

## Art and the city: Urban Space Art and Social Change (Amman, 11–14 Jun 23)

Amman-Jordan, Jun 11–14, 2023

Deadline: Feb 28, 2023

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ART AND THE CITY: URBAN SPACE, ART AND SOCIAL CHANGE

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Since 2019, every year in a different city, Art and the City: Urban Space, Art, and Social Change conferences bring together a team of international scholars with an interest in art and the right to the city, urban creativity, aesthetics and politics, cultural and artistic rebellion, aesthetics of urban social movements, and art activism in the urban space. The central goal of the conference series is to critically engage in a multifaceted, multi-disciplinary, and multi-geographic perspective to articulate and promote a richer and more integrated understanding of the ideologies, relationships, meanings, and practices that arise from the diverse interactions among the three social spheres: urban space, art, and society.

Art's role in the urban space involves a multitude of spatial and temporal dynamics and constitutes emotional, dialogical, and aesthetic interactions. On the one hand, art assists in the improvement of urban development, tourism, public health, race relations, and even welfare. On the other hand, we observe that art lends its competencies to urban activism and social change from the 'right to the city' and anti-gentrification movements to urban social movements with their spatial, ideological, and ecological agenda to the struggles of democracy, civil rights, individual and collective freedoms.

The politico-aesthetic character of these movements has been explored extensively from the point of plural resistance against the authoritative government, the struggle over the appropriation and use of public space, structural and social inequalities, and human rights issues. However, these debates lack a specialized framework and language for contemporary art practice, which places urban space and its social urgencies at the center of its production.

Crucially, the recent discussions on the sociality of art emphasize the therapeutic, ethical, unitary, reconciliatory, and functional attributes of art, focusing on how art contributes to easing tensions between communities and city authorities. Although such criticism of art's engagement with social change is sound, it undermines art's capacities of struggle and agonism, of contestation and re-appropriation that emerge through the creation of common and shared spaces for socialization, mobilization, and political action.

To push forward the dialogues and widen the debates on art's relationship to the political and the social, Art and the City conferences interrogate what it is to imagine and experience the city from the perspective of social dissensus and democratic citizenship.

The overarching theme "Urban Space, Art, and Social Change" envelops this year's following four

tracks (in total 9 panels):

1. Art, architecture and the aesthetic struggle for urban commons
2. Public arts, public space and democracy
3. Urban arts and the politics of urban space
4. Aesthetic activism against authoritarianism

The participants from all humanities and social sciences disciplines are invited to analyze the way art:

- is used in reclaiming the cities as sites of resistance and change,
- is a part of the aesthetics of the urban social movements and their commitment to participative (direct) democracy,
- struggles in the increasingly surveilled, designed, aestheticized and otherwise controlled urban contexts,
- confronts and reconstitutes the concept of public space,
- provides the citizenry with new and innovative ways to engage,
- activates, captures, and subverts the experience of the urban space,
- enables reflexive processes and co-creation of knowledge and worldview,
- empowers marginalized voices and subjects in the city,
- reveals hegemonic and counterhegemonic interactions among city authorities, urban developers, and artists,
- produces new narratives of social organization in the gentrified urban space,
- transforms our understanding of the politics of the urban space,
- changes our sensual and perceptual encounters with the city,
- reveals, questions and resists authoritarian thinking and doing,
- accentuates potentials and disadvantages related to the interaction of eco-activism with urban ecologies.

#### KEYNOTE

Rosalyn Deutsche, Bernard College &Columbia University

#### Interdisciplinary Scientific Committee 2023

Eva Branscome, Architectural History, the Bartlett School of Architecture

Anna Dempsey, Visual and Performing Arts, University of Massachusetts

Emre Çetin Gürer, English, Koç University

Friederike Landau, Cultural Geography, Radboud University

John Lennon, English, University of South Florida

Alla Myzelev, Art History, the State University of New York at Geneseo

Robert Nilsson Mohammadi, Society and Culture, Malmö University

Tijen Tunali, Art History, Columbia University

Josepha Wessels, Arts and Communication, Malmö University

Interested participants are requested to submit an abstract of a maximum of 500 words and a short CV to the conference convener Tijen Tunali [tt2928@columbia.edu](mailto:tt2928@columbia.edu) no later than February 28, 2023.

After the evaluation of the scientific committee, the results will be communicated by the end of March 2023.

Preference will be for in-person attendance although virtual participation will be possible. To make in-person attendance more viable, we have a small travel budget for junior scholars. Please state your need for a travel grant in the body of your email.

There is no conference fee. Lunch, snacks, hot and cold drinks will be provided.

Selected papers will be invited to contribute to an edited volume by Routledge or to a special issue in *Street Art and Urban Creativity Journal*.

Reference:

CFP: Art and the city: Urban Space Art and Social Change (Amman, 11-14 Jun 23). In: Arthist.net, Feb 6, 2023 (accessed Jul 13, 2025), <<https://arthist.net/archive/38502>>.