Human-Centred Design in Place-Based Arts

Report from the 'Reclaim Creativity: Arts in the Public Realm' Summer Academy in London

KONRAD MICIUKIEWICZ
TEODORA LAZAR

trans·making

Contents

© Teodora Lazar

Acknowledgements

Introduction

Arts contribute a great deal to democratisation of the social, political and economic spheres. But while the capability of arts institutions and place-based art activities to generate long-lasting benefits for local communities is high on the political agenda, existing approaches do not always meet aspirations of politicians and policy-makers, and their outcomes are uneasy to measure. Arts-based approaches to civic education, social inclusion and empowerment of residents in diverse communities require long-term outlook and meaningful engagement with local communities from the very outset.

To address these challenges the Trans-Making project delivered a Summer Academy entitled 'Reclaim Creativity!: Arts in the Public Realm'. The Summer Academy took place in London from 21 to 27 June 2017 and delivered a programme of activities focusing on social and economic innovation through artistic practice in the public realm. In doing so it brought academic and non-academic partners of the Trans-Making project together with leading London's arts organizations, cultural & creative SMEs, East London's youth and students to innovate the ways in which participation in culture and the arts can foster social inclusion and shape civic cultures.

In sum, 56 people took part in learning activities, including 11 Trans-Making partners from London, Paris, Ljubljana, Sarajevo and Valencia, 15 cultural and creative professionals from the UK and 35 young East Londoners and students. The key public event entitled 'Public Spaces and Civic Cultures was attended by 105 people. While UCL's widening participation agenda was at the heart of the event, 65% of young East Londoners who attended the Academy came from BAMER (Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic and Refugee) groups. All learning activities were offered free of charge*.

Our aim was to open up a new kind of conversation about the relationships between place-based arts initiatives, social inclusion and democratic public sphere.
The objectives of the Summer Academy were:

1. to share knowledge and experience of innovative approaches to arts in the public realm
2. to educate young people in public arts and design-led methods
3. to design new public realm initiatives
4. to examine the potential of design-led innovation methods for place-based arts
5. to strengthen entrepreneurial skills and innovation capabilities of artists and creatives
6. to promote and enable active involvement of local communities with place-based arts.

These objectives were pursued through a programme of activities comprising public events, workshops, experiential learning, gaming, site visits and human-centred design training. Within this the Summer Academy focused on social and economic innovation through artistic practice in local communities, making East London our site of exemplification. While classroom-based learning was delivered in East London's creative spaces - Hackney Wick's Stour Space and the Here East complex – immersive and community-facing activities took place in the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park and in the rapidly changing post-industrial neighbourhood of Hackney Wick.

Active Learning
in the Public Realm

The first half of the Summer Academy included a series of public events, workshops, study visits, and immersive and experiential activities.

The key public event, a panel entitled 'Public Spaces and Civic Cultures' chaired by Professor Henrietta Moore, the director of the UCL Institute for Global Prosperity, focused on the role of architecture and the urban public realm as sites of possibility, aspiration and agonistic struggle.

▼ Image 1. 'Public Spaces and Civic Cultures' event

© Teodora Lazar

▼ Image 2. Bartlett Summer Show

© Teodora Lazar

Jo Noero, the founder Noero Architects with offices in Johannesburg, Cape Town and Port Elizabeth, spoke about complex interplays between radical democracy and the physical public realm in post-apartheid South Africa. He used the case of the Red Location Museum in New Brighton, which was contested by the very communities whose liberation struggle it commemorated, to examine tensions that arise between public arts projects and public service delivery. Ian Borden, Professor of Architecture and Urban Culture at the Bartlett, presented on the role of skateboarding as a critical agent in public space. His talk explored the ways in which urban and architectural spaces are experienced and perceived by skateboarders and the ways in which the city constantly changes and evolves depending on its different uses and lives that are projected onto it. Then, Heather Philipson, an award-wining artist and poet who works across video, sculpture, drawing, music, text and live events, discussed the role of art in public space and the ways in which artists negotiate contexts, politics and repercussions of public space. Last, Maurizio Marinelli gave a talk on street markets in Hong Kong as spaces of socio-ecological prosperity and living heritage, and laboratories of democratisation.

Students also took part in an urban choreography workshop led by Mateja Bucar, a choreographer from Ljubljana. Bringing together everyday materials, 'sameness' and 'unannounced performing', urban choreography offers immersive an experience of being in the city, sharing space, time and movement with others, and tracing habitual activities of oneself. Interacting with a series of Mateja's projects - Green Light (2010), Parking-Packing (2012), Unnoticed (2013) and Green Table (2015) – students reflected upon rhythm, motion, aestheticisation and subjectivity in the public realm.

© Teodora Lazar

Image 3. **Mateja Bucar** ▲

© Monah Papamija Urbano

Image 4. **Maurizio Marinelli** ▲

The Summer Academy comprised also a series of unique study visits. First, students went on a tour around Hackney Wick to explore heritage of this post-industrial area neighbouring the Olympic Park which hosts the highest density of art practitioners in Europe and is undergoing a process of rapid gentrification. Second, students visited Stratford Circus, a contemporary performing arts venue in Newham known for its history of engagement with a multitude of ethnic and religious communities in that most diverse borough in Europe.


© Monah Papamija Urbano

© Monah Papamija Urbano

Image 5 & 6. ▲
Study visit in Hackeny Wick

Third, a study visit was held in the new cutting-edge dance studio of Wayne McGregor located in the Here East building in the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. Fourth, participants of the Summer Academy were invited to the opening and a special tour of the Bartlett Summer Show 2017, where 650 students from the best architecture school in Europe exhibited a wide range of creative work including, models, drawings, films, multimedia installations and digital fabrications.

© Teodora Lazar
© Teodora Lazar
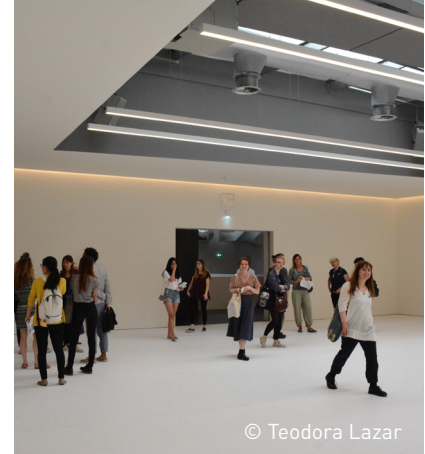
▲ Image 7 & 8.
Study visit in Hackney Wick

Last, but not least the team from Relais Culture Europe, Paris delivered a one-day gaming workshop on future narratives for public space. Students formed small groups and played a 'transition game' developed by FING under the Creative Commons (CC BY 2.0 FR). The key questions were the following: How can we – as cultural actors, artists, researchers, young professionals – drive creative transitions? In which domains and fields of action can we commit ourselves? The aim of the game was to collectively raise key questions, imagine possible challenges, and negotiate individual and collective positions, as well as possible answers. The first sequence of the game was dedicated to mapping current challenges and transitions (such as the ecological crisis, the digital transformation, the future of work, changes in cultural consumption, etc.). The second sequence aimed at exploring and defining personal and collective skills that we require to face such transitions.

© Teodora Lazar
© Teodora Lazar
© Teodora Lazar

Images 9 - 11. **Transition Game** ▲

All activities that formed the active learning in the public realm strand of the Summer Academy were detrimental to instilling the readiness of students to put into motion the human-centred design methodology and to develop public realm projects of their own.

Mobilizing Human-Centred Design for Public Space Projects

Human-Centred Design Training

Human-Centered Design (HCD) training was the first step towards understanding how participatory methods can be used as tools for assessment of human needs, implementation of solutions and impact measurement. It was delivered by Catalytic Action, a charity and design studio that aims to promote human rights and bring about social change through design of the public realm in conflict-torn societies.

The training was inspired by Refugee Week, an International event happening around World Refugee Day (20th of June), whose ultimate aim is to "create better understanding between different communities and to encourage successful integration" of refugees. Through this training, the capacity of the Arts in creating inclusive places unfolded towards the integration of refugees and displaced communities.

The HCD training had the following objectives:
• to train the participants in human centred design through a real-life example
• to share experience and knowledge of innovative and creative approaches in place making
• to prepare the participants to designing creative arts interventions addressing problems of their choice in the following phase of the Summer Academy.

© Monah Papamija Urbano

▲ Image 12. **Joana Dabaj**

© Monah Papamija Urbano

▲ Image 13. **Hannah Sender**

The HCD training asked the participants to design creative interventions based on a real-world case study: a courtyard for a school in Lebanon attended by local and refugee children. Six groups of learners worked on the same challenge: 'how can we use creative arts in the public realm to create inclusive places?' Each student had a role to play in the group (an artist, a municipality, NGO or school representative, and community member: local or refugee). In Human-Centred Design these roles, called personas (Guenther, 2006), are one of the key forms of connecting the design team to tangible users, gaining more targeted stakeholder insights, and simulating opportunities and possible futures (von Hippel, 2005).

© Teodora Lazar

© Teodora Lazar

© Teodora Lazar

© Teodora Lazar

Each team picked a type of creative arts (theatre, music, dance, visual arts, creative writing etc.) to focus on while designing their intervention. The groups spent five hours on this challenge, following an extensive process of inspiration, ideation and implementation. The exercise focused directly only on the ideation phase, which operated in multiple steps. First, groups engaged in discussions shared inspiring stories, asked questions and brainstormed, with all members using a persona of their own. The goal of brainstorming was not to get a perfect idea, but to get as many ideas as possible, to have enough to choose from. The next step meant moving from ideas to concepts. Organizing ideas into themes helped the groups choose the best ones to proceed forward with and arrive at a refined concept. Then students used rapid prototyping to test their concepts and make them more tangible. Collaborative design became a tool for learning through making as quick prototypes helped students to find out how their concepts could work in practice.

The Human-Centered Design training took the participants of the Summer School through a process of design-based community engagement and empowerment. Such a creative task is as much about the final outcome, as it is about the journey of getting there. Over the following days students were tasked with mobilizing their knowledge and skills learned during HCD training to design place-based arts projects responding to challenges of their choice.

Designing public realm projects

In the last phase of the Summer Academy the participants were tasked with indicating a burning challenge in London and addressing it through designing an arts project of their own. This part of the learning process focused on two key phases of a human-centred design project: inspiration and ideation.

The inspiration phase comprised learning about a place and its communities, understanding their needs and opening up to all creative possibilities. An initial challenge setting workshop gave each group an opportunity to identify a situation that needed an intervention. For that, previous experience, shared stories or recent news in the broadcast media served the participants as sources of inspiration. Ideas varied from public markets, through local community engagement to the provision of meeting spaces for the homelessness in London. Most groups decided to focus on topics that were relevant to all members, building on forms of shared knowledge from the outset. This, in turn, helped to widen the affordances for interaction, play and learning (Giacomin, 2014). After identifying a starting point, groups framed their design challenges by talking in terms of insight statements and translating them into opportunities for design. Asking 'How Might We' questions gave a clearly defined purpose and track to their challenges.

Image 18 - 20. **Designing public space projects** ▼

© Teodora Lazar

© Teodora Lazar

© Teodora Lazar
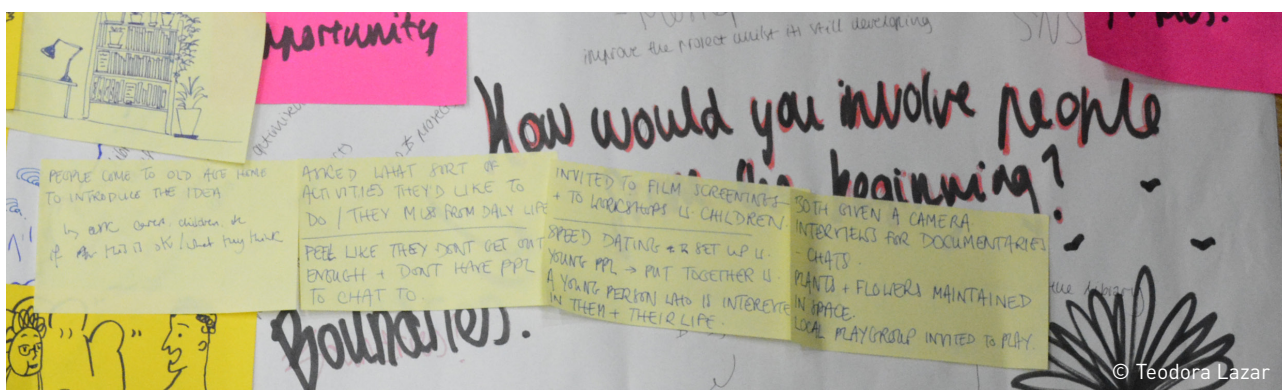
The ideation phase was about finding solutions and ideas to tackle the challenge. The process of Human-Centered Design is plotted to be challenging, to take into account creative possibilities and make one either think outside the box or narrow things down to what is possible. Therefore, the next stages of the ideation phase operated with divergent and convergent thinking, alternatively. The participants diverged in order to come up with bold ideas for their social interventions, used personas and scenarios to facilitate 'interaction, imagination and learning' (Giacomin, 2014). This abstract and open thinking generated many ideas and creative solutions, disregarding the boarders of what is actually possible. Then groups discussed and organised their ideas into themes identifying those ones that could actually work. Divergent thinking was useful again when it came to the next step - getting visual. The groups got creative and represented their ideas through drawing and small scale moulding, but then converged one more time to storyboard and prototype. "When the goal is to get impactful solutions out into the world, you can't live in abstractions" (IDEO, 2015, p. 20). Getting constant feedback and ideas from people outside the group taught each participant a core mindset of Human-Centered Design: iterate, iterate, iterate.

Image 21 - 22. **Designing public space projects** ▲

To reflect over the whole experience, each group created a poster that integrated all the hours of researching, brainstorming and prototyping. Their presentations showed excitement and belief in the eventual implementation of those social interventions, but still remaining open to ideas, suggestions and constructive feedback. They managed to understand that 'when Human-Centered Designers get it right, it's because they got it wrong first' (IDEO, 2015, p. 21). As a result, most projects had no actual design solution. Instead, every project clearly stated the issue it was trying to fix, the people it was addressing to, and the mindsets it wanted to change. The participants experienced a process whereby a design activity focuses on 'questions of motivation, discourse and learning before proceeding to identify the means of implementation' (Giacomin, 2014, p. 3).

The Summer School ended with poster presentations and discussion of student projects that will form the next section of this report. Even though the Human-Centered Design exercise stopped at this phase, the projects created are of great relevance to today's challenges and it would be a real gain to see them implemented in the future. The next section presents the outcomes of the work of 5 groups of students prepared in the form of double-sided A0 posters.

Student Projects

This section comprises a series of posters designed by the participants of the Summer Academy at the end of the week-long intensive programme.

Group 1 designed on a project called 'Open Door' aiming to tackle social isolation of older people and the lack of youth engagement through arts-led workshops community gardening and community-based skis acquisition in public libraries.

Group 2 worked on a project titled 'The Living Archive: Remembering Grenfell'. The archive was conceived as a physical and digital space for recording, sharing and discussing memories of residents of the Grenfell Tower block of social housing flats in North Kensington, London, where a tragic fire had broken out on 14 June 2017, causing 71 deaths, more than 100 injuries and catastrophic event for the local community.

Group 3 designed the 'Hackney Wick Flagship', a boat that would serve as a local means of transport on the River Lea and local canals, create a floating public realm, and foster sociability between different class and ethnic communities living in the area.

Group 4 engaged in tackling the problems of disempowerment, spatial exclusion, social isolation, and loneliness experienced by London's homeless people through provision of a network of flexible community hubs. The 'CommuniTEA Project' proposed working with cafés and other business to transform a number of venues into temporary community spaces operating after business hours.

Group 5 worked on a proposal for a 'Poplar Market Improvement Association' that was meant to give a face-lift and revitalize Christ Street Market in East London's Polar. The project comprised working with traders and local communities to collaboratively redesign the market, turn it into a space for skills sharing and venture incubation and empower local residents.

Image 23. **Designing public space projects** ▼

© Teodora Lazar
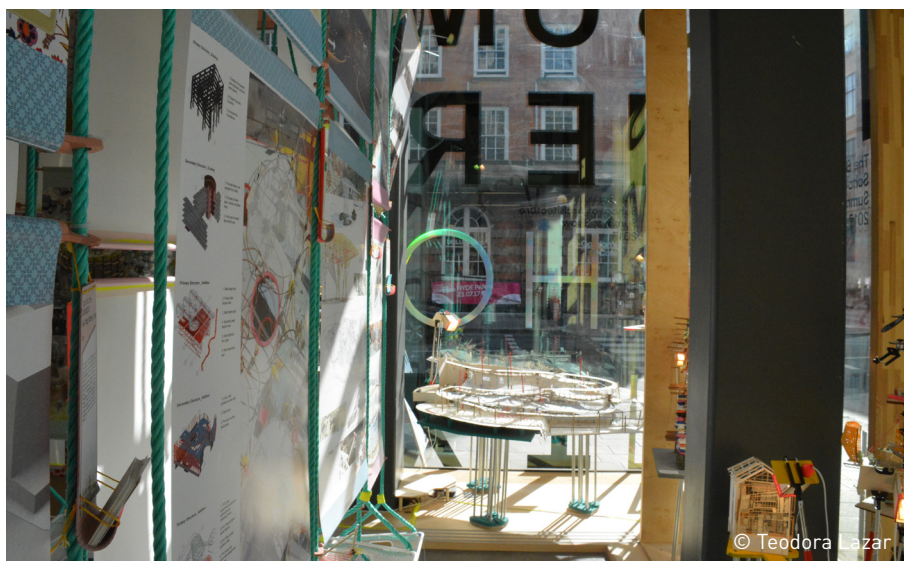
Open Door

Group Members: Rafaela Spangenthal, Momoko Okuyama, Catharine Hughes, Maria Caballero & Kasia Sobucka

PROBLEM SPACE

"To simultaneously tackle the isolation of the elderly and the lack of youth social engagement."

Elderly people are isolated in their communities and homes, feeling lonely and forgotten, which has a negative impact on their health and wellbeing. This in turn has a potential influence on the amount of care which is required and an increase in cost to the state. Ultimately, this creates a detrimental cycle of neglect and a derogatory mentality towards aging in London.

Meanwhile, youth in certain communities in London, which lack facilities and opportunities, fall into similar cycles of detachment from society along with school failure and potential gang involvement. Preventing this social disengagement would have a positive effect on how state funds are allocated, in that certain areas will see a decrease in criminality and drug consumption. This will also improve social dynamics within the community, offering these young people a better standing in society and life.

VALIDATION

ELDERLY PEOPLE

At least 40,000 elderly people in care homes in England are living in "social isolation", according to a survey. "They've lost so much already -
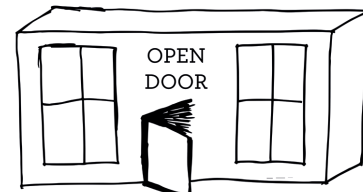
they've lost their homes, their families, often their memory. No-one to help stimulate it or remind them of who they were or what they did. No-one who knows their history.

Care Services Minister Paul Barstow said "By understanding their personal history and listening to them, care homes can transform people's lives.

"Caring for older people is everybody's business. That is why the government is determined to strengthen community action. Citizen-led advocacy and community-based befriending services can make a big difference."

YOUNG PEOPLE

The crisis of youth disengagement is considered to be widespread within the UK, due to a variety of risk variables related to their social environment and cultural influences (such as growing up poor in single parent households; living in crime ridden neighbourhoods; possessing low educational aspirations and expectations; exposure to substance abuse from a young age; adoption of self-defeating behaviours).

LIBRARIES

Almost 8,000 jobs in UK libraries have disappeared in six years, about a quarter of the overall total, an investigation by the BBC has revealed. Over the same period, some 15,500 volunteers have been recruited and 343 libraries have closed, leading to fears over the future of the profession. In Brent in north London more than half the libraries have closed since 2010.

BIOPHILIC ARCHITECTURE

The introduction of plants to a space is proven to have a positive effects on productivity and wellbeing. Given the current trend of including plants in interiors this would be a simple solution to enhancing the aesthetics of the space.

ACTION PLAN

PRELIMINARY
Present the proposal to NGO and municipality (and potential developers or donors) in order to gain the necessary funding. The established figure will be reflected in the scale of the project.

INTRODUCTION
Informative presentations to inspire users about creative solutions to isolation - ie. alternative care homes abroad, modern co-working spaces, any kind of human centrically designed spaces (with a view to utilise neglected local libraries, if identified as a relevant solution).

STAGE 1
Participatory diagnosis. Approaching different end users - schools and care homes - to identify needs and interests, using creative workshops and interviews. From these the project will discover the skills and talents of the users, potentially contributing to the creation process. For example: imparting knowledge of gardening/ plant growing to decorate the space, etc.

STAGE 2
Summarise findings and develop multiple ideas with the community. Once the common interests of users from both age groups have been established, a pairing system will be implemented.

STAGE 3
Begin to source local craftsmen in order to gauge feasibility and begin to involve community in processes for building by creating specific projects which complement the skills and abilities of community members.

STAGE 4
Once build is completed (or an adequate amount has been achieved with the aim of continually developing and adding to the project) activities can begin to take place within the space.

ACTIVITIES (Dependent on Budget)

PHOTOGRAPHY / DOCUMENTARY MAKING
Depending on the facilities gained from funding,

the project would offer their use to local photographers /documentary makers/production companies who would in exchange take on the role of directing photography workshops with the users. Following on from the pairings made at the start of project these would form the basis of said photography projects. That is to say, the young people would be taught the necessary photography skills to tell and interpret the stories offered by the elderly therefore providing an opportunity for them to share experiences.

OTHER POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES
Plant Growing (Hydroponic), Painting, Tai Chi, Pilates, Poetry, Flower Crafts, Cinema Projection, Story Telling, Street Art / Murals, Secret Santa, Photography Collection

KEY ACTORS / BENEFICIARIES

Elderly and young people from the local communities. Care givers and families of vulnerable users. NGO providing funding and expertise. Municipality / Council Local craftsmen / artists / photographers / etc.

SCALE AND SCOPE?

To begin with, the project will operate within one community, identifying 1 school, 1 care home and 1 library. If successful this will be treated as a prototype to be duplicated and reapplied in other communities.

Refences
"The Educative Role of Sport for Socially Disengaged Young Black Men in London" Lena Hatchett
"Thousands of elderly in care homes 'socially isolated'" BBC
"Libraries lose a quarter of staff as hundreds close" BBC

The Living Archive: Remembering Grenfell

Group Members: Andre Afonso, Michael Christov, Barbara Martinez & Monica Papamija

PROBLEM SPACE

WHY ARE WE DOING THIS?

"To create opportunities for ensuring collective memory and enabling grieving processes after crisis."

Ex-residents are dispersed, feel forgotten and undervalued, and have no organised space for community grieving. Citizens in London also want to find out the stories of residents themselves rather than through biased media outlets. Desire for this incident to be memorialised so that a similar event will not result from council negligence.

Mindfulness

QUESTIONS
- How can ex-residents have a long-term platform / space for preserving collective memory?
- How do citizens actually want to grieve? (Open-ended project facilitates all modes

ACTION PLAN

WHAT ARE WE DOING?

Physical + digital intervention to record memories of ex-residents and their communities

Physical
Physical wooden structure in form of tower to post written memories
Booths for sound recording
Chairs for sharing stories privately with others

◀ Example of wooden structure

VALIDATION

WHAT DO WE ALREADY KNOW?
- Ex residents are dispersed
- No centre for grieving
- Protests show dissatisfaction and anger
- Media blackout after a week - people need sustained opportunities for grieving and media cannot provide this

Digital
Simple website where people can upload multimedia files
Photos, recordings, videos, documents + Sharing thoughts section for
either local community or broad public.

Informing People
Email, posters, website, social media.

Funding
Donations via internet and onsite collection points.

WHO WILL BENEFIT FROM IT?

Primarily local communities, ex-residents, families and friends.

Wider London communities

High-rise / social housing communities worldwide
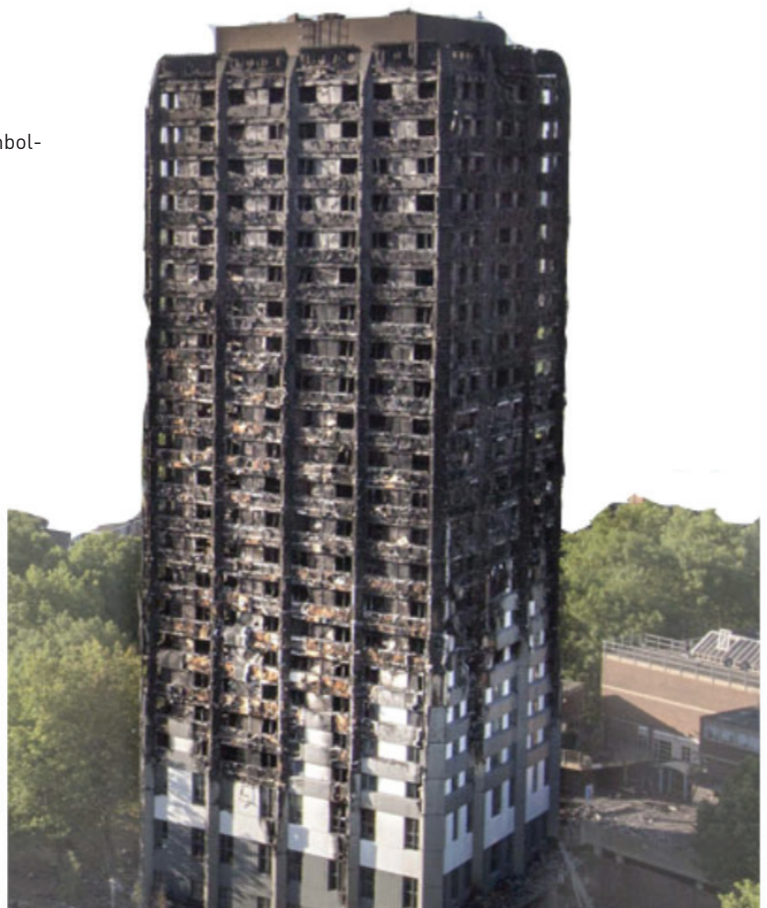
WHAT IS THE SCALE AND THE SCOPE?

Small-scale, large scope

300+ residents and their local commumity

Hackney Wick Flagship

Group Members: Romeo Gongora, Angie Farfán Garcia, Tritrabhorn Pohsri, Aesclin Fridurik Jones & Taiane Fernandes

PROBLEM SPACE

WHY ARE WE DOING THIS?

"How might we create an inclusive public space for the Hackney Wick communities?"

VALIDATION

WHAT DO WE ALREADY KNOW?

1 The problem: Lack of cooperation and communication between different communities of Hackney Wick. Notable is the division that the waterway creates between the North and South of the area.

2 How can we address these social divisions between communities? How can this improve their experience of their local area by including new modes of transport?

3 As new groups of people move in, older communities can feel distant, both culturally and socially from this movement. This is particularly acute because of the London 'Housing Crisis' as graduates on moderate income move into more affordable areas.
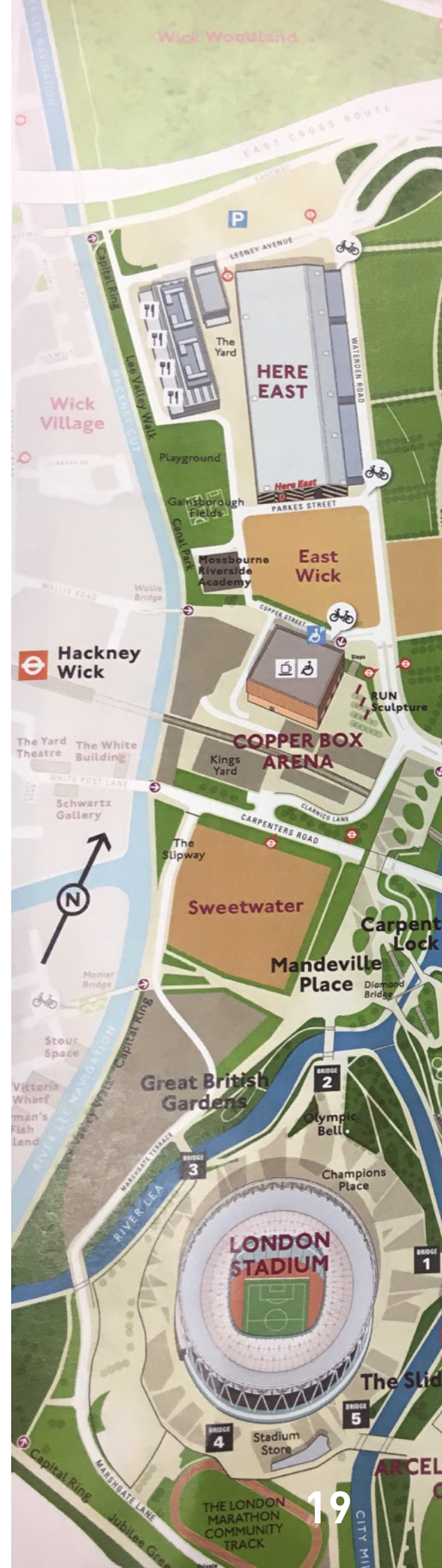
ACTION PLAN

WHAT ARE WE DOING?

Our solution: To build a boat with skilled manual workers from the community, which will remain important in dissolving the North/South divide in the area.

The boat will contain a communal garden, which will take up a large part of the boat, and will travel from point A to B South along the canal. The route will include the different areas of the community and encourage a positive sense of identity for the residents.
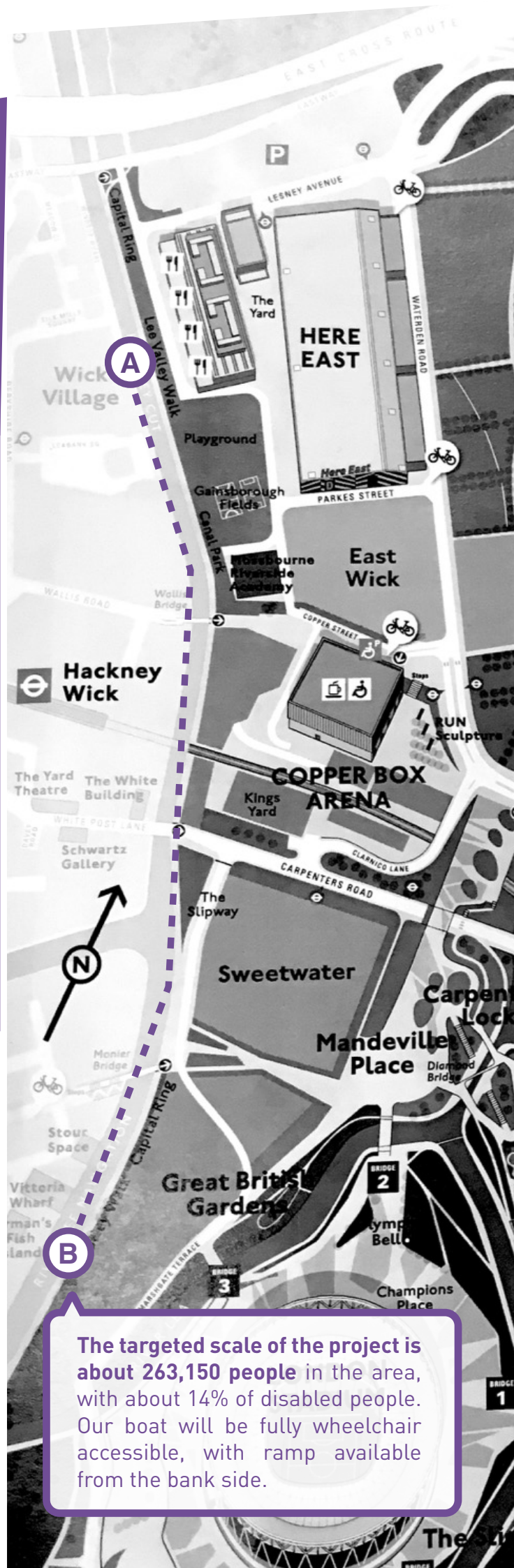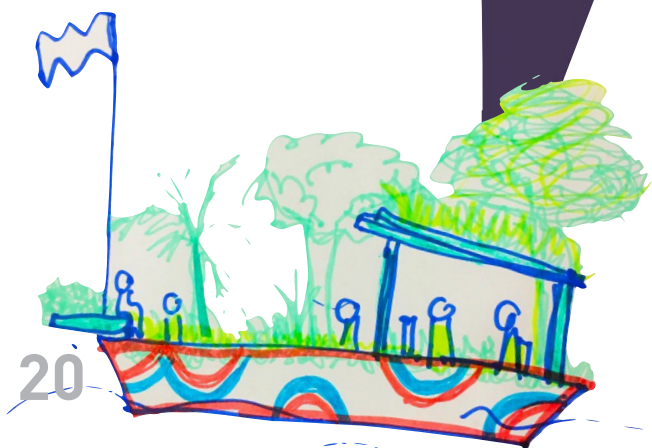
Activities such as painting, an accompanying orchestra will be part of something that leaves something tangible left for the community.

WHY — **To foster sociability between communities**

FOR WHOM — **Three community groups from Hackney Wick: working class, middle class (new group), migrant those group include young and elderly people.**

20

The targeted scale of the project is **about 263,150 people** in the area, with about 14% of disabled people. Our boat will be fully wheelchair accessible, with ramp available from the bank side.

CommuniTEA Network

Group Members: Charlie Lyttelton, Jessica Scott, Nada Smiljanic, Raquel Trentini & Zhen Lin

PROBLEM SPACE

WHY ARE WE DOING THIS?

"Integrating homeless people in the wider community through spaces for creative collaboration"

Homelessness is still stigmatised in the society. Homeless people are disempowered, poorly integrated into the wider community, and often remain within the confines of the institutional framework that supports them. Too often, they do not feel welcome in public and private spaces occupied by people with financial capital; a symbolic barrier separates them.

We believe that, through facilitating exchange, communication and creative collaboration- starting with the simple activity of drinking tea in free-to-use spaces- we can improve the quality of life for homeless and non-homeless people, strengthen community cohesion and challenge negative stereotypes. We want homeless people to feel like they are part of the community.

VALIDATION

### WHAT DO WE ALREADY KNOW?

An exclusionary attitude towards homeless people's presence in urban spaces is widespread and is exemplified by:
* Spikes on the ground used to deter rough sleepers
* The 'Camden bench' model, designed to be uncomfortable to sleep on.

This leaves many homeless people with no place to sleep, making them more and more excluded from the public space and increasingly alienated.
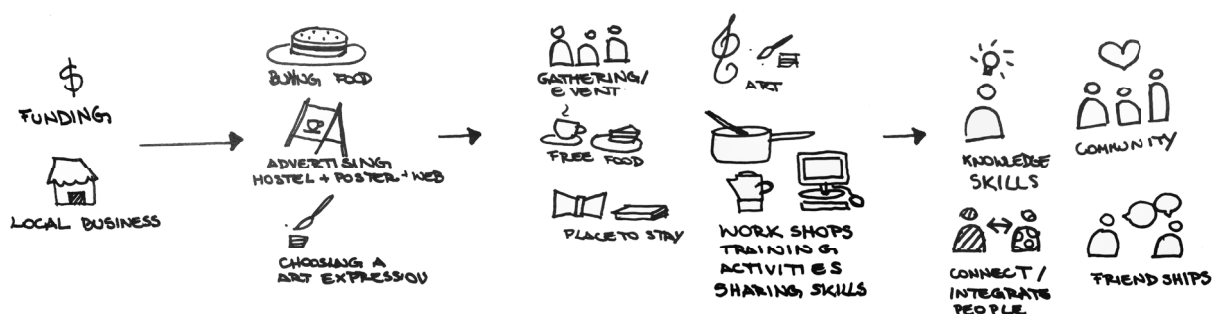
According to a 2016 Crisis report:
• Over 1 in 3 homeless people have had things thrown at them
• Almost 1 in 10 homeless people have been urinated on
• More than one in 20 homeless people have been a victim of sexual assault.

This indicates continued stigmatization of homeless people, and a disregard for them as equal citizens.

ACTION PLAN

WHAT ARE WE DOING?

We are opening up flexible community hubs, where creative engagement will be encouraged. These spaces will offer possibilities for recreation and socialising that are not strictly defined as serving the homeless community. This will help to make homeless people more included in the community.

Privately owned spaces such as cafés used after closing time, in effect becoming "public" spaces.

Artistic and creative engagement between communities will be encouraged; initial interactions will indicate what activities there is a demand or need for; homeless and non- homeless people alike will be encouraged to lead activities and share their skills with others.

We will create an online network map of participating spaces and a community-curated programme of events; we will also advertise the intervention through established organisations and charities providing support for homeless people, in order to circumvent potential limitations to internet access.

WHO WILL BENEFIT FROM IT?

Homeless people: sense of belonging, wider access to recreational spaces and more opportunities to participate in a diverse range of activities.

Local businesses: attention will help to increase footfall in the longer term and help to positively portray them as socially engaged.

Wider community: cohesion in places that are growing increasingly divided due to gentrification, or where the sense of community is lacking due to residents being transient populations like students; more options for people to engage with in the evenings, helping to make an area more vibrant.

WHAT IS THE SCALE AND THE SCOPE?

Small-scale intervention will provide a model that can be applied wherever basic requirements can be met (i.e. seating, tea, flexible space).

Poplar M.I.A Improvement Association

Group Members: Tara Dorey, Louise Hildreth, Elisa Melodia, Silja Vornanen, Mary Berman & Lisa Drew

M. I. A.

PROBLEM SPACE

WHY ARE WE DOING THIS?

"To develop a community-led intervention to give Chrisp Street Market a face-lift and to support traders and locals in the face of a redevelopment plan and inevitable gentrification of the area."

Although a diverse area, the communities in Poplar are lacking in cohesive spaces to enjoy together. There is an existing market place whose users are from mixed ethnic backgrounds, however the space itself is underused and uninviting. Historically the market place is the heart of a community that we believe if improved can provide an inclusive and vibrant social space as well as a local identity.

The intervention will be developed with the community but with the aim of being long-term and sustainable.

© Andy Worthington

VALIDATION

WHAT DO WE ALREADY KNOW?

From online research we have discovered an existing redevelopment plan for 2018 by Poplar HARCA and Telford Homes. Although the plan presents itself to be beneficial to the local traders it does not seem to have considered Human Centered Design. The plan contributes to the further 'Shoreditchification' of the area without incorporating the existing community in its conception process and its design.

- Poplar is one of the poorest areas of London, despite being just a stones throw from Canary Wharf and the City
- The community lacks both private and public space
- Less than 50% of residents are in employment
- 40% of the community is Bangladeshi with a high proportion of a Muslim belief
- The other large proportion of residents is White British
- There are no artistic facilities in the area

© TimeOut

© Andy Worthington

- The communal spaces are often based around religious institutes

ACTION PLAN

WHAT ARE WE DOING?

MIA is a volunteer community-led board composed of market traders, local residents, artists and representatives of the council. We will promote MIA via the market and through digital channels (facebook, twitter account and the home page of the free wifi page).

What MIA does:
- Work with local schools (e.g tower hamlets college) on the redesigning of the market place, engaging them in the conceiving, designing, creating and opening of arts projects - Offer art skills workshops open to all involving local resources (e.g textiles workshops using materials sold on the market)
- Provide a centralized, unified voice through which locals can "converse" with the developers; expressing concerns, questions etc regarding proposed designs
- Support market traders by providing training in marketing, e-commerce and digital promotion and business management skills

Raise Awareness through MIAtings with community
↓
Establish MIA with collaborators
↓
Build collaborations with schools
↓
redesign market with community
↓
add benches, mosaics
↓
work on visibility and identity
↓
Opening Celebrations
↓
Sustainability after intervention

WHO WILL BENEFIT FROM IT?

Market Traders, Schools, Local Artists, Residents, Council & Visitors of the Borough!

WHAT IS THE SCALE AND THE SCOPE?

Local, impacting the direct vicinity of Chrisp Street Market

Students' Experiences and Reflections on Human-Centred Design

'What I liked about the Human-Centered Design training was that we discussed concrete challenges'

Human-Centred Design is an approach to problem-solving that puts people, their imagination and needs at the very core. It embraces socio-political, cultural and environmental implications that go beyond physical design and its technological factors. While HCD often incorporates elements of systems thinking to create holistic solutions (see: Vechakul & Agogino, 2016), it is "concerned less with assuring that artifacts work as intended (by their producers, designers, or other cultural authorities) than with enabling many individual or cultural conceptions to unfold into uninterrupted interfaces with technology" (Krippendorff, 2004, p.48 in Giacomin, 2015, p. 609).

 In place-based arts HCD is used for valuing the input, knowledge, resources and opinions of the local community and those who will interact with art. This often means connecting with the community in meaningful and creative ways to meet their needs, brainstorming creative ideas or dreams for the project, as well as reaching out to discover who can participate in the delivery. As such, HCD builds on participatory action research and participatory planning to move away from technocratic and rationalist thinking towards new domains of collective creativity (Sanders and Stappers 2008; Thompson Klein et al., 2001; Frasera et al., 2005) and collaborative forms of governance (Healey, 1997 and 2007; Hillier, 1999; Balducci, 2010; Friedmann, 1987 and 1992).

The Summer School served as a vehicle for reflection on advantages and disadvantages of using Human-Centred Design, and on different roles it can play in place-based arts. The capacity to address real human needs through inclusive collaborations with local communities was seen as the key advantage of the design process whereby connecting to different viewpoints, shaping desired experiences and transforming lives constitutes the primary aim rather than a secondary effect (Crossley, 2003; McDonagh-Philp and Lebbon, 2000). This, in turn, gives an opportunity to empower engaged communities and strengthen their sense of belonging. Turning communities into co-creators of place-based arts not only allows on using and capitalizing on their skills and knowledge, but also helps to connect their members to a place they live in and to one another. As such, HCD opens up avenues for long-term engagement, active place-making and sustainable ownership of artistic interventions. Last but not least, HCD, through integration of professional and experiential knowledges, has a potential to break boundaries between arts and society.

'We got to conceive our own intervention in a public space'

The participants of the Summer Academy have also reflected upon challenges that Human-Centred Design can present in place-based arts projects. Time was considered the first of them. Collaborative design process can be longer in terms of finding common ground and might require more resources. A HCD-led project might also get complicated in the long term as original stakeholders are replaced by new people whose needs are different. Secondly, community engagement might prove to be problematic for a number of reasons. Some elements of the public will always be difficult to reach, the most excluded and isolated groups in particular. Other groups, on the contrary, might be overrepresented in arts-led projects. It is very common that the same few 'usual suspects' take part in all participatory projects, their opinions and needs get overemphasized in the design process, and project outputs become tailored for them (see also: Panne et al., 2003). Some communities might be also unaware of their needs or not willing to talk about them (Van Kleef et al., 2005). Last but not least, challenges of Human-Centred design arise also with the increasing diversity of people for whom art interventions are intended. Users come from different backgrounds, have different views and different experiences of the city, which often translates into conflicting needs and expectations. Listening to these frequently dissonant voices during the construction/assemblage of an art intervention may represent an extra difficulty to the design team.

The above mentioned challenges, which project teams face when mobilizing Human-Centred Design for place-based arts, can turn into several limitations or disadvantages of the HCD approach. First, the integration of professional knowledge of designers with multiple voices of communities might compromise the artistic excellence of place-based arts projects. Participants of the Summer Academy pointed out that there might be a number of tradeoffs between artistic and social qualities of design (see also: Hekkert and Van Dijk 2001). Second, some ideas coming from the community and non-experts are not realistic, which causes their voices being disregarded from final decisions taken by professionals and can bring disappointment. Further community disappointment and disengagement may result from conflictive needs of humans and non-humans, e.g. built heritage, animals or plants whose custodians and spokespeople take part in the design process. Last, Human-Centred Design process, within which making ethical choices is inevitable, might evoke conflicts between interests and unravel salient tensions within local communities (Thompson Klein, 2001).

Finally, consideration of advantages and disadvantages of Human-Centred Design for place-based arts throughout the learning process helped the participants of the Summer Academy to understand the complexity of the design process, to create conditions for successful arts-based interventions, and to critically reflect upon their own roles as artists and designers. As Steen (2011) points out, HCD practitioners need to navigate two key tensions: (i) a gap between different life worlds, knowledges and competencies of professionals and users, and (ii) a tension between the need for simultaneous understanding of the present and designing for alternative futures. This requires critical reflexivity on power and agency of different actors, on complex relations of representation, and on ethical implications of place-based arts.

Conclusions

The TRANS-MAKING Summer Academy entitled 'Reclaim Creativity! Arts in the Public Realm', that took place in London from 21 to 27 June 2017, explored how a variety of actors (cultural/creative, academic and civil society) can contribute to economic, social and democratic innovation in Europe and beyond. In so doing it aimed to investigate into and create capabilities of arts institutions and place-based art activities to shape the European public sphere. Pursuing this requires turning the arts into a catalyst of sustainable prosperity. This means not only building and sustaining compelling democratic narratives, but also addressing local problems and human needs.

The programme of activities which comprised public events, workshops, experiential learning, gaming, site visits, human-centred design training and design of place-based arts projects, embraced three elements that characterize every piece of participatory action research: (i) reflection upon problems & practices, (ii) meaningful engagement with broader society and (iii) work towards social change. Public events and workshops offered a space for research and innovation staff active in the fields of place-making and place-based arts to reflect upon innovative approaches to arts in the public realm together with East London's youth and students. Gaming exercises helped the participants to understand the complexity of economic, cultural, environmental and sociopolitical challenges facing Europe, to collectively imagine desirable futures and trajectories of social change, as well as to experiment with taking different roles in the innovation process. Site visits enabled immersion in real-life environments where art is used as a vehicle for social inclusion and active citizenship, and acted as a source of inspiration for young people. Last but not least, the HCD training and collaborative design of new public realm projects offered the participants new skills, networks and joint plans for the future.

The TRANS-MAKING Summer Academy in London was a step forward in pursuing the consortium's goal of turning place-based arts into a 'living laboratory' (Muller et al., 2006) of socio-economic change and progressive politics. The Human-Centred Design approach was examined and experimented with an opportunity to turn public art into a hybrid research, design and making space of social innovation. "Exposure to the design process as a structured way of framing a problem, generating innovative concepts, and refining and implementing a solution may empower practitioners and low-income communities by encouraging people to try new ideas, experiment iteratively, and effect change" (Vechakul and Agogino, 2016, p. 11). While the design-led approach to participatory experimentation presents a number of challenges relating to time, resources, and forms of integration of professional and experiential knowledges, its promises for creating alternative narratives for social, economic and democratic renewal can hardly be questioned. The use of HCD in place-based arts offers an opportunity to embed systems thinking into artistic practice and thus break boundaries between art, society and technology. This approach also paves new transdisciplinary avenues for 'relational aesthetics' (Bourriaud 2002) whereby art is co-created by artists, designers and communities whose lives it aims to change.

We argue for a greater integration of Human-Centred Design into both school and higher education curricula across the arts and humanities and STEM subjects. The value of this approach rests not only in developing shared concepts and action frameworks for future artists and engineers (Zoltowski et al., 2012), but foremost in inspiring and empowering a new generation of thinkers and doers capable to understand complex social challenges, as these are experienced by different communities on the ground, and address them through technology-enabled, creative and collaborative problem-solving.

References

Balducci A. (2010) Strategic Planning as a Field of Practices, in: M. Cerreta et al. (Eds) Making Strategies in Spatial Planning Knowledge and Values. Dordrecht, and New York: Springer.

Bourriaud N. (2002) Relational aesthetics. Dijon: Les Presses du Réel.

Crossley L. (2003) Building Emotions in Design, The Design Journal 6 (3): 35–45.

Frasera E. D., Dougilla A.J., Mabeeb W.E., Reeda M. and McAlpine P. (2005) Bottom up and top down: Analysis of participatory processes for sustainability indicator identification as a pathway to community empowerment and sustainable environmental management, Journal of Environmental Management, 78(2): 114-127.

Friedmann J. (1987) Planning in the Public Domain: From Knowledge to Action. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Friedmann J. (1992) Empowerment. The Politics of Alternative Development. Cambridge: Blackwell.

Giacomin J. (2014) What Is Human Centred Design?, The Design Journal 17(4): 606-623.

Guenther K. (2006). Developing personas to understand user needs, Online 30(5): 49–51.

Healey P. (1997) Collaborative Planning - Shaping places in fragmented societies. London: MacMillan.

Healey P. (2002) Planning in Relational Space and Time: Responding to New Urban Realities, in: G. Bridge and S. Watson S. (Eds) Companion to the City. Chicester: Blackwell Publishing.

Hekkert, P. and Van Dijk, M., 2001. Designing from context. In: P. Lloyd and H. Christiaans (Eds) Designing in context. Delft: Delft University Press.

Hillier J. (1999) Going round the back? Complex networks and informal action in local planning processes, Environment and Planning A 32(1): 33-54.

IDEO (2015) The Field Guide to Human-Centered Design. A step-by-step guide that will get you solving problems like a designer. New York. IDEO.

Krippendorff K. (2004) Intrinsic motivation and human-centred design, Theoretic Issues in Ergonomics Science 5(1): 43–72.

McDonagh-Philp D. & Lebbon C. (2000) The Emotional Domain in Product Design, The Design Journal 3(1): 31–43.

Muller L., Edmonds E. & Connell M. (2006) Living laboratories for interactive art, CoDesign 2(4): 195-207.

Panne G. van den, Van Beers C. and Kleinknecht, A. (2003) Success and failure of innovation: a

literature review, International Journal of Innovation Management 7(3): 309–338.

Sanders E. & Stappers P. (2008) Co-creation and the new landscapes of design, Co-Design 4(1): 5-18.

Steen M. (2011) Tensions in human-centred design, CoDesign 7(1): 45-60.

Thompson Klein.J. (2001) The Dialogue Sessions, in: J Thompson Klein, W. Grossenbacher-Mansuy, R. Häberli, A. Bill, R.W. Scholz and M. Welti (Eds) Transdisciplinarity: Joint Problem Solving among Science, Technology, and Society. An Effective Way for Managing Complexity. Basel: Birkhäuser.

Van Kleef E., Van Trijp H.C. and Luning P. (2005) Consumer research in the early stages of new product development: a critical review of methods and techniques. Food Quality and Preference 16(3): 181–201.

Vechakul J. & Agogino A. (2016) A Comparison of Two Transdisciplinary Human-Centered Design Approaches for Poverty Alleviation, in The Future of Transdisciplinary Design. Dordrecht: Springer International Publishing.

Von Hippel E. (2005). Democratizing Innovation. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Zoltowski C., Oakes W. & Cardella M. (2012) Students' Ways of Experiencing Human-Centered Design, Journal of Engineering Education 101(1): 28–59.

This page is intentionally left blank