Move into the open space – what can we expect from moving artistic interventions to open urban spaces?

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Abstract. The paper discuses the role of incorporating creative engagement into the processes of urban and social development using cultural means of action and expression and the potential of artistic interventions in public space. The block of initiatives within the People's Smart Sculpture EU project, realized by Gdańsk City Gallery, has been named "Move Into The Open Space". This paper will provide the examples selected from the array of the implemented practices, as well as try to elaborate on the ideas behind the project, among them the types of participation. It will do so by presenting the different perspectives of the viewer, maker and initiator, as well as utilized media, the temporalities of the projects and actions, together with the long-term effects on the city and its users.

Keywords: art; public art; public space; space (Architecture), city landscape; city planning; art in public space; public participation; art galleries.

1 Introduction

The People's Smart Sculpture is the name of the umbrella project constituting a period of actions over more than three years promoting various forms of participation and artistic interventions into public spaces in partner cities all over Europe. Its aim is to incorporate creative engagement into the processes of urban development using cultural means of action and expression. The role of participatory art and the potential of artistic interventions in public spaces, supporting social relations and public life in the context of urban regeneration, is currently the subject of research regarding the quality of urban space, and can serve as an additional instrument to improve city landscapes. This new approach, if properly integrated with urban planning strategies, can become a powerful tool for urban and social processes, as "researching the city means researching its culture" [1, p.487]. The meaning of the term "culture" has been considerably expanded over recent years due to new kinds of interdisciplinary research concerning cities, places and territories. Thus, introducing cultural activities

into the city space presently means also entering the domains of city philosophy, cultural geography, anthropology of places and space, geocriticism or geopoetics [1, p.477]. Poetic and traditional geographies and discourses overlap to create new qualities within the art projects carried out with the use of the major *topoi* of the city: legend, memory, and dream, filling the physical city space with particular significance [2, pp.105-106]. This is significant in terms of transformation and the improvement of city landscape, as well as awakening the social awareness of its users.

Thus the experienced space becomes a laboratory for cultural and existential reflection, leading to the questions concerning cultural heritage, historical discourse and their role in (re)constructing local identity of people and places [1, p.477]. This influences the involvement of the community in the intangible heritage, the participation in the formation of the conscious society, and last but not least, the identification with the city, facilitating greater care of the space recognized as a familiar and habitable.

The block of initiatives implemented by Gdańsk City Gallery within the People's Smart Sculpture project has been named "Move Into The Open Space". This paper will provide the examples selected from the array of the aforementioned practices, as well as elaborate on the ideas behind the "Move Into The Open Space"(MITOP) project, among them the types of participation presented from different perspectives of the viewer, maker and initiator, as well as utilized media, the temporalities of the projects and actions, together with the expectations towards acquiring the long-term effects on the city and its users.

1.1 "Move Into The Open Space" concept

The strategy behind moving out of the gallery space and entering the city structure with the tools provided by art and with the participation of artists and public as agents is manifold. Firstly, we take Gdańsk as a case study. Possessing a complex history and overlapping identities, it is a society constructed from post-war refugees from Eastern Europe displaced as a result of shifting borders. A society which only after the fall of the communist regime in 1989 could openly and without constraint begin to analyze its own identity unbiased by political propaganda. A society of viewers and users of art for whom their own city is full of undiscovered truths – perhaps even those which they do not wish to acknowledge. That is why moving into the open space of this city gives one a chance to familiarize oneself with it. The most engaged and genuine tool to do it is art and culture. Hence, the most important role of art institutions and artists is to take active part in the long-term process of building a personalized and individual bond with one's own habitat, understanding it and accepting it through participation in it.

The fact that the institution implementing the project is a public gallery, launched, supervised and financed by the city government, is a relevant factor in the understanding of the "Move Into The Open Space" concept as well. Brian O'Doherty sketches the evolution of the more traditional notion of an art gallery from being "confined to a zone around the artwork", through to a kind of "zero space", "infiltrated with consciousness", "infinitely mutable". [3, p.87] In this sense he claims that the subject of the gallery's interest and presentation consists in two ways of self-

manifestation: either by commenting "on the 'art' within, to which it is contextual", or reflecting on the "wider context – street, city, money, business – that contains it" [3, p.87]. On the one hand, practice has already proved that the range of performative gestures aiming at the separation of artistic objects from their image of an object of cult, encouraged the participation of the more sensitive audience, willing to become a part of the creative process. However, on the other hand, it led to the exclusion of those for whom the higher experience of co-creating art seemed too big a challenge. That is why beginning in the 1960s and '70s artists saw the need to take their actions outside of the gallery spaces in a form of socialization, believing that "all art 'belongs' objectively to the society" [3, p.95]. In those days outdoor practice included land art, site-specific or body art works, that ironically sooner or later would come back into the white cube walls of the gallery anyway, in a form of video footage or photographic documentation of the performative actions or outdoor interventions. And so did murals and graffiti a few years back, when commercial galleries managed to convince street artists to transfer their works on canvas in order to become objects of gallery exhibitions and sales.

The art institution, as an active initiator and supporter of cyclic or long-term effect art projects concerning public space, is building the complicated and multi-level relation between the city and its users. In this way it is fulfilling the crucial concepts of local cultural policy (also being a part of it). First of all, it favours ideas and projects happening in public space, very often narrative in character, based on historical and contemporary cultural heritage. It grounds it in the consciousness of users, and motivates them to practice active involvement in the construction of the modern identity, as well as a better landscape of their own city. Secondly, it presumes that even if isolated actions seem temporary, their consequences should be long-term, as it is widely believed that continuity and sustainability can provide relevant effects. And last but not least, in order to maintain the interest of the contemporary public, the undertaken actions have to be of varying nature, resulting from various kinds of motivation and interest, as well as incorporate multiple perspectives (also concerning the ways of implementation, e.g. varied media). Hence, what we will be analysing below is the process of art going into the public space and thus becoming public in itself (since it is inspired by the public domain and directed at the participants of public life).

Once the artistic actions go more and more out into the city space, we tend to talk about the art of the city (along with the concepts of: the city as art, the city in art, and the art in the city), which includes all kinds of artistic or socio-artistic practices involving the city and treating it as a point of departure [1, pp.486-487]. This goes along with the thought of Zygmunt Bauman concerning the role of contemporary art being "to stimulate the processes which are responsible for creating senses, as well as to sensitize towards the polyphony of meanings, at the same time exposing all complexities of the seemingly simple theories" [4, p.133]. Therefore, the artistic practice of going out into the city space, the space as a dimension of life and everyday activities, self-reflection, existential questions, the space which is very much connected with temporality, however both aiming to reach the overall stabilization, and serving as a tool for (self)research and (self)discovery [5, p.281]. The cultural calendar of the city includes many events fulfilling the above goals, among them the "Outdoor Gallery" [6] implemented by Łaźnia Contemporary Center for Art in

Gdansk. Also an interesting example is the "Narrations" festival organized by Gdansk City Gallery and Instytut Kultury Miejskiej since 2009. It explores new urban themes and stories in the course of artistic interventions in public space, taking place in different districts of Gdansk. They give a new context to everyday places and enable citizens to discover them again [7].

2 "Move Into The Open Space" project

According to the studies on "the new museology" an art institution should depart from the "museumification" of art objects, as well as assume "an active role, encouraging the public to understand the complexity of the present world and acknowledge the significance of memory and the past for the development of the civil society which is transnational (cosmopolitan) and multiple"[8, p.163]. The actions aiming at the reduction of both social hierarchization and the practices of exclusion should thus be encouraged by the new model of public institutions which are departing from their political inclinations (being public, thus representing certain political interests and powers) and their often biased ideological preferences (mainly with regard to their tendencies to manipulate the historical discourse as well as impose artistic canons) [8, pp.13-14]. Thus, moving into the open space seems to be a resolution for the new notion of an art institution, an institution which bears in mind the human being, the society it belongs to and the community it is built around, fostering the culture of democracy, accessibility and participation, based on community involvement, as well as integrating the works of art with the public space to a reliable and consistent extent, as highlighted by Rosalyn Deutsche in the already classic essay entitled "Agoraphobia"[9]. It especially applies to the post-communist Polish agora which for decades had not been neutral, as it belonged to the all-controlling authorities, and where the mechanisms of new democracy born after 1989 are still to be learnt and practiced carefully, particularly as far as the freedom of speech and expression of one's beliefs is concerned [10, p.179].

Thus, the role of an art institution based on the new democratic and open functional model should be developing the contemporary audience by undertaking a wide range of global social, political, economic, historical etc. issues that are addressed by public opinion not only locally but also worldwide, as it is an inseparable part of the public domain and a crucial part of the city itself [8, pp.18-23]. And since the art institution is an integral part of the city, its discourse will sooner or later overlap with its immediate environment.

The urban landscape is naturally a carrier of memory and oblivion, tradition and identity. Thus, it may also become a perfect territory for experimental practice, including discussing, questioning and answering the space in which both art and life are happening. On the other hand, its inhabitants are becoming nowadays more and more *la société des flux*, characterized by the abundance and temporality of ideas, rather forgetting than cultivating, being highly selective in the linear process of the faithful reconstruction of the past. In this way the city and its identity become a sort of palimpsest, with their overlapping narratives, perspectives, ideologies, belonging to everybody who left their traces on them [11, pp.110-112]. It is then the legitimizing

function of the art institution, situated between the past, the present and the future and constituting a crucial part of the city and society, to provide the tools for constructing the local identity/specificity [8, p.22]. It may do so by encouraging different forms of artistic engagements, consisting in: 1) individual artists' projects which are concerned with burning issues and identify the hot spots in the city's political and social landscape, 2) the implementation of artistic and participatory projects in the public space, 3) the involvement of new media and technologies communicating with the contemporary audience within the real and meta-space of the city.

   From the examples described below, it will be plain to see that the active part in the process of familiarizing with one's city space and heritage based on the example of the city of Gdańsk, is still to a large extent the domain of public institutions and individual artists. It is up to them to create the potential "for grooming the participatory maker culture"[12, p.9], based on overlapping layers of local heritage and identity issues which would trigger the active interest of the audience in one's own habitat. Varied examples of the abovementioned practices have been implemented by Gdańsk City Gallery in collaboration with different private and public agents in the course of the People's Smart Sculpture project.

2.1   Individual artists' initiatives into heritage

Baudrillard underlined the tendency of contemporary societies to depart from the excitement about producing things, in favour of being haunted and fascinated by their perishing [13, p.211]. And this perishing seems to be an integral part of the past which constitutes the domain of memory and cultural heritage. In fact, the indisputable nature of heritage is to commemorate by passing the knowledge from generation to generation, at the same time supporting the process of cultivating and shaping the local identity of the inheriting community [14, p.10]. An example of such a crucial part of the local heritage for the city of Gdańsk is its shipyard. It is not only the sphere of overlapping historical narrations concerned with the Prussian, Polish, independent (connected with the period of the Free City of Gdańsk between the wars) and finally communist times of its functioning. All of them are clearly seen in the architecture and planning of the area, as well as the industrial heritage consisting of various machineries dated accordingly to the times they were produced and used. In the popular perception, the Gdańsk Shipyard connotes much more than just a huge industrial plant, whose glorious times have already passed. For the Shipyard means legend, a symbolic space, an idea which is, on the one hand, extremely intriguing because it is still not entirely penetrated and explored. But, simultaneously, in the eyes of many beholders, it is already quite worn out and dated, an empty and insignificant slogan. Yet, regardless of what has just been written the sign of contemporary times strongly connected with the aforementioned notion of perishing is also symptomatic for the area. Presently, after the period of collapse, rapid privatization, and the following economic stagnation caused by the world financial crisis, this postindustrial area is being slowly and somewhat hesitantly transformed into a completely new quarter of Gdańsk – the habitat of rich corporations, exclusive apartment houses, crowded shopping malls and loud entertainment places. This process has been connected with a series of demolitions including buildings of

historical value, which has not left local and visiting artists indifferent. Banal and obvious as it may seem, however it has to be clearly stated and repeated that it is very often the artists who initiate the critical process of certain phenomena, as they are triggered by the sense of "rebellion and utopia, imagination and sensitivity, and they are not obliged to provide footnotes. They are free, or perhaps it rather seems to them that they are, and often radical"[8, p.12].

The nearly two-decade presence of the photographer Michał Szlaga within the shipyard area resulted in a cross-section of art projects which are becoming a significant part of the contemporary social and political history of local art and heritage. The artist here plays the role model for participatory creativity, which also – in the longer run - has an empowering impact making him the catalyst of events and decisions [12, p.3]. Not only does he point out places and issues crucial for the city space and identity, but he also anchors them in the inhabitants' consciousness. It is the art about them and for them, passed on through the means of photography as a way for perpetuating one's own heritage. Thousands of photographs documenting the transformations taking place in the shipyard and concerned with not only the urban shape of the area, but also the architectural heritage, the post-industrial monuments, and last but not least, the people constituting the place, formed an impressive archive that has been turned into an album. The album has become a long-term material evidence in scientific expertise for historians and urban planners, as well as a tool influencing the local monument conservation authorities to take steps aiming at the protection of more precious elements of the area. The result of the publication was also an index of venues and signs located all over the region, marking the shipyard heritage in not so obvious ways. This index was also further used as a basis for the organization of participatory workshops for photographers which had been conducted by Szlaga himself commissioned by Gdańsk City Gallery within the "Move into the open space" project. They were based on creative field-work accomplished by a photo report, finally turned into a post-workshop exhibition presented in the Gallery, additionally documented in a form of a catalogue.

Fig. 1.. Michal Szlaga, The Gate – exhibition in Gdańsk City Gallery, photo: M. Szlaga

The abovementioned archive provides not only the tools for practical research and workshops, but it also constitutes an artistic social documentary, which has the power to endow everyday practices with aesthetic qualities, in this way upgrading them to a special status of works of art presented in the gallery space, thus becoming a crucial and legitimized part of the local history and cultural heritage. One of the symbolic venues inseparably connected with the Gdańsk Shipyard is its historical Gate no. 2 and the Solidarity Square in front of it. Both places are very important from the historical, political and social perspective not only for Gdańsk citizens, but also for the Polish nation in general. For the Gate was the breakthrough spot from which in 1980 Lech Wałęsa announced the signing of the August Agreements, which came about as a result of the strikes of the shipyard workers against the communist repressions. In front of the Gate, the Monument To The Fallen Shipyard Workers 1970 was erected, surrounded by the square which became the arena occupied by different social groups identifying with it, practicing different rituals connected with political celebrations, religious manifestations, or private special occasions, thus representing the perfect example of the contemporary Polish agora which naturally constituted itself after the fall of communism. The ritual and repetitive nature of those events bring to mind the rites of passage described by van Gennep [15, p.30,p.41]. The space, though open now, is symbolically delineated by the area around the aforementioned monument commemorating the tragedy of the past, while the celebrations bear the semblance of magical and religious practices, leading to the constitution of a symbolic change within the society – here the significant passage from the communist tyranny towards democracy and freedom. Highlighting the importance of this symbolic common space, the artist turns into a kind of social worker for the sake of not only commemorating, but also cultivating and emphasizing the most important areas of the city historical, political, social and cultural landscape. By presenting the results of the artist's research and documentation, the gallery becomes the repository of the contemporary history, institutionalizing and thus legitimizing its course, presenting the local reality and the topics with which it is concerned from the perspective of an artistic project and the artist's private sensitivity acting both as an engaged creator and as a critically involved citizen. In this way the public institution not only developed an individual artistic initiative, but also endowed it with a sense of longevity necessary to become a bead in a chain of more complex and long-run local social and historical processes, also leading to the regeneration of the city landscape.

2.2   The implementation of artistic and participatory projects in the public space

The second field of artistic practice connected with the implementation of the "Move Into The Open Space" project is the encouragement of events in public space contributing to the long-term revitalization of neglected or abandoned areas, concerning points of significant architectonic interest on the city map. This also favours artistic interventions, at the same time fostering local community participation and the involvement of not only experts in the fields of urban planning and monument preservation, but also the local authorities and decision makers. Numerous

dissertations have been published concerning the problem of the revitalization and architectural heritage of the city of Gdańsk in connection with the complex nature of its identity[1] [16]. It is crucial, though, for the understanding of the local phenomenon to be aware of the fact that the central city has been nearly 90% rebuilt after the destruction of the Second World War. The post-war communist government's vision meticulously underlined the Polish side of the city's heritage, and at the same time dismissed or undermined the German past. Consequently, the historical reconstruction of the city was not an entirely faithful copy of what had been destroyed, but a contemporary fantasy on the historical architecture and motifs with a considerable inclination towards its Polishness [17, p.30]. It has been noted that: "*Gdańsk is in a way a new city. New with regards to its inhabitants, the Old City is new, the university is new, colleges are new, and culture institutions are new*"[18, p.20]. This raises two important aspects while dealing with the urban and architectonic heritage: firstly, the immense value of the original urban matter in shape of the buildings which survived the war almost intact; secondly, the adaptation of the collective memory linked with those historical places for one's own, connected with the new notion of localness.

Within the "Move Into The Open Space" project a series of artistic actions fostering the participation of the local community has been undertaken in the historic area of the city called Osiek, where – among other things - a former orphanage built in 1799 is situated. Historically Osiek constituted the oldest city area, first inhabited by the Teutonic knights who built their castle here, their sojourn connected with the greatest development of the medieval city. Later, the district became a rather poor fishermen's area, underinvested and underdeveloped until recently. The orphanage was originally built to serve as a shelter for the homeless, poor and sick, later to become a home for orphaned children. Turned into municipal apartments at the beginning of XX century, it has been almost forgotten, until the local authorities decided to turn it into a new culture institution to be named "Daniel Chodowiecki and Günter Grass House" after two important local artists and personas (which also constitutes an interesting move considering the construction of the city's image and the change of the point of view at the local heritage which took place after 1989). The revitalization process commenced with artistic interventions encompassing the historical buildings themselves, as well as spreading throughout the whole district to provide a broader perspective on the process. Selected activities implemented within the "Move Into The Open Space" project also took into account the above-mentioned location and its potential to build the cultural identity of the place by the revitalization of the plot located in the core of the district and ultimately Osiek itself. The main tool for this revitalization processes was the implementation of artistic and participatory projects in public spaces.

One of such participatory initiatives is represented by The Urban Walk – Architecture Talk research project which was a collaboration between Gdańsk University of Technology, Sapienza University in Rome and Gdańsk City Gallery. Following the "Move Into The Open Space" idea, the project sought to understand and discover the possibilities of transforming/revitalizing the district of Osiek through

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[1] Jacek Friedrich and Peter Oliver Loew wrote extensively on the subject, cf. the texts In: Kerski B. (ed.): Gdańskie tożsamości. Eseje o mieście [Gdańsk identity. Essays on the city], Instytut Kultury Miejskiej, Gdańsk, (2014).

a series of workshops, meetings, lectures, discussions and study visits involving experts, architects, artists, urban planners, city decision makers and finally the inhabitants. The new cultural institution "Daniel Chodowiecki and Günter Grass House" was the core of the investigation /study.

The program of the project was based on an elective seminar under the same title organized at the Faculty of Architecture of the Gdańsk University of Technology, and was aimed at familiarizing participants with the topic of multi-layer and multi-sensory perception of public spaces and the use of public space[19], as well as the recognition of the needs of its users, and finally the consequences of such perception and the use of space in order to build more comprehensive urban concepts. This artistic and participatory series of projects in the public space follow alternative urban design techniques. Much of the concept of the project was based on art interventions and public participation, recalling Jane Jacob's focus on the social layers of the city.

One of the key contributions of the project was to consider the importance of artistic intervention in the way that responded to the identity of the place and interacted with the residents, highlighting the importance of local actors / residents of the district. "*Cities have the capability of providing something for everybody, only because, and only when, they are created by everybody*"[20, p.238]. This quotation from Jane Jacob's revolutionary book is an important reference point for citizen participation in urban design activities and processes in general, and concurrently expresses the approach of the project.

The main goal of the project was to (re)discover and exchange the experiences of two cities – Gdańsk and Rome, and the main tool to achieve it were "*city walking tours towards community-based city building*" [21]. Walking is an activity that involves continuous movement in the physical space. It awakens observation, which takes place on the borderline of reality, perception and imagination, with the activation of all of the senses. Walking means observing and observing allows one to re-discover and imagine [22]. Contact with the physical space is the encouragement to look at individual locations in a very careful way. As Careri says: "*Walking can be understood as an "autonomous form of art, a primary act in the symbolic transformation of the territory, an aesthetic instrument of knowledge and a physical transformation of the "negotiated" space, which is converted into an urban intervention*" [23].

The data for the study was gathered during several preparation walking and drawing workshops, practical activities on the site, investigation and interviews with neighbours and members of the public, concluded with a final outdoor event in an inner city area. This expertise and best practice exchange served as a starting point for much complex discussion about the transformations of the city public space with the active involvement of art and culture. Therefore Osiek was classified as one of the hot spots of Gdańsk. The discussions and workshops concentrated on the neglected district with a special emphasis on the new culture institution, were the core of the actions and played the key role in the participation building process. The research period in both cities – Gdańsk and Rome – was concluded by events in public space welcoming broad public participation. In Gdańsk the final event was entitled "Crossing the bridges – Gdańsk Osiek" leading to the researched location, while in Rome, "Cross San Lorenzo - Ideas for a Green Network". The actions were directly linked with the international concept of the Jane's Walk and were accompanied by

various special events, such as art installations in public space, a cultural picnic, workshops, concerts and other cultural events, carried out by artists, culture workers, researchers, and also members of local communities and various organizations.

Fig. 2. Jane's Walk "Crossing the Bridges – Gdańsk Osiek – Along canal towards discovering a district" and art installation recalling forgotten canal, accompanying and concluding the walk, "Daniel Chodowiecki and Günter Grass House" in Osiek district Gdańsk, photos: J. Borucka

The main topic of the Gdańsk project was to discover the forgotten but potentially very attractive district of Osiek, using participatory methodology and the urban walking tool. It was also crucial to strengthen the cultural and social identity by incorporating social urban experiences and rediscovering social and historical landscapes of Gdańsk, starting with comparative analysis of different districts and their problematic aspects.

Similarly, the part of the project conducted in Rome, which also included a series of seminars, lectures, meetings, and site visits, was completed by a Jane's Walk in the San Lorenzo district, provided comparative material for the analysis of the local - Gdańsk practices and experiences. The final outcome of the whole research process was presented to a wider public in the form of a post-workshop exhibition in yet to be opened cultural institution in Osiek "Daniel Chodowiecki and Günter Grass House" including photographs, films, sketches and projects created during study visits in Gdańsk and Rome.

The program was an opportunity to learn about numerous identities of the neighbourhood. It allowed participants to take note of the strong heterogeneity of the atmospheres of the places and activities present in them. The rediscovery of the physical space, the history, the social identity of the neighbourhood means not only knowing the present status of the sites, but also imagining its unpublished future perspectives. Bearing this in mind, the local actors become inherently a fundamental factor of the local identity and the regeneration processes of cities. The implemented artistic interventions and public participation are aimed at fostering the awareness of the need to design public spaces and buildings as an integral and continuous part of the urban environment, including special places of interest, involving the subject of public space and its transformation in the context of both social participation and transformative role of art in public space. It was important to determine if the

manifestation of belonging to a place and rediscovering public space by alternative activities can improve the existing state of transformation of urban landscape and spatial disorder. In these aspects cultural institutions and their initiatives seem to be crucial.

2.3 The involvement of new media and technologies in communication with the contemporary audience

The use of new media and technologies is the third approach to the city space, gallery objectives, artistic interventions and constructing local identity in close relation with the cultural heritage. Baudrillard's epoch of hyperreality is a state of fact nowadays. The "audiovisual miracle", producing more and more attractive equipment to consume media culture, is happening in front of our eyes. We are dealing with the society of contract interested in interacting with goods and services produced by the culture industry and based on the image and spectacle [24, pp.58-59]. An average citizen becomes an active *intermedioanthropus*, obliged to remain constantly on-line [25, pp.88-90]. Virtual reality, which has been approached at first with apprehension and distrust, can actually become a tool of augmenting and broadening the viewer's perspective and imagination. And since art becomes global and is concerned with global issues, its ways of communication with the audience should also be adapted to the latest developments engaging new media and technologies. The inspiration of Baudrillard's simulacra taking over the place of real objects and experiences, constitutes an interesting pretext for launching innovative projects based on memory, commemorating cultural heritage and participation in its imaginary recreation.

As part of the "Move Into The Open Space" project a special mobile application has been designed in cooperation with the University of Applied Sciences in Düsseldorf. Titled G:RASS [Gdańsk: Real And Simulated Spaces] the application is directly inspired by the literary heritage of the Gdańsk-born Nobel Prize winner in literature - Günter Grass. In his "Danzig Trilogy" he describes the city as it was before the war, overlapping topographies of the no longer existing places with the re-created ones, situated exactly on the same locations of the city's pre-war and post-war map. The walk as an "elementary form of experiencing the city" and the users becoming "Wandersmänner" [2, p.93] gave grounds to the idea of strolling according to the guidelines located on a virtual city map. This inspiring and fascinating experiment was developed by artists and IT experts in order to overlap the past and the present memory of the city which has been rebuilt in a historical manner, but not entirely faithfully visually reconstructed (which has already been discussed before in this text). The idea behind the free downloadable app is to offer the user an enjoyable experience of walking through the city following a special guide – a dog (one of Grass's literary protagonists). The dog not only refers the user to the original locations described in literature, but also offers a unique point of view – based on the senses, short impressions, and sounds characteristic of animal perception. It constitutes good grounds to present the city from an alternative perspective which will engage the senses along with the intellectual feed, thus mixing the traditional long-term historical narrative with the temporal and illusive sensual experiences, as well as

overlapping the geographical maps with the sensory maps and soundscapes in one common project.

Fig. 3.. G: RASS [Gdańsk: Real And Simulated Spaces], photos: Gdańsk City Gallery information materials

The application thus mixes realities, placing the viewers within their actual surrounding, augmented with a selection of digitalized and artistically transformed art pieces (text passages, drawings, sketches, audio), creating a new notion of a playful and interactive city landscape supported by the art works digitalization processes, as well as more and more extensive use of GPS-function mobile devices.

The project is to a large extent a result of an effect of the impact of global market on culture activities, driving the art world to become compatible with innovative information and communication technologies, favouring new rules based on the concept of teleculture [24, p.58]. It is also inspired by the contemporary notions of a cybercity, influenced by the new information technologies, where a user has a chance to dive into virtualized space, however still performing the physical walk within the traditionally understood geography of the city [1, p.476].

All in all, the application is a result of two factors being both site-specific (meaning the city) and times-specific (meaning the nature of the surrounding reality closely connected with social needs and demands). It triggers the temporal action which appears and disappears when the app is turned on or off. In this way it might be compared to the notion of Goffman's "*Shared Encounter*" eagerly used in the context of similar projects, which practices "ephemeral forms of communication and interaction augmented by technology" [26, p.307]. However, it is underlined by the concept of the long-term effects on the user, bearing constantly in mind the process of familiarizing and personalizing the city. This process is additionally enhanced by being anchored in the enduring cultural heritage as the fundament of the city's identity – meaning the use of literature which is world-renowned and well-grounded in the citizens' consciousness. That is why, the application not only modernizes the traditional approach to the cultural heritage through the effect of synergy of different creative areas, but it also offers an exciting yet a bit individual and private (*flâneur*-like) stroll throughout the city's open space, filling the gaps in its history and identity landscape with one's own new-technology triggered vision.

3 Conclusion

Stuart Hall once wrote: "We all write and speak from a particular place and time, from a history and a culture which is specific. What we say is always 'in context', positioned" [27, p.222]. The specific position of a culture institution within the city space and its society is to fulfill this society's cultural needs using different forms of communication. By offering a new, often innovative and surprising perspective, it uncovers the multi-layered images of the city, revolutionizing the concept of the role and place of art within its geographical, social and historical long-term context, often supported by ephemeral and spontaneous individual actions. It is expected that among the main goals and priorities of a culture institution, there should also be the support for the historical experiences, and sharing cultural codes, by – among others – constantly rediscovering and renegotiating all elements which construct the common local identity. The identity as a process based on the repetitive actions implying "continuity with the past" as the reference point, but also the sustained change and innovation, which should lead to social cohesion within commonly acceptable value systems and conventions of behavior, promoted through artistic activities and statements [28, p.1]. The identity as an integral part of what we call *genius loci* of a city, which is constantly discussed and negotiated by cultural reflection and artistic intervention.

   The aim of this article is to present the various uses of art and art activities in order to understand the cultural identity of the analyzed city mainly by social experiences that contribute to regenerating mental and physical city landscape. It elaborates on the ways those methodologies, which capture artistic and cultural aspects in the participatory dynamic, can be embedded in the city's urban redevelopment strategies. Three examples of art and cultural initiatives within the "Move Into the Open Space" project illustrated how the systematic and sustained support of the public institution in the use of temporary art interventions in public space contributes to gaining rich insights that are invaluable to inspire and improve the city's redevelopment strategies, aiming to enrich the space of our everyday living.

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