



CITY STREET⁴

STREETS FOR 2030
PROPOSING STREETS FOR INTEGRATED AND
UNIVERSAL MOBILITY

LJUBLJANA 23.&24.9.2020



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A-Place: Linking Places Through Networked Artistic Practices

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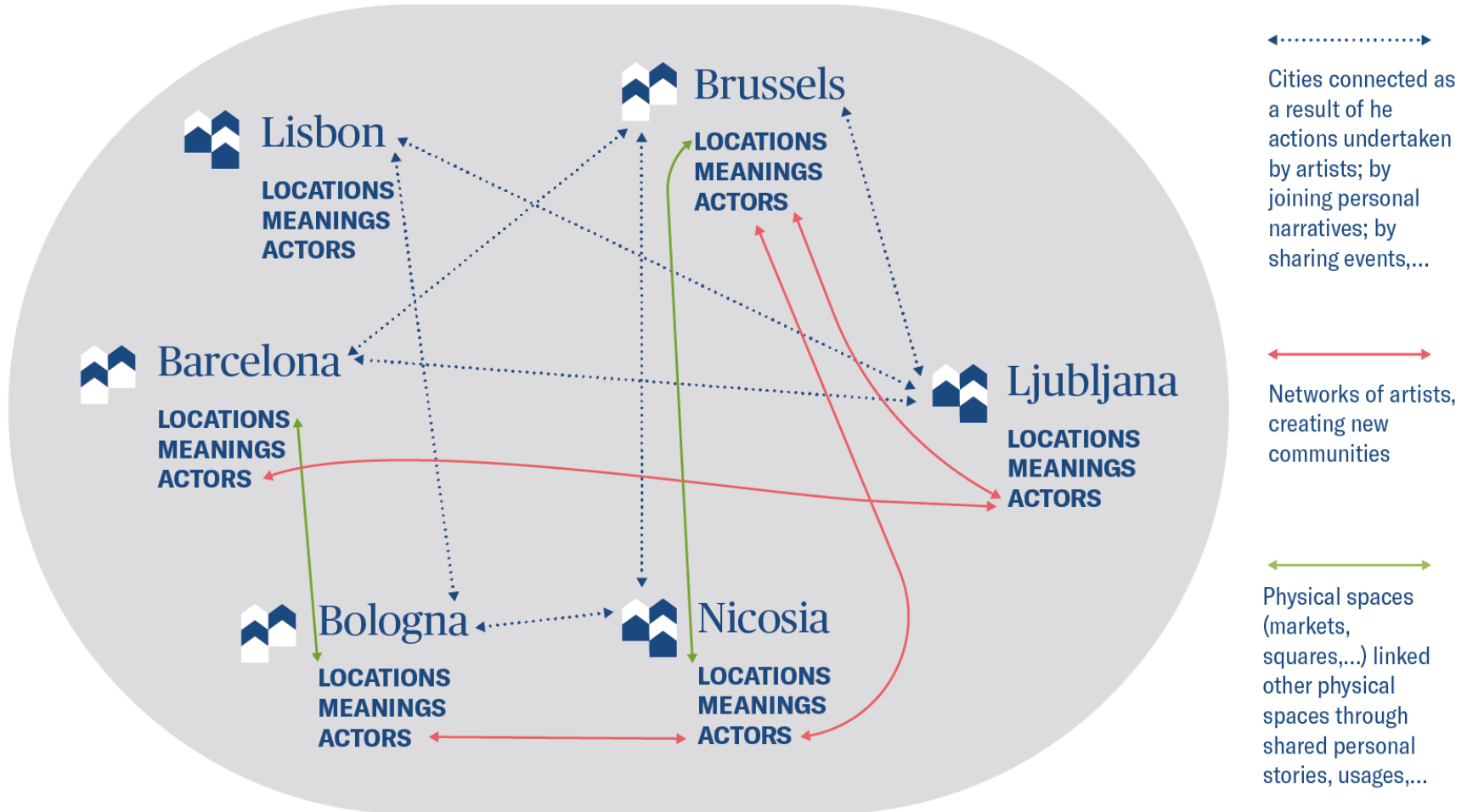
1. INTRODUCTION

A-Place “Linking places through networked artistic practices”, is a project co-funded by the Creative Europe programme (2019-2023)

The objectives of the project are:

- To design and implement art-centred **placemaking activities** in six European cities: Barcelona, Bologna, Brussels, Lisbon, Ljubljana, and Nicosia.
- To connect **meanings and experiences** associated to **places across cultural and geographic boundaries**.
- To involve **local residents** (from multiple cultural backgrounds) and **transient population** (refugees, tourists, business travellers, temporary workers), in collaboration with **artists and educational staff** participating in the project.

1. INTRODUCTION



A network of places

2. PLACE AND PLACEMAKING

The **idea of place** -in opposition to the **concept of space**-implies the existence of bonds between people and the environment they inhabit. Places are "**centres of meaning, or focuses of intention and purpose**" (Ralph, 1976); meanings and functions which are not the same for all cultural groups.

The term "**placemaking**" has been used since the 1990s by the non-profit organization Project for Public Spaces based in New York. They define placemaking as "an overarching idea and a hands-on approach for improving a neighbourhood, city, or region, **placemaking inspires people to collectively reimagine and reinvent public spaces** as the heart of every community" (Project for Public Spaces, 2007).

Place and placemaking are hardly distinguishable if we think of **a place as a social construction process** which involves multiple actors and audiences in diverse ways.

Is there a difference between place and placemaking?

2. PLACE AND PLACEMAKING

A diversity of practices, including placemaking, creative placemaking, tactical urbanism, pop-up urbanism, performative urbanism and community art-based interventions, among others, coincide in the need to foster bonds between people and the spaces they live in, and to find ways to increase their sense of belonging and advocate their right to the city.

The re-appropriation of public spaces by their users and activities, which defies the regulations set by professional planners and policy-makers, has been gaining ground in the last decades, to the extent that it has become part of newly “institutionalized” form of planning.

These practices call for the collaboration between professionals (artists, planners, sociologists) and non-professionals; for the promotion of interdisciplinary creative practices embedded in the social and built environments; and for the creation of exchanges between social groups from multiple origins and cultures.

Re-appropriation of public space, diversity of practices, participation

3. PLACE AND PLACEMAKING

These alternative practices question existing power relations and offer alternative ways to bring together time, place and communities. In this sense, the concept of spatial practice can be extended to integrate social and political realms, which lead us to think of placemaking as a diverse form of civic-situated knowledge creation in-and-through design.

Alternative practices (under many denominations) vs. orthodox planning: expanding the scope of spatial practice.

2. PLACE AND PLACEMAKING

In our global, multicultural societies, placemaking can become instrumental to reinforce the coexistence of diverse ethnic groups in neighbourhoods and cities thus giving rise to a **superdiversity** by which “individuals of diverse backgrounds may come together and form bonds based on a variety of identities or interests” (Foner et al, 2017).

Superdiversity is a new condition of permanently increased, varied and fragmented pattern that can be detected in our cities. This term, coined by Vertovec (2007), **refers to a diversification of diversity** which surpasses the conventional interpretations of interculturality (Meissner and Vertovec, 2014).

The most evident challenge is a **diversification of interests** in society which gives rise to inter-cultural conflicts and makes it difficult for the **urban design and planning practices to find a common ground to build upon**. On the other hand, superdiversity creates distinct and novel forms of everyday life, which can also be creatively addressed.

The impossibility of fitting the complexity of today's societies into an overall theoretical framework formulated by planners.

3. CREATIVE PLACEMAKING

The term “creative placemaking” arose as a result of a programme of the National Endowment for the Arts in the United States, whose goal was “to integrate art and design in community planning and development, build shared spaces for arts engagement and creative expression, and increase local economic activity through arts and cultural activities” (Landesman, 2013).

The aim was to help “public, private, non-profit, and community sectors” to develop strategies to “shape the physical and social character” of a neighbourhood, town, city, or region around arts and cultural activities” (Markusen and Gadwa, 2010).

Creative placemaking was part of a “creative economy” in which the “creative industries” would play a key role, together with the “creative citizens”, in the making of “creative cities”.

Creative placemaking, creative economy, creative industry, creative citizen, creative cities.....

3. CREATIVE PLACEMAKING

Creative placemaking and urban planning can be related to each other in so far as the first provides solutions to the problems created (or not solved) by the second. Thus, Walker contends that “Placemaking really happens when people utilize recreational, social play and lingering spaces - and artists doing art - in ways that actually help solve a design problem” (Walker and Marsh, 2019).

For Marsh, the function of creative placemaking is to repair or fix designs that people’s use has proven them to be wrong: “Creative placemaking is an effort by artists to be part of this work of place fixing, and also part of undoing the social damage that these choices have caused for communities” (Walker and Marsh, 2019).

Creative placemaking as a way to fix design [rather than an alternative practice]; lay people amending the work of design professionals.

4. PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITIES (2019_20)

A Calm Place in Schaerbeek (Brussels)

- Exchanges between students and residents in superdiverse neighbourhood

A Hidden Place in Ljubljana

- Revitalization of an empty plot, a place without memory, with the participation of students, residents.

A Joint Place in Kaimakli (Nicosia)

- Artistic and spatial practices to facilitate interaction with the community in Kaimakli neighbourhood.

A Sound Place in Lisbon

- Collaborative creation of a soundscape around Martim Moniz square

A Visionary Place in Bologna

- Activities related to the Urban Visions festival, in the Porto-Zaragoza neighbourhood

A Weaved Place in L'Hospitalet (Barcelona)

- Activities to involve students, residents, artists, community groups in connecting social and physical fragments

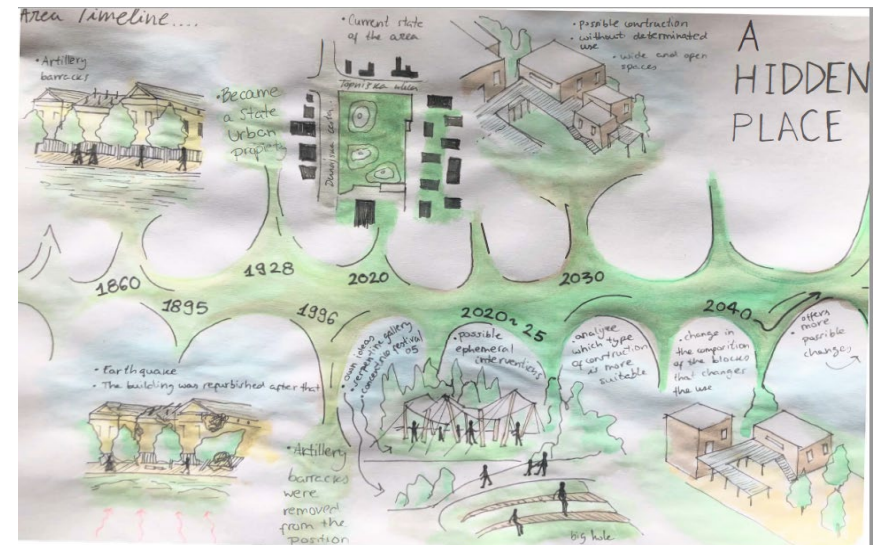
A Confined Place

- Sharing the experience of living in the confinement

A HIDDEN PLACE

It focuses on the revitalization of an empty plot in the Bežigradski Dvor district in Ljubljana, a place hidden behind a construction fence, overgrown with greenery, without a collective memory or use.

The placemaking interventions are carried out by FA UL and ProstoRož together with Trajna, a non-governmental organisation dedicated to promote nature based solutions, community economies, creative research, workshops and eco-infrastructure design.



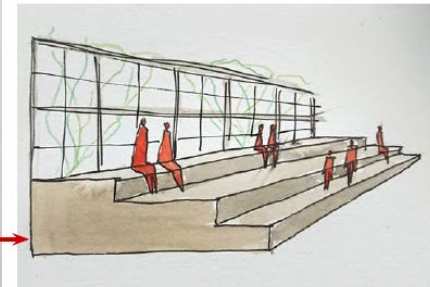
A HIDDEN PLACE

In a 3-month student workshop, mentors from FA UL and ProstoRož led students through an exploration of the site and its socio-cultural context, discovering the ties to its past and present-day stories, and revealing its potentials for the future use.

After a series of lectures, debates, site visits and analyses, intensive masterclasses and interviews with the potential users and stakeholders, students proposed temporal or semi-temporal interventions and/or on-site events to attract interest of the public.

It was a first step towards inhabiting this hidden place, making it more inclusive and attractive for the different social and interest groups.

'OPEN SPACE'



A HIDDEN PLACE

Students from UL FA:

Marieke Van Dorpe
Axel Schimpf
Barbora Výborová
Fadi Suidan
Anna Kotlabová
Nina Alexandra Karelina
Julia Cordero Pedrero
Daniela Leccese
Lucie Zadravova
Zuzana Šutvajova
Julia Sepúlveda Antón
Paula Mora de Urquiza
Natalia Caparrós Pérez
Oriol Gracia
Natalia Caparrós
Lara Jana Gabrije
Ilvana Gligorovska
Daniel Hernandez
Urša Katin Koželj
Xavier Llerena
Eider Oruezabala
Nives Otaševič
Maja Perpar
Lea Elena Vidmar
Klemen Žibert

Tutors from UL FA:

znan. sod. dr. Špela Verovšek
prof. dr. Tadeja Zupančič
doc. dr. Matevž Juvančič

Guest tutors from Prostorož:

Alenka Korenjak
Maša Cvetko
Zala Velkavrh

Guest collaborators from Trajna:

Gaja Mežnarič Osol
Andrej Koruza
Primož Turnšek

Group projects:

A Growing Place
A Connective Place
A Converging Place
A Colourful Place
A Growing Place

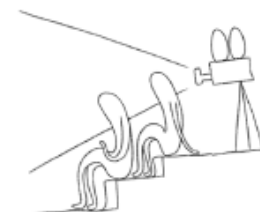


A HIDDEN PLACE

Due to constrained conditions derived from the pandemic, only provisional interventions and events have been organised on-the-site. The aim of these actions was to design and implement representation and promotion interventions that would help to raise the attention of the local community, passers-by and other visitors.

LOCAL USERS SURVEY

Local people



b kino na prostem



d ustvarjalne delavnice



f športne dejavnosti (joga, vadba, skupinski športi)



FOOD EVENT & WORKSHOP



19 05 20

5pm - 7pm

TOPNIŠKA ULICA 4

Ljubljana (15min from the central station)



A CONFINED PLACE

A programme of activities, open to those willing to express and share the experience of living in the period of confinement through the digital networks, using a variety of mixed techniques including texts and storytelling, drawings and photographs, audio-visual works and performances.

It is structured in three sections:

- Blog "A Confined Place", the sense of place during the confinement, expressed with photographs and texts produced by students of the higher education institutions participating in the project.
- Open call "A Confined Place", the experience of living and transforming the confined places, expressed with mixed-media and published in social media.
- Short film competition "A Confined Urban Vision", to explore and widen the meaning of places in times of COVID-19, in the lockdown and recovery periods.

Sharing the sense of place during the confinement

A CONFINED PLACE: Blog

<https://aconfinedplace.wordpress.com/>

Jihane Moudou: "The nutcracker"

Jihane Moudou

The nutcracker

My roommate using our window railing as a support for her dance practice. This pandemic increased our creativity in finding ways to use our home for our daily activities. This last month the apartment was transformed into a school, an office, a gym, a dance studio, a bar... Maintaining our usual routines during the lockdown helped a lot to our mental health.



Diego Hoefel: "Blur"

Diego Hoefel

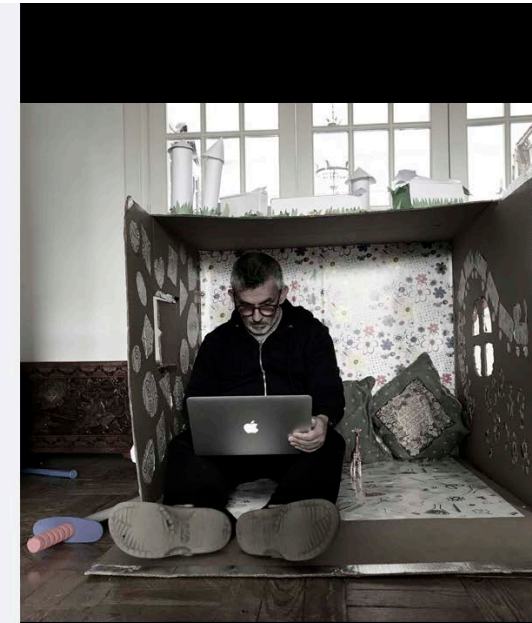
Blur

This was one of the first pictures I took when we started quarantining. It was a photo taken almost out of curiosity. I remember listening to music and looking at the rain. A month ago, the idea of not being able to go anywhere seemed crazy, a bit like being in a Chris Marker futuristic film. Now, reviewing the images, I found this one interesting. The outside loses its contours. It turns into a half-visible mass. A world there, but inaccessible.



"mise en abyme" = at the same time we are in the house, which is inside our house. It's our new reality. Like a "dream inside the dream". These are stories inside the big History.

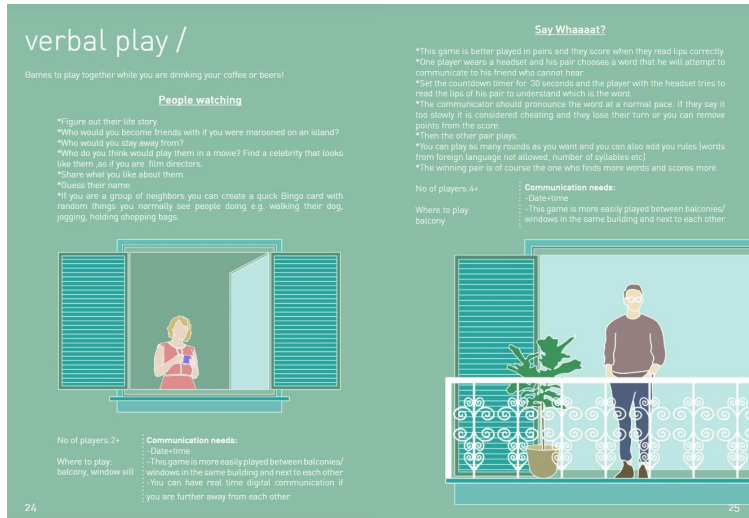
Ariuna Bogdan "Matryoshka's evolution"



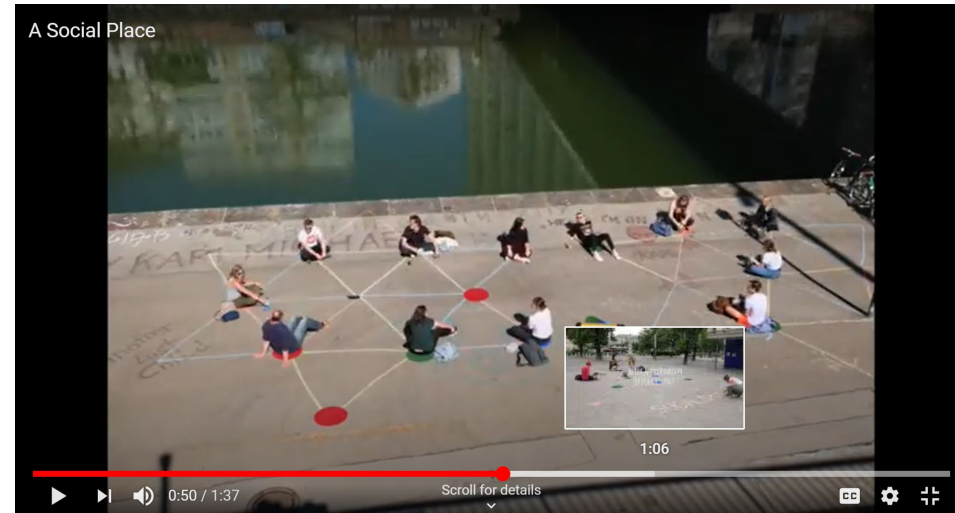
Over 100 photographs from university students around the world

A CONFINED PLACE: Open call

<https://www.facebook.com/events/217866446168307/>



Marina Kyriakou: "A Playful Place" (1st prize #aRediscoveredPlace)

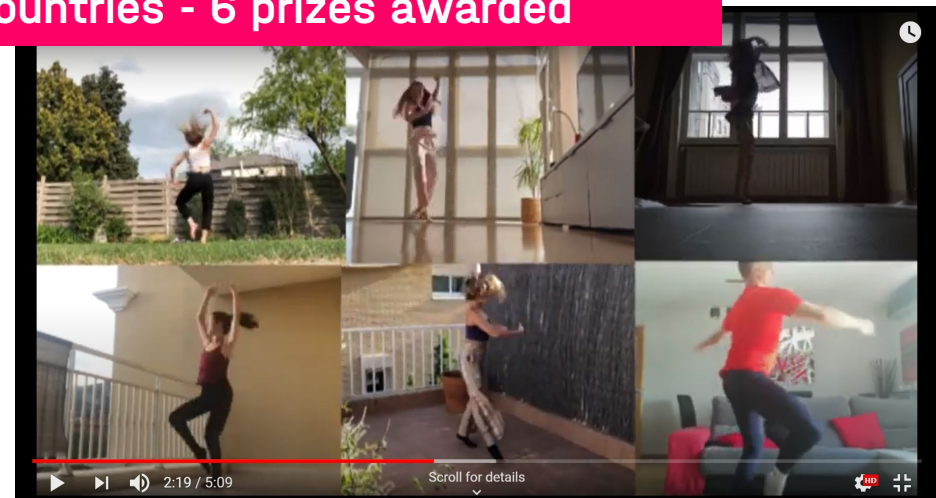


Sophie Thiel & Miriam Cooler: "A social place" (1st prize #aReimaginedPlace)



Eirini Gri: "A strategic place" (3rd prize #aReimaginedPlace)

96 entries from 19 countries - 6 prizes awarded



Charlie Hatmann: "Home Together Covid-19 Choreography" (2nd prize #AnEveryonesPlace)

5. EVALUATION

CHALLENGES

If we design and implement activities to encourage the creation of a sense of place and identity, **how do we know the extent to which we have achieved the established goals?**

The evaluation of the impact of placemaking in public space remains an open challenge:

- Assessment is not limited to the outcomes, but **embedded in the placemaking process**
- Each (social, expert) group involved tends to evaluate its specific objectives, rather the **overall impact over time**
- There are difficulties to define **indicators** and to have access to **data**

Impact assessment is inextricably linked to the placemaking activity.

5. EVALUATION

METHODOLOGY

The evaluation needs to be specifically “designed” for each placemaking activity, taking into the expectations of the various actors involved (e.g. artists, planners, citizens) and their shared goals and values.

The impact assessment needs to combine socio-ethnographic, phenomenologic and aesthetics theoretical frameworks to critically explain how placemaking enhances social participation and inclusiveness, and help to improve relations between community groups, by strengthening social cohesion.

Assessment is specific to each placemaking, is part of its design.

5. EVALUATION

METHODOLOGY

We need impact indicators to describe the dynamic process of transformation of indifferent spaces into engaging places, such as the enhancement of social interactions, the emergence of inter-community discourses, and the increase in experiences of perceptions of places.

In order to acquire the data required for this assessment, we need a diverse methods and tools: interviews; sound capture; photography; video; notes, and sketches; press narratives; oral and written testimonies and the inhabitants' oral narratives, etc.

Assessment needs to focus on the process, rather than on the outputs.

5. EVALUATION

OBJECTIVES

The assessment of placemaking activities will help to reveal:

- a) The capacity to artistically express the sense of place with a particular media.
- b) The potential of the performed action to transform physical and social space.
- c) The social impact of the placemaking actions, and its capacity to strengthen community ties.
- d) The communicative value of social media.
- e) The originality of the action.
- f) The capacity to integrate the dimension of time.
- g) The capacity to transcend the disciplinary boundaries.

Assessment is multidimensional; each dimension can have a different weight, throughout the lifetime of the placemaking process.

6. CONCLUSIONS

Nowadays, there is a myriad of approaches aimed at encouraging the participation of people in the construction of a sense of place, by engaging multiple and diverse actors in a joint creative effort: placemaking, creative placemaking, community-based art, tactical urbanism, performative urbanism, do-it-yourself urbanism, etc.

The activities planned in A-Place share some of the basic principles underlying these practices –enabling social cohesion, supporting inclusion and civic engagement– and they can adhere to a larger or greater extent to any of them depending on each particular intervention.

Creating a network of interrelated situated practices across disciplines, territories and cultures –rather than the adoption of an overarching theoretical framework– is what the project aims to achieve.

Impact assessment of the multi-disciplinary activities in a specific place needs to be intertwined with the design of these practices; they cannot be detached from each other.

A-Place "Linking places through networked artistic practices"



A-Place

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Happening right now



Marina Papadakis

Results of the Open call "A Confined Place"

The Open Call "A Confined Place" which was opened in the midst of the Covid19 global crisis has come to a close, and it gives us great pleasure to announce the results. The call drew 96 outstanding entries from 19 countries from Europe, Asia, and America. We were struck by the care and thought which had gone into all the proposals and we were deeply moved by their sensitivity and their capacity to create bonds between people.

[Learn more >](#)

Placemaking

Actions

Action from
A Weaved Place
in L'Hospitalet (Barcelona)

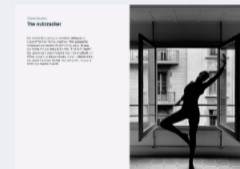


A (digital) exploration of the territory of Hospitalet

This blog contains the preliminary research made by the students of the subject Systems of Representation in the third year of the academic programme of La Salle School of Architecture. This wor...

Posted on 20/07/21

Action from
A Confined Place



Perception and representation of space in time of confinement with photographic media

These works were planned and carried out in the period of confinement, during March and April 2020, within the subject Systems of Representation at the School of Architecture La Salle. Th...

Posted on 20/07/21

Action from
A Hidden Place
in Ljubljana



Launching of the student workshop in Ljubljana

At the beginning of March, the foreseen 3-month student workshop has been launched at the Faculty of Architecture (Ljubljana). The goal of the workshop is to initiate the collaboration between the mem...

Posted on 20/06/22

[Learn more >](#)

www.a-place.eu



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