

Artistic and cultural praxes (Belfast, 5-7 Sep 13)

Belfast, Sep 5-07, 2013

Deadline: Jun 15, 2013

Peter Bengtsen

Call for papers

Artistic and cultural praxes in the transitional and contested territory of urban public space

A stream at Critical Legal Conference, 5-7 September 2013 in Belfast.

Conveners:

Peter Bengtsen & Matilda Arvidsson (Lund University, Sweden)

In their presentation of the "Reconciliation & Reconstruction" theme of this year's Critical Legal Conference, the organisers suggest that a pertinent topic of discussion might be the role of art and culture in contested political territories.

While the notion of political territory may immediately bring to mind a specific contested geo-political location, this stream proposes a take on the theme that invites submissions which specifically consider the urban public space as a contested territory.

Where people meet, so do conflicting interests and ideas: in cities, which are characterised by - among other things - a high population density, this invariably leads to incompatible spatial claims and on-going clashes between diverging agendas of a political, commercial, legal, moral, social, cultural, and artistic nature. This is reflected in, for instance, people's everyday praxes on city streets, where legislation, social norms, and notions of spatial justice help regulate interaction in - and with - urban public space. While in this sense constricting, these elements of social control also constitute a nexus of creativity as they continuously incite individual agency, as people seek to circumvent them.

While laws, regulations, and norms play an important role in maintaining the relative openness of urban public space (by limiting what any one agent - an individual, organisation, a company, or other legal entities - can legitimately do there and lay claim to), this space is arguably

also constituted by the individual and collective agency which takes place within this cross-field of diverging interests. The collaborative or conflicting acts, resulting from the multiple agendas and visions of the nature and purpose of urban public space, leaves it in a state of constant transition and contestation. This can be seen in for instance authorities' removal of graffiti writing, which not only restores urban public space to its intended (material, visual, and legal) state, but also leaves a blank canvas for someone else to engage with.

In thinking about urban public space as a contested political territory, this stream invites participants to discuss a range of topics including, but not limited to:

- the transitional nature of urban public space and the artistic and cultural expressions found within it
- artistic and cultural praxes which investigate, problematise and/or actively challenge urban public space and its dominant uses
- artistic and cultural praxes as a means of regenerating urban public space
- the materiality and agency of artworks and their potential to address and/or resolve conflicts in urban public space
- the strategies and voice(s) of the marginalised in urban public space
- personal appropriations of urban public space and their (positive or negative) contribution to the publicness of urban public space
- the role of critical legal theory in investigating and understanding artistic and cultural praxes within urban public space
- the effects of legislation, legal decisions, and law enforcement on individual praxis in urban public space and/or the effects of individual praxis in urban public space on law enforcement, legal decisions, and legislation

The stream welcomes traditional papers/presentations as well as formats which transgress or transform the traditional framework of an academic paper presentation. Participants are thus encouraged to actively combine academic reflection and commentary with alternative ways of finding, presenting and representing findings and ideas (e.g. presenting - or creating/conducting - an installation, a performance, or other artistic or cultural praxes).

Please submit your abstract (250-300 words) to either Peter.Bengtson@kultur.lu.se or Matilda.Arvidsson@jur.lu.se by 15 June 2013.

Reference:

CFP: Artistic and cultural praxes (Belfast, 5-7 Sep 13). In: ArtHist.net, May 23, 2013 (accessed Jun 13, 2026), <<https://arthist.net/archive/5433>>.