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## Urban spaces between norms and dreams

*Maiju Loukola*

Seizing Henri Lefebvre's famous notion of the citizen's right to their city,<sup>1</sup> the article aims to enlarge and concretize art's role in advancing more holistic means in urban development in ways that acknowledge city space as a process where different kinds of not only interests, but also *practical practices* collide and meet. The underlying premise here is that art can liberate urban space and create alternative scenarios *for, of, and in* it. The means inherent in arts, such as impertinent dreaming and unbounded imagination, play a key role in this endeavour.

### **City space forming in the crossing of normative and affective practices**

Urban space is saturated with material means of space-making through several practices, including the regulation-driven, also 'soft' legal instruments. Both art and urban law manifest themselves in material and spatial dimensions – in architecture, walls, squares, and thoroughfares. Urban law, like urban intervention and other public space art, manifests itself in material dimensions but in a very different kind of register, one almost unnoticed. In the words of Andreas Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, who writes of the 'spatiality of law':

(–) the city operates as law's megaphone. In city, law's presence is magnified to a deafening extent – so much that one no longer feels its presence: planning restrictions, environmental regulations, zoning, social control, borders between private, public, and restricted access areas, pavements, roads, traffic lights, metro barriers, flows of people, (–) power architecture and landscaping ... are just a few 'legal moments'. (–) Law is the regulator of spaces between spaces, connecting and severing urban beings, urban objects, urban desires, and fears ... .<sup>2</sup>

Once recognizing some of the mechanisms of the seemingly dissecting orders – art and law – we can say that as material and discursive dimensions they, in their collision and differences, may also produce informative tangential points worth thinking forward. Ari Hirvonen writes about city space as a ‘normal space for normals’ in which specific areas are allocated for consumerism, production, transportation, passage, work, and free time.<sup>3</sup> Thus, it is much an institutionally defined hegemonic space, and, as such, never a neutral one. If we look at the city as a space saturated with norms (for *normals*), we notice that norms flow in the city not only as meanings on a symbolic level but also as material and real. Urban landscape is there to be seen, experienced, touched, and lived. The *lefebvrrian right to the city* arises and becomes spatialized in and through several legal and material practices. That is, there are only a few spatializations in the city space that would *not* be results of these processes and practices. It is fair to say that there is no urban space without a touch of law.

Lefebvre argues a city is an ‘oeuvre of its citizens – a work of art that is constantly being made anew.’<sup>4</sup> It is noteworthy to point out that Lefebvre’s notion of ‘right to the city’ was brought to urban studies’ table some 50 years ago, and like any grown-up term is to be looked at in relation to the cultural and societal transformation over time. In recent critical readings, the notion has been dissected from multiple angles in multiple contexts, from legalistic conceptions<sup>5</sup> to radical-materialistic ones<sup>6</sup> to those emphasizing culture-specific cooperational relations and conditions in which the right to the city becomes activated, claimed, and contested. Peter Marcuse suggests a better recognition of the interconnectedness of spatial proximity and social diversity in enabling ‘interaction across difference’ that can foster possibilities for more complex forms of cooperation.<sup>7</sup>

Recognizing the citizens’ needs, wills, dreams, and desires ought to be an essential part of urban decision-making processes. Through acknowledging the inhabitants’ affective relationship with the spatial formation processes might have potential to grow less hierarchic, less top-down, perhaps in ways that release potential for more responsible and caring relation towards one’s hoods.

When including materiality and embodiment as significant parts of spatial practices in urban placemaking<sup>8</sup> affect theories offer a non-institutionally driven, and in this sense peripheral way for understanding how urban space forms through processes both administrative-social and experiential.<sup>9</sup> Following Sara Ahmed, affect recognizes ‘the actual, everyday way in which an individual body moves and negotiates its relationship to space,’<sup>10</sup> and thus much defines how we talk about the constitution of spaces as being for bodies. On the same breath, it is crucial to notice that not all bodies are the same, as some are always more ‘sheltered’ than others in terms of visibility, subjectivity, and what is given (for them) as rights. From the perspective of *affective urbanism*, following Anderson and Holden, cities form as compositions of ‘multiple, differentiated affects, emotions and feelings.’<sup>11</sup>

### **Attachment to a site**

The connection between urban life and emotions was famously outlined by Georg Simmel in his literary work *The Metropolis and Mental Life* in 1903.

He wrote of a special type of human, produced by the city life as a result of an overload of urbanization, mass migration from rural areas to cities, and crowds of people and information. The turn to urban life led to a creation of the *blasé person* who substituted emotional reactions with rational reactions.<sup>12</sup> The French word *blasé* is a past participle form of *blaser*, which translates as being or becoming ‘apathetic to pleasure or excitement as a result of excessive indulgence or enjoyment’ – of being made tired of too much of everything. Turning to *blasé* mode of being was as if a shield to bear the overload of metropolis stimulus in contrast to simple country life.

Sense of belonging to a place brings along an empathic sense of attachment that makes the connection meaningful in a way that is profoundly tied to the registers of sensory experience, memory, and imagination. We are connected to the world through our spatial-sensory experience, and this connection politicizes the aesthetic experience. While in domestic space, ‘at home,’ and while taking our daily routes and any other everyday routine repetitively and absent-mindedly – those sites and situations become saturated with personal relations, sensory data, memories, emotions, and affects that have *taken place* in those very places. Yet none of these site-tied occurrences form as purely personal and intimate without a slightest touch of the hand of law and regulation.

One surely does not need to be *at home* to *feel at home*. It is exactly these kinds of ‘feeling at home’ type of spatial occurrences and practices in public space, in the city environment, where the sensuous and the regulatory meet and collide that I find it interesting to look at through a parallax lens; sites, situations, and practices where the intimate and personal are acknowledged as adjoined in a dynamic tension with the normative and regulatory, instead of trying to force these spheres in utter and complete separation.

My hypothesis is that affect implicates an ethical engagement with people and their everyday and particular sites. In them, the intimate, own, personal, shared, collective, and public come to be effective in countless variations. I argue that affective processes, situational, and relative by nature, have an underused and unidentified capacity to break the normative spatial order in ways that have potential to liberate some of the urban space legal practices beyond their positivist-normative purposes and interpretations. They have a potential to enhance *affective cohesion* and *sense of belonging* through citizens’ daily practices, individual and collective, connected to their living environment and their material-architectural processes.

Affect implies ways of connecting to others and other situations.<sup>13</sup> An affective link is likely to not only empower the citizens’ right to their city but entails potential to bridge socio-spatial gaps and eventually come to challenge practices of exclusion, othering, and alienation. Affective urbanism implies certain calibration towards being attentive to the residents’ sensory connectedness to urban space, and to others sharing those spaces, and adds another kind of measuring technique for the citizens’ experience of their living environment. For example, instead of rooting the citizens’ attachment to the city around their use of infrastructure or services, affective approach makes way for the ‘unconscious and preverbal phenomenon that only emerges when an encounter of bodies of different nature – not only human but also material

objects, ideas, anything – occurs.’<sup>14</sup>

We are constantly involved in the production of affects through the choice of our routes to the grocery store, daily walk with the dog, to work, and leisure. We keep building affective maps, unintentional and unaware, and in so doing come to affect our environment as well.<sup>15</sup> It is these kinds of everyday affective cartographies that I wish to pay attention to in the following chapter through introducing certain ‘techniques,’ conceptions, and approaches for experimenting with the formation of sites and situations that form into something more than just places on a map or distances from one place to another.

### **Situational practices in arts**

Simmel’s *blasé person* and Walter Benjamin’s *flâneur* characterize some of the most noted examples of the shift in a new kind of urban experience through idle exploration in the city. In Benjamin’s studies of the Paris arcades ‘the flâneur’ forms an audience of one who wonders in a city filled with visual and sensory stimulation.<sup>16</sup> Translated into today, the *flâneur* browses in the digital space across a plentitude of media layers of arcades small enough to fit in a smartphone.

The *Situationist International* developed a playful meandering practice, *dérive*, and a related wandering method *psychogeography* where the city is experienced without the usual motives for moving. The method highlights the effects of the environment on the wanderers’ emotions and behaviour.<sup>17</sup> An act of walking in *dérive* practice is primarily an urban affair in cities that often can be unwelcoming for a pedestrian. This way the act of walking becomes a subversive act, against the spirit of the modern city with fast vehicles and other technological innovation.<sup>18</sup>

The situationists stressed the interconnectedness of art in everyday life. The tendency is widely present in arts today. Walking practices in today’s arts in public space share many roots with their avant-garde predecessors’ methods and motivations. Ernesto Pujol, one of the forerunners of socially engaged performative walking art practices, has used the method in his site-specific community walking projects and social choreography works to highlight social and political issues related to decolonization, ecological troubles, human and animal rights, to name a few. He names several traits constantly at use via this approach: the socially engaged walking practice entails site-specific embodiment of urgent social issues; considers human gestures such as conscious walking; is ethically made; is a form of diagnostic, collective, poetic portrait; is freely offered for aesthetic appreciation and reflection.<sup>19</sup>

Socially engaged walking practices and other collective and participatory art practices are realized outside (art) institutions, and in this sense, they come to critique art’s institutional practices. Urban space interventions also take place outside museums and institutions, in public space. All the mentioned can be seen as part of the *post-studio* practices. Claire Bishop calls these kinds of art’s tactics ‘modes of action in which engagement is part of a politicized method’ often with a focus on the creation of situations that have references to a wider societal and political context.<sup>20</sup>

Spatial interventions are site and time-specific actions that typically break the traditional expectations of presenting or performing art. Among other things, an intervention may challenge the notion of spectatorship 'by injecting something new and surprising into the familiar and existing.'<sup>21</sup> Rooted within several moments in the history of arts, such as Dadaism, Surrealism, and again the Situationist movement, intervention questions both the institutionalized and everyday life that shape our lived experience in a capitalist society. Place, as a concept and as a concrete physical space, has a central role in any intervention. Silvia Jestrovic calls this an *interperformativity of place*, and notes that many public urban spaces can be associated with collective memory.<sup>22</sup> Intervention has a potential to enhance, challenge, and alter experiential expectations as well as create new ones.

Yet another walking practice shaping the city space are 'desire paths.' The term derives from urban planning to describe the slithering shortcuts that people choose to take when the 'official' routes do not provide a direct or in other ways preferred route for urban pedestrians. They cause mechanical erosion to the ground through repetitious and intentional bodily movement. These unpredictable free-form passages, with grass worn off, confront the planned set-up for moving into the city.<sup>23</sup> They form in the margin of planning dictated by urban policy and can be seen as democratic and unpredicted interruptions through the citizens' power to affect the fabric of the landscape in an unconscious but purposeful way. To start a *desired path* is to vote, quite literally, with your feet.

*Desire paths* have inspired artists to manifest the border areas between the regulated and desired uses of public space and to imagine other ways of organizing space. One of the forerunners in land art Richard Long has 'walked without purpose' in several works with telling titles such as 'A Line Made By Walking' (1976) and 'Dusty Boots Line' (in Sahara desert 1988). In a playful way we can think it is ants' everyday practice shifted into human (and beyond) scale. Playful or intentional mis-use, rebel, absurdification, fabulation, or fictionalization with rules, regulations, and 'normals' – subtly as a whisper or with screaming intensity – are common tactics in arts. The site-specific, situational, outside-of-museum post-studio practices in public space inevitably form another kind of interconnection with society than were they presented in gallery or museum context. The tensional relation between 'city law' and 'art event' forms an alternative urban reality quite concretely visible.

### **Art intervening the top-up ruled city space**

I next look specifically at an urban space intervention positioned in the city centre loaded with regulatory aspects framing its use, which on the other hand is intrinsically an intervention with an own inner logic *as artwork*. The installation project *People's Architecture Helsinki* took place in a popular meeting place in the heart of the city, Three Blacksmiths' square in autumn 2017. The project was facilitated by a Taiwanese architect Hsieh Ying-Chun with the aim to set up a temporary shelter at the heart of Helsinki city centre.<sup>24</sup> An open call for citizens was launched, and a group of some 30 asylum seekers responded and participated in the collective art project. Most of the

participating asylum seekers had at that point been involved in the *Right to Live* standing demonstration, which had stood for the call day and night for over seven months at the railway station square for more just refugee policies than those executed by the Finnish Immigration Services (Migri), at that time operated by the then sitting right-wing government.<sup>25</sup> The asylum seekers urged for human rights policies that would better respect the international agreements that Finland is committed to and protested against forced deportations.<sup>26</sup> The original demonstration had been asked to move from the railway square in end June 2017 and faced other logistic difficulties in re-settling, and had now a chance to get reactivated in early September in the *Three Blacksmiths square* as part of the Helsinki Design Week event. The installation was re-titled *Right to Live house*, and it was on site for two weeks, after which the *Right to Live protest* as a physical and long-term demonstration ended.

The intervention can be seen as a manifestation of socially engaged art practice motivated in large part by the act of claiming the right for city space by the citizens themselves – in this case, by the asylum seekers who were, at the time, themselves undergoing the process of claiming their own rights to seek asylum and possible later the (permanent status of) citizenship. For some of the audience and passers whose life not necessarily is anywhere near being in need for a roof above your head or any other shelter reminiscent of a ‘home,’ the intervention perhaps served as a bridge for connecting even remotely to the problematics of homelessness (local and global) in one step more concrete manner than by reading an article about it.

The project can be seen as an artistic intervention that liberated public space from its given normative regulatory purposes, while entailed emancipatory potential in giving voice and subjectivity to those who collaboratively worked it up. The intervention posed a question about to whom the city belong. Similarly, it challenged the prevailing conditions and social structures of the site of its erection, the *Three Blacksmiths Square*.<sup>27</sup> Furthermore, intervention breaks traditional expectations of what is normal and acceptable behaviour in urban space. It ‘injects something new and surprising into the familiar and existing’ and suggests another kind of attachment to the (new and altered) situation.<sup>28</sup> Through the intervention one comes to acknowledge the altered materiality and new parameters or demands in terms of embodiment that are at stake in it and in its relation to the site.

The *People’s Architecture* was constructed as a polemical space by transforming a designated public square into a shared and inclusive space open for all. It took place within the normative institutional order of the city coinciding with the utopian possibilities related to several practices of ‘othering’ – it constituted an inclusive space for those not granted an official status of citizenship (or even asylum), and it constituted an opening, a stage if you like, for a utopia to be actualized in an unexpected contradiction with the overly commercialized location under city law, regulation, and surveillance. In this way, the intervention formulated a new theoretical gesture inherently a political one, through tactics commonly used in arts.

Art pieces, such as urban interventions, can serve as empirical evidence of the residents’ engagement to their site. In this sense, they create a new cartography of

the city, of itself. Ideas and dreams become felt and understood through sensible experience and affective attachment they actualize. Following David Harvey, the asylum seekers – as temporary citizen’s actualizing the temporary work themselves – carried out their ‘freedom to make and remake our cities as one of the most precious yet most neglected of our human rights.’<sup>29</sup> The intervention celebrated this by leaving the citizens’ affective footprint onto the site.

### **Putting dreaming techniques into practice**

In the previous chapter, I mentioned *desire paths* as one of the practices seizing the citizens’ power to change urban scenery in ways beyond the city planning top-down ideas and ideologies. In psychoanalytic literature and study, *desire paths* resonate with a wide and multidimensional field way too vast to be touched in this text in more detail, yet I will briefly take up a line of thought in dialogue with Gaston Bachelard. In his endeavour in ‘giving the exterior destiny to the interior being’ – as he formulates in the frame of his psychoanalytic-phenomenological topoanalysis of the intertwined spatiality of body and mind<sup>30</sup> – he writes:

*‘George Sand, dreaming beside a path of a yellow sand, saw life flowing by.’  
‘What is more beautiful than a path?’, she wrote. ‘It is the symbol and the image in his soul.’<sup>31</sup>*

The passing glimpse into Bachelard’s dreamlike conception serves here as a hinge to elevate another kind of visionary, fictional, and magical thinking as means to challenge the preconditions dictated by the normative rational-technical thinking. Through art-based approach that takes the imaginary equally real as the physical everyday-reality-at-hands, the prevailing social, cultural, and urban practices become re-evaluated and articulated in terms leaning to another kind of register that connects with embodiment, senses, and affectivity. Sense of belonging and affective attachment to a place become relevant indicators once we take imaginary dimension as a tool for mapping sites and spaces in ways receptive and respective to their experiential qualities. Recognizing closeness to a site makes an affective attachment, a caring relationship, that brings along responsibility and thus an ethical bond.

In the earlier pages of this article, I introduced between the lines, with two images (see Figures 3.1–3.2), some examples of assignments by the group called ‘*space + practice parasite*,’ whose specific interest is in the relationship between



*Figure 3.1 Space + practice parasite group session ‘sticks with the city’ (from series of assignments), Agrokseenmäki, spring 2022. Photo by the author.*



*Figure 3.2 Space + practice parasite group session ‘sticks with the city’ (from series of assignments), Agrokseenmäki, spring 2022. Photo by the author.*

spatial practice and urban space. The group began as a course and workshop gathering collectively to do spatial assignments once a month, each time with a specific ‘score’ for an assignment.<sup>32</sup> Each score entailed instructions or parameters for each four-hour-long gathering. The ‘score’ for the assignment ‘sticks with the city’ (Figures 3.1–3.2) was as follows, and it was initiated by one of the group facilitator-members Denise Ziegler:

We pick up some long wooden things we need and walk together to Agroksenmäki park on a hill. We explore the site together using long wooden objects. Place the sticks in the landscape. Connect the stick, a human/humans and the landscape. Take a picture/pictures of the situation(s).

The *score* defined the material to work with (each participant took with her/him a 3-metre-long wooden stick), the collective mode of practice (walking together to the site carrying the stick, and working together at the site), inviting the participants to ‘place the sticks in the landscape’ so that they in some way connect the sticks with a person/participants and the landscape. Further, the participants were asked to take a photo documentation of their assignment outputs.

The gatherings are motivated by a shared will to experiment, test, materialize, and sketch various, all kinds of, spatial practices in relation to the city space without a specifically defined purpose or aim. The spatial practice sessions are like five-finger exercises with city space and practice (an active act of experimenting) in relation to or born out of whatever the score, the site, and the situation at hand may suggest.

Usually at the end of each gathering, we step aside from the site and discuss instant impressions and observations. We have agreed that we try to maintain as objective a tone as possible, make observations, and avoid ‘making meaning’ or ‘evaluation.’ In the observation session after Agroksenmäki ‘stick with the city’ gathering, the participants mentioned among other things the following, in commenting on one of the assignments where one of the participants had asked the other participants to hold the long wooden sticks on a vertical position, exactly lined to be in a 90-degree angle with the ground, and place themselves in a group position with some 5–10 metres distance from each other, with the city skyline with high vertical buildings as the backdrop of the assignment setting:

*... while making (this) composition with sticks in a vertical position, the city changed as if into an architectural scale model ... This observation catalyzed a thought that urban planners should really sketch the architectural (and other) planning with 1-to-1 scale objects at their hands, instead of making tiny scale models by the laptop and drawing tables.*

Another comment:

*The group of vertical sticks created a phantom building on the Agroksenmäki, and it was like drawing in the air a kind of sketch of a spatial construction, perhaps a house, that is to be built here ... a virtual figure of a house or some other architectonic object ...*

What was noted repeatedly was that whatever material or object was used, they never ‘stayed the same,’ but through the practice their potentiality was made visible in many unexpected ways. The stick was no longer ‘just a wooden stick’ but part of several possible spatial compositions – those that were acted out in

Agroksenmäki, and those that became *visible in their absence* while and after practicing, experimenting, observing, and discussing. The practice created concrete materializations of what could be possible, but also, immaterial visions of what could be possible but was not realized (by choice of instant action and choice to do this and not that), or could not have been realistically realized but could be realistically envisioned. Many of the potential options of how to use the sticks in a sketch-like composition, as elements of potential architectonics, were possible to imagine as effects of an actually practiced practice. The envisioned possibilities not realized but imagined, represent a 'utopia' as it refers to an absent idea, a figure that has a counterpart in the sensuous mind as a phantasmatic figure, even though a focal point in reality remains missing. Interestingly in a parallel fashion, in the context of relationship between law and the city, legal theorist Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos formulates utopias as 'temporal leaps out of the present (–) and into a future vocabulary of possibility, where both law and the city (in their identity) delve into the horizon and construct an ideality in the form of *absence*.'<sup>33</sup> In the 'sticks' practice, the utopian components enabled the effects of the spatial practice 'to extend on a phantasmatic articulation' in the urban space, which, in turn, became dreamt by the observations resulting from the practice, in the tension catalyzed exactly by that practice.<sup>34</sup>

In the early pages of the article, I mentioned the notion of 'law's invisibility' by Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos. He claims that law and regulations are present in the city space to that (magnified) extent that they become a 'normal,' transparent condition in their being-not-noticed. Here, he locates one of the 'blindspots in lawscape': When a single law or rule is looked at more closely, it is assumed to be an answer, a reaction to some strictly limited problem, and thus insists on the 'performativity' and 'spatiality' of law. Instead of being a solution in and of itself, the law needs to respond to the 'fractured, conflictual, and piecemeal nature' of city life, city space, and the ever-transforming conditions of and in the city.<sup>35</sup> He strongly argues against the conception where law as such responds to a fixed, static, given conditions. What needs to be asked instead, he argues, is how to 'acquire a sense of spatialized history of the urban manifestations of the law' – and how could further blindspots be revealed?<sup>36</sup> Considering law and regulatory mechanisms as historical and present, always 'practices practiced' that are tied to spatiality as well as temporality, brings fore interesting parallelity to art and art's modes of operation. Artistic practices are elementally spatial and temporal, not to mention historical in their fluid context-specificity.

In arts, as in the law, it is a common practice to play with discrepancies and contradictions. In arts, it is a common practice to purposefully equate the ills and inconsistencies in strange and impossible parallels. Art puts exactly those frictions and differences, impossibilities, and peculiar settings out in the open to be perceived, experienced, felt, and known for us to encounter. We meet with art via senses and are in these instances bombarded with stimulation that lands on both the aesthetic and sensuous, and the conscious and context aware. Yet, in experiencing art we are nowhere near being dispatched from the invisible effects of law and the prevailing normative set-up.

One of the most deeply touching examples of depicting a tragic wrong via means of art is based on a tragic real-life photograph of the Nauru island refugees,

who, while being forcefully and against all international obligations for human rights in illegal imprisonment in a Nauru island refugee camp with their mouths stitched up. The images spread widely in social media and were followed by numerous adaptations, becoming an iconic depiction of the brutality of illegal camps torturing those seeking asylum. A mouth is a vehicle for speaking one's voice. Without having to see the actual image a set of heated political issues immediately hits us through our aesthetic-sensory perception.<sup>37</sup> In the case, there is no way to not consider the legal and incomprehensible depth of absence of rights.<sup>38</sup>

## Horizons

The city space can be understood as a nexus of its inhabitants' freedom, needs, interests, desires, and their estuaries. This viewpoint urges the necessity to inspect closely the forces that partake in the formation of urban space – and of different kinds of urban spaces in varying temporal and spatial frames. A city is a dynamic topography, in which different kinds of orders are established, ills and inequalities are created, and at the same time opportunities for emancipation and democratization are opened. Understood as a network of subjects, places, events, emergences, and imagination where seemingly dissenting registers – art (aesthetic-sensuous and affective) and law (regulatory-administrative-legal) – form an effective tension, within which it is possible to acknowledge both registers' own inner logic and respect the difference by an ethical logic of being sensitive to the strange and peculiar other(ness). It is noteworthy to understand that the law not only restricts or prohibits but can and needs to be part of the emancipatory processes as well.

When contemplated through a parallax view where the tense relationship of artistic space, administrative space, and political space collide, another kind of picture forms of a city, one that allows the city to be understood more concretely as a temporal-spatial entity where differently motivated practices take place.

I have elaborated on a few instances where different kinds of material and discursive dimensions in the city can be looked at through the lenses of art and law, and how some of the tangential points between the dissenting orders could be located in order to add more holistic understanding of the citizens' sense of belonging and attachment to their city.<sup>39</sup> I am convinced that a better understanding of the interplay between different conflictual forces and factors contains hidden potential that could strengthen the residents' attachment to their living neighbourhood in terms of care, responsibility, and affection.

I have stressed that through experiential *practice of practices* via means of arts, without goal-oriented premise for an expected result, can act as manifestations and concretizations of the forces at stake in urban space formation. While the relations and tensions at play are contested in actual sites, with material tools and objects, we come to have access to an imaginary, utopian even, field of possibilities that may actualize *right here right now as absent yet* have recognizable counterparts and points in the lived space and spatial experience, and inform us of the components at stake, effective and affective.

As urban space is through and through material and ‘constitutes an actual site, a place, a ground within which and from which political activity flows’ it is necessary to seek ways to specify and concretize the connections and differences in the forces and components at play, to be able to achieve improved means for mending the claimed blindspots that remain overlooked if we place the sensuous and the regulatory as opposite actors.<sup>40</sup> Along with the reach for theoretical understanding, concrete practices – artistic and political – are needed in this work. As I have tried to exemplify, in artistic experiments alternative scenarios are created and concretized. Artistic interventions in the smoothed throughout-administrative urban space leave affective, emotional, and temporal traces through mental and physical experiences.

I have presented a fragmented scenario to explicate an art-based and law-sensitive orientation for partaking in the democratic processes of forming citizens’ attachment and agency in urban space. I have stressed an angle that recognizes the power of affective attachment to site – singular and collective, local, and beyond. As the city space is created in a polemical relationship between different forces and actors, the research methods and practices are necessarily diverse. Through interlinking conflicting discourses and experimental practices, the cross-examination of different kinds of affective relations to city space has proved to create new perspectives not only to make visible people’s connectedness to the city space, but also to offer tools for urban planning and further residential civic activity via practices attentive to affective attachment, responsibility, and belonging. In political, artistic, legal, and lived practices the city keeps re-structuring. It matters how the counterparts come in connection, and it is crucial to safeguard a space for the dissenting orders, conceptions, and practices to have the right to be recognized as particular, yet open.

## Notes

- 1 Lefebvre based his concept of the ‘right to the city’ on his investigation of urbanization in 1960s France, as urban areas and planning were marked by the expansion of capital and massive migration from rural areas, which led to the ‘crisis of the city’ and colonization of everyday life. The domination of social housing and mass production in the margins of the cities, while middle-class and working-class suburbs and city centres were valued as different. ‘In these difficult conditions, at the heart of a society which cannot completely oppose them and yet obstruct them, rights which define civilization [...] find their way. These rights which are not well recognized, progressively become customary before being inscribed into formalized codes. They would change reality if they entered social practice: right to work, to training and education, to health, housing, leisure, to life. Among these rights in the making features the right to the city, not to the ancient city, but to urban life, to renewed centrality, to places of encounter and exchange, to life rhythms and time uses, enabling full and complete usage of these moments and places, etc.’ (Lefebvre 2000, 178).
- 2 Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos 2007, 9.
- 3 Hirvonen 2011, 297.
- 4 Lefebvre 2000, 117. See also Butler 2007, 214 (in ‘Aspiration, asylum and the denial of the “right to the city”’ in *Law and the City*, ed. Andreas Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, 205–220).
- 5 Mayer 2012, 63–85.

- 6 See for example Harvey 2008.
- 7 Marcuse 2012, 185–197.
- 8 The term has been actively used by urban planners and activists in the 1990s, yet the thinking behind *placemaking* is influenced by trailblazers of urban planning development such as Jane Jacobs and William H. Whyte, who advocated the idea of cities for people, not for just cars and consumption.
- 9 Ahmed 2004; Wetherell 2015.
- 10 Schmitz and Ahmed 2014.
- 11 Anderson and Holden 2008, 145. Affects are understood here as impersonal movements that amount to what a body can *do*, feelings as interpersonal expressions of affects, and emotions as personal qualifications of feelings. (ibid.)
- 12 For a dictionary definition, see <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/blas%C3%A9>
- 13 Massumi 2015, 6.
- 14 Massumi 2002.
- 15 Massumi 2015. ‘(–) affect is the power/capacity to affect and be affected’ (2015, ix). ‘These capacities are not two different capacities, they “always go together” because when you affect something you are at the same time opening yourself up to being affected in turn.’ (2015, 4).
- 16 The concept was originally used in poetry by Charles Baudelaire to depict the figure of an artist-poet of modern metropolis and has been quoted and modified further in poetry and literature, urban and feminist studies, and other contexts.
- 17 Guy Debord (defines *psychogeography* as ‘the study of the precise laws and specific effects of the geographical environment, consciously organized or not, on the emotions and behavior of individuals’ (Internationale Situationniste #1, 1958).
- 18 See Coverley 2018.
- 19 See Pujol 2018 [1988]).
- 20 Bishop 2012, 1–2.
- 21 Jensen et al. 2018, 11–12.
- 22 Jestrovic 2013, 40; see also Jensen et al. 2018, 15.
- 23 Landscape planners sometimes make desire paths ‘official’ by paving them and they become integrated with the official path network. Urban planners are known to visit construction sites immediately after the first snowfall to get a better idea of where people walk, and where thus the paved routes should be.
- 24 Hsieh launched an open invitation for citizens to join and share the collective responsibility in building a temporary shelter. Over 30 asylum seekers responded to the call. Over the course of ten days, the temporary shelter was installed on *Three Blacksmith’s square*, one of the most centrally located sites in the city. Adjacent to the square lies the classiest department stores in the city, surrounded by the most elegant fashion boutiques. The site is a perfect example of a socio-economically coherent, gentrified downtown location designed to be attractive for middle-class taxpayers and tourists (Galanakis 2008, 243). As such, it is also top-up regulated, exclusionary space to the marginalized urbanites such as the homeless, the paperless, and the asylum seekers.
- 25 Finland is committed to international agreements and to providing protection to those in need. The basis of this is the 1951 Geneva Refugee Convention and other international human rights treaties and EU legislation. See <https://intermin.fi/en/areas-of-expertise/migration/refugees-and-asylum-seekers>. (Accessed 6 March 2022).
- 26 *The Right to Live* protest was the second-longest held in the country and the first one organized by the asylum seekers themselves. It brought together a large community of supporting citizens, allies, NGOs, and other open-border activists to support the demonstrators’ constitutional right for temporary use of urban space for demonstration. The protest started on 10 February 2017 in front of Kiasma Museum for Contemporary Art and was transferred to the Railway Square a week later by order of the police. (See Näre 2018).
- 27 Jensen et al. 2018, 127.

- 28 Jensen et al. 2018, 11–12.
- 29 Harvey 2008, 23–24.
- 30 Author’s interpretation of Bachelard’s approach in thinking space and spatiality.
- 31 Bachelard 1994, 90–91.
- 32 The framing of the ‘*space + practice parasite*’ activity is described as follows: ‘We focus on addressing the multiplicity of space and the ecology of spatial practices that they suggest. We develop methods of imparting the ways in which different spaces structure and form the taking place of things, gestures and events. We (–) prepare and experiment with site and situation specific interventions, gestures, and other space-reckoning practices. We develop methods of visualizing, materializing, or presenting thoughts on the role of space as structure for taking place of things, gestures, and events. (–) we learn from the site, its pasts and futures and the possibilities it offers now.’ (See the original course description in full in <https://opinto-opas.uniarts.fi/en/course/K-JI-11-K22B/13712>).
- 33 Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos 2007, 11–12.
- 34 I am here altering a quote from Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos into the use of interpreting the ‘sticks’ situation from an angle where the imagined, utopian effects resulting from the spatial practice come to be seen in parallel with the original citation, which deals with the law and the city. I see considerable concurrency in the sentences where the other is in part translated or replaced with words and conceptions from another discipline. This ‘method’ brings another layer to thinking about law and art through a practice of translation. The original quote is ‘*Utopian projects are vociferous lawscapes, enabling the legal body to extend on a phantasmatic articulation of the urban, which, in turn, is dreamt by the law in a state of justice-induced excitement.*’ (P-M 2007, 11).
- 35 Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos 2007, 10.
- 36 Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos 2007, 8–10.
- 37 Lip-sewing protests and variations of them have been seen in the context of early AIDS protests, for example, see Rosa von Praunheim’s documentary ‘*Silence = Death*’ (1989). More recent lip stitch images have been a tragic evidence of Nauru island refugee camp, where the refugees, while being in forcefully illegal imprisonment in a refugee camp in the island near Greece-Macedonia border, voiced out their protest against the brutality of the camps. The images started circulating in turmoil via social (and other) media, becoming an almost iconic depiction of the brutality of illegal camps for those seeking asylum.
- 38 It remains a subject of another article and further study to tackle the ‘politics of space’ related to migration and asylum policies with the European Commission’s struggling with stumbling with keeping up its (human rights) appearances in border policies, as refugees and stateless people will form ‘the most symptomatic group in contemporary politics,’ as Hannah Arendt rightly anticipated in her work *The Origins of Totalitarianism*.
- 39 See Lefebvre 2000 and 1968; Harvey 2008.
- 40 Mitchell 2003, 129–135.

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