction and a referential orientation to specific sites of social production. Kester argues that the most challenging new collaborative art projects are located on the continuum with forms of cultural activism, which he sees both productive and inevitable given the period of transition through which we are living, referring to moments of historical crisis and change that have shaped modern art from Dadaism to practices that emerged out of the political turmoil of the 1960s and '70s. The principle of aesthetic autonomy, or distance that enables a critical perspective on and relation to the existing social order, is a central point of tension in this work. It is evident, that Kester's understanding of political is not the same as Rancière's which will be discussed in the next section.

Modernist art includes the idea of an antagonistic relationship to its audience and a kind of defensive relationship to other disciplines which Kester (2011, p. 38, p. 59) calls a relational antagonism. In his analysis, activist and socially engaged art practices pose a challenge for critics like Bourriaud and Bishop. The collaborative projects that Kester (2011, p. 65) discusses in his book are often concerned with the durational interaction, they problematise the authorial status of the artist and imply more peaceful and unaggressive strategies and relationships with both their participants and affiliated movements. Although these projects may "be implicated in forms of collective action that take up an oppositional or antagonistic relationship to particular sites of power, they differentiate this antagonism from the modes of self-reflexive sociality necessary to create solidarity within a given organizational structure". In doing this, the conventional aesthetic autonomy of the artist and art practice is questioned.

The a priori choreographed and arranged mode of interaction and collaborative process is for Kester (2011, p. 185) the key point of differentiation between the textual approach of artists and the dialogical and collaborative projects in which the outcome "can only be determined through the subsequent forms of social interaction mobilised by a given work". Although Kester writes in favour of the creative possibilities of mediated intersubjective exchange, he states that neither approach is automatically better than the other as they both include possibilities but also constrains. In either case the goal is "a transformation of human consciousness in a way that enhances our capacity for

the compassionate recognition of difference, both within ourselves and in others". Here, I totally agree with Kester and that's why I have decided to focus in this research on dialogical aesthetics. I also base my understanding of the notion of dialogue on Kester's thinking. As the analysis chapter will show, this research positions the curators and festivals as dialogical actors in the urban context, and that's why in this section, I have focused on dialogical aesthetics.

2.2 Art and Politics

Above I have discussed the historical background of new genre public art and dialogical aesthetics and described how Lacy and Kester conceptualise them along the tradition of the neo-avant-garde and the political turmoil of the 1960s. I have also discussed the characteristics and specificities of them, pointing out the significance of the engagement of diverse communities in potentially emancipatory artistic processes that embrace dialogue and exchange as aesthetic. When we are discussing art that has such strong connections to social and political life and which has the potential to be emancipatory and activist, it is necessary to open up the notion of politics. In this research, I understand politics along the conceptualisation of Jacques Rancière (2009, 2004) for whom politics is not about debating between different interests but about challenging the hierarchical order by bringing new voices to be recognized, seen and heard as the legitimate voice. I will next describe the central arguments of Rancière's understanding of politics. In order to do that, I also need to describe how he uses concepts of police, distribution of the sensible, politics, subjectification, democracy and dissensus.

Rancière defines the police as an "organisational system of coordinates that establishes a distribution of the sensible or a law that divides the community into groups, social positions, and functions" (Rockhill, in Rancière 2004, p. 3). In other words, "police is not a social function but a symbolic constitution of the social" (Rancière & Corcoran, 2015, p. 44). Society consists of groups that are "tied to specific modes of doing, to places in which these occupations are exercised, and to modes of being corresponding to these occupations and these places". Rancière often talks about those who take part and those who are excluded and it is the distribution of the sensible that implicitly separates them and "therefore presupposes a prior aesthetic division between the visible and the invisible, the audible and the inaudible, the sayable and the unsayable" (Rockhill, in Rancière 2004, p. 3). For Rancière, the core idea of politics is that the distribution of the sensible is interrupted, which means interruption of the social positions, functions and organisation of different groups. This interruption can happen by supplementing the police order with those who have no part in the perceptual coordinates of the community. In Rancière's view, this kind of interruption modifies what he calls the aesthetico-political field of possibility. This is why Rancière defines the political as relational. It is not based on governmental regimes but a kind disturbance of the police principle or "the intervention of

politics in the police order". Politics does not assume a material subject or specific group such as the poor or a predefined group of minority because for Rancière, "the only possible subject of politics is the people". The central idea in Rancière's conceptualisation of politics is the presupposition of equality between all people. It is possible for those who remain invisible and inaudible to disturb the police order only "via a mode of subjectivisation that transforms the aesthetic coordinates of the community" through the implementation of this presupposition of equality. In Rancière's thinking, it is these occasional and recurring acts of political subjectivisation that reorganise and rearrange the distribution of the sensible within the community, and this defines democracy. It is important to understand that equality as such is not a goal but a presupposition that needs to be constantly verified and democracy itself does not imply a form of government or a specific way of living. In fact, there is no guarantee that democratic emancipation can totally rule out social inequalities that are deeply rooted in the police order because, in Rancière's view, the redistribution of the system of sensible coordinates is a process that is haphazard and arbitrary.

Politics then essentially encompasses opposition to the police order or a kind of challenge to the established order by the excluded, or what Rancière calls "the part which has no part", in the name of equality and the attempt to reconfigure or reorganise the distribution of the sensible (Rancière & Corcoran, 2015, p. 44). In Rancière's (2003, p. 199) thinking, the social order, or the police order, can be described as "anti-democratic" or "anti-political" because it supports the mechanisms of inclusions and exclusions. Politics is then conceived as essentially oppositional and alternative to any police order. This leads to the conclusion that the voice of people who reject the persisting social distribution of roles and who are not willing to accept how power and authority are shared in society, is the democratic voice (Rancière, 2003, p. 192). Consequently, democracy is not a form of power nor a form of government but rather it institutes politics (Rancière & Corcoran, 2015, p. 58). It also institutes politics as a paradox because it "defines a paradoxical power - one that does not allow anyone legitimately to claim a place on the basis of his or her competences" (Rancière, 2003, p. 199). This means that democracy is a practice. It is possible for the same forms of parliamentary powers and the same set of institutions to result in a democratic life or operate as instruments that reproduce existing power. Regarding communities, Rancière (2003, p. 198) says that "a community is political when it authorises forms of subjectivation for the uncounted, for those unaccounted for", and clarifies that "when there is a properly political symbolising of the community, -…- this is where it lies".

In Rancière's (2003, p. 199) thinking, it is important to understand that politics and power are not the same thing. Politics cannot be defined as "the organisation of a community" or as "the occupation of the place of government" because "politics is always an alternative to the police order". Political is also not the social (Rancière, 2003, p. 201). For Rancière, the social is a complex domain which can be described as a mixture where the policing logics face different ways of configuring the common space and this encounter is where the distribution of

the sensible is questioned. This is also why Rancière says that "everything in politics turns on the distribution of spaces". For him, "political action always acts upon the social as the litigious distribution of places and roles" and "a matter of knowing who is qualified to say what a particular place is and what is done in it". Politics comes out of socially considered questions that can be related to for example education and labour, but the issue for Rancière is about the configuring of what is common. This disruption of the social hierarchy, a given distribution of the sensible, Rancière calls *dissensus*. Dissensus can also be described as disagreement about the perceptual givens of a situation (Büscher-Ulbrich, 2012). For Rancière (Rancière & Corcoran, 2015, pp. 3-4), both aesthetic art and politics can be forms of dissensus as each in their own way effect the distribution of the sensible.

This leads Rancière (2003, p. 203) to aesthetics, which is central to politics. Because the social and political system is founded on the distribution of the sensible, it means that it is an aesthetic matter of rearranging what is visible and thinkable, and the way places and times, the visible and the invisible, speech and silence are divided. The common aspect of politics and art is their innovative potential against forms of domination when they are conceptualised as forms of dissensual activity (Rancière & Corcoran, 2015, pp. 20-23). Genuine political and artistic practice thus involves a mode of emancipation (Rancière & Corcoran, 2015, p. 4). It is here that I find Rancière's conceptualisation of politics very important for understanding the potential of new genre public art and its curatorial practices.

According to Corcoran (Rancière & Corcoran, 2015, pp. 20-23), since the time of the French Revolution, "art has always been connected to the promise of a new world of art and a new life for individuals and the community". Rancière shows that "the freedom of the aesthetic -…- is based upon the same principle of equality that is enacted in political demonstration". Rancière differentiates between three regimes of art, the ethical regime, the representational regime and the aesthetic regime, and it is only the third one, which can be associated with art's transformative and innovative potential against forms of domination. In the ethical regime, artworks are not considered autonomous but are viewed as images. In the representational regime, artworks "belong to the sphere of imitation". The aesthetic regime of art discards the normativity of the representational regime and the underlying principle of "imposing form on matter". In the aesthetic regime, art consists of attempts at and proposals for "a local restructuring of the field of experience". Artistic dissensus consists of "operations that effect new forms of the circulation of speech, of exhibition of the visible and of production of affects, all of which creates a new topology of the possible". Tanke (2011) also points out that "aesthetic practices are political because they contest, impact, and alter what can be seen and said" and that's why Rancière considers them a very basic medium to create dissensus. Tanke describes instances of dissensus as moments of breakdown that crush the assumed certainty in regard to the distribution of bodies, voices and their functions and positions. The aesthetic regime keeps alive the relationship

between art and life as it includes the idea that "art is at once informed by the products and practices of the everyday, and in some significant way different from it". Rancière's historical analysis of three major regimes of art shows the political implications of the new practices of art contemporaneous and in that, how "the aesthetic regime disrupts the boundaries between art and life" and "wherein art is reinvigorated by being brought into contact with life", and "life -…- can be re-formed under the influence of aesthetic values". Through Rancière's reading of Kant's third *Critique* and Schiller's *Letters on the Aesthetic Education of Man*, the aesthetic regime produces "a new form of experience" that disrupts the regular experience of everyday, and as Tanke puts it, "disrupts the results of domination in everyday life" while at the same time "it refuses to be directly inserted into everyday systems of meaning". Aesthetic art has a political dimension because of the fact that "in both its production and reception individuals and groups alter their position within society". This means that the aesthetic is the "constant reminder that what presents itself to our senses cannot be reduced to a single meaning or purpose". As pointed out by Tanke, this is exactly the point why it is not necessary for contemporary art to address political themes, "to become directly and explicitly political" because "as aesthetic art, it already contains its own politics".

So if politics and art are conceptualised as dissensual activities that have the potential to disrupt the given distribution of the sensible, in relation to new genre public art and urban space, I think it is necessary also to open the notion of public space as a privileged site for stating disagreeing parts as necessary for politics, contesting of what is considered normal. Here space as such is not neutral but constructed throughout that process. To do that, I turn next to the theorisation of Henri Lefebvre's social production of space.

2.3 Production of Space: Lived, Conceived, Imagined

When we are discussing new genre public art, and the notion of urban space more broadly, I think it is important to consider how space is conceptualised and constructed. My understanding of space in this research is based on the theorisation of French philosopher Henri Lefebvre. In his book *The Production of Space* (1991), originally *La production de l'space* which was published in 1974, Lefebvre introduces a spatial triad which offers a tool to observe and analyse space from a point of view that, akin to Rancière's conceptualisation of politics, also highlights the importance of disagreeing coexisting agencies in space. Lefebvre (1991, p. 1, p. 68) criticises the geometric and mathematical notions of space and invites us to consider all human spaces as fundamentally social including history, society, consciousness and even nature. This highlights the processual aspect of production of space, implying that space is a complex social phenomenon where products and objects, practices and imagination all play a role (Lehtovuori, 2005, p. 74; Kumpulainen, 2012, pp. 33-34). New genre public

art as an activity in public space, participates in the manifold processes of social production of space, which I will open up next.

For Lefebvre (1991, p. 11) the experience of space is at the same time physical, mental and social. He has formulated a conceptual triad which is compiled from spatial practice, representations of space and representational spaces (1991, p. 33). *Spatial practice* or *perceived space*, as Lefebvre (1991, p. 38) describes it, is the first dimension in the production of space and it embraces production and reproduction. In a dialectical interaction, spatial practice produces space "slowly and surely" while mastering and appropriating it at the same time. Perceived space can be understood as spatial practices perceived in the daily life, ensuring continuity and cohesion. Spatial practice in the context of neo-capitalism incorporates a tight connection between daily routines and urban reality.

The second dimension is *representations of space* or *conceptualised space* which is "the space of scientists, planners, urbanists, technocratic subdividers and social engineers, -…- all of whom identify what is lived and what is perceived with what is conceived" (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 38). According to Lefebvre (1991, pp. 38-39, p. 33), "this is the dominant space in any society" and it is "tied to the relations of production and to the 'order' which those relations impose". Lefebvre (1991, p. 42) also says that "the representations of space have a practical impact, that they intervene in and modify spatial textures which are informed by effective knowledge and ideology". This is why representations of space have a significant impact in the production space.

Representational spaces or *lived space* is the third dimension of the spatial triad (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 39). Lived space is "the space of 'inhabitants' and 'users', but also some artists". It is passively experienced space that "imagination seeks to change and appropriate", kind of overlapping physical space and "making symbolic use of its objects". Representational spaces point toward "systems of non-verbal symbols and signs". For Lefebvre (1991, p. 42), "the only products of representational spaces are symbolic works", but in this research it is more interesting to consider the movement and embodied practices of the lived space.

It is a rather debated topic, how Lefebvre's spatial triad should be understood and interpreted (see, for example, Stanek & Schmid & Moravánszky, 2014). Lefebvre (1991, p. 46) says that "spatial practice, representations of space and representational spaces contribute in different ways to the production of space according to their qualities and attributes, according to the society -…-, and according to the historical period". He also points out that the relationship between these dimensions of the spatial triad is not static or straightforward. Lefebvre (1991, pp. 40-41) reminds us that the spatial triad is not intended to be only an abstract and theoretical model and thus directs our attention to the body. He points out that the perceived, conceived and lived spaces are interconnected and that people can move from one to another. Lefebvre describes representations of space as abstract but notes that they "play a part in social and political practice". This means that "established relations between objects and people in represented space are subordinate to a logic". But it is representational

spaces which do not need to follow the "rules of consistency or cohesiveness". They are related with the "imaginary and symbolic elements, they have their source in history - in the history of a people as well as in the history of each individual belonging to that people". Lefebvre (1991, p. 42) says that "representational space is alive: it speaks". It may be qualified as directional, situational or relational because it is essentially qualitative, fluid and dynamic. It is in this lived, representational space that the new genre public art is produced and experienced. Lefebvre (1991, p. 42) urges us to explore the history of space but reminds that also the history of representations and their relationship with each other, with practice and with ideology, that needs to be investigated. In my view, it is exactly this approach to history and the space that the curator of new genre public art is researching and considering when programming artworks for public spaces which can be understood to be participating in the process of production of space. Lefebvre (1991, p. 43) also points out that it is artistic creations that occupy the interstices between representations of space and representational space, between conceptualised and lived space. It is thus partly the space of the urbanist, the planner and the scientist, and partly the inhabitant and artist, that the curator works in, as will be later analysed through the data. The notion of lived space is connected to the everyday or everyday life, which is another theme Lefebvre (1991b) has written extensively about. Lefebvre (1991b, pp. 228-230) describes the everyday life as repetitive, boring and colonised in the capitalist structure, but also surprising and full of potential. The first aspect is the lived space dominated by representation, i.e. those in power, while the second refers to its potential to produce creative diversions and new socio-spatial constellations (Lehtovuori, 2005, p. 145). This is the point of connection between Rancière's potential for politics and the potentialities of social space, which Lefebvre (1991, p. 349) describes like this:

> Potentialities - of works and of reappropriation - existing to begin with in the artistic sphere but responding above all to the demands of a body 'transported' outside itself in space, a body which by putting up resistance inaugurates the project of a different space (either the space of a counter-culture, or a counter-space in the sense of an initially utopian alternative to actually existing 'real' space).

In my understanding, this counter-space can be activated through political activity in public space, such as the festivals which I have conceptualised as intrinsically political through their interventionist character of interrupting the regular uses of public spaces. But as pointed out by Dennis Büscher-Ulbrich (2012), it is the emergence of a political subject that "intervenes in the global capitalist production of -…- "abstract space" by actualising a "counter-space", and producing -…- a "differential space" or the potential for it". It can be described as an aesthetic experience, affecting what Büscher-Ulbrich calls "the "dissensual" constitution (in perception) and production (in spatial practice) of urban space".

It can be concluded that this kind of dissensus or disagreement both in terms of space and communal activity is the potential site of politics for which the urban context is very important. Next, I will move on to elaborate how Lefebvre

proposes us to understand cities and urban life through his concept "right to the city". This is the last part of the theoretical chapter, but extremely important when discussing festivals that contribute to the production of public space in their respective cities.

2.4 The Question of the Urban

Based on Lefebvre's spatial theory, the city can be understood as a process in a similar way as Ash Amin and Nigel Thrift have proposed in their process-oriented approach to urban theory (Amin & Thrift, 2002). Amin and Thrift (2002, p. 26) propose that the city should be seen as an institutionalised practice, a systematised network, in an expanded everyday urbanism. For them, everyday urbanism is marked by a certain humanism which is evident for example in the desire for face-to-face-contact and urban community. The formative element in the urban world is the encounter, and the reaction to it (Amin & Thrift, 2002, p. 30). Lefebvre (1991, p. 101) also states that the form of social space is encounter, assembly, simultaneity, and it is everything that there is in space, that assembles – everything that is produced by nature or by society, either through co-operation or conflict. Next I will look closer at Lefebvre's notion of the city and the urban and consider how the festivals can be understood in this framework.

In his article "Henri Lefebvre, the right to the city, and the new metropolitan mainstream", urban researcher Christian Schmid (2011, pp. 42-43) elaborates on Lefebvre's concept, "the right to the city", and its comeback in recent years. Schmid connects Lefebvre's spatial triad to his writings on cities and urbanisation which offers more concrete ways to grasp how the case festivals of this research contribute to the urban life in their respective cities. Although Lefebvre writes about 1960's France, and obviously the context of the cities related to the case festivals of this research is different, and Budapest, Copenhagen, Graz and Helsinki are also different from each other, his theorisations are central in discussions related to spatial practices. I understand them as tools to understand and analyse space and cities and as such, they can be utilised in contemporary contexts as many scholars, including Schmid, are also doing. In the discussion chapter, I will also expand Lefebvre's concepts to the contribution of contemporary geographers Amin and Thrift. "The right to the city" is based on Lefebvre's research on urbanisation in France in the 1960s and for him, the crisis of the city was related to "a tendency towards homogenisation of lifestyles and an engineering and colonisation of daily life" (Schmid, 2011, pp. 42-43). This tendency towards homogenisation is caused by "a universal rational shaped by technology" that is a result of industrialisation and forces of the global market (Schmid, 2011, p. 47). For Lefebvre (1996, p. 75), "urban life suggests meetings, the confrontation of differences, reciprocal knowledge and acknowledgement (including ideological and political confrontation), and ways of living, 'patterns' which coexist in a city". Right to the city means right to "urban life, to renewed centrality, to places of encounter and exchange, to life rhythms and time uses,

enabling the full and complete usage of these moments and places" (1996, p. 179). From this is follows, that every person has a right to the city, including "the collective creation of urban spaces in response to the needs, desires and pleasures of its inhabitants" (Stanek, Schmid & Moravánszky, 2014, p. 7).

According to Schmid (2011, pp. 44-48), the urban struggles in the late 1970s and early 1980s can be considered as struggles against systems of social exclusion and marginalisation, pointing out the necessary requirement for centrality and claim for the accessibility of the resources of the city. These struggles are related to "the spatial dialectics of center and periphery, and of appropriation and domination". In his theorisation of the urban, Lefebvre moved away from considering the city as a form to a process of urbanisation. His "thesis of the complete urbanization of society" claims that it is not possible to categorise contemporary social reality into "city" and "countryside". Instead, "they must be analyzed in terms of emerging urban society" which points towards understanding urban transformation as a long-lasting process. For Lefebvre, the city can be grasped through three core concepts which are mediation, centrality and difference. The urban is identified as "a specific level or order of social reality". It is an "intermediary and mediating level" connecting the global and private levels, serving as mediation. In this context of the complete urbanisation of society and the tendency to eliminate this level of mediation, Lefebvre suggests that the city should be regarded as a social resource. It forms "an essential device for the organisation of society" because it brings together different elements of society which also implies that it becomes productive. This leads Lefebvre to define the city as a centre. The city is a place of encounter, communication and information, as well as "a place where constraints and normality are dissolved, and are joined by elements of the playful and unpredictable". Centrality is not a geographic idea but refers instead to a pure form. "Its logic represents the synchronicity of objects and people that can be assembled around a given point". This implies that centrality as a form is not connected to the idea of carrying concrete content but it "defines the possibility for an encounter", which means that it is imaginary and social. This brings Lefebvre into the third characteristics of the urban, namely "the city as a place of difference". Schmidt describes how the distinctive quality of the urban emerges from difference:

> -…- the simultaneous presence of very different worlds and value-systems, of ethnic, cultural, and social groups, activities, and knowledge. Urban space creates the possibility of bringing together these different elements and making them productive. At the same time, however, they have a constant tendency to separate themselves from one another. The decisive question therefore is how these differences are experienced and lived in actual everyday life.

As this quote demonstrates, difference has multiple aspects that are related to daily life and political struggles and it must therefore considered an active part of the city.

As Schmid (2011, p. 49) points out, for Lefebvre, "the city is determined not by size, density or heterogeneity, but by the quality of active, everyday processes of interaction". Instead, Lefebvre's analysis shows that what marks the city is the

idea of city "as a place where differences encounter, acknowledge, and explore one another, and affirm or cancel out one another. Distances in space and time are replaced with opposites, contrasts, and superimpositions, and with the coexistence of multiple realities", pointing towards "a possibility and a promise, not an already achieved reality". Although Lefebvre idealises the idea of urban here, his key conceptualisation is that the urban must be constantly produced and reproduced.

Throughout *The Production of Space*, Lefebvre (1991, p. 40) reminds us of the body and that social practice presupposes the use of the body, highlighting that the spatial triad is not intended to be an abstract model. In fact, the body is immersed in spatial practice of the perceived/conceived/lived, and "the potential of the urban, that is a phenomenon in contact with the body, everyday life, lived culture and the city" (Stanek, Schmid & Moravánszky, 2014, p. 192, p. 320). Lefebvre's complement to the spatial triad is the concept of rhythmanalysis (Stanek, Schmid & Moravánszky, 2014, p. 13), which he began to develop in *The Production of Space* but that was not published as a book until after his death in 1992 (Lefebvre, 1996, pp. 29-31). Rhythmanalysis mixes different rhythms in the everyday and it can be considered as a way to understand "the struggle against time within time itself". Starting from the everyday rhythms of the body, rhythmanalysis was intended to be pluridisciplinary approach in which various rhythms of speech, thought, music, biological rhythms and "living rhythms" are all considered, including the rhythm of the city, where each city has its own. The rhythmanalyst thinks with their body, calling on all senses, in lived temporality, garbing themselves in the tissue of the everyday (Lefebvre, 2004, pp. 31-32). Without neglecting the spatial, the rhythmanalyst makes themselves sensitive to times and comes to "listen" to buildings, streets and a whole town. Lefebvre (2004, p. 37) states that "to grasp a rhythm it is necessary to have been grasped by it; one must let oneself go, give oneself over, abandon oneself to its duration". In order to grasp the fleeting rhythm, one must situate themselves at the same time inside and outside of it.

I understand rhythmanalysis as an embodied approach to perceive and experience urban space, but Lefebvre does not offer a clear method for it. For Lefevbre (cited in Amin & Thrift, 2002, p. 9), everyday life incorporates 'daily life', defined as recurrent human and material practices, the 'everyday' as an existential or phenomenological condition, and 'everydayness', understood as a kind of imminent life force running through everything. In Amin and Thrift's new urbanism, it is important to grasp the phenomenality of the urbanism of the everyday:

> An everyday urbanism has to get into the intermesh between flesh and stone, humans and non-humans, fixtures and flows, emotions and practices. But, what is to be kept in, and what out? Then, it needs to know the city beyond the powers of cognition, venturing into the realms of poetic invocation and sensory intimation. But, here too, the task is not unproblematic. How can we be sure that the latter take us into the city's virtuality? How do we avoid simply making empty gestures?

Amin and Thrift (2002, p. 9) propose three metaphors to capture recurring practices. The first one is transitivity which marks the spatial and temporal openness of the city. Following Lefebvre's rhythmanalysis, the second one captures the city as a place of manifold rhythms, forged through daily encounters and multiple experiences of time and space. The third one recognises the city as footprints, compiled of imprints from the past, the daily tracks of movement across and links beyond the city. Transitivity is often connected with the tradition of flânerie, the reflexive walker who through sensory, emotional and perceptual immersion in the passages of the city, engages in the encounter between mind and the city (Amin & Thrift, 2002, pp. 10-14). Considering the complexities of the contemporary cities, Amin and Thrift point out that the flâneur's poetic of knowing is not sufficient and that the transitivity of cities needs to be grasped through means such as technologies of knowing, historical guides and photographs charting change over time, imaginaries which illustrate the city in motion and books or films displaying the global connections of cities. Rhythms of the city are the coordinates through which inhabitants and visitors frame and order the urban experience, state Amin and Thrift (2002, pp. 17-18). Whereas the flâneur reads the city with a poetic sensibility, rhythmanalysis provides something that Lefebvre calls "spectral" distance, which is a more detached vantage point. But it is not possible to rearrange the city and the urban, only through looking at the signs of the city, hence why Lefebvre (1996, p. 143) calls for a praxis that "can take charge of -…- the gathering together of what gives itself as dispersed, dissociated, separated, and this in the form of simultaneity and encounters".

When thinking about new genre public art, I think it is possible to understand the artworks in urban spaces as interventions into the rhythms of the city which affect the urban experience. The interventions might be disruptive or supporting aiming to alter the rhythms of the city or bringing attention into a rhythm by reinforcing and highlighting it. The strategies can and do vary from one artwork to another, but on a theoretical level, as reoccurring events, the festivals can be understood as part of the multi-temporality of cities and during the festival, the artworks as interventions into the daily rhythms of the city. Lefebvre's rhythmanalysis as a method/way of grasping the rhythms of the city is an interesting tool to discuss the contribution of the festivals and artworks in the urban context and how it is through being and moving in the city as a bodily experience that we both experience and produce space.

Acknowledging encounter as the premise of the urban and as the characteristic of dialogical aesthetics, artworks in the framework of new genre public art create possibilities for encounters in the urban context. From this it follows, that I consider the curatorial practice of new genre public art as non-representational, which can be defined as a mode of thinking that seeks to immerse itself in everyday practice (Cadman, 2009, p. 1). Non-representational theory, which began to be formulated in the mid 1990s by geographer Nigel Thrift (2008), is both a methodology and a practice, and can be described as a theory of practice(s) (Cadman, 2009, p. 1; Dirksmeier & Helbrect, 2008, p. 7). The

main premises of non-representational theory are practice, everyday life, performance and performativity, embodiment and the body and virtuality and multiplicity (time and space). It attempts to take mundane, everyday activities seriously and, utilising Lefebvre's notion of 'everydayness', to engage with the very life of the everyday life, "that is, a transversal force, or an excess, which constitutes the everyday rhythms of, for example, world cities" (Cadman, 2009, p. 4). This focus on practice and everyday life is linked to notions of performance and performativity, as performativity is constitutive of the ongoing nature of practice. It is not possible, nor my intention to further focus on non-representational theory here. I simply refer to it as a methodology and practice that tries to capture the "onflow" of everyday life (Thrift, 2008, p. 5), which I find a valuable contribution in the move away from understanding curatorial practice as production of representations and towards a performative practice embedded in the city.

2.5 Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I have focused on the theoretical framework around the concepts of new genre public art, politics and production of space. Focusing on Suzanne Lacy's conceptualisation, I have described the activist background and nature of new genre public art and the significance of direct engagement of diverse audiences in artistic processes. New genre public art includes political intention although it is not connected to specific themes or sites. However, it's connection to a broader context of political and social life relates to the changing role of both the artist and audience and expands them from the modernist and post-modernist tradition. I have utilised Grant H. Kester's dialogical aesthetics as a framework to understand new genre public art as a dialogical practice. Dialogical aesthetics defines dialogue itself as aesthetic which includes both the verbal and corporeal interaction. With clear connections to both new genre public art and the tradition of community art, the discussion of communities and audiences are central in dialogical aesthetics. In Kester's thinking, the key point is the artist's ability to create the emancipatory insights through intersubjective exchange.

I have shown the connections of new genre public art and dialogical aesthetics to the tradition of the neo-avant-garde and the political turmoil of the 1960s. The political and activist nature of these artistic practices as described by Lacy and Kester differs from my understanding of politics, which I have outlined along the theorisation of Jacques Rancière. Through Rancière's concepts of distribution of the sensible, police, politics, political, subjectivisation and democracy, I outline art and politics as forms of dissensual activity as they have the potential to disrupt the social hierarchy. This is also how Rancière sees aesthetics as central to politics. Through a brief explanation of three regimes of art identified by Rancière, I explain how in the aesthetic regime, art has a political dimension to the degree that the position of individuals and groups within society is modified or changed in both processes of production and reception of

art. This also means that contemporary art does not need to adopt political themes because it already has its politics.

The potential to disrupt the given distribution of the sensible connects Rancière to Henri Lefebvre because urban space as a site of disagreeing parts is necessary for politics. I go through Lefebvre's spatial triad and show how spatial practice, representations of space and representational spaces contribute to the production of space in different ways. I outline new genre public art as an activity of the lived space and the practice of the curator taking place in the interstices of representations of space and representational spaces. After discussing the spatial triad, I focus on Lefebvre's writings on cities and the urban through his concepts of mediation, centrality and difference. I explain the city as a place of encounter where differences are brought together and experienced. I also connect Amin and Thrift's concept of everyday urbanism and Lefebvre's rhythmanalysis as embodied approaches to perceive and experience urban space. Finally, I connect dialogical aesthetics and the premise of the urban through encounters because I understand new genre public art as a potential for creating encounters in the urban context. I describe the curatorial practice of new genre public art as non-representational, as I see it as a practice that is immersed in the everyday which leads me to define it as a performative practice embedded in the city.

In the next chapter, I will describe the data and methods used in this research.

3 DATA AND METHODS

In this chapter, I introduce the research methodologies and the empirical data of the research. I begin by describing the multiple case studies as a research type, and approach, interview and observation as methods of gathering empirical data. I then proceed by explaining content analysis as a method I used in analysing interviews and photographs which is followed by a discussion of my own position as a researcher and curator. I then continue by introducing the empirical data. I go through the interviews, observations, case introductions, photographs and other documents utilised in the research process and then introduce the case festivals. Each case introduction is followed by my observations of the festivals including a few photographs.

3.1 A Case Study

From the methodological and science philosophical starting points, this research is a qualitative multiple-case study. It is characterised by an interpretative paradigm that emphasises subjective experiences and their meanings for an individual (Starman, 2013, p. 30), in this case both the interviewed curators and me as a researcher. This means that the researcher's subjective views play a vital part in the results. In this research, it is through the four cases that I explore and produce new knowledge about the phenomenon of curatorial practices of new genre public art utilising an interpretative paradigm. This approach has enabled me to reach an overall understanding of the phenomenon of curatorial practices of new genre public art. I understand case study here as a general term which includes the description of the individual case and its analysis with the purpose to understand the curatorial practice as a phenomenon (Starman, 2013, p. 31).

Typically to case studies, my research has been guided by the questions of "what", "how" and "why", and there is very little existing empirical research of the research topic which is a phenomenon connected to contemporary real-life, and as a researcher, I have had no control of the cases (Eriksson & Koistinen,

2014, p. 5). I have studied the cases concurrently which means that this study can be classified as a parallel study (Starman, 2013, pp. 32-33). It is usual in multiple case studies to study the cases as singular and then compare them to each other (Starman, 2013, p. 33). However, in this research I have decided not to compare cases or curatorial practices of each individual case but aimed to understand them as a larger phenomenon.

During the research process I have focused on the real-life and the subjective views of the interviewees whereas the aim of the research has been to formulate a theoretically comprehensive analysis of the research topic. Multiple case study as a research approach has enabled the contextualisation of the curatorial practice of new genre public art as well as defining the phenomenon. This research can be understood as a collective case study as it is formed by several cases with the central aim to appose them (Eriksson & Koistinen, 2014, p. 16). Through multiple cases, my aim has been to reach a deeper understanding of the phenomena and contribute to its theorisation. This research aims to understand and describe a phenomenon of curatorial practice of new genre public art and to find common characteristics of the phenomena. My objective is to develop new theoretical ideas and to complement existing concepts.

Case study has been criticised especially in comparison with quantitative research methods for not producing knowledge that can be statistically generalised (Eriksson & Koistinen, 2014, pp. 37-38). It is important to keep in mind that this has not been the aim of this research either. The main idea is to produce in-depth information and knowledge of the phenomenon of curatorial practices of new genre public art. Another reoccurring criticism concerns the selection bias which focuses on the subjective case selection and argues against the researcher's prior knowledge (Starman, 2013, p. 36). However, it can also be argued that having prior knowledge of the cases may positively impact the research plan. There are also procedures such as thorough explanation of the process of collecting data and general documentation of information in order to achieve reliability (Starman, 2013, p. 36).

This research process has followed the outline of main phases of a case study, including formulating research questions, defining the research frame, selecting the cases, defining the theoretical viewpoints and concepts, finding out the logic between empirical data and research questions, choosing the method of analysis and selecting the way of reporting (Eriksson & Koistinen, 2014, p. 22). My research process started in the autumn 2013 when I was drafting the initial research plan, formulating the research questions and choosing the cases. The spring of 2014 I spent developing the research plan, familiarising myself with the theoretical framework, main concepts and existing research. Although the process of deepening my theoretical knowledge and reading existing research has continued throughout the research, this phase in 2014 was important in preparing for the research approach and collection of empirical data which I begun in the autumn of 2015 by visiting the Metropolis festival in Copenhagen and conducting my first interview and observations there. The data collection continued in the spring of 2016 at IHME festival in Helsinki, followed by

interviewing the artistic director Fanni Nanay from PLACCC festival and visiting Steirischer Herbst and doing interviews and observations there in the autumn. The final activity related to the collection of data was in the autumn 2018 when I visited PLACCC festival in Budapest and did my last observations there. After I had conducted all of the interviews by the autumn of 2016, the transcribing took place in December 2016 and January 2017. The main focus in 2017 and 2018 was in the analysis of the interviews during which I worked periodically, reading, re-reading and many times returning to the interview data and choosing the method of analysis. Alongside the analysis, I also worked on the theoretical framework identifying and clarifying the main concepts. The final phase of the research process took place in 2019 when I was working on the script.

3.2 Gathering of Data

Typically to case studies, this research includes several types of empirical data, namely interviews, case introductions, observations, photographs, festival catalogues and websites in order to deepen my knowledge and understanding of the cases as well as to better answer the research questions (Eriksson & Koistinen, 2014, pp. 30-31). Interviews are used as a method to produce new knowledge and observation and photography as a method to bring the researcher's experience into dialogue with the interview data. In order to produce new knowledge of curatorial practices of new genre public art, it is natural to ask about those practices from the curators themselves and this is why I chose interviews as one of the methods to gather empirical data. As my research questions are not simple and straight forward, using interviews as a method allows for elaboration on specific questions and themes, and it is a situation where the interviewee can rather freely think aloud.

In terms of setting up the interviews, I decided to get in touch with the festivals directly by email, present the research topic shortly and ask whether they would be interested in being one of the cases and who they think would be best to interview from their organisation. In selecting who to interview from the case festivals, I went forward with their proposals. With most cases this was pretty straight forward, as they are small organisations and there is usually one employed person in charge of the artistic programme. Steirischer Herbst was an exception in this sense, as they employ an artistic director and a curatorial team. That's why I ended up interviewing two persons from Steirischer Herbst, both the artistic director and the visual arts curator, as this was proposed by the artistic director.

The conducted interviews can be described as focused or semi-structured interviews (Hirsjärvi & Hurme, 2015, p. 47). I had prepared a series of questions following the themes of the research questions but did not ask them in the same order in each interview. I also did not ask every question in each interview. If an interviewee had already spoken about the subject of a question spontaneously or in relation to another question, I skipped it. For some interviewees, the time

available for the interview was limited, and depending on how long the answers they gave were, there wasn't enough time to go through all the prepared questions. In those situations, I had to prioritise during the interview which questions to ask in order to make sure that the interviewee had talked about each theme of the research questions to some extent. Instead of detailed questions, the interview proceeded thematically (Hirsjärvi & Hurme, 2015, p. 48).

My aim was to set up a relaxed atmosphere so that the interviewees would feel comfortable and answer the questions as freely as possible. I conducted all the interviews personally and due to my knowledge and expertise in the field of curating, I was able to discuss the themes with the curators and evaluate which questions to ask and when and which to skip entirely. However, my aim was to encourage the interviewees to describe their role and work as abundantly as possible and not to impose them with my opinions. I organised the interviews in places proposed by the interviewees, mostly in cafes or restaurants and one in the office of the festival. I used a digital voice recorder to record the interviews. I conducted the interviews during the festivals with the exception of Fanni Nanay from PLACCC who I interviewed in Amsterdam during the IETM meeting that we both attended in 2016. This was due to the fact that PLACCC wasn't organised every year because of several issues.

Along with the interviews, I have written short introductions of the case festivals and gathered observations during my visits to the festivals because I thought that they would provide another perspective of cases and thus enrich the contribution of the research to the field. Observation is a very useful method to analyse interaction (Hirsjärvi & Hurme, 2015, p. 38), and as I was interested in the dialogue between new genre public art and public spaces, I thought that my observations would be another type of empirical data that would provide information along the speech of the curators. Observation also allows me to see things in the right context (Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 2018, p. 70).

In my observations, I focused mainly on the activities in public spaces following the themes of my research questions. These activities included things like how the sites of the artworks were marked, how easy it was to find them, how did I experience navigating the cities in search of the artworks, how the audiences behaved and engaged with the artworks and how the artworks contributed to the production of public space. It is important to note that my aim has not been to analyse the artworks. To support my observations, I also took photographs on each site with my mobile phone. The program I followed during each festival visit was determined by what was available on the days of my visit and in the case of multiple programs, I went to see works that best fitted my research area of new genre public art. During some artworks I made notes on my mobile phone on site, but mostly I wrote notes at the end of the day on the computer. These were diary like quick notes, some more descriptive while others were just a list of things that I had noticed and paid attention to. It was only during the process of writing the script, partly because earlier I was not sure how I would utilise the observations in the analysis or how to present them as part of the research, that I wrote those notes into more descriptive chronological

personal journal like stories. In this process, the photographs I had taken functioned as a way to refresh my memory and I also utilised the websites of the festivals to check details of the events.

As both the theoretical chapter and this outline of data gathering methods show, my research is multidisciplinary and multi-methodological relating to art education, cultural policy and cultural studies. Triangulation is a typical tool utilised in case studies to evaluate the research and both data source and theory triangulation have been utilised in the process to ensure reliability of the research (Eriksson & Koistinen, 2014, p. 46). Data sources include; interviews, observations, photographs, case introductions and other documents; and spatial theory, art theory and political theory have been utilised in the analysis and discussion of the phenomena of curatorial practices of new genre public art.

3.3 Content Analysis

This text data I then began to analyse using a qualitative content analysis method, which can also be described as inductive, as I have moved from data to a theoretical understanding (Graneheim, Lindgren & Lundman, 2017). This research also leans on the hermeneutic circle in the process of understanding and analysing the empirical data (Anttila, 2014). I have gone through the data many times in order to understand it, and also to become aware of my own assumptions and pre-understanding of the research topic. Through this process I have been able to define my own approach and the central points of the data.

I printed out all the transcriptions and organised the transcribed data into three thematic categories relating to my research questions. Thematisation of the research material can be described as reducing the material in order to bring up the most relevant things (Aaltola & Valli, 2010, p. 55). In creating the themes, I read the material several times aiming to find the most relevant meanings while 'listening' to the material carefully and critically, returning to it several times, reading and re-reading it. I used different colours and highlighted each theme with a certain colour on the printed documents. The first theme was the festival context into which I gathered all text material relating to it. Into this theme I included material describing the aims of the festivals, the organisation, the ideologies behind the festivals, the social and dialogical working methods of the festivals and material relating to audience. The second theme was the curatorial practice which comprises all the material in which the curators talk about their work and material which implies specific skills or conditions which influence the curatorial practice. The third theme was public space into which I gathered all text material referring to public space, city and urbanity. I then created new themed files on Word, copied the highlighted parts and colour coded parts from the interview files, and pasted them to the files according to the themes. After this, I began the further analysis of these themes. It is from these three thematic categories, that I have then further sub-themed the data according to its relevance to my research questions. Having read the data several times and considered it

in relation to my theoretical framework, the sub-themes emerged from this cycle of reading, considering, re-reading and re-considering. The cohesive thread has come from returning to the research questions.

The first theme I analysed was the festival context which I sub-themed into four categories of 'political but not activist', 'dialogical and social', 'following the structures of the art world' and 'audience' which I found from the interview data. The theme of curatorial practice I sub-themed to three categories of 'curatorial practices', 'curators' power in the art world' and 'curators' power in the public sphere'. Curatorial practices encompass the practical side of curating, curators' power in the art world discusses how the curators see their power within the art world and their organisation, and curators' power in the public sphere focuses on curators' power in the city and the public sphere. The sub-themes of the theme of public space included 'curators' ideas about public space and new genre public art', 'connecting the local & the global' and 'practice embedded in the city'.

In addition to the interviews, I also utilised content analysis in analysing the photographs I took during my visits to the case festivals. The photographs selected along my observations of the case festivals visualise especially research questions 2 and 3, as they illustrate some of the aims of the curators regarding urban space and their understanding between new genre public art and urban space.

3.4 Researcher and Curator

For the past 19 years I have worked as a curator in the field of new genre public art. My main experience comes from being one of the co-founders of the ANTI - Contemporary Art Festival (Kuopio, Finland) and working for establishing and developing the festival since 2002. Since 2009, my job title has been artistic director - senior manager, which means that I am leading the organisation including programming, strategic planning, staff management and financial management. ANTI is an international site-specific contemporary art festival which focuses on presenting artworks in public and everyday spaces and places in the city of Kuopio annually. The festival is open to all forms of art but the central idea in all the works is the relationship to a specific site, public space or the urban context of Kuopio. The connection to site can be varied and the festival's approach to ideas of site has also changed and developed during its 19-year history (Tuukkanen, 2016, pp. 49-50). My position and role at the ANTI Festival is very similar to that of the interviewed curators.

Inevitably my work experience has influenced this research. My general interest in new genre public art and curatorial practices has grown from this professional experience but it has also impacted the interviews and how I have analysed and considered them. All the curators I interviewed were aware of and knew the ANTI Festival although none of them had actually visited the festival. I believe this knowledge created mutual trust between myself as the interviewer and the curators because we shared a common ground of curating art for urban

spaces and working in a festival context. During the interviews this shared experience of working in the context of new genre public art created an atmosphere in which the curators could talk freely because I could understand very well what they were talking about and how they were describing their practice. Even though I could have engaged in a more conversational mode in the interviews, I decided to stick to the role of the interviewer. I did not comment or offer my own opinions to their answers. Instead, I focused on listening, trying to ask the most relevant questions, encouraging them to elaborate on the questions as freely as possible and at times asking them to specify their answers. In this process I used both my theoretical and practical knowledge of the research topic.

In framing this research, one of the first choices I made was not to include ANTI Festival as a case because I thought that it would be difficult to have one case in which I would be so personally involved in while the other cases I had either very little or no previous experience of. However, I have brought into the research my observations of the case festivals which allows for my subjective experience to have a presence in the research without analysing my own curatorial practice or the festival I direct. My observations and the photographs of the events also function as a counterpoint to at times idealistic speech of the curators in chapter 5. Throughout the process of analysis, I have tried to be aware of my own assumptions and pre-understanding and follow ethical principles of scientific research. I have purposefully taken distance from the data and returned back to it with a critical approach. This process of taking distance and coming back to the data several times during the research process has functioned for me as a reflective method of evaluating my analysis, listening to the data and becoming more conscious of my pre-understanding. I have aimed at credibility in reporting the results of the analysis precisely, but my own position has undeniably affected the process of analysis. Being aware of this, I have utilised both data and theory triangulation and used direct quotes abundantly as arguments in the analysis chapter in order to show to the reader how the results have been achieved.

While practicing criticality and utilising distancing, I have tried to be transparent of my position and involvement in the field by clarifying it here and in the introductory chapter, as well as by explaining openly and precisely the research process and how I have come to the results of the analysis, following the guidelines of ethical research. Although my position can be seen as problematic, it also has its advantages. I believe it adds to the in-depth knowledge that this research produces because it has allowed me to formulate interview questions that tease out some of the specificities of curatorial practice of new genre public art and thus bring new knowledge about this practice. The idea of subjective bias has been discussed a lot in relation to case studies and there are conflicting views about it (see, for example, Flyvbjerg, 2006; Baškarada, 2014). While I have aimed at transparency and criticality regarding my own position, it is useful to keep in mind that subjectivism and bias toward verification are not challenges of case studies and qualitative methods only but apply to all methods (Flyvbjerg, 2006).

3.5 Description of Data

The main aim of the research has been to produce new knowledge which is based on a new way to understand curatorial practices of new genre public art. The starting point of the research is based both on the theoretical understanding of the research topic and my own experience in the field which has formed my pre-understanding of the research topic. As already outlined, the empirical data consists of interviews, observations, photographs and other documents that I have gathered from four cases. The four international cases are IHME Festival (Finland), Metropolis (Denmark), PLACCC Festival (Hungary) and Steirischer Herbst (Austria). They are festivals that present artworks in the framework of new genre public art and focus on contemporary artistic practices, site-specificity and urban space. Steirischer Herbst, which is the largest festival of the four cases, presents artworks also in museums and performance venues such as theatres, but the interviews focused on their programme in the public space. These four festivals are diverse in their content, size, life cycle and organisation structure and they are realised in very different contexts. They have enabled the production of new knowledge that is rich and multifaceted and supported by the concrete context of the festivals.

Due to my research interest in curatorial practices, it was important to select cases that are reoccurring, not just single events. In this sense, festivals turned out to be a pragmatic choice. These four festivals are diverse in scale and context, and although I had not visited all of them prior to this research, I was aware of their artistic vision and commitment to public space. Some of the curators I had met previously in professional networks or conferences. I met curator Kira Kirsch who at the time was working for Steirischer Herbst and artistic director Fanni Nanay through the European funded network called Space Destinations managed by Onda in 2013-14 and became fascinated by their curatorial visions and approach to public space through their presentations at the network meetings. It was also through the Space Destinations that I heard the keynote speech by Trevor Davies, the artistic director of Metropolis in a conference in Brussels and was intrigued by Metropolis's contribution to the city and engagement of citizens in artistic processes. I also wanted to include a Finnish case in the research and chose IHME Festival because of their commitment to urban space and experience of commissioning temporary public artworks.

The only festival of these cases I had visited before starting this research was Steirischer Herbst. Supported by the Space Destination, I visited the festival in 2014 and brought along ANTI Festival's production assistant and one local artist from Kuopio to a study trip to experience and observe how a large scale, more established festival is programmed, managed and communicated. My prior knowledge of the case festivals was thus mostly based on curators' presentations of specific projects, websites and loosely having followed their programming from afar. In order to further articulate why precisely I chose these festivals, it could be described that their curatorial approach was not limited to one art form

or practice such as visual art. Coming from a performing arts background, I am often frustrated by the dominance of visual art practices in relation to the discussions of new genre public art as well as literature and research on curating. Thus, I was keen to include cases that demonstrated a diversity of artistic practices in their programmes and considered performative works as part of their programmes in urban spaces. I was also interested in differences in scale both in terms of artistic programs and organisational structure although these often go hand in hand.

Naturally, there are also other festivals that present new genre public art, but in the framework of my research, the purpose is not to demonstrate where and how many festivals programme new genre public art but to generate new, in depth knowledge of curatorial practices of new genre public art. So, it was important to select cases that I could visit and organise interviews in, considering both available time and financial resources.

The interviews generated understanding especially to research questions 1 and 2. The interview data is compiled of 5 interviews which I conducted in 2015-16. The interviewees were artistic director Trevor Davies (Metropolis, 2015), general manager Paula Toppila (IHME, 2016), artistic director Fanni Nanay (PLACCC, 2016), artistic director Veronica Kaup-Hasler (2016) and curator Luigi Fassi (2016). The interviews, which I recorded as Mp3 files using a digital voice recorder and compiled of sound data, totalled altogether 7 hours 17 minutes, and I transcribed this data using a programme called Audacity, which is freely downloadable on the internet. The transcribing took place in December 2016 and January 2017. I transcribed all the interviews from word to word from the beginning of the sound file to the very end. I also wrote down utterances such as "hmm" and "a-ha" but I did not note specific intonations or weights on certain words. I saved the transcribed interviews as individual documents using Word and the text of five interviews compiled altogether 141 pages (Times New Roman 12, line spacing 1,5). The process of transcribing was important as I spent a lot of time with the interview material, listening to what the curators said often several times, and writing down everything that was said aloud. This time allowed me to actively think about the data over several months and it also made returning to specific parts of the interviews easier later on.

For research question 3, concerning the dialogue between new genre public art and public space, I aimed to answer this through the interviews, my observations and the visual photographic material I collected during my visits to the festivals. I have written observations of each case and they form four different journal like stories which are based on my observations and experiences during the festivals. They compile 15 pages (Times New Roman 12, line spacing 1,5). The texts are accompanied with a selection of photographs I took on my mobile phone during the visits. I refer to these observations in chapter 5, where I discuss the analysis of the interviews, and they provide a different viewpoint to the speech of the interviewed curators. The photographs function as a way to visualise some of the observations regarding the public space and they bring reliability to the research. From a total of 527 photographs, I have included 14 in this research. The

number of photographs in relation to the cases varies because the number of artworks that I experienced at the festivals was different. It should be noted that I am not a photographer and that I have used a regular smart phone to take the photographs. They are by no means intended to be regarded as high quality photographs but rather as documentations of the events.

Along with the interviews, observations and photographs, I have utilised the festivals' websites, festival brochures and catalogues as a background material in the process of writing the case introductions for understanding the case festivals, and when necessary, as reference materials for information.

3.6 Chapter Summary

In this chapter I have outlined the empirical data used in this research and how I have gathered it. I have explained the content analysis method that I used in analysing interviews and photographs and discussed my own position as a researcher and curator in the research process. I have described the empirical data which includes interviews, observations, case introductions, photographs and other documents. The next chapter is dedicated to the analysis of the data. The first part consists of the analysis of the interviews in which the focus is on the voices of the curators of the case festivals. The case introductions, my observations and photographs are presented in the second part.

4 ANALYSIS

This chapter, which is divided into two parts, provides answers to my research questions and focuses on the content analysis. In the first part 4.1, the focus is on the analysis of the interviews, and the case festival introductions, my observations and photographs that I have taken during my visits to the festivals are presented in the second part 4.2.

Sections 4.1.1 and 4.1.2 bring answers to research question 1, in which I have asked what are the typical curatorial practices and roles in the context of new genre public art, and regarding their implementation, why? Section 4.1.1 focuses on the curatorial practices of new genre public art and reveals the characteristics of the practice and shows what it implies in very practical terms and why. Section 4.1.2 is dedicated to curators' perspectives on public space and their understanding of the concept of audience. Sections 4.1.3. and 4.1.4 are related especially to the second research question which asks what are curators' aims in relation to urban space; and how do they discuss power and the political. In section 4.1.3 I analyse how the interviewed curators understand and conceptualise the festivals, their function and position in their respective cities. It includes three political agendas that I have identified from the interviews. Section 4.1.4 opens up curators' thinking of what it means to program a festival and how they see festivals as a dialogical form of cultural production and as part of urban life of cities. Both parts of the analysis chapter 4.1 and 4.2 bring answers to my third research question; how do curators see the relationship between new genre public art and urban space and how is this manifested in their choice of artworks.

Throughout the analysis I interpret the discussion utilising the theoretical framework outlined in chapter 2, and the general curatorial discourse described in the introduction. The actual discussion of the results is not the focus in this chapter, as I will concentrate on this in chapter 5; Rethinking Curatorial Practices.

4.1 Analysis of the Interviews

This first part of the analysis chapter is dedicated to the voices of the interviewed curators. I have divided it into four sections which are Curating new genre public art (4.1.1), The curators' views on urban space (4.1.2), The festival context's three agendas (4.1.3) and Festivals as dialogical actors (4.1.4).

4.1.1 Curating New Genre Public Art

In the context of new genre public art, curators have and exercise power both within the art world and the cities and their urban spaces. Undeniably, the curator is a powerful figure, affecting artists' careers, income and opportunities but also in shaping what kind of art gets made and produced. This in my view is a very dominating and significant factor in the context of new genre public art because its creation and production often require partners and/or involvement of people as participants in the framework of dialogical aesthetics (Tuukkanen, 2013, 39). Usually this means, that the productions do not take place without funding, production and/or presenting partner/s meaning solely through an initiative of the artist. The work cannot be realised alone by the artist in their studio and afterwards gets "discovered" or "picked up" by a curator. This foregrounds the role of the curator in the context of new genre public art. In this section I focus on how the curators speak about their work and how they describe their practice in very pragmatic terms. I will show that the curatorial practice requires time, local knowledge and knowledge of the art field as well as producing, management and communication skills. I analyse their practice as dialogical because it is based on openness, flexibility, diplomacy, creativity and listening, and because it requires excellent teamwork skills.

4.1.1.1 Characteristics of Curatorial Practice of New Genre Public Art

In this research, curatorial practice takes place within a festival context which sets specific parameters around the work of the curators in terms of time frame, financial resources and types of artworks. The programming time frame varies from festival to festival and it is not necessarily related to the size or funding of it. IHME invites the commissioned artist about two years in advance and as described by Trevor Davies, Metropolis also works in a two-year span although after their lab, invited artists have less than a year to develop and produce their projects. According to Luigi Fassi, he has about 10 months to envision the visual arts programme where as Fanni Nanay, due to the Hungarian funding cycle and financial insecurity of PLACCC, has around four to five months to make the programme. Although the actual time span for most of the festivals seems rather short, the curators are continuously engaging with the artistic field, seeing and experiencing what the artists are doing and thus building their knowledge of potential artists and projects for their context in the future. This knowledge, good networks and personal relationships are very important in the context where the

curators are expected to create an international festival programme in a relatively short time.

In fact, time is crucial for curatorial practice. To my question about the most important skills, methods and working tools, Fanni Nanay immediately replied: "Very important is time. More time that I have now." She describes how the lack of time makes creating and producing the festival really difficult. Nanay's answer implies that creating a festival programme is a process that requires conceptual work overtime which roots the practice in the idea of the durational, as described by O'Neill and Doherty (2011). It also relates to characteristics of new genre public art and dialogical aesthetics, which include processual artworks that are often created in collaboration and dialogue with people and/or communities (Kester, 2004, 2011; Lacy, 1995). As also pointed out by Nanay, time as such is not a skill but a necessity one must have in order to keep up a curatorial practice and to create festival programmes in the context of new genre public art. The second most important skill Nanay points out grounds the festival to the concept of locality which she describes like this:

> Local embedding and knowledge. And contact with the places and the people, I think it's very important, maybe not the most important, but I think it's very very important to be a real contact because as I said, maybe not in case of every festival, but this kind of festival. (Fanni Nanay, PLACCC)

Nanay's quote above shows that for a festival focusing on new genre public art, local knowledge is extremely important which is a view shared by all the interviewed curators. It's important in terms of envisioning projects, planning artistic programmes and developing the festival. If the curator does not have pre-existing knowledge of a certain issue, they do research or seek to collaborate with people who do have the kind of knowledge they are interested in. The collaboration can take place within their organisation, for example with producers and assistants, or with other experts. The highly valued local knowledge also extends to consideration of locals, the citizens living in the city or a specific neighbourhood, as the aim is to programme artworks that have relevance to local people and communities.

As I have already shown in section 1.1, the educational and professional background of a curator can vary a lot. In regard to the interviewed curators of new genre public art in this research, I describe their education more specifically in section 4.2. However, the interviewed curators think that the educational background is not so important but there are several skills and characteristics that came up in the interviews, which they find most important and useful in their work. Next I will focus on these.

The self-evident requirement for curatorial practice is a good knowledge of the art field in which the curator works and locates their practice. This was also brought up by all the interviewees. To keep up with this knowledge, curators are constantly seeing artworks and having meetings with artists. Traveling to festivals and events to see and experience a lot of artworks is an important part of the curatorial practice which all the curators mentioned. In fact, traveling is such a big part of the everyday work of the curator that, according to Luigi Fassi,

to stop traveling means the end of your career. The curators visit many festivals and events internationally and see as many artworks locally as possible, as described by Fanni Nanay, or conduct research in a specific city for a month, which was an example given by Luigi Fassi. This knowledge of current artistic practices and artists' interests creates the knowledge that enables the curator to envision artworks and projects in their local context. When curators are working on the festival framework and being aware of the local social political issues, through their knowledge of the art field they are then able to imagine which artists could respond to those issues. This kind of practice relates to all types of projects in the festival programme whether a commission, adaptation of an existing concept or a work by local artists.

For curators, traveling is not only about seeing and experiencing art, but networking and building their connections in the art world. Fanni Nanay mentions that she travels partly because PLACCC is a member of the In Situ network, which is one of the networks supported by the European Union Culture funds. For smaller festivals like PLACCC, these EU supported networks are extremely important opportunities through which curators learn about artists, some of their trips are paid by, and through which some projects are financially supported to be presented at the festivals. Through networking, the curators also develop projects and co-productions with other festivals, organisations and artists. However, for example, Veronica Kaup-Hasler talks about how she wants to be very close and connected to the artists which is not necessarily supported by the institutionalised networking model. In fact, most curators talked about the mutual trust between artists and curators being an essential requirement of a successful commission.

Besides needing to have time, excellent knowledge of the art field and local knowledge, Fanni Nanay talks about the need for openness, flexibility, teamwork skills, patience and creativity. A kind of creativity and flexibility are also put forward by Luigi Fassi, when he points out the importance of being able to react to unexpected situations as something unforeseen always happens in a festival context:

> You have to respond all the time to the situation so this is why it's completely different than curating within white cube or like a contained space like a Kunsthalle or…or a museum so…It's… something unexpected always happens, every year. (Luigi Fassi, Steirischer Herbst)

This flexibility is related to the characteristics of new genre public art, as there are a lot of uncontrollable parameters when working in urban spaces and with people and communities which was also brought up by Paula Toppila. It is entirely different than working within the confined space of a theatre or museum, for example, as Fassi's quote demonstrates and this chapter unravels. But flexibility is also related to artistic production as it is not possible to control artists' creativity, and this also requires flexibility and understanding from the curators.

Curators are not only expected to be able to react to unexpected situations, but they also need to have an awareness of current socio-political issues on a local

level and a kind of sensitivity to acknowledge and assess which are the issues that a festival with political agendas should address. Here the case of the 'zaun', the metal border barrier that Austria decided to erect on the Slovenian and Italian borders in 2015-2016 as a response to the European migrant crisis, is a good example discussed by Luigi Fassi:

> We all felt like we could not, we cannot oversee that. We cannot just you know generate a leitmotiv speaking about art and culture and politics without really tackling that (Luigi Fassi, Steirischer Herbst)

Managing these kinds of multiple and at times conflicting agendas where there are local, regional and national politics at play, also in regard to the festivals' funding, might put the curator in a position where they need to have skills of diplomacy and negotiation. When talking about the processes of production of an artwork, along with sensitivity, Toppila highlights empathy for the aspirations of the artist.

> In my view the most important thing [in an artistic process] is a kind of sensitivity and empathy towards the aims of the artist. So that the artist feels that it goes right. In the process of making an artwork there is a vast number of nuances that are very very important for the final artwork and what it actually mediates and what the work talks about so everything matters, like the choices made on details in the realisation. (Paula Toppila, IHME Festival)

Toppila's quote shows that the positioning of the curator in the artistic process is that of an art expert and a supporter of the aspirations and visions of the artist, someone who understands the artist and is able to think and propose practical solutions for the realisation of artworks. This leads to aspects of listening, mentoring and supporting artists which are an integral part of the process of working with artists. Trevor Davies actually talks about his role more as a mentoring than curating when he describes how he accompanies artists in the process of producing artworks:

> You have to be very… not force it… you have to be able to go into a dialogue on different levels and about how much you ought to… how close you have to get to the work or how not. Or whether you just concentrate on practical solutions or find a space or support them in discussing things with people or whatever. It's more a mentoring role than I'd say a curating role because you are both deciding on things, you are actually mentoring them in a context they are not maybe knowledgeable about and they feel maybe that they are out of their depth in a way and they need some support or interpretation somehow. (Trevor Davies, Metropolis)

The kind of role Davies describes above is supportive and dialogical. Pointing out the significance of the local knowledge that the curator can offer, he sees his role in relation to the artist as a mentor who accompanies them and helps them to realise their artwork in the best possible way. Sometimes this work is very practical and other times more conceptual. This kind of sensitivity and listening takes place also in relation to the city and the local context.

In the creative process the curators are encouraging artists to take risks and challenge their practice, but it is also risk taking for the curators. Whereas Paula

Toppila talks about artists creating kinds of works that they are not famous for, Fassi and Kaup-Hasler talked about creating a new work without any idea of the outcome. Taking risks relates to both the nature of commissioning artworks and new genre public art as an art form which is entirely different to inviting already existing, touring performances or exhibitions to the festival. Along with a set of skills, namely; knowledge of the art world, local context and creativity, this kind of curatorial practice requires certain personal qualities like the above-mentioned openness, flexibility, sensitivity and empathy which of course can be developed and learned to some extent.

As the nature of curatorial practice encompasses creating programmes, choosing topics and artists and selecting artworks, I will next look at how the curators talked about not specific artists but the process before, the ideas and motifs they discussed prior to the decision of which artist to invite to their festivals. All the interviewed curators work with an artistic team, committee or board, whether as a volunteer based expert group or as employed by the festival, and they seem to be very satisfied with this arrangement. Curators value the possibility to discuss the artistic programme and engage in conversation with other art and urban experts. They value long-term working relationships with these artistic committees and Nanay also makes a statement against the rather short, fixed term periods of artistic directors that is common in some festivals. The dialogue with peers in the form of artistic committees is a way to discuss ideas and share a thinking process, gather knowledge, be inspired, get feedback and support so that something new can emerge through the dialogue. But it can also be interpreted as sharing of the workload and responsibility. The curator gets support and is reassured to then publicly stand behind the programme and the choices they have made.

When I asked how the choice regarding artists is made and what kind of things are considered, Paula Toppila explained that the selection process is not only based on the artistic quality and what curators find interesting, but that it is based on understanding and considering the festival as processual and durational, where the previous editions and past choices affect and inform the future ones. In the context of IHME, it is important for Toppila to expand notions of contemporary art and artists and also challenge artists to experiment and create something new, instead of something they are already known of. Luigi Fassi talked about the long-term outcomes and effects of artistic projects which demonstrates that with each artist and project the curators consider carefully how they contribute to the objectives of the festivals and similarly to Toppila, how they increase understanding of contemporary art. It also shows that the curators think a lot about the audiences when creating programmes. But it is important to not only think and imagine how a project might be perceived but what kind of traces it could leave in the city and its communities. Luigi Fassi describes that this kind of thinking pushes the curatorial practice beyond the curators' personal interest which he considers necessary in the contexts of new genre public art and the festival:

> I try to go beyond this approach of like inviting artists you like because they relate to your personal interest. I think you have to go beyond that. Maybe you can do that in a kunstverein, I think you have to go beyond that here. You have to think…it's not a joke, it's not about you, it's about this community. (Luigi Fassi, Steirischer Herbst)

This quote demonstrates that curating in this context is not only based on the knowledge of the art field and the curator's own taste. It is crucial to consider the local context and be able to programme artworks that have a potential to connect to that context and be relevant for local people and communities.

Before making the decision to invite an artist to the festival, Metropolis actually wants to not only hear what the artists are interested in but also to experience in practice how they work in the city and manage site-specific processes. For this purpose, Metropolis organises a lab every other year and after the lab 10-15 artists are invited to come back to develop their projects in a loose form of a residency which might vary in length. It is only after those residencies that Metropolis makes the decision whether to commission or co-commission a work or not. Trevor Davies considers the process of creating new genre public art as a specific practice in which the local process is very important. Davies is interested in ensuring that this process runs smoothly and is meaningful, not only that the so-called end result is successful. Davies' approach demonstrates that dialogical art practice requires specific skills from the artists (Kester, 2004, pp. 68-69) and it is not every artist who has those skills. For Fassi this is related to commitment when he says that the invited artists must be able to share the level of commitment with the curator.

All the curators interviewed for this research shared an exploratory approach to contemporary art. Fassi talks about "going beyond your personal interests", Toppila about "looking for different artists", Fanni about "discovering new things" and Davies about "a new kind of aesthetic" and "a new kind of a relationship with society, between art and society". They are interested in discovering new things, practices and ways of working and are open to different forms and modes of partnerships and collaborations.

Often curators are described in the media as art world's taste makers and gatekeepers and the general assumption is, as Luigi Fassi describes, "to curate after your taste". While to a limited extent the artists that the interviewed curators are interested in working with and the artworks they want to program, relate to a kind of art they are interested in, namely site-specific, socio-political and socially engaged, it seems that beyond this aesthetic interest, the curators are more interested in the possibilities of art, what art can and could do locally, and what its relationship is to the political agendas of the festivals which I will describe in section 4.3.

All the interviewed curators are involved in very practical aspects of the production of the artworks. Next I will focus on how the curators talk about their work in very practical terms and what kind of tasks and processes it includes. The section also highlights how the curators themselves understand their practice. Although all the curators are involved in many practical production related tasks, it varies to what degree. The curators have a flexible relationship to it, and it depends on how the production of the artwork is going and to some

extent how big the festival in question is, thus how much human resources or funding they have available. Especially in the cases of IHME and PLACCC, the curators are entirely responsible for the production of the artworks and involved in every aspect of it including negotiating partnerships, locations, logistics, production and communication details related to the creation of the artwork. The organisations also employ producers and assistants and utilise trainees and volunteers, but the curators are deeply involved in the practical production work and often manage this process. In the cases of Metropolis and Steirischer Herbst, on the other hand, the curators are also involved in the production processes but less responsible for the practical realisation of the production. However, their approach is flexible and if their involvement is needed, they will get involved in the practicalities and 'troubleshoot', as described by Trevor Davies. Sometimes it is useful to take advantage of the authority of the curator in order to ensure permission for an artwork or smooth flow of production.

It is because of this responsibility of the production of the artwork and that it's such a big part of her work, that Paula Toppila's job title is general manager, not a curator. Her job includes a wide range of responsibilities and tasks, extending to all areas of activity of the organisation. She manages the entire festival and her work includes staff management, financial management, communication and production. Because IHME commissions one artwork a year, all these processes are tightly linked to that artwork and its requirements, themes and partners. Toppila also thinks that it is very important that it is the curator who produces the artwork because it requires a certain kind of sensitivity towards the aims of the artist as already described above. Toppila sees the expertise of the curator in the process of producing an artwork as crucial.

Luigi Fassi and Paula Toppila talked a lot about how they accompany artists during site visits and research trips. In practical terms, this accompanying implies organising meetings, visiting sites and organisations responding both to locally relevant issues and topics as well as artists' ideas and interests which is characterised by an improvisational approach. Working with international artists requires an ability to work remotely, keep up with conversations and the processes from a distance and according to the curators, this is a typical way of working in international festivals. The artists come for site visits or residences at least once and in some cases a few times. Usually it is after the visit that the production process kicks off and this requires local knowledge in relation to seeking and confirming the locations of the artworks, required negotiations and permissions and planning the production and logistical aspects of the work.

Luigi Fassi describes the process of commissioning a new work as "working from scratch" or "from A to Z". Fassi uses the concept of "following a project from A to Z" to describe the flexibility and practicality required from the curator. This process of following a project from A to Z, from "the kind of very theoretical beginning to the very practical level", is exactly what creates the complexity of curatorial practice because in some ways the curators never know where an artistic process might lead, what the outcome will be, what kind of skills that process is going to require from them and what expertise they either need to

acquire personally or source from outside the organisation. While this is challenging and risky, it is also the best part of curatorial practice:

> Facilitating the making of a work of art from scratch, from A to Z, it's like the best the job can offer you, so. Working together with an artist in such a close way, that makes a new work of art happen, something which started under your own initiative and then when it ends up being like a completely shared project with the artist. I think it's really the very best…" (Luigi Fassi, Steirischer Herbst)

Although projects have some starting points fixed by the curator, the actual forms and outcomes are a result of the local, dialogical process. For Fassi, this kind of hands on production management and being involved in the practical production is an integral part of the curatorial practice, and as he describes above, the best part. Besides his own involvement, Fassi also points out that Steirischer Herbst has a production team with whom he works, and that he collaborates closely with the head of visual arts production who is also the curatorial assistant. But as the curator, Fassi is deeply involved in the process of art making, which highlights the curatorial role as performative and productive similarly to how O'Neill (2012) and Lind (2011) describe it, and not simply as a taste and choice maker, mediator or presenter.

The practical production and management skills required from the curators also include financial management. The curators need to have a very practical sense of what a production might cost, be able to manage the production budget and sometimes raise extra funding for the project. This means that the curators do not only manage existing budgets or that they are given a budget to work with, sometimes they are responsible for raising the funding so that they can create a programme in the first place. This is the situation at PLACCC, where besides planning the artistic programme of the festival, Fanni Nanay is in charge of the fundraising for the organisation. When discussing her curatorial practice, she describes that financial difficulties directly impact it. At PLACCC they do not know until approximately 4 months prior to the festival how much funding they have which creates various challenges for the curatorial practice. The finances set a crucial parameter and if those sources are extremely scarce, the programming, including discussions with artists, cannot take place. Although the other case festivals are financially in more stable situations, all the interviewed curators referred to the financial situation of the festival at some point in the interview, either by referring to cuts in funding in recent years, or by acknowledging financial resources and their limitations or applying for extra funds in order to realise a project or an artwork. Due to the financial struggles of PLACCC, people involved in the production of the festival do not always get paid for their work. This reflects the general phenomena in the field of cultural production that the amount of unpaid, volunteer work is high (see, for example, ArtsProfessional, 2019; Rensujeff, 2014; Ruusuvirta, 2019). What drives people behind PLACCC is a shared passion for the art.

The case of PLACCC demonstrates very well that curators do not always come to an existing, clearly defined and fixed position, but that through their practice, curators are creating jobs and opportunities for artists and various

cultural workers, including themselves. This kind of management role is an example of a strategic leadership position that many of the curators occupy or are required to take on. They take an active role in developing the festival and the organisation. In some of the cases the existing structure and resources are better than in others, and in the case of PLACCC, a big part of the work of the curator is to think about models for financing their activities and finding new ones.

Festivals' funding usually comes from several sources and funding schemes (Ruusuvirta, 2019). Different funders have their own objectives that the grant recipients need to match, and some funding is targeted to a very specific purpose. Different forms of financial support come with different responsibilities and the curators need to consider those carefully. Luigi Fassi, for example, argues that public funding brings more responsibility than private money. In terms of curatorial practice, it is not only the question of having or not having funding, it is also that depending where the money comes from, it has effects on the curatorial practice. Regarding sources of funding, most of the case festivals are mainly publicly funded. IHME is an exception as it is entirely privately funded, and it seems that they do not have to constantly struggle for their financial support or argue for their social relevancy as the other festivals do.

For the curators, strategic leadership includes constant rethinking of the festival and questioning the priorities of what to invest in. PLACCC is financially in the most unstable situation and that affects directly the organisation's ability to produce the festival. This instability has an enormous impact on the curatorial practice and Fanni Nanay describes it as a kind of 'reverse curating' which means that the budget dictates what projects they can realise. This financial pressure is so high for Nanay that she hesitates to consider herself a curator and the effects of the financial situation cause her to work in a way that she does not identify as 'normal' curatorial work.

4.1.1.2 Dialogical Curatorial Practice

I will next look at the interviews to analyse how dialogue, collaboration and a social way of working are discussed by the curators and what does it mean for their practice. Dialogical practice here is understood along the thinking of Kester (2004, p. 139) as "collaborative rather than individual and dialogical rather than monologically expressive". Kester's (2004, p. 69) notion of dialogue does not aim towards agreement but to catalyse emancipatory insights through dialogue. It is characterised by intersubjective communication and the capacity to think critically and creatively across disciplines (Kester, 2004, p. 101). This requires openness, listening, willingness to accept a position of dependence and vulnerability relative to the collaborators (Kester, 2004, p. 110).

Creating the festival framework is a dialogical process. The festival is in constant dialogue with the city, the festival artists as well as all the local and international networks. There is also a dialogue between all the artistic works which forms the experience of the entire festival programme. I will explore the festival framework and the festival's relationship with the city further in sections

4.1.3 and 4.1.4. Although I am breaking up these different dialogical relationships into separate, yet parallel conversations for the sake of analysis and clarity, it is important to keep in mind that they do not happen in a succession, one after the other. They are not isolated conversations either. They are all going on at the same time, informing each other and forming what I call the social and dialogical nature of the curatorial practice of new genre public art. It also worth pointing out that the conversations and dialogues take place on many levels: individually between curators, artists and other partners, between networks and organisations and structurally between festivals, cities and government departments. By social in this context, I simply imply the interaction and interdependent relationships with others.

The festival framework is created through different processes of conversation but always in dialogue. This festival framework can be further divided into two strands of activity; dialogue with the artists and dialogue with the city which are informed by the political agendas of the festivals. The artistic projects are created from and through these two parallel, overlapping and intertwining dialogues and it is the curator, who is the key person managing these dialogues and bridging them together into an artistic programme compiled of several artworks. These artworks are often, but not always, also dialogical, engaging citizens and audiences in artistic processes and artworks. Curators might take part in these dialogues as well, but often those processes are facilitated by artists. Through the artists and the artworks, the curatorial practice as social and dialogical is rooted in local communities.

The curatorial practice is based on the dialogue between the curator, artists and partners in the local context, namely the city, and this dialogue is informed by the political agendas of the festival. Depending on the festival in question, the dialogue with partners and collaborators is often, but not always initiated and maintained by the curator. However, the curator is the key figure in thinking about potential partners within the city, despite the fact that sometimes after the relationship has been established, the dialogue is picked up and continued by for example curator's assistant or the festival producer. In many cases though, as the case festivals are rather small organisations, it is the task of the curator to keep these dialogues and relationships going. These many layers of dialogue are described by Kaup-Hasler like this:

> The way we are doing the festival, as we do create so much…we communicate constantly, not only within the team of course but…it is a constant dialogue with the city, politicians, people giving money, developing projects for education on all possible levels. -…- You have to see the size of the programming and the involvement of us, so I think whatever comes out, but we are really very close to the artistic process. (Veronica Kaup-Hasler, Steirischer Herbst)

In very practical terms, the dialogical and social characteristics of the curatorial practice means that the curators have a lot of contacts in the city, ranging from local authorities to residence associations, companies and organisations working in different sectors and various communities and a lot of their work involves conversations and discussions as well as networking. In the process of

commissioning artworks and planning the festival, they connect artists to potential collaborators whether it's a specific community, organisation or a site. Sometimes these points of contact are pre-existing, but if not, the curator establishes this relationship and they are the key person in raising the interest of the potential collaborator towards the artist and the project, convincing the collaborator of the value and benefits of the collaboration. In some cases, partnerships with organisations or communities are established before the curator has a specific artist in mind, allowing for a dialogue about the potential collaboration to emerge through the partnership.

Besides discussing artistic content, the curators foregrounded a dialogical approach and collaboration also within their organisation and team generally. Especially in the cases of Metropolis and PLACCC, the importance of the team and non-hierarchical, horizontal collaboration within it appears very strong. In the case of Steirischer Herbst, both the artistic director Veronica Kaup-Hasler and curator Luigi Fassi talked about the collaborative process of writing the leitmotiv within the curatorial team and also "sharing everything" with them. Once the dialogue about invited artists according to the political agendas and festival framework is held within the curatorial or artistic team (depending on the structure of the organisation), the process of the artist's pre-visits and site visits begins; negotiating locations, partnerships, permissions, as well as communication. This process can influence the outcomes of the artworks dramatically and, actually, the artistic process is entirely dependent on it. Whether the desired public space or specific location can be negotiated for the realisation of the artwork, and in what terms, or if another location needs to be considered, has a huge impact on the artwork, its production and mediation. The same applies to possible partnerships, collaborations with communities, participants and the such, which vary a lot according to the artwork. This whole process is a result of a dialogue that is mostly managed by the curator. Depending on the size and structure of the organisation, the curators hold some of these negotiations themselves, some of them can be done by their assistants, producers, project managers or other festival staff. In the context of new genre public art, the entire festival is created in this dialogical process. This dialogue also determines on what location and with whom the work is actually created and realised, thus shaping the experience of the audiences and the processes of social production of space when understood alongside Lefebvre (1991). The curator is a key participator and contributor in this dialogue which forms the central part of their practice.

In terms of the dialogical festival framework, the challenge for the curator is to find a balance between all the components of the dialogue while maintaining artistically high quality. This was brought up especially by Fanni Nanay:

> So these three examples which I think just illustrate very well that there are projects which are popular even for the locals even though it's really high quality and another one which is not interesting for them and a third one which is below the level that we would like. So that's a big question that how to find that balance that the people living there, the local people, also the local investors just feel their own but at the same time it has a high-quality level. (Fanni Nanay, PLACCC)

As the quote reveals, what is popular with audiences is not necessarily considered artistically high quality by the curator, but it is very rewarding when these differing viewpoints are met in an artwork. Considering the creation of the festival as a dialogue, the curators have to be open, flexible and responsive, ready to react to unexpected stories and situations. This is something the curators highlighted a lot in relation to working in urban space and in different parts of the city, including historical venues and various partners.

4.1.1.3 Festivals as Platforms for Curatorial Practice

In this research, the festivals are the platform through which the curators operate in the art world. It is the dialogical festival framework that allows the curators to respond to artists' ideas and visions and address local socio-political issues. While this framework has many advantages, such as the festival is not tied to fixed spaces or venues, it also proposes certain challenges. In order to reach an international audience, the festivals have to be able to present something new and not only touring exhibitions or performances. Each time they commission an artist, they also have to find a location for the work which can be a very laborious process and result in extensive production costs. In other words, the festival framework is a conscious choice which is also related to the festival's attractiveness to audiences and art world professionals. Although all the curators consider the festival format useful in the sense that it offers flexibility and freedom, it is also a vulnerable form of working and proposes some challenges related to funding, and for example, working with local communities. All interviewed curators also refer to the festivals as evolving and constantly developing structures which they try to shape to best support the political agendas of the festivals and the challenges that the ever-changing contemporary art brings along. But the festival format is not an easy way to operate in the art world. Like many other art organisations, they have been affected by cuts in arts funding due to the Great Recession in Europe from 2007-2009. Especially, Fanni Nanay from PLACCC and Luigi Fassi from Steirischer Herbst brought up that the festivals have been affected by funding cuts in recent years.

When I asked the curators what they consider a successful festival and how to evaluate the festival, most of them responded by highlighting the artists' feedback. They also mentioned the number of audiences, sold tickets, press reviews and coverage and visibility in the media in general. Regarding sold tickets or audience numbers, it seems that a well-attended festival is a positive sign for the curators, but not that important. For Fassi, for example, the outcomes of individual projects and the international press coverage and visibility seem to be more important than audience numbers and ticket sales. Also Fanni Nanay from PLACCC mentions that in evaluating the festival, they consider audience numbers and reviews of the festival but that it is very important to succeed in engaging local people. It also matters who the audience is, not just numbers. For Paula Toppila, the ability to fulfil the artist's vision along with audience feedback are the most important criteria for evaluating the festival. Veronica Kaup-Hasler

also discusses the importance of the appreciation of the art world but highlights the festival's function as a social place and its ability to communicate with a "normal" audience as well as relevancy to society.

The curators consider the festivals to have a certain function or position in the local cultural sector and they see the festivals fulfilling that function in relation to other cultural organisations. In this sense, the curators understand the festivals as part of the bigger local cultural scene and having a specific contribution to that scene. For example, Paula Toppila discusses how in Finland it is not possible to see international contemporary art all the time. The curators point out that these days it is more common and more mainstream to produce new genre public art and that there are more institutions doing that. So, whereas perhaps in the 1960s and 1970s, producing new genre public art was an activity outside the mainstream and institutions, today it is institutionalised, accepted and even expected by contemporary art institutions. It is debatable though how experimental these institution-led projects are, but that is not my focus here.

I have already mentioned that the reviews and critics from art world journals and publications are not crucial for the existence of the festivals, but Luigi Fassi, Fanni Nanay and Paula Toppila say that to get the festival reviewed in a professional art journal is a positive and welcomed thing. It is also worth noting that a lot of this kind of work does not get reviewed by professional art critics, as Toppila notes, which limits the festivals' visibility and presence in the art world.

As it has become obvious for the reader, the festival structure is a way to operate in the art world. It is a structure that can apply and receive funding for their activities from the public and private funding bodies and programmes that support art. To operate in the art world and access certain operational grants requires some form of organisation. Some activities are organised by individual artists or collectives and working groups formed by individuals, but usually all bigger and regular events are organised by an organisation. The case festivals of this research have chosen to operate in the form of a festival and the legal organisation is either a non-profit association, private foundation or private company. However, to be framed as a festival, is not unproblematic, which Paula Toppila elaborates like this:

> This is a kind of question that we continuously ask ourselves, that was it sensible to act or take this festival name. But when we took it, we were thoroughly considering that…this kind of temporary presence that we don't make permanent works, per se. (Paula Toppila, IHME)

Toppila's quote shows that the temporary intervention into the urban space is an important conceptualisation of festivals for the curators, and it is also a key feature of new genre public art as noted by Mary Jane Jacob (1995, p. 56). But it seems that it is perhaps the tension between the temporary intervention and the longer-term engagement of local people and communities that is challenging for the curators in the festival context. Interestingly, since the interviews, both Metropolis and IHME have changed their working model. Although still called

a festival, Metropolis now produces a longer season and IHME has dropped "the festival" from their name.

4.1.2 The Curators' Views of Urban Space

In this section, I focus on how the curators talked about the urban space and audience. They highlighted the artworks' real connection to the city, and I will begin by analysing what this implies. According to the curators, this connection can be realised and resulted in multiple ways, levels and forms. Fanni Nanay, for example, identifies three different types of projects she invites to the festival. The first is what she calls a commission built locally which can be characterised as developed "from the scratch" as Luigi Fassi describes, or "embedded in the city" as Nanay says. These kinds of projects have a strong connection to the city, the local context and local people, and they can be understood as unique productions that hold novelty value. All the case festivals produce these kinds of projects. The second type is called "spatial adaptation of an existing project", which also has a connection to the city and the local context, but it is easier for the artist to produce than a full commission which also means that it is cheaper for the festival to realise. These projects might also offer local artists possibilities to assist international artists, to experience artworks and learn. These types of artworks are produced by all the other festivals except IHME, as they focus on one artwork each year which is always a commission. A third type is a project by a local artist which can also have a strong connection to the city, the local context and local people because the artist knows the city. These projects also offer employment possibilities for local artists and their work gets presented in an international context. Metropolis, PLACCC and Steirischer Herbst present these types of projects. All these three types of projects have a relationship to the local context but slightly differently. They demonstrate that the urban context is where the curators base their practice. "You have to consider Graz and the region as your workspace", says Luigi Fassi. This implies that the urban context in all its complexity is where their practice is rooted.

When the curators invite an artist or a company to create a site-specific version of an existing project, the curators are in charge of discussing the site-specific adaptation to the local context in collaboration with the artist. In the case of a new commission, the curators are very involved in the process, accompanying and supporting the artist, negotiating partnerships, locations and permissions. The dialogue with the artists includes offering insights and information about the local context and culture and utilising networks to help realise the projects. Whereas IHME commissions work by international, well established artists, the other case festivals work also with less established, younger and emerging artists that are both local and international. It is especially this relationship to the local context, that is a performative practice, as Luigi Fassi describes:

> I think it generates a kind of work practice which is leaning towards performativity by itself because it becomes performative because it's really like about interacting with

> artists, researching together, you know, there is also mutual kind of trust because…artists learn from us because we are the ones that know the most about, about the city, about…such. (Luigi Fassi, Steirischer Herbst)

What Fassi describes here is what I understand to be an embodied, non-representational practice as described by Louisa Cadman (2009) and Nigel Thrift (2008). It is also a process of learning and being open to discovery. There is great potential in how a visiting artist as an outsider can make observations that are difficult to see in one's own context.

In terms of the curatorial practice, the focus on locality and artworks' real connection to the city and locally relevant issues, creates a strong framework. It requires the curators to be engaged in local discourses and be very connected and networked while at the same time, they need to actively follow the international art world. Their challenge is not only to create programmes that are relevant in the art world but imagine and create possibilities for both international and local artists to find meaningful ways to engage with very local topics, people and communities.

Who is the audience and does it matter?

In the context where audiences become more involved in the artistic processes and in the production of artworks or in cases where the artwork takes place in the form of an encounter, the idea of an audience becomes complex and less obvious. The curators spoke about audiences, participators, spectators, people, citizens and communities in the interviews. It wasn't clear or systematic how they used those terms but next I will analyse the interviews in order to trace the complexities of understanding audiences in the context of new genre public art. The significance they appoint to rethinking spectatorship and engaging audiences as co-creators reflects the fact that these issues have not been, until rather recently, in the centre of curatorial discourse which has focused mainly on curators reimagining the museum, writing the history of curating, innovating within exhibition formats and extending curating into educational activities (Smith, 2012, p. 22). Audience was recently described by Magdalena Malm (2017, pp. 9-10) as a curatorial issue as she pointed out that the curatorial practice concerning with the city and public spaces allows many different roles for the audience from spectators to participants, producers of new narratives and protagonists.

The curators are interested in artworks that invite, allow and encourage the engagement of people and audiences in the processes of artistic production which reflects the general phenomena of social turn in the arts (see, for example, Bishop, 2012; Bourriaud, 2002; Kester, 2004, 2011). In this sense, the local people as citizens and members of different communities are important for the curators. This idea is so much at the heart of the curatorial practice of new genre public art, that the curators did not talk very much in the interviews explicitly about how they differentiate a spectator, audience member, participator or citizen. I also did not ask specifically about this. All the interviewed curators were in different ways concerned about the audience that they reach through the

festivals. Trevor Davies talks about counting the number of people Metropolis reaches but that they are also interested in who they are reaching. This is very important also for Fanni Nanay. Whereas Nanay talks about reaching local people, Veronica Kaup-Hasler refers to normal people. Nanay's and Kaup-Hasler's concepts of "local people" and "normal audience" refer to both the non-art world professionals and people in certain neighbourhoods, but also to people who are not the elite art audience. Without neglecting the specificity of different audiences and aims of some artworks to reach a very specific audience, Paula Toppila talks about reaching new audiences which is related to both accessibility and the commitment to work in the public space. According to Toppila, it is more important to reach new audiences than just count the audience numbers. IHME is the only one of the case festivals that produces each year a questionnaire for audiences through which they are able to analyse their audience profiles and get feedback about the festival.

None of the curators of the case festivals is very bothered with the question of audience numbers. They all say that the festivals count the number of audiences and in the case of ticketed events, the number of sold tickets, but that this information is not very central to their consideration of the success of the artworks or the festival programme and not very critical even to the festival funding. They seem to have a positive attitude towards well attended or sold out events and they acknowledge that this can be a serious argument to their marketing and PR teams. But equally, the curators value events that gather only a small audience and are able to analyse critically why it is so unless it was not intended (for example the artwork had a limited audience capacity or was created for one person at a time).

It seems to be important to the curators to not only reach local people but also that they "like" and engage with the artworks. Paula Toppila from IHME also points out she is very interested in the audience feedback that the festival gathers each year through questionnaires and audience workers. Luigi Fassi describes both the significance of the concept of audience for him at the festival and how it has changed significantly since he started to work at Steirischer Herbst. He is a visual arts curator who has previously worked in the art gallery context and the different relationship to audiences between these contexts is striking. At Steirischer Herbst, "audience is key in all our strategies", he says. The big difference between Steirischer Herbst and a kunstverein context seems to be the responsibility and power to influence the audience's understanding of contemporary art as the festival has a greater capacity to reach a more diverse audience compared to the highly specialised professional audience of the kunstverein context. Whereas Fassi talks about responsibility towards audiences, Toppila highlights IHME Festival's focus on art education. Both IHME and Steirischer Herbst have an extensive art educational programme but whereas Paula Toppila talks a lot about the art educational approach and audience education, Luigi Fassi does not mention those terms at all.

Although the case festivals are of course open to all kind of audiences through their activities in urban spaces, it is important for the curators to have a

sense of who these people are. Obviously, they cannot know precisely who sees or engages with the artworks, but they do have an idea of the demographics of their audience based either on their own observations, audience workers or occasional or regular audience polls. This information is also something the curators take advantage of in their negotiations with funders and partners. Of course, it is not entirely random who the festival reaches. They have target groups they aim to reach and projects through which they hope to engage specific communities. Luigi Fassi for example describes that Steirischer Herbst reaches an audience which is not necessarily otherwise using cultural services provided by institutions and this is a big advantage in any kind of negotiation with either possible partners or funders of the festival. In the case of local partnerships, it can also be attractive for the festival to reach a different kind of audience through the partnership.

The choice of location is one way of reaching a specific audience. There are several examples in the interviews of how producing artworks in specific sites is related to reaching a specific audience also. Sometimes this is related to a neighbourhood with a certain current socio-political issue the curator is interested in addressing, like in the case of PLACCC festival and their specific editions in Csepel for example, or in Steirischer Herbst's recent focus on working in the region. Similarly to IHME, there is a need to constantly build and reach new audiences and thus challenge the way the festivals engage people.

Reflecting the general conversation about publicly funded cultural institutions, that have an enormous pressure for box office and self-generated income, it is interesting to think whether this pressure has not yet reached the case festivals, or have they managed to somehow escape it. It partly relates to the characteristics of new genre public art as many of the works are un-ticketed, taking place in the urban context. IHME for example, does not sell any tickets and all events are free. Metropolis, Steirischer Herbst and PLACCC on the other hand have both free and ticketed events. It can also be understood that the curators do not perceive it to be their responsibility to get the people to come to the events and that the value of art is not measured by audience numbers. At the same time, it is also important that the festival is supported by a local community and a growing audience, whether the events are free or not.

In the curators' speech, it is possible to observe a separation between audiences who are involved and engaged in the process of artistic production and an audience who comes to see or otherwise experience an artwork more as observers. The audiences who are involved in the artistic creations are often described by the curators as citizens, people or participants, and their role is described through active engagement and participation. In the case of experiencing an artwork more as an observer, the curators use the term audience or spectator more and tend to refer to them as passive. For example, Fanni Nanay uses this kind of definition in her speech when she talks about participants as co-creators of the artwork. By this kind of separation of passive and active, Nanay refers to different levels of engagement and participation in the process of making or presenting the artwork, and that often participation requires physical,

bodily involvement whether in the form of participating in meetings or other activities. Compared to the act of watching a performance for instance, it can be described as more active. But in my understanding, she does not refer to the activity of the spectator of interpreting and translating the artwork as analysed by Rancière (2009b).

> The dialogue and the public space as the dialogue and you might say the rhetoric of the festival. Which means then you have to allow citizens to be involved because they are the ones you might say whose voices are there or not there. (Trevor Davies, Metropolis)

From this position, "dialogue and public space as the dialogue" follows the involvement and engagement of not only audiences, but citizens, which Davies' quote demonstrates. The curators talk about audiences, participators, people and citizens when they discuss the participatory and dialogical artworks. When discussing the interest to programme participatory projects, Veronica Kaup-Hasler talks about her interest to confront normal people and make them react. Participation also makes people feel included.

When understood as a civic-republican conception, citizenship's focus is on the political nature of human beings (Oldfield, 1994). Citizenship is about democratic participation; it happens in the public sphere and citizens are politically active. Understanding the audience members as citizens reinforces their political nature, rights and duties, freedom and many contextual aspects of society such as family and ideas of right and wrong. So, when audiences are confronted, their beliefs and culture of participation is somehow challenged by the artworks. In my view, the curators' conceptualisation of the audience as citizens can be connected to Jacques Rancière's (1991) idea of radical equality which he outlines in *Ignorant Schoolmaster – Five Lessons in Intellectual Emancipation*. Rancière bases his thinking on Joseph Jacotot's discovery of how well students with whom he did not even share a common language, succeeded in learning things by themselves. Based on this experience, Jacotot came to the conclusion that everyone has equal intelligence (Rancière, 1991, p. 18). For Ranciére (1991, pp. 137-138), the principle of equality is not a goal but a presupposition that must be constantly practiced. Akin to Rancière's presupposition of equality, the curators consider all people as potentially interested in art and art as potentially meaningful for everyone.

When discussing audience participation and Toppila's interest in it, she turns the conversation to the aims of the organising foundation. Toppila rationalises participatory, socially engaged works from the viewpoint of the foundation and its aims, namely reaching new audiences and developing the dialogue between audiences and contemporary art. She does talk about processes of creating and producing contemporary art, but does not argue for participatory practices from the viewpoint of dialogical art. Making a distinction between community art and socially engaged practices or participatory art, Toppila discusses fleeting, temporary communities and collective experiences in which audiences and people are taking part while recognising that these artworks are delicate processes, and therefore it is difficult to talk about them without a

specific example. Toppila also points out the criticism or misconception of participatory art which generalises it as superficial and aiming towards a kind of consensus that results in socially pleasing but artistically compromised results. Her thinking seems to be in line with Kester's (2004) argumentation of dialogical art which does not aim towards agreement despite its collaborative and participatory nature.

As evident both in the interviews of the curators and a lot of existing research concerning art audiences, it can be generalised that often art audiences are from a higher socio-economic status (see, for example, The 2015 Report by the Warwick Commission on the Future of Cultural Value). A significant aspect of new genre public art is that it has the potential to engage all kinds of people in their everyday environment which is also a strong interest of the curators. And when working in the public spaces and as part of the everyday, I think we are closer to understanding audiences as citizens than as spectators and observers.

A question related to understanding audiences as citizens that was brought up by the curators is linked to their taste and the potential conflict of the curators' idea of artistic quality. Fanni Nanay, for whom it is very important to reach local people, also asks the question of what kind of art the audience are interested in. The struggle seems to be in how to get them interested in the artworks and engaged with the festival and still maintain the level of artistic quality that she and the artistic board consider interesting enough. Nanay also gave several examples of how the feedback of local audiences has affected the duration of artworks' presence in the public space or directly the process of production. In one case she explains how an artwork which was given only a temporary permission for the duration of the festival, was so popular that it became a permanent artwork in the city.

The negotiation of tastes that is related to citizen's participation and sometimes processes of permission, requires a lot of communication from the curators or festival organisers. It means that the artworks are not just programmed to be received by an anonymous mass, but in many processes the citizens are part of the negotiation with their opinions, beliefs and experiences of the specific neighbourhood or community. Thus, the curator surrenders some autonomy to the citizens as collaborators, as Kester (2004, p. 8) describes regarding dialogical practices.

4.1.3 The Festival Context's Three Agendas

Because this research is a case study, and the cases in question are festivals, in this section I focus on the curators' thinking of the festivals. It is important because almost anything can be considered a festival and the festivals themselves have specific aims and functions. The case festivals are also different from each other in terms of size, organisation, staff and structure which I will describe in more detail in section 4.2. Two of the festivals, IHME and Steirischer Herbst, are organised annually, Metropolis is organised bi-annually and PLACCC changes the rhythm of producing the festival according to their funding situation and local partnerships. They are all independent organisations by which I mean that

they are not state organisations whose conditions for state subsidies would be provided in law. This status means that as organisations, the festivals have certain freedom and flexibility to organise their activities which are on the one hand limited by their funding situation and on the other hand effected by available project funding. It can be summarised, that the funding situation is both a constraint which limits and frames activities and, at same time, a possibility to restructure and develop them. This kind of flexibility also means that the festival programmes may vary greatly from year to year.

All the festivals consider themselves small independent organisations although they do vary widely in the number of staff and activities. For instance, PLACCC has no fulltime permanent staff and Steirischer Herbst has about 20. Most of the festivals were founded in the 2000s, except for Steirischer Herbst which has more than 50 years' history dating back to 1967. For the festivals, being 'independent' is a form of an agency and important identity. They situate themselves as something other than cultural institutions, smaller and more flexible but at the same time more fragile. Except for IHME, the festivals are dependent on public funding, and working in the independent sector is characterised by vulnerability, which is caused by changes in cultural policies and cuts in public funding experienced in many European countries in the 2000s. Despite the smallness of the organisations, the festivals want to do 'big things' and have an impact on the city in which they are organised and upon their audiences.

In the process of content analysis, I have found three themes into which the festival context can be categorised. They are the art world agenda, socio-political agenda and urban agenda. I call them agendas because I understand them as political agendas that are related to the mission, aims and visions of the festivals. This means that the festivals have a certain function which reaches to three different areas of inquiry. Regardless of the differences between the festivals, they all have political agendas which the curators follow in their long-term planning. These political agendas that I have identified are based on the curators' speech when they talked explicitly about the festivals, using expressions like "we, as a festival, wanted to…" or "our idea is to…".

The art world agenda relates to strategic focuses that are connected to the art world. These include aims and visions that the festivals have in terms of new genre public art as an art form, artists and the local art scene. The socio-political agenda is connected to the festival's aims related to local social and political issues, identifying them and opening up dialogue around those issues through artworks. The urban agenda includes strategic focuses that relate to public space, the urban context and the city. These agendas can be understood as a context for the curatorial practice, a kind of ideological framework in which the curators operate. This festival context defines the work of the curator but at the same time, the curators are in a position in which they can directly influence the political agendas of the festival, as they are constantly being discussed and reproduced within the festival organisation. It is important to note that most of the curators interviewed for this research have been key persons in establishing the festivals,

so it is evident that their thinking and ideology is present in the political agendas of the festivals. With these considerations in mind, it is not necessarily possible to separate the political agenda of the festival and the curatorial practice from each other. In fact, it can be argued that for some curators, establishing an independent structure, in this case a festival, is a part of the strategy to support their curatorial practice, to survive as an independent curator in the art world and to engage in socio-political debates in society.

The presence of the political agendas is not always obvious in individual artworks and they can be approached in diverse ways from festival to festival. However, the curators follow them in a longer time span, reflecting the activities of the previous festivals into the upcoming editions, constantly considering the traces the works and the festival leave in the city. Here it is important to keep in mind that the festivals are not considered as single entities but as a processual artwork itself which continues, evolves and develops from edition to edition, *and* in a dialogue with the local, urban context including the audience, the artists and the curator/curatorial team. In this sense, the curators' conceptualisation of a festival differs from the traditional definition introduced in the introduction of this research, which does not recognise this processual, accumulative and durational aspect of festivals. In fact, this processual nature, the constant reconsideration and rethinking of the festival concept seems to be very important for the curators.

Claire Bishop (2012, p. 21) has said that where artists lead, curators follow. This is true for the festivals of new genre public art as well, as they want to follow what is happening in the arts right now, with the addition of staying relevant in the constantly changing society, and actively engaging with it and its diverse audiences. For festivals of new genre public art, responsiveness, openness and ability to change are key characteristics. This means, that it is not enough to just follow the artists and stay relevant in the context of the art world, but to be open to the changes in society and sensitive to the issues of the local context and to constantly create and recreate the relationship to the public. This engagement to audiences is one of the key characteristics of new genre public art and the festivals follow the logic of art being made for audiences, not institutions of art (Jacob, 1995, pp. 50-59).

The concepts of audience, relationship, communication and political intention form the construction of the history of new genre public art (Lacy, 1995, p. 28) These concepts form also the basis of three political agendas of the festivals, which I have identified from the curators' interviews. These agendas reflect the historical background of new genre public art and the artworks' references to social and political life (Lacy, 1995, pp. 28-30). Next I will further open each political agenda, starting with the art world agenda.

4.1.3.1 Art World Agenda

The art world agenda relates to discourses of the art world that are related to art, the position of the artist, accessibility of art and art education. In terms of art, it is important for all the festivals to advocate new genre public art as an art form

and to increase its visibility which strengthens the relevancy of it within the art world in relation to institutions, funders and audiences. The curators see the festivals as important platforms for the experimental and radical forms of contemporary art which cultural institutions either do not recognise or have the appropriate facilities to host. However, they consider the festivals as complimentary to the institutions, not as a criticism per se. An important objective for the festivals is to diversify the selection of cultural activities and increase the awareness of what contemporary art is today, hence what can be understood as art. Kester (2004, pp. 188-189) also reminds us that while dialogical practices can expand the understanding of what art can be, it is not about a hierarchy between museum-based art and projects developed in non-art environments. According to him, it is more appropriate to think of them as equally productive sites that each have their own strategies and potential compromises. In this sense, the festivals' art world objective is in line with Kester's thinking. For the festivals, it is also important that the art world recognises the artworks, and art criticism is one form of this recognition. According to the interviewed curators, new genre public art projects are not often reviewed by professional critics and the festivals work hard to change this situation.

The festivals want to create and offer work opportunities for artists in the field of new genre public art and reach new audiences. Not only are they interested in producing artworks in urban spaces for the "art's sake", but through the presence in urban space, reaching new audiences and engaging diverse audiences in processes of producing contemporary art. This is related to the festival's interest in increasing interaction between artworks and audiences as well as general discussion of contemporary art in society. Working in urban spaces and participatory artworks are considered an effective way to reach these goals.

The festivals' function as an employer and their aim to create new work opportunities for artists comes with responsibility and considerations of ethics. Steirischer Herbst particularly emphasised the inequalities of the art world and the importance of being conscious, for example, of the background of the artists the festivals employ, as some of them are interested in very openly challenging the hegemonic structures of the art world and its Eurocentrism.

When the festivals invite an artist, they really commit to them. Not only do they want to provide the artist with the best conditions possible within the festival's capacity, they also want the work to be meaningful for the artist by securing the artistic freedom. This motif was very much reinforced by IHME. Although IHME wants to maintain a critical distance from instrumentalization of artworks by highlighting the artist's freedom and vision, they do have ideologies that shape their political agenda. One of their strategic focuses related to the art world agenda is to bring international contemporary art to Finland and their main task is to commission each year a new public art project. According to Toppila, in Finland, there aren't many artists specialising in public art and because there are so many exciting artists working in this field internationally,

they want to enrich the selection of contemporary art in Finland. Fanni Nanay from PLACCC also brought up that working with international artists is a possibility for the local artists to learn about other practices and through this develop their own work. This internationalisation of the local cultural scene from the perspective of the audience and the art world, including both institutions and artists, is one of the strategic focuses of the art world agenda.

4.1.3.2 Socio-political Agenda

The curators describe that the festivals want to "feel our time" and be "social and political". The socio-political agenda relates to the festivals' aims in areas that include social and political factors. The strategic focuses in this agenda include identifying locally relevant topics, opening up a dialogue around those topics, social responsibility, criticality, mobilising new thoughts, accessibility and building communities. The politics curators discuss and refer to, is not related to political parties or interests of specific groups or communities – although the curators have certain sensitivity to those as well. They want to take part in locally relevant debates which they consider broadly, including several fields, by creating possibilities for encounters, for debates and discussions, for diverse voices and viewpoints and even for conflicts to be present in the public realm through artworks. In this sense, they understand politics along the thinking of Jacques Rancière (2009), as they aim to foster criticality towards the hierarchical order of a given set of social arrangements and in some occasions also encourage dissensus.

For Steirischer Herbst, writing the leitmotiv is a tool through which they identify socially and politically relevant topics the festival wants to address in the following year, through commissions and artworks across art forms, talks and conferences. The leitmotiv is compiled within the curatorial team of the festival and it is a very important moment to envision the next edition of the festival from the socio-political point of view. There is no doubt about Steirischer Herbst's willingness, even keenness to be an active participator in socio-political debates and a platform for these debates. By debates in this context, I imply not only discussions but also artworks and artistic processes as forums of engagement and sites of conversation (Lacy, 1995; Kester, 2004). In the history of new genre public art and artists' interest in new forms of public art, the presence of themes such as environmental crises, AIDS and marginalised communities have been central issues for artists working in this context and in their search for strategies to raise awareness as discussed in the theoretical chapter (Lacy, 1995, p. 29). It is no surprise then, that identifying socially and politically relevant topics, engaging in them and considering the festival as a platform for them, is so important for most of the festivals in question.

Most of the curators acknowledge the festival's political agendas while separating their activities from activism and political parties. The festivals are very aware of the power relations of political parties on local, regional and national levels but instead of aligning themselves with any party, they are interested in fostering a critical mentality of citizens and contributing to the sense

of social responsibility. This is most evident in the case of PLACCC, which this quote by Nanay demonstrates:

> We want to be political. In that way that not against the governing party or the government because it's senseless, even though I hate them and they are ruining the whole country very systematically. But rather that people are very apathetic, very passive, very depressed…caused by the political situation and economic situation also because we are poorer and poorer and that's a huge problem. (Fanni Nanay, PLACCC)

Although it is clear that Steirischer Herbst, PLACCC and Metropolis clearly want to be political and have an impact, they do not have false expectations of their effectiveness and they are rather careful about their ambitions for change. What is present in the speech of the curators though, is the idea of a festival as a catalyst; as an actor which, encouraging and together with others, can make a change. It seems that the festivals are aware of the multi-disciplinary research field concerning the impact of art and cultural participation and the mechanisms of individual and community impact (see, for example, ArtsEqual-konsortio, 2016). But it is not the arguments concerning the impact on wellbeing and equality that the festivals want to be measured and evaluated against. The socio-political agenda is more focused on fostering criticality and dialogue.

Another socio-political focus identifiable in the interviews is the festival's aim to "mobilise new thoughts" which means trying to make an impact on people's values and ideology, as seen in this quote of Luigi Fassi:

> The idea is to mobilize new thoughts. This is why we have an interest in social political issues, even now, more and more, I mean with what is going on in this country. -…- It's really a challenge because we know that we… even in our audience there are people that lean towards right wing politics in this kind of crazy way. -…- You may say it's idealistic but the kind of idea… the hope is to open up new questions, new reflections, to help people to see things differently. (Luigi Fassi, Steirischer Herbst)

Through the artworks, the festivals aim to open up new ways of dealing with difficult issues such as immigration. This is of course not a simple task and Luigi Fassi acknowledges the idealism related to this aim but connects it with the function and history of the festival. He also states directly, that Steirischer Herbst is not a festival where you can come to curate projects you know just according to your taste.

While most of the curators openly talk about making an impact in society and affecting the audience's thinking and ideology, there are also critical thoughts about that. Along Fanni Nanay being suspicious about the impact a festival alone can make in a city, Paula Toppila is very critical of festivals affecting change and resistant about the idea of impact. She does acknowledge that through a personal experience, an artwork might leave a memory and offer alternative examples of behaviour and activity. As IHME highlights the aims and visions of the artist, as opposed those of the festival, my interpretation is that Toppila opposes objectives pre-described to an artwork and the instrumentalization of them. However, she brings up that the Pro Arte Foundation, the organisation behind the IHME Festival, does have objectives. Since IHME is the only activity of Pro Arte, it is possible to understand that the

objectives apply to the festival as well. Those objectives are mostly art world and public space related but one of the socio-political objectives of IHME, according to my interpretation, is to increase conversation about contemporary art and contemporary society which is connected to the strategic focus of opening up a dialogue on social political issues. In their reports after the festival, IHME also reflects on the breadth of the audience engagement in the project, if the project has been able to catalyse some other activity elsewhere, how much critical discussion they have managed to raise and whether this conversation continues in some other forum.

Another aim of the socio-political agenda is to increase accessibility to arts which is a core strategic focus of all the festivals. Paula Toppila states clearly, that artworks are more accessible outside of institutions than within them. Toppila's view is in line with Mary Jane Jacob's (1995, p. 52) thinking that a departure from an institution can multiply the ways of engaging a wider audience.

While distancing themselves from activism, which for example Fanni Nanay considers destructive, the festivals want to be constructive contributors to socio-political debates and open up spaces for imagination. They are not interested in provocation or criticising without envisioning an alternative future or a concrete proposal. This need to keep a distance from activism as a festival can be understood as a way of putting forward the artist, maybe even as a way of hiding behind the work of the artist when declaring that the 'artist comes first', and 'what is most important is what the artist is interested in doing'. While there is always a level of uncertainty and danger of the unknown in the process of producing new works of art, the artists invited to the festivals have not been selected without a thorough research and knowledge of the artist's previous works and their activist or political agendas are by no means a surprise, in fact, they are also encouraged by the curators. As Luigi Fassi described earlier, most of the festivals first identify locally relevant socio-political issues which they then invite artists to address. Although artistic freedom is emphasised by the curators, the artist is asked to consider and respond to a specific socio-political issue or situation.

But what are the strategies employed by the festivals when they want to be political, but not activist, embedded in the city but not provocative? The interviews suggest that the festivals want to act as platforms for public discussions, create a sense of community and ways for people to relate to one another. For Rancière (2004, p. 13), "artistic practices are 'ways of doing and making' that intervene in the general distribution of ways of doing and making as well as in the relationships they maintain to modes of being and forms of visibility", which creates a possible relation to politics.

This sense of community is not about everyone being happy around an enjoyable piece of community art or all agreeing on something. Instead, it is about encountering each other in urban complexity, the presence of diversity of voices, hosting conversations and contributing to the social production of space – in the process of producing the city, questioning the conditions of the world and society in which we live, negotiating and envisioning a possible future as

well as creating spaces for imagination. The festivals would hope to be able to do this in the long term, in order to "have a lasting, changing effect on local communities or local decisions", using the words of Trevor Davies.

Patricia C. Phillips (1995, p. 69) says that public art implies a significant social, political, and aesthetic agenda which the case festivals also recognise but consider it as "far too much of an agenda for such a small festival", as described by Trevor Davies. The interviews suggest that the festivals' socio-political agenda encompasses large and almost contradictory aims: a festival has to have a social function, it has to be a social place and engage a wide range of audiences, it has to be relevant to society and to the artists and, while supporting the development of art, it has to take risks. How the festivals aim towards these is through social and dialogical working methods which I will further discuss in section 4.1.4

4.1.3.3 The Urban Agenda

The third political agenda of the festivals I have identified from the interviews is the urban agenda, which refers to the objectives that are connected to the urban space and the city. By calling it urban I understand it along Lefebvre's (1996) definition of the urban as the place of encounter, assembly and difference and Amin and Thrift's (2002) conceptualisations of new urbanism that emphasises the city as a place of mobility, flow and everyday practices, and that reads cities from their recurrent phenomenological patterns. The festivals' urban agendas are mostly connected to the representational, lived spaces (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 33). Whereas Lefebvre talks about lived spaces, Amin and Thrift (2002, pp. 48-50) argue for a place as *living*. They see contemporary architecture and performance art as exciting attempts to produce new modes of belonging (new social relationships, new means of representation and new means of resistance) that have tried to define in practice what is meant by a place as living. Characterised as dynamic and producing this dynamic by understanding the city as a gradual unfolding of spaces and times, while working at different speeds and measures, understanding architecture as constantly being transformed by use and its boundaries renegotiated by habits that are developed and practiced collectively, both performance and architecture are engaged with trying to redefine belonging.

In the context of new genre public art, it is inevitable that the concept of the 'public' raises questions about cities, spaces, systems, and communities, as noted by Phillips (1995, p. 60). These questions were strongly present in the interviews, as well as the ambiguous and urgent investigation of art's relation to urban form and civic life. The strategic focuses of the urban agenda include creating a social place, producing the city and its urban spaces, creating a biennale effect, impacting the urban life of the city, investigating urban society, affecting sense of ownership, expanding public space and encouraging new encounters and unexpected situations.

The festivals contribute to the production of the city in several ways. They produce artworks in different areas and parts of the city and work with diverse communities. In these processes, curators highlight the importance of the local context whether it's a locally topical political situation or issue, a community or

an area in the city that lacks or is in the centre of a locally important debate, for example. Working in different areas in the city or moving out of the city into the region, are strategic choices for the festivals. The aims of working in a specific area, region or a part of the city might be partly related to the socio-political agenda as described in the previous section, for example the objective of building communities, or the art world agenda, such as reaching new audiences. But most of the curators link these activities to the production of the city and the aim to impact the lived spaces of the city which I refer to as the urban agenda.

Besides understanding the festival as a social place, as described by Veronica Kaup-Hasler, locating a festival's activities in a specific location is a powerful tool to attract people into a specific area. By utilising various sites in different areas of the city, the festivals are also discovering sometimes hidden local histories and addressing them through artworks. For Fanni Nanay, producing artworks in a certain site or a part of the city is connected to art's ability and potential to increase a community's feeling of ownership towards a location and thus improving the area.

While PLACCC and Metropolis are very outspoken about their urban agenda, IHME on the other hand does not subscribe to it at all. Although IHME is committed to working in the public space, they deny the idea of impacting the city as an aim. By foregrounding the art world agenda and the interests of the artist, Toppila sees that possible comments or aims regarding the urban space may be part of the artwork, but they are not the agendas of the festival, as such. However, Toppila is rather positive about the possibility of affecting change in the use of public space. She also sees that the commitment to working in public space in itself is a big decision which actually implies that new kinds of encounters and unexpected situations must be possible in the public space. Although in the interview Toppila belittles the urban agenda of IHME, my understanding is that on an ideological level, this commitment to public space and Toppila's comments actually do speak about a certain kind of urban agenda which may not have the direct aims of affecting an area or a community in Helsinki, but to affect the atmosphere of the city, the use of public space and the possibilities of social behaviour of the citizens.

But for the festivals it is not enough to just produce artworks in public spaces in different parts of the city, to put something on the streets. "We are beyond doing public space which is not a problem and it's quite easy", says Trevor Davies. While describing the kind of artworks she is interested in, Fanni Nanay states:

> It's not like street theatre. Let's say a theatre company is rehearsing in an indoor, in a rehearsal room. Then they just go out to the street, they block the street and they do the same on the street. It happens very often. (Fanni Nanay, PLACCC)

So, what are the festivals interested in and what do the curators mean by doing something more than being present in the urban space or by more than "putting something on the streets"? First of all, the curators are interested in leaving trails

and traces in the city which are related to the artworks that have a direct relationship to the city.

> It is also very important that how to leave a trace. Leaving a trace, it can be two different kind, leaving physically or mentally. It is very important that our projects could just change the mental map of the people. Or not just a mental map but also the…an image of a…or a reputation of a certain place. -…- This is also a kind of goal that how to fight a little bit against these stereotypes, stigmas. This is also the mental trace leaving…how to say in English, leaving mental traces. But if it's also physical, it's very good. I think these are the very basic directions or rules we more or less follow when we are programming. (Fanni Nanay, PLACCC)

Nanay's quote shows how the curators consider new genre public art's potential to influence people by leaving mental traces and affect urban spaces through physical traces that remain in the city beyond the duration of the festival.

Metropolis and PLACCC especially understand the festival as a tool to research and investigate urban society and, through engagement, create a sense of community. According to Trevor Davies, the Nordic countries have a very utilitarian way of understanding, structuring and managing cities and he sees that the Metropolis' mission is to help understand the complexity and psychology of the city. He mentions different typologies of urban games and gaming, locative digital artworks and community processes as ways and tools to research and understand this community but notes that "we are just touching on that".

For Fanni Nanay, it is crucial that the artworks have a real connection to the city which means, for example, that the artwork is inspired by a certain location or a problem present in a specific location, then the work is built on this thematic relationship and presented on the same location, creating a kind of circle. For PLACCC it is also important to leave mental or physical traces in the city. What this means, according to Nanay, is that the artworks have a potential to change the mental map of people as well as an image or a reputation of a certain place or area. Depending on the type of artwork, if it can remain on site leaving a physical trace, it adds to its strength.

Another way the curators understand the festivals as contributors of urban space and thus impacting the urban life of the city, is through the engagement of local communities and audiences in artistic processes. The festivals are interested especially in longer engagement, beyond the duration of the festival, which the curators consider more impactful. However, this proves to be a big challenge for the festivals as a festival by its nature implies a defined and often rather short period of activity. Then the question is, as Trevor Davies describes, how to create opportunities for this longer engagement to take place and through this, how to make a lasting impact on local communities and decisions? Instead of producing one off events, Davies is interested in "processes of change as artistic projects in public space" which implies a longer, durational time frame and more open processes. Metropolis's strategy is not to produce more and more works but to find ways of being more radical, more contextual and work in the longer term. Davies sees this as a development process of the festival which the past festivals have provided the potential and knowledge to follow. Fanni Nanay speaks

similarly to Davies and agrees that an ongoing activity would be a better way to create impact in the city than a festival, but a lack of funding makes it impossible for PLACCC.

In addition to leaving mental and physical traces in the city and engaging audiences and communities, the curators understand the festivals as a way to recreate the city and expand the public space. Trevor Davies talks about "abstract curating" and "meta curating", by which he implies that while curating artworks of the festival, he is at the same time curating and recreating the city. For him, expansion of the public space is very important:

> This is part of the mission of art in public spaces, pushing the boundaries of what you are allowed to do and trying to make the public space more public, broader and deeper into the city. -…- We perceive as a public institution and the mission actually to engage with a public space but actually to re-appropriate it and also to extend it. (Trevor Davies, Metropolis)

While Trevor Davies see's Metropolis as a tool to research and investigate the city and an alternative way of registering what the city is, Luigi Fassi talks about creating a biennale effect as a strategy to increase vibrancy of the city of Graz and to attract wider audiences and art world professionals. Steirischer Herbst partners with numerous local organisations to create this biennale effect, which is a kind of opposite strategy to Metropolis. This partnership also includes financial support which enables the partner organisation to be more ambitious, as described by Fassi, implying that they can produce something bigger, artistically bolder or in some way specific that they otherwise wouldn't be able to do. But it is not only the biennale effect which is important. Fassi also thinks that "the festival should be working a bit more than now within the public space, within the city, inviting artists to envision projects without having an idea of the outcome from the beginning". By this he refers to the number of projects produced in public spaces as opposed to museums and theatres and thus the festival's contribution to social production of space.

Although most festivals claim that they want to recreate the city and expand its public space, the curators say that they do not want to criticise the cities in question or question the use of public spaces in them. The festivals want to be 'constructive' contributors to the city development, not just criticise without envisioning an alternative future or offering a concrete proposal of an alternative vision. By foregrounding that they do not want to criticise the city and the use of public spaces, provoke or act like activists or anarchists, the festivals want to be a collaborative actor and all the events are organised with permissions from local authorities, thus all the situations and events they produce are negotiated in advance.

Besides participating in the social production of spaces in the city in question, the curators of Metropolis and PLACCC see that the festivals could contribute and play a bigger part in the processes of urban planning, architecture and city development. While the chief architect of the city of Copenhagen sits on the board of Metropolis festival, PLACCC is only envisioning a municipality level partnership. PLACCC would like to participate in city planning because

they work in the public space and have organised the festival several times in Csepel, an area of Budapest which is currently under development, and thus have developed a very strong relationship to the area Csepel. But Nanay explains that due to the political situation, the local municipality is currently not interested even in talking with the festival. According to Nanay, the situation in Budapest has changed significantly with the rise of the conservative, right wing populist political party Fidesz, since 2010. PLACCC's relationship to the city is increasingly complicated and despite the festival's efforts to collaborate with the city and local municipalities, it is more and more difficult to get permissions to organise artworks and events in public spaces. During this time, the financial support from the city has also weakened. Despite this hostility, the festival seeks ways of collaborating with the city departments and authorities and contributing to the development of the city. For Nanay, the accessibility of public space and public issues are connected, and she says: "If you don't care what's happening in the public space, then you don't care what is happening in the public life." By this she implies that the use of public space reflects the level and quality of discussion in the public sphere.

The question of permissions to work in public spaces came up several times during the interviews. As the festivals are produced in different countries and cities, also their local rules and regulations are varied. Veronica Kaup-Hasler from Steirischer Herbst pointed out that because of the privatisation of the public space, it is harder to work in public space now than it was 20 years ago. Paula Toppila from IHME, on the other hand, has the opposite experience. She says that producing artworks in the public space has become easier over the years that IHME has existed, and also the number of other events where citizens take over the public space, has increased. Trevor Davies has a similar experience with Metropolis in Copenhagen.

4.1.4 Festivals as Dialogical Actors

Above I have opened up the three political agendas of the festivals which demonstrate that the festivals operate on many levels in society. The socio-political and urban agendas are important agendas for the festivals, which means that the city and its socio-political issues are essential contexts that affect, frame and shape the festivals. But the city is not just a site and pre-existing context where the festival takes place. Keeping in mind the political agendas of the festivals as well as characteristics of new genre public art, namely urban space and engagement of communities and people, it is inevitable that the city in question is a key collaborator for the festivals. With the city as a collaborator, I refer to the city not only as a location on a map or as a governing public authority, but a wide concept including all its actors such as different neighbourhoods, institutions and organisations located in the city in question, its inhabitants, infrastructure like streets and systems of transport and so on; everything that exists in the city, both human and nonhuman. To understand the city as a collaborator, implies that the festivals are created in and through conversation with the city. This kind of collaboration which reaches beyond the art world is a

significant characteristic of the festivals programming and producing new genre public art and thus a signifier of the curatorial practice in this context. In this section I focus on the festivals as dialogical actors. Its implications on curatorial practice will be discussed further in chapter 5.

Whenever the festival or an artist wishes to collaborate with an existing community, organisation, an institution or a specific urban space; be it a park, square or neighbourhood, the festivals are the ones who make contact, negotiate and seek for required permissions. Copenhagen, for example, is organised culturally into a series of local areas and Metropolis often does projects with them and residence associations connected to them. For PLACCC, that emphasises their urban agenda by aiming to make an impact on the city, the most important local partner is the contemporary architecture centre which focuses on issues related to urbanism. According to Nanay, they often collaborate because the architecture centre sees that a festival with a big audience can help their activities. Other important local partners mentioned by Nanay include an activist group Valyo[1] and a group of landscape architects and urbanists who focus for example on collective city planning. Fanni Nanay brought up the crucial relationship with the city several times describing the difficulties with the city council and local municipalities regarding permissions and use of public spaces. Veronica Kaup-Hasler also mentioned that the city officials can be a major influence on the processes of requiring permission, implying that they can make the process very difficult or ensure that it runs smoothly. Luigi Fassi from Steirischer Herbst highlighted that whenever he invites an artist to the festival, he also needs to seek for a location for the work because the festival itself does not have any spaces or venues. This dialogical relationship to the city is a major part of the curator's work which Trevor Davies describes as the "rhetoric of the festival".

For Steirischer Herbst, the festival centre is an important element of the festival's social engagement with the city. The festival builds a festival centre each year in a different location utilising a different concept and its main function is social; to create a social place for audiences to gather, hang out and to socialise, to engage people with the festival and to create presence in the city. It can include a bar, a restaurant and activities related to urban culture, such as bicycle repair workshops. For Steirischer Herbst, it is crucial that local people connect with the festival through the festival centre because "a good festival has to be an extraordinary social place", as Kaup-Hasler says.

Although the cities are significant collaborators for the festivals, they are partners not only in the sense of potential. First of all, the local authorities can be crucial in terms of giving permissions to use a specific location, allowing an artwork to be created or shown in a specific site or enabling a collaboration with the city's department, or denying the permission. Secondly, when we think about a collaboration and dialogue with the city, it is possible to have a dialogue only with what and who is there, in that specific city in question. In this sense the city is also a limitation and restriction and each city is of course different.

1. Valyo. Visited April 14, 2019, https://smartcitybudapest.eu/content/valyo.

In addition to a festival's dialogical relationship to the city, considering festivals as dialogical actors implies that each festival and its theme, focus or leitmotif is a result of a dialogical process. I call this the festival framework. For Paula Toppila and Fanni Nanay, the most important conversation takes place within the festival's artistic team or working group, as it is called at IHME. The members of these artistic working groups are not employed by the festivals but work as outside experts. At IHME, each artist is decided upon together with Toppila and the artistic working group, and then she consults the members individually when she wants to elaborate on something. Considering the nature of new genre public art festivals, Trevor Davies from Metropolis also says that it is better to have two or three other people or a group of people working on the programme together. For Davies this is on one hand connected to the characteristics of new genre public art and on the other hand to the urban agenda which to him, make the curatorial practice more complex than programming a theatre festival as an example. According to Davies, this kind of festival which is organised in the urban spaces and different locations in the city, engaging citizens and communities, with strong urban and socio-political agendas, is not about a single vision but multiple voices and dialogue. Luigi Fassi held a similar viewpoint. Fanni Nanay from PLACCC also connects the dialogue within the artistic team to the urban agenda and argues for critical thinking in relation to the city. For her it has been very important to have expertise and criticality related to the city and urbanism in the artistic team of the festival.

Steirischer Herbst's leitmotiv and Metropolis's lab are other examples of how the festival framework is created through and in a dialogue. For Trevor Davies, the labs are a dialogical method of working with artists and urban practitioners. The process of creating the leitmotiv of Steirischer Herbst is another example of this kind of dialogical approach. First of all, it is a collaborative process within the curatorial team to write the preliminary text which is "a very open paper with all the questions and thoughts" and "a dialogue between theory and people we meet", as described by Veronica Kaup-Hasler. And through this text, the festival begins to enter into dialogue with other curators and artists, and their responses and ideas enter the text. In the end, the actual leitmotiv of the festival can be understood as a result of several layers of dialogue, a kind of multi-layered collaborative process. Certainly, the leitmotiv does not represent the thinking and visions of the festival and its curators only.

It can be generalised that the festival's dialogue with the city operates more on an institutional, organisational and municipal governance level, between the festival and a company, institution, an organisation or a city department, for instance. However, it is not limited to only the level of governance. On the level of the artworks, the dialogue happens more on an individual level between curators, artists, citizens, communities and individual members of those communities. This distinction is of course a generalisation as the lines can be blurry and conversations with members of different entities happens through individuals. Naturally, people also belong to different communities through work, personal interests or cultural background. The festivals' dialogical

relationship with communities of the city is closely related to the characteristics of new genre public art and its engagement to urban spaces, citizens and communities.

For Steirischer Herbst, this dialogical way of working is also a way to diversify themselves from other institutions in town, as Luigi Fassi describes. In Graz, which Fassi characterises as a city of many contemporary art institutions, Steirischer Herbst tries to operate differently. The festival does not have a space or a gallery like the other institutions and their model of working and production is much more about the dialogue with the city. The artistic processes that Fassi is interested in facilitating are really about the dialogue with the city and its communities. On the level of the artwork, Luigi Fassi describes how it is often through the artworks that the festival engages local communities: "The focus is pretty much on the artist and…and their engagement through us with the community." Through the process of producing artworks, the curator establishes relationships with people, communities or partners that the artists would like to work with, but simultaneously Fassi also points out that both the festival's political agendas and curators' interests play a part in that process.

Foregrounding the art world agenda, IHME Festival also highlights the role of the artist in the dialogue with the city during the artistic process. For Toppila, the dialogue is foremost based on the interests of the artist, although she acknowledges that when the artist comes for the first visit, the meetings and the programme the festival has set up can significantly influence the process. Once the festival has accepted the artwork proposal, Toppila begins to look for the necessary partnerships in realising the artwork, discusses them with the artist and starts to make initial contacts with local partners. IHME Festival's invitation to the artist includes a proposition to consider participation as part of the process of creating or experiencing the artwork. Paula Toppila describes that through the artworks they have commissioned, she has contacted various communities in order to collaborate on the artworks and that in some cases the willingness of the potential partner to collaborate with the festival has been a crucial element in the process of producing the artwork. Both Fassi and Toppila emphasise that the local partners vary a lot according to the artworks.

Metropolis is interested in getting artists involved in reconfiguring communities and creating places with meaning, community and ownership. But when the festival produces a project that engages local communities or creates a kind of temporary community around it, it's a challenge to think how the festival could follow that up or work with it in the long term, as a festival is not set up to sustain ongoing activities. Using the example of Collective strings as an artwork that engaged more than 200 local residents in their neighbourhood and who would like the work or something similar to be there permanently, Trevor Davies says that Metropolis would like to manage similar processes in the future, which the temporary festival framework does not currently allow.

The festivals' political agendas form the framework for the dialogical relationship with the local context, the city and its communities and citizens. The significance the curators give to the socio-political and urban agendas implies that

it is not enough to operate only in the art world. However, the art world is important, and the curators want to be able to realise artists' visions and offer them the best possible conditions in the framework of the festival. For the curators it is of course important to maintain artistically high quality which grants relevancy and enables and secures future funding and collaboration opportunities in the art world. Relating to the art world agenda, especially Metropolis and PLACCC mention that some networks are very important in their work and shape the process of curating the festivals. For small organisations, networks are also an enabler of activities and objectives they could not achieve or afford alone.

Both Metropolis and PLACCC are part of the European In Situ[2] network which for them is a very important platform to discuss site-specific art with fellow curators, hear about new projects and artists and which also provides common funding possibilities for certain projects and activities. Participation in a network like In Situ is dialogical. It is based on regular meetings, conversation, exchange of ideas and artists as well as collaboration. Because through In Situ, some projects are funded and the curators get to bring them to their festivals with extra financial support, it directly affects the curatorial practice as well, so participation in a funded network like this adds another dimension to curators work as the network has its own objectives and timeline that the curators need to adjust the festival's programming cycle to. According to Trevor Davies, via the partners of In Situ, Metropolis is in an ongoing contact with 150-250 artists, theatre companies, architects and visual artists who work in the public realm which he calls "the core of European production". Other formal, funded networks that the curators of PLACCC, Metropolis and Steirischer Herbst mentioned in the interviews include IETM,[3] Circo Strada,[4] Space 2,[5] Tandem Europe[6] and NXTSTP[7]. Davies also mentions that he works with networks of cities but does not specify those in more detail.

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2. In SITU brings together a group of programmers who are passionate about new forms of art and public space. They have been working together since 2003 to develop joint European projects. There are 25 member organisations in 2016-2017, including Metropolis and PLACCC from the cases of this research. Retrieved July 21, 2017, from http://www.in-situ.info/en/.
3. IETM (Informal European Theatre Meeting) is the International network for contemporary performing arts for performing arts organisations and individuals working in the contemporary performing arts worldwide. Retrieved July 21, 2017, from https://www.ietm.org/.
4. Circostrada is the European Network for Circus and Street Arts. Retrieved July 21, 2017, from http://www.circostrada.org/en.
5. Space is a platform for supporting performing arts circulation in Europe. SPACE 2 – DESTINATIONS, pdf. Retrieved July 21,2017, from www2.onda.fr/fichiers/bibliotheque/space_2_destinations.pdf.
6. Tandem is an initiative of European Cultural Foundation to support social innovation throughout the EU. Retrieved July 21, 2017, from https://www.tandemforculture.org/programmes/tandem-europe/.
7. NXTSTP was a network of European performing arts festivals to support co-production and circulation of performing arts in Europe. Retrieved July 21, 2017, from https://www.nxtstp.eu/home.

Besides these established, formal networks the curators mostly referred to informal, local networks built around an artwork or local partnerships. Whereas In Situ is a very important network for Metropolis and PLACCC, for IHME and Steirischer Herbst the informal networks formed by local partnerships and organisations are more important than formal, international networks. For IHME the partnerships and informal networks are always related to the artworks and IHME is not part of any formal international network. According to Toppila, their international collaborations are mostly related to IHME days and the networks of the members in the artistic working group. For Steirischer Herbst, according to Fassi and Kaup-Hasler, the most important partners on an international level are the artists and they both emphasise the importance of discussions with them. Kaup-Hasler mentions the NXTSTP network as an example of international partnership but generally highlights the importance of informal networks of people. Steirischer Herbst does have international partnerships beyond NXTSTP, but according to Fassi those are more related to fundraising than curatorial practice.

Although collaboration through dialogue is crucial for the festivals, it can be observed in the curators' comments that the collaboration has several benefits for the partners as well. Whether it is to increase visibility of their activities, to receive extra funding for co-productions or reach a different and perhaps bigger audience, the festivals are considered as a heightened moment of increased intensity that attracts people who otherwise might not visit cultural institutions, art world professionals and media. This mutual interest for collaboration seems to be a kind of win-win situation for both the festivals and their partners and it forms the basis of dialogue. And if this mutual interest does not already exist, it is part of the curator's work to find a way to establish the relationship, create interest for collaboration and manage the dialogical process.

Above I have described how through the analysis, I have come to define festivals as dialogical actors. When thinking about dialogical artwork which in Kester's (2004, p. 69) analysis is created in and through the dialogue with the artist, the context of the work and its audience/participators, a dialogical festival can be understood to be created in and through the dialogue with the artists and their artworks, the city and its socio-political context and the curator/s. This further roots the curatorial practice of new genre public art in the dialogical framework.

4.2 Case Introductions, Observations and Photographs

This second part of the analysis chapter is dedicated to the introduction of the case festivals Metropolis (Denmark), IHME Festival (Finland), Steirischer Herbst (Austria), and PLACCC Festival (Hungary), my observations and photographs. Each short introduction is followed by my observations which I have accompanied with a few photographs. The cases are presented in chronological order, starting from Metropolis which was the first festival I visited.

Before I proceed with the cases, I return for a moment to the different educational routes to working as a curator which I pointed out in section 1.1. Also, the educational background of the interviewed curators in this research is varied. One of the oldest curatorial courses is the one year de Appel Curatorial Programme in Amsterdam, Netherlands, and of the interviewed curators, Paula Toppila, went to the second edition of the programme in 1996-97. Prior to that, Toppila had studied art history, cultural history, literature and communications theory and worked as a curator and exhibition co-ordinator. Luigi Fassi studied philosophy and later on attended the Whitney independent study program's curatorial programme organised by the Whitney Museum of American art in New York. Like de Appel, it is a one year course and cannot be compared to an academic degree. However, these courses can be considered a part of a larger university degree. Fassi has mostly worked as a curator during his professional career. Fanni Nanay studied theatre anthropology and Hungarian and world literature but has a professional background in working as a project manager and executive manager in theatre and dance. Veronica Kaup-Hasler has also a background in performing arts and studied theatre science, performance and literature. Her professional background includes working as a dramaturg, teaching at university and working for festivals. Trevor Davies is originally a city planner but has worked in the arts for decades. His professional background includes working as the director of Copenhagen International Theatre and of two European Capital of Culture projects namely Copenhagen and Århus as well as working for festivals.

Metropolis

Metropolis[8] has been organised between 2007-2015 as a biannual festival and since 2017 as a summer season taking place over several months in Copenhagen, Denmark. As the interview data and observations were collected in 2015, in this research I refer to Metropolis as a festival although it is acknowledged that they have changed their form from a festival to a season. Metropolis has a strong focus on the concept of the city and urban context, which is identifiable already in the name of the festival. Alongside the festival, Metropolis organises a laboratory through which they initiate and produce new artistic projects. The laboratory was called Nordic Urban Lab between 2014-2018 and organised in collaboration with various Nordic Partners. The main focus of the laboratory is to develop projects with international artists through residencies and collaborations in the city. The laboratory functions as a platform for artists, architects, city planners and theoreticians to meet the challenge of creating more living, fair, inspiring and cohesive cities. The aim of the laboratory is to investigate urban practices, to create a network of artists and architects engaged in the urban field, to explore concrete ideas for projects and to introduce artists who will be engaged in the Metropolis programme. Metropolis has published a series of publications, Changing Metropolis I (2007-2008), Changing Metropolis II (2008-2011) and

8. Metropolis – performance and art in urban space. Retrieved July 25, 2019, from https://www.metropolis.dk/en/

Changing Metropolis III (2012-2015), which include articles written by architects, city planners, artists and academics.

Københavns Internationale Teater is the organisation behind Metropolis and its focus is to exit the theatre and enter the city to create art, life and debate. Their main objective is to break established notions of art, in particular performing arts, and to function as an artistic platform for the development of the creative city. According to Trevor Davies, they are two people who organise the festival and, on the website, they are called directors. Also, a communications person and technical director are mentioned on the website. It is not clear who or how many of them work full-time for the organisation. Metropolis is supported by the City of Copenhagen and the Danish arts Foundation.

Observations at Metropolis festival, Copenhagen, Denmark 26.-30.8.2015

Metropolis is the first festival of the four cases of my research that I visit. I have been working on the interview structure and questions prior to the trip and have organised one interview with the artistic director Trevor Davis for the last day of my visit. I am very excited as I have not visited Metropolis before, but I love the city of Copenhagen and I really look forward to staying there for a few days.

Prior to my visit I have also organised tickets for some of the performances. The ticketed shows that I see are Emke Idema's "Rule", Osynligan Teatern's "Engram", Opera Nord's "Looking for Courage" and Wunderland's "Phoenix". The free events include Karoline H. Larsen's "Collective Strings", Asphalt Piloten's "Tape Riot" and "In the name of Democracy" by Steen & Hejlesen with den Sorte Skole. Copenhagen is a very expensive city, so I stay further away from the centre in a less expensive hotel in Ørestad and take the metro to the city and the locations where the artworks take place. The artworks by the festivals are located around the city. "Rule", "Engram" and "In the name of Democracy" are located in the centre, but "Looking for Courage" takes place only a few metro stops from my accommodation in Ørestad. "Tape Riot" takes place in several locations but I visit it at Frederiksberg Metro station, "Wunderland" in Refshaleøen by the Copenhagen harbour and "Collective Strings" on Thomas Plads in Frederiksberg.

The first work I see is "Rule" which takes place in Kulturstyrelsens Foyer. I of course have the address to the location, but I identify the site by the Metropolis festival stand on the street. I am a little early and nobody seems to be there. I buy a snack from the supermarket across the street and watch the festival staff setting up a ticket sales table with some brochures on the street in front of the red brick building. Rule is an interactive game played by the audience. It requires participation and collaboration of all audience members and we are guided by a recorded voice that instructs us through the loudspeakers. The game instructs us how to move in the space, what to do, it forces us to take stands or sides according to our opinion, and many of the tasks require collaboration between audience members. If someone is unsuccessful in fulfilling the task, they are dropped out of the game and instructed to sit down on the side. They are "ruled out" so to speak. Although the work symbolically addresses issues of norms, inclusion and

tolerance thus representing a kind of mini society where the audience members need to sometimes collectively figure out a way how to respond to the tasks, I find the work rather didactic and limiting.

"Engram" is an audio walk which begins at the cathedral of Vor Frue Kirke in the centre of Copenhagen. I am given headphones and an mp3 player and instructed to sit down on the benches of the cathedral. I recognise the other audience members from wearing big headphones and looking around curiously. The soundtrack is made of sound memos of people who just a few days after those recordings passed away. They are memories and reflections which unfold as we are guided out of the cathedral to walk on narrow streets of city. We walk as a group along small streets and end up on a little square where we sit down on benches. I enjoy walking in the city and listening to the soundtrack which creates somehow a cinematic, slightly unreal feeling. Listening to the soundscape while walking in the city creates a sense of a secret, I am hearing something others are not and therefore I have this secret knowledge or insight. The experience is poetic and intimate, it allows me to think about the fragility of life and consider the idea of having 640 breaths left before dying while walking in the midst of the urban life of Copenhagen.

FIGURE 1 People participating in Osynligan Teatern's "Engram". Photograph: Johanna Tuukkanen, © Johanna Tuukkanen 08/2015.

"Looking for Courage" is a huge and complex theatre production that is sited in a newly developed area of contemporary housing blocks in Ørestad. There is a large audience gathering in a park, registering, and we are divided into smaller

groups and guided by radio receivers in our ears through the buildings, underground parking spaces, via elevators to some apartments, courtyards, small parks and streets. On the journey we encounter performers, strange acts and scenes with lights, sound and videos, dancers, singers, choirs and in the end, we gather to watch a spectacular scene in the round courtyard surrounded by the buildings through which we have moved.

"Phoenix" on the other hand, takes me through strange wastelands to Refshaleøen by the Copenhagen harbour. I take a boat taxi there which is more complicated than I anticipated because there is a triathlon event going on by the harbour and some of the boat taxis were not running or had changed their route. Although I have received arrival information by email, I am slightly lost and running late and having a hard time finding the location where I am supposed to be for the start of this one to one performance. But once I am there and given instructions, I dwell into the intimacy of the work which is described as an individual performance walk. GPS tracks my location and shows me where to go next. I encounter an intimate one to one performance in a small sauna tent for example, I am invited to lie down on a grey, old wooden boat, I climb down into another boat that floats in the water and is decorated entirely white, I enter a building where I see nobody but witness remnants of a person. Some scenes are performative, some more visual, an audio guides me through headphones and the whole experience is strengthened by the wasteland landscape and location by the sea, and my own bodily experience of moving through that landscape, climbing and exploring different sites, smelling the sea, hearing seagulls and feeling slightly anxious, scared and curious but constantly rewarded by these small performative moments that the work offers me. After the experience I wait for the boat taxi and take a selfie on the dock. I remember how the sun was shining on my face, the slightly unpractical dress I was wearing and the sense of happiness and gratitude.

I take the metro to Frederiksberg to see "Tape Riot". I have trouble finding it as the festival programme does not detail where exactly at the station the work takes place exactly and the station is big. I walk outside around different entrances until I recognise some festival staff members who tell me that the work begins at the platform. It feels strange to be hanging out on the platform to wait for a performance to begin and let all the metros pass by. Clearly there is a crowd who, like me, is there to see the performance. The work is performed by two dancers, one performer who uses black gaffer tape to create shapes, spaces and lines onto the floor and an electro musician. The performance begins at the platform and creates a journey up the elevator to the upper level of the station. Most people watch it a few minutes and take a bit of video or photographs with their smart phones before continuing their journey to or from the metro. People seem surprised and excited. During the performance there are some small interactions between audience members and the performers but mostly the performers seem to be working with their own score. They follow the taped forms created on the floor and through their movement the dancers seem to relate to space, its shape, angles and lines, as well as the soundtrack played at least

partly live by the musician. To me it is interesting to observe how people react to the work when they bump into it by chance, but the most inspiring moment is perhaps when two polices officers or security guards intervene with it. I am not so near that I would hear what they say - and probably would not understand even if I was, but at least two organisers talk with them showing a paper which I assume to be a contract or a proof of permission. The performance is not stopped but the negotiation with the officers takes what feels like quite a long time. Eventually they leave but it looks like the issue was that the performers were too close to the train track. This police intervention reminds me how controlled our public spaces are and when anything too much out of the ordinary behaviour takes place, the police are there right away.

FIGURE 2 Asphalt Piloten's "Tape Riot" at Frederiksberg station. Photograph: Johanna Tuukkanen, © Johanna Tuukkanen 08/2015.

Another rather huge event is "In the name of Democracy" which takes place only once in front of the courthouse at night. It is related to the celebration of the first centenary of the Danish Constitution. The entire facade of the courthouse is video mapped using images, graphics, legal texts and political speeches. Live DJs accompany the visual show which is large scale and very impressive. Thousands of people have gathered to see it and there is a strong sense of excitement. It is Friday night in the heart of Copenhagen so lots of people are out and about. The visual concert ends with an invitation to walk through the lobby of the courthouse where a performer is lying on a podium. Afterwards there is a little reception for invited guests, and I hang around for a while, but I am tired, so I soon head to my hotel.

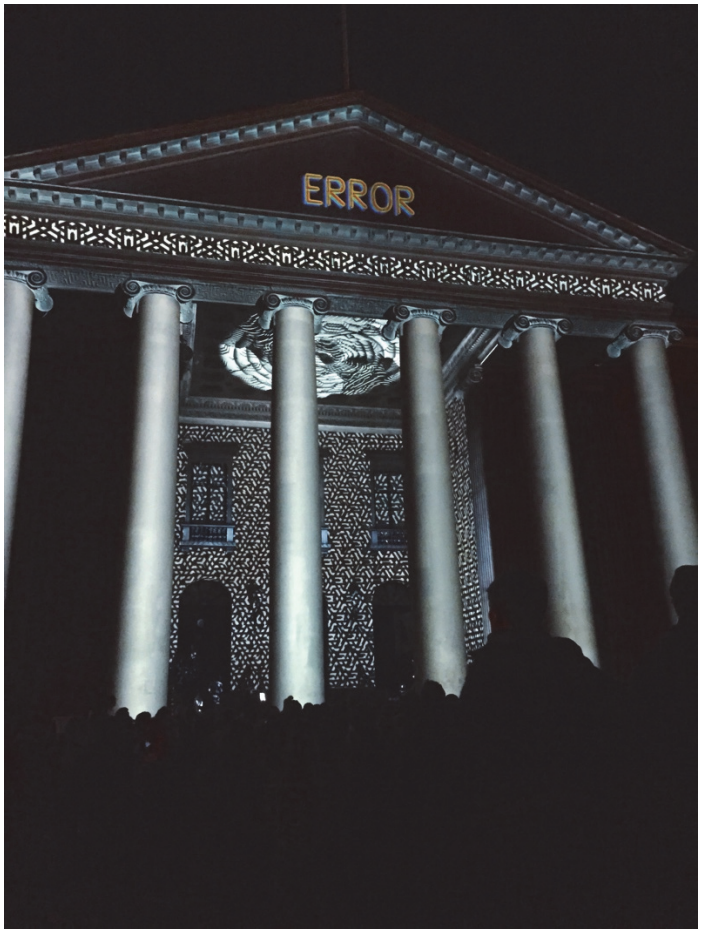

FIGURE 3 "In the name of Democracy" by Steen & Hejlesen with den Sorte Skole, Courthouse. Photograph: Johanna Tuukkanen, © Johanna Tuukkanen 08/2015.

The work I visit a few times is "Collective Strings" on Thomas Plads square. It is a participatory installation created of strings and ropes of all colours over two weeks. Everyone is invited to contribute to the installation which develops day by day as people add into and continue it. During certain hours the artist or perhaps their assistants are there also working on the installation and providing string to the participants. I walk around the installation and observe the environment and how people interact with the work. On my first visit I sit on a bench for quite a while and think how the work has temporarily transformed the square and I am surprised that the festival has received permission for the work because it has really taken over the square. It almost blocks the routes of cars and bicycles as they drive though the square. It is amusing to observe people participating in the installation by adding more string to it but also playing with it. Some tourists and children are using it as a swing and have a laugh while playing in and with it. Many people take photographs.

FIGURE 4 A child playing at Karoline H. Larsen's "Collective Strings" on Thomas Plads. Photograph: Johanna Tuukkanen, © Johanna Tuukkanen 08/2015.

FIGURE 5 Karoline H. Larsen's "Collective Strings", Thomas Plads. Photograph: Johanna Tuukkanen, © Johanna Tuukkanen 08/2015.

IHME

The first IHME Festival[9] was held in 2008 and it was organised as an annual festival between 2008-2018 in Helsinki, Finland. The festival consists of one commissioned temporary public artwork by an international artist or group and a programme built around this artwork. The programme includes talks and discussions, film screenings, video art and music. Alongside the festival, IHME organises the IHME school which is an art education programme planned for children and youth as well as teachers, and the IHME panel, which is a discussion forum consisting of audience members that gathers a couple of times a year. After each IHME edition, a publication is made focusing on the commissioned artwork and the artist, but it also features the IHME school and art educational activities related to that.

In 2019, IHME launched a new activity model and changed its name to IHME Helsinki[10]. The new model supports collaboration of artists and scientists and the mission statement focuses on supporting art in an ecologically sustainable and democratic society. Although this new working model and name of the organisation are acknowledged, in this research I refer to IHME Festival because the empirical data is collected in the period when the organisation used that name and functioned under a festival concept.

The organisation behind IHME is the art foundation Pro Arte which aims to promote art in democratic society as an integral part of the everyday life of people (Koskela & Toppila, 2016, p. 4). Furthermore, the foundation wants to

9. IHME Festival History. Retrieved July 25, 2019, from https://www.ihmehelsinki.fi/en/history/.
10. IHME Festival is now IHME Helsinki. Retrieved July 25, 2019, from https://www.ihmehelsinki.fi/en/2019/05/ihme-festival-is-now-ihme-helsinki/.

promote the status and visibility of visual art, as well as its accessibility and relationship to audiences. The funder of the foundation is an anonymous donor. Since 2015, Kone Foundation has supported IHME and from 2020-22 the Saastamoinen foundation will also join as a funder. This means, that IHME Festival is funded entirely by private foundations. They do not receive or apply any public funding.

There are two permanent full-time staff members at IHME. Paula Toppila has worked as the general manager and curator since the first edition of IHME in 2007. The other full-time staff member works in production and communication. IHME also employs assistants, producers and communications experts on a temporary basis according to the needs of the commissions. Until June 2019 when IHME changed their activity model, there was an expert team consisting of six art experts, including Paula Toppila, which was in charge of the artistic content of Pro Arte. Pro Arte Foundation has a board which had at the time of writing six members and one foundation's administrator (Koskela & Toppila, 2016, p. 7). Four of the members belonged both to the expert team and the board.

Observations at IHME Festival 16.3.2016
and IHME days 2.–3.4.2016, Helsinki, Finland

On the 16th of March, I have planned to head out to explore the "Tram Busker's Tour". I am currently working in Helsinki and after work I go home, drop my stuff and change into a more relaxed sports outfit. I walk to the nearest tram stop on Karjalankatu and hop on the tram. There are no musicians in the tram, and I continue to Hakaniemi, and change into another tram, the first one that arrives. No musicians in that one either. I jump off at the railway station and take just one stop to Lasipalatsi, nothing. Then I decide to go back towards Ylioppilastalo. I get on the tram, and again there is no sight of the Tram Busker's Tour. I jump out and stand on the tram stop in front of Stockmann on Mannerheimintie and do not know where to continue. I am getting a little bit cold. I look towards Lasipalatsi, it is dark already, and I see at least 10 trams at the same time. Several in front of Lasipalatsi, some continuing towards Töölö and Ooppera, some turning towards Hakaniemi and Kallio, others coming from Kaivokatu and continuing to Kamppi. Some coming towards Stockmann, turning to Aleksanterinkatu and some coming to the stop where I am standing, heading towards Ullanlinna or Hietalahti. I think that this is a hopeless task; to purposefully try to find an artwork that is supposed to be discovered unexpectedly, as a surprise, and not as an event I can intentionally decide to go and experience. I do not know what to do. I see trams coming and going, turning left and right, tracks almost on every street. It is going to be one in a million kind of luck for me to get a glimpse of the Tram Busker's Tour. I decide to head back towards Alppila where I live. I hop on a tram, no musicians. But the line is quite busy, maybe they will jump on this tram at the railway station or Kaisaniemi? Nothing. I try to look at every passing tram in my search for finding the Tram Buskers' Tour, but I do not find anything. I continue to Hakaniemi and jump off. For the last part of my journey back home, I change one more time, enter through

the back door and BINGO! Two female musicians singing and playing guitar in the middle of the tram! Suddenly all my frustration is gone. I am delighted to have finally run into the Tram Busker's Tour. I sit down next to someone, quickly take out my phone to take some photos and videos of their performance. A young man carrying an IHME Festival cotton bag on his shoulder almost straight away approaches me, says that this is an artwork and gives me a brochure of the festival. He is talking to people on the tram, explaining what is going on and that it is part of the IHME Festival. The car in which I am sitting is half full and everyone seems to be smiling and excited. People chat, laugh and take photographs. There is a lively, bubbling energy in the tram. Suddenly I feel a sense of community, of us, random people sharing a moment of music in the dark March evening in Helsinki, sitting cosily in the tram. I feel happy. The tram is approaching my stop and for a moment I consider whether to ride past my stop and continue along with the Tram Busker's Tour, but I decide to get off on my stop as the experience feels complete and satisfying. A fleeting moment of an unexpected artful event on the tram, creating a temporary community of random people experiencing something together in the everyday.

FIGURE 6 TBee Girls performing as part of the Tram Busker's Tour. Photograph: Johanna Tuukkanen, © Johanna Tuukkanen 03/2016.

A few weeks later, 2.-3.4.2016, I attend some of the IHME days programme that takes place in Ylioppilastalo, right in the heart of Helsinki. I listen to a talk where Pekka Sauri, one of the mayors of Helsinki, and graffiti artist Hende Nieminen talk about graffiti and street art, a series of comments and experiences of the Tram Busker's Tour including a comment by Otso Kantokorpi, a Finnish art critic, and a discussion between the artist Kateřina Šedá and curator Hamza Walker. Along the talks programme, I also visit a club night on Saturday evening featuring electronic music acts and watch the documentary film about the Tram Busker's Tour which captures moments with the different musicians and people's reaction to them on the tram.

The IHME days feel like a rather professional art world event and the audience seems to be consisting mostly of artists and other art experts such as curators and producers. Many of the IHME expert team members are present in the events and I recognise some of them as they are well known figures in the Finnish visual art scene. Some representatives of Kone Foundation are also attending the IHME days as one of the main supporters of the festival. There is a crowd but not so many people. During the days people come and go, some stay for one talk while others like me stay a bit longer. The talks relate in different ways to the themes that the Tram Busker's Tour addresses. Kateřina Šedá herself talks about the inspiration behind the work and the interviewing curator is conceptualising and framing the work in an art historical context. To me it all feels a little bit elitist as it focuses on discussing the work in the art world context. Or maybe I just feel slightly like an outsider and I do not really know how to be in the event.

Steirischer Herbst

Steirischer Herbst[11] is the oldest festival of the cases and it was founded in 1968 as a reaction to the resurgence of nationalist cultural initiatives at the time. Based on the tradition of international modernism in music, theatre and visual art, Steirischer Herbst has been one of the few interdisciplinary festivals in the world with its programme integrating visual art, music, art in public space, theatre, performance, new media and literature. Translated as Styrian autumn harvest, Steirischer Herbst takes place annually over 3-4 weeks in September-October. The programme consists of hundreds of events and dozens of artists, both Austrian and international. The festival aims to foster dialogue between art forms and practices and combines aesthetic positions with theoretical reflection. This approach has been central throughout the history of the festival as it emphasises work that escapes the rules and traditions of separate cultural fields. The festival has a strong engagement with the region of Styria and the city of Graz as it emerged through the initiative of the local scenes and plays an important role today. The festival has activated many cultural and public spaces both in the city and the region. Steirischer Herbst has a strong focus on the social and political urgencies in Austria aligned with international orientation and they openly claim to have a critical agenda.

Steirischer Herbst is a private company, officially titled steirischerherbst festival gmbh. Their main object is to plan and carry out cultural events in the context of steirischer herbst. The shareholders are public institutions Land Steiermark and Stadt Graz. According to the interview of Luigi Fassi (2016), the staff is about 20 people. There is a director, curatorial team consisting of curators and curatorial assistants, managerial team with deputy director, managing director, management assistant, and an educational team, editorial team, production team, communications team and financial team. On their website there are 47 people mentioned under the team, but it is not possible to tell how

11. About Steirischer Herbst. Retrieved July 25, 2019, from https://www.steirischerherbst.at/en/about/6/steirischer-herbst.

many of them are working full-time around the year. It is also possible that the amount of staff has changed since the interviews in 2016 but it is unlikely that the number of full-time staff would have doubled.

Since the interviews, both the director Veronica Kaup-Hasler and curator Luigi Fassi, no longer work at Steirischer Herbst. The new director Ekaterina Degot started in 2018 and with her, the whole curatorial team has also changed. According to Fassi, this is a typical way for the festival to operate when the director changes.

Observations at Steirischer Herbst, Graz, Austria 29.9.-2.10.2016

I have managed to organise a three-night trip to Steirischer Herbst Festival and set up two interviews. Besides doing the interviews with the festival director Veronica Kaup-Hasler and curator Luigi Fassi, I plan to see as much of the festival programme as I possibly can, with a focus on the site-specific works.

At the festival I see six artworks including Apichatpong Weerasethakul's "Fever Room", blitz Theatre Group's "Late Night", Philipp Gemacher's "Die Dinge der Welt", Julian Hetzel's "Schuldfabrik", Ingri Fiksdal's and Jonas Corell Petersen's "State", Rainer Prohaska's "Mobile Tea house" and Kiluanji Kia Henda's "This is my Blood" and the main exhibition "Body Luggage". The works got selected based on what was available in the festival programme during the time of my visit. The selection of the artworks represents quite well the overall festival programme which consists of visual art, theatre and dance works as well as a music programme. Some works are new commissions by the festival (This is my Blood), some international co-productions (State), some touring works (Late Night). Some works are presented in theatres, galleries and museums and some in public spaces of the city of Graz and Leibnitz by both local and international artists.

Due to the focus on new genre public art in my research, I focus here on the experience of the artworks by Kiluanji Kia Henda (AO) and Rainer Prohaska (AT). They are both sited outside the city of Graz, in the village called Leibnitz. The festival has organised free bus transportation from the centre of Graz and the bus stops in both locations of the artworks. The organisers know that I will be attending the festival as I have organised and bought my tickets in advance and arranged the interviews with Kaup-Hasler and Fassi. When I arrive to the location from where the bus departs, I am greeted and welcomed by the staff as they are expecting me. On the bus, I sit next to Martin Baasch, who turns out to be the head of dramaturgy at Steirischer Herbst. During the bus ride we talk about what I am going to see, the festival structure, funding and sponsors. I learn for example that the festival's general sponsor is Legero, an Austrian footwear company.

We first stop at Kiluanji Kia Henda's work. We are in the middle of the countryside and the bus stops along a small road, letting everyone off just on the side of the road. I see fields and forest, and on one field there is a slight slope, with red sticks a little taller than a human arranged in systematic rows. These sticks are organised to cover the entire section of that field, and they are placed

approximately 1,5 meters apart from each other, making it possible for the audience to walk amongst and in-between them. It is the opening of the artwork and the bus seems pretty full. There are perhaps 30-40 people at the event. Because it is the opening, the festival director Veronica Kaup-Hasler is there, and of course the artist and the visual arts curator Luigi Fassi, whom I will interview a few days later. There is a reception including some wine and little snacks. Steirischer Herbst has a tradition of the festival director, curator and the artist talking about the artwork in the openings so there is a sound system set in the field and one after another they present the commission, talk about it and the festival, thank partners and funders and congratulate Kiluanji Kia Henda on the opening of the new work. A few other people also speak but I do not know who they are. Perhaps they are from the local village or owners of the field. I do not understand most of what is said, but the atmosphere on the sunny afternoon is relaxed, the audience sips wine and wonders around amongst the installation after the talks.

FIGURE 7 Kiluanji Kia Henda's "This is my Blood", Seggauberg, Leibnitz. Photograph: Johanna Tuukkanen, © Johanna Tuukkanen 09/2016.

I am in the mood of observing the situation and I do not engage much in conversation with anyone. It is my first day at the festival and I do not know Henda or the festival staff personally. I have only chatted with Martin on the bus. To me it seems a little odd to have this kind of formal opening, to have a PA set up and listen to curators talking to a microphone in the middle of the countryside,

on a field. This familiar set up from museums and galleries feels out of place which it literally also is.

I think about the artwork as an installation or perhaps land artwork. From some angles it is very impressive, and I enjoy how it paints the entire field red. It is nice to see people wondering amongst it, walking between what seems like hundreds of red sticks on a field. The scale is big but not massive. I take a lot of photos and walk around. The work is very visual but, in some ways, it also blends into the landscape smoothly. It does not require specific interaction or participation from the audience, but it does offer a very different experience if you walk in the midst of it compared to if you just observe it from the road or a distance. The exact location feels rather remote, it is just a piece of land and a field in the countryside. There is not a landmark or another site next to it which would give it an identity. At least I as a visitor do not recognise anything like that.

I wonder a lot what would be the impulse or invitation for someone who is not an art audience and who would be just passing by in their car to stop by the artwork? You can see a glimpse of the it from the main road but if you want to stop and have a look at it, you need to turn and drive about half a kilometre to actually reach the installation. It does not look like a location where there would be pedestrians or cyclists passing by a lot. To me it seems that you need to know about the artwork and be pretty interested in it to make the effort to visit it.

FIGURE 8 Audiences at Kiluanji Kia Henda's "This is my Blood", Seggauberg, Leibnitz. Photograph: Johanna Tuukkanen, © Johanna Tuukkanen 09/2016.

There is a little stand on the road next to the artwork which explains that it is part of the Steirischer Herbst festival and what it is about. The text describes that the work relates to Austria's reaction to the European refugee crisis, especially the metal border barrier that Austria erected on their borders to seal off the country, the area of Styria's idyllic vineyards, a vast number of crucifixes and the colour red, symbolising both wine and blood. Although conceptually I can see how the work is linked to those themes, I am not sure if my experience of visiting the work prompts me to reflect on them. To me the work seems rather poetic and peaceful, a kind of visual and colourful intervention into the countryside landscape of fields. But on the other hand, the work creates a rather beautiful environment in which to walk around, and perhaps that beauty and the conceptual provocation actually speaks to the problematic way Austria decided to react to the humanitarian crisis of refugees in Europe. That underneath the beautiful Styrian idyll are strong religious and conservative ideas of patriotism and nationalism that still prevail.

FIGURE 9 Kiluanji Kia Henda's "This is my Blood", Seggauberg, Leibnitz. Photograph: Johanna Tuukkanen, © Johanna Tuukkanen 09/2016.

From "This is my Blood" we continue on the bus to the centre of Leibnitz where Reiner Prohaska is setting up the "Mobile Tea House". This work is not commissioned by the festival like Henda's work, but it is a coproduction between Steirischer Herbst and the Institute für Kunst im öffentlichen Raum Steiermark. Set up on the main square of Leibnitz, the work consists of an architectural wooden structure and the social aspect of using this structure to sit down and hang out in, as well as Prohaska performing a kind of tea ceremony, making tea and serving it to whoever wants it. Like the title suggests, the work creates its

own mobile tea house, an open structure for people to hang out in, drink tea and meet other people.

Some parts of the structure sit on a trailer, some elements are placed on the ground. The wooden parts are tied together with cargo straps which highlights the idea of mobility, that this is not a permanent structure. Orange pillows and blankets are placed on some of the wooden elements to invite people to sit down. Most of the Mobile Tea House is covered by a sunshade which creates shelter and a sense of intimacy. Prohaska has set up a little cooking station in the middle of the structure and begins at some point to boil water in a big pot. He lays out small tea glasses on specifically designed wooden trays and when the Turkish tea is ready, after mixing tea leaves in two pots and draining the tea into a smaller one, he pours it into each glass and invites people who have gathered in and around the Mobile Tea House to have some tea. There are also trays of little cakes placed on some of the tables. As before, the ritual of the festival director, curator and someone I do not know opening the event, talking about the work and inviting the artist to say a few words, repeats. Again, there is a PA system, and, in that sense, everything is very well planned and organised.

FIGURE 10 Audiences at Rainer Prohaska's "Mobile Tea house", Hauptplatz Leibnitz. Photograph: Johanna Tuukkanen, © Johanna Tuukkanen 09/2016.

There is a lively crowd of perhaps 50 people drinking tea and chatting. Again, although I also drink tea and have some cake, I am more focusing on observing the event, taking pictures and walking around to see how people interact with it and how it appears to me on the square. I enjoy that the Mobile Tea House is

sited on the main square of Leibnitz and is accessible without necessarily having prior knowledge about the work or the festival, and that local people are passing by and engaging with the work. It definitely is inviting as both the social aspect of drinking tea and the architectural structure itself kind of pull you in to explore the space and enjoy the tea. As the tea is Turkish, the work invites me to think about tea ceremonies in different cultures. The work seems very relational in a sense that it creates this possibility for encounters, conversations between people and physical interaction also with the architectural structure itself. It is also an intervention into the public space of Leibnitz. Located in the main square right in front of the Rathaus, it asks how we could perhaps more efficiently take advantage of the public spaces in order to stimulate interaction, dialogue and understanding between people and different cultures, how we could make the public spaces more inviting and enjoyable without having the pressure to buy anything.

FIGURE 11 Rainer Prohaska's "Mobile Tea house", Hauptplatz Leibnitz. Photograph: Johanna Tuukkanen, © Johanna Tuukkanen 09/2016.

The other works I see during my visit to Steirischer Herbst are either performances in theatres or galleries or exhibitions. Through the festival programme I get an overview of the city of Graz and its cultural institutions as I visit several museums and galleries, walk around in the city between venues and my Airbnb apartment. The festival also takes me out of the city to the Styrian countryside and the city of Leibnitz and from the bus I see vineyards and farms.

I am struck by the visibility of the Steirischer Herbst festival both in Graz and Leibnitz. There are lots of flags, posters, signs and stickers in public spaces, in all the venues that the festival uses as well as in cafes, restaurants and shop windows. No-one in the city can escape the visual presence of the festival, it seems so strong.

PLACCC

The PLACCC International Festival of Site-specific Art and Art in Public Space Festival[12] has been organised in Budapest, Hungary, since 2008. It is organised by the Artopolis Association and their mission is to focus on the field of site-specific performance and art in public space in a wider context. The main aim of the association is to organise the annual PLACCC festival which presents both international and local artworks and a selection of site-specific art forms. The editions of PLACCC have been very different from each other. Their scale has varied according to the funding, the festival has been organised both in the spring and autumn and in different locations including the city centre, the neighbourhood of Csepel and Pécs.

The festival does not have any long-term operational funding which means that each edition is funded differently by numerous local, regional and international funding schemes. The supporters listed on the festival website vary from the European Union to cultural institutions, networks and private companies. There are three people listed as organisers on the website including Fanni Nanay and three additional people working in press and public relations. At the time of interviewing Nanay, none of these were working full-time. The curators of the festival since 2017 are Fanni Nánay and Andrea Kovács.

Observations at PLACCC, Budapest, Hungary 14.-17.9.2018

Finally, I am able to visit PLACCC festival! I have been planning to visit since 2015 but either the festival was not organised each year or my own work schedules did not allow it until now. I arrive early in the morning in Budapest, take the airport bus to the city and walk around a little bit before I can get to my Airbnb apartment in the 8th district. It is my first time in Budapest and also Hungary, as well as at the festival. Prior to my visit I have been emailing about the programme with the artistic director Fanni Nanay. I am basically able to see only two artworks, a dance performance by Ziggurat Project and an urban game by Meetlab, which are both Hungarian collectives. In addition, Fanni Nanay has offered to take me and a few other international visitors on a walk to visit earlier projects of PLACCC.

The first work I see is the "Urgent Need to Breathe" by Ziggurat Project. To get to the location I need to catch a shuttle bus at Valyo Kikötő. It is just under four kilometres from my apartment and I decide to walk there so that I also get to see some of the city. I walk mostly along the river Donau and I am a little bit

12. PLACCC. Retrieved July 26, 2019, from http://placcc.hu/category/home/. Placcc fesztivál (Budapest, Hungary). Retrieved July 26, 2019, from http://www.in-situ.info/en/places-in-europe/en/placcc-fesztival-budapest-hungary-40.

anxious to find the right location of the shuttle bus. I do not really know what Valyo Kikötő even is, but I do have a phone number that I can call in case I have trouble finding it. Despite my anxiousness, I find the location just fine and it turns out that Valyo Kikötő is a riverfront hangout place. There is a bar, a DJ is playing music and people sit and relax in the sun. I look around and hang out at the parking area trying to spot the shuttle bus. Eventually an old bus arrives and a bunch of us get on it. It takes us to Csepel, which is another eight kilometres further. In the interview back in 2016, Fanni Nanay has talked a lot to me about this part of the city which is a former working-class area with several factories which are now all closed down. When we arrive to the location, we are asked to hang out on the riverbank and wait before we can enter the performance site. There is a good crowd of perhaps around 100 people. People chat, have drinks and sit on DIY benches and pallets. It soon gets dark and we are invited to enter the performance area.

"Urgent Need to Breathe" is described as a site-specific dance performance and it is performed in an old, now unused and what looks like abandoned swimming pool of Csepeli Paper Factory. The pool is lit with theatrical lights and we enter the pool through stairs. The pool is massive but kind of falling apart. It is missing tiles and trees and grass are growing through the bottom signalling that it has been a while since it has been in use. The audience finds their seats, some are sitting on the floor, some on pillows or little stools. The work is about diving and how time spent under water connects us to our bodies in a special way as we hold our breath but also to the fluid environment. The work begins by an invitation for the audience members to also try holding their breath for specific times and through this activity, the performance begins to unfold. Four performers go through different scenes utilising different parts of the pool. There is sound and light and the performers are also influencing these effects by wearing some kind of interactive technology on their costumes and through rearranging the fluorescent lamps in the pool. It feels fitting the work to be performed in the pool as it creates a strong connection to diving also as a sport.

I take a few photographs during the performance, but it is difficult to get any good images in the dark with my phone. Once the performance is over, I take a few pictures of the pool when the audience is wandering off. After the performance there is a film screening of a film documenting the PICTURE Budapest-Ostfold project. The film is projected on a wall in the same area where we were waiting for the performance to begin but the screen is quite small, and I find it difficult to concentrate on the film. In the audience I have earlier spotted a familiar face and I approach her during the film to say hello. It turns out that she is indeed my old school mate from the mid 1990s when we both studied at the European Dance Development Centre in Arnhem, Netherlands. We have not seen each other for more than 20 years so we have a lovely chat about what we do and where life has taken us. We continue our chat on the shuttle bus back to Valyo Kikötő and from there I take a tram back to the city.

FIGURE 12 The pool after the performance of "Urgent Need to Breathe" by Ziggurat Project. Photograph: Johanna Tuukkanen, © Johanna Tuukkanen 09/2018.

The next day I meet Fanni Nanay for the urban walk where she has promised to introduce me and some other international guests to previous projects of PLACCC. We meet at Boráros tér and take a tram to Csepel to experience an audio walk which takes place in the old industrial area. When we get to the gate of the factory area, I download an app called "Remember the Good Times Csepel Works" through the PocketGuide. The free version that the festival had on is not available anymore, so I purchase it for 5.49€. The walk is created by the Dutch company called SPACE and it is a combination of art, history, technology and personal experience. The walk has 10 stops that are triggered by my geographical location. At each stop, a story unfolds, and they immerse me in the colourful history of Csepel Factory. Being in the ghost like partly empty industrial area, listening to the stories of this area which once was the working place of 35 000 people, and now encountering empty, rundown buildings, children playing on the streets and seeing how some of the buildings now house homeless people, is a mesmerising experience mixing past and present.

FIGURE 13 "This Place is COOL!" by noppa, Rombusz Terasz. Photograph: Johanna Tuukkanen, © Johanna Tuukkanen 09/2018.

From Csepel, we go back to town and walk through the Mester street in the 9th district where there is a series of red signs with QR codes revealing histories of the buildings and locations. The work is called "This Place is COOL!" and it is created by Hungarian group called noppa. It is an interactive city history-based mapping system and the stories span from the construction of metro lines to significant historical buildings that once existed. Fanni Nanay is explaining the project to us but it is not really possible to discover and spend time reading the stories behind the codes when we are moving as a group. We continue to the Buda side of the city to the 11th district to visit the sgraffito work which was part of the festival in 2012 and still remains on site. Utilising the sgraffito technique of embossed plaster and then scratching on it the desired image, the Hungarian artists Antal Balázs, Fodor Zoltán, and Hatházi Laszló made this work on a wall of a residential building in honour of Hungarian sculptor Kárpáti Anna (1923-1993). The sgraffito wall complements Kárpáti's sculpture *Black Boy* which is located in a little park right in front of the wall. The sgraffito wall features several of Kárpáti's sculptures with each individual image featuring the year the sculpture was created and the postcode of its location. The work is rather large scale and I am pretty impressed by it as I have never seen a sgraffito wall before.

The 11th district feels calmer and quiet compared to the central area of Pest where I am staying. From the sgraffito site we walk to the starting point of Meetlab's work. The space is like a little pop-up studio where the Meetlab collective has been working and from where the audience gets instructions for their augmented audio walk "How to disappear completely". I am introduced to two artists of the collective and get instructions of how to download the necessary app and how use it during my walk. I do not have roaming internet on

my phone during the trip, so I am a little bit anxious about the technology. There is an English version available and with the help of the artists, I download that. They keep reassuring me that the app itself will be working without internet once downloaded.

FIGURE 14 A screenshot of "How to disappear completely" app. © Johanna Tuukkanen 09/2018.

With my headphones on, I step back to the street and start walking to the direction that the app suggests. On the app I see the map of the area, my own location and the route or rather the area where the work takes place. The area where I am is shown as blue and the areas where I can go to trigger new episodes are yellow. The app is using geo-location technology and as I walk and reach new areas, new bits of text and sound are triggered. The text I am hearing as I walk is

about the disappearance of researcher Andrej Ivanov and disappearance as a phenomenon. It is read by a soft male voice and has a very poetic tone. The accompanying soundscape is ambient. As I walk, the streets, shops, corners, benches and passing people merge into the fictional narrative of how to disappear and I think of the homeless, the immigrants and stories of people who just one day have vanished from their lives. Walking at night in an area that I do not know and being a little bit worried whether I will find my way back to the meeting place, I am slightly tense and think whether I will also disappear and never come back. The app keeps crashing and I have to start it again several times during my walk. This interrupts my ability to fully immerse into the narrative of the work, but I still enjoy it, nevertheless. After walking for about an hour, I find my way back to the meeting spot. People are sitting and chatting, and I join them. Afterwards a bunch of us go for dinner together and after that I take the metro back to the Pest side of the river and fly back home the next morning.

4.3 Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I have focused on the content analysis of the empirical data. In the first part, I have analysed the typical practices of new genre public art and considered their implications in very practical terms. Following the analysis of curatorial practices, I have discussed the curators' views on urban space and their consideration of audiences, as people are an integral part of urban space. I then continued with the curators' conceptualisations of the festivals through three political agendas that I have identified from the interviews. The last section in the first part of the analysis chapter showed how the curators understand festivals as dialogical actors that contribute to the urban life of cities. In the first part of the chapter, I have analysed that through the urban agenda, the festivals are contributing to the constant change of the city. In this sense, the curators understand the festivals as active participants of the social production of space and the festivals can be considered within the framework of Henri Lefebvre's (1991) spatial theory. The spatial triad of perceived-conceived-lived creates both continuity and immediacy which are central in producing and defining spaces. Curator Aura Seikkula (2011) has described locality as a dimension of social life that always emerges from the practices of local subjects. Throughout the interviews, the curators highlighted the local context which I understand along argumentation of Seikkula who describes locality as "a phenomenological property of social life, providing intentional activity and material effects and including the actual settings in and through which social life is reproduced". Imagination is a key feature in producing, sharing and experiencing spaces which the curators brought up in relation to envisioning projects for public spaces and collaborating with artists.

Whereas the first part of the analysis chapter focused on the voices of the interviewed curators, the second part was dedicated to my introductions of the case festivals, my observations of them and some photographs. Both parts bring

answers to my third research question; how do curators see the relationship between new genre public art and urban space, and how is this manifested in their choice of artworks. Next, I will further discuss the results of my analysis.

5 RETHINKING CURATORIAL PRACTICES

In this chapter I discuss and further elaborate on the results of the case studies. The key findings of the analysis can be summarised in three points. Firstly, through the analysis I have to come to define curatorial practices of new genre public art in a festival context as a performative and non-representational practice embedded in the city. As a practice, it can be described as thoroughly dialogical because it is based on an ongoing dialogue between the curator, artists and the city. Secondly, I have found three political agendas of the case festivals which are the art world, socio-political, and the urban agenda. Although overlapping, they demonstrate that in the festival context, the curatorial practice reaches to these three areas because it is informed by the festival's political agendas. The third key result is that curators' aims to create encounters holds the potential for politics. These encounters which are immersed in the everyday, connect the curatorial practice to ideas of potential, possibility and experimentation.

5.1 Performative and Non-Representational Curatorial Practice Embedded in the City

As I have shown, the mode of curatorial practice of new genre public art is dialogical. Although dialogue is often perceived as a positive method, giving an opportunity for multiple voices to be heard, present and considered in a process, I do not have a romantic, idealistic view that a dialogical process occurs without challenges related to ethics and power relationships. I have tried to demonstrate dialogical characteristics of the curatorial practice in relation to the artists, artworks and the city. In my understanding, the idea of a dialogue passes through the festivals on many levels and infiltrates the curatorial practice. The festivals collaborate on a local level across sectors with the city and its different departments and local municipalities, public, private and third sector institutions and organisations as well as individual citizens and communities. The festivals'

willingness for dialogue across sectors and different structures is based on the belief that the artistic programs they produce can be valuable and significant contributors of the democratic and open urban space and to the communal life of citizens. Although the festivals as dialogical actors want to collaborate with various partners, the local collaboration is not always easy. In some cases, the festival is not a welcomed partner and the collaboration on the level of city governance is impossible, which can directly influence the festival's ability to produce works in urban spaces. The constraints can lead into difficulties in obtaining permissions or for example in unaffordable costs of the use of urban spaces, inevitably affecting a festival's ability to produce the artworks, which for example PLACCC has experienced in Budapest.

The curators' dialogical way of working with the city, its organisations and citizens is based on the political agendas of the festivals, especially the urban and the socio-political agendas, the conceptualisation of the festival as a dialogue and the interests of the artist. I understand the political agendas to be operating in the background of a curator's thinking and they are actualised through the artistic projects chosen by the curators. The new genre public art projects which often include different levels of engagement can also be described as dialogical, as they are often created in and through dialogue with the citizens and communities, city authorities or other organisations and institutions in urban spaces. As the interviews of this research show, the relationship between the artist and the curator is often dialogical.

For the festivals to be able to realise the projects they are interested in producing, it is essential to maintain good relationships with the local authorities and all partners, both current and potential. The curators have to be diplomatic, communicate openly their plans, inspire partners to become involved in artistic processes and have good relationships towards local authorities in order to secure a smooth process of requiring permissions, and yet, they need to ensure that the artistic process runs smoothly and that the artist's vision is maintained and appreciated. Malm (2017, p. 11) also points out the essential skills of negotiation and collaboration for curators but adds that perhaps the most important skill is to keep the artistic intention of each project clear while being able to respond in moments of difficulties and obstacles. This was clearly put forward by Luigi Fassi and Paula Toppila in the interviews, and Toppila (2017, p. 285) highlights it also in her more recent article in the first ever book written about curatorial practices in Finnish *Kuratointi – yhdeksän nykytaiteen kuratoinnin käytäntöä* which has been edited by Taru Elfving and Mika Hannula (2017). These requirements of negotiation skills further reinforce the dialogical characteristics of the curatorial practice in relation to both the artists and local partners, including the local art scene.

Kester (2004, p. 8) notes that conversation is an integral part of dialogical artworks and thus the dialogical artist. His theoretical and aesthetic paradigm understands the artwork as a process and a site of discursive exchange and negotiation (Kester, 2004, p. 12). Similarly, as the analysis of the interviews illustrates, the practice of the curator of new genre public art is entirely dialogical

and processual. Whereas Kester (2004, p. 11) focuses his analysis on a specific form of art practice that has its own characteristics, I have looked at this curatorial practice which similarly has its own characteristics, and which can be thus understood as a specific practice. In her case study of media art projects, Karen Gaskill (2010) also puts forward the idea of social curation as a defined practice and social curator as a practitioner with a defined role.

Kester (2004, p. 12) proposes to us to consider the aesthetic experience of dialogical artworks as durational rather than immediate. The durational is also put forward by O'Neill and Doherty (2011, p. 5) in relation to commissioning public art and a more profound understanding of place within public art "as a means of structuring the fluctuating encounter with public space". They use the concept of charismatic agency to describe the visionary means of individual curatorial practice that engages participants and visitors and secures funding (2011, pp. 7-8). Charismatic agency is employed through networked models of sociality that considers the dynamic formulation of place whilst prioritising the discursive, the processual and the relational as media in their own right. According to O'Neill and Doherty (2011, p. 9), if the nature of social engagement at the heart the curatorial endeavour is truly to be understood, consideration of sociality must extend to the nature of co-production in relation to time, and not only to space and place. My analysis of the views of the curators also shows, that they highlight sociality, engagement and presence in their practice, which allows inter-subjectivity to become a primary medium of curatorial practice (Bishop, 2006, p. 1).

For O'Neill and Doherty (2011, pp. 9-10), a durational approach to events and projects allows for the formation, dispersal and reformation of temporary, active communities as opposed to pseudo-ethnographic working with a passive target group deprived of agency. This kind of durational approach can be observed in the interviews of the curators as well, when it is considered along the thinking of O'Neill and Doherty as involving a process of being together for a period of time with some common objectives, in order to constitute a new mode of relational, conversational and participatory practice. O'Neill and Doherty are not proposing a paradigm shift but notice a 'shake-up' of the temporal limits of extant models of curating public art which must be conceived as part of a cumulative process. For them the signification of duration does not lie in a single extended project but rather in the relationship between projects in place over time. Although O'Neill and Doherty write about commissioning public art, in this sense, the curator's dialogical practice can be described to include a durational approach as they curate a programme consisting of multiple of projects in a reoccurring form of a festival which is located in a specific city.

This dialogical practice, including the durational approach, shows a position of solidarity as the curators demonstrate a strong sense of responsibility to community (O'Neill & Doherty, 2011, p. 13). The ability to remain open and vulnerable, as well as empathy, are necessary for the formation of solidarity which enables us to conceive fellow humans as co-participants in the transformation of self and society (Kester, 2004, pp. 77-79). All the interviewed

curators demonstrate clearly this position of solidarity as they foreground participation and talk at great length about the importance of engaging local communities. The curators are not interested in pursuing a single artistic vision or programming only according to their personal taste. Their practice is based on listening, sharing, experimenting and learning. For Kester (2004, p. 112), it is through discourse and intersubjective exchange that subjectivity is formed. This discursive exchange can also acknowledge the nonverbal, which is important when considering a non-representational approach and practice (Kester, 2004, p. 115; Thrift, 2008, p. 8). Kester (2004, p. 150) also notes that empathetic identification is a necessary component of all dialogical practice, which I extend to include the curatorial. Empathy was also highlighted by Paula Toppila in her interview. Whereas Kester talks about empathy, Cecilia Sjöholm (2015, pp. 107-108) writes about a spectrum of sensual qualities which is related to collectivity. She describes how artworks speak to individuals that have nothing in common but the artwork being experienced. In the kind of collectivity that is produced through a display of art, this arbitrary factor is crucial, and this collectivity is a contingent construction. Sjöholm states that there is no recipe for producing a moment of collectivity and solidarity through art and that we need to conceive artworks as objects that can withdraw from commodification and fetishization. In Sjöholm's argumentation, this is possible to achieve through the way objects produce a spectrum of sensual qualities. For her, artworks must be displayed so that they enable our sense of community and solidarity.

In her concept of the social curator, Karen Gaskill (2010) places social interaction as a central force of the curatorial practice. Gaskill (2010, p. 137) argues that meaning emerging from social curatorial approaches is dialogical and grounded in the everyday, positioning the relations between audience, artwork, context and site at the core of the practice. Gaskill (2010, p. 138) argues that "the aim of the social curation is to create the site where presence can occur, and with this, new boundaries, new forms of exchange and thus new significance". Defining a curator as a responsive practitioner, dialogue positions the curator as a collaborator in art's social relations while reflecting complex everyday contexts and building knowledge from these experiences and relationships (Gaskill, 2010, p. 103). Gaskill (2010, p. 122) also sees that the more active curatorial approach is based on a shift in the characteristics of art practices towards dynamic and process-based practices which are not about creating static objects. Gaskill's concept of the social curator is useful in my analysis and it demonstrates how social interaction is a central part of the curatorial practice. However, in the context of new genre public art, in addition to artwork, audience, site and context, in my thinking, the whole city and the urban context are at the core of the curatorial practice as the analysis of the interviews has shown. I understand the city and the urban context as a larger and more complex framework than thinking about a specific site and the context around it. This implies that their practice is embedded in the city which I have conceptualised as performative and non-representational.

Whereas Gaskill discusses creating meaning and building knowledge through social interaction, in dialogical practice the crucial element is whether the artist is able to generate emancipatory insights *through* dialogue (Kester, 2004, p. 69, italics original). Extending this thought to dialogical curatorial practice, it can be argued that it is not enough for the curator to work dialogically and create opportunities for encounters through dialogue. It is elementary for the curators to be able to catalyse these encounters through dialogue into a critical and emancipatory festival programme, thus actualising especially the socio-political and urban festival agendas. Like the interviewed curators say, it is not enough to just put something on the street. Their aim is to create artistically and socio-politically relevant interventions into the regular use of urban spaces which have the potential for encounters. To work towards this aim does not of course always result in an artwork that is emancipatory, especially for everyone. But in my view the point is not whether each artwork manages to do that, because already the temporary intervention into urban space is political and, as Rancière (Tanke, 2011) says, aesthetic art holds the potential to disrupt the given distribution of the sensible because it "disrupts the results of domination in everyday life". When the curators were elaborating on the outcomes of artistic projects, although they did not discuss in further detail the criteria, my interpretation is that they are related on one hand to the aims and interests of the artist, thus the original idea of the artwork, and on the other the political agendas of the festivals. Some curators gave greater significance to the festival's ability to engage with the local audience and the socio-political context in which they are organised than others, but it was also clear that even when they highlighted the artists' aims, the political agendas were there to influence both the choice of the artist and the artwork in question.

The curators have a strong sense that they are at the fore front of contemporary art and understand these practices well and better than, for example, art critics, as the art world agenda demonstrates. This is perhaps an obvious statement and relates to their professionalism, but I think it is an interesting attitude to push understanding of contemporary art and create space for encountering it in the public sphere. In this sense, the curators align themselves with the artists, they are advocates for artists and this kind of artistic practice. The curators defend the artists, the artworks and take a public stand in giving value, cultural space, visibility, and resources for this kind of work to exist in the world. The curators can be described as enablers or connection makers who can be characterised as having a typical mediating role between the artists and presenters, be it other festivals, venues, museums or other cultural organisations. But the curator's more creative and dialogical role as part of the processes of producing art is also evident in the interviews. The curators discuss envisioning new projects without any idea of the outcome, they push boundaries of urban space and imagine possibilities for encounters and engagement. In my understanding, the curators' performative and non-representational practice creates space for art in the urban context. Art is not hidden away in museums, theatres and other institutions but presented as part of the everyday urbanness.

In this sense, alongside the thinking of Lefebvre (1996), the curator of new genre public art is an important contributor to the urban life of cities, to the constant production and reproduction of the urban and connecting local issues to global phenomena. Although strongly identified with and connected to the art world, through this commitment to urban space, the curator is always immediately connected to the local context of the city in question.

The social relevancy of festivals is related to what Smith (2012, p. 28) calls connectivity, in which the plurality of relations become more interesting of art than its mediality. According to Sjöholm (2015, p. 101), from this point of view, curatorial practices become more important than individual artworks as the connectivity and display of an exhibition are the primary concern replacing the fetishist focus on the aura of the artwork. This view does not deny the meaning of art but directs our attention to what art does as opposed to what it is. Sjöholm (2015, pp. 105-6) points out that art can "break into our sense of collectivity with the urgency of the unexpected", arguing that the impact of aesthetics lies more in the way it manages to incorporate acts of spontaneity instead of a normative conception of content. Thus, curatorial practice can provoke an artwork's ability to encroach our perception of things and displace and relocate sensible forms of apprehension. As can be observed from the interviews of the curators, it is important what the festival as a whole creates and how it functions. The festival's ability to function as a social place, as a place for unexpected encounters, or as Sjöholm puts it, acts of spontaneity, is very important for the curators.

According to Gaskill (2010, p. 124), social curation's approaches are embedded and integrated. Social curation mirrors relational art practices, including the audience as part of the exhibition process and curating an experience as much as the contents of an exhibition. I have also shown from the curators' interviews that audience is not an object of outreach at the end of a production but considered from the start as pointed out by Malm (2017, p. 10). Although audiences as citizens are an important consideration for the curators, it is interesting to notice how little they talked specifically about engaging, for example, marginalised communities, although some of them did mention language minority communities, homeless people, alcoholics and drug addicts, poor people or people in the countryside. While they do talk about reaching audiences that other cultural institutions are not able to reach, the curators did not seem to have very strong visions of who especially they are targeting or are especially interested in engaging with art beyond quite general definitions of local or normal people. This is perhaps related to the focus on artists and their interests, thus the specific communities are interests of the artists rather than the curator. It must be remembered though, that the festivals have a strong socio-political agenda, so whatever is currently relevant in their local context, also affects who is involved in the creation of the artworks of the festival.

It is also striking how much the curators talk about educating audiences and shaping their understanding of art. It also shows that the audience is really a very central curatorial issue. The broad concept of audience is at the heart of the curatorial practice. It is about constantly creating and recreating the relationship

to the various publics whether local, global, neighbourhood community or the art world professionals. This in some ways can be described as to be put to the test during the festival, which shows how the different offerings by the curators are accepted and visited by the public or not. According to the curators, the number of people in the audience is not the meter of success as such, and they point out that there are many variables when working in public spaces - not only the content of the artworks. The curators are disappointed if they experience a lack of audience or if the specific communities they are interested in engaging with for some reason do not find the project.

The processes of producing participatory artworks invites people as active citizens with their own agency, opinions, values and beliefs into the creative process, and as I have shown in section 4.1.3, this relates to the curators' interest in building and reinforcing a sense of community and many cultural policy objectives assigned to art festivals (see, for example, Karttunen & Luonila, 2017). Sometimes the local people have a very different taste to that of the curators and at times there is a conflict between what is considered popular by local people but not high artistic quality by the curator. More than demonstrating a top down view of the curators, I think it speaks about a weak relationship that many people have with art and perhaps about the lack of relevance of contemporary art in society. This pull of wanting to be locally relevant, the desire to engage people outside the art world realm and the historical burden of relational antagonism which has pushed modern art to the margins of society as analysed by Kester (2011, p. 59), is very much present in how curators discuss people, audiences, spectators, participators and citizens. In my view, the curators are not looking for easy and joyous artworks in order to engage as many people as possible with art, but they foreground criticality and new genre public art as a powerful potential to create encounters and places of assembly in the urban complexity where differences can encounter each other (Lefebvre, 1996, p. 75).

It can be summarised that the curators of new genre public art foreground the importance of the local context and the intense dialogue and collaboration between the curator and artist. It is the task of the curator to invite artists whose work is meaningful in their local context and help the artists to create works which speak to the local audiences about issues that are relevant in that context. In this sense, the curators are not only interested in the artists and the art world, nor just the finding or creation of an audience for the works they have curated, but they are extremely interested in exploring the local context, the city in which they work and how the artworks can foster dialogue locally, create connections between people and communities and how, through the artworks, they can create a space that is accessible for a diverse audience. These aims and interests relate to social inclusion and it can be stated, that where traditional art institutions tend to be places of predominantly the so-called cultural elite, at least the aims of the curators of new genre public art include an idea of citizens in a very wide and open meaning.

Whereas Gaskill (2010, p. 123) characterises social curation as holistic, active and embedded in the everyday, I propose to understand this practice as

dialogical, social and embedded in the city. It is a performative, non-representational practice of creating potentials for encounters. Being embedded in the city holds the idea of connections, interconnections, as well as the process. Similar to there being no recipe for a successful artwork, there is no system for curating new genre public art which this quote by Luigi Fassi shows:

> It's learning by doing, so. I think it's…there's no way to escape that. It's a learning by doing process. This is what curating is about. (Luigi Fassi, Steirischer Herbst)

The practice embedded in the city requires the curator's local knowledge, embodied involvement and presence in the local urban context, and a kind of rhythmanalyst sensitivity to experience, observe and contribute to the city in question. From my view, this cannot be done as a short-term guest curator who pops into a place they have no connection to or by doing research about the local context remotely. It is important to have real local connections, and following Lefebvre's (2004, p. 37) method of rhythmanalysis in order to be able to analyse the city, one must experience it, or rather been grasped by its rhythms. As the festivals are considered processual, it is important that the curators are working in the long term, which allows for a durational and non-representational approach.

Besides needing to have time, excellent knowledge of the art field and local knowledge as outlined in section 4.1.1.1, according to Kester (2011, p. 114), dialogical practices include the co-presence of bodies in real time, which "encourage a heightened awareness of bodily schema – our capacity to orient ourselves in space relative to the world around us – and an increased sensitivity to the process by which our bodies feel, relate, and produce meaning". Kester (2011, p. 115) talks about meaningful loss of intentionality in dialogical practice when the artist is open to be affected by the site, the context and the collaborative Other. I have established in section 4.1.1.2 the curatorial practice as dialogical and the curators as part of the process which is active, generative and creative.

It is through the non-representational and durational approach, and through their knowledge of the art field and personal connections to artists, that curators build trust, which enables them to both envision projects and artworks in their local context and challenge the artists to create something new and take risks. While the necessity to travel and see artworks internationally at festivals, events, institutions and organisations demonstrates that the curatorial practice operates on an international level and that the art world is thoroughly global, it also poses some problematic issues. Although the curators highlighted the importance of traveling, it is questionable on which grounds the curators choose where they travel and which events they attend. It is well known that the monster biennales attract huge global audiences, including professionals such as curators, and that huge international festivals and biennales have marketing resources to promote and advertise their events internationally. Those events easily become "must experience" shows and events that the curators also visit. Although this phenomenon operates on an international level, in some ways it can also restrict curators' views on other possibilities because curators from around the world

visit the same events. This creates a kind of narrow professional art world circle where one experiences the urge and pressure to visit those events in order to be on top of the current curatorial discourse, but at the same time it excludes far more events, perhaps smaller and more locally engaged events, that still hold the same potential for curators, namely offering possibilities to discover new artists and practices, but which do not have the resources to market internationally or pay for the curators to visit them. Besides certain networks financially supporting curators to visit other organisations within the network, some festivals offer paid opportunities for curators to attend their events. Sometimes these are done in partnership with national funding bodies or organisations that aim to create further touring opportunities for local artists. This again distorts what the curators see, where they travel and who gets to see whom. Traveling to personally experience artworks in different contexts and to meet artists is integral to the curatorial practice and a central tool through which curators update and expand their knowledge of the art field. It is important to recognise though that there are several agendas at play in where the curators travel and what they see.

Although the curators highlight the importance of artists and their role as enablers and supporters of art, it is also evident that success of the artworks and the festival are also a success of the curator. It is also good for the curator if an artwork they have commissioned or been involved in producing, gets picked up by another curator, festival or other event. These add to the curator's eligibility and establishment in the art world. The curator's practice is based on understanding the festivals as durational and processual, and at the same time, considering the potentiality of art in the local context including the traces it can leave in the city and the local community. In this regard, it seems almost conflicting that a successful festival and process is measured against the artists' feedback. As I have shown, the curators highlighted the importance of local people and communities but when they described moments of being satisfied with their work, they did not bring up the aspects of community engagement, positive feedback of the process from the participants or community members, or examples when an artwork succeeds in generating discussion about a timely socio-political issue. Instead, the curators described that that they want the artist to be happy. One way to think about this is to consider the close collaboration between the curator and artist. It is understandable to ensure that the collegial professional relationship runs smoothly and that both sides can leave the shared process feeling satisfied, respected and understood - like in any other sector, not only in the art world. On the other hand, this strong positioning alongside the artist demonstrates that the art world agenda persists as the main focus for some of the curators. I think this speaks of a strong commitment and belief in the possibilities of art, which is of course one of the main motivations to work as a curator in the first place. And because being a curator is an art world profession, curators are also dependent on their reputation with peers in the art world, including artists and regarding future opportunities. In the context of new genre public art and the case festivals, it does seem slightly contradictory how the curators talk about audiences, communities and cities. This also means that how

the curators talk about their practice is in some way idealistic. The aims of tackling the socio-political and urban agendas are challenging and inevitably idealistic, and this is something the curators also acknowledge. But based on my experience at the festivals, the political agendas are not empty catch phrases. This is evident for example in Kiluandi Kia Henda's work "This is my Blood", where there are serious aims to address big socio-political challenges of contemporary Europe, namely; immigration, equality, solidarity and racism. Or to take the example of Kateřina Šedá's "Tram Busker's Tour", which is a very different kind of work, a kind of intervention into the trams of Helsinki which appears rather light and joyous, it actually addresses large questions of what is allowed in urban public spaces and by whom, and offers new potentials for our mundane everyday activity in public transport.

In the analysis chapter I have demonstrated, that curatorial practice includes a wide range of very practical tasks related to the production of artworks, communication and management. I have shown that being involved in the practical production of the artwork is as an integral part of the curatorial practice and that the separation of curator and producer is not necessarily useful and does not apply to the interviewed curators. It also shows that curating is not only about making selections of artworks for a specific context such as a festival or accompanying and supporting artists in their creative processes. All the interviewed curators consider producing to be part of their practice and like Toppila explains, a very important part in the successful production of a new commission.

Curating a festival is very much linked to available financial resources. In some cases, the curatorial work includes fund raising and envisioning projects that could be of interest to specific funding bodies. This shows that curating a festival programme is the result of many circumstances, negotiations and perhaps compromises, including the limitations of financial resources. This implies that when audiences experience the festival programme, it is not always the case that each artwork is selected through a careful decision-making process considering the festival framework and its political agendas. Sometimes the artwork is in the programme because it was supported by a specific funding body or partnership and thus financially possible to realise. Other times it is the work that the festival managed to get a permission for from the local authorities or the community or it fitted the schedules of the artist. And sometimes it is the result of thorough dialogical process, but the end result is perhaps far from what the curator originally envisioned. This means that the curatorial practice also includes living with the pressure of the unknown, with the uncertainty of dialogical (artistic) processes, accompanying artists in these processes and the ability to stand behind the artworks, talk about them publicly and defend them if necessary. Often audiences do not know and are not necessarily aware of these complicated processes behind the programs of art that they experience. In the end, it is the festival and the curator who are going to be judged for the program they set up and with these expectations, the curators have to operate and manage the pressure.

5.2 In the Centre or Margin of Power?

However horizontal and dialogical the organisations of the festivals are, it is obvious that the curator is a powerful figure in the organisation. They are often the public figures of the festivals, speaking about the programmes, interviewed and quoted by the press and taking the public stand when needed. But their power has to be considered more broadly, extending to the art world and artists' careers as I have shown in section 4.1.3, but also to their cities, its communities and the public sphere. Although the curators do exercise power towards what is seen, or possible and allowed to realise in public spaces, they tend to belittle this in the interviews. For them, the concept of power is very much related to responsibility and being able to offer opportunities for others. Before choosing artists for the festival programme actually begins, curators are involved in formulating the festival framework which I have outlined in section 4.1.4. Although they do not explicitly talk about defining the current local social and political issues, curators have power in the process of deciding which topics are the most relevant and worth addressing as a festival. This also impacts which communities get involved in the making of the festival and at least partly influences the topics of artists' works as well.

It can be argued that the curators have a lot of power to decide which themes are addressed and discussed through art and the festival in question and this way they have direct influence on the public sphere. Their choices of themes push artists to address those topics in their work, and if the work is created in the framework of new genre public art, it also affects local communities. This in turn dictates what issues the media is going to address and for example, what critics write about. This also affects individual audience members, and the themes of the artworks at least to some extent direct what topics audiences are going to think and discuss about. As already discussed in section 4.1.2, the power of the curator extends to the citizens in a sense that the artistic programmes they present, shapes understanding of contemporary art. Similarly, Smith (2012, p. 163) has said that curators are the definers of public discourse, joining artists, public commentators, politicians, and expert scholars, and noted that it is an ideological domain in which nothing is neutral.

Curators are in a position in which they have financial resources to work with. Although in many cases curators are also active in fundraising and applying for more resources through specific funds or partnerships and thus affecting what kind of resources are available for artistic programmes, they are the ones managing the planning process of these activities and how the financial resources are allocated between different projects and artists. Although this conversation takes the form of an internal dialogue within the artistic team and festival organisation, the curators are key persons in planning and proposing how to use the available budget.

Alongside planning a program and collaborating with artists and various partners, the curators must consider and decide when is the right moment to

present the artwork. The processes of dialogue and production with the artist can take several years and the presentation might also be related to partnerships, specific funding and permissions. As I have shown earlier, curators participate in various networks in which the festivals are members of and sometimes these timelines effect the curatorial decisions. None of the interviewed curators saw their position as problematic towards the artists. They all discussed it in very positive terms and sincerely considered it a unique opportunity to effect both the artistic field and the city in question and its public spaces. This shows that the curators consider art a powerful method and a tool to address contemporary issues and challenges, or perhaps even that art should address contemporary issues. It can be interpreted that the curators see art as a powerful contribution to contemporary urban life and discourses and that they understand the festivals to be a site and context for this kind of contribution to take place - a kind of opening into the public sphere for artistic viewpoints to be heard, visible and recognised by different publics. However, the artist does not necessarily identify the topics of the artworks, but the curator, which implies the creative and productive role of the curator as one that is close to and trusted by the artists.

So, if we accept the creative and productive role of the curator, it expands the power of the curator in the art world. The curator is not only a facilitator, mediator or a choice maker who manages existing content, or a carer of collections in a more traditional sense; the curator is an active actor in the dialogical process of creating artworks. Thus, the dialogue does not happen only between the artist, the context, the city and the audience/participators, but includes the curator. The curator is an active producer of the public space in the city who participates in the conception and creation of the artworks as well. The curator is an artist's collaborator, but what separates the curator from another expert collaborator or audience collaborator is exactly their power in the art world.

This brings me to conclude that the curator is involved in the making, in the flow of life and not outside of it. Their practice is rooted in the everyday life and embedded in the city. Curatorial practice is part of that everyday, sensing and feeling, living, breathing and walking in the city in question which Luigi Fassi describes like this:

> Curatorially speaking, my practice changed a lot, because… it opens up a completely different way of working. You don't have a space to fill, you have a city to engage with. You have to kind of deepen your relationship to the artist you work with because it's not about selecting a work already existing or it's not like about producing a work in a contained white cube kind of space. You have to share more so it brings a kind of level of relationships to, to a deeper level so like researching together properly, maybe spending some days together like researching in the countryside. (Luigi Fassi, Steirischer Herbst)

In a world of diverse artistic practices, none of the curators consider themselves a connoisseur in a traditional sense, showing which art is good, but rather as influencers, producing the understanding of contemporary art over time. The curators are also involved in showing the potential of art which I think can be understood as increasing the significance of art in society and the accessibility of

art. This relates to the question and thinking of what art can do (Sjöholm 2015) as opposed to what art is. It also links the curators to the concept of curating contemporaneity (Smith, 2012, pp. 144-146) when understood to include both the saturation of the present and many kinds of pasts. It is this "awareness of the historicity and the temporal complexity of contemporaneity" that Smith considers to be a crucial step for curators to succeed in dealing with, instead of the narrower idea that contemporary curating should involve only the art world and ideas of contemporary art, or the vaguish "demands of our times".

5.3 The Political Agendas

Regarding the art world agenda, it can be interpreted that the festivals' emphasis on reaching new audiences and aims to diversify them is in line with recent research which shows that museums, theatres and orchestras do not succeed in reaching, for example, low-income audiences (see, for example, http://colleendilen.com/2016/05/18/why-cultural-organizations-are-not-reaching-low-income-visitors-data/). Some of the festivals, namely IHME and Steirischer Herbst, also run a strong art education programme alongside the main programme, which offers schools, day care centres, teachers and educators the opportunities to engage and learn through art. All festivals seem to have a strong belief that aesthetic encounters in public spaces can be meaningful to people and that a greater variety and number of audiences would actually enjoy participating in artistic processes. For Jacob (1995, p. 58), participation can be understood as a method to create relevancy for the artwork within a community and as a way to offer the potential for art to affect the lives of people in and outside the community.

The festivals' strong focus on advocating new genre public art and increasing its visibility can be considered to be connected to their understanding that new genre public art is not recognised by the traditional institutions and funders of art to the extent the curators think that it should be. Although they do not directly criticise art institutions, their thinking implies that the institutions fail to support this contemporary practice and that it deserves greater recognition and funding as well. It can be observed that although the acceptance of new genre public art by the art world has increased in the 2000s along with the number of artists and artistic productions, it does not have the status of more traditional art forms and publicly funded institutions dedicated to the dissemination of them. In fact, Phillips (1995, p. 61) argues that new genre public art can be a form of radical education challenging the structures of cultural and political institutions. It can be a more powerful and effective position to the artist to be situated in the real world and remain outside the institutions in order to maintain an independent or politically revolutionary stance (1995, p. 53). In 1995 Mary Jane Jacob (1995, p. 54) observed that new genre public art is the latest "art outside the mainstream", praised as the new avant-garde and damned as "not art". Although more accepted, I am not sure if the reception and recognition of community-

based public art is very much different today. Certainly, Jacobs remarks echo even today in the critical voices of new genre public art, for example in the writings of Claire Bishop (2012). However, there are more festivals and other organisations, even institutions organising events and producing artworks in the framework of new genre public art, as described by Paula Toppila concerning the situation in Finland.

There is naturally more theorising and research about new genre public art and its aesthetic approaches available (see, for example, Bourriaud, 2002; Kester, 2004; Bishop, 2012). As Kester (2004, pp. 187-188) notes, at the same time, many artists working in the framework of dialogical aesthetics are dissatisfied with the authority and traditions of the institutionalised art world, and he asks: "why bother trying to explain this work to an art historical and critical establishment that has so often treated it with indifference, if not disdain?". I think part of the art world agenda of the festivals is related to this dissatisfaction. According to Lacy (1995, pp. 20-21), the status of new genre public art is related to the question whether this work is art and its potential for social change, which for the critics can work as evidence that, indeed, it is not art. This debate around art's extension into the realms of the social remains a problematic issue, as pointed out by Heddon (Heddon & Klein, 2012, p. 179). The confusion whether socially engaged artworks should be considered as works of art or rather as social justice, along with the adoption of participation and collaboration as artistic tools is a parallel discussion to the critiques of neoliberal policies as Melanie Dodd (2020, p. 13) outlines. This is exactly where Jacques Rancière has become a key thinker. Rancière (2010, p. 151) says that "there is no straight path from viewing of a spectacle to an understanding of the state of the world, and none from intellectual awareness to political action". This means that the relationship of art and politics is more problematic than the discussion of whether something is art, or not. According to Dodd (2020, p. 13), a simple expectation of cause and effect actually closes down art's potential for politics.

Regarding the socio-political and urban agendas, it is evident that the curators have a strong belief in the possibilities of new genre public art affecting people's understanding or ideas of a certain issue and even an area in the city. From this position, it is also understandable that some of the curators see a more direct collaboration between the festival and the city planning authorities/department as a relevant next step. Most of the curators consider the festivals as producers of a type of knowledge that the city/urban planners otherwise would not have. The curators consider the participatory methods of new genre public art and artists in general as powerful ways of producing that knowledge, creating a sense of community and building a relationship to an area. This connection to an area can be created in several ways. For instance, the artwork can be created in a dialogue with a specific community in the city in question, it might utilise participatory methods to engage citizens in the production and/or performance of the artwork, it can have a direct relationship to a specific area, neighbourhood, building or part of the city, or the work might reflect a locally current theme or topic. These different ways and levels of

connecting to the city can be realised by the direct engagement of the artist but often this engagement is initiated and facilitated by the curator and the festival team. In some cases, the initiative to work in a specific area or a certain community comes from the festivals and sometimes it is the interest of the artist. Because the festivals are working in a very dialogical way with the artists and they "really trust them", as they say, it seems to be less important to them who is the initiator. What matters though, is the festivals' commitment to working with the public space, their interest in the urban life and production of the city in question as well as the festival acting as a carrier of local knowledge.

My experiences at the festivals support the curators' views of new genre public art's potential to influence an understanding of an area in a city. This was the case for example with the "Remember the Good Times" audio work in the area of Csepel in Budapest, which brought the lively history of the now run-down industrial area to the present. Several artworks that I experienced during my visits aimed to foster a sense of community such as Karoline H. Larsen's "Collective Strings" in Copenhagen or Rainer Prohaska's "Mobile Tea house" in Leibnitz. These works also engaged people in processes of making art in the urban context and created possibilities for play, conversation and encounters while also temporarily transforming the urban space and offering ideas for what urban spaces could be like and how they could potentially be used.

The potential of the festivals as community creators and builders of bonds to specific locations, areas, neighbourhoods and parts of the city is strongly evident in the interviews. However, it did not come up in the interviews how the curators think the cities could utilise the knowledge the festivals produce and in what ways this information could become part of city planning. In some cases, the festivals produce activities in the public spaces that could function as exemplary for the local municipalities in how to make city spaces lively and how to engage citizens, which potentially they could then take over from the festival. Similarly, the impact an artwork can have on a neighbourhood or a community could encourage developers, investors, city planners and architects to include artists in planning processes and expand the understanding of public art to include socially engaged methods and participation in the framework of new genre public art. The festivals seem to be connected to the larger, rather recent phenomenon of activating and engaging citizens in the processes of urban planning to produce a more 'livable' urban environment (Global Report on Culture for Sustainable Urban Development, 2016).

It is evident in the interviews that the potential and wish to make an impact in the city is a possibility that interests the curators; an ongoing potential to be acted upon rather than an existing fact that can be easily explained or proven. They do not claim that, at the moment, the festivals would have a huge impact on how their audiences and local communities perceive and understand public space, how they produce public spaces or how the festivals affect areas and regions of the city, but they do recognise some changes and the potential of new genre public art and are actively trying to find ways within the limitations of festival concept and structure, how to best use that potential and even change

their ways of working. Thus, the festivals' aims and objectives regarding the city are more strategic and agenda like. Similarly to Vidler (2000, p. 202, cited in Amin & Thrift, 2002, p. 50), the curators understand the activities of the festivals as a way to expand and widen the potential and different ways of how space could be inhabited in cities. From my view, it is the urban agenda that creates a framework for the curators to plan artistic activities in the city.

In most cases the festivals are acknowledged as important contributors to the urban life by the city in question, which can be seen in the fact that in some cases the city is a significant funder of the festival and that experts and civil servants such as the city architects sit on the boards of the festival organisations. Most cities want to maintain a direct relationship and close dialogue with the festivals – and in some cases maybe even learn from them. The festivals have different experiences of getting permissions to produce artworks and organise events in public spaces. In the more conservative contexts of Austria and Hungary it seems to be more difficult than in liberal Nordic countries of Denmark and Finland. It seems to me, that the history and reputation of the festival, good local networks, professional organisation and dialogical working methods ensure and influence that the festivals are trusted partners from the perspective of local authorities. But the situation is not the same in every city in question. The city and its departments are not always easy to collaborate with and sometimes they do not even acknowledge the festivals as partners or important actors in the city. It can be characterised that Metropolis and Steirischer Herbst are acknowledged by the city as a kind of strategic partner and the collaboration is strong. IHME on the other hand seems to have a rather neutral relationship to the city of Helsinki. The festival does not have articulated strategic aims regarding the city of Helsinki, the city does not fund the festival and its representatives are not for example board members of the organising foundation. PLACCC's position in Budapest on the other hand is very complicated. Previously they have been partnering with the city, but the political situation has changed dramatically and effected this relationship. PLACCC seems to be rather diplomatically negotiating from an 'in-between' position of opposition and criticality, aiming to be a constructive contributor to the lived spaces of the city of Budapest while increasingly being neglected or denied that position.

The different strategic focuses of the festivals regarding the urban agenda have to be considered in relation to the contexts they are produced in. The local political situation, the size of the city, the status, resources and the vision of the festival all effect how the festival operates and how the urban agenda is played out by the festival in question. For instance, Copenhagen, the home of Metropolis festival, is a big, culturally buzzing city and capital of Denmark, which attracts a lot of tourists, whereas Graz is a much smaller, provincial Austrian city. To use the expression of Luigi Fassi, it's not a city where you just happen to be. Therefore, the festival needs to work differently to attract visitors to Graz and to create a presence in the city.

Along with the public art's relationship to conversations around urban redevelopment and revitalisation as well as social inclusion, discussed by Kester

(2011, pp. 195-198), I propose that the curatorial practice related to the urban agenda, as described by the curators, to be considered as a kind of sensitivity to capture and produce the rhythms of the city in line with Lefebvre (2004). This sensitivity is related to the phenomenality of new urbanity and everydayness as described by Amin and Thrift (2002). Capturing and producing rhythms is realised through both the curatorial and artistic practices of new genre public art. As a visitor of the case festivals, many of the artworks that I experienced allowed me momentarily to grasp a sense of the rhythms of these cities. This was the case for example, with the augmented audio walk "How to disappear completely" by Meetlab. While listening to this audio and walking the city, the distance that was created enabled me to be immersed in the urban context and to observe the rhythms of traffic, other people moving in the city, the changing, blinking and different colour lights in the darkening evening, and my own rhythm of breathing, walking and moving my eyes; which was a mesmerising experience of Budapest.

In addition to the metaphors of transitivity and rhythms, Amin and Thrift's (2002, p. 22) metaphor of urban footprints is another possibility to consider the spatial and temporal porosity of the city. Cities are full of footprints of simultaneity because they contain footprints from the past as well as contemporary links beyond elsewhere. The metaphors of transitivity, rhythms and footprints are useful in helping to understand the everyday urbanism and how the urban agenda of the festivals is embedded in the complexity of the city. But it should be noted, that cities are also scripted literally through urban art like graffiti and murals as well as through open events such as concerts, festivals and parades in parks and on the streets (Amin & Thrift, 2002, p. 26). The curators refer to this kind of scripting when they talk about leaving physical traces or landmarks in the city. Examples of these kinds of traces include Karoline H. Larsen's "Collective Strings", which took over the Thomas Plads in Copenhagen for the period of 17 days, and the sgraffito wall in Budapest from 2012 which has remained as a physical trace of the festival.

Considering the urban and the city, it can be concluded that the curators are the connecting element between the local and global, the "glocal" actor, which glues the urban agenda of the festival, the interests of the artists and their own curatorial ambitions together through dialogue, in encounters.

> You have the city as a curator, you know the artist. You have to kind of bring the two things together. (Luigi Fassi, Steirischer Herbst)

Although Fassi's quote is simply put, it illustrates that the curatorial practice of new genre public art in a festival context requires as much local knowledge as knowledge of the art world.

5.4 The Political Potential of New Genre Public Art Festivals in Urban Space

Following Lefebvre's framework of the urban, the festivals focusing on the everyday places and spaces of the city can be understood to be working on the level of mediation between the global and local. The artworks may thematically relate to globally urgent social and political issues such as immigration, climate change or globalisation. Also, the art world itself is global as both the artists and curators work internationally, many artworks tour globally and are funded through international funding schemes and co-productions. Increasingly, the art audiences are also international as millions of people trot around the globe to visit monster biennales like Documenta in Kassel, Skulptur Projekte in Münster or the Venice biennale. There are also many large-scale festivals that attract huge global audiences and although the case festivals of my research are in many respects rather modest and small in scale, their audiences are extremely international. Interestingly then, new genre public art produced in the context of the case festivals seek to find a very local connection and relevance. From this perspective, the festivals can be understood to function as sites for creating connections between the local and the global, thus contributing to the idea of cities as sites of local-global connectivity. For international visitors, the artworks of the festivals offer a connection to locality and sometimes an opportunity to connect to local people or specific communities. Through the artworks, the city can be explored, and artistic projects may offer an alternative narrative, and certainly lead visitors into mundane, everyday spaces and places of the city. This is equally true for local people as well, as the artworks might function as ways to explore their own city.

The 14 photographs I have selected for this research and my observations of the case festivals illustrate that through the artworks, I visited many places in Copenhagen, Helsinki, Graz and Budapest that I would otherwise probably not have gone to. I wondered around Austrian wine growing countryside, drank Turkish tea with strangers in a mobile tea house, stumbled in the waterfront wastelands of Copenhagen and walked in silence with a group of people listening to the last words of diseased people. I have learned about the glorious past of Csepel, wondered alone completely lost in the streets of Budapest thinking about how to disappear, and searched hopelessly for tram buskers in Helsinki on a cold April evening.

The case festivals also work with the forms of the urban, namely centrality, assembly, encounter and interaction. And as the urban is characterised by difference, the artworks that the festivals produce are sites to discover, acknowledge and understand differences through dialogue and critical discourse. According to Schmid (2011, p. 49), Lefebvre's (1991, pp. 38-39) duplicate spatial triad of spatial practices/ perceived space, representations of space/ conceived space and spaces of representation/lived space points to a twofold approach to space which are a phenomenological approach and

linguistic or semiotic approach. I will next go through how Schmid (2011) describes the relationships of the urban forms as theorised by Lefebvre.

In terms of the urban practice, space has a perceptible component that can be grasped with the five senses, relating directly to the materiality of the elements that constitute a space. Spatial practice combines these elements into a spatial order, an order of synchronicity. Therefore, urban space is a place of material interaction and of physical encounter. "This practical aspect of mediation, centrality, and difference can be seen as the superimposition and interlacing of networks of production and of communication channels, as a combination of social networks in everyday life as places of encounter and exchange that are amenable to surprises and innovations." This means that space can be empirically observed through physical presence of people in urban space but also those who work there. The stage of urban life is created by all kinds of urban actors from small businesses and cafes to cultural spaces that facilitate meetings and social exchange. They might be permanent, ephemeral or temporary. For example, festivals create opportunities and chances for interaction. (Schmid, 2011, p. 50.)

It is thus inevitable, that the case festivals function as contributors of urban space, creating diverse encounters and opportunities for interaction and dialogue. But as Schmid (2011, p. 50) points out, the mere presence of different social groups and networks is not sufficient for the emergence of an urban culture. What matters, is the way they interact, the quality of these interactions and whether the outcome is an open exchange or are the differences curtailed and domesticated. When analysing the interviews of the curators, they articulate very clearly their aim for open exchanges and participatory, dialogical artworks that aim to foster dialogue between heterogeneous voices and diverse communities in the city. Akin to Schmid's rationale, Fanni Nanay and Trevor Davies said directly, that it is not interesting or enough to put something on the streets. This kind of potential for encountering and interacting with people was strongly present in the "Mobile Tea house" by Rainer Prohaska and "Collective Strings" by Karoline H. Larsen.

Schmid (2011, p. 51) also notes that our understanding of the "city" is dependent on how different societies define the urban which influences the idea of the city and the different ways through which the urban is defined such as maps. Different definitions of the city contain mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion and function as sites of conflict for variety of approaches, methods, aims and intentions. Diverse actors from urban specialists to urban movements take part in this battlefield. The definitions of the city are not the end point, but they do translate to political questions which are directly connected to the rules and norms of the urban space and they define who and what is acceptable or prohibited and what can be included or excluded in urban space. The interview data of my research demonstrates that the case festivals can be considered as part of these urban movements pushing their own interests and agendas. And as seen regarding the urban agenda, the idea of expanding public space and pushing the boundaries of what is allowed and by whom, are key aims of most of the cases.

The third dimension in the production of space is what Lefebvre calls spaces of representation which are spaces that signify something. This aspect of space is encountered and experienced by people in their everyday life and that is why it is also called lived or experienced space. This implies that the city is always also a concrete, practical experience. It is used and occupied by residents in their everyday practices. This nature of a city is learned since infancy and eventually becomes combined with memory. That is why it is important which experiences are inscribed in space and in the collective consciousness, and to understand that struggles for the city themselves are constitutive elements of urban experiences facilitating concrete processes of appropriation, and the recognition that urban spaces can be used differently than imagined before. For example, "urban moments" like May 1968 in Paris are important points of reference and their effects continue to exist decades later, influencing contemporary debates and urban practices in distinctive ways. (Schmid, 2011, p. 52.)

Regarding this dimension of the production of space, the case festivals' contribution to the inhabitants' experiences of the public urban spaces holds important potential. The experiences offered and facilitated by the festivals may not have such a huge impact as May 1968 in Paris, but their significance to individuals cannot be foreseen and should certainly not be underestimated, especially as it plays out over time, beyond the duration of each artwork and the festival itself.

Schmid (2011, p. 52) summarises Lefebvre's theory of production of space as a three-dimensional production process consisting of material production, the production of knowledge and the production of meaning. Space is produced through the interaction among these three elements. As space is a result of production that takes place in time, it leads to a dynamic conception of urban space as being constantly produced and reproduced. This implies a constant struggle over the content of the urban and means that lived urbanity is the outcome of continuous conflicts and contestations. The city is constantly being renewed and redefined, both in theory and practice. In this sense, according to Schmid (2011, p. 53), the right to the city could be redefined as the right to urban space, which means the right to participate in the transformation of space and to control investment into space.

Based on the theoretical reflections above, Schmid (2011, p. 53) recognises a set of trends in the history of recent urban struggles. While urbanisation has increased, in many places urban spaces are being reclaimed through urban social movements that "have resisted transformation of their cities, fought against commercialization and displacement, demanded old and new forms of urbanity, mixed districts in the city centers, street life and public spaces". They have also created many kinds of concrete urban spaces, alternative and sometimes oppositional everyday practices based on cultural, ethnic or sexual differences. The case festivals of my research can certainly be understood to be taking part in these struggles and as forms of urban social movements in the contexts of their cities.

As Lefebvre (1996, p. 73) has analysed, the metropolitan centres, the urban cores are becoming consumer products, and the global city model with its metropolitan values, cultures and lifestyles are widely celebrated and sought after (Schmid, 2011, p. 54). The city itself, the urban life, becomes a commodity. In this process it is not only the land and real estate that are exchanging value, but the entire space is sold including the people living in it as well as the social resources and the economic effects produced any them. What is interesting, is that the qualities of urban space (difference, encounter, creativity) become part of the economic logic of systematic exploitation of productivity gains. Private shopping malls, entertainment centres or private railway and metro stations constitute quasi-public spaces that are controlled by private interests and that channel urban life into commercially exploitable avenues and market and consumption-oriented practices. This process reduces people to mere extras in the great urban spectacle. (Schmid, 2011, pp. 55-56.)

In Schmid's (2011, p. 56) analysis, "the question of center and periphery is transformed into the antagonism between productive and non-productive ways of consuming space, between capitalist "consumers" and collective "users"". According to Lefebvre (1991, p. 356, pp. 359-360), the opposition of exchange and use value can be described as the contradicting clash between "capitalist domination" and the "self-determined appropriation" of space. Lefebvre's Marxist analysis cannot perhaps be applied to contemporary cities as such, but as Schmid (2011, p. 57) notes, "the social potential of urban space lies precisely in its capacity to facilitate contacts and mutual interaction between the various parts of society". At the same time, we can observe that access to urban resources are increasingly controlled and appropriated by global metropolitan elites. As a result, urban space loses some if its critical elements, especially the most important characteristic which is the possibility of unexpected encounters and interactions, Schmid argues.

It is here that contribution of the case festivals to urban space is most important in my view. As I have demonstrated in the analysis and this discussion, the curators want the festivals to actively produce the city and its public spaces and impact the urban life of the city. The festivals hold potential for discovering new or alternative, artist and community lead definitions of the urban and opening up possibilities for conceiving and living different forms of urban life. The contemporary urban crisis can be seen as an opportunity to imagine alternatives and to create new possible urban worlds, as pointed out by Schmid (2011, p. 59). The potential of the case festivals should be recognised and celebrated as they embrace the context of the urban, bring artists and citizens to the creative, active process of production of space, creating opportunities for assembly, encounter and interaction without fearing conflicts. This artistic and creative activity in urban space holds huge potential for transforming everyday life. In my view, there is nothing lacking in leaning on this potential if we understand that the premise of the urban is in the encounter which is joined by the elements of the playful and unpredictable and keep reminding ourselves that the urban must be constantly produced and reproduced. Lefebvre's positive

conception of the urban points towards a possibility, a promise, not an already existing reality, reminds Schmid (2011, p. 49). Like the common is not something that existed once and has now been lost, but it is something like the urban common that has to be continuously produced (Harvey, 2012, p. 77).

5.5 Chapter Summary

It can be concluded that a curator's practice is about understanding the local context and an ability to consider the city and the region as their working space and material, an ability to recognise the potential of art in an urban context and envision artistic projects, and about knowing the art field well enough to be able to choose the right artist who has the potential to create meaningful and engaging artworks. While recognising the risk of superficiality and lack of local embeddedness when inviting international artists, it is an advantage to know the artists which creates mutual trust and makes it possible both for the curator and artist to enter the creative process together and to trust that process. When understood like this, the curatorial practice begins to be further rooted in the everyday processes of making, of living and in the performative, as the materiality of curatorial practice is present in the various levels of dialogue, in the encounters with the city and its public spaces and citizens, the artists and artworks, in the trips to other festivals and events and research taking place in different cities and contexts.

In the analysis chapter, I have opened up the curatorial practices in the context of new genre public art, demonstrated curators' perspectives on urban space and their understanding of audience, defined the festival contexts through three political agendas and described festivals as dialogical actors. In this chapter I have further discussed the implications of the results by first discussing the performative and non-representational curatorial practice embedded in the city followed by how the curators perceive their power. In the last two sections I have discussed the political agendas of the festivals and political potential of new genre public art festivals in the framework of the urban. I believe it is evident, that the motives of the curators extend way beyond their taste – in fact they spoke about that very little – to the city, the art world and the society at large. Heidi Amundsen and Gerd Mørland (2015, p. 4) also make two points about the relationship between curating and politics, which is a very relevant aspect in contemporary curatorial discourse. Firstly, that curating is an inherently radical-political practice and secondly, that during the last few years, curatorial practice has strived to make it relevant in society at large.

Based on Lefebvre's theory of space as social production, I have argued that the artworks participate in the manifold processes of production of space, contributing to the constant change of the city. The curators of new genre public art have a strong belief in the effectiveness of the artworks in the urban context and they consider the participatory methods of new genre public art a powerful way of producing knowledge, creating a sense of community and building a

relationship to a place. Amin and Thrift (2002, p. 30) propose that the city should be seen "as an institutionalized practice, a systematised network, in an expanded everyday urbanism". For them, everyday urbanism is marked by a certain humanism which is evident for example in the desire for face-to-face-contact and urban community. For Lefebvre (1991, p. 101), the formative element in the urban world is the encounter, and the reaction to it, and he also states that "the form of social space is encounter, assembly, simultaneity". And it is everything that there is in space, that assembles – everything that is produced by nature or by society, either through co-operation or conflict. As I have shown through the analysis, the curators want to create encounters and possibilities for people to assemble through art in the urban context. In my view, the interests and aims of these encounters are in the political potential. The curators consider the artworks as places or platforms for encounters, for conflicts, for debates and discussions, for diverse voices and viewpoints to be present in the public realm. In this sense, politics is understood alongside the thinking of Jacques Rancière (2015, p. 147) for whom politics is about inventing new forms of collective expressions that reconfigure the given distribution of the sensible through new arrangements of space, time and bodily functions.

According to Thrift (2008, pp. 113-114), "world is a making"; it is processual and in action and it must be acted into. He writes about the surprisingness of the event, saying that the event can be connected to potential, possibility and experimentation. I consider the curators' aims and visions of new genre public art as kind of experimental events which call for the unexpected encounters and participation in urban spaces. And these events and encounters hold the potential for politics, as part of the everyday urbanism. Naturally, this potential cannot always be fulfilled and there is a danger of what Nora Sternfeld (2013, p. 6) considers "patronizing efforts to include in the representational logic those previously excluded" or Claire Bishop (2012, p. 14) as neo-liberalistic social inclusion discourse stating that "to be included and participate in society means to confirm to full employment, have a disposable income, and be self-sufficient". According to Bishop, it is problematic when artists' projects start sounding like government cultural policy "geared towards the twin mantras of social inclusion and creative cities" because "artistic practice has an element of critical negation and an ability to sustain contradiction that cannot be reconciled with the quantifiable imperatives of positivist economies". While I subscribe partly to Bishop's criticism, my understanding based on this research and the interviews is that indeed, the curators actively encourage and look for artists and artworks which can facilitate a space for critical negation, contradiction and even conflict. Foregrounding risk taking and embarking on new projects without knowing the outcome, the curators acknowledge that their visions might not be met as the essence of the dialogical art is in the process, conversations and collaboration which means that the process might lead into unexpected outcomes. For the curator it is essential to trust the artist and the process and to try to facilitate the process the best they can.

Socio-political aims, including the participatory agenda, are significant for the curators of new genre public art. Socio-political aims are not the only ones the curators are considering as part of the process of creating an artistic programme but they encompass several objectives of cultural policy, namely access to cultural services and activities and accessibility. Urban space is considered as a greater possibility to reach these goals, compared to traditional art venues, such as museums and theatres. The ability to create "truly accessible" artworks as described by Paula Toppila, where the location is also truly accessible (public space), and when the artworks reaches people who do not experience being welcomed in museums – "who do not open the door of the museum and who are not especially welcomed there either"–– are powerful experiences and moments of successes for the curator. It is in these "truly public spaces" where all layers of life and people as equal citizens can be encountered. A big motive to programme artworks in public spaces is to create unforgettable experiences for people who do not normally feel that cultural experiences are open for them.

For the curators, participation itself is not a sufficient objective. It matters what the audience is invited to participate in and that the content and form of the artworks enables a dialogical engagement in a socially and politically relevant topic or issue, which potentially influences the thinking and understanding of participants. It is crucial that the artist is interested in participation and that the work is interesting as art, not just a social process, which echoes Bishop's criticisms of dialogical art projects. Reflecting changes in the practices of contemporary art and partly the shift from the spectator consumer to the active contributor, new genre public art can be understood as an experimental, potentially powerful event of negotiation, dialogue and conflict taking place in the public space and thus contributing to the everyday urbanism of cities.

Thinking back on the political agendas of the case festivals regarding the cities, the public spaces, engagement of citizens and communities, as well as the Lefebvrian framework of the urban, I understand the festivals to be contributing to the ideas of sustainable cities, the liveability of cities and increasing awareness of place, identity and a sense of belonging as outlined by the Global Report on Culture for Sustainable Urban Development (2016, p. 132). Minja Yang (2016, p. 134) points out that cultural activities in public spaces give identity to cities and encourage positive interactions between citizens. There are numerous examples around the world where cultural diversity is celebrated through the arts in public spaces and festivals as part of city branding or urban regeneration schemes. Although they are very important in generating interactions among different groups of people and creating jobs, they do not in themselves improve urban liveability unless associated with targeted action for behavioural change and transformation of the city's physical and social infrastructure. To me, the case festivals' function as platforms enabling cultural exchange and, at the same time, as sites to reimagine and re-evaluate values through art in the framework of dialogical aesthetics, is crucial.

Through the analysis, I have demonstrated in this research that the interviewed curators are not interested in working in the picture perfect sites in

the city, to "market the city", or only to work with those who already are participating in cultural activities, but through time and durational processes, to research and investigate the city, contribute to the production of it and mobilise new thoughts through art. The festivals are not focused in fulfilling social inclusion agendas but operating as part of the urban culture, embracing the unexpected, unpredictable and the encounter as the premise of the urban.

6 CONCLUSIONS

As this research has shown, curating encompasses a great variety of tasks, areas of responsibility and requires diverse skills. Curatorial practices of new genre public art in a festival context appear as performative and non-representational practices embedded in the city, and as thoroughly dialogical. I also found that the case festivals operate through three political agendas: the art world, the socio-political, and the urban agenda. This means that in the festival context, curatorial practices reach to these three areas of inquiry. I have shown that the political potential of curatorial practices lie in curators' aims to create encounters that are immersed in the everyday. This connects the practices to notions of potential, possibility and experimentation.

There is no one route to become a curator as both the diverse backgrounds of the interviewed curators and the broad area of tasks related to their curatorial practice demonstrates. Despite this, in all the interviews, there was a kind of ghost of the concept of curating hovering in the air which the curators referred to in various ways. Davies referred to a "straight curator", Nanay to "normal curatorial work", Fassi to "different than curating within white cube" and "not curating projects just according to your taste", and Toppila to thinking about "strictly curating". It seems that the curators had a kind of image of the "normal" curator in their mind to which they reflected their own practice. In some ways their idea of a curator was almost an outdated concept, a concept that perhaps is still applicable in a museum context. This narrow definition of curatorial practice has been dominant in the art world and curatorial discourse. Smith (2011, pp. 30-31), for example, defines exhibiting artistic meaning to be the main task of the contemporary curator and all other roles as subservient to that, and Kester (2011, p. 3) notes that the modernistic idea of a single, artistic genius is still the basis of much of contemporary curatorial practice. I argue that "the other roles" are equally important for curatorial practice in the context of new genre public art, or rather that curatorial practice encompasses various and multiple roles. It is important to note though, that however expanded and extended the notion of exhibition is for Smith, the context he writes about is still very much the visual art exhibition including working with collections, although he includes events,

creation of a sequence of sites and public dialogues in this framework. It is still far from understanding the city as your context and framework.

This notion of a contemporary curator can be characterised as the ghost concept of curatorial practice that was present in the interviews. It is understandable that it has shaped the thinking of the interviewed curators because it is still the dominant way of understanding curatorial practice. In my view though, it does not represent the diversity and characteristics of current practices. It almost feels as if their actual practice, what they really do in their work, has not caught up with their thinking. Instead of arguing that curators are also producers, or communications officers or whatever professional jobs one can recognise in the field of cultural production in the framework of new genre public art in a festival context, my argument is to broaden the understanding of the curatorial practice and to update that "image of the curator" which perhaps does not exist anywhere. As the boundaries of artistic fields and practices are increasingly blurry and messy, perhaps this kind of blurring and merging is also happening in the other professions within the cultural production, and it is up to the individual curator to develop, question and renew their practice according to where it is located.

In the Introduction chapter, I wrote that at the beginning of my professional career as a curator, I did not really see myself as a curator. Although in this research process, I have been occupied with the ideas and views of other curators and tried to keep my own opinions at a critical distance, it has also been a process where my own thinking and assumptions have been challenged. I have been surprised by how strongly the art world agenda persists in the speech of the interviewed curators and how important the artists are for them. This is not a criticism towards the interviewed curators, and I am not saying that artists would not be important to me, but rather it is an observation that there are multiple agendas at play when curating new genre public art in a festival context, and that each curator has their own way of navigating those in respect to the city and its specificities, whether a political situation or the position of the festival in the ecosystem of art. This research has also increased my personal belief in the political potential of art. It has opened new ways for me to see the potential and significance of curatorial practice in fostering artistic encounters in an urban context as a powerful and intrinsically political activity. This has been very helpful during my, at times, serious considerations of whether to continue to work in this field. The research process has enabled me to recognise and value how crucial the potential to engage all kinds of people in processes of making and encountering art in the urban context is for me, and my identity as a curator.

It has also been inspiring to see that there are new discussions emerging in the curatorial discourse relating to curating live art (Davida, Gabriels, Hudon & Pronovost, 2019), curating as anti-racist practice (Bayer, Kazeem-Kamiński & Sternfeld, 2018), ethics and feminism (Reilly, 2018) and curating site-specific art (Elfving, 2017), and that some of them, similarly to my research, discuss curatorial practices beyond the hegemony of visual art. As a curator with a background in performing arts and cultural policy, these recent discussions have

not only strengthened my identity, but also enabled me to understand and articulate, that curating in the framework of new genre public art in a festival context, is a specific practice full of potential.

Although in my view, this research has produced significant new knowledge about contemporary curatorial practices, it also has its limitations. The number of cases and interviews is not very large and larger empirical data could have possibly produced more characteristics of the practices and roles of the curators in the context of new genre public art. On one hand, this research does not aim towards representative generalisation and has not been set out as quantitative. My aim has also not been in analysing the existing academic curatorial discourse but with my empirical data, to produce new knowledge of curatorial practices of new genre public art, and through this, take part in redefining curatorial practices now, which I have achieved. I also agree with Flyvberg (2006) that one of the misconceptions regarding case studies is that "context-independent" knowledge is more valuable than practical, "context-dependent" knowledge. In fact, as the results of this research show, the performative and non-representational practice of doing and making, experimenting, being embedded in the city and everyday is what curating in the context of new genre public art is about, and it is therefore extremely valuable to listen to and learn from those real life experiences of curators of the case festivals. I also want to note that in terms of envisioning a research project that would be both interesting in terms of producing new knowledge and realistic to pull through, my view is that the number of cases of my research is justifiable and balanced. In fact, to focus on fewer cases and interviews, but to be able to analyse them thoroughly, can produce in-depth knowledge that is otherwise difficult to achieve. This at least is my hope.

My interest has not been to compare the case festivals with each other because they operate with very different resources and are realised in cities that are different not only in size and population but also in their political context. In my opinion, it would not have been fair to compare festivals that take place in Nordic liberal countries and which are well funded with a festival that barely manages to continue to exist in a country that is conservative and has in recent years experienced a rise of right wing populism, for example. This brings me to another limitation of this research. While my research does contribute to the discussion about art's contribution to the production of urban space and urban development, I have not spent enough time in each of the case festivals' cities that I could discuss their significance in their specific locality in depth. This can be seen as a limitation, but it is worth pointing out that it has not been my aim either. My aim is to look at the curatorial practice of new genre public art on a more general level, as a contemporary curatorial phenomenon, and the case festivals should be understood as platforms for the curatorial practice. Although I have visited each festival during this research process, this research is not ethnographical. However, an ethnographical approach would be an interesting post-doc project to further research the manifold relationship between art and

spatial practices and the role of the curator in those processes, including a specific focus on ethical concerns.

Lastly, I want to point out the potential of festivals. Understanding the city as a process along the theorisations of Henri Lefebvre (1991) and Amin and Thrift (2002), and acknowledging the urgent need for cities to reinvent themselves (Fenner, 2017, p. 13), my research offers insights into festivals' interests to foster participation and creativity of citizens in urban spaces. The opportunity to fight for the right to the city through diverse forms of encountering each other, is a potential to discover alternatives of everyday life and participate in producing and reproducing the urban. As festivals have been recognised in cultural policy as very important platforms in the fields of producing, distributing and experiencing art, and having a significant impact culturally, socially and economically (Karttunen & Luonila, 2017), they are also expected to fulfil various cultural policy objectives such as increasing participation and inclusion in culture and promoting sustainable development. In the light of this research, in my view, it is important to better articulate the notion of politics that recognises that unexpectedness and surprisingness are necessary components of festivals. A big potential of festivals regarding urban spaces and politics lies in the potential of unexpectedness; the impossibility of articulating in advance what is going to happen. In this sense, from the viewpoint of dialogical aesthetics, urban space and politics, the tendency to expect festivals to fulfil various cultural policy objectives, perhaps unrealistically as noted by Sari Karttunen and Mervi Luonila, is in conflict with the political potential of the festivals. In my view, one of the crucial points is to allow and secure autonomy of the curator so that there is space for the potential of politics, through the simultaneously poetic and mundanely messy curatorial practice embedded in the city.

YHTEENVETO (SUMMARY IN FINNISH)

Tässä väitöskirjassa olen tutkinut uuteen julkiseen taiteeseen liittyviä kuratoriaalisia käytänteitä festivaalikontekstissa. Tutkimuksen tavoite on ymmärtää ja tuottaa uutta tietoa näistä viimeaikaisista ja ajankohtaisista kuratoriaalisista ilmiöistä taiteen sosiaalisen käänteen jälkeen sekä osallistua keskusteluun kuratoinnin uudelleen määrittelystä ja tämänhetkisistä käytännöistä. Tutkimus käsittelee kuraattorin roolia uuden julkisen taiteen tuottamisen prosesseissa ja sitä, kuinka kuratoriaaliset käytännöt osallistuvat urbaanin kontekstin kompleksisuuteen. Lisäksi tutkimuksen tavoite on kuraattorin näkökulmasta analysoida ja tuottaa uutta tietoa uuden julkisen taiteen ja julkisen tilan välisestä vuorovaikutussuhteesta.

Taiteellisten käytäntöjen muuttuminen kohti paikkasidonnaisuutta, osallistamista, yhteisöllisyyttä ja dialogisuutta on omalta osaltaan vaikuttanut kuraattorin roolin ja siihen liittyvien käytänteiden muuttumiseen. Tutkimuksessani uusi julkinen taide on kattokäsite, joka pitää sisällään laajan kirjon paikkasidonnaisia taiteellisia työskentelymenetelmiä julkisissa tiloissa sijaitsevista veistoksista, installaatioista ja ympäristötaiteesta sosiaalisesti sitoutuneisiin teoksiin ja prosesseihin esittävien taiteiden ja kaupunkitaiteen parissa.

Tutkimukseni on monitieteinen ja -menetelmällinen liittyen taiteentutkimukseen, kulttuuripolitiikkaan ja kulttuurintutkimukseen. Menetelmällisiltä lähtökohdiltaan tutkimus on laadullinen monitapaustutkimus. Tapaukset ovat Metropolis (Kööpenhamina, Tanska), Steirischer Herbst (Graz, Itävalta), IHME-festivaali (Helsinki, Suomi) ja PLACCC-festivaali (Budapest, Unkari). Ne ovat moni- ja poikkitaiteellisia, ja niiden keskiössä on taiteen uusien muotojen esiin tuominen, paikkasidonnaisuus, julkinen tila ja kaupunkitila. Lisäksi ne ovat toistuvia ja niitä on toteutettu jo pidemmän aikaa, mikä on tärkeää tutkittaessa käytäntöjä.

Tutkimuksen keskeiset käsitteet ovat uusi julkinen taide, tilan tuottaminen ja poliittinen. Näiden käsitteiden kautta tutkimus avautuu dialogiseen estetiikkaan ja festivaaleihin pääpainon pysyessä kuraattoreissa ja urbaanissa kontekstissa. Ymmärrän uuden julkisen taiteen, kuraattorin ammatin ja taidefestivaalit taidemaailman ilmiöinä. Uusi julkinen taide tapahtuu urbaanissa kontekstissa, ja tutkimuksessani tarkastelen sitä dialogisen estetiikan kautta, joka on Grant. H. Kesterin kehittämä viitekehys ymmärtää sosiaalisesti sitoutuneita taiteellisia käytäntöjä. Urbaani konteksti asettaa kysymyksiä tilan käsitteellistämisestä, joihin viittaan tilan tuottamisella, sekä poliittisen ymmärtämisestä ja määrittelystä. Kun tarkastelemme ihmisten taiteeseen sitoutumista ja osallistumista kaupunkitilassa – taiteen, joka voi olla aktivistista ja potentiaalisesti poliittista – on tarpeellista määritellä poliittisen merkitys. Tässä tutkimuksessa nojaan Jacques Rancièren poliittisen teoriaan ja hänen kirjoituksiinsa taiteesta ja politiikasta. Käsitykseni kaupunkitilasta perustuu Henri Lefebvren teoriaan tilan sosiaalisesta tuottamisesta ja hänen urbaanin käsitteen teoretisoinnille. Kuraattorin ja festivaalin käsitteet ovat päällekkäisiä, sillä tutkimus keskittyy kuratoriaalisiin käytänteisiin festivaalikontekstissa. Tässä kolmen laajan teoreettisen viitekehyksen ja

tutkimusperinteen risteyskohdassa analysoin ja tarkastelen kuraattoreiden käytäntöjä ja festivaalien poliittisia agendoja.

Tutkimukseni empiirinen aineisto koostuu haastatteluista, tapausesittelyistä, havainnoista, valokuvista, festivaalien luetteloista ja nettisivuista. Aineiston analyysimenetelmänä olen käyttänyt laadullista sisällönanalyysia. Tutkimuksen keskeiset tulokset voi tiivistää kolmeen kohtaan. Tutkimus osoittaa, että uuteen julkiseen taiteeseen liittyvät kuratoriaaliset käytännöt festivaalikontekstissa ovat kaupunkiin kiinnittyneitä performatiivisia ja ei-representaationalisia käytäntöjä. Käytännöt ovat läpikotaisin dialogisia ja perustuvat jatkuvaan kuraattorin, taiteilijoiden ja kaupungin väliseen dialogiin. Tällaiset kaupunkiin kiinnittyneet käytännöt vaativat kuraattoreilta taidemaailman asiantuntemuksen lisäksi paikallistuntemusta ja läsnäoloa kaupunkitilassa ja ne ovat luonteeltaan pitkäkestoista. Niitä voi kuvailla myös ”glokaaleiksi”, sillä kuraattoreiden toiminnassa yhdistyvät paikallisesti ajankohtaiset kysymykset ja teemat sekä globaalin taidemaailman ilmiöt. Toiseksi löysin tapausfestivaaleilta tutkimuksessani kolme poliittista agendaa, jotka ovat taidemaailman, sosio-poliittinen ja urbaani agenda. Vaikka ne ovat osittain päällekkäisiä, agendat osoittavat kuinka festivaalikontekstissa kuratoriaaliset käytännöt ulottuvat näille kolmelle alueelle, sillä kuraattoreiden toiminta perustuu festivaalien poliittisille agendoille. Kolmas keskeinen löydös on, että kuraattoreiden tavoitteet luoda kohtaamisia sisältää poliittisen eli asioiden muuttumisen mahdollisuuden. Tapausfestivaalit kiinnittyvät paikalliseen urbaaniin kontekstiin, tuovat taiteilijoita ja kansalaisia osaksi luovaa ja aktiivista tilan tuottamisen prosessia ja festivaalit siten luovat mahdollisuuksia kokoontumisille, kohtaamisille ja vuorovaikutukselle ilman konfliktien pelkoa. Julkisessa tilassa tapahtuva taiteellinen ja luova toiminta sisältää mahdollisuuden arkipäivän muuntautumiselle. Kun ymmärrämme, että urbaanin lähtökohta on kohtaaminen, johon liittyy leikillisyyden ja ennakoimattomuuden elementtejä, ja muistamme, että urbaania täytyy jatkuvasti tuottaa ja uudelleen tuottaa, tähän mahdollisuuteen nojaaminen on perusteltua. Lefebvren käsitys urbaanista kurottaa olemassa olevasta todellisuudesta kohti mahdollisuutta ja lupausta. Tutkimukseni osoittaakin, että arkipäivään uppoutuneet kohtaamiset liittävät kuratoriaaliset käytännöt ajatuksiin potentiaalista, mahdollisuudesta ja kokeilusta.

APPENDIX

Interview structure

The aims of the interview are

- to position the curator/artistic director within the organisation and to understand how s/he works in relation to the rest of the team
- to understand what kinds of duties and responsibilities the curator/AD has and how the work load is spread between staff members
- to understand how the curator/AD makes the programme and what networks are involved in that process
- how the curator works with the artists
- what kind of local, social and political aims, short and long term, define the work of the curator/AD
- how the work of the curator/AD is evaluated and what s/he does with that information
- what is the curator's/AD's understanding of and relationship to public space

Main questions are numbered, a-i are sub questions for me to bring up if they don't otherwise come up in the conversation.

1. You are responsible for the programming of case festival (name). Can you tell me about the process of programming the case festival (name)?
    a. How long has the process been?
    b. In which parts of the process have you been involved?

2. Your job title is artistic director/curator/general manager. Please describe your job
    a. What are your responsibilities
    b. Describe the activities your job includes.
    c. In leading up to the festival, can you describe the different phases of your job?
    d. In relation to other people working in your organisation, please describe your role
    e. Are you based in xx (name of the city)? Are you originally from here?
    f. What is you background? Education?
    g. How many festivals (case festival name) have you programmed?
    h. Is your job permanent or fixed term? Full time or part time?
    i. Do you also curate other festivals / do you have other jobs as well?

j. Your job title is artistic director/curator/general manager. Can you tell me why it's that and not for example a curator/artistic director/general manager?
k. How do you understand the difference between an AD and curator?
l. The different duties/responsibilities/parts of your job, please estimate what is the most time consuming part?

3. How do you choose the artists?
    a. Open call, entirely chosen by curator, curators, artistic director?
    b. Seeing a great site-specific work somewhere doesn't mean that it would be great in your local context here. Do you often invite existing site-based concepts here that you have seen somewhere else or do you more start from a local issue and question and seek for an artist to work with that?
    c. Themes? Sites? Communities?
    d. Do you choose first the sites, i.e. you want to curate works to a certain location, community, building etc. or do you first choose the artists? Why?
    e. Do you invite other people, experts or non-experts to discuss / comment artists or works you are interested in?
    f. If so, who? How do approach or reach out to them, and why?
    g. Do you commission new works?
    h. If yes, can you tell me how you work with the artists?
    i. What are main objectives behind the decisions?
    j. Are there certain themes, aims or motives artistically, locally, socially, politically in each festival or do you have more general goals? If so, can you talk about them?
    k. Do you have a certain responsibility towards the local art scene / artists? Can you describe it?

4. What have been the most important networks/partners for you whilst curating/programming the case festival (name) and why?
    a. Using a specific work as an example, can you talk about the networks involved in the curatorial process?
    b. Local, national, international networks/partners?
    c. Please describe the most important/crucial points in the process of programming and producing this work at your festival?

5. On your website you talk about contributing to the idea of creative city/producing and commissioning a work for public space. Can you tell me more what do you mean by that and how do you think the case festival (name) contributes to the idea of a creative city/public space?
    a. How do you understand public space?

b. Why curate something for the public space? What do you want to achieve?
c. Do you think art has changed into more site based practice or do you have certain goals in relation to city's public spaces?
d. Who is your audience? Are there specific target groups? Do these vary from year to year?
e. Do you want to criticize your city or the use of public space? Or develop it into a certain direction? If so, what and how?
f. Has your own understanding of public space changed during the years you have programmed the case festival (name)? How?
g. You have a lot of power to effect how public space is used at and during the festival. How do you relate to that responsibility?
h. Do you notice a difference in how public spaces are used?
i. Some of the events are ticketed and some are free. In the spirit of public art, this is a little bit contradicting. Why have you chosen to work like that?

6. Over the years you have programmed several works that involve audience participation in different ways. Can you tell me about your main motivation/ideology to curate participatory works?
    a. Why do you want to programme participatory works in public spaces?
    b. There's a lot of criticism around participation and socially engaged practice. What do you think about that?
    c. What are your aims as the curator behind participatory works? What do you want to achieve?

7. Can you tell me why you have chosen to work in a festival context?
    a. Do you think it's the best way to make an impact in a city? Or is it best for the artists?
    b. Have you worked as a curator or artistic director in the past in different context?
    c. If so, can you talk about the specific characteristics of working at the case festival (name)?
    d. Thinking about curating in a biennial/annual form, how does this affect your curatorial practice?
    e. Does the festival have a local, social and/or political mission and vision that you as the curator follow or try to full fill? What are those missions and vision?

8. What is the time frame you work as a curator?
    a. Do you already have works planned and fixed for the following year?
    b. Do the previous festivals inform the upcoming ones? How?

9. What would you describe as the most important working tools and methods of the curator/AD of the case festival (name)?
    a. Do you work with specific art theories or aesthetic concerns?
    b. What kind of education best serves this role?

10. How do you evaluate or measure the success of the festival?
    a. Does this evaluation/feedback inform your artistic choices? How?
    b. Do you gather audience feedback? How do you deal with it?
    c. What do you consider a successful case festival (name)?

11. As the artistic director/curator/general manager, in what kind of situations or moments you feel that you have succeeded, done your job particularly well?

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