CANBERRA URBAN ACTIVATION STUDY

PLAY
CREATIVITY AND CULTURE

Centre for Creative and Cultural Research
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UNIVERSITY OF CANBERRA

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INTRODUCTION

The ACT is currently in a period of remarkable transformation. In consonance with global movements in urban renewal, Canberra is planning for a future that is both vital and sustainable. To this end, a series of policy frameworks have been designed to form *The Canberra Plan,* which together "articulate a common vision of a desirable future which addresses practical concerns shaping the lives of Canberra's people as they live, work, learn and play." (ACT Government, 2004: 2)

The *Canberra Plan: Towards out Second Century* (2008:5) outlines an ambitious strategic framework for Canberra from which:

Canberra will be recognised throughout the world as a truly sustainable and creative city; as a community that is socially inclusive—acknowledging and supporting those who are vulnerable and in need and enabling all to reach their full potential; as a centre of economic growth and innovation; as the proud capital of the nation and home of its pre-eminent cultural institutions; and as a place of great natural beauty.

This *City to the Lake Urban Activation Study* complements *The Canberra Plan* and accompanying planning reforms[1] by focussing on the development of the "play" (ACT Government, 2004: 2; Brand Canberra, https://canberra.com.au/play/) attributes of the vision for Canberra.

In particular, this Study seeks to contribute to the development of a vital public realm in Canberra through identification and analysis of international exemplars of playful urban activation. It will highlight examples of urban play that can contribute to the realisation of the five Place Principles of the (2015) ACT Government Strategic Urban Design Framework –connected; vibrant; responsive; diverse; green.

Australian urban renewal icon Marcus Westbury (2015) notes that "cities aren't simply grand projects and megavisions, they are constellations of small acts and activities" (13). In keeping with this view, this study of international best practice in urban play seeks to inform the planning and design of the public realm, which in turn contributes to realising the vision of this city.

[1] This includes the Economic White Paper; The Canberra Spatial Plan; The Canberra Social Plan; People, Place, Prosperity: The ACT's Sustainability Policy; ACT Government Digital Strategy 2016-2018; Incorporating Active Living Principles into the Territory Plan; The Territory Plan; The City Renewal Authority Act.

A FRAMEWORK FOR BEST PRACTICE IN PLAY

The term "play" and it qualities will be explored throughout this Study, but for the purpose of the Introduction, we define play as:

A positive affective experience generated between open participants, available resources and the environment that transcends utilitarian practices and fosters pleasurable and novel forms of engagement for its own sake.

Play encompasses those activities and encounters that comprise many of the more active, interesting, imaginative, incidental, enjoyable and engaged aspects of daily life.

Play in urban settings may include leisure, sporting and physical activities, and creative pursuits undertaken for their own sake; open and/or novel engagement with spaces and places – whether formal as with playgrounds, or informal as with urban features and green spaces; participation in festivals, events and other gatherings for pleasure; games and gaming; and any other joyful, novel engagements with people, resources and the environment.

Play thus constitutes those non-instrumental, non-obligatory and non-ordinary activities and encounters that contribute to the rich cultural fabric, vitality and diversity of a city, and the wellbeing and quality of life of its citizens. (Stevens, 2007; Montgomery, 2013; Eberle, 2014).

The following Urban Play Framework has been designed to inform our selection of urban play activations. It is based on a synthesis of the vast literature that identifies what are often referred to as the "conditions" of play (REFS). These conditions are loose and vary according to context and players, but will generally include a combination of some of the conditions as outlined in the table below.

URBAN PLAY FRAMEWORK: CONDITIONS FOR PLAY	
CONDITION FOR PLAY	DESCRIPTION
Voluntary and open participation	Play occurs when participants choose to engage in an activity or affective encounter. People are unlikely to experience play if they feel coerced into engagement.
A sense of safety and absence of stress	Play requires participants to be open to engagement. Openness to play is difficult to achieve when people are stressed or feel under threat. Thus participants must feel safe and relaxed enough to become present 'in play'.
Engagement in play for its own sake	Participants engage in play experiences for intrinsic ('for the sake of it') rather than extrinsic purposes (e.g. for income, for awards, for promotion). When people play games solely to win rather than to experience the process and outcome engaging in the game, they are no longer playing, but 'competing'. The focus of play is on the experience rather than any attendant outcome attached to play.
Loose rules and/or known elements that provide parameters and familiar cues for engagement	Play requires affordances that trigger participant capacity to understand the initial terms and potentialities of engagement. Thus play experiences tend to involve some familiar rules or parameters. These rules and parameters enable participants to recognise (a) that this is play and (b) how one might come to engage in the first instance.
Novel elements; affordances that encourage experiment	Play tends to be generated by novel elements and affordances that encourage creative, alternate or experimental ways of being and/or doing.
Positive affective experience	Play generates forms of positive affective experience for participants. If it doesn't bring pleasure of some sort, then it is no longer play.

Poncho Circus, ART NOT APART, NEW ACTON (image c/- DAVID CAFFERY)

Play is the affective experience that occurs when willing participants, a set of play conditions (as outlined above) and other tangible (e.g. bat and ball; see-saw; Festival infrastructure) and intangible resources (e.g. shared cultural knowledge and practices) come together in a zone or “field of interactions” to generate what is experienced as play.

THE BENEFITS OF PLAY FOR CITIES

Play provides multiple health, wellbeing, social, cultural and economic benefits, many of which will be explored in greater depth in the relevant sections of this Study. However, in general it can be said that play offers the following benefits:

1. Play ATTRACTS: playful environments and encounters hold strong market and lifestyle appeal across the demographic spectrum;

2. Play ENGAGES: play generates active engagement with objects, public spaces, the natural environment, and other members of the community;

3. Play INSPIRES: play enhances quality of life and adds diversity, texture, colour and light to daily experience;

4. Play ACTIVATES: play environments encourage physical, emotional and cognitive movement and exploration, and enable the development of new skills and the strengthening of old skills;

5. Play TRANSFORMS: play incites creative thinking, transforms the ordinary into the extraordinary, illuminates alternative pathways, and stimulates novel modes of encounter from which emergent ways of being and doing arise;

6. Play BINDS: play fosters community through the provision of sites of encounter around which strangers, friends and families can coalesce, engage and collaborate; and generates a sense of place

Art Not Apart Festival. Image source: with permission from David Caffery

THE BENEFITS OF PLAY FOR THE ACT

The ACT Government already recognises the value of play for the Canberra and broader community through active promotion of play as a strategy for health and wellbeing via a range of programs.

The ACT Health's *Good Habits for Life* and *Kids at Play* initiatives target Canberra's growing obesity problem by encouraging more active and physical play:

> *Sitting less and moving more every day is vital for your family's health – and it's a great excuse to have some great times together. There are lots of fun, easy and free ways for you and your family to get moving.*

Image source: https://goodhabitsforlife.act.gov.au/kids-at-play/

The *Good Habits for Life* program also recommends play to create more inclusive social engagement among families and within communities:

> *When you make time to play together as a family, visit friends or make new ones, or just get out there and be part of the community, you and your family will get more out of life.*
> (Good Habits for Life, ACT Health)

The ACT Government's recent *Natureplay Canberra* initiative addresses the growing crisis for children who spend "less time outside in nature than at any other time in history" – a crisis which is contributing to "increasing rates of childhood obesity, depression and behavioural disorders". *NaturePlay Canberra* attributes this trend to the growing ubiquity of screen based technologies and a culture of risk aversion. (What is Nature Play?). The NaturePlay Canberra initiative is thus designed for the following:

> *Research across the world supports the view that unstructured outdoor play is fundamental to childhood. Opportunities for outdoor play and immersion in nature are essential to the health and wellbeing of children, helping them to develop to their full potential.*
>
> *Nature Play CBR is about getting more children outdoors more often so they can reap the benefits of unstructured playing, learning and being physically active.*
>
> *Children need nature play for their physical and mental health, for their cognitive and emotional development, and because they have a right to run, climb, build, get dirty, and imagine the world for themselves through play.*
> (NaturePlay Canberra)

Image from Active Canberra, ACT Government
http://www.sport.act.gov.au/participation-and-programs/active-recreation-and-play/nature-play-cbr

The ACT Government and affiliate organisations also recognise that play is an important part of the life of this city – whether as event or experience – and have embedded "Play" in the Canberra "CBR" Brand website:

PLAY in Canberra

There's something for everyone in our city, with attractions, museums and galleries, shopping and markets, bars and clubs, restaurants and cafes, wineries and breweries, music, sports, theatre, dance and film.
(https://canberra.com.au/play/)

Image source: https://canberra.com.au/play/

PLAY, URBAN VITALITY AND MARKETABILITY

Play is a key element in the marketability of a city, as play enhances liveability and tourist appeal. (Brand Canberra; TRA, 2009) A 2009 Tourism Research Australia (TRA) study of Australian consumer perceptions of Canberra as a short break destination revealed that while "short break holidays were considered to embody and meet consumers' main requirements for '*indulgence*', '*expressing myself*', '*fun and excitement*' and '*freedom*', Canberra as a destination equated with the needs for '*tradition*', '*control*' and '*wisdom and knowledge*'.

The study recommended that:

The gap between the short break needs of Australians and those perceived of Canberra suggest that Canberra needs to be repositioned to better meet the core short break needs of Australians. (9-10)

This view of Canberra was confirmed by a 2013 TRA Study of Visitor Perception of the ACT Impressions of Canberra include:

National icons recognised as significant, but sometimes dull

Politics, government and a sombre, respectful feel

Perception of limited activities

Lacking excitement for some

Strong perception that attractions are focused on education (and not fun, hands-on)

A 'been there, done that' destination (4)

Image source: Tourism Australia, 2013: 1

While it is recognised that "Canberra has made significant progress in shaking off the unjustified tag as a place that is sterile, soulless and boring" (ACT Events Policy Discussion Paper, 2016: 9), rejuvenation of the destination image of Canberra as playful, both in terms of its large-scale events and national icons, and more generally as an everyday cultural experience, will improve this city's reputation as a sombre immersive experience, and enhance its appeal as a short break holiday destination.

PLAY, CITIES AND THE PUBLIC REALM

What defines a character of a city is its public space, not its private space. What defines the value of the private assets of the space are not the assets by themselves but the common assets. The value of the public good affects the value of the private good. We need to show every day that public spaces are an asset to a city.
UN-HABITAT Executive Director Joan Clos i Matheu

The future of public space is playful.
(Architecture Review Asia Pacific)

Current global best practice in urban renewal locates people and their experience of the city at the heart of both planning and design: with the human scale, place-making and other renderings of human/non-human engagements in cities taking primacy over older planning approaches driven by the construction of buildings and logics of infrastructure. (Healey, 2007; Project for Public Spaces, 2012; D'aaci et al., 2016) As D'aaci et al. (2016) state, what we are witnessing in the 21st century is a "paradigm shift" from the traditional focus on the "hardware (buildings and infrastructure)" to the "software (culture and place)" of cities, and a concurrent move from city scale to human scale. Key to this paradigmatic shift is renewed focus on the *public realm* – that is, on public spaces in cities. (McGuirk et al., 2007; Bodnar, 2015)

This shift in urban planning has roots in a range of trends that have emerged over the course of the last century and into the twenty first century. Increasing industrialisation and the exponential population growth of cities has made sustainable urban planning a more complex, dynamic and contested practice. For one, cities are now homes to many more people. While in the 1950s, about 30% of the world's population lived in urban areas, that number has risen to over 50%, and is predicted to reach 70% by 2050. (United Nations, 2014) The outcome of this is that cities now serve as 'backyards' to substantially more, and more diverse, groups of people with a wide and varying range of needs.

At the same time, the last fifty years have seen an expansion of private sector influence over urban environments in the face of reduced public funding and rise in privatisation, as well as increasing commercialisation of the city. This trend has led to more management of public spaces by private developers, (McGuirk et al., 2007) or what Garrett (2015) refers to as "Pops" – privately owned public spaces

with a concurrent decline in publicly owned public space. (Garrett, 2015)

In the face of these trends, there are efforts to reposition the public realm as essential to city life, and to reclaim and reinvigorate public space. (Project for Public Spaces, 2015) For one, we see a rise in community and grassroots movement that are calling for more inclusive, democratic and vital uses of the city. One movement that strongly reflects this is the Rights of the Child to the city, with community groups, educators and other children's advocates seeking to recover the capacity for children to move freely, engage in and feel ownership over their own environment. (Kyttä, 2004; Child Rights Information Network, 2008; Carver et al., 2012) Others include grassroots groups that hold interventions and events like the Live Games movement, which involve reclamation of urban sites for play among older audiences that involve "social interaction, shared narratives and playful re-contextualisations of space and place". (Reid, 2017, http://www.axonjournal.com.au/issue-12/we-play-public)

In 2011, the United Nations UN Habitat initiative launched its Global Public Space Programme, which "aims to improve the quality of public spaces". According to this programme, "public spaces have historically often been overlooked and undervalued by urban authorities" but should be considered "the backbone of cities". The UN defines public spaces as:

…sites which are accessible and enjoyable by all without a profit motive and take on various spatial forms, including parks, streets, sidewalks, markets and playgrounds. Good public spaces enhance community cohesion and promote health, happiness, and well-being for all citizens.

They also enable cities to support a higher population density – a key element of the sustainable cities of the future.

Public space is attributed with multiple capabilities in the literature on urban environments. The UN's (2016) Annual Report for Global Public Space Programmes notes:

Public space is a vital component of a prosperous city. Well designed and managed public space is a key asset for a city's functioning and has a positive impact on its economy, environment, safety, health, integration and connectivity. The quality of life for people in cities is directly related to the state of its public spaces.

Providing public spaces enhances community cohesion and civic identity and supports the levels of urban density required for environmentally and economically sustainable cities. Cities with sufficient public space make it possible to have well-maintained, safe and attractive places to live and work in. Public spaces and streets are multifunctional areas for social interaction, economic exchange and cultural expression among a wide diversity of participants. The role of urban planning is to organize public spaces and the role of urban design to encourage their use. (10)

Backyard Experiment, Garema Place. Image source: https://www.good-design.com/entry/backyardexperiment-pop-up-park-and-social-study-in-garema-place/

Importantly, much of this literature argues that the creation and activation of the public realm must prioritise the human scale over the regulatory or design elements of urban planning. As Lofland (2009) notes, "realms are not geographically or physically rooted pieces of space" but rather innately "social territories". (11) The sociality of the public realm differs from that of the private realm because the former involves incidental encounters with strangers, and "it is the interactions among these diverse individuals, their mixing, which really constitutes urbanity, and which gives city life its special character and possibility" (Stevens, 2007, 5). For Stevens, "it is in public open spaces that people are best able and most likely to engage with the social diversity gathered together in cities" (ibid). McGuirk et al. (2007) support this view:

Urban culture and vitality fundamentally shape and depend on an open and diverse urban public realm containing the spaces and institutions around which people can come together to engage with one another, participating in events or engaging in common projects. These are the collective spaces in which various publics encounter and engage with one another and they are the spaces where creative and cultural activities are enacted: streetscapes, community centres and clubs, parks, playgrounds and sporting areas, public performance spaces, festivals and community celebrations, formal civic spaces and institutions. (52)

Canberra Multicultural Festival. Image source: https://www.outincanberra.com.au/greek-affair-national-multicultural-festival/

The availability, type, vitality and inclusivity of the public realm thus not only defines the character of a city, but also provides its citizens with incidental sites to experience diversity and difference, which "is part of democratic practice and the foundation of democratic politics, with normal equality among strangers being (its) maxim." (Bodnar, 2015: 2093) Further, engagement in the public realm enables people to "step outside themselves" through exposure to diversity, which can in turn "test the limits of their personality, skills and creative powers". (Bodnar, 2015: 2093).

According to the *Project for Public Spaces*, to achieve a vital and inclusive public realm a city should focus on the broader strategy of *place-making*, which is a collaborative process between the community and planners that "inspires people to collectively reimagine and reinvent public spaces as the heart of every community". (Project for Public Spaces, 2009). Thus place-making not only strengthens the connections between people and place, but "facilitates creative patterns of use, paying particular attention to the physical, cultural, and social identities that define a place and support its ongoing evolution." (ibid.)

This more collaborative approach to urban planning is being adopted around the worldwide. As urban planning becomes more complex and fiscally challenging, the various urban authorities are moving away from a centralised and hierarchical planning approach to one centred on governance, consultation and partnership with the private and community sectors. (Healey, 2007; Sestehed, 2009; Steele, 2009)

The ACT Government is already undertaking various community engagement and place-making programmes, including an extensive community consultation process for the Haig Park Development; and Transport Canberra and City Services' recent "Craft Your Parks" nature play parks project which called for designs from the community for three Canberra parks.

Telopea Park nature playground. Image source: http://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-08-18/transforming-playgrounds-to-go-back-to-nature/8816114

THE STRUCTURE OF THIS REPORT

This Report aims to contribute to the development of a vital, sustainable and people-led public realm in Canberra by exploring a wide range of playful urban activations from around the world.

The activations in this Report have been selected because of their:

a) relevance to the Canberra context
b) potential to contribute to thinking about the development of Canberra
c) consonance with the Urban Play Framework as outlined in this Introduction

The Report consists of twelve Sections which focus on a variety of geographic, social, aesthetic and sensorial aspects of urban activation. Six of these sections provide more comprehensive case studies because of their relevance to Canberra and/or because they have been selected to represent an important element of urban activation (e.g. soundscapes is a case study of the senses in urban activation). These sections contain a detailed introduction and descriptions of the various activations with general recommendations embedded in each section:

- Activated Waterfronts
- Play Activation in the City
- Cycling as Play
- Digital Play
- Activated Soundscapes
- Play Activation and Sustainability

The remaining six sections explore other important elements of urban activation and offer a vast range of strategies for enlivening the public realm in Canberra:

- Playful Activation with Colour
- Playful Activation for the Seasons
- Playful Light Activation
- Playful Relations
- Playful Movement
- Water Play

ACTIVATED WATERFRONTS

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INTRODUCTION

Waterfront developments are among the most prominent and popular urban renewal strategies implemented in cities in the last few decades. (Chang & Huang, 2010) Growing urban populations and city densification has led government planning bodies to revitalise and repurpose these sites because their original industrial and trade functions are now redundant and because waterfronts are prime locations. Greater competition for skilled labour and tourism as a result of globalisation has seen an increased focus on a city's marketability and liveability, with waterfronts offering "priceless opportunities to market cities on the global stage". (Williams, 2004:30-1). As Benedict McAteer (2017) notes "Regenerated waterfronts have become the poster image of city advertising campaigns". (Protocity.com)

Canberra's key waterfront site, Lake Burley Griffin, is a built structure designed to unite the axes of the Parliamentary Triangles with the vistas of the surrounding landscape, and to provide the city with a large recreation park with formal plantings and extensive parklands. As part of the Griffin Plan for the National Capital, the Lake holds both local and national significance. According to the Lake Burley Griffin Heritage Assessment Plan (2009), the Lake "is an essential part of what defines Canberra" and a site that is "highly valued" by communities not only for "recreational uses and aesthetic qualities" but as an "iconic cultural landscape" and symbol of local and national identity. (ii; 24) The Lake is arguably *the* key built landmark in Canberra, and central to the city's identity, heritage, natural environment, sense of place and point of marketable difference.

In the last decade or so, ACT Planning Policy Reforms – which aim to contain growth to a 15 kilometre perimeter, and with city densification as central to this aim – have required a reconsideration of the Lake's current usage. This is particularly the case at West Basin, where the Lake is in closest proximity to the city centre and New Acton Precinct. (Norman & Sinclair, 2014). The current plan for West Basin is for mixed use development, a plan which the National Capital Authority (NCA) argues is consonant with the Griffin plan (National Capital Authority, 2008b). According to the NCA, this development will ''liberate substantial areas of under-utilised land for public use" so that "a residential population of around ten thousand people can be accommodated without loss of the city's special landscape setting" (National Capital Authority, 2008a).

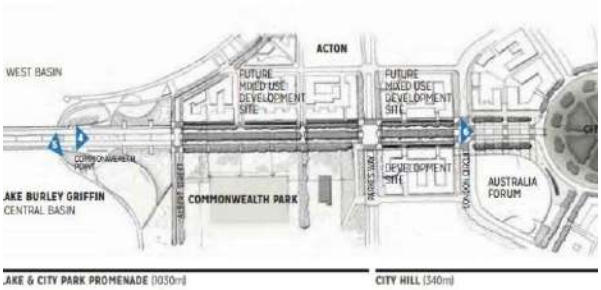


Image source: The Canberra Times: http://www.canberratimes.com.au/act-news/government-announces-38-million-for-lakeside-reclamation-and-boardwalk-at-west-basin-20170523-gwb4xa.html

To ensure that sites like Lake Burley Griffin retain and enhance their user and heritage value, urban designers and planners argue that it is essential to create a high quality and accessible public realm, one that maintains a strong sense of local identity while also enabling global legibility and accessibility. (Williams, 2004; McGuirk et al., 2007) According to Williams, while sites like West Basin are "too important to be lost to poor developments only seeking to achieve maximum commercial returns or short-term political gains", they can benefit from mixed use developments because "in most instances, the incorporation of residential and commercial buildings will be a vital aspect of creating a good public realm". (31)

In the case of West Basin, we recommend that the ACT Government prioritises the quality, size and character of the public realm of this site. As part of the axes of the Parliamentary Triangle, and with a direct view to the home of Australian democracy (Parliament House), the symbolic capital of the public realm in West Basin as a site of local and national significance should not be underestimated.

With regard to fixed play elements in this public realm, we suggest that *the quality and heritage value of the design is critical*. Fixed play can and should provide an opportunity to embody and reflect the character of the Lake and its higher purpose within the Griffin Plan, while enabling what the National Capital Authority (2008a) refer to as "a handshake between our past and our future". (2008a)

These fixed play elements can then be complemented with a suite of transient play elements that are more adaptable to a 24/7 economy, seasonality, celebrations, and the current and future interests, hobbies, pleasures and fascinations of locals and visitors alike.

As we have argued, quality play activations can contribute to the creation of a vibrant, activated, inclusive and diverse public realm. Fixed and transient play elements can also assist in ameliorating concerns regarding the loss of heritage value, because they generate vibrant and novel forms of encounter which contribute to living heritage, place-making, engagement and community building.

The following waterfront developments have been selected as examples of highly activated and playful waterfront sites based on the above discussion and recommendations.

COPENHAGEN, DENMARK

"Copenhagen has been an urban laboratory for at least 40 years, exporting to the rest of the world its slow-simmered wisdom about the basic unit of urban life: the street. In less enlightened places, the street is a soulless corridor, engineered for the benefit of vehicles. In Copenhagen, it's an asphalt common, where city dwellers learn to tolerate each other, where leisure intersects with business, and where people move at many different speeds, or choose not to move at all. The latest challenge here has been to channel the flow of street life toward the harbor, and turn a former maritime highway into another kind of public square. Once again, Copenhagen is at the forefront of urban evolution—this time as it relates to the waterfront. And once again, city planners worldwide are paying attention." (Davidson, 2012)

WHY COPENHAGEN?

Copenhagen has been selected because:

- The city has a global reputation for privileging the public realm
- The waterfront has been activated with the intention of drawing people from the city to the harbour, and can thus inform the City to the Lake Project
- The activations are playful
- This is a cooler climate Harbour
- The activations address a broad range of target demographics (kids, youth, families, couples, older people)
- The activations target citizens' health and wellbeing in playful ways.

HARBOUR BATH, ISLANDS BRYGGE, COPENHAGEN

Harbour Bath is an architect-designed place-making urban activation site with health, wellbeing and connectivity informing the design. There are a total of 5 pools – two 50 meter swimming pools, two children's pool and a diving pool with three and five metres springboards. The Harbour Bath was built following improvements to the harbour's water quality.

Harbour Baths, Brygge, Copenhagen. Image source from: https://urbannext.net/copenhagen-harborfront-critical-review/

Diveboard, Harbour Baths, Copenhagen. Image source: https://urbannext.net/copenhagen-harborfront-critical-review/

KALVEBOD WAVES, COPENHAGEN

This sculptural wooden promenade connects the harbour level with higher platforms fitted with seating and viewing platforms. Along this promenade are resting zones and sports areas.

Image source: https://au.pinterest.com/pin/457045062160320895/

PLAYSCAPE, KALVEBOD BRYGGE, COPENHAGEN

Image source: http://www.play-scapes.com/page/3/

Image source: http://www.play-scapes.com/page/3/

This linear children's playscape is designed to work with the sculptural shape of the Kalvebod Wave promenade.

MARINA BAY, SINGAPORE

Singapore has undergone substantial urban, development, reclamation and rejuvenation with the aim "to make Singapore a great city to live, work and play in". (Urban Redevelopment Authority, Singapore) As a result of the Singapore government's investment in and vision for this renewal, the city has transformed from "urban squalor" to one of the world's most liveable cities. (Centre for Liveable Cities, 2016)

Marina Bay is an ambitious waterfront of mixed use activation built on 350 hectares of reclaimed land. The public realm here includes:

- a 3.5 kilometre waterfront promenade
- Gardens By the Bay
- ArtScience Museum
- Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay

While this is a mixed use site, the Singapore government is committed to providing and activating public spaces. The Singapore Urban Renewal Authority states:

As social venues, public spaces also help to strengthen social identity, as well as offer opportunities for community bonding and building inter-cultural understanding. At the same time, public spaces help to humanise the urban environment by promoting life outside of buildings.

They bring economic benefits not only by drawing in more customers for nearby businesses, but also by making Singapore a more attractive city to live, work and play in.

As Singapore becomes more densely developed, public spaces become even more important in maintaining a good quality of life and sense of well-being. As our city grows, we have planned for more new public spaces. In addition, we will look at enlivening and activating existing spaces through good design and programming. (Urban Renewal Authority)

The following infographic provides a visual representation of the Urban Renewal Authority's strategy for public spaces:

Image source:https://www.ura.gov.sg/uol/-/media/dmp2013/key-focuses/public-space/ps%20strategies_highres.jpg?la=en

Marina Bay is activated by multiple activities and events which run throughout the year – from small community to annual milestone Festivals. At night, the Bay is activated by light shows, water play, soundscapes and events. Three different light shows occur on a nightly basis.

WHY MARINA BAY?

While Marina Bay is a substantial public and private sector project, it warrants consideration in this context because:

- It is a highly ambitious people- and public-space led project underpinned by vision and principles, and one recognised as a global exemplar of waterfront development;
- Marina Bay is committed to ongoing daytime and night-time activations;
- It is used for a broad range of small, medium and large gatherings, events and city milestones, and has become an integral part of the fabric of the city;
- This is a mixed use development, which encompasses private and public sector infrastructure, activation and cooperation;
- It involves playful design and activation.

MARINA BAY BY DAY

Image source:
http://www.e2singapore.gov.sg/TestBedding_RD/TestBedding/Marina_Bay.aspx

ART SCIENCE MUSEUM

Image source:
http://www.peluangproperti.com/berita/internasional/2013-07/1172/uniknya-bangunan-artscience-museum-di-singapura

FAR EAST CHILDREN'S GARDEN

Image source: https://www.flickr.com/photos/25802865@N08/12312224054

Image source: https://www.gezinopreis.nl/singapore-met-kinderen/

RHYTHMS BY THE BAY

"Rhythms by the Bay is a monthly series of free cultural performances and concerts at the Marina Bay waterfront promenade. A community-engagement and outreach initiative, it intends to create a more vibrant Marina Bay and showcase performing talents in Singapore." (Urban Renewal Authority)

WORLD OF PLANTS

Image source: https://www10.aeccafe.com/blogs/arch-showcase/2012/07/21/gardens-by-the-bay-in-singapore/

MARINA BAY AT NIGHT

Marina Bay Gardens. Image source: http://www.traveleye.net/?p=3395

Marina Bay at night: http://static.asiawebdirect.com/m/phuket/portals/www-singapore.com/homepage/pagePropertiesImage/singapore

CHINESE NEW YEAR

Image source: http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/asia/lunar-new-year-2015-23-dazzling-pictures-of-year-of-the-goat-celebrations-10053923.html#

Image source: Shutterstock

OCBC GARDEN RHAPSODY, SINGAPORE

Garden Rhapsody is a 15 minute light and sound show in which the Supertrees in Gardens by the Bay light up at night in a "rhapsody of colours" to the sound of music projected from 50 hidden speakers. The show ends with the trees exploding into a firework-like pattern.

Image source: http://www.singapore-guide.com/attractions/three-great-light-shows.htm

I LIGHT MARINA BAY

I Light is “Asia’s leading sustainable light festival” and runs for 3 weeks in March.

Image source: https://www.ilightmarinabay.sg/

Image source: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kHpER_YiVRU

CRANE DANCE, SENTOSA RESORT, MARINA BAY

Image source: http://www.singapore-guide.com/attractions/crane-dance-singapore.htm

This sound and light show runs from Monday to Thursday at 9.00pm. Two giant cranes emerge out of a large box to “perform a courtly dance of love. (…) Flashes of light and dramatic music accompany the performance as the large steel structures move gracefully through the night sky; and their chests are emblazoned with large screens that add an extra dimension to the story, which ends with the cranes flying away into the night.” (Singapore Guide)

SPECTRA, MARINA BAY, SINGAPORE

Spectra is a free 15 minute outdoor light, laser and water show along the Marina Bay promenade. The show involves orchestral music, water and light powered by lasers, fountain jets and visual projectors.

Image source: http://www.singapore-guide.com/attractions/three-great-light-shows.htm?cid=ch:OTH:001

GARDENS BY THE BAY

Gardens by the Bay is a Singapore government initiative to transform Singapore from a "garden city" to a "city in a garden". The three waterfront parks span 101 hectares of reclaimed land. The park includes species from cool, temperate and tropical forests and habitats.

SUPERTREES AND SKYWALK

The Supertrees are tree-like structures ranging between 25 and 50 metres tall. The trees are vertical gardens that are also designed to serve a variety of ecological functions for this landscape. A skywalk runs between two of the trees to provide a panoramic view of the Gardens.

Read more at: http://www.singaporeguide.com/attractions/gardens-by-the-bay.htm?cid=ch:OTH:001

CLOUD FOREST

The Cloud Forest is a 35-metre tall mountain with plant life representing climates from the tropical highlands rising to 2000 metres above sea-level. Cloud Forest has the world's tallest indoor waterfall.

Cloud Forest. Image source from http://www.singapore-guide.com/attractions/gardens-by-the-bay.htm

MARINA BARRAGE

Marina Barrage is built across the mouth of Marina Channel to create a freshwater reservoir that, at 10,000 hectares, is the island's largest catchment area.

Image source: http://www.kohbrothers.com/projects

The site not only provides a water catchment but is activated for multi-use. Because the water level is constant all year round, it is ideal for recreational water activities like boating, kayaking and dragon boating.

Image source: www.pub.gov.sg/marinabarrage/aboutmarinabarrage

The Barrage also has a large rooftop garden designed for recreational activities like kite flying and other community events. The grass and soil shield the building from the sun and reduce the surface temperature by 3°C.

Image source: http://singaporekites.blogspot.com.au/2014/06/kite-day-marina-barrage-2014.html

SOUTHBANK, BRISBANE

South Bank is located on the banks of the Brisbane River facing the Brisbane CBD. The site connects the cultural precinct with public parklands, plazas, retail and other attractions. Around 11 million people visit Southbank every year.

WHY SOUTHBANK?

Southbank is selected to inform the West Basin development because:

- It has a range of multipurpose water features – from urban beach to activated creek to kids' water play;
- It combines green and built environment infrastructure with smaller activations;
- It encourages positive public engagement through a series of activations (see the Epicurious Garden signage for an example), but supports this with security infrastructure (including 24 hour security presence; security telephone sites and hidden CCTV)

STREETS BEACH

Streets Beach is a man-made swimming beach in Southbank Brisbane that overlooks the Brisbane River and the CBD. Lifeguards are on duty seven days a week, with times varying throughout the year.

Streets Beach. Image source: http://www.visitbrisbane.com.au/brisbane/things-to-do/sport-and-recreation/beaches-and-lakes/streets-beach?sc_lang=en-au

Streets Beach and the Boat Pool. Image source: http://www.visitbrisbane.com.au/brisbane/things-to-do/sport-and-recreation/beaches-and-lakes/streets-beach?sc_lang=en-au

THE BOAT POOL

The Boat Pool in Southbank sits next to Streets Beach, and is designed for children and casual lap swimming. Lifesavers patrol the Boat Pool.

The Boat Pool. Image source: https://www.brisbanekids.com.au/streets-beach-at-south-bank-parklands/

AQUATIVITY WATER PARK

"Aquativity is a fun, interactive water-play park right in the heart of Brisbane's South Bank. It is specially designed to encourage families and children to come together and enjoy the outdoors. It celebrates the city's close relationship with the Brisbane River.

Aquativity features educational play elements referencing the river, and helps create an early understanding of the water cycle and its preservation.

Aquativity also highlights the native fish and mammal species of mullet and dugong, the interesting pattern of the river catchments and the importance of indigenous, environmental and urban elements of our relationship to the river.

Open on weekends and school holidays from 10am until 5pm, Aquativity also works within the existing pool system, and water is recycled for use within The Parklands." (Visit Brisbane website)

Aquativity. Image source: http://www.visitbrisbane.com.au/brisbane/things-to-do/family-friendly/aquativity?sc_lang=en-au

Aquativity. Image source: https://www.brisbanekids.com.au/streets-beach-at-south-bank-parklands/

Aquativity water play creek. Image source: Cathy Hope (author).

CHAIRS TO SHARE

Southbank offers a range of colourful, moveable 'chairs to share' on weekdays in allocated sites throughout the Parklands.

Chairs to share. Image source: http://www.visitbrisbane.com.au/south-bank/things-to-do/recreation-south-bank?sc_lang=en-au

Image source: Cathy Hope (author).

RIVERSIDE GREEN PLAYGROUND

"Inspired by Neverland, the Riverside Green playground is a state of the art play area that has been designed to cater for a wide range of ages as well as to encourage a variety of imaginative and physical play. (…) All equipment, including the skywalk and enclosed slides, have been designed to also cater for adults so they can join in the fun with the kids – and those without kids who have never really grown up!

With 4 entry points catering for all ages and abilities, once up the top, kids can safely move between one of the 3 towers via rope bridges and climbing webs high above the ground before exiting through the jumbo enclosed slides. Below the skywalk you will find a a number of fun climbing structures including rock climbing walls on a steady incline to suit a wide range of age groups and the more challenging belt bridge where

kids have to climb up a bridge which swings from side to side.

At the bottom of the playground, a giant hamster wheel which comfortably fits 4 kids at a time, will provide hours of fun and laughs as groups of kids attempt to run inside the big wheel, while the supernova, with low access points, will allow kids to continue their spinning fun.

The playground has an entire area dedicated to little kids too. The pirate ship themed toddler zone includes a swing, smaller slide, climbing ropes, compass, binoculars and lots of things to look at and touch. There is also a separate swing area with 2 swings, one being a toddler swing." (Brisbane Kids)

Image source: http://urbanplay.com.au/

Mouse Wheel. Image source: Cathy Hope (author).

Climbing walls. Image source: Cathy Hope (author).

GRAND ARBOUR

The Grand Arbour is a one kilometre pedestrian walkway that provides shade from sun and (some) protection from rain. The Arbour is made of 433 steel tendrils with a bougainvillea canopy.

Image source: http://www.innovativerigging.com.au/portfolio-type/grand-arbour-south-bank-parklands-brisbane-city/

EPICURIOUS GARDEN

Epicurious Garden is a productive garden that consists of both native and exotic edible herbs, fruit and vegetables. The Garden is open and free to visit all year round.

According to Visit Brisbane, the Garden is "all about discovery, and visitors are invited to explore the garden's exquisite plant life and see what fresh produce looks, feels and smells like."

The Gardens are maintained by council workers, with volunteers onsite from 7am to 11.30am Tuesday to Thursday.

Image source: http://www.visitbrisbane.com.au/south-bank/things-to-do/epicuriousgarden?sc_lang=en-au

Epicurious encourages engagement with the Garden via tours for school groups and cooking demonstrations. A Harvest Cart containing seasonal produce and cuttings is open to the public from Tuesday – Thursday from 7am to 2pm. Seasonal recipes are designed for the Garden produce.

Image source: Cathy Hope (author)

Epicurious uses positive intervention through signage. This signage invites people to try the produce, with recommendations on how to proceed with this process: i.e. that they take seasonal produce from the Epicurious Cart, or ask a volunteer for advice on availability. Signage is also used to educate the public about feature plants.

Image source: Cathy Hope (author)

Image source: Cathy Hope (author).

LITTLE DAYS OUT

Little Days Out is a series of free children's workshops held at various locations in the Parklands. The workshops consist of a changing programme designed to suit all interests and skill levels. Little Days Out is held every Thursday from 9am-1pm.

Image source: https://allevents.in/brisbane/southbank-little-days-out-qld/1747760262129177

PICNIC ISLAND PLAYGROUND

Image source: Cathy Hope (author)

SOUTHBANK AT NIGHT

MOVIES, STREETS BEACH

Image source: http://www.weekendnotes.com/free-christmas-movies-brisbane/

CHRISTMAS MARKETS

Image source: https://www.brisbanekids.com.au/event/south-banks-christmas-markets-south-bank/2016-12-16/

THE SEINE, PARIS, FRANCE

The banks of the Seine are UNESCO listed World Heritage sites that have recently been reappropriated to enhance the public realm and enliven the city. Both the left and right banks of the Seine now consist of long, mixed use, activated promenades, with a focus on health and wellbeing; art and culture; participation and community; and seasonality and ecology.

WHY THE SEINE?

The Seine is selected because:

- It is heritage-listed
- As a near-dedicated public realm site, it provides a backyard for the city and its people
- It contains multiple activations that allow people to 'claim' public space for periods of time
- The site is multi-purpose and with a broad range of playful activations
- It is a site for public art and culture
- It encourages physical and cognitive engagement
- The activations do not require substantial financial investment

PISCINE JOSEPHINE BAKER

The Piscine Josephine Baker is a glass-walled swimming pool that has been built on a barge docked on the banks of the Seine. The pool uses efficient water management procedures. Water from the Seine is collected and treated at Piscine Josephine Baker. It is then chlorinated and stored for use. Water is eventually returned to the river following a final treatment. The pool also has a retractable glass roof to respond to seasonal and weather changes.

Image source: http://voyage.blogs.rfi.fr/article/2011/08/26/paris-sur-seine.html

BEACH, LA SEINE

Every summer on the Parc Rives de Seine the riverbank is converted into a beachside resort with sand, deckchairs and palm trees.

Image source:
https://takemetoparisapartments.wordpress.com/2014/07/25/the-friday-five-the-top-places-to-spend-summer-by-the-seine/

LES BERGES DE LA SEINE

SIDEWALK GAMES: YELLOW MAZE

http://www.smartcitymemphis.com/2014/08/ending-the-riverside-drive-speedway-inspired-to-do-more-by-city-of-lights/

TWISTER

Image source:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sml_sADh6Wg

PRIVATE PUBLIC SPACES: TEEPEES AND 4 ZZZS

The teepees and 4Zzzs shipping containers are a permanent fixture that are available to the public to reserve for free. Teepees are available for children's birthday parties.

The 4Zzz shipping containers can be reserved for 90 minutes on Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays. They provide a private spot along the river "to take a nap, read a book, play cards or even get married". (Out and About in Paris). On other days, the containers host exhibitions, workshops and performances.

Image source: http://www.lefigaro.fr/actualite-france/2013/06/23/01016-20130623ARTFIG00199-voies-sur-berge-chronique-d-une-affluence-annoncee.php

BOARD GAMES

A range of boardgames are built into the tables along the Berges de la Seine. Game pieces can be borrowed from nearby shipping containers.

Image source: http://cityguide.paris-is-beautiful.com/en/paris/sights/les-berges-an-entertaining-stroll-along-the-seine/19036

Image source: http://www.cool-cities.com/les-berges-de-seine-22711/

PLAYFUL SEATING

Image source: http://www.urbangardensweb.com/2013/08/12/floating-gardens-giant-chalkboards-and-climbing-walls-on-banks-of-seine-in-paris/

CLIMBING WALL

Image source: https://www.trip.com/paris/things-to-do/berges-de-seine

CHALKBOARD

Image source: http://cityguide.paris-is-beautiful.com/en/paris/sights/les-berges-an-entertaining-stroll-along-the-seine/19036

TEMPORARY ART INSTALLATIONS

Image source: http://www.unjourdeplusaparis.com/non-classe/street-art-berges-de-seine

"Street artist Sambre created a second skin for the walls of the quay by using pieces of furniture to make three-dimensional sculptures and segments of collages of interwoven wood scraps that "have the privilege of enjoying a riverside retreat before returning to dust," as Sambre explains." (Liotta, 2014)

Cetace art installation. La Pont de le Concorde. Image source: http://www.artcop21.com/events/cetace/

Image source: https://au.pinterest.com/Vanrelle/philippe-baudelocque-street-art/

SPRINT TRACK

Image souce:http://www.domusweb.it/en/architecture/2014/04/23/experiencing_theseine.html

FLOATING GARDENS

Five floating gardens are built on barges on the edge of the Seine. The gardens contain edible and other plants, as well as deckchairs and a wild bird aviary. You reach the Gardens via a footbridge which is raised at night.

Image source: http://www.myamazingparis.com/2013/

Image source: http://thetouristinparis.com/paris/en/le-jardin-flottant-your-sunny-green-escape-on-the-seine-riverbanks/#6Po21BZ0XPXepCcV.99

SOUND SHOWER, LE PONT DE LA CONCORDE

The Sound Shower is designed to take advantage of the acoustics of the Concorde Bridge. Passersby can connect via mp3 or smartphone Bluetooth and upload their music. The Sound Shower is also used for events and installations. The area has been set up with mirrored walls, a disco ball and speakers, allowing DJs to play song lists off their mobile devices.

Image source: http://www.aussieinfrance.com/wp-content/uploads/douches_sonores.jpg

MIKADO PLATFORM

The Mikado Platforms are multipurpose and can be used for exercise (yoga, tai chi, stretching) or for sitting and eating.

Image source: http://www.ruedusejour.com/france/paris/les-nouvelles-berges/les-nouvelles-berges-de-seinesolferinoles-terrasses/

PLAY ACTIVATION IN THE CITY

PLAY
CREATIVITY
AND CULTURE

INTRODUCTION

The cornerstone of great cities is vital public places. (McGuirk et al., 2013; UNESCO, 2017)

As noted in the Introduction to this Report, the last few decades have seen increased efforts worldwide to reclaim and augment public space. (Friedmann, 2010) According to UNESCO, a public space is defined as "an area or place that is open and accessible to all peoples, regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, age or socio-economic level." (Inclusion Through Access to Public Space) Public space can include plazas, parks, squares, sidewalks, streets and even virtual spaces. (UNESCO) While public space is most often associated with formal civic spaces, it also, and importantly, consists of informal, unstructured and incidental spaces. (McGuirk et al., 2013)

Public spaces are attributed with multiple cultural, economic, social, political and health benefits. (Lepofksy & Fraser, 2002; Project for Public Spaces, 2009; Corcoran, 2017; UNESCO, 2017). In the context of this Report, public spaces may either be publicly or privately owned and maintained, but strong public investment or engagement in public space contributes to equity, diversity, economic vitality and wellbeing (UN-Habitat, 2017)

In order to maximise positive use of public spaces, the planning, design and activation of such spaces should be people- and then design-led. As the Project for Public Space (2009) states, "A great public space cannot be measured by its physical attributes alone; it must also serve people as a vital community resource in which function always trumps form." (What is Placemaking?) This process assists with what is known as placemaking, which is the process of drawing on the interests, needs, assets and inspiration of a local community to create public spaces that *have positive meaning* for people, and that contribute to health, happiness, belonging and wellbeing.

The following section provides examples of a range of successfully activated public sites (some publicly owned and some privately owned) designed to encourage engagement, participation, connectivity and community. All of the sites have been selected because they are playful, vibrant and unique – together they offer a broad picture of the possibilities for activation in cities.

PLAYFUL URBAN ACTIVATION: CASE STUDIES

SUPERKILEN, COPENHAGEN

Superkilen is a one kilometre long public space designed to engage residents in the public realm in one of the most ethnically diverse neighbourhoods in Copenhagen.

The park is divided into three main areas: *The Red Square*, *The Black Market* and *The Green Park*. *The Red Square* reflects modern urban life and includes a café as well as a site for music and sports. *The Black Market* is the more formal square, with fountain and benches. *The Green Park* is a park for picnics, dog-walking and sport.

WHY SUPERKILEN?

Superkilen has been selected because:

- It is a playful response to a complex neighbourhood demographic
- It is based on playful design principles: colour, lines, shapes and objects
- It celebrates diversity and encourages inclusivity
- It involved community in the design process in rich, meaningful and playful ways

RED SQUARE

Superkilen, Red Square. Image source from: http://www.arcspace.com/features/big--topotek1--superflex/superkilen/

THE BLACK MARKET

Image from http://www.visitcopenhagen.com/copenhagen/superkilen-park-gdk707822

Superkilen celebrates diversity and is an exercise in what designers call “extreme participation”. Residents in this area, who come from around 60 different countries, were asked by the park designers to nominate specific urban objects that they had encountered from either their home country or through travel. These objects were then replicated or purchased for the park, with a total of over 100 objects installed.

JAMAICAN SOUND SYSTEM, SUPERKILEN

Image source: http://arkfo.dk/da/blog/superkilen-byrummets-primadonna

THAI BOXING RING, SUPERKILEN

Image source: http://thebetterawards.com/celebrating-diversity-in-copenhagen/

JAPANESE PLAYGROUND SLIDE, SUPERKILEN

Image source: http://www.amusingplanet.com/2014/07/superkilen-public-park-in-copenhagen.html

IRAQI SWINGS, SUPERKILEN

MOROCCAN FOUNTAIN, SUPERKILEN

PARK(ING) DAY, WORLDWIDE

PARK(ing) Day is an annual event where metred parking spots are converted by artists, activists and citizens into temporary public parks and other spaces. The aim is to promote creativity, civic engagement, unscripted social interactions, generosity and play.

Image source: http://heystamford.com/2014/09/18/parking-day-will-create-temporary-mini-oasis-in-stamford-downtown/

Image source:
https://au.pinterest.com/pin/259449628513771839

Image source:
https://au.pinterest.com/source/designeastoflabrea.blogspot.com.au/

https://au.pinterest.com/pin/498844096214605369

DANCE-O-MAT, CHRISTCHURCH

In the aftermath of the 2010 earthquake in Christchurch, an organisation called Gap Filler sought to invigorate the empty spaces left by the 2010 earthquake, and provided fun outlets for a devastated community. The group organised a DIY dance party called Dance-o-Mat by making a juke box from an old washing machine and an MP3 player, and then set up speakers around a makeshift stage. People could pay $2 to play music on the juke box. In its first three months, Dance-o-Mat was in use for over 7 hours each day.

Image source: http://gapfiller.org.nz/project/dance-o-mat/

Image source:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qe9YvNVQKg0

Image source: http://popupcity.net/urban-regeneration-one-dance-floor-at-a-time/

LONG LUNCH, UNDERUSED FREEWAY, OHIO

This freeway in Akron, Ohio was closed due to underuse. Artist Frank Hunter created a placemaking initiative to bring 500 guests from 22 neighbourhoods to lunch at one table, creating a space where locals come together and share their stories and ideas for improvement of their neighbourhoods, as well as new potential functions for the highway in the future.

Image source: http://popupcity.net/enjoying-lunch-with-500-people-on-a-highway/

FEDERATION SQUARE, MELBOURNE

Federation Square is a highly activated square in Melbourne that provides a wide range of free day time, night time, seasonal, health and cultural activities for all ages. There is also a giant screen in the Square for movies and other forms of messaging.

Image source: http://skyrisecities.com/news/2016/08/5-dramatic-projects-built-atop-transportation-corridors

FREE YOGA

Image source: http://fedsquare.com/events/yoga-at-fed-square

FREE TAI CHI

Image source: http://fedsquare.com/events/tai-chi

FREE WEST COAST SWING AND LATIN DANCE LESSONS

Image source: http://fedsquare.com/events/latin-dance-at-fed-square

FREE AFRICAN DRUMMING LESSONS

Image source: http://fedsquare.com/events/african-drumming-at-fed-square

FREE QIGONG LESSONS

Image source: http://fedsquare.com/events/health-qigong

FREE MOVIES

Image source: http://expandabrand.com.au/fed-square-melbourne-events/

TEMPORARY PUBLIC ART

Image source: http://www.louiseparamor.com/ursa-major.html

WOOL WEEK

Federation Square provides a site and available infrastructure for the support of local, cultural and industry milestones. Wool Week provides an example of this.

WOOL ART INSTALLATION

Image source:
https://melbourneartcritic.com/tag/federation-square/

SHEEP

Image source:
https://melbourneartcritic.com/tag/federation-square/

THE GROUNDS OF ALEXANDRIA, SYDNEY

The Grounds of Alexandria is a privately owned conversion of an abandoned industrial site and car park in an inner western city suburb. Two entrepreneurs aimed to create an “urban sanctuary” with a large, warm and welcoming public realm. The public realm includes green space, small animal farm, tables and chairs, children’s play-space and permaculture garden. On weekends all of the cafes and carts in the Grounds open to the public, and are extremely popular, while during the weekdays the large café is open and has a strong patronage.

WHY THE GROUNDS OF ALEXANDRIA?

- It contains many playful signs and design features
- It offers a range of facilities for people of different ages and interests
- It is a solid example of how commercial organisations can benefit from incorporating a substantial and authentic public space

ANIMAL NURSERY, GROUNDS OF ALEXANDRIA, SYDNEY

Image source: https://twohonesttruths.wordpress.com/2014/09/21/the-grounds-of-alexandria/

Image source: http://www.inexplicablewanderlust.com/sydney-the-grounds/

PUBLIC SPACE, GROUNDS OF ALEXANDRIA

Image source: author

Image source: https://www.timeout.com/sydney/restaurants/the-grounds-of-alexandria

Image source: https://www.thebrickpit.com.au/portfolio/the-grounds-of-alexandria/

CHILDREN'S PLAYSPACE, GROUNDS OF ALEXANDRIA

Image source: author

PARKLETS, COVINGTON, KENTUCKY

Covington is a city with a population of around 40,000 people in the state of Kentucky. The city is activating its streets with a public competition called Curb'd, which seeks to connect and enliven Covington by installing parklets at key junctures in the city. The Curb'd competition has the following vision:

Imagine a world where the streets are filled with food and drink and celebration instead of cars. A city where public art not only pushes the boundaries of tradition, but also breaks free from the gallery itself and lives out in the street for all to see and enjoy.

Image source: http://www.curbd.org/parklets-covington/

MUSICAL PARK

http://www.cincinnatimagazine.com/citywiseblog/covington-parklets/

WISH IGLOO

Visitors to the Wish Igloo parklet are encouraged to leave written wishes.

http://www.cincinnatimagazine.com/citywiseblog/covington-parklets/

POP UP STUDIO, SAN FRANCISCO

This pop up mobile studio is provided by the San Francisco Planning Department to individual and community groups for a range of creative, health and other purposes.

DJ STUDIO

STORYTELLING

Image source:
https://www.flickr.com/photos/sfplanning/with/24840917375/

ART INSTALLATIONS

THE MUSEUM OF POSSIBILITIES, MONTREAL

The Museum of Possibilities was a one-day pop-up installation on the inaugural day of the Quartier des Spectacles, which invited people to share their dreams and visions for the future of the space by writing their ideas on pieces of paper and attaching these to colourful balloons.

People then voted on their favourite ideas with stickers.

WHY THE MUSEUM OF POSSIBILITIES?

- It is a highly playful, engaging and imaginative strategy for collecting public data
- It enhances the placemaking element of the public space
- The event holds heritage value as it marks the inauguration of the public space
- It engages people with many levels of this process

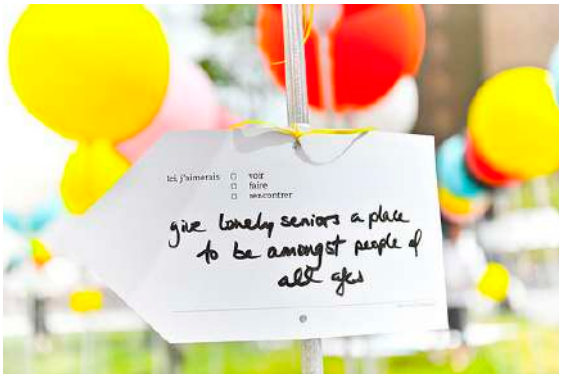


Image source: https://www.brainpickings.org/2011/02/03/the-museum-of-possibilities/

PUBLIC 'LIVING ROOMS'

Some playful urban activations involve the blurring of boundaries between the private and public realms. By providing activities and cues in public spaces that are normally found in the private realm, elements of the familiar and are situated and displayed in unexpected ways, creating a safe but novel experience.

WHY PUBLIC LIVING ROOMS?

Public living rooms have been selected because they

- Activate public spaces
- Are mobile and require few resources
- Can be made of recycled objects and materials
- Contain play elements to create a novel experience

URBAN LIVING ROOM, WORLDWIDE

'Urban Living Room' is a temporary urban activation that consists of a living room design in an urban public space. The Dutch designer claims that Urban Living Room focuses on "hospitality and small-scale meetings in the big city. The Urban Living Room makes the city a homely place." (http://urbanlivingroom.org/URBAN_LIVING_ROOM/ABOUT.html)

http://www.smartcitiesdive.com/ex/sustainablecitiescollective/public-spaces-around-world-urban-living-room/251846/

Image source: http://urbanlivingroom.org/URBAN_LIVING_ROOM/PHOTOS.html#23

SET IN THE STREET, NEW YORK

Set in the Street is an art installation built from abandoned interior furniture. Photographer Justin Bettman takes portraits here and then leaves the sets behind for the public to enjoy.

Image source: http://popupcity.net/turning-junk-furniture-into-sidewalk-living-rooms/

LIGHTER, CHEAPER, QUICKER, WORLDWIDE

"Lighter, Quicker, Cheaper is a placemaking strategy that empowers communities to create great places in their neighbourhoods, cities, or regions. Short-term LQC improvements – whether it's new amenities, programming, art, or design changes – are part of a larger and more permanent vision for a particular site. Think of LQC as a way to generate excitement, new partnerships, and support for long-term placemaking efforts and projects in your community. By helping you to make improvements quickly and inexpensively, LQC is a way to avoid common roadblocks like planning fatigue, bureaucratic approvals, and protracted fundraising. Its incremental and grassroots approach also provides an avenue for collaboration and community building, and it can help stakeholders at all levels to establish lasting partnerships.

IS LQC A PROCESS OR THE PRODUCT?

Lighter, Quicker, Cheaper is a PROCESS that helps create great PRODUCTS - sustainable places that highlight local assets and attract people. LQC is a way for communities and partners to think creatively about low-cost improvements that can be implemented quickly—like organizing public programs in the park, or a clean-up event with local volunteers. Even the smallest and simplest efforts can lead to big change. To be truly great, every public space needs long-term management and maintenance so that it can continually adapt to the emerging needs of the community it serves. Instead of planning places as end products, LQC celebrates them as ever-evolving works in progress."

WHY LIGHTER, QUICKER, CHEAPER?

Lighter, Quicker, Cheaper is selected because it:

- Enlivens public spaces
- Provides resource-efficient, short-term interventions to activate public space prior to longer term developments
- Encourages community buy-in and engagement
- Fosters community pride
- Brings together diverse stakeholders
- Provides pilots for potential ongoing design, planning and infrastructure

RESURFACED, LOUISVILLE

Resurfaced involved the temporary transformation of a 16,000 square foot vacant lot in downtown Louisville. The space became a daytime and night time venue with pop-up beer garden, food trucks, outdoor seating, stage and local bands, DJs, outdoor movies and table tennis.

SITE BEFORE THE ACTIVATION

Image source:
https://brokensidewalk.com/2014/resurfaced/

SITE AFTER THE ACTIVATION

Image source: http://services.louisvilleky.gov/timeline/

Image source: https://www.louisville.com/content/where-go-and-what-do-weekend-louisville-june-18-21

Image source: http://cellohuerta.com/wordpress/?page_id=87

THE LAWN ON D, BOSTON

The Lawn on D is a 2.7 acre outdoor event and meeting space next to the Boston Convention and Exhibition Centre. The Lawn on D is a site for public and private events, and has daytime, night time and seasonal activations throughout the year. The lawn functions to activate South Boston, and to provide a site for people to gather, and to engage with the activations.

DAYTIME

SWINGS AND SEATING

Image source: https://signatureboston.com/lawn-on-d/community-activities/open-lawn

BOCCE

Image source: http://www.landezine.com/index.php/2016/08/the-lawn-on-d-by-sasaki/

OUTDOOR SCREENING: JAWS

Image source: http://imgur.com/gallery/FUvBYnf

NIGHT TIME

Image source:
http://www.landezine.com/index.php/2016/08/the-lawn-on-d-by-sasaki/

Image source: http://dirtywatermedia.com/the-lawn-on-d-opening-weekend/

LANEWAYS/ALLEYS

Alleys are an important part of the landscape and permeability of the city, but as Anzilotti (2016) notes, they exist "in a sort of limbo". They are "not quite streets, but still thoroughfares; not private, but not public enough to feel protected; backdrops to crime, or filled with trash heaps." (https://www.citylab.com/solutions/2016/07/a-new-life-for-urban-alleys/491207/)

Because alleys are less open and utilised than other forms of thoroughfare in cities, they also have a reputation for being unsafe or uncertain zones in the city: zones of criminal activity and homelessness

However, the increasing lack of space in cities has led to a rethinking of the treatment of alleyways. Indeed, because they serve a secondary role in cities as thoroughfares for vehicles and humans, and are on a more intimate scale than other transport routes, they are more easily activated than the heavily used sites.

Alleys form an important part of a city's public space and, if activated, can better contribute to placemaking, community, and the city's ecosystem.

The following examples include public and public-private partnership activations of alleyways.

WHY ALLEYS/LANEWAYS?

Alleys have been selected because they:

- Enliven unused spaces in cities in playful ways
- Support green corridors
- Expand connectivity and walkability for pedestrians
- Improve public safety in cities
- Enable more space for economic and cultural activity
- Provide opportunities for artists and creatives to contribute and collaborate on city projects with other stakeholders
- Highlight heritage assets
- Change peoples' perceptions of alleyways, and of a city more generally
- Enhance place making

ACTIVATE, CHICAGO LOOP, CHICAGO

Activate transforms iconic Loop alleys into pop-up urban experiences for five nights between June and September. The Alliance partners with local companies and the talents of Chicago's creatives and artists to run pop-up events that feature art, music, and more in unique urban settings. According to the Chicago Loop Alliance, in 2016 this initiative drew on the talents of 386 artists, brought over 47,000 attendees to the alleys and had an estimated economic impact of over $1 million. Activate is located in the CBD, and according to the Director, the purpose of activating these alleys is to "shake up the Loop from a perception of nine-to-five, to something that's much more creative and alive than what (people) are typically in."

Cheap, temporary and discarded materials like shipping containers and wooden pallets are used to minimise costs.

DAYTIME

Images source:
http://chicagotonight.wttw.com/2016/05/12/art-activate-chicago-s-urban-alleys

Images source: http://loopchicago.com/activate/photos

NIGHT TIME

Images source: http://loopchicago.com/activate/photos

LANEWAYS TEMPORARY PUBLIC ART PROGRAM, SYDNEY

The City's Laneway program was initiated to activate the alleyways of the city centre. The program also contributes to the Sydney's public art program, which "plays a crucial role in developing opportunities for artists to reflect on contemporary life and present innovative ideas to challenge and delight our citizens and visitors." (City of Sydney)

BETWEEN TWO WORLDS

Image source: http://hg2.com/magazine/contemporary-art-turns-to-the-dinner-table/

FORGOTTEN SONG, ANGEL PLACE

Set in an alleyway in Sydney's Angel Place, this art installation of 110 empty birdcages plays the songs of 50 birds that lived in central Sydney before urbanisation. The sounds change at dusk with daytime songs being replaced by the sounds of nocturnal birds. The names of the birds are engraved on the paved stones beneath the cages.

The Canopy of Birdcages was commissioned as part of Sydney's 2009 temporary laneway program.

Image from: http://mymodernmet.com/michael-thomas-hill-forgotten-songs/

PERI(PHERAL) SCOPES, SKITTLE LANE

These four scopes show recorded images of Sydney's western suburbs.

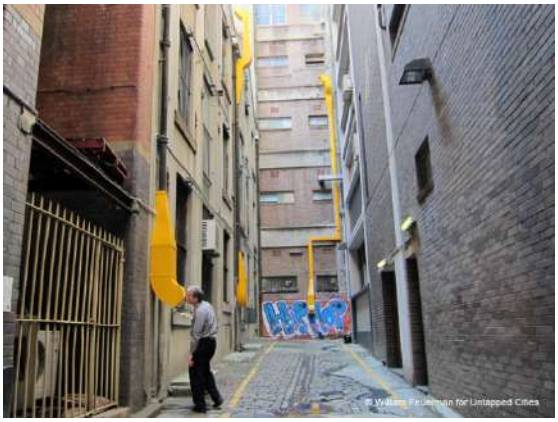


Image source: http://untappedcities.com/2011/10/10/off-the-grid-exploring-the-sydney-laneway/

- Can be made of recycled objects and materials;
- Contain play elements to create novel experience

URBAN LIVING ROOM, WORLDWIDE

'Urban Living Room' is a temporary urban activation that consists of a living room design in an urban public space. The Dutch designer claims that Urban living room focuses on "hospitality and small-scale meetings in the big city. The Urban Living Room makes the city a homely place." (http://urbanlivingroom.org/URBAN_LIVING_ROOM/ABOUT.html)

THE MEETING PLACE, LITTLE HUNTER STREET

The Meeting Place is a playful installation encouraging participation and interaction. As pedestrians move through the laneway, it narrows, encouraging people to acknowledge, communicate and negotiate with each other to increase human connectivity with strangers. The material selected is opaque to allow for views through to the unused parts of the laneways and to the existing building facades.

At night, the yellow fabric serves as a canvas for human movement within the space.

Image source: http://www.cityartsydney.com.au/artwork/the-meeting-place/

Image source: http://aspect.net.au/?p=134

I DWELL IN THE CITY, BRIDGE LANE

Image source: http://www.cityartsydney.com.au/artwork/i-dwell-in-the-city/

SEVEN METRE BAR, UNDERWOOD STREET

"Located at Underwood Street, a laneway near Circular Quay, *Seven Metre Bar* aimed to convert this usually abandoned site into a bustling social hub while also raising awareness with regard to Climate Change and rising sea levels. It comprised a bar, at which drinks were served from 4 pm to 11 pm three days a week, and an art installation created from cars, boats and other jettison. Raised seven metres above ground, the installation's height signified the potential impact of Climate Change. For if the ice at the North and South Poles melts, the City's sea levels will rise by 75 metres. At an increase of just eight metres, Underwood Street would be underwater. Using digital gaming technology, the artists also projected volatile weather scenarios onto the bar, the ferocity of which intensified as the bar patronage increased. Visitors saw and became affected by the projected scenarios and the consequences of their inaction. "At what point", asked the creators of *Seven Metre Bar*, "do we raise or lower the bar?" (Curating Cities)

Images source: http://eco-publicart.org/seven-metre-bar/

ELECTRIC STREET, PHILADELPHIA

This neon light art installation brings people to an under-visited and unsafe part of the city for photographic and viewing purposes. This installation contributes to reducing crime in the area, and boosting local business as people seek the bright lights.

http://popupcity.net/more-selfies-less-crime/

LANEWAYS, MELBOURNE

Melbourne, which was nominated as the world's most liveable cities for seven years running, turned its key laneways into a walkable network, increasing human traffic by 40%. They also increased outdoor cafes and restaurants from less than 50 in 1990 to over 600 today.

CAFES, RESTAURANTS AND RETAIL

Image source: https://www.citi.io/2015/05/04/walkonomics-and-the-high-line-effect/

Image source: https://australianotes.wordpress.com/2009/12/12/got-to-love-the-laneways/

STREET ART

Images source: http://dailyurbanculture.com/hosier-lane-street-art-melbourne-graffiti/

Image source: https://au.pinterest.com/pin/324751823111593488/

SPICE ALLEY, SYDNEY

Spice Alley is Sydney's answer to hawker-style eating, and involved the conversion of an underutilised alley into a site for six Asian eateries. Spice Alley is an extremely popular site both day and night. While this is a private sector activation, it demonstrates how food and a strong theme can bring life not only to the alley but also to surrounding businesses.

Images source: https://spice-alley.com.au/#eateries

Images source: author

OPEN CITY, CHRISTCHURCH

Open City is a repurposed parking meter in Cathedral Street that 'vends' a list of fun, free things to do in Christchurch as chosen Christchurch locals. Examples of the 'secrets' that emerge from the meter might include climbing a tree in the Botanic Gardens, or visiting a piece of street art, or a great place for a picnic.

WHY OPEN CITY?

- It offers a playful way to engage with the city
- It involves locals at all stages of the process
- The suggestions provide alternative experiences to those found through traditional channels
- It enables connectivity between strangers – even if only through the recommendations

Image source: http://gapfiller.org.nz/news/2017/open-city-coming-soon/

Image source: https://www.christchurchdailyphoto.com/page/3/

GAMES, WORLDWIDE

Public games provide an opportunity for communities to gather and engage around familiar and fun activities normally played in the private sphere.

WHY GAMES?

Games are selected because they:

- provide familiar play cues
- are engaging to play and to watch
- connect strangers
- activate public spaces
- are cheap, mobile and easy to store

SCRABBLE, SEATTLE

Image source; https://www.aiaseattle.org/event/udf-feb-event/

MINI-GOLF, PHILADELPHIA

Image source: https://au.pinterest.com/pin/366339750910855828

PING PONG, BOSTON

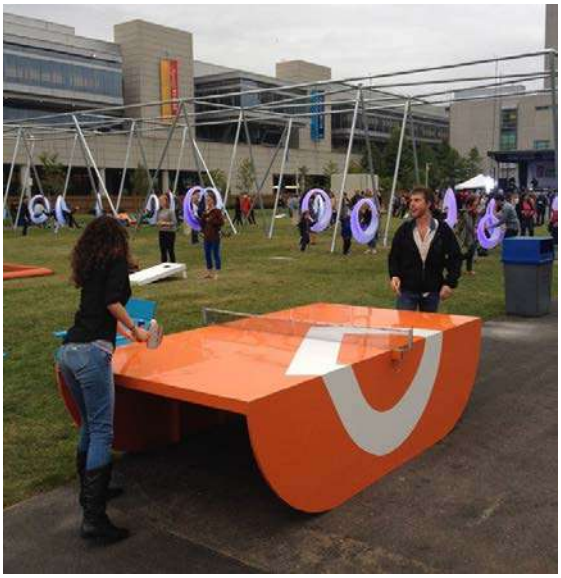


Image source: https://au.pinterest.com/pin/375628425144754019

FANCY A GAME, FEDERATION SQUARE, MELBOURNE

Federation Square has a collection of giant games kept in steel boxes and made available to the public for use in the space at certain times during the week.

Image source: http://entertainmytribe.com.au/giant-chess-federation-square/

GUESS WHO, WINNIPEG FOLK FESTIVAL, WINNIPEG

Image source:
https://au.pinterest.com/pin/174655291772337327/

POP UP STREET DANCING, GLASGOW

Image from:
https://au.pinterest.com/pin/235735361724363653

PIN ART, UNKNOWN

Image from:
https://au.pinterest.com/pin/561542647258992224

HUMAN FOOSBALL

Image source:
https://au.pinterest.com/pin/557390891355929308

SHISHKABALL

Image source:
https://au.pinterest.com/pin/487092515926383733/

HOPPER BALL, HARLEM NEW YORK

Image source:
http://newyork.thecityatlas.org/lifestyle/street-games-try-classic-street-games-from-the-60s-and-70s/attachment/street_games_hopper_ball_lg/

SHORT EDITION VENDING MACHINES, PARIS

Orange vending machines placed at French train stations dispense short stories, fairytales and poems by young writers, as well as more classical literature. Users can choose a 1 minute, 3 minute or 5 minute reading option. Over 100,000 passengers have used these vending machines since their installation.

WHY SHORT EDITION VENDING MACHINES?

Short Edition Vending Machines have been selected because they:

- Provide playful alternatives to reading electronic devices on trains
- Give young writers the opportunity to disseminate their work
- Make writing accessible through the 'vending machine' cue
- Challenge traditional methods of writing distribution

Image source: http://popupcity.net/french-vending-machines-dispense-short-stories/

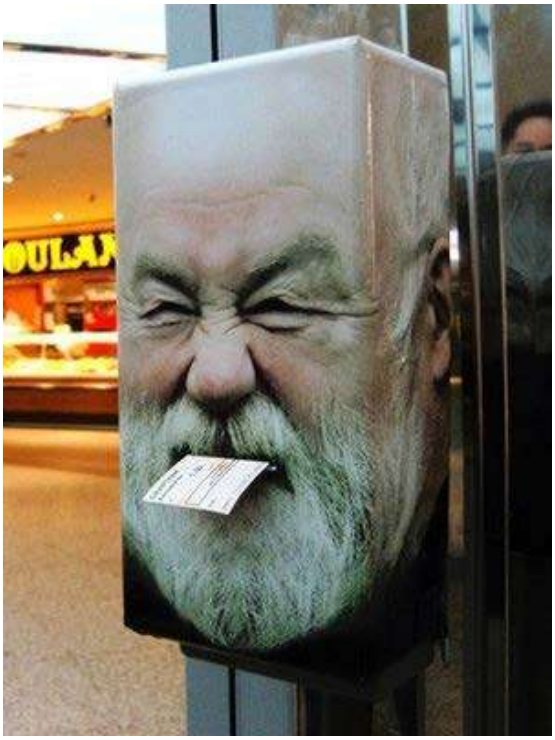
AMENITIES

TWO-WAY MIRROR TOILET, LONDON

This mirrored toilet gives users a one-way 360 degree view of passers-by.

Image source: http://freshadda.com/images_adda/one-way-mirror-toilet/

POSTBOXES



FURNITURE

https://au.pinterest.com/pin/553802085402657507

CYCLING AS PLAY

PLAY
CREATIVITY
AND CULTURE

INTRODUCTION

A key part of sustainable urban design is the cultivation of a positive culture of active transport. Active transport is seen in policy as a solution to myriad problems including challenges of sustainability, healthy lifestyles, and individual and community social wellbeing. In Australia, the national cycling strategies of the first decade or so (2000-2010) produced tremendously positive results by largely encouraging those population segments that were already cycling. In the last five years or so cycling participation rates have hit a ceiling and plateaued (Munro 2017), with the data indicating potentially greater problems as participation rates amongst younger Australians have declined.

Rethinking active transport involves two initial steps. First, cycling culture is understood in very distinct and arguably limited ways. Cycling is largely perceived as a recreational activity involving the leisure time of adults or family units (Fuller 2017).The figure of the MAMIL (Middle-Aged Man In Lycra) looms large here, and even if it is not the (total) reality, this figure shapes the contours of how active transport is understood by the public at large. We need to work on ways of expanding current conceptions of cycling and active transport in mainstream culture to reimagine it as a life-long practice interwoven into the fabric of everyday life.

Second, designing urban space to address these challenges involves translating active transport from the language of urban planning into the lived experience of those who inhabit the space. 'Active transport' extends beyond recreation and purposeful travel to embrace creation, play and adventure. The design of urban space is therefore key not only for activating spaces in particular, but for activating lifelong habits that promote an active, healthy and playful culture of mobility.

The examples in this section focus on 'play' as a way to link one set of habits to another set of habits and in so doing, reconfiguring those habits to unlock new possibilities for our experience of active transport.

PLAY STREETS, CYCLING GAMES, AND CYCLING PLAYGROUNDS – ODENSE, DENMARK

The medium-sized city of Odense, Denmark, was positioned as Denmark's Cycling City in the early 2000s. Through the first decades of this century the broader municipality has worked to continually develop innovative programs and build them into the level of urban design. It complements programs such as the Dutch Cyclists' Federation's (2015) Cycling Game initiative designed to transform the activity of cycling so that children play and learn through mobility. Odense implemented examples of what the Dane's call a "Play Street" (Clausen 2010). For example, the first Play Street, Roars Vej, was built next to a school and designed to provide students with a play space beyond the limited playground equipment during recess, and address issues to do with drop off in the mornings. However, the most dramatic example is the Vestergade Vest:

The Vestergade-project in Odense includes the transformation of a crowded road for mixed traffic into a space where motorized traffic is not allowed except for delivery freight vehicles. The new design allowed non-transport related activities that should create a more lively urban area, like outdoor sitting at cafes and playing table tennis. (van Goeverden, Nielsen et al. 2015)

Figure 1 Vestergade Vest, Odense, at night. Including speed hump and ping pong table detail. (Silva, Harder et al. 2010)

Many sociologists of mobility argue there is a hierarchy of mobility that locates automobility by motorised vehicle at the pinnacle of a social and moral order (Green, Steinbach et al. 2012). If participants in the system of automobility do not follow this hierarchy then they are 'bad' citizens. In a project in part investigating the transformation of Vestergade Vest, urban design scholar Ole Jensen interviewed the Odense Municipality architect, who framed the project explicitly in terms of place building.

I wanted to push the limits from what experiences people have in public space and I also wanted to make them start to question and reflect about what public space could be used for... It has been very provocative to put ping pong tables on the former motorized vehicle lanes... It has been a challenge to reinvent the former motorised vehicle lanes into a space for urban life, play and exercise. (quoted in Jensen 2014: 106)

The example of Vestergade suggests that rather than expelling motorised traffic from spaces of play, incorporating their remnants in a way that restructures the hierarchy of automobility contributes to privileging active transport through play over motorised transport. This could include symbols of automobility such as car play equipment and model traffic intersections.

CYCLING AS CONTEXT FOR PLAY – PERTH, WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Figure 2 Crossing of the bike boulevard in Bayswater linking the primary school to its oval. Safe Active Streets National Workshop (2017).

Over the past decade the Australian city of Perth has embraced active transport by investing in infrastructure not only for utilitarian commuting, but also as a strategy for enlivening urban space. The investment in infrastructure by the state and local governments has been reflected in the way locals have noticed a shift in cycling culture (Neubauer 2014). The change has been noticed by the news media in terms of the number of so-called 'hipsters' cycling without helmets (Offer 2014). The cultural shift has mirrored a policy and investment shift that has been recognised globally by, for example, the Smarter Travel website, which mentions Perth as a cycling city alongside world leaders from Europe (Rossi 2016).

BIKE BOULEVARDS, PERTH

Western Australia's integrated cycling strategy is primarily organised around a network that includes large-scale 'cycle freeways' or Principle Shared Paths (PSP), which enables fast and efficient transport by bike. These arterial cycle ways have been developed alongside initiatives for broadening participation, including four bike boulevard demonstration streets. The bike boulevards are described by the Department of Transport (2015) as being designed to encourage those who wouldn't otherwise cycle:

Bike boulevards are planned to allow mums, dads, children, senior citizens and others to make short trips on bikes to schools, railway stations or shops. Routes also form part of wider bicycle networks, connecting to off-road shared paths and linking important destinations.

Image source: https://www.bikecitizens.net/western-australian-bike-week/

Designing for play in urban space through mobility means understanding space in at least three ways: space as destination, space as journey, and space as setting (Koohsari, Mavoa et al. 2015). The Perth Bike Boulevards are an example of rethinking space not as destination but as journey.

ELIZABETH QUAY

Existing research indicates a positive relation between children's physical activity and the co-presence of play destinations with trails (Kaczynski and Henderson 2007). The example of Perth is useful for thinking through how to embed opportunities for play in a broader cultural context enabled by innovative urban design as a part of a broader strategic approach. This is best demonstrated by the dramatic parametric cable-stayed Elizabeth Quay Bridge, designed by Arup Associates (2016), which enables continuous movement around the quay, connecting the Perth CBD with the Elizabeth Quay Playground built on top of a man-made island.

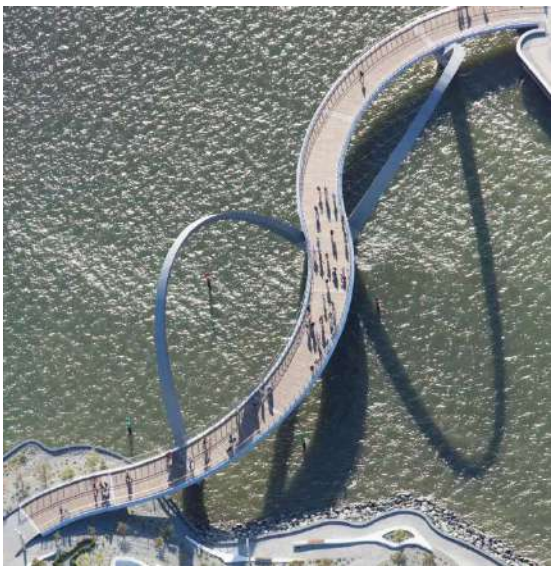


Image source: http://www.archdaily.com/786420/queen-elizabeth-quay-bridge-arup-associates/5721628ae58ece9a9400002e-queen-elizabeth-quay-bridge-arup-associates-photo

The playground design by Aspect Studios (2015) emphasises nature play and adventure play and the craftsmanship of the playground emphasises the city's connections to a maritime theme, while shade and seating have been designed with consideration of carers. The playground works in combination with the bridge and foreshore cycling infrastructure network.

Image source: https://www.mra.wa.gov.au/see-and-do/elizabeth-quay/attractions/playground

CAREER PATH: PAST FUTURES – TURKU, FINLAND

Canberra is a university city with a high number of students. Candy Chang's installation "Career Path" (2011) taps into the space of everyday movement being the site of vocational dreams in movement. Chang took over a university pathway in Turku, Finland, known as Uraputki, or "Career Path". The installation features prompts that ask those passing by what they wanted to be when they were children and what they want to be today. A similar project could see an annual Orientation Week installation with chalk and non-permanent paint and the tens of thousands of university students in Canberra re-imagining and reliving –

if only for a moment – their childhood dreams, and orientating themselves in the present and in their current dreams.

Source Image: http://candychang.com/work/career-path/

SHREDDING THE LAKE, INCORPORATING ENERGETICS – LAKE TAHOE, CALIFORNIA

Canberra has a highly developed skateboard and BMX-based extreme sports scene with seven high quality parks and 12 others with skating features. The Belconnen Skate Park regularly features competition-level skate events. Skateboarding and other related wheeled action sports are often seen as in contest with less energetic uses of public space. Yet, younger Canberrans add an energy that develops place with a colour of experience that may otherwise be absent. An example of this is Visit California's project involving pro-skateboarder Bob Burnquist's design of a floating skateboard ramp on Lake Tahoe. This ramp pushes the boundaries of how the energetics of play can be incorporated into space.

Figure 3 Floating Skate Ramp, Lake Tahoe. Image via Visit California. http://www.visitcalifornia.com/au/attraction/pro-skater-bob-burnquist-lake-tahoe

TRAIL CHALK, JOURNEY AS PLAY

Canberra has two Learn to Ride centres, one in Belconnen and one in Tuggeranong, which are designed to be controlled environments to educate and practice how to ride bicycles safely. In some ways cycling is inherently fun, but the Learn to Ride centres are explicitly framed as safe spaces rather than fun spaces. Trail Chalk was a successful Kickstarter project in 2012 and it fires the imagination to rethink what the activity of early childhood cycling could be if experienced as a fun activity.

Image source:
https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/1894629582/chalktrail-awesome-toys-for-bike-and-scooter/description

OTHER EXAMPLES OF CYCLING PLAY

ILLUMINATED BIKE PATH, EINDHOVEN, NETHERLANDS

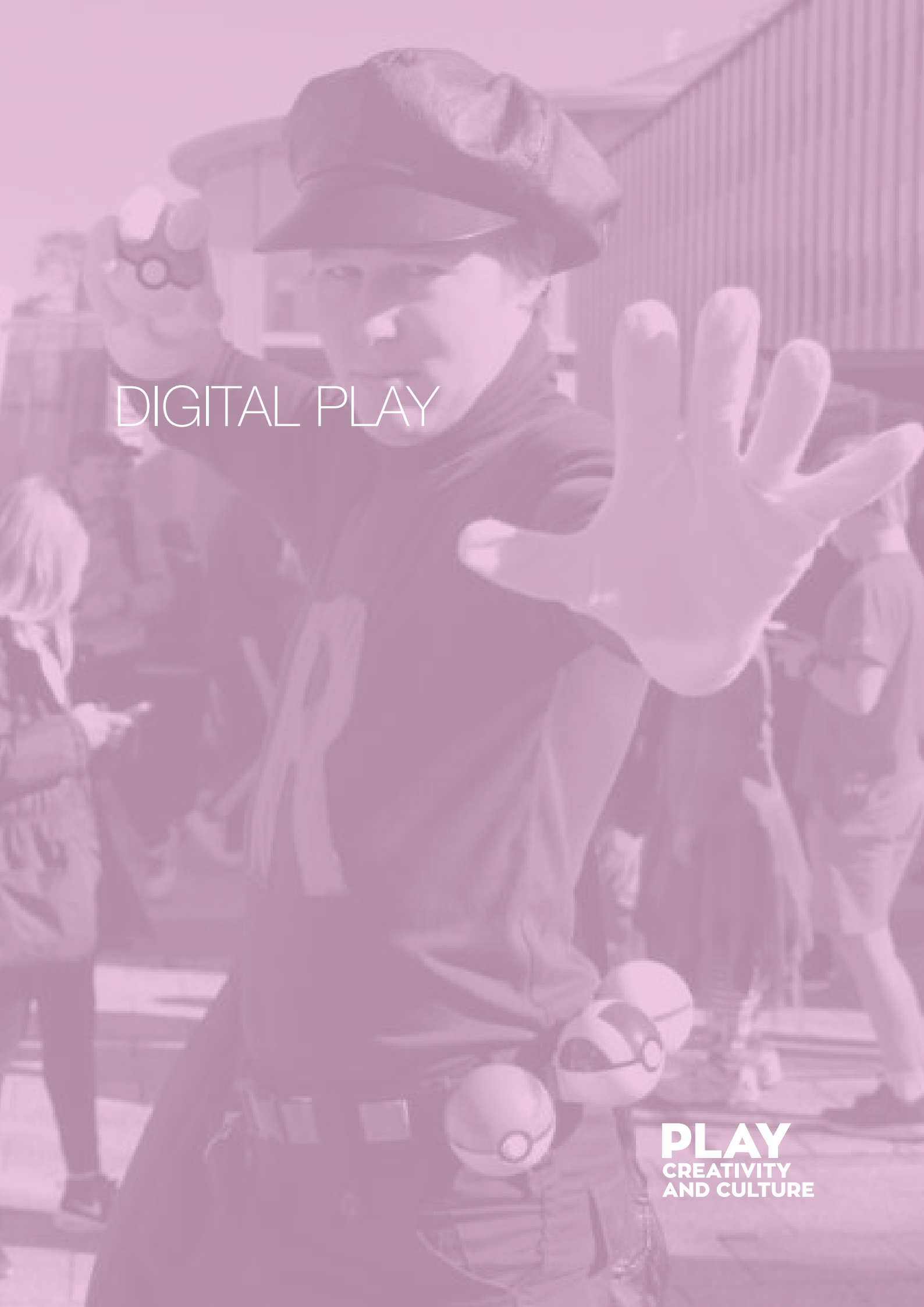
Artist Daan Roosegaarde created a 1 kilometre long bike path tribute to Vincent Van Gogh's 'Starry Night'. The path consists of thousands of twinkling stones that combine solar-powered LED lights with glow-in-the-dark technology to create what the artist refers to as "techno-poetry".

Image source: http://www.sactownmag.com/April-May-2017/Ready-Set-Glow/

THE PEOPLE'S CANOPY, PRESTON, ENGLAND

The People's Canopy was brought to Preston to encourage exchange and new (visual) connections between the University of Central Lancashire and the Preston City Centre, using a two-story high, expandable red roof-structure on bicycle wheels. The canopies, designed and produced in Beijing, open like an accordion and when placed behind each other, they stretch the entire length of the street, creating pop-up spaces for a range of events and markets.

Image source: http://popupcity.net/cycling-canopies-create-new-urban-spaces/



DIGITAL PLAY

PLAY
CREATIVITY
AND CULTURE

INTRODUCTION

Modern cities are not only defined by their architecture and design, but also by the information networks that people connect to, and use to connect with the environment. Weather and map apps are everyday examples of how we experience a hybrid digital/physical landscape as we go about our daily lives. The ready accessibility of mobile devices means that most people are always connected to media, be it streaming audio, podcasts, or social media updates.

A mass of digital information creates a ubiquitous media environment – a kind of information cloud – that constantly surrounds us, and permeates and mediates our experience of the physical world. Waiting for a bus is likely to be as much a digital experience as a physical experience. Because of this ubiquity, digital technology can provide a wide range of ways to engage with our physical environment. We can use the digital environment to reconnect people with their physical environment, to help them explore, learn about and understand their urban habitat, and perhaps even to participate in its development.

Even the way people find their way around cities is transformed as we rely on the mobile device to show us how far we are from a café or meeting place, rather than navigating by landmark and the free advice of strangers. But beyond purposeful navigation from one place to another, there are the spaces in between embarkation and destination, and the journeys and encounters that exist in these spaces. Ideally, activation of urban spaces should encourage people to engage with the urban habitat by encouraging engagement with these in-between spaces, not just as pathways to something, but as experiences in and of themselves.

The ACT Government is “committed to evolving Canberra into a smart and connected digital city”. (Smart City Canberra) In Canberra good cellular network coverage and the ACT Government’s public Wi-Fi network ensures a high level of digital connectivity for anyone with a Wi-Fi enabled device. This makes Canberra an excellent site for playful activation of the urban environment through digital technology.

There are multiple ways that digital technologies have been utilized in urban spaces to encourage people to engage with them. Many social media platforms like Instagram, Facebook and Twitter allow the user’s physical location to be attached to a photo, tweet or post, while some social

media platforms (like Foursquare) are entirely designed around physical location. However, some of the most engaging digital interventions in the urban landscape are playful, and range from distracting installation to complex orchestrated games that are played for prizes.

There are different kinds of playful digital experiences and games that use the physical world as their central design principle. Common to all of them is the way that the physical environment is integrated into the game as a key design component. Hjorth and de Souza e Silva helpfully define three broad categories of games that relate to the physical environment. These are: Urban Games, Location-Based Mobile Games, and Hybrid Reality Games. Urban Games are “games that use the city space as a game board” (de Souza e Silva & Hjorth, p612); location-based mobile games use the GPS features of modern mobile devices to feed physical location information into the game’s rules; and, hybrid reality games set out to smudge the boundaries between the digital world and the physical world.

DIGITAL PLAY AND CITIES: GENERAL EXAMPLES

Before examining specific digital projects that have engaged with the urban environment, it's valuable to look at some of the more general examples of the ways that digital technology has recently been employed as a tool for playing with our urban environments.

GEOCACHING

Geocaching is one of the first location-based activities that emerged with the availability of the consumer geographic positioning system (GPS). Put simply, geocaching is essentially a cross between orienteering and a treasure hunt, where GPS is used by the player to locate a hidden cache. The cache might be a simple message, or an object. Often there will be some kind of notebook in the cache that the player can sign, and there may also be a treasure. A key rule of geocaching is that when a cache contains a treasure, the player is supposed to leave something behind so that there is something for the next play to discover. Aside from the enjoyment of finding hidden treasure, geocaching encourages exploration of the local environment, asking players to depart from their daily travel patterns to explore and discover places around them.

While geocaching has a loose informality, other digital technologies have been employed within more formal game systems. Early examples of physically-located games include PacManhattan, a game where five people – four dressed as ghosts and one as the video game character PacMan – chased each other around Manhattan. Each player had a GPS which reported their location back to a central command centre. People could then engage with the game from anywhere in the world, providing movement instructions to the ghosts or the PacMan.

PACMANHATTAN, NEW YORK

Two ghosts hunting Pac Man. Image source: http://www.nydailynews.com/new-york/brooklyn/pac-man-life-dumbo-game-article-1.1868061

Image source: http://www.mobygames.com/game/windows/pac-manhattan/screenshots/gameShotId,828057/

BOTFIGHTERS

Another classic locative urban game was Botfighters, which ran in a number of European countries between 2001 to 2005 and was first released in Sweden. In the pre-iPhone era, location was determined using cellphone tower triangulation. Players would play the role of robots, and could move into the proximity of another player in the real world, and "shoot" at opponents to deplete their batteries. Victories would be rewarded with game currency which could be used to purchase robot upgrades such as better weapons on armor. (Stroud, 2002)

Image source: http://iasl.uni-muenchen.de/links/NAPGe.html

POKEMON GO

More recently games like Ingress and its well-known successor, Pokemon Go, have taken advantage of smartphone location awareness and graphical interfaces to produce even more compelling location-based game. Pokemon Go places virtual Pokemon monsters in geographical locations and uses geolocation services to allow smartphone users to hunt and capture those monsters. The player must literally walk around their physical environment, looking for Pokemon to capture. Virtual Pokemon gyms that are anchored to real-world locations then provide a place for Pokemon Go players to come into contact with one another.

POKEMON GO CANBERRA

Image source: http://www.abc.net.au/news/2016-07-17/pokemon-go-mass-hunt-lures-thousands-in-canberra/7635956

Taking the ideas established by these games, urban digital games provide opportunities to use technologies like mobile phones (which are often seen as impediments to social interaction) as tools to encourage engagement with both the urban environment and the people that co-exist in that environment. They can allow us to slow down and think about the spaces we use or pass through.

A number of examples of how these affordances of digital technologies have been used in other cities around the world are discussed below.

These examples range from locative real-world play supported by technology, to play with games that simulate real-world environments. The examples demonstrate the ways in which digital technologies can improve engagement with urban environments, stimulate conversations, and facilitate improved communication between planners and communities.

SMART TECHNOLOGY AS POSITIVE INTERVENTION

PLAYABLE CITIES

Playable Cities is a UK-based ongoing project that sponsors digital urban intervention projects in cities around the world. According to their web site:

"Playable City puts people and play at the heart of the future city, re-using city infrastructure and re-appropriating smart city technologies to create connections – person to person, person to city." (https://www.playablecity.com/vision/)

Source: FutureEverything Singapore: Hello Lamp Post. https://vimeo.com/148887655

HELLO LAMP POST, WORLD-WIDE

Hello Lamp Post is a simple yet effective example of a Playable City project. Hello Lamp Post is a travelling installation project designed to link people to their urban environments. The idea is quite simple: urban objects (not just lamp posts) are assigned an identity, such as "Fire Hydrant #23". People can then send an SMS to the object using their mobile phone, which will then respond to the text. This strikes up a conversation between the individual and the object, providing a sense of connection between the urban environment and the individual. Hello Lamp Post has been run in a number of cities, including Tokyo, Singapore, Manchester, Austin, and Bordeaux.

Image source: https://www.statuscake.com/hello-lamp-post-the-gamification-of-a-city/

PARTICIPATORY CHINATOWN, BOSTON

Participatory Chinatown was a game developed and implemented in 2010 by Emerson University, town planners and developers. It was designed to encourage members of the community to be more involved in the urban planning of Boston's Chinatown district. In the game, players could take control of one of fifteen characters ("virtual residents") and move around a virtual reconstruction of Chinatown. The reconstruction was accurate enough that participants could locate and identify their own homes within the virtual environment, which allowed residents who were intimately familiar with the area to connect their real-world experiences with their virtual ones. (Hasaguchi, 2009)

The aim of the game was to move around the virtual Chinatown playing one of the characters and trying to accomplish tasks, such as getting a job or finding a place to live in. This gameplay was designed to get players engaged with urban planning problems and to provide them with rich prompts to discuss those issues.

One of the problems that the developers were trying to tackle with the game was opening up conversations about urban planning to a wider audience. They had noted that most of the traditional community planning meetings tended to be over-represented by older, often male residents. Participatory Chinatown produced additional appeal and engagement in the community, particularly from younger members of the community.

Although Participatory Chinatown is not a locative game (that is, it is played on a computer in a room, rather than out in the actual spaces), it serves as a good example of how virtual representations of urban environments presented within the context of a game can be employed to get people involved in urban planning.

Image source: Hasaguchi, M., Participatory Chinatown https://vimeo.com/11486628

GLOBAL (MOBILE) GINCANA

Global Gincana was a 2009 project undertaken with schools in Amsterdam and Sao Paulo where mobile devices were used to guide players to cultural locations in the respective cities where students would carry out activities to describe, document or creatively reflect on their cities.

Gincana is a traditional Brazillian game where players are divided into teams that compete against each other. The game involves completing activities (which may be artistic, or finding objects or places), across an urban area, for which points are awarded. The team with the most points wins.

Using digital technology, teachers could design Gincana that encouraged students to explore and engage playfully with cultural elements of their urban environments. Students then set out in their cities to complete a series of activities which they could then report back upon. By doing this in two cities on opposite sides of the planet, the project also provided opportunities for the students in both cities to exchange their cultural knowledge.

Image source: Waag Society 2009

NEXTCAMPUS

Like Participatory Chinatown, NextCampus was a game designed to encourage wider community participation in urban design around the proposed move of a university campus in Hamburg. The university was faced with aging infrastructure and significant costs associated with renovation. A number of suggestions for dealing with the problem were proposed and traditional planning and community discussion forums were held.

The NextCampus game modelled the situation, including stakeholder groups. Each stakeholder group was given a satisfaction score which could increase or decrease based on decisions made by a player, and the player had a budget, which provided a limit on what they could achieve. The goal of the game was to find the urban planning solution that had the best satisfaction for all stakeholders but also did not break the budget.

While the game used a relatively simplistic model for simulating community reactions to decisions, the point of the game was fundamentally to allow participants to develop a deeper understanding of the situation. While playing the game, participants were able to develop a better understanding of stakeholder groups and the demands and needs of the university itself. Information about buildings on the campus and their history were available, for example, which added another dimension to the decision to knock down or renovate different buildings.

BLOCK BY BLOCK - MINECRAFT FOR YOUTH PARTICIPATION

Block by Block was a project undertaken by the United Nations Human Settlements program between 2012 and 2015. The project's main aim was to encourage community participation in urban design, particularly from traditionally under-represented groups such as women and youth. To facilitate conversation, the project utilized the game Minecraft, a creative block-building game that gives players enormous creative abilities to construct objects in a 3D world. Using the game it is relatively easy for even a complete novice to build and design structures.

Real and Minecraft versions of an urban space in Block by Block. Image Source: United Nations Human Settlements Programme (2015) Using Minecraft for Youth Participation in Urban Design and Governance, p.3

To facilitate discussion, the project used Minecraft experts to create virtual representations of real-world environments. Once put into the virtual space, participants could use the game as a tool to focus discussion on issues, and even build interventions. In one example, older fishermen in Haiti were able to build new docks for fishing boats and shaded areas for cleaning their catch in the virtual world, providing urban planners with a clear and tangible indication of the primary needs of the fishermen.

In another project, water resources in Kirtipur, Nepal were the primary focus of the project. Water management is traditionally something that is left to female members of a family. Involving both men and women in developing ways of managing urbanization and management of water resources not only gave women an opportunity to communicate their knowledge and requirements, but increased male participants' understanding of the challenges that they might otherwise not be aware of.

Overall, the Block by Block project was used for 15 projects in 12 countries including Nigeria, Somalia, Kosovo, Peru, Haiti, Mexico, Bangladesh, the Philippines and the Solomon Islands. A report on the project by UN Human Settlements argued that "… using technology as a tool for participatory urban planning and design can be a powerful way to include non-traditionally [sic] stakeholders in decision-making processes." (p17)

ACTIVATED SOUNDSCAPES

PLAY
CREATIVITY
AND CULTURE

The ambient soundscape of the street is made up of a shifting aural terrain, a resonant metropolitan fabric, which may exclude or subtly guide us in our experience of the city, thus highlighting an invisible yet highly affecting and socially relevant area of urban enquiry.

Atkinson, 2007: 1905

It is a matter of overcoming the narrow natural science based approach which remains at best capable of grasping noise as a function of decibels, and to ask instead what type of acoustic character the spaces in which we live should have.

Bohme, 2000:18

INTRODUCTION

The use of sound as a playful urban strategy is on the rise. Growing interest in the place and potential of sound in urban planning and renewal is partially a response to the exponential increase of populations in cities (Bettencourt et al., 2007), which has seen a corresponding increase in the volume, type and range of sounds found in urban environments (Goines & Haglar, 2007).

In Canberra, as in most cities worldwide, sound as a category of the urban sensorial experience is largely conceived of in urban planning terms as 'noise'. Noise is defined as a sound which is experienced as out of place, and/or that causes a level of discomfort (Brown & Muhar, 2004; Atkinson, 2007; Jennings & Cain, 2013). In this context, the primary focus in urban planning is on the negative or unwanted.

This approach to sound replicates other pollution models (such as air pollution) and is arguably derived from and reflected in the vast collection of studies on the negative impacts of urban sounds on health, productivity and the natural environment (Skånberg, A., & Öhrström, 2002; Singh & Davar 2004; Goines & Haglar, 2007).

1 This approach is reflected in the ACT, with noise managed by the Environmental Protection Agency under the Environmental Protection Agency Act (1997) and measured in decibels. (Access Canberra, "Noise")

The 'noise' paradigm positions sound in the urban environment as a problem that must be controlled, managed and monitored through a range of regulatory and control strategies, such as zoning, mapping, masking and policing (Brown & Muhar, 2004; Raimbault & le Debois, 2005; Adams et al., 2006).

At the same time, a strong and varied body of research is emerging in the auditory fields – from musical studies to acoustic ecology – that offer broader and more complex approaches to sound and the role that it plays in the human and non-human environment (Adams & Guy, 2007, Atkinson, 2007;). Within the context of urban planning, this research suggests that approaches to the sonic environment should extend beyond the current reductionist and negative conceptions of sound in cities and instead position sound as a 'scape' – akin to the notion of landscape (Adams et al, 2006).

Soundscapes are defined by the Positive Soundspace Project as "the totality of all sounds within a location with an emphasis on the relationship between individual's or society's perception of, understanding of and interaction with the sonic environment" (Maculewicz et al, 2016, p.230).

Brown and Muhar (2004) suggest that soundscape planning treats sound as a resource "to be utilised an, as in the sustainable use of all resources, one whose depletion of degradation is to be avoided". In this context, soundscape planning involves the planning of positive sonic environments that contribute to an improved lived experience. (Brown & Muhar, 2004). Brown and Muhar identify three focal points for acoustic design:

1) Noise abatement: Eliminating or restricting sounds that cause discomfort through "noise abatement"
2) Preservation or creation of 'Soundmarks': Preserving and enhancing those sounds that "give character or sense of place to a location"
3) Aesthetic/creative soundscaping: "imaginative placement of sounds to create attractive and stimulating environments.

Sound is a demonstrable sensory resource that can be used not only for the demarcation of space, but for place-making more generally. (Atkinson, 2007) Further, certain sounds (including human sounds, non-human sounds, and silence) have been demonstrated to offer a range of therapeutic benefits. (Ratcliffe et al., 2013)

Within the context of urban play, we suggest that Canberra could complement the current noise management and control policy as underpinned by the 1997 Environmental Protection Agency Act, with playful soundscaping strategies that generate novel embodied affordances in the city which:

- Create positive interventions that supplement and bolster the punitive measures relating to control of noise and management of noise pollution
- Demarcate space
- Enhance place-making
- Enliven the urban environment
- Provide a therapeutic environment
- Preserve and create new 'soundmarks' that enhance Canberra's cultural heritage

The following sound play case studies provide diverse examples of the playful use of sound to achieve the above strategies.

FEDERATION BELLS, MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA

Federation Bells is an installation comprising of 39 upturned bells of various sizes (and pitches) set on large poles. The Bells play at peak times to enhance engagement (8-9am; 12.30-1.30pm; 5-6pm). A weekly schedule is curated from the more than 100 compositions designed for the Bells, with special curatorial and musical events occurring.

To enhance public interaction, an online platform called the Federation Bells Composer enables people to create a virtual multitrack using the bells. Certain pieces from the public are then selected for inclusion in the Bells' play track.

Image source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Federation_Bells

PIANO STAIRS, STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN

The Piano Stairs were originally designed for the Odenplan Subway in Stockholm, Sweden, as part of Volkswagon's "Fun Theory" promotional/branding campaign to "change people's behaviour for the better by making it fun to do." The stair keyboard mimics the sounds of a keyboard, encouraging people not only to take the stairs, but also to move up and down the stairs to create tunes.

According to Volkswagon, 66% more people chose to take the stairs over the escalator than was the case without this intervention.

Picture source: http://www.designoftheworld.com/piano-stairs/

This model has been replicated across multiple sites in the world, including Shangdung China; San Francisco, US; Milan, Italy; Rennes, France and Sao Paulo, Brazil.

21 BALANCOIRES, MONTREAL, CANADA

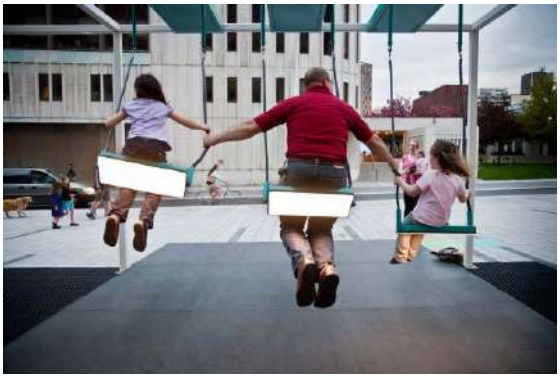
21 Swings is an interactive musical installation that overtakes a high-traffic area in the Quartier des Spectacles in Montreal for a month every spring.

Source: http://www.dailytouslesjours.com/project/21-balancoires/

Each of the 21 swings produces its own sound. There are different coloured swings, which correspond with the sound of four instruments: piano, harp, guitar and vibraphone. The note that is played by each swing is determined by the height that the user reaches.

The swings are designed so that melodies can only emerge through cooperation between participants:

"When in motion, each swing triggers different notes, and when used all together, the swings create a musical composition in which certain melodies emerge only through cooperation. This collaborative exercise stimulates intuitive play and experimentation amongst people of all ages and backgrounds, whether they know each other or not, and leads participants and spectators to become aware of each other, and their environment."



Source: http://www.dailytouslesjours.com/project/21-balancoires/

GREENACRE AND PALEY PARKS, NEW YORK

Greenacre and Paley Parks are pocket parks in midtown New York that use waterfalls to mask unwanted urban sounds. Both parks demarcate green space between two large buildings to create an "oasis" in the dense New York urban environment.

GREENACRE PARK, 51ST STREET, MIDTOWN, NEW YORK

Source: http://gothamist.com/2017/05/24/greenacre_park_darkness.php#photo-1

PALEY PARK, 53RD STREET, MIDTOWN, NEW YORK

MELODY ROADS, JAPAN

'Singing Streets' are playful alternatives to the 'rumble strip', which are the grooves on roads designed to alert drivers that they are veering out of the lane by making a loud noise when car tyres encounter them.

Image source: http://mentalfloss.com/article/73142/musical-roads-5-places-where-streets-sing

The concept was first introduced by Danish artists Steen Krarup Jensen and Jakob Freud-Magnus in 1997 with the invention of the "Ashphaltophone", which is essentially a series of raised markers spaced out intermittently so the wheel vibrations can be heard in the car.

In Japan, Melody Roads are playful interventions to assist in the reduction of accidents on dangerous roads. The distance between each groove determines the pitch of the sound: the closer the grooves, the higher the pitch.

Image source: http://www.amusingplanet.com/2015/11/musical-roads-play-melodies-when-cars.html

WILLIAM BARAK TALKING BRIDGE, MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA

The William Barak Bridge is a 525 metre footbridge designed to improve pedestrian links between Melbourne's sporting and entertainment district. In 2006 a sound installation called "Proximities", with its focus on 'local histories/global entanglements' became a permanent fixture of the Bridge. This artwork contains 24 audio channels and 56 speakers.

According to the artists' website, this soundscape is:

"...conceived as a sonic corridor of human voices. The project is built up around recordings made by the artists of people from the 53 Commonwealth nations who are now living in Australia.

Each individual voice contributes a distinctive singing style, with specific melodic and rhythmic ornamentation shaped over centuries of cultural tradition. The artwork can be seen as an imagined crowd through which actual crowds of pedestrians pass for a time between destinations." (http://leberandchesworth.com/public-spaces/proximities/)

Image source: http://www.weekendnotes.com/the-art-of-sport-self-guided-walk/

SOUNDSEEKER, NEW YORK

Soundseeker New York is a virtual sound map of New York City that uses GoogleMaps to zoom, pan and search for sites within the city and listen to the sounds recorded in that location. It also enables users to upload sounds to document New York's living heritage. Soundseeker brings to life New York through "an under-represented sense". (Soundseeker)

Image source:
http://wordsinspace.net/2010/Fall/mediamateriality/?p=525

SOUND FOREST, KLAKENBOS, BELGIUM

Klakenbos is a dedicated sound forest and the largest of its kind in Europe. Over 15 installations by sound artists are hidden in the trees to "challenge visitors to become more conscious of sound and silence: a very special experience for young and old." (https://www.klankenbos.be/en/about-klankenbos)

While not all of the works meet the criteria for playful engagement, the concept of the Sound Forest (or Sound Garden as in Katonah, New York State) is included here because these concepts could provide a novel layer of alternative sensorial experience, and for which a more accessible and playful soundscape than the examples provided here could be designed as part of Canberra's vibrant living heritage.

SOUND FOREST: OOR VAN NOACH

Image source:
https://www.klankenbos.be/en/projects/klankinstallatie-oor-van-noach

“The Dommel in Neerpelt looks like a mere scribble when you look at a map of the area. If you have a closer look though on the bank of the river and listen, you realize that it is the sum of a great number of events. The stream consists of millions of splashing waves, rolling pebbles, floating leaves, nibbling fish. In turn they are made up of molecules and atoms, floating in an endless restless stream.

Robert Lambermont constructed *Oor van Noach* (Noah’s Ear) to make the Dommel’s identity audible. The sound installation is made up of a wooden floating barge. It is connected to a bent arm that ends on the bank in a trumpet form. The higher the water, the deeper *Oor van Noach* bends. Just as the needle follows the groove in a record the impressive creation explores the streaming water. The forces of the fickle Dommel on the work are transformed into sounds that leave the object at the trumpet ashore. Works like *Oor van Noach* are Robert Lambermont’s path on the search of a universal language to express his wonder for things in relation to the passing of time. Seemingly slow processes like the turn of the seasons in relation to incidental events like the falling of a leave are the central theme of the installation.” (https://www.klankenbos.be/en/projects/klankinstallatie-oor-van-noach)

KONVERSATION, KLAKENBOS

This art installation consists of 12 mechanical plants that communicate through signs and sounds.

Image source: http://www.klankatlas.eu/blog/something-so-unique-its-strange-weve-never-written-about-it/

REVERBERATE, FIGMENT SCULPTURE GARDEN, GOVERNOR'S ISLAND, NEW YORK

Reverberate is an interactive soundscape playground where visitors can both sit and play. The underlying modular wood grid structure supports a field of oversized colourful rubber balls alternating with reverberating sound platforms. Visitors are invited to bounce and push on the balls in order to create sound. When a ball is activated (by bouncing), a sound cascades through an array of speakers in the structure. The more people bounce, the more sounds are created.

http://newyork.figmentproject.org/sculpture_garden_2013

THE SINGING HOUSE, DRESDEN, GERMANY

The Singing House is designed to create music from the rain as it falls through the piping. It was designed by an artist and two designers who live in the building. The House is part of an art project called the Courtyard of Elements.

Image from: http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2238355/Singing-rain-Building-plays-music-heavens-open-tourist-attraction.html

CANOPY OF BIRDCAGES, SYDNEY

Set in an alleyway in Sydney's Angel Place, this art installation of 110 empty birdcages plays the songs of 50 birds that lived in central Sydney before urbanisation. The sounds change at dusk with daytime songs being replaced by the sounds of nocturnal birds. The names of the birds are engraved on the paved stones beneath the cages.

The Canopy of Birdcages was commissioned as part of Sydney's 2009 temporary laneway program.

Image from: http://mymodernmet.com/michael-thomas-hill-forgotten-songs/

FIGMENT MINI GOLF 2017, GOVERNOR'S ISLAND, NEW YORK

This artist-designed mini golf course on Governor's Island is the site of the sound art installation "New York Has a City Beat". Each of the nine holes contains a sound from New York city, or a sound from its previous, current or future music scene.

Image source: https://govisland.com/activities/figment-mini-golf

PLAY ACTIVATION AND SUSTAINABILITY

PLAY
CREATIVITY
AND CULTURE

INTRODUCTION

The transformative power of cities is increasingly recognised at the global scale. Cities are now home to the majority of the world's inhabitants and are predicted to contain 70% of the population by 2050 (UN). While this brings with it numerous environmental challenges, intensified by increasing climate variability, so too does it afford significant opportunities. In particular, there is great potential to harness the creativity of urban dwellers to work towards realisation of Goal 11 of the UN Sustainable Development goals: how to make *cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.*

Canberra is committed to being "recognised throughout the world as a truly sustainable and creative city" (people, place prosperity) with the Canberra Plan identifying a "sustainable future" as a key strategic aim. Realisation of such aspirations will require agility in form and function taking shape in multiple ways including initiatives that are top-down, multi-partnered (Government, industry and NGO partnerships), and those that draw on the potentially rich resource of activated, engaged citizens.

We suggest that cities where citizens are activated through playful landscapes are more capable of contributing to the realisation of the sustainable urban development goals outlined in the New Urban Agenda formulated by world leaders at the Urbanization conference in Quito, Ecuador, 2016. The agenda includes the following commitments directly relevant to the current project:

ENSURE THAT ALL CITIZENS HAVE ACCESS TO EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND FACE NO DISCRIMINATION

Everyone has the right to benefit from what their cities offer. The New Urban Agenda calls on city authorities to take into account the needs of women, youth and children, people with disabilities, marginalized groups, older persons, indigenous people, among other groups.

PROMOTE MEASURES THAT SUPPORT CLEANER CITIES

Tackling air pollution in cities is good both for people's health and for the planet. In the Agenda, leaders have committed to increase their use of renewable energy, provide better and greener public transport, and sustainably manage their natural resources.

STRENGTHEN RESILIENCE IN CITIES TO REDUCE THE RISK AND THE IMPACT OF DISASTERS

Many cities have felt the impact of natural disasters and leaders have now committed to implementing mitigation and adaptation measures to minimize these impacts. Some of these measures include: better urban planning, quality infrastructure and improving local responses.

TAKE ACTION TO ADDRESS CLIMATE CHANGE BY REDUCING THEIR GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Leaders have committed to involve not just the local government but all actors of society to take climate action, taking into account the Paris Agreement on climate change which seeks to limit the increase in global temperature to well below 2 degrees Celsius. Sustainable cities that reduce emissions from energy and build resilience can play a lead role.

IMPROVE CONNECTIVITY AND SUPPORT INNOVATIVE AND GREEN INITIATIVES

This includes establishing partnerships with businesses and civil society to find sustainable solutions to urban challenges.

PROMOTE SAFE, ACCESSIBLE AND GREEN PUBLIC SPACES

Human interaction should be facilitated by urban planning, which is why the Agenda calls for an increase in public spaces such as sidewalks, cycling lanes, gardens, squares and parks. Sustainable urban design plays a key role in ensuring the liveability and prosperity of a city. (http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/blog/2016/10/newurbanagenda/)

Of particular concern in this section of the report is the focus on green public spaces and how these can be configured not only as a means of making cities liveable for all, but as sites of urban activation capable of supporting efforts to address climate change at the individual, community, national and global scale. It is likely that incorporation of sustainability awareness, and infrastructure to support its realisation, also has the capacity to improve community resilience in the face of climate uncertainty.

The potential for urban planning initiatives to facilitate these goals have been the focus of numerous worldwide movements in recent years expressed in a variety of ways including green, eco, sustainable and biophilic cities. Increasingly these green technologies are commonly incorporated

into the smart cities framework (veeckman ad van der Graad 2015). However, regardless of the nomenclature adopted, what underpins these various initiatives is a view of the city as an integrated, connected and networked environment functioning as a holistic ecosystem. As such, best practice in this area involves not simply focusing on individual components through, for example, the inclusion of more green landscapes. Instead, it is represented by efforts that attempt to encourage a sustainable ethos in all facets of city life. As Loures and Costa write:

Often characterized merely as the coexistence of biophysical and human systems, the meaning of sustainable landscapes spans far beyond this idea. Sustainable landscapes are much more than landscapes composed by the juxtaposition of different uses and functions, they are the result of the coexistence, interaction and connection of different dimensions such as ecology, economics, culture, history and aesthetics. (Loures and Costa. 2012 p. 460).

We identify 3 key themes in the existing literature and design vernacular that support this networked approach:

1) the incorporation of urban design initiatives that attend to both human and more-than-human elements of the city in relation to ecosystem services, wildlife and human health and wellbeing;
2) the provision of mobile and fixed infrastructure anchored in technological and practical connectivity that ensures environmentally-sound decisions are easy to make;
3) design and artworks that activate citizens to reflexively engage in creative and playful ways with sustainability challenges at the local, national and global scale.

Best practice examples of these 3 categories will be explored in further detail following the discussion of the sustainable city case study of Bristol, England.

BRISTOL, U.K

In 2015 Bristol was designated the European Green Capital, recognised as a city that combines ambitious environmental goals revolving around energy, food, nature, resources and transport with a "sense of fun". It is where the Playable Cities (https://www.playablecity.com/cities/bristol/) network began in 2012. Key urban design interventions in the city include a significant focus on local food production involving community participation, sustainable activation of the harbour that supports local wildlife corridors and habitats, interactive public art that encourages visceral engagement with, and reflection on, climate change and the adaptations to daily living in our cities that this might require, and a focus on creating a walkable and cycle friendly city.

WHY BRISTOL?

Bristol has been selected because:

- The city has a global reputation for being a creative and fun city
- The city is committed to achieving ambitious sustainability and resilience goals
- The activations address a broad range of target demographics (kids, youth, families, couples, older people)
- The activations are visceral and practical in playful ways
- The waterfront has recently been revitalised

EDIBLE BRISTOL

Bristol's efforts to invest in a sustainable future have had a significant focus on food systems, with a specific interest in increasing local food production. This involves partnerships among local government, the National Health Service, private businesses, NGOs, the voluntary sector and the education sector. One outcome of these collaborations has been the development of over 30 edible gardens located throughout the city in high profile location in parks, train stations and on street verges. The gardens are managed by volunteers with the food freely available to passersby.

An urban food trail has also been introduced by community-group Incredible Edible Bristol to improve access to local foods, encourage ecological awareness, and enhance pleasure for pedestrians by encouraging them to engage with the city in new ways. The trail includes community gardens, private gardens, gardens owned by private businesses and gardens of historic significance.

Image source: http://ediblebristol.org.uk/urban-food-growing-trail-a-bristol-2015-project/

Image source: https://3.bp.blogspot.com/-B0JWodIcerw/WSqrujmAL7I/AAAAAAAAD5U/zZGcNhuKWPkGNOtHmN2Ql0lY1sYJmoP2gCLcB/s1600/Edible%2BBristol%2Bhashtags.jpg

Image source: http://www.chelseafringe.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Castle-20Park-veg-bed-copy.jpg

WATERFRONT ACTIVATION WITH A FOCUS ON SUSTAINABILITY

Bristol sits on the River Avon. Recent redevelopments of the harbour-side have been carried out through a playful engagement with urban drainage and water attenuation designed to encourage and support ecological diversity. This is most overt in the introduction of floating walkways for pedestrians and cyclists and floating reed beds designed to provide habitat for local wildlife, particularly water birds. The reed beds are currently being cared for by a community action group to ensure they are able to fulfil their intended purpose.

Image source: http://grant-associates.uk.com/approach/bristol-harbourside-floating-gardens/

A WALKABLE AND CYCLE FRIENDLY CITY

Improving connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists by making streets safer and easy to navigate has been a key focus in Bristol. This is apparent in the regular closing off of city-centre streets from cars for events such as “Make Sunday Special” (http://bristololdcity.co.uk/events/make-sunday-special-0) where citizens are invited to outdoor events.

Image source: http://www.southwestbusiness.co.uk/southwestbusiness-co-uk/_img/MakeSundaySpecial.jpg

Image source: https://it.pinterest.com/pin/332422016215871920/

The development of technology that enables and supports walking and cycling the city, particularly for children, has also been a key element of the strategy. The 2015 Green Capital Design Hackerthon led to the development of the ‘crocodile app’ designed to make it fun and safe to walk or cycle to school (http://crocodile.org.uk/). It is an online platform and app that enables the development of walking school buses and offers children the opportunity to earn rewards through participation.

Image source: http://crocodile.org.uk/

ENVIRONMENTAL ART INSTALLATIONS

SOLAR ENERGY TREE

The use of temporary and permanent installations in the city to encourage understanding of key environmental challenges, and our need to alter our living practices, has been used in Bristol.

The permanent installation of the Solar Energy Tree, an interactive installation that enables people to charge their phone and access wifi once they complete an energy quiz, invites consideration of renewal energy forms through the use of biomimicry

"A tree is a metaphor, a playful metaphor – all trees are solar trees. Hopefully [the tree] can plant a seed-thought about where our energy comes from, and why we rely so much on fossil fuels."
John Packer, designer and artist behind the Energy Tree.

Image source: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/europeangreencapital/news/events/energy-tree-launch-event/

http://bristolgreencapital.org/the-technology-behind-bristols-solar-tree/

FOG BRIDGE

'Fog Bridge' – a temporary weather artwork installation by Fujiko Nakaya was displayed in 2015. The work is designed to provide visitors with an embodied, multi-sensorial interaction with weather and the way that it can impede human actions and desires and force them to shift and adapt.

http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-bristol-31446975

WITHDRAWN

The temporary installation, *Withdrawn*, by Luke Jerram was also displayed in 2015 as part of the city's Green Capital year. The interactive artwork placed boats in local woods to prompt people to consider the realities of both the changed landscapes and economic shifts (loss of local fisheries) that may be induced by changes to the climate.

http://aprb.co.uk/projects/all-projects/2015/luke-jerram-withdrawn

URBAN GREEN SPACES: THE CITY AS AN ECOSYSTEM

Green spaces in cities, including peri-urban and suburban areas, provide key ecosystems services. They are critical to reducing urban heat island effects, providing wildlife corridors and improving air quality. Simultaneously, the health and wellbeing of urban dwellers has been shown to be supported through interaction with natural environments, with particular green spaces providing restorative and therapeutic benefits.

Global urban design interventions can address both these human and more-than-human concerns. Best practice initiatives in this sphere tend to draw on notions of urban spaces as 'living cities" (Hinchcliffe & Whatmore 2006: 125). For Hinchcliffe and Whatmore (2006) the notion of 'Living cities':

fleshes out a sense of ecological co-fabrication in which the life patterns and rhythms of people and other city dwellers are entangled with and against the grain of expert designs and blueprints. This conceptual shift from built environments (as they are termed in conventional Town and Country Planning) to living cities is allied to a realignment of the politics of nature such that cities are appreciated as 'ecological disturbance regimes rather than ecological sacrifice zones' (Wolch, 1998) in which people are no longer considered inimical to nature, nor nature antithetical to cities. (134).

Conceiving of the city as living, experimental urban sites of 'ecological co-fabrication' (Hinchcliffe & Whatmore 2006: 134) should be a driving force for urban design interventions as we see in the following global examples.

PARKLETS

Parklets are small interventions that slightly extend footpaths, usually into on-street parking spaces, to reclaim city space from cars. The spaces often include innovative seating and green elements that invite citizens to dwell. Parklets were born from the global activist-inspired PARK(ing) Day where carparks are temporarily taken over and redesigned for citizen use. The design interventions regularly include playful, disruptive elements that enhance the urban streetscape, enable place-making and can support health and well-being. The materials used are often recycled and mobile and these interventions can support wildlife, food production and pollination.

Image source:
https://www.flickr.com/photos/sdot_photos/16439889648

Image source:
https://i.pinimg.com/736x/6a/25/d1/6a25d1b8bc31da33cbb69d2c30a624d1--balboa-beach-urban-planning.jpg

Image source:
https://i.pinimg.com/originals/3b/eb/96/3beb967095fa5589b95d98dace4cb5d2.jpg

Image source:
https://www.flickr.com/photos/sfplanning/24067557270/in/photostream/

POP UP FOREST, SAN FRANCISCO

The Pop-Up Forest in Market Street San Francisco focuses on the role and importance of trees in urban areas by creating a playful site for celebrating forests. The neighbourhoods surrounding Market Street have one of the lowest tree canopies in San Francisco, and this pop-up is designed to create an engaging environment that encourages people to consider the value of trees in the urban environment.

The Pop-up forest features two mirrored walls among the selection of trees and narrative plants. The mirrored walls are positioned to reflect the trees in 'an infinitely repeated pattern', providing the experience of a entering a vast forest. To enhance the effect, native wildlife sounds are played over speakers while at night rows of LED lights reflect the forest into the mirrors to illuminate the forest and enhance the visual effect.

http://marketstreetprototyping.org/2016-festival/projects/pop-up-forest/

GREEN SPACES TO SUPPORT WILDLIFE, NATIVE PLANTS AND FOOD PRODUCTION

POLLINATOR PATHWAY, SEATTLE

The *Pollinator Pathway* (http://www.pollinatorpathway.com/) is a one-mile precinct in Seattle stretching between 2 significant swathes of green space from Seattle University to a large parkland. Along the route, grass verges were replaced with pollinator gardens emphasising the necessity of promoting connectivity between green spaces for both humans and wildlife in the city. Local householders were recruited into this participatory design intervention.

http://kuow.org/post/seattle-woman-builds-pathways-bees-birds-and-other-pollinators

http://www.studiomatthews.com/work/pollinator-pathway/

BIRDS IN CITIES

Providing accommodation for, and awareness of, the birds that live with us in cities can be done in playful ways that shift the perception of cities as locales divorced from nature.

HAPPY CITY BIRDS, DAMBO, DENMARK

Image source: https://www.treehugger.com/culture/artists-takes-trash-new-heights-habitat-urban-birds.html

Image source: https://www.treehugger.com/culture/artists-takes-trash-new-heights-habitat-urban-birds.html

BIRD APARTMENT, NAGANO, JAPAN

Image source: https://www.treehugger.com/culture/japan-treehouse-goes-birds-and-one-lucky-bird-watcher.html

BIRD VIEWING PLATFORMS

Image source: https://www.treehugger.com/culture/japan-treehouse-goes-birds-and-one-lucky-bird-watcher.html

BIOMIMICRY

BIOPHILIC BUG-DOME, SHENZHEN

Design interventions that draw on biomimicry can emphasise the presence and capacities of natural elements in cities by providing spaces for people to consider the co-inhabitants of our urban sites. The Biophilic Bug-dome designed by a group of architects known as WEAK! takes its cue from the homes of insects and was built primarily with materials from the site on which it was located at the Shenzhen and Hong Kong bi-city Biennale of Urbanism/Architecture in Shenzhen in 2009

Image source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bug_Dome#/media/File:Bug_Dome_by_WEAK!_in_Shenzhen.jpg

Image source: http://www.metrohippie.com/bug-dome-in-shenzhen/bug-dome-inside/

EDIBLE LANDSCAPES

Unexpected encounters with food production in cities, particularly where citizens are invited to harvest produce, relax in the productive spaces and participate in workshops can induce pleasant, playful encounters capable of encouraging a sustainable sensibility. To maximise awareness and contact, it is crucial that these encounters are embedded in the fabric of the city centre, not only its peri-urban edges.

INCREDIBLE EDIBLE TODMORDEN, TODMORDEN, ENGLAND

Todmorden aims to be the first town in England to be self-sufficient in food by 2018. What began as a small-scale community effort has engulfed the town. Incredible Edible Todmodern purports to be the home of a burgeoning 'vegetable tourism' industry. The Green Route of edible walkways provided interconnected pathways throughout the town creating a pedestrian thoroughfare.

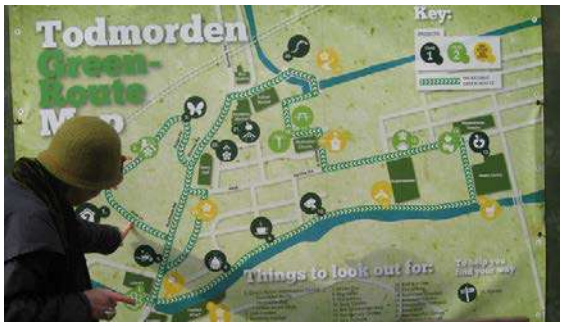


Image source: http://www.crp-ltd.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/img_4203.jpg

Image source: http://thegreenvillage.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Incredible-Edible.jpg

EDIBLE BUSTOPS, LONDON

Smaller scale edible design interventions are also popping up in London. Edible Bus Stops (http://theediblebusstop.org/projects/) invite community care for, and engagement in, these public spaces improving the experience of public transport and creating networks of green spaces connecting transport routes throughout cities.

Image source: http://www.carbongold.com/the-edible-bus-stop-transforming-the-forgotten-and-neglected-sites-across-londons-transport-network-into-community-growing-design-led-spaces/

Image source: http://www.urbanghostsmedia.com/2013/05/the-edible-bus-stop-transforming-abandoned-spaces-urban-interventionism/

Image source: http://trishgant.com/2012/05/26/changing-the-world-one-bus-stop-at-a-time/

Image source: https://au.pinterest.com/manuelaboeckle/urban-gardening/

Image source: http://theediblebusstop.org/about-us/

VERTICAL GARDENS, GREEN ROOFS AND CLIMATE RESILIENCE

Vertical gardens assist with dissipating urban heat island effects, add greenery and can support wildlife.

MUSÉE DU QUAI BRANLY, PARIS

Image source:
https://www.verticalgardenpatrickblanc.com/realisations/paris/quai-branly-museum

COPENHAGEN, DENMARK

Copenhagen, the European Green capital in 2014, the city aims to be carbon neutral by 2025. Green roofs are required and community food production is a key focus of this initiative.

Image source:
http://www.kobenhavnergron.dk/place/ostergro/?lang=en

CLOUDBURSTS, COPENHAGEN, DENMARK

Østerbro is designated a “climate-resilient” neighbourhood and houses Copenhagen’s only rooftop farm run by a Community Shared Agriculture (CSA) farm since April 2014. Plans are in place to include playful ways of managing intense periods of rain, known as cloudburst events.

http://klimakvarter.dk/en/om/

Designs for cloudburst events have already been integrated into another Copenhagen neighbourhood in St. Kjeld which has involved reclaiming parking spaces and replacing grass with denser urban planting with a rainforest sensibility attuned to the wet environment and capable of supporting urban wildlife.

"Rainwater is collected from the nearby roofs in an underground reservoir and used to surprise children and childlike souls when they rock a tile and the water splashes from giant metallic water drops.

The area is sloped to collect rainwater at the bottom of the slopes, where it seeps into the ground instead of being directed to the drains. Water from the streets is collected in so-called water beds, filled with mould that filters the water. This climate adaption creates capacity in the drains to prevent flooding and damages." (https://stateofgreen.com/en/profiles/orbicon/solutions/tasinge-square-copenhagen-s-first-climate-adapted-urban-area)

https://stateofgreen.com/en/profiles/ghb-landskabsarkitekter-a-s/solutions/taasinge-square

http://citiscope.org/sites/default/files/styles/large/public/tasinge-plads_credit_david_buchmann.jpg?itok=9G55KHrQ

URBAN GREEN SPACES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Sustainability can be embedded in urban design in innovative ways that produce practical outcomes and encourage reflection on everyday use of resources in a playful manner.

BIRD STREET, LONDON

At what is being called the world's first 'smart street' Pavegen are using footfall kinetic energy to power bird sounds in inner city London.

http://www.pavegen.com/

http://www.pavegen.com/bird-street

KINETIC ENERGY POWERED STREET LIGHTING, LAS VEGAS

Street Lighting can also be powered using kinetic energy in combination with other solar power to ensure continuity and safety. Las Vegas is paving the way:

https://smartcitiesworld.net/news/news/pedestrian-power-lights-up-las-vegas-1079

http://www.pennenergy.com/articles/pennenergy/2016/03/renewable-energy-las-vegas-and-engoplanet-partner-to-provide-new-clean-way-to-light-streets.html

PLAYFUL WASTE DISPOSAL ACTIVATIONS

REVERSE VENDING MACHINES

Reverse Vending machines with a reward system have been successfully trialled throughout the world. A combination of gamification and rewards have proved popular

GB RECYCLING

The GB "social recycling platform invites users to join challenges to win cash and prizes online". The crusher makes playful sounds as recycled material is placed in the machine.

Image source: http://news.mit.edu/2011/greenbean-stratton

RECYCLE AND REWARD, GLASGOW

Image source: https://au.pinterest.com/pin/538039486712622643/

REVERSE VENDING MACHINES, SYDNEY

Image source: http://www.aotuxinxi.com/bencandy.php?city_id=339&fid=145&id=10128

RECYCLING GAME, FUN THEORY

This example from the company 'fun theory' did not have rewards but focused on making recycling a gaming experience as participants needed to place their items in accordance with the sequence of flashing lights.

Image source:
https://realtimecities.wikispaces.com/Bottle+Bank+Arcade

LIGHTBULB RECYCLING, BRAZIL

Image source:
https://au.pinterest.com/pin/322429654546120028

PLAYFUL BINS

HOPSCOTCH BIN, LUCERNE, SWITZERLAND

Image source:
https://www.trendhunter.com/trends/lucerne-switzerland-uses-games-to-inspired-citizens-to-keep-the-city-clean

BASKETBALL RECYCLING

Image source:
https://au.pinterest.com/hubbubuk/neighbourhoods/

TETRIS BIN, NEW YORK

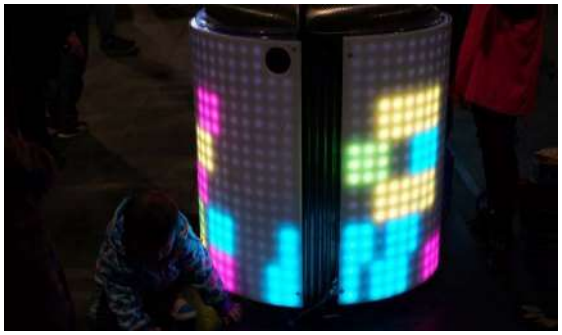


Image source: https://au.pinterest.com/lizagervais/city-life-garbage-cans/

COMPOST BIN INTERVENTION, NEW YORK

An attempt to make reuse of food waste more convenient and to raise awareness about this global issue has been enacted in New York through the reuse of newspaper vending machines fitted with a combination lock with the code provided to people who register. The food waste is collected by local gardeners and composted for use in local food production.

Debbie Ullman, the urban activist who started the Compost Box project.

PLAYFUL WALKING AND CYCLABILITY

Organisations such as Playcore have developed resources such as *Pathways for Play* (www.playcore.com/pathwaysforplay.html), which support the development of, and engagement in connected urban paths that encourage walking and cycling through a series of enticing play pocket experiences. These are experiences designed to "promote play, environmental awareness and family time" This can be enabled through fixed play spaces, their design and ongoing citizen-Government interactions employing forms of Co-design, participatory activities and DIY urbanism.

Nature-based play and natural playscapes have been documented to foster environmentally-minded behaviours in children (Wight et al 2016) but this is increasingly also being identified as a benefit for other age-groups. Soga and Gaston state that:

"Although much attention is being focused on childhood experiences, people's orientation toward nature is also likely to be reinforced by direct interactions in adulthood."

Image source:
http://www.americantrails.org/resources/kids/locating-playful-paths.html

URBAN GREEN SPACES, CREATIVITY AND RESILIENCE

Increasingly the creativity of cities is linked to agility and resilience as well as economic output (see *Cultural and Creative Cities Monitor 2017*). The European Unions' *Cultural and Creative Cities Monitor 2017* focuses on 3 key facets deemed to be indicative of a 'Cultural and Creative city':

'Cultural Vibrancy', which measures the cultural 'pulse' of a city in terms of cultural infrastructure and participation in culture;

'Creative Economy', which captures how the cultural and creative sectors contribute to a city's economy in terms of employment, job creation and innovation;

'Enabling Environment', which identifies the tangible and intangible assets that help cities attract creative talent and stimulate cultural engagement. (p. 1 annex a)

Creative citizens can be activated to be environmentally-minded and focused on addressing the key sustainability challenges we face in the present and future. Play spaces and spaces that support playful engagements have been shown to fast-track this activation. Play exceeds the sum of its parts and is itself 'a surplus: an excess of energy or spirit' (Massumi, 2014, p. 9) enabling creative reimaginings. It is, as Massumi writes, 'inventive', 'a veritable laboratory of forms of live action' (2014, p. 12). Indeed, Play provides a unique prompt supporting cross-generational engagement with the environment, and the more-than-human in general and playful art provides one such prompt. Some examples include:

THUNDERBOLT, SYDNEY

The artwork, *Thunderbolt*, by Bonita Ely commissioned by the Sydney Olympic Park Authority, fuelled by solar power and constructed using recycled materials changes colour in response to the energy consumption in the surrounding area.

Image source: http://www.niea.unsw.edu.au/research/projects/thunderbolt

LIVE FOREVER, LOS ANGELES

Live Forever by Jenna Didier and Oliver Hess (infranatural) is an interconnected collection of brass origami-inspired flowers fitted with LEDs on a Los Angeles fire station wall. The lights respond to humidity and temperature data collected on the roof of the station to communicate the impending fire risk.

Image source: http://eco-publicart.org/liveforever/

THE HIVE, LONDON

The Hive by Wolfgang Buttress is an audio-visual sculpture in Kew Gardens that immerses participants in the life of bees through the interconnections between the lights and sound displayed and the activity in a local beehive. It is designed to emphasise the critical role of honeybees in nurturing planetary life.

Image source: https://www.dezeen.com/2016/06/16/wolfgang-buttress-milan-expo-pavilion-relocates-kew-gardens-london-beehive-inspired-hive/

PLAYFUL ACTIVATION WITH COLOUR

PLAY
CREATIVITY
AND CULTURE

INTRODUCTION

Colour provides a legitimate strategy for playful activation of a site or feature in the short, medium or longer term. From chalk on the sidewalk, to street art, to colourful urban design features to whole neighbourhoods, colour can enliven spaces and enhance the aesthetic and embodied experience of cities. The following are examples of playful activation with colour.

WHY COLOUR?

Colour:

- Enlivens city spaces
- Offers a wide palate for changing the look and feel of a city site
- Provides playful and benign ways to alter perception and experience
- Can be embedded in a range of materials, from highly transient to permanent
- Flexible and can respond to changes in the environment
- Is comparatively inexpensive

UNDERPASS, BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA

Image source: https://creators.vice.com/en_au/article/53wmkb/disused-underpass-lights-up-into-a-rainbow-walkway-with-thousands-of-leds

PACHUA, NEW MEXICO

Pachuca, New Mexico. Image from https://exploring-and-observing-cities.org/2016/03/01/colorful-cities-a-little-paint-a-lot-of-pride/

ALLEYWAY, MADRID

Image source:
https://au.pinterest.com/pin/57561701461410722

BALBOA PARK, SAN DIEGO

Image source:
https://www.pinterest.com/pin/444449056967468544

3D STREET CHALK ART

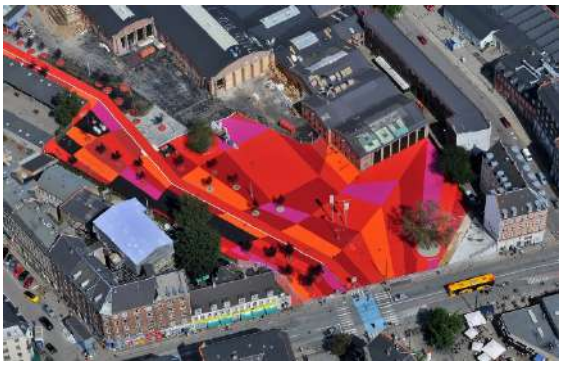
Image source: http://heavy.com/social/2013/04/the-20-awesomest-3d-sidewalk-chalk-drawings/

Image source: http://www.relativelyinteresting.com/must-see-sidewalk-chalk-art-illusions/

ABANDONED FACTORY, PUERTO RICO

Image source: http://popupcity.net/color-explosion-in-an-abandoned-factory/

SUPERKILEN PARK, COPENHAGEN



OUTDOOR FURNITURE, LEIPZIG

Image source:
https://au.pinterest.com/pin/339036678173163205

AMSTERDAM, NETHERLANDS

Image source:
https://www.pinterest.com/pin/827114287784953685

MEDELIN, COLUMBIA

Image source: https://exploring-and-observing-cities.org/2016/03/01/colorful-cities-a-little-paint-a-lot-of-pride/

Image from https://exploring-and-observing-cities.org/2016/03/01/colorful-cities-a-little-paint-a-lot-of-pride/

BASKETBALL COURT, PARIS

https://au.pinterest.com/pin/297096906646652077

PINK STREET, LISBON, PORTUGAL

Pink Street in Lisbon was once the home of the red light district, but this rehabilitation project has changed the status of this street. It now has a daytime and night time reputation, with cafes, bars and nightclubs coming alive.

Image source: http://www.parqmag.com/?p=39789

Image source: https://www.flickr.com/photos/pedrosimoes7/24429659302

STREET ART, HOSIER STREET, MELBOURNE

Image source:
https://au.pinterest.com/pin/324751823111593488/

XIYING RAINBOW BRIDGE, MAGONG, TAIWAN

Image source: http://www.thisiscolossal.com/2012/08/the-xiying-rainbow-bridge/

STAIRCASE, BEIRUT, LEBANON

Image source:
https://www.pinterest.com/pin/449234131567195572

PLAYFUL ACTIVATION FOR THE SEASONS

PLAY
CREATIVITY
AND CULTURE

INTRODUCTION

Seasonal activation provides year-round activities for citizens and visitors that not only complement the weather and climate but make the most of all they offer. This section only covers the more extreme seasons of summer and winter.

WINTER

GLOW WINTER FESTIVAL, STONNINGTON, MELBOURNE

The Glow Winter Festival is a ten day Festival in August that lights up buildings, parks and gardens in the suburb of Stonnington.

Images source: https://www.speakertv.com/arts/glow-winter-arts-festival/

Image source: http://www.weekendnotes.com/glow-winter-arts-festival/79692/

ALICE'S GARDEN

Image source: http://glowfestival.com.au/event/alices-garden/

GLOBAL WARMING HUTS, WINNIPEG, CANADA

The Global Warming Huts project is an annual competition held for designs of small structures that provide respite from the cold during winter.

Image source: https://beta.theglobeandmail.com/life/home-and-garden/architecture/how-urban-designers-are-getting-canadians-outside---even-in-the-deepest-freeze/article22676397/?ref=http://www.theglobeandmail.com&

WARMING POMPOMS

Image source: https://au.pinterest.com/pin/268034615297062326/

THE ICE, HOUSTON DISCOVERY GREEN

The Ice is powered by Green Mountain Energy using recycled water from Kinder Lake to create a 7,716 square-foot ice skating surface, making it the largest outdoor skating rink in the Southwest. The Ice hosts a variety of programs from November through to early February.

Image source: https://365thingsinhouston.com/2015/11/26/ice-at-discovery-green-houston-2015-2016/

ICE FROSTIVAL CARVING COMPETITION

NILES ICE FESTIVAL, MICHIGAN

ICE PING PONG TABLE

ICE SLIDE

Images source:
http://www.theresasmixednuts.com/2016/01/ice-fun-at-niles-ice-festival.html

WINTER ART INSTALLATION, UNKNOWN

https://au.pinterest.com/pin/21532904440092527/

WINTER NIGHT MARKET, QUEEN VICTORIA MARKET, MELBOURNE

The Winter Night Market runs every Wednesday 5pm to 10pm from the first week of June to the last week of August. The Market includes a light display, street performers, live music, warm drinks, global food traders and open fires.

Images from: https://thenightmarket.com.au/

SUMMER

Alongside the city beach and water play installations, these ideas provide playful respite from the summer heat, and/or engaging activities during the summer months.

ART INSTALLATION, ST LOUIS, MAURITIUS

Image source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Umbrella#/media/File:Umbrellas_at_Caudan_Waterfront_Mall.JPG

PICNURBIA, VANCOUVER

Picnurbia is an undulating 116 square metres of yellow astroturf hillocks and umbrellas that provides gathering space and shade in the city. Picnurbia involves the closure of a single line of traffic and also incorporates nearby Robson Square.

ROBSON ST ON A REGULAR DAY

Image source: https://www.pps.org/places/picnurbia/

CHRISTMAS SQUARE, MELBOURNE

Christmas Square differs from other Christmas events because it does not incorporate retail aside from the production of Christmas card portraits. In this sense it offers a public space to engage people with the spirit of the season in a public way – with signage, post boxes, Advent calendar, Christmas-inspired balloon artists and yarn bombing, garden displays and Santa meetings.

Image source: https://www.weekendnotes.com/city-of-melbourne-christmas-festival/

Image source:
http://www.banyulenillumbikkids.com.au/christmas/christmas-in-city-square/

Image source: Cathy Hope, author

PLAYFUL LIGHT ACTIVATION

PLAY
CREATIVITY
AND CULTURE

It is only with the benefit of light, after all, that urban spaces become accessible at night.

INTRODUCTION

Light is pivotal to activating a city at night time. Not only do lights illuminate the city in an instrumental way, but they create a sense of safety, and an ambience that shapes our experience of that city. Light is becoming increasingly recognised as an art form in its own right, with thousands of Light Festivals worldwide - like Canberra's own *Enlighten* – serving as testaments to the playful possibility of light in enlivening and creating novel encounters in cities.

The following are examples of playful light activations in cities.

21 BALANCOIRES ILLUMINATED

21 Swings is an interactive musical installation in the Quartier des Spectacles in Montreal. At night the swings are illuminated to encourage night time use and in so doing, to activate the Quartier.

Image source: http://www.archilovers.com/stories/2107/21-balancoires.html

SOLAR TREE ART, EUROPE

Image source: https://au.pinterest.com/pin/574631233674828970

Image source: http://www.archilovers.com/stories/2107/21-balancoires.html

SHADOWING, BRISTOL

Another project supported by Playable Cities called “Shadowing” took place in Bristol in 2014. In this project, eight street lights had projection and digital recording equipment attached to them so they could record the movement of pedestrians passing beneath them. The recoded movement would be played back as a shadow, and projected onto the pavement as an image of a person who had previously passed the streetlight. This invited playful interaction with urban spaces, and saw people seeking out the lights and playing with the installation, often in groups.

Shadowing Halloween: Images source: https://www.playablecity.com/projects/shadowing/

GINZA 2ND AVENUE 2, TOKYO

Image source:
https://au.pinterest.com/pin/385057836873729874/

ISHOJ STATION, COPENHAGEN

The Isohj Station project aimed to create a lighting design that combined safety and legibility with a distinct and artistic night time identity for the Station. The concept was inspired by the element water, creating a link to the maritime environment and the Museum of Modern Art – thus enhancing the existing art axis in the area.

Images source: http://www.illumni.co/ishoj-station-by-af-lighting/

SEE SAW NIGHT INSTALLATIONS, UNKNOWN

Image source:
https://au.pinterest.com/pin/298926494000865623

JEEPERS PEEPERS, FIGMENT, BOSTON

Jeepers Peepers are a small art installation at Boston's Figment Festival – providing a point of day time and night time interest, while illuminating the gardens in which the Festival is held.

Image source: https://www.flickr.com/photos/figmentproject/30191568045/

Image source: https://www.flickr.com/photos/figmentproject/29562483624/

SPECTRA, MARINA BAY, SINGAPORE

Spectra is a free 15 minute outdoor light, laser and water show along the Marina Bay promenade. The show involves orchestral music, water and light powered by lasers, fountain jets and visual projectors.

Image source: http://www.singapore-guide.com/attractions/three-great-light-shows.htm?cid=ch:OTH:001

CONFETI, PLAZA DE CHUECA, MADRID

Confeti was a temporary intervention in a public space installed for the Christmas season.

Images source: https://au.pinterest.com/andrew2020/sergio-sebastian/

WAYFINDING LIGHTING, DUBAI

Image source:
https://au.pinterest.com/pin/564498134515968466

FINSBURY SQUARE, LONDON

100, 000 energy efficient LED lights are embedded in the landscaping of the Square, which produce 10 different light displays – each of them triggered by the movement across the length of the square.

Image source:
https://au.pinterest.com/pin/483433341240802437

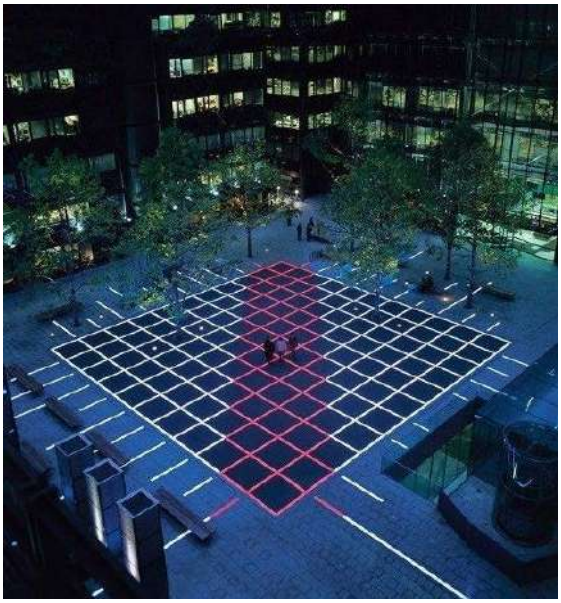


Image source:
https://au.pinterest.com/pin/545498573596754424

Image source:
https://au.pinterest.com/pin/398076054553546743

BRIDGE BY RIVER, UNKNOWN

Image source:
https://au.pinterest.com/pin/220254237997752457

https://au.pinterest.com/pin/78320480993094091/

GLOBAL RAINBOW, WORLDWIDE

The Global Rainbow installation beams seven rays of high specification laser light, representing the spectrum of the seven colours of the rainbow. This installation has been displayed in over 15 cities since 2009.

Image source: http://www.yvettemattern.com/about/

GUERILLA LIGHTING, WORLDWIDE

Guerilla lighting involves temporary (and possibly covert) installation of lighting in identified sites for a variety of purposes, but with intervention or reclamation of sites in cities, and aesthetic or artistic endeavour as motivating factors.

100 DOLPHIN TORCHES, MELBOURNE

Image source: http://guerrillalighting.blogspot.com/

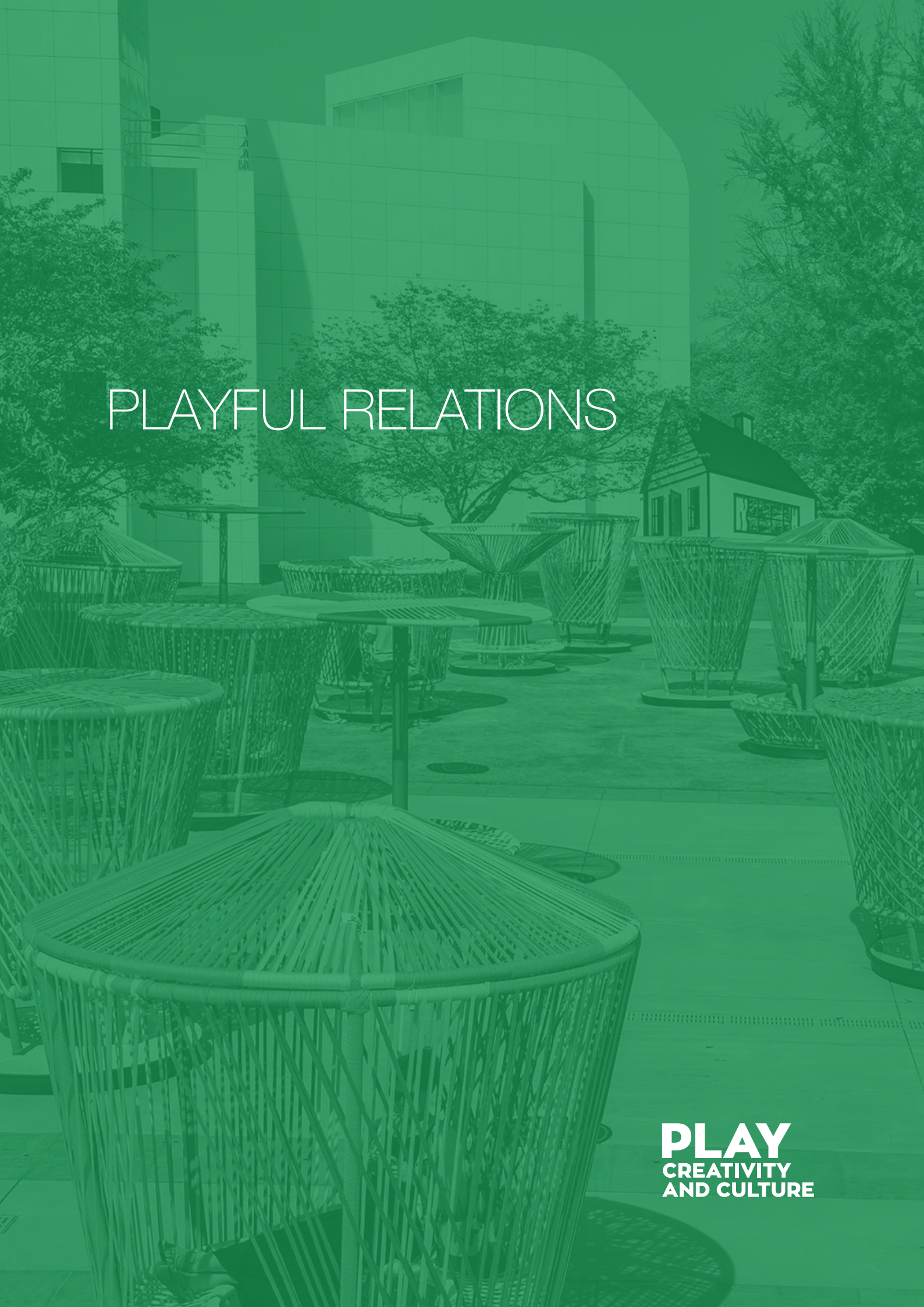
ISTANBUL

NEW YORK

Image source: https://www.buzzfeed.com/luckytran/12-amazing-guerrilla-light-projections-you-may-hav-hrv3?utm_term=.arYgVbkmz#.xuOY2AJOG

MANCHESTER

Image source: https://www.pinterest.com/pin/477592735454769497



PLAYFUL RELATIONS

PLAY
CREATIVITY
AND CULTURE

As well as meeting our economic needs, cities affect our ability to meet our fundamental human need to have meaningful, positive interactions with other people.

Kelly & Donegan, 2015: 64

Democracy does not require perfect equality, but what it does require is that citizens share in a common life. What matters is that people of different social backgrounds and different walks of life encounter one another, bump up against one another in the ordinary course of life…

Michael Sander

INTRODUCTION

The public realm in urban environments provides an opportunity to encourage triangulation, which is “that characteristic of a public space that can bring people together, strangers. It’s usually an external stimulus of some kind”. (Bagneres, 2015)

The following activations include pop-ups and design features that encourage engagement with strangers, and thus enhance the role of the public realm in creating positive incidental encounters.

CHATTERBOX BALLPIT, UNKNOWN US CITY

Chatterbox was designed by participant media company Soul Pancake as a response to the increasing difficulty of making friends as we grow older. The Ball Pit provided cues for participation, including signage and larger balls with topics to start conversation.

Images source: http://imgur.com/gallery/h9OfH

LOS TROMBOS, DISCOVERY GREEN PARK, HOUSTON

This art installation of woven spinning tops that require two or more people working together to make the tops spin, thus fostering a positive engaging connection.

Image source: http://www.archdaily.com/784418/esrawe-plus-cadena-emplazan-los-trompos-instalacion-temporal-inspirada-en-juguete-mexicano/56b3e898e58ecefad30008f2-esrawe-plus-cadena-emplazan-los-trompos-instalacion-temporal-inspirada-en-juguete-mexicano-image

WELCOME DOOR, FIGMENT, BOSTON

Welcome Door is an installation at one entrance to the Boston Figment Festival. When you walk through the door you are greeted by a stranger who welcomes you with positive verbal and physical contact.

Image source: https://www.flickr.com/photos/figmentproject/30157323946/

DOUBLE HAMMOCKS, GOVERNORS ISLAND, NEW YORK

Image source: https://govisland.com/activities/hammocks

MEETING BOWLS, NEW YORK

The Meeting Bowls are designed to generate a slight rocking motion as they rebalance when people step into and out of them. The gentle motion generated is intended to be relaxing and fun much like a swing, but for adults. This temporary and playful urban furniture encourages friendly dialogue between strangers in a close yet pleasant space.

They are large objects shaped like bowls with seating to accommodate eight people. The inviting semi-spherical capsules are installed outdoors in spaces with high pedestrian traffic. They are designed to promote interaction by having those seated inside face one another. These “social” benches are more intimate than typical public benches.

Image from: https://landarchs.com/the-meeting-bowls-a-new-hub-of-social-activity-along-times-square/

THEIRPONG, HILDESHAM, GERMANY

Two students from the HAWK University have created touchscreen traffic light displays where pedestrians can play a game of Pong with a stranger on the other side of the street. Their StreetPong project has been commissioned by the City of Hildesheim.

Image source: http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2868719/German-students-install-Pong-arcade-game-traffic-lights.html

STOP, SMILE, STROLL, UK

"Stop Smile Stroll is a playful intervention at pedestrian crossings that brings strangers together for a serendipitous moment of shared fun while breaking the mundane 'stop and walk' routine. The traffic light experience aims to subtly reference important moments of our routine by bringing a twist to them: Daily data, touching on the weather, rush hour, our working hours, traffic, current events and more, will be translated into snippets of recognised songs, images, or phrases – offering food for thought, or simply putting a smile on the pedestrians and drivers' faces while they wait for the light to turn green.

Pedestrians will press a button to cross the road. When the light goes green for them, sounds, lights, images and other transformations will bring the cross walk to life; encouraging passers by and people in the cars to participate as much as they choose. No matter how much they get involved, they will all have an opportunity for a memorable experience. The transformations will reference local data points, aiming to be relevant to its community."

Image source: https://www.playablecity.com/projects/stop-smile-stroll/

BIMBLE, OXFORD

A bimble is 'a walk without a purpose.' Bimble is a Playable City initiative in conjunction with Oxford City Council that enables people to share walks throughout Oxford city that create micro-adventures for others.

"Colourful, dramatic and beautifully designed interactive stickers with QR codes on them will appear all over Oxford overnight. Scan the code with your phone and it will show that your current location is part of an existing bimble. You will see a little map, and on this the other few stops that make up that micro-journey. You will also see other bimble trails close by for you to browse or explore. Bimble creators can have a public profile which means you can choose to go on a bimble created by an artist or perhaps a sous-chef or a local parent depending on your interests at that time.

The project brings together the entire community; from those who frequent Oxford because they live, work or visit here, to those whose businesses depend on the trade therein. Oxford is a diverse community and Bimble encourages integration and celebrates this by helping us to see things through the eyes of others.

Bimbles also provide a valid structure for those reluctant to start exploring by themselves.

It encourages people to get outside and explore either on foot or by bike and uncovers routes to places that are as yet undiscovered by the bimble user. There are obvious health benefits for all, getting people off screens and engaging with the city."

Image source: https://bimblehq.com/

CONNECTING FURNITURE, MOBILIARO, MEXICO

Image source:
https://au.pinterest.com/pin/377387643759070558/

FURNITURE INTERVENTION, NEW YORK

BEFORE I DIE, WORLDWIDE

"BEFORE I DIE has become a global participatory public art project that reimagines our relationship with death and with one another. The original wall was created on an abandoned house in New Orleans by artist Candy Chang after the death of someone she loved. Since then, over two thousand BEFORE I DIE walls have been created in over 70 countries around the world. Each wall is created by local residents who want to make a space in their community to restore perspective and share more with one another. Each wall is a tribute to living an examined life."

Image from: https://s-media-cache-ak0.pinimg.com/736x/b7/db/3a/b7db3a48a39f0d8bfe996efdea177265--space-projects-art-projects.jpg

SUBWAY THERAPY, UNION SQUARE, NEW YORK

Subway Therapy is an art project in Union Square that enables strangers to share their thoughts with others via post-it notes.

Image source: http://popupcity.net/spread-the-underground-word/

PLAYFUL MOVEMENT

PLAY
CREATIVITY
AND CULTURE

INTRODUCTION

Current best practice in the design of people-led cities privileges pedestrians over vehicles. The last decade or so has thus seen an increase in the promotion of walking as a sustainable and healthy mode of transport. (Middleton, 2010) Designing a walkable city means dedicating more land to squares, plazas, laneways and other features that enable pedestrian traffic and encourage footfall. A walkable city also requires a highly connective street network that is legible and human-scale. (Healthy Places and Spaces, 2009)

Studies suggest that walkability is enhanced when people are engaged by their urban environment. A diverse and dynamic streetscape which feels safe improves walkability. Thus streetscapes with shops, cafes, public art, and other attractions such as opportunities for people-watching provide points of engagement and distract from the experience of distance walked. (Hansen, 2014). Walkability is also enhanced by signage and wayfinding strategies that contribute to the permeability and legibility of a city.

The following examples offer playful strategies for encouraging movement, and improving legibility and permeability.

PLAYABLE CITY ACTIVATIONS

MISCHIEVOUS FOOTPRINTS

"Designed as an antithesis to walking with your head down using a phone, this installation uses embedded pressure sensors and LED lights to capture footstep data of people walking on the pavement and leaves a trail of glowing footprints. The footprints can even "break free", running ahead of their owners of their own free will.

Mischievous Footprints invites citizens to play and connect with the city in a new way as they travel along a city's roads.

Mischievous Footprints places playful prompts in city streets, drawing out new behaviours such as taking a meandering path or standing still to look around through playful prompts. Using technology so pavements show the changing behaviour of people, a reflection of the natural evolution of roads, Mischievous Footprints shows that the city landscape is alive with new discoveries.

When the playfulness of pavements make us journey through the city with the eyes of an explorer, we start to cultivate a stronger interest in our cities and our travels through the city become journeys that initiate new connections, person to person, person to city."

Image source: https://www.designweek.co.uk/issues/26-september-2-october-2016/playable-cities/

DANCE STEP CITY

Dance Step City gives pedestrians license to dance their way down the street, turning a few steps from an ordinary walk into a playful and magical journey. This installation uses a combination of overhead laser projectors and directional audio to create a rhythmic journey down a section of pedestrian walkway. Inspired by classic scenes like Gene Kelly dancing through puddles in Singing in the Rain, Dance Step City will offer a set of dance steps tailored to the environment, that take participants on a playful romp. Participants will be able to simply follow along the steps like a multimedia hopscotch grid or add their individual flair to the steps, creating their own performative journey."

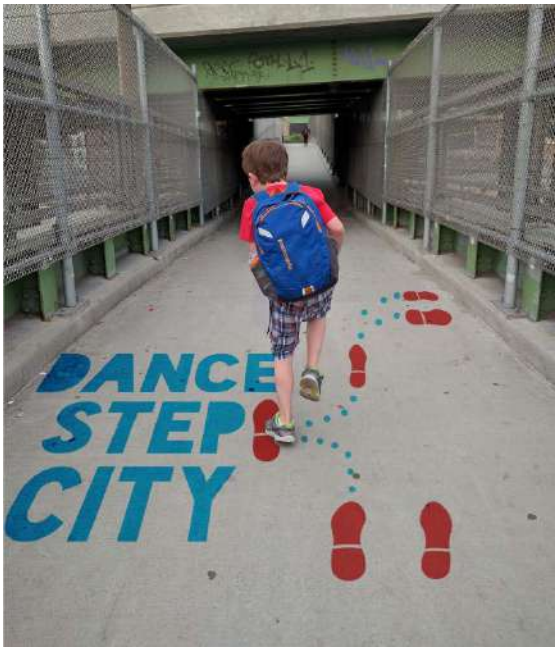


Image source: https://www.designweek.co.uk/issues/26-september-2-october-2016/playable-cities/

PLAYFUL PATHS

Playful paths generate non-linear movement and in so doing engage people in walking for further distances to reach the same destination.

WHERE THE RIVERS RUN, WUHAN, CHINA

Image source:
https://www.pinterest.com/pin/339529259387165404

Image source: http://www.archdaily.com/776474/penda-designs-river-inspired-landscape-pavilion-for-chinas-garden-expo/5638b2d1e58ece6e640000e6-penda-designs-river-inspired-landscape-pavilion-for-chinas-garden-expo-photo

BLACK MARKET, SUPERKILEN, COPENHAGEN

Image from http://www.visitcopenhagen.com/copenhagen/superkilen-park-gdk707822

UNIVERSITY OF CINCINNATI CAMPUS, OHIO

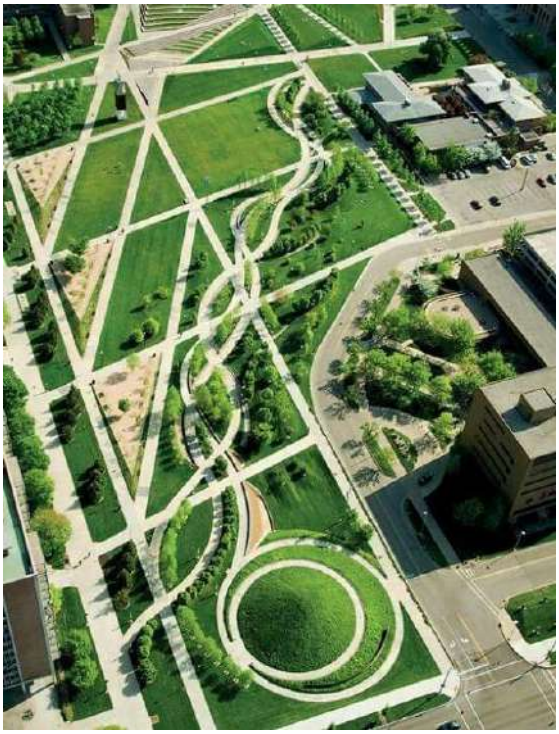


Image source: https://www.pinterest.com/pin/371195194271045324

TAPE ART, NEW YORK

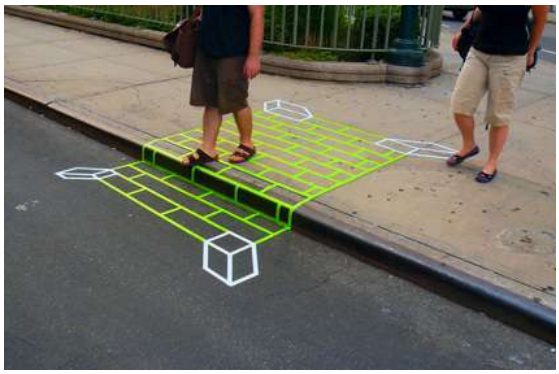


Image source: https://www.artistaday.com/?p=2745

Image source: https://indulgy.com/post/uolVrHsEF1/nature-walk-by-aakash-nihalani-noah-kalina

FLOOR MARKINGS

"Floor markings intervene in a space by changing the appearance of the ground. They were chosen as a suitable form of intervention as they can guide movement through a space or establish points of interest, yet do not physically impede pedestrian flow. Floor marks are regularly used in public spaces to assist direction to services (e.g. train platforms, lifts, taxis, etc.) or advertising. As it is not necessary for pedestrians to alter their movement path in order to pass through the space investigated, changes in behaviour in response to the intervention can be attributed to engagement with the intervention."

Image source: http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13574809.2015.1106913

CARPET PATH, JAUJAC, FRANCE

http://inhabitat.com/gaelle-villedarys-green-carpet-rolls-through-provincial-town-in-southern-france/

PLAYFUL PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS

https://au.pinterest.com/pin/566398090623179209/

Image source:
https://www.pinterest.com/pin/788904059695454869

Image source:
https://au.pinterest.com/pin/543035667559307440

Image source:
https://au.pinterest.com/pin/394909461063043544

WALK YOUR CITY, WORLDWIDE

Walk Your City links informational street signs with web-based campaign management and data collection to complement traditional approaches to wayfinding.

Image source: http://www.morethangreen.es/en/walk-your-city/

CIRKELBROEN, COPENHAGEN

Cirkelbroen is a pedestrian bridge that makes it easier for residents to walk, jog and cycle along the inner waterfront. Around 5,000 cyclists and pedestrians are expected to cross the bridge on a daily basis. This bridge is designed to reflect the district's maritime history by using the sailing boat as inspiration for the design.

Cirkelbroen, Copenhagen. Image source: https://nordeafonden.dk/about-nordea-fonden/cirkelbroen-by-olafur-eliasson

PLAYFUL PEDESTRIAN CROSSING LIGHTS

Image source: https://www.pinterest.com/pin/485685141033790689

ASTROBOY, TOKYO

Image source: https://www.pinterest.com/pin/197736239868756671

LIGHTS ENCOURAGING MOVEMENT, UNKNOWN

POSITIVE AFFIRMATION, SAME SEX COUPLES, VIENNA

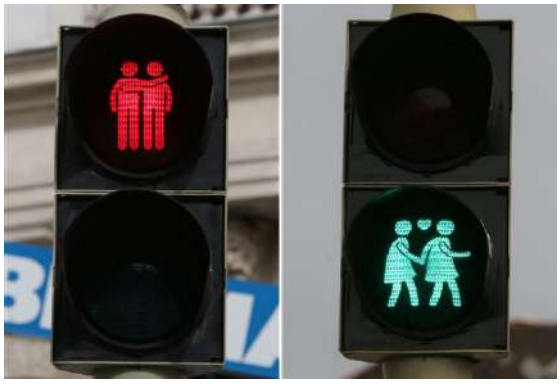


Image source:
https://www.lgbtqnation.com/2015/05/vienna-traffic-signals-go-red-and-green-gay-and-straight/

SIGNAGE

Signage is not only essential for a city's legibility and permeability, but provides opportunities to offer multiple ways to explore a city and in so doing, encourage movement and exploration. Signs can also offer playful ways of 'reading' the city experience.

LES BERGES DE SEINE

REBOOT UNIVERSE PEDESTRIAN LIGHT BUTTONS, UNKNOWN

https://au.pinterest.com/pin/21532904440092527/

YARN BOMB STOP SIGN, UNKNOWN

FIGMENT, BOSTON

Image source:
https://www.flickr.com/photos/figmentproject/30106911471/

Image source:
https://www.flickr.com/photos/figmentproject/30106911911/in/photostream/

Image source:
https://www.flickr.com/photos/figmentproject/29562479884/

CHALKBOARDS, BRISTOL, UK

Chalkboards provide cheap and temporary sites for signage, like this sign in one of Edible Bristol's food garden. This sign attracts attention with its playful, accessible message, and provides information at the same time.

http://ediblebristol.org.uk/urban-food-growing-trail-a-bristol-2015-project/100-temple-street/

PLAYFUL SIGN INTERVENTIONS, SYDNEY

Artist Michael Pederson "makes use of pre-existing elements like park benches or abandoned furniture to share messages meant to snap a viewer out of their daily routine and see the world from a more contemplative or even childlike perspective, if only for a moment".

Image source:
http://www.thisiscolossal.com/2015/10/sydney-street-signs/

PLAYFUL ACTIVATIONS ENCOURAGING PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

MOBILE MINI GOLF, WORLDWIDE

Image source:
https://au.pinterest.com/pin/366339750910855828

PARKLET, RIDING TO WATCH A MOVIE, COVINGTON, OHIO

Riding the bikes in this parklet powers the screen which plays a movie.

http://www.cincinnatimagazine.com/citywiseblog/covington-parklets/

MIND OVER MADNESS YOGA, TIMES SQUARE, NEW YORK

Yoga practitioners celebrate the summer solstice during the Mind Over Madness event in New York's Times Square, Wednesday, June 20, 2012. At least 14,000 people attended on the longest day of the year.

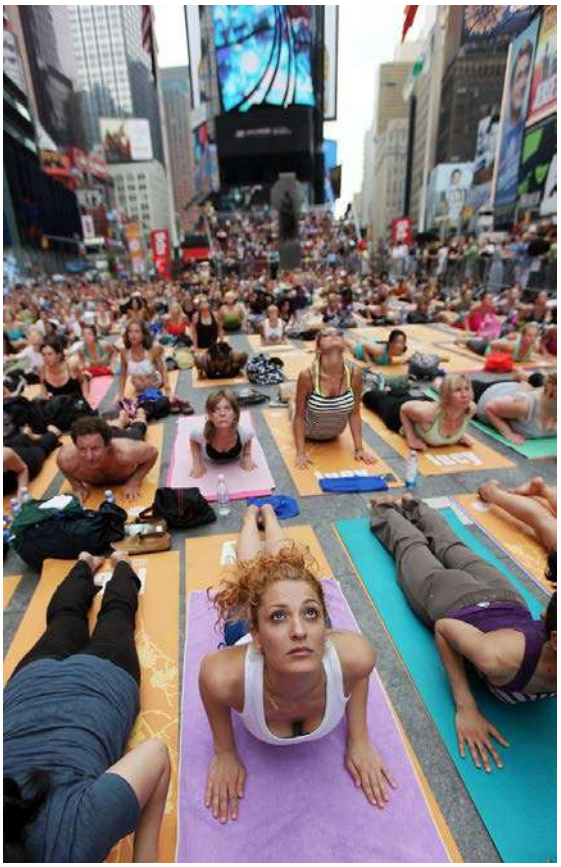


Image source:
https://au.pinterest.com/pin/305611524684072134

RAAGHIRI DAY, NEW DELHI

Raahgiri Day closes down several central "ring" streets every Sunday morning, and in doing so attracts over 10,000 people of all ages to bike, skate, run, walk, dance, learn yoga, exercise, and zumba together as a community.

Image source: https://pps-placemaking.exposure.co/raahgiri-day

UNIRE/UNITE, MAXXI PIAZZA, ROME

Embedded in the design of this ensemble are yoga and other exercise positions that relax, stretch and strengthen the body.

Image source: https://au.pinterest.com/pin/456482112207525396/

Image source: https://au.pinterest.com/pin/280419514275014773/

EMERGENCY FOOTBALL, BRAZIL

A new campaign in Brazil called “Be More Child” is placing footballs in boxes throughout the streets in order to encourage kids to get outside and play.

The balls are locked away in the boxes which state “In Case of Football, Open Here” and only local children are provided with keys which enable access to these boxes.

Image source:
https://au.pinterest.com/pin/127508233178724270

CLIMBING WALL, SCIOTO MILE

This is the largest free outdoor climbing wall in the USA at 35 feet high. Climbing is free, but climbers must bring their own ropes and equipment. The climbing wall opens at 9am and closes one hour before the park closes. On the second Friday of the month, from March through November, the climbing wall will stay open till midnight.

Image source: http://indoorwalls.com/listings/Scioto-Audubon-Metro-Park-Climbing-Wall

OPEN AIR GYM, MEDELLIN, COLUMBIA

Image source: http://news.trust.org/slideshow/?id=fb411c17-22be-44d7-b960-54c5af6ab046

PUCKELBALL, WORLDWIDE

Puckelball is a playful take on the soccer field. According to its designer:

"the pitch's irregularities neutralise the players' skills. It is not at all certain that the best football player is also the greatest puckelball hero. If the ball doesn't bounce where you think it will everybody has a chance."

"The unevenness of the field is intended to invite more imaginative ways to play, and to encourage play between girls and boys, old and young, skilled against unskilled, on equal footings, challenging the physical elitism inherent in most sporting activities. But serious footballers find it useful, too…for practice in responding to unpredictability."

MALMÖ, SWEDEN

Image source: http://www.play-scapes.com/play-art/playable-sculpture/puckelball-pitch-the-worlds-first-johan-strom-malmo-sweden-2009/

MINNESOTA, USA

Image source: http://www.play-scapes.com/play-design/contemporary-design/puckelball-st-paul-minnesota/

WATER PLAY

PLAY
CREATIVITY
AND CULTURE

INTRODUCTION

Water provides a playful sensory experience that can activate sites in the warmer months and create experiential connections between the urban and natural environments. For this reason, water is a popular feature of many urban renewal plans.

This section adds to those examples of water play already provided in this Report (see Brisbane Southbank and Copenhagen).

WHY WATER PLAY?

- It provides a sanctuary in warmer months – particularly for cities that are not located near the ocean or other swimmable bodies of water
- It appeals to the full demographic spectrum, cutting across age, socio-economic status and cultural background
- It can be used to playfully educate the public about this precious resource
- It enables people to connect with nature in a sensorial way
- It can include design principles to enhance the aesthetic appeal of a site

DISCOVERY GREEN WATER FESTIVAL, HOUSTON, TEXAS

Discovery Green is a highly activated 12 acre urban park in Houston, Texas. The Water Festival was part of the 2015 *Maravilloso* contemporary circus and dance event featuring local and international talent. The Festival was performed on Kinder Lake in a series of glowing flowers, and in the water features throughout the Park.

Image source: https://thecoog.wordpress.com/2015/06/06/a-few-pictures-of-maravilloso-2015-the-water-festival-discoverygreen-discoverygreen/

DUMPSTER PROJECT, LONDON

Image source: https://au.pinterest.com/pin/75013150026302660/

SCIOTO MILE FOUNTAIN, COLUMBUS, OHIO

The Scioto Mile Fountain is the extraordinary centrepiece of the Scioto Mile Waterfront Park. The Fountain is sponsored by the American Electric Power Foundation and is:

- 15,000 square feet
- 200 feet long
- Holds 110,000 gallons of water in an underground reservoir
- Shoots jets of water 75 feet into the air from its circular centre blossom
- Features five stainless-steel halo structures with 1,100 fog nozzles
- 1,079 ground-level spray nozzles make up 24 hedgerows

Image source: http://www.sciotomile.com/fountain-fun-summer-concerts-mile/

FOUNTAIN AT NIGHT

Image source: http://www.mkskstudios.com/projects/scioto-mile-columbus-ohio.html

PARK AND SLIDE PROJECT, BRISTOL

Image source: https://www.lukejerram.com/urban_slide/

APPEARING ROOMS, LONDON

This structure sends walls of water high into the air to create 'rooms', which appear and disappear in a series of patterns.

Image source:
https://www.southbankcentre.co.uk/venues/hayward-gallery/past-exhibitions

CANOE AND KAYAK RENTAL STATION, ALBERT LEA LAKE, MINNESOTA

Image source:
http://www.albertleatribune.com/2015/07/canoe-and-kayak-rental-open-to-the-public/

SUGAR BEACH, TORONTO

Image source:
https://www1.toronto.ca/parks/prd/facilities/complex/2261/index.htm

Images source:
http://www.landezine.com/index.php/2014/01/sugar-beach-by-claude-cormier-associes/

FOUNTAIN, HYDE PARK, LONDON

Image source: http://5osa.com/entry/Bertrand-Lavier-SerpentineFountainunruly-mass

WATER GARDEN, FORT WORTH TEXAS

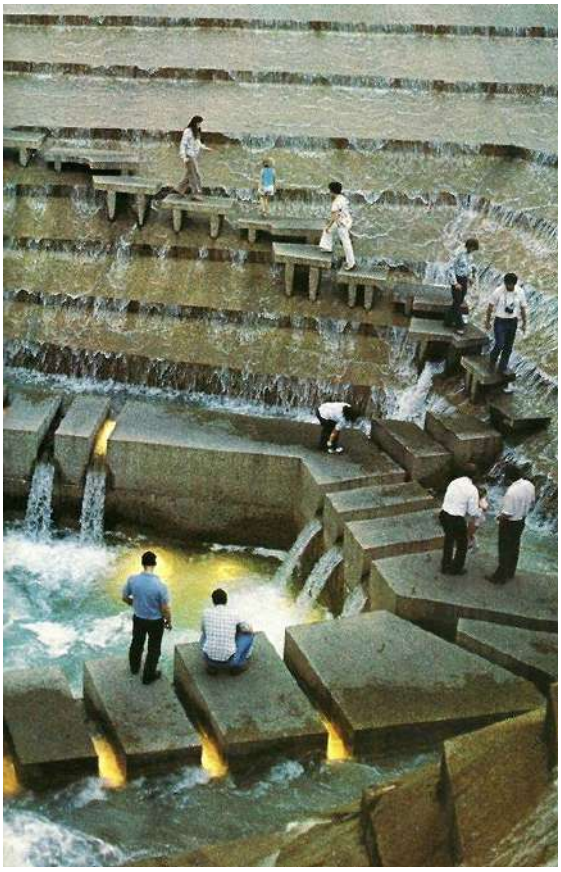


Image source:
https://www.pinterest.com/pin/226517056230516764

WATER GARDEN AT NIGHT

Image source:
https://www.flickr.com/photos/mygs29/7155195979

CHEONGGYECHEON CANAL, SEOUL, KOREA

Image source:
https://www.pinterest.com/pin/541698661412406400

CHEONGGYECHEON LANTERN FESTIVAL

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PLAY
CREATIVITY
AND CULTURE

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