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607457-CREA-1-2019-1-ES-CULT-COOP2

# **Strategies for embedding creative and artistic productions in sociocultural environments**

## **2019-21**

Deliverable 3.6

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CREATIVE EUROPE Cooperation Project Agreement number 607457-CREA-1-2019-1-ES-CULT-COOP2

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**A-Place**

Deliverable 3.6

Strategies for embedding creative and artistic productions  
in sociocultural environments (2019-21)

Version 1.0

**Editor:**

Luisa Bravo

Leandro Madrazo

**Contributors:**

Veronika Antoniou

Luisa Bravo

Victoria Sacco

Teresa Tourvas

**31 March 2022**

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## Executive Summary

Three festivals participate in A-Place, taking place in Barcelona, Bologna and Nicosia. They are intended to help develop the career of professional artists and creative thinkers and designers, and to internationally promote and disseminate the activities of the project within the realms of art, research and academia.

These three festivals are different in scale and scope:

- LOOP Barcelona promoted by Screen Project is part of a larger, city-wide yearly event, an internationally renowned fair dedicated to video art, taking place in different locations in the city of Barcelona, with the engagement of international galleries and the organization of exhibitions, screenings and live performances;
- Urban Visions promoted by City Space Architecture in Bologna is a festival dedicated to exploring urban humanities through the screening of short films focusing on the contemporary urban complexity, exploring the relationships between people and spaces with multiple media, tackling urgent issues related to participation, inclusion, sharing and social practices, with an international perspective and applying an interdisciplinary approach;
- Pame Kaimakli promoted by Urban Gorillas in Nicosia is a neighbourhood cultural festival managed by the residents of the Kaimakli district in Nicosia, with an open gallery and a hub of creative and social actions, linking ad-hoc informal events in the private houses of the neighbours, while exploring publicness, co-creation, and community engagement through creative interventions of local and international artists with the collaboration of residents.

This document describes different practice-led approaches from each festival with regard to the production, sharing and dissemination of creative and artistic contents in the socio-cultural context in which they take place, and the strategies developed to engage the artists as content creators of public space knowledge and meanings. Such strategies are challenging the current definition of so-called "creative placemaking" by placing an emphasis on a curatorial entrepreneurship for the production and dissemination of art-led content - that acts as a mediator between artists and communities.

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. Definitions and strategies for creative placemaking

The three festivals of the A-Place project, LOOP, Urban Visions and Pame Kaimakli, work on the production and dissemination of creative and artistic contents such as videos, films and artistic installations, presented and discussed during community events, intercultural debates and public gatherings in different venues. The engagement of the artists follows specific strategies, that are defined according to the condition of the context in which each festival takes place, focusing on specific issues or dedicated sites. Artists are selected through open calls and curatorial activities and are invited to produce content that is able to expand the meaning and notion of public space and to theoretically shape its physical and social character.

These strategies are usually described as “creative placemaking” since this term has been associated to certain bottom-up and impact-driven practices able to redefine public space, its use and transformation, namely called “placemaking”, through the engagement of creative thinkers, designers and artists, and thus considered as “creative”.

According to Project for Public Spaces (2018), “placemaking” is “an overarching idea and hands-on approach for improving a neighbourhood, city or region”, and “inspires people to collectively reimagine and reinvent public spaces as the heart of every community”, “strengthening the connection between people and the places they share”. According to the American Planning Association, “creative placemaking is a process where community members, artists, arts and culture organizations, community developers, and other stakeholders use arts and cultural strategies to implement community-led change. This approach aims to increase vibrancy, improve economic conditions, and build capacity among residents to take ownership of their communities” - <https://www.planning.org/knowledgebase/creativeplacemaking/>. Creative placemaking animates public and private spaces, rejuvenates structures and streetscapes, improves local business viability and public safety, and brings diverse people together to celebrate, inspire, and be inspired (Markusen and Gadwa, 2010). Creative practises are often process-driven, and move towards a complex and more nuanced understanding of creative placemaking, with regard to the role of the artist and the social, economic and political contexts in which the artist’s work is developed, throughout a dynamic process that evolves together with the practice itself. Arts-led and socially concerned placemaking celebrates the capacity of the arts to address the city as a complex ecosystem, so that projects and actions can integrate culture and community and can result in boosted local economies and increased levels of social connection and civic engagement (Courage, 2020). In creative placemaking, partners from public, private, non-profit, and community sectors strategically shape the physical and social character of a neighbourhood, town, city, or region around arts and cultural activities.

Since 2010, the rapid adoption of the term “creative placemaking” has led to confusion with regard to which activities can be considered under that umbrella and how their impact can be measured (Zitcer, 2018). In particular the criticism is related to the role of the artist carrying out his/her practice in a socio-cultural context. Such engagement is not just a component of the community development process nor an instrument to solve social issues and promote urban regeneration, as it seems to be assumed by creative placemaking. Rather the artist is called to speak the language of the community and to learn and be inspired from the process of engagement and sharing with the community, while at the same time being free to elaborate and produce artistic contents. To do so, the artist should be strongly supported by the organization(s) that is/are inviting him/her, and is/are in charge of the project management, through proper curatorial strategies that are able to make the contribution of the artists meaningful for the community and the related socio-cultural context.

Screen Projects, City Space Architecture and Urban Gorillas are playing a curatorial role as creative entrepreneurs for the engagement of artists, with a strategic approach able to:

- design activities to exploit the potential of artistic practises and productions
- define and support art-oriented actions at the local scale but with an international perspective
- shape an overall vision in which the artists can feel comfortable and can produce impactful outcomes, that could foster awareness and eventually produce a long-term change into specific socio-cultural contexts.

The three festivals are operating at three different scales and impacts:

- local, at the community level (Barcelona, Bologna and Nicosia)
- urban, in regard of the city where it takes place, linked to context's issues and debates related to public space design and implementation, use and appropriation
- European, as part of the A-Place project, to inform a larger debate - also with the engagement of the A-Place network - in the realms of art, research, and academia, and to internationally promote the artists' works and to support the artists' career.

## 1.2. Experiences of creative placemaking

There are many experiences of creative placemaking around the United States where the definition was firstly coined in 2010 by the National Endowment for the Arts. A comprehensive overview is provided by the American Planning Association, together with an archive of projects, guidelines and research outcomes:

*“Successful creative placemaking interventions are considered those that highlights unique community characteristics: projects can focus on connecting local history with the present, bringing cultural influences into the spotlight and creating new traditions. It also builds connections between people and places by encouraging collaboration and visualization. Oftentimes, creative placemaking is able to activate public spaces or create a short-term opportunity to connect residents around arts and culture. While the creative placemaking process results in changes to physical spaces, it is also an opportunity to build relationships between diverse partners and to build positive change. A key element in the creative placemaking process is to have stakeholders, including artists, engaged early in the process. This provides opportunities to look at community challenges in an inclusive manner, gathering and deciding on creative placemaking actions based on a variety of community perspectives”* (<https://www.planning.org/knowledgebase/creativeplacemaking/>).

In Europe the concept of “placemaking” is quite recent, and can be related also to the establishment of Placemaking Europe, defined as “a network that connects practitioners, academics, community leaders, market players and policy makers across the field of placemaking. Placemaking Europe develops and shares knowledge; contributes to designing and testing tools; creates the ground to exchanging ideas; and actively advocates for better public space policies” (<https://placemaking-europe.eu/>). This concept includes also “creative placemaking”, even if it is often simply associated to creative and artistic practices that are not necessarily produced with the community, such as murals, street art and colourful painting of certain public areas, and thus have not been produced as part of a process intended to define shared values.

The Arts Council in the United Kingdom published a report (Parkinson, Buttrick, & Knight, 2020) on “Arts and Place Shaping” produced by “Wavehill: social and economic research”, which highlights how arts and cultural activities could be driving forces in building stronger communities through several activities such as:

- playing a role in facilitating reconciliation and understanding among different groups creating more harmonious communities;
- inspiring local communities to volunteer their time, expertise and energy to support others, thus promoting cohesion and sense of belonging;

- creating healthy communities through a place-based approach that foster wellbeing and a better quality of life;
- generating a sense of civic pride, place identity and fundamentally enhancing the public realm by building social capital.

Creative events and festivals in public space, as pointed out by FestSpace, a research project coordinated by the University of the West of Scotland,

*“offer opportunities for urban public spaces to be reimagined as more welcoming and more diverse spaces encouraging different behaviours and producing the inter-subjectivity that can foster the integration of migrants and other socially excluded people. However, there is also a risk that festivals and events represent merely a superficial ‘quick fix’ to social problems or worse - they might exacerbate social and economic exclusion. In their planning, and in their realisation and legacies, festivals and events include and exclude people and they allow (and restrict) the celebration of certain identities. They have the power to disrupt the fixed nature of public space and to change the dynamics of spaces. Like the spaces they inhabit, urban festivals and events are contested - with different interests competing to secure their own objectives”* (<http://festspace.net/>).

So creative and artistic practices should be implemented through an effective curatorial strategy that takes into account opportunities but also risks and counter-effects such as exclusion (Brownett & Evans, 2020). That is why a certain expertise and entrepreneurialism is required as a part of a curatorial strategy able to link social and community issue to cultural and artistic contents, maximizing the impact of creative and artistic productions developed with - through participatory practices - and for - in response of specific needs and desires - the community.

### 1.3. A-Place festivals: a diversity of approaches to placemaking

The curatorial strategy of each festival challenges the definition of creative placemaking, since it establishes a methodology that goes beyond the artistic production *per se* : it is intended to create conditions for the artist to produce his/her work without restrictions or guidance - thus giving them the freedom to understand and interpret - while embedding social cultural issues in the artist’s path. So the process of engagement of the artist and the production of creative and artistic and context-dependant contents is the focus of the three festivals.

The three festivals provide different contributions to A-Place:

- LOOP festival promotes an open call for film productions, awarded every year by a jury to one or more film-makers and/or creatives. The awarded films are then presented during the days of the festival
- Urban Visions film festival promotes a short film competition, with two different categories, one in particular dedicated to “Migrants, refugees and displaced communities” and the other one that varies every year (for the first year it was dedicated to the pandemic with “A Confined Urban Vision”, included in “A Confined Place”, and for the second year it was dedicated to recovery after the outbreak of the pandemic with ‘Resilient Communities’). After a curatorial selection from all submitted short films, a jury is appointed to award different prizes for the two categories. The shortlisted films are presented during the days of the festival and the winners are announced during a ceremony on the last day of the festival
- Paime Kaimakli festival promotes a neighbourhood-based community event, with the engagement of local residents through several creative and social events, with the engagement of international artists, that could include also the screening of films and video productions, selected by the curators.

In coherence with A-Place objectives, each partner develops a proper strategy, in regard of:

- how to engage the artist / how to collaborate with the artist
- how space, place, and public participation are intertwined, with the intention to promote awareness and inform the audience on specific issues and topics through film productions and public gatherings.

Each festival is committed to producing an impact in its respective socio-cultural environment, contributing to the understanding of the notion of place. Each festival develops and uses a specific format and targets a specific audience, so that artistic productions can create a greater benefit for the community by fostering practises of appropriation, activation, and renovation of the public realm, thus contributing to place attachment.

#### 1.4. Limitations in the exchange of knowledge during COVID-19

One of the main objectives of the networked cooperation among the three partners Screen Projects, City Space Architecture and Urban Gorillas is the exchange of cultural agents and artists. During the first two years of activities, this exchange was significantly limited due to Covid-19 restrictions with regards to in-person events and travelling. However, the three partners cooperated throughout various activities, exchanging knowledge and good practices, and becoming familiar with the creative and artistic approach and curatorial strategies of each other, and engaged each other in various activities of the A-Place project. In particular:

- LOOP festival took place in November 2020 (1st edition, online only) and in November 2021 (2nd edition - "A Body's Journey", hybrid format) and invited Urban Gorillas to join the jury for the first open call for audiovisual productions and City Space Architecture to join the jury for the second open call
- Urban Visions film festival took place in April 2021 (1st edition, online only - previously scheduled on November 2020 and postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic) and in November 2021 (2nd edition, hybrid format) and invited LOOP to join the jury for the competition "A Confined Urban Vision" and later the jury for the competition "Migrants, refugees and displaced communities" for the first year, together with other partners from A-Place (NOVA); LOOP also gave an introductory speech at the second edition. A selection of contents from the first edition of the Urban Visions film festival was disseminated in Rome during the Karawan Fest promoted by associated partner Ecomuseo Casilino ad Duas Lauros in September 2021
- Pame Kaimakli festival took place in September 2020 (A Delicious Place) and hosted films selected from A-Place partners (NOVA, KU Leuven, prostoRož) and the film "Not just food" by the Italian non-profit organization ACRA, recommended by City Space Architecture. Urban Gorillas invited LOOP to serve in the jury for the competition "A Confined Place"



## 2. LOOP Barcelona festival

Since 2003, LOOP Barcelona has been a recognized platform for the dissemination, discussion and creation of audio-visual artworks. Under its three main formats, that of a festival, an art fair and a program of knowledge exchange and debates, it is carrying out a continued exploration of the latest productions that emerge from the contemporary art practises related to video, film and the overarching concept of the moving image.

Most of the artistic productions that the festival supports aim to capture the complex layers that animate the notion of public space and the various constructs that define people's sense of belonging, as well as the intimate ways in which they relate with the world. In short, the intent of LOOP Barcelona is to help artists achieve those experiential aspects that are the hardest to be observed in material terms, all the underlying and forgotten aspects that form an integral part of the use, meaning and construction of place.

LOOP Barcelona established a section for the A-Place project, exclusively dedicated to exploring, advancing and establishing creative placemaking practises, as well as to the exchange of knowledge with other A-Place partners. The A-Place program is designed to follow two basic lines of action that feed each other and are, therefore, mutually complementary:

- a production line, through videos selected in an open call and commissioned to artists. Through the commissioned video works, LOOP Barcelona wants to foster research on placemaking practises implemented in a specific territory, on the impact that those practises might have at the physical, cultural, historical or social level.
- a debate line, through a series of closed-door debates that allowed local and international professionals to exchange knowledge and discuss subjects about the creation of a sense of place and the role of artists and artistic media - in particular, video art - divided in two streams: "Embodying space through memory" and "Place-making through body moves".

### 2.1. How to engage the artist / how to collaborate with the artist

Nurturing artists is part of "curating" and caretaking, and can include offering feedback, making them aware of opportunities to learn and develop, or simply listening to their needs. Continuous follow-up and conversations are important, through emails, face-to-face meetings or Zoom encounters, with the scope to solve the artist's problems (as long as it is feasible) and to favour the creative process. Problems can often be administrative, financial, production-related, or sometimes conceptual.

Helping artists to bring their wildest ideas to life means connecting them with other creative thinkers from a diversity of fields: a writer can help contextualize or expand the narrative around an artist's work, or an architect or anthropologist can help develop aspects of creating a project. In this way, the work of the artist will be enriched as long as his / her professional possibilities will also develop beyond the project.

Taking these questions one step further by conducting interviews with artists is also very helpful. During these discussions, the artist can get a deeper understanding of the work and the related priorities. It's also essential helping the artist to think in a cross-disciplinary way and with a critical perspective.

LOOP Barcelona understands the importance of being very open to find out what artists actually want to do. This is possible only performing an active listening. When a relationship between producers/curators and artists is strong, based on trust, respect and mutual help, both sides are inspired to co-create powerful projects.

LOOP developed a specific strategy for the A-Place open calls to contact artists:

- Create a press release and contact the press for its dissemination in online and offline media
- Contact artistic agendas (online or offline) that contain an Open Calls section
- Contact national and international artist associations
- Contact local and international artist residencies
- Contact A-Place partners
- Create a dissemination campaign on social networks (of LOOP and of A-Place)
- Contact specialized curators and critics who could help with the dissemination
- Create a talented and prestigious jury that can help with their own social networks to spread the call
- Enlist previous Open Call winners to act as ambassadors for the award.
- And for dissemination of artistic works:
- Contact press, curators and institutions that might have any interest in screening the video productions
- Create a dissemination campaign on social networks (of LOOP and of A-Place). In this regard, use trailers and photos in social media as reminders of past activities and productions
- Contact specialized curators and critics who can help with the dissemination.

## 2.2. How space, place, creativity, and public participation are intertwined

The video-works commissioned to artists explored the attachment, sense of place in different contexts, narrating emotional landscapes, beyond the visible and physical locations. Productions dealt with personal beliefs and memories, multi-ethnic and multi-cultural meanings, roots, languages and care, expanding knowledge and urban perceptions. The narratives of the videos unfolded feelings of belonging, inclusion and identity, with regard to a specific condition and referring to diversity, migration, displacement, and contributed to the understanding of the notion of place, describing or encouraging practises of appropriations and sharing through creative interventions.

Video productions focusing on placemaking are intended to debate and experiment “about the sense of belonging and identity which groups from multiple backgrounds and cultures hold within their social and physical environments”, and to expand not only the concept from the narrative and the script perspective, but also provide specific value through the audio-visual work. It is also desirable that video productions generate knowledge, raise critical questions, create a poetic reflection on image production and foster experimentation and innovation in the audiovisual creation.

### 3. Urban Visions festival

URBAN VISIONS. Beyond the Ideal City is the first, independent, Italian-based film festival for short films entirely dedicated to the contemporary city and to urban public life, aimed at exploring urban humanities through an interdisciplinary approach.

The Urban Visions film festival aims to collect narratives of different realities, to investigate city's connections, intersections and activities while focusing on the public realm, where public aspects, related to participation, sharing and social practises, blend with private aspirations, related to individuality, diversity and lifestyles. Urban Visions intends to collect stories of happiness or poverty, success or solitude, conformity or rebellion, beyond the seducing and reassuring shapes of the beautiful, ideal city. Overcoming the stereotypes and well-known images of consumerism, Urban Visions looks for something that our eyes, deliberately or unconsciously, don't know or can't see.

The aim of the Urban Visions film festival is to develop a field of research activities to facilitate a dialogue between urban theory, social complexity and film studies, and to raise awareness of contemporary urban issues, emphasising the relationship between individuals and the urban spaces they inhabit. In this context, a film becomes a tool to open new perspectives, to explore new theoretical paradigms and research methods, to establish an effective understanding around urban humanities, especially in the urban settings in which the festival takes place.

The A-Place contribution of UV film festival consists of:

- Two short film competitions
- Screenings of films out of competition
- Talks, interviews and public debates

Six short films from the first edition of the Urban Visions festival were selected for a dissemination activity that took place in September 2021 at Parco Sangalli in Rome during the Karawan Fest as an *open air* cinema event, developed in cooperation with associate partner Ecomuseo Casilino ad Duas Lauros.

The main objective of the Urban Visions festival is to create cross-disciplinary learning spaces engaging an inter-generational audience and different social groups, and to develop and apply creative placemaking practises, through workshops, art-based interventions and temporary transformation of space, both indoors and outdoors, in order to establish new places for peaceful coexistence. These activities can contribute to fostering understanding of the living conditions of migrants and refugees, while promoting solidarity, cooperation and trust among people from diverse cultural origins and to approach notions of identity and belonging from a multidisciplinary perspective.

#### 3.1. How to engage the artist / how to collaborate with the artist

In the UV festival artists are invited to contribute in various ways:

- Submit their work in response to open calls for short film competitions
- Join the jury panel for the evaluation of shortlisted films
- Participate in talks and public debates
- Give an interview to explain their approach to socially-engaged art actions

In all these activities, artists produce enrichment and set the ground for a more reflective perspective on society's contemporary challenges. The collaboration with artists is then a source of inspiration to re-think and potentially re-define the process of creative productions and its goals,

and to frame contents for a more effective social impact, by sharing awareness and developing a critical reflection through a multifaceted approach to urban issues.

Urban Visions film festival developed a specific strategy for the A-Place short film competition to contact artists:

- Publish the competition for short films on FilmFreeway, a professional platform for film productions
- Create a dissemination campaign on social networks (of LOOP and of A-Place)
- Contact associate partners (Ecomuseo Casilino ad Duas Lauros and small)
- Contact A-Place partners
- Contact specialized curators and critics who could help with the dissemination
- Invite well-known film-makers or distribution companies to suggest films that can be included in the section 'out-of-competition'
- Invite international well-known artists and art curators to serve as jury members that can help with their own social networks to spread the call
- Invite scholars and art professionals for interviews and public debates during the days of the festival

And for dissemination of artistic works:

- Create a dissemination campaign on social networks (of LOOP and of A-Place), using trailers of films and photos taken during the festival
- Contact associate partners (Ecomuseo Casilino ad Duas Lauros and small)

### 3.2. How space, place, creativity, and public participation are intertwined

The Urban Visions festival is an instrument to bring together urban stories from different cultural contexts, depicting societies' contemporary challenges and human stories, and it envisions how self-organised communities could become agents of change, fostering cooperation and solidarity. From the screen to local contexts, Urban Visions festival is able to offer to the audience a rich and complex perspective on the way we live urban space and how we contribute to defining places, calling for public participation in the process of making and re-making our own world. The screenings are always accompanied with talks and public dialogues, to reflect on the contents of the films and to exchange opinions and different perspectives, offering opportunities for the audience to be actively engaged.

Artists are providing the opportunity to be exposed to multiple perspectives, languages and forms of expression, and to learn about other places, cultures and ways of understanding community urban life. In addition, they open a new dimension, made of imagination and enchantment, they represent and question human condition, they offer far-seeing inputs on people liveability in a more and more complex urban scenario. This way, they effectively contribute to the definition of strategies for creative placemaking, challenging communities to experiment solutions and ways of participation that are open and inclusive.

Learning from others, experiencing, suffering or rejoicing from the stories of other people, communities and cities generates a strong emotional impact and helps to build new awareness and new ways of perceiving places, also with respect to the decision-making process that generated them.

## 4. Pame Kaimakli festival

Pame Kaimakli is a neighbourhood festival launched in 2013 by the residents of the Kaimakli district and Urban Gorillas. From a series of ad-hoc informal events that started off in the private houses of the neighbours, the festival has grown into a well-known event, welcoming acclaimed artists; it became a cross-disciplinary place, where local meets global. It is an annual community event that aims to explore ideas of publicness, co-creation and community engagement through creative interventions with the collaboration of residents and artists.

For A-Place, Urban Gorillas organised a series of activities whose final outcome were presented during the two-week festival in September 2020, such as:

- two theatre workshops, intended to actively engage members of the community;
- an open call inviting A-Place partners and their extended networks to create new video /artistic productions around the theme of food and community engagement

The workshops were designed to engage local residents, who are otherwise not visible in the artistic world yet whose role and stories are an important component for the place and the idea of local placemaking. The artistic productions were an impactful tool as they diverted the focus on everyday people and turned them into protagonists of their neighbourhood. In addition, the creative process was designed to engage local people/neighbours with the support of theatre specialists to support them in unfolding their stories. The final artistic productions became an important tool to record memories, stories, thoughts related to places of somewhat marginalised social groups (elderly and migrants) that would otherwise remain unheard. In addition, the workshops were aimed at finding new ways of expression through storytelling, dance and song, also through the creation of a vertical community garden that later became the festival's stage, backdrop, and neighbourhood hub, a place for planting and cultivating, especially mothers with young children and youth, for an audio-visual poetical reading event, for the screening of a documentary film on the topic of Kollyva, a religious food offering in commemoration of the dead.

The open call was an opportunity to explore different aspects of food and places as experienced by different cities across Europe. The video stories permitted a local audience to connect with places elsewhere and understand certain specificities of the local context of others through a food related concern or issue raised. Although not all videos were specifically produced for the event, a pop-up cinema event with selected 15 short films connected the festival and the stories to a larger context and created a valuable body of work on the topic of food expanding on a European scale.

### 4.1. How to engage the artist / how to collaborate with the artist

The activities developed for the Pame Kaimakli festival engaged artists with a strong social and cultural interest, who created artefacts deeply rooted in the locality of the place and so has been the outcome of the project. Working with artists whose focus and work revolves around socially-engaged artwork made the collaboration between community and Urban Gorillas very successful as our objectives were aligned along the process.

UG actively collaborated with the artists and local community members in all stages of the development of the idea by taking on the role of the mediator, bringing the local communities and artists in contact. UG have been active in the Kaimakli neighbourhood for almost a decade and have created a strong network with locals and artists. This sense of trust has created the conditions to create connections between the specific communities and artists. In the summer of 2020 when the activities took place, the pandemic was still menacing, the active presence of our members in the neighbourhood and in particular in the workshops was important to maintain the good

relationships between communities and artists. It also gave UG an opportunity to be an active observer of the dynamics and the effects of the activities.

#### 4.2. How space, place, creativity, and public participation are intertwined

The productions of Pame Kaimakli festival are the result of local stories and local actors. This context-dependent approach gives participants and the audience in general a sense of pride, as it roots the results in a local context. The festival showcased these results and established a stage for a local breed of productions to continue to be showcased in the pop-up cinema area by independent groups and initiatives. In a way, the activities created a primer for further actions, and cultivated the idea of locally produced art as a community engaged process, deeply rooted in place and eventually placemaking.

The festival structure (open calls and invitations of local organisations) acted as a facilitator, engaging members who would normally be kept outside the process of artistic production. It was also free and accessible to all. The fact that it lasted two weeks with physical changes in the space and the installation, meant visitors could look forward to the new events and visited more than once. The festival also became a centre for engagement as actions such as setting up and organising, watering the plants and cleaning up truly became a neighbourhood action.

In addition, the structure created in the public space later became an active part for further activities, a social infrastructure for the artistic expression of the locals, and hosted several other screenings, community dinners and cultural discussions by independent local groups.

## 5. Conclusions

After two years of activities, the three festivals have applied diverse curatorial strategies for artistic productions, mostly video productions, in their local socio-cultural contexts, and have seen how these productions have been able to contribute to community integration and identity. Common topics that the three festivals shared are mostly related to diversity, migration, displacement, explored through multiculturalism, richness of perspectives, diversity of languages and creative means.

The three festivals were able to produce relevant outcomes, in terms of quality artistic and creative productions that generated social impact, at different scales and in regard to different social groups, and reached a large and diversified audience through different activities and actions.

Next steps are currently planned around the following tasks:

- Consolidate the existing outcomes, by establishing a community of practice among the three festivals, to learn more from each other and to better define individual and common processes and strategies for artists' engagement. An opportunity could be to participate in the online Professional Meetings promoted by LOOP, in November 2022. These are a series of closed-door informal debates and networking sessions for local and international art professionals with like-natured practices to exchange knowledge and debate common interests
- Define opportunities to disseminate contents, through exhibitions and events in the three cities (Barcelona, Bologna and Nicosia), promoting the transnational mobility of artists and artistic productions. An opportunity could be to organize an exhibition at City Space Architecture's headquarters on the occasion of the third edition of the Urban Visions film festival in November 2022
- Expand the level of engagement of local communities, including various, diverse and intergenerational groups, with different cultural backgrounds. An opportunity to meet and reflect on this matter could be the Pame Kaimakli festival taking place in July 2022
- Exploit the work of artists to multiple target groups involved in community-based practises, by exchanging artistic productions and promote transnational mobility of artists. An opportunity could be to invite the Bologna-based art collective Zimmerfrei (the winner of the LOOP's first open call, with "La città dentro") to participate in the third edition of the Urban Vision film festival in November 2022, with a screening and a public debate
- Support the careers of professional artists and creative thinkers and designers, through exchanges and interactions among the three festivals in the A-Place network and beyond. In this regard City Space Architecture organized during the first edition of the Urban Visions film festival a public dialogue with curators of the Hungarian Contemporary Architecture Centre Kek in Budapest and Wonderland in Vienna, both promoting film festivals on themes related to architecture and urban spaces in the city

Finally, the cooperation among the three festivals also aims to also open a critical debate, in particular on the following – but not limited to – questions: for whom are we trying to create benefit when implementing our curatorial strategies? Are they able to address equity and social justice, and not just increasing the vibrancy of neighbourhoods? Can the work of the artists become a tool to tackle most urgent societal challenges and define the true meaning of places, based on inclusion and shared values? These reflections are supposed to inform the curatorial strategies of each festival and to open the multiplicity of implications with regard to creative and artistic productions in socio-cultural environments.

## 6. References

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