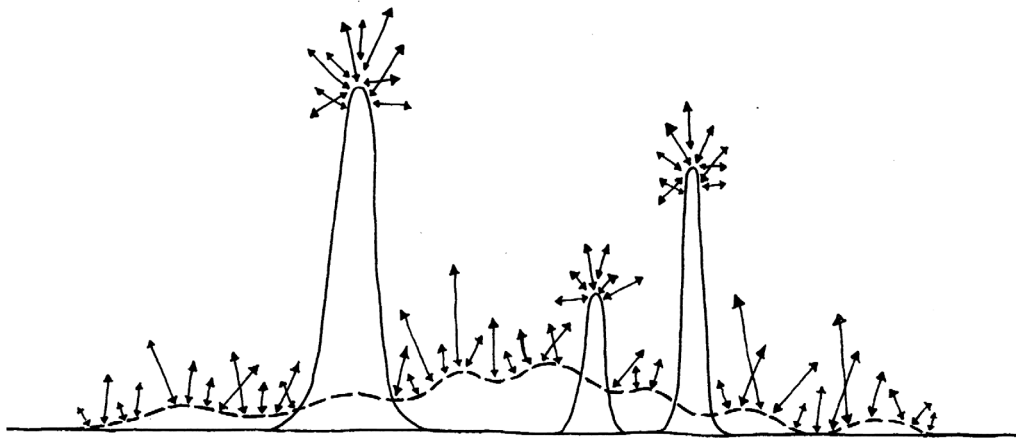


Activating Place Identity

Programmatic Shifts in the Outdoor, Public Spaces of Downtown Eugene



Melissa Schenter
MS Arts Management, 2018
University of Oregon

A Master's Project presented to the Arts and Administration Program of the University of Oregon,
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Science in Arts Management


PROJECT APPROVAL PAGE

Student: **Melissa Schenter**

Title: **Activating Place Identity: Programmatic Shifts in the Outdoor, Public Spaces of Downtown Eugene**

Date: **6/7/18**

This project has been accepted and approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Science in the Arts and Administration Program by:



Eleonora Redaelli, PhD.

Assistant Professor, Arts and Administration Program
University of Oregon

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ABSTRACT

Melissa Schenter
Master of Science in Arts Management
Arts and Administration Program, University of Oregon

Title: **Activating Place Identity: Programmatic Shifts in the Outdoor, Public Spaces of Downtown Eugene**

This study examines the City of Eugene's adoption of creative placemaking practices in an effort to positively alter the identity of its Downtown- focusing on the resultant shifts in programming methods, and on the complex role of artistic producers within it's outdoor, public spaces. Recognizing "place identity" as existing in the combination of both tangible and intangible elements, this project applies a framework of performance theory to analyse the "mechanisms of action" which work to normalize behaviors within physical spaces, thus influencing perceptions of place.

Based largely on 15, semi-structured interviews with City programmers and community arts leaders, the findings of this project focus predominantly on the concept of "activations"- an emergent style of arts programming born from the creative placemaking movement, and inspired in Eugene by the 2016 Downtown Assessment conducted by the Project for Public Spaces (PPS). Interviewees differentiated activation programming from event programming, describing the former as being more ambient, ongoing, inclusive, and as creating a greater link between the arts and city infrastructure. Importantly, activations provide more varied modes of engagement, and have the potential to more subtly influence behavior patterns over time.

Through these interviews, it became apparent that current city infrastructure struggles to support artistic activities. However, Eugene has adopted strategic partnership models to work towards addressing downtown's identity crisis, which involve intentional arts programming. Following the work of PPS, the Mayor, City Council, and leaders across various City department pulled together a diverse team of city staff to form the "Downtown Operations Team." As a result, arts programmers voices have been brought to the table in strategic, downtown revitalization efforts, allowing them to work alongside leaders in areas such as Facilities, Transportation Options, and Planning & Development. Through these collaborations, City programmers and arts leaders have adopted a necessary sensitivity in their work, in order to complement the efforts of social services and public safety providers.

The conclusion of this research argues that the City of Eugene's shift towards activation programming is a move in the right direction. Because activations are more accessible to differing populations, and more conscious to the various entities working within these public spaces, they could be especially useful for addressing the current needs of Downtown Eugene. To sustain this type of programming, however, more flexible public spaces are needed. Additionally, because activations require strong links between artists and city infrastructure, continued strategic collaborations, such as the City's "Downtown Operations Team", are a necessity- with City divisions such as Cultural Services and Planning & Development acting as leading intermediaries. Ultimately, these programmatic shifts will help to introduce new levels of sociability to these spaces, and increase Downtown Eugene's ability to act as a civic heart to the community.

Key terms: **place identity, creative placemaking, performativity, liminality, flexible spaces**

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PROBLEM STATEMENT

On Thursday, February 16, 2017, the headline of the Eugene Register-Guard read:

"Downtown in Crisis."

The proclamation came from Senior Vice President at the Project for Public Spaces (PPS), Meg Walker. PPS is a creative placemaking firm based in New York City which provided an assessment of Downtown Eugene, OR, during the summer of 2016. Members of the organization came into the community to conduct interviews, initiate focus groups, lead workshops, organize pop-up placemaking stations, and administered a survey to Eugene residents to learn more about the community's needs (PPS 2017 p.9). PPS was contracted by the city of Eugene, after responding to a "Request for Proposals" (RFP) for outside urban planning firms to make improvements to the city's downtown neighborhood. Through their survey, the PPS report found that the top three words community members used to describe downtown were:

dirty

homeless

unsafe

(p.18)

Walker noted that Eugene isn't unique in the fact it has a homeless population downtown. However, because of the city's small size, and it's relatively small downtown, the concentration of transient individuals in the space felt more highly concentrated.

The issue of homelessness, and the differentiated- yet related- issue of the "transient" population, is widely acknowledged in Eugene. The city's act of putting out the RFP, and contracting PPS, was in direct response to this sort of community feedback. A 2016 "Bulletin" article quotes Police Chief Pete Kerns in saying that criminal and aggressive activities amongst the downtown homeless population had reached an all-time high, and that: "It feels unsafe. It is unsafe in a lot of ways." (Hill, 2016). He continues to explain the lacking capacity for his team to address the issue and maintain order, given the size of the transient population. In 2017, the City of Eugene released a report titled: Addressing Homelessness, in which they outline their intentions in striving for both long-term and short-term solutions, investing in collaborative processes, and finally, in balancing "livability of neighborhoods with compassionate and humane responses to homelessness and the reality of our current housing and homelessness crisis" (p.2). Here, we see an adoption of the term "crisis" to describe the city's situation, echoing the conglomerate feedback from both the community and PPS.

Though I am merely a short-term resident of Eugene (living here for fewer than 2 years), in listening to conversations, reading, and observing, it has become clear to me- as a graduate student researcher, and as a part-time Community Events Coordinator in the City of Eugene's Cultural Services division- that there is some sort of impetus to alter the **place identity** of Downtown Eugene.

Through this research, I have found that there are both shared and differing viewpoints about exactly what this new identity should be, or how such changes should be pursued. In a November 27th Eugene City Council Work Session, there were differing opinions which emerged regarding the goals and intentions of this Downtown revitalization. To some, this change involved appealing to outside entities, making Downtown Eugene a "destination," and promoting a positive image for the purposes of tourism and economic development. For others, there was a greater emphasis on improving the day-to-day experiences of those who are already living within the community.

Through this work session, it became apparent that conversations surrounding “place identity” seems to fall into two main categories: 1.) the branding of place to those on the outside (or the external performance of identity); and 2.) refining the culture of place according to those who inhabit it (or the internal performance of identity). Of course, I’m convinced that these two ideas are not mutually exclusive, and that one naturally influences the other. The purported “identity crisis” of Downtown Eugene is being addressed through a multitude of pathways, entities, and initiatives. One of the strategies being employed to make this shift, is to artistically **activate** the outdoor, public spaces of Downtown Eugene.

The term “activation,” and the idea of “activation programming”- as opposed to “events” and “event programming,”- has become a cornerstone to my research, and I dedicate both words and images to defining and exploring the term in Chapter 4. This differentiation is then able to act as a foundation to the remainder of my findings and conclusions.

Activating public space through the arts is one method of many which the city is employing to make positive impacts downtown; along with exploring affordable housing options, changes in infrastructure, and providing increased social services resources to more directly address issues of homelessness and to increase feelings of safety in the neighborhood. However, in what I believe to be a clear byproduct of the **creative placemaking** knowledge and language shared within the city’s leadership networks, artistic programming is becoming more comfortably situated as an instrumental partner of other city departments in addressing some of the community’s most pressing issues. According to findings in the PPS report:

Many believe the lack of programmed activities, as well as a lack of rules and expectations, lead to a vacuum in Eugene’s public spaces which fills with negative behavior. Kesey Square, the Park Blocks, the Free Speech Plaza, and the planting zones on Broadway feel unoccupied and uncontrolled, becoming gathering places for transient persons. (p.22)

In this section of the report, we see that “the Homeless situation” as the top issue, identified by 77% of survey respondents (p.21). However, while it may be easy to focus solely on homelessness as the negative contributor to Downtown’s identity, it seems the issue is more complex. What we also see evidenced in the results of the PPS evaluation efforts, is a need- acknowledged by community members- for greater control over these spaces, in the form of activities and programming. It seems that the process of positively altering Downtown’s identity requires both accommodations for the differing populations using the space, and activity to catalyze new levels of sociability between those populations. Feedback from the community seems to call for a recontextualization of the space- a feat which, additionally, requires changes in Downtown’s infrastructure, messaging, and the behavior patterns of the people who inhabit it.

This research document provides a case study for how creative placemaking language and practices have manifested within the city programming networks of Downtown Eugene, in a way which places the arts and creative players in direct dialogue with different departments and agencies throughout the city. It explores the strategic actions, networking practices, and considerations of programmers working to positively influence Downtown Eugene’s identity through the planning of arts events and activations in its outdoor, public spaces, as an act of recontextualization.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The primary research questions of this study ask:

1. How has the concept of **creative placemaking** manifested in the local language and processes of programmers in the outdoor, public spaces of Downtown Eugene?
2. What is the role of the **arts programmer** in addressing the community needs of these spaces?
3. How can **programmable shifts** in these spaces create greater community inclusion in the expression of Downtown Eugene's place identity?

In the remainder of this document, I begin by outlining my theoretical framework for this research, in which I define and break down the concept of place identity. Next, I provide an overview of my methods, including an explanation for the format of this document. In Chapter 1, I apply the lense of performance theory to conceptualize the mechanisms at play in the construction of place identity. Chapter 2 reviews literature regarding the use of outdoor public, spaces as venues for artistic experiences, and Chapter 3 looks at creative placemaking scholarship, with a specific focus on the relationship between language and practice. Chapters 4 through 7 provide an analysis of my research findings, and I conclude with recommendations for cities and programmers hoping to engage in similar creative placemaking practices to those happening in Eugene.

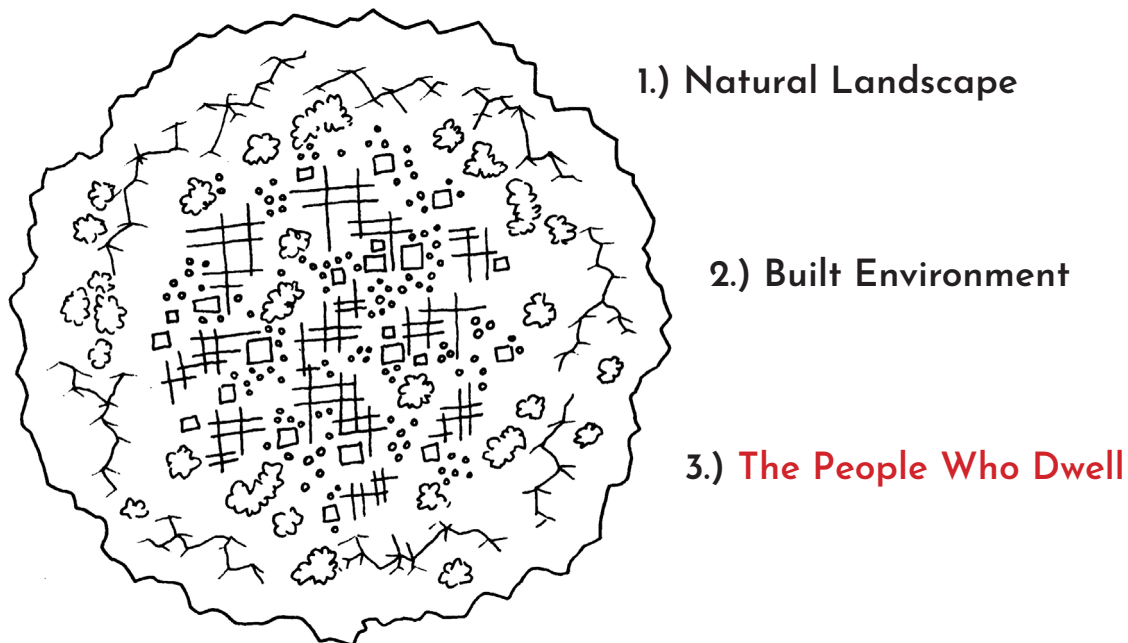
CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK:

“Place Identity” & “Mechanisms of Action”

“Place identity” is a multifaceted term which is complex to define. Huovinen et al. (2017) explain that “Places do not have one, coherent identity, but that they are filled with past and future. Places become articulated in discourses and narratives that are repeated and renewed in social relationships.” (p. 2). Savic (2017) cites the Québec Declaration on the Preservation of the Spirit of Place adopted in 2008 by the ICOMOS, saying that:

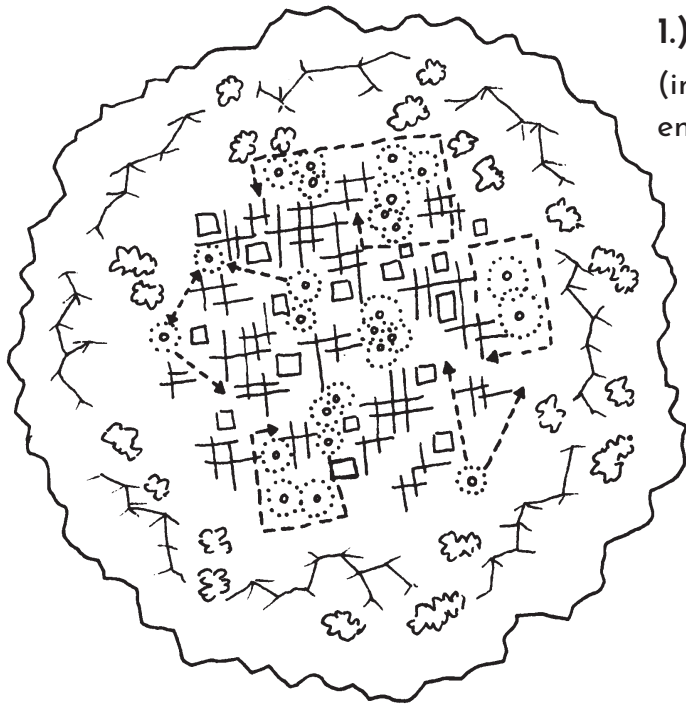
...spirit of place is defined as the tangible (buildings, sites, landscapes, routes, objects) and the intangible elements (memories, narratives, written documents, rituals, festivals, traditional knowledge, values, textures, colors, odors, etc.), that is to say, the physical and the spiritual elements that give meaning, value, emotion and mystery to place.” “It is also defined as a “continuously reconstructed process”, thus putting forward the importance of people and communities, who assign meanings and values to a place and reinvent them over time. (p.1)

I appreciate this quote in its ability to differentiate between the “tangible” and “intangible” elements of place, as well as commenting on it’s temporal qualities. It seems that the concept of place exists somewhere between both the tangible and intangible elements- that it exists in the interplay between the two. Shutika (2011) identifies three primary aspects integral to building place (p. 229):



She places particular emphasis on the “people who dwell,” citing Casey (1996) in saying that “Bodies and places are connatural terms. They interanimate one another” (p.24). She describes this idea in her own words by saying: The identity of a particular place is directly related to the people who inhabit it, and as people bring particular places into existence, so, too, do places shape the people who inhabit them” (p. 229).

My own conceptual framework draws on each of these definitions; recognizing place identity as being comprised of both intangible and tangible elements, recognizing its temporal qualities, and recognizing the particular importance of people who attach meaning to space to create “place.” This research is built upon the idea that place identity exists as a combination of the:



1.) Physical Spaces

(including both the natural and built environment)

2.) Perceptions

(of both the people who dwell, and those who do not)

3.) “Mechanisms of Action”

(which I define as: the systems, networks, or processes of a space which work to normalize behaviors.)

While each of these elements plays an important role in the construction of place identity, my study focuses heavily on the third: mechanisms of action. This element is interesting to me, in that it does not fit perfectly into the “tangible vs. intangible” binary. According to my definition of the term, “mechanisms of action” determine who is *allowed* into a space, who is *invited* into a space, and how those individuals are able to be there- when, where, and what they are allowed to do. Mechanisms of action are more tangible than “perceptions” of place, yet less tangible than the physical walls of a public square.



Mechanisms of action exist as the schedules, the policies, the plans, and the social networks of a place. At times, they fluctuate between ends of the tangibility spectrum. I view the process of programming as being a prime example of a mechanism of action. For this reason, my study pays particular attention to the role of the programmer of artistic activities in Downtown Eugene's outdoor, public spaces- recognizing their power of influence in the construction of its place identity. Shutika (2011) states that:

...the relationship between humans and their environments are significant, not so much because they influence one another, which is fairly obvious, but rather because of the ways such notions **work to naturalize specific types of human activity,**" and she goes on to state that recognizing this as fact allows us "to legitimize group action (p. 161).

This quote, perhaps, does best to highlight my choice in focusing on the "mechanisms of action" regarding the use of downtown public spaces. Policies which dictate the use of public space directly influence the discourses and narratives (Shutika 2011) of a place through the types of people, and the types of activities they exclude and support. It is important to look at who is in control of these spaces- exploring the systems which lead to decision-making for the greater public good. While downtown belongs to the public, its programming is being handled by a small pool of individuals- an interconnected network of city employees and arts managers. While I believe this network is interested in the well-being of downtown, and in creating a safe, vibrant, and inclusive experience for all who inhabit the space, I still feel it is important and necessary to acknowledge the power dynamics involved in the proctoring of public city spaces, and how this affects what is being expressed, what is allowed to be expressed, and what is not allowed to be expressed. Systems of power should always be explored- to ensure justice, and for the purpose of understanding.

Finally, as I explore in the following chapter (1. Performativity & Place: A Theoretical Framework) I am interested in mechanisms of action for their discreet yet profound influence on the expression of place identity. Besides the instrumental benefits of understanding these networks within downtown Eugene's programming, I am also interested in learning the inner workings of these systems because I believe them to hold substantial formative power in regards to place identity.

METHODS

Interviews

The findings of this research project are largely based on 15, semi-structured qualitative interviews with individuals who have taken part in the programming and/or facilitation of arts activities in the outdoor public spaces of Downtown Eugene. These include city staff- within the Cultural Services Division, the Planning Division, and City Council- and arts leaders- for arts organizations, arts collectives, and independent, self-producing artists. These individuals were selected based on my knowledge of their involvement in decision making or planning processes in relation to arts events and activations in outdoor, Downtown public spaces.

Interviewee	Date	Position or Role in Eugene
Charly Swing	1/20/18	Founder, ArtCity Eugene
Eric Brown	1/26/18	Associate Planner, Planning & Development, City of Eugene
Liora Sponko	1/30/18	Executive Director, Lane Arts Council
Isaac Marquez	2/1/18	Cultural Services Director, Cultural Services, City of Eugene
Courtney Kauffman	2/1/18	Assistant Manager, Eugene Saturday Market
Emily Farthing	2/6/18	Sunday Streets Coordinator, Transportation Options, City of Eugene
Danny Kime	2/13/18	Owner, HiFi Music Hall
Mindy Linder	2/15/18	Downtown Programs Manager, Cultural Services, City of Eugene
Jessica Watson	2/16/18	ArtWalk and Events Coordinator, Lane Arts Council; Public Art Coordinator, Cultural Services, City of Eugene
Timothy "Banjo" Youngblood	2/18/18	Local Musician
Emily Semple	2/20/18	City Councilwoman, Ward 1, City of Eugene
Brad Garner	2/22/18	Co-founder/ensemble member, Harmonic Laboratory
Jon Bellona	2/22/18	Co-founder/ensemble member, Harmonic Laboratory
Jeremy Schropp	2/22/18	Co-founder/ensemble member, Harmonic Laboratory
Isaac Paris	2/28/18	Local Performer
Colette Ramirez	3/6/18	Community Programs Manager, Cultural Services, City of Eugene
Kerry Weeks	3/8/18	Production Coordinator, City of Eugene

Document Analysis

The documents analyzed included evaluations and assessments of Downtown Eugene, the events which happen there, and the final report produced by the Project for Public Spaces, following their assessment of Eugene's downtown spaces over the summer of 2016. In addition, organizational websites were assessed, and youtube videos of City council meetings were reviewed and analyzed. Documents were selected if they included insight into the perceptions or plans surrounding Downtown Eugene's identity and its activities. In some cases, these documents were identified as useful data sources by the primary investigator, and in others, they were recommended by interviewees during their interviews, or after interviews were completed.

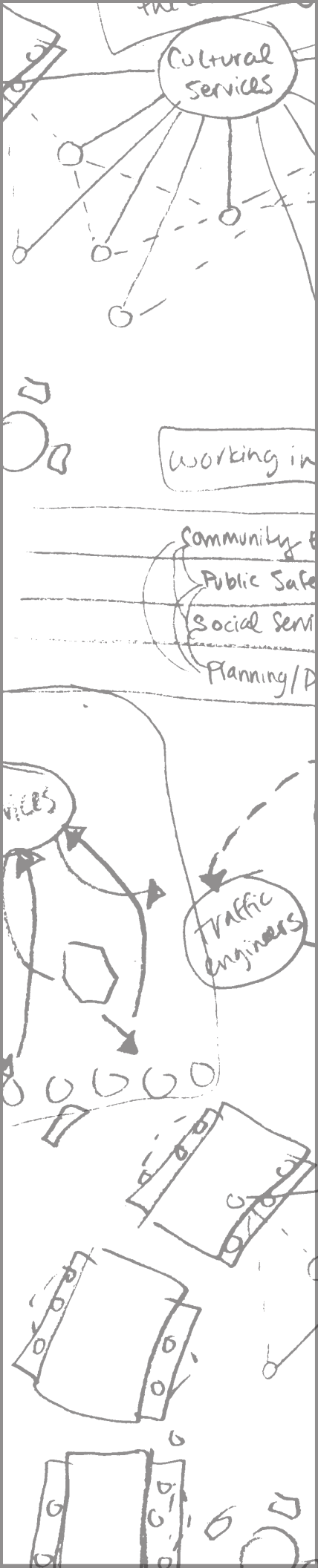
Role of the Researcher

As the primary researcher of this study, I bring inherent biases, and offer a subjective interpretation of these findings. I am uniquely positioned as both a graduate student, and an employee of the City of Eugene- working as a Community Events Production Coordinator within the Cultural services division. From this position, I was well situated to access the networks of programmers and decision makers with whom I interviewed, and had previously formed working relationships with a number of them prior to the start of my research. Additionally, as a programmer and decision maker myself, my perspective offers an almost autoethnographic insight into the topic of this research. For a resident of Eugene, I have had a high-than-average level of exposure to the process of planning and facilitating events in the outdoor, public spaces of downtown- this fact, should be considered by the reader of this document, as it no doubt bears influence on my findings and conclusions.

Context: Eugene, OR

According to City-Data.com, the population of Eugene is 49.9 % Male, and 50.1 % Female, and the median age is 35 years old. The estimated median household income in Eugene in 2013 was \$45,573. The population is 79.8% White, 8.6% Hispanic, 4.5% Asian, 3.8% Two or more races, 1.6% Black, 0.8% American Indian, 0.6% Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander, and 0.2% Other race. The total population of Oregon State is an estimated 3,831,074, while the population of Lane County rests between 200,000-449,999. The United States Census Bureau estimated a population of 163,460 in Eugene in July 2015. Data from the Oregon Office of Economic Analysis showed that, in 2015, the majority of Oregon residents were Millennials (born between 1981-2000), at 27%. Coming in at a close second were the Baby Boomers (born between 1946-1964) at 25% of Oregon's population.

Eugene is home to a number of visual and performing arts venues, including: the Hult Center for the Performing Arts, the Cuthbert Amphitheater, HiFi Music Hall, WOW Hall, the Shedd Institute, Karin Clarke Gallery, Oregon Contemporary Theater, the Jazz Station, and the Maude Kerns Art Center. Eugene has been ranked as one of America's "Most Bicycle Friendly Cities," and Oregon was one of the first states to pass the Bicycle Bill back in 1971, according to "Eugene Cascades & Coast." Eugene is also known as "Track Town USA," it is the only U.S. city to have hosted three consecutive U.S. Olympic trials, and it was the birthplace of Nike.



FORMAT

My research is presented as a hybrid of text and images. In some places, the images act in support of the dominant text, and in others, the text acts in support of the dominant images. One of the aims of this document is to explore the communicative abilities of combined text and image, as well as to experiment with the boundaries of academic writing formats. The reason behind such an experiment (besides my simple curiosity to explore) is that I believe strongly in the abilities of the arts as tools for communication, and in their potential for increasing public scholarship and general access to knowledge. This document matches the importance of its content with the importance of its form, acknowledging that the form will directly influence how the content is perceived, as well as by whom it will be perceived. In this way, my document hopes to further the cause of public scholarship, by allowing the research to reach a different audience base than those strictly within the academic realm.

Karp (2012) defines the work of public scholars as accommodating multiple spheres of society (p. 285). He draws attention to the complexity of the term “public,” saying that because universities and museums are public institutions, technically, the work which they produce is also public (p. 291). He notes that the idea of communicating to a “public” audience is sometimes, unfortunately, equated to the idea of communication with a less sophisticated, and a more passive, audience. He refutes this idea, saying:

...the publics that scholars seek to communicate with do not have a single mind, and are not disposed to passive acceptance of what they hear; they have strong and preconceived attitudes and opinions about much of what the scholarly community wants to tell. Even worse for this simplistic view, members of the public are active agents, who have highly developed ideas and criteria of judgment about the very matters that are the subject of scholarly communication to them. (p.287).

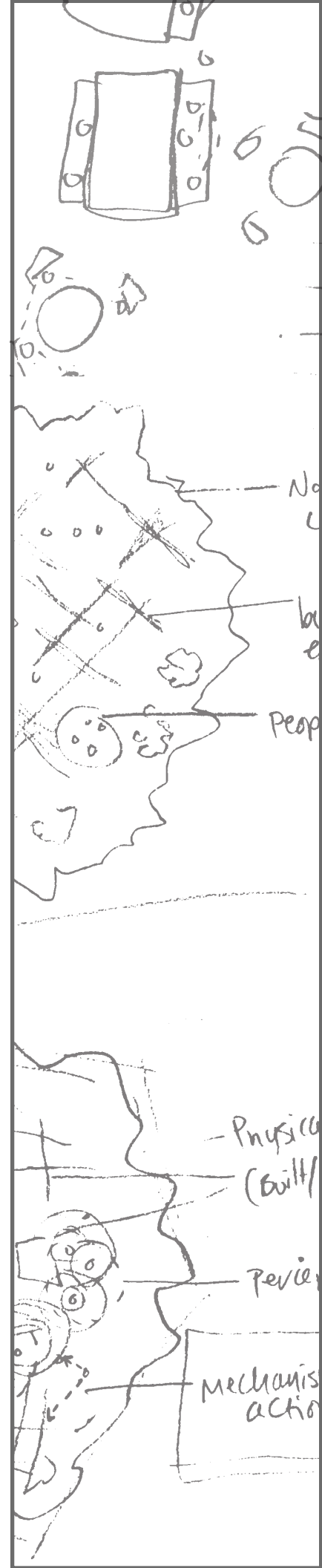
He acknowledges that institutions, and the rigidity of academia, do indeed serve an important purpose, saying that “...they hold that using certain methodologies, which they deem objective, will produce the distance between the student and the studied that is necessary to achieve validity.” (p. 291). He challenges academics hoping to “do public scholarship” to draw upon the benefits of both academia and broader communities in deciding how to both conduct and present their work (p.290).

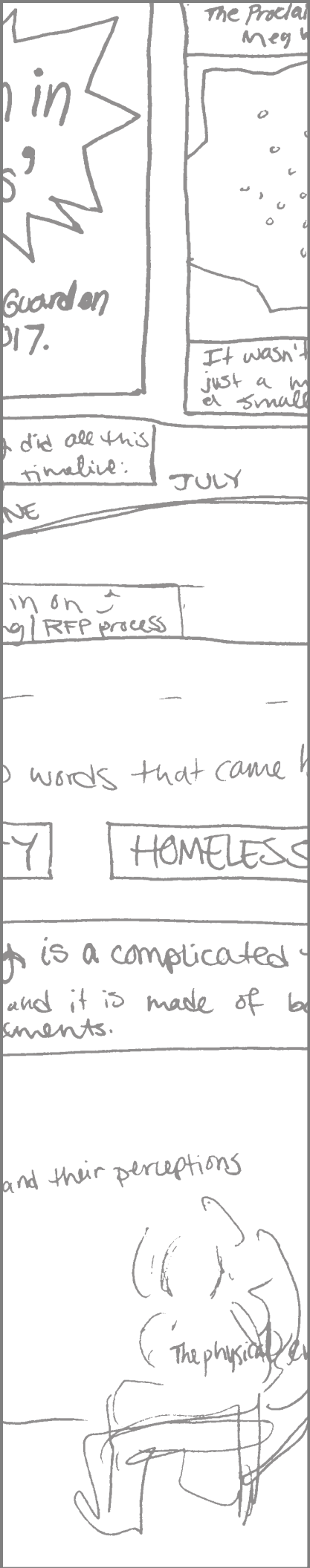
Leavy’s (2015) “Method Meets Art” provides an in-depth description of arts-based research (ABR), defining it as: “a set of tools used by researchers across the disciplines during all phases of social research, including data generation, analysis, interpretation, and representation” (p. 4).

In this, she explores fiction-based research, poetic inquiry, and visual, theatrical and movement-based research methods. Leavy highlights the many strengths of ABR, including their ability to promote dialogue, to convey multiple meanings at once, and their participatory and holistic nature. She explicitly states, however, that the strongest benefit ABR provides is “the advancement of public scholarship and correspondingly conducting research that is useful” (2015, p. 27). She goes on to argue that research deserves to be spread outside of the circles of the academic elite, where researchers run the risk of contributing to moral and ethical issues. The advancement of public scholarship describes one of the primary goals behind the format of this document, as I work to communicate my findings in a format which is accessible to audiences beyond academia. My interest in this topic first emerged in the context of recent shifts within the field of Anthropology, and the emergence of graphic ethnographic methods. Causey (2017) discusses the act of drawing as a means of seeing more completely as an ethnographer, and encourages the incorporation of drawing into fieldwork notes in order to catch details of the surrounding environments and interactions that might otherwise be missed. Taussig (2011) asserts that: “fieldwork is actually based on personal experience and on storytelling and not on the model of laboratory protocols.” (p. 49). He discusses the limitations of words, saying that using them to accurately capture an experience can feel fruitless, and even that photography does not work to fully “encompass” a time and place as a drawing does (p. 21).

In recent years, the field of anthropology has seen a push for greater public engagement, as well as collaborative ethnographic methods, which stem from a postmodernist and a feminist approach (Lassiter, 2005). Lassiter, who has written extensively on public and collaborative ethnography, cites Dell Hymes’ *Reinventing Anthropology* (1969) in discussing this change in the field. Hymes states that the problem lies “between a bureaucratic general anthropology, whose latent function is the protection of academic comfort and privilege, and a personal general anthropology, whose function is the advancement of knowledge and the welfare of mankind” (as cited in Lassiter, 2005 p. 83).

Behar poses valuable questions about how practitioners can move forward in the field of anthropology, taking with them the knowledge of how storytelling, and the dissemination of information, is politicized and wrought with hierarchical power-play. She argues that: “while we often speak of applying anthropology to public policy, I think we can also apply anthropology to the arts in the widest sense of the term, to the different arts of representation. If we can get our stories out there, in readable books, in theater, in film, and on television, I believe we can make a significant contribution to public knowledge and public debate” (2003, p. 34).





Conquergood discusses the presence of “scriptocentrism” or “textocentrism” as a hallmark of Western imperialism, and argues that “[t]ranscription is not a transparent or politically innocent model for conceptualizing or engaging the world.” (p. 147). Basso (1974) refers to writing as a “communicative activity” (p. 426), and urges for the examination of writing systems as coded performance. He says: “When all is said and done, we shall find that the activity of writing, like the activity of speaking, is a supremely social act.” (p. 432) The acts of both writing and drawing are acts of performance. What’s more, comic books and graphic novels constitute a genre, which communicates something in its own right.

With each adjustment to format- with each change of code- our performed messages can be recontextualized (Bauman and Briggs 1990), thus reaching a different audience, as well as reaching them on a different level. Artistic methods can be employed to communicate research to both a specific and broad public audience. Preferences for modes of communication are culturally, geographically, and generationally based. I posit that a large crux in working towards more public scholarship lies in the high value placed on the written word within the limits of academia, and its consideration as the most “legitimate” mode of communication. I argue that the arts’ integration into the presentation of research acts as a successful mediating tool in communicating culture in a way which is more nuanced, pluralistic, and publicly engaged.

In structuring this document, the sections of literature review (Chapters 1-3) were made to rely more heavily on text, while the sections on findings (Chapters 4-7) incorporate more drawings. Images used throughout the document are intentionally left without figure numbers, in order to allow the image and text to flow more fluidly into a single narrative. While in some places, images have text written in to directly speak to their purpose, in others, images are accompanied with no explanation at all; in which case, they should be viewed as a symbiotic partner to any adjacent text, and interpreted according to the readers discretion. It is my hope that the handmade quality of this research document will work to remind the reader that these findings and conclusions come from my own subjective perspective. Most importantly, I hope the format will allow new readers access into the findings of this research, and allow its more theoretical and conceptual ideas to be absorbed in new ways. Ultimately, this document’s format is an experiment- a meta layer to my research project- and has presented both challenges, as well as pleasant surprises along the way. Thus, reflections on the overall formatting and design process will be included in the conclusion, as an epilogue, or postscript, to the document.

1. Performativity & Place

Having elaborated on the different elements and definitions of place identity contained in other scholarship, I will next move to further examination of the process, or action, through which place identity is formed. While a “place” may be viewed as inanimate, stagnant, and distinctly separate from ourselves, I argue that places are dynamically performative by nature, and that our own performances are dialogically interwoven with theirs. A “place” is no more just a space than a human is just a body, and I believe the identities of places are built performatively through much of the same processes as our own identities are built. To explore this idea, I apply Cresswell’s (2004) concept of “place,” which he defines as: “spaces which people have made meaningful.” (p. 7). He notes that we are naturally inclined to create strong attachments between people and place, and describes place as: “a way of seeing, knowing and understanding the world.” (p. 11).

I agree with Cresswell, and seek to explore this connection through the application of Butler’s (1993) definition of performativity, which she describes as a “reiterative and citational practice by which discourse produces the effects that it names.” (p. 2). I pose that places, being performative, are no exception to Butler’s rule; that they cite us, we cite them, and through the process, both the identities of places and the identities of people are tangentially brought into being.

In his discussion of performance, Goffman (1959) breaks down the concept of what he refers to as a performative “front,” referring to it as that “expressive equipment” which is employed in the act of performing. (p. 22). According to him, a performative front can be split into two parts: 1.) the “setting” or “scenic elements”, and 2.) the “personal front” of an individual performer. He describes “setting” as something which is typically geographically fixed and acts as a necessary container in which performances are able to transpire, saying that “those who would use a particular setting as part of their performance cannot begin their act until they have brought themselves to the appropriate place and must terminate their performance when they leave it.” (p. 22)

Goffman is apt in drawing attention to the importance of setting and scenic elements in the act of social performance. However, he seems to imply with this statement that not all performances necessitate a specified setting in which to occur, and that only those who directly utilize, or make conscious reference to the physical environment allow them to contribute to a performance. Additionally, while he claims that setting is something which is expressive, he instead limits himself to speaking of it’s ability to serve as a necessary platform for the expressive performance of personal front. He fails to communicate the ways in which a setting is itself expressive. It seems that, according to Goffman, the primary purpose of a setting is to act as a location in which personal fronts are able to perform.

Santino (2004) offers up a similar idea to that of Goffman, but provides a more nuanced and complex illustration of the interplay between the performances of places and people. He discusses the human act of marking places in order to commemorate deceased individuals, using such examples as roadside crosses and “spontaneous shrines” made of items intended to cite, or pay homage to an individual. He says:

[R]ibbons, flowers, and personal items reference a person or a group in a remarkable or significant condition of absence: hostage, distant lover, soldier sent to war, dead celebrity, or martyred leader...The attitudes expressed are also intended to be shared by those who view the artifacts- to convince or to have an effect on the aggregate spectatorship. Thus, these displays can be said to be performative... (p. 128)



Through this passage, Santino extends beyond Goffman's conception of performative settings by attributing expressive agency to a place or environment in which performances occur, and speaks more directly to ways in which they are expressive. According to Santino, humans have the ability to manipulate their spaces in a way which allows them to expressively perform through place, even after the person is no longer present- much in the same way that people perform through other people.

He argues that while these place-specific, public rituals and commemoratives may appear to be primarily metaphorical, they are also considered functional by certain participants, in that they are assuming an audience, and thus granting them the ability "to effect change." (p. 129).

Santino also points out that: "Performative commemoratives- spontaneous shrines- invite participation...They also invite interpretation." (2004 p. 130). This example further illustrates the complex relationship between the performances of place and the performances of people- showing how a person can perform through the citation of places, and a place can perform through the citation of a person. Through his work, the actual dialogue, or exchange, between place and person becomes more clear, whereas Goffman's emphasis was on the use of place as a tool for human performance. The most important aspect of Santino's idea of commemorative performance, however, is that it shifts the role of the person to the audience member, and the place to the role of performer. It illustrates that a place can perform a citation without the aid of someone who is physically present. Thus, a physical environment, standing on it's own, can perform.

In Gilley's (2005) *Two-Spirit Powwows and the Search for Social Acceptance in Indian Country*, he discusses the ways in which social gatherings have the ability to redefine and reshape the social boundaries of places. He argues that: "Two-Spirit people have created a public space to express their identity in the powwow as well as a space that emphasizes the diversity of Native society and cultural practice." (p. 234) Gilley's point here emphasizes the ways in which the identity of a place can be defined first and foremost through the act of social performance, which is then, secondarily, communicated as and converted to a physical environment. With this, he suggests that a place's boundaries can be defined as much socially as they can physically.

This idea is directly supported by Cresswell (2004), whose multi-layered definition of place suggests that there is a "tight connection between geographical place and assumptions about normative behavior." (p. 103). In reference to this idea, he coins the term "anachorism" to describe something that is in the wrong place. He continues to highlight how this idea is used as a hierarchical tool to exclude individuals:

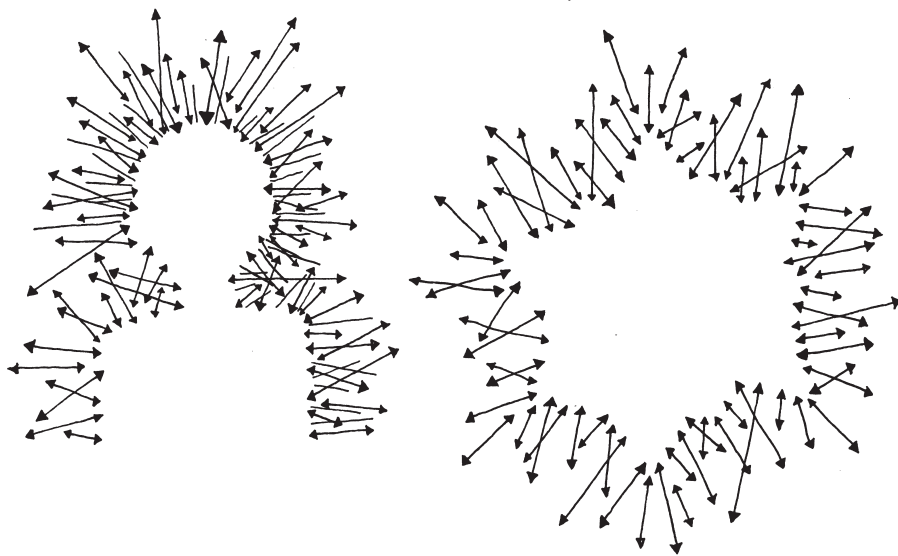
At first glance many people do not see a link between sexuality and place. But like any other form of social relation (class, gender, race, etc.) it is constituted, in part, geographically...Everywhere we look straight sexuality is accepted as normal and is thus invisible to straight people. Gay people, on the other hand, see heterosexuality everywhere and through this experience their own sexuality as radically 'out-of-place.' (2004 p.104)



Gilley and Cresswell allow us to further examine the difference between space and place, by emphasizing place's ability to be extracted from a physical environment, and to be created, sustained, and manipulated based on social performances alone. Through their examples, we can understand how people have the power to perform places into existence, and social boundaries can be created as a replacement (or interior layer) of physical boundaries. While I believe that we create places which arise primarily from social performance, I find it interesting that we are incapable of completely abandoning the use of spatial language in order to describe what we've created. In this sense, places and people remain linked.

I find that Akou's (2004) *Nationalism without a Nation; Understanding the Dress of Somali Women in Minnesota* best illustrates the performative characteristics at play between place and people. In it, she discusses the links between Somali dressing habits with their sense of connection to their national identity- viewing these clothing choices as an important form of performance. She says:

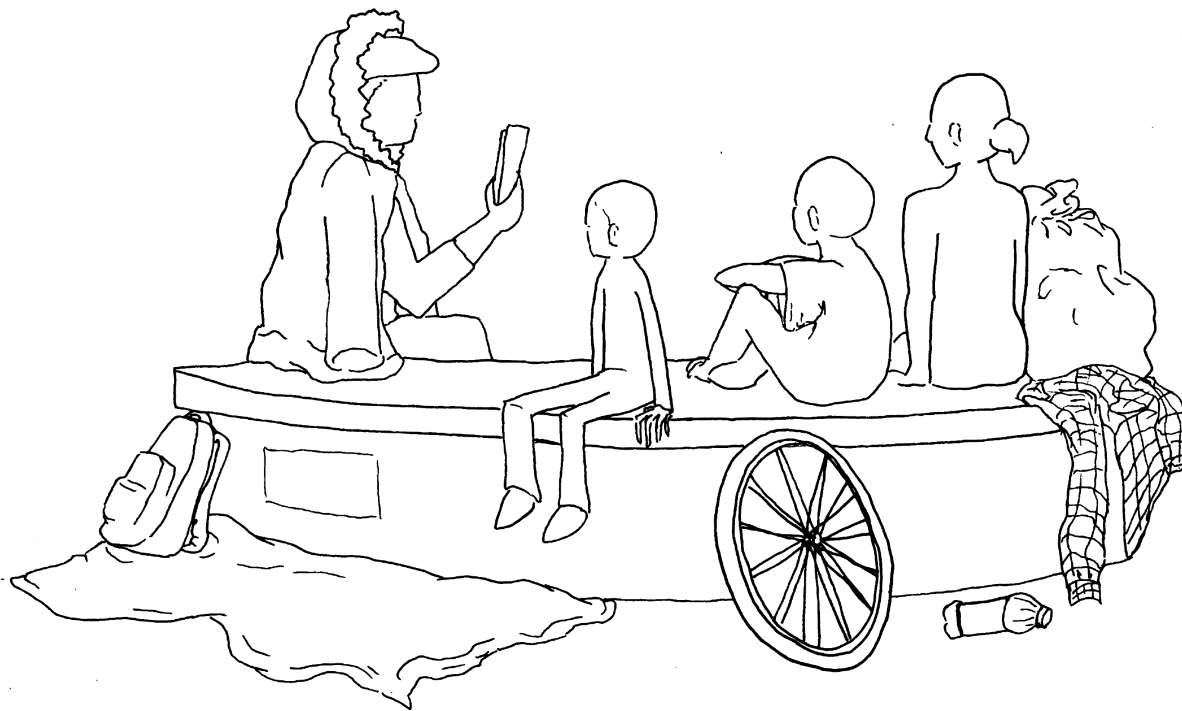
For Somali refugees, a strong sense of collective identity- projected through clothing- is almost all they have left of their nation. Unable to return to, or in many cases even to visit their homeland...Somalis use clothing to keep their memories and dreams alive and to shape the future of a new Somali nation. (p. 50)



This statement is interesting to me for two reasons: one, because it conceptualizes a “nation” as a place which is not permanently tied to one geographic location (though it certainly cites one); and two, because Akou suggests that a nation, as an entity, is capable of being decontextualized and recontextualized (Bauman and Briggs 1990) through the performative action of dressing. Akou notes that Somalis have a “long history of connecting dress to nationalism” (p. 50), stemming from responses to political upheaval, and as an act of resistance to the powers of colonialism within their home country. Because they have been displaced from the physical environment which originated their sense of national identity, they’ve adapted by attaching that sense of place to themselves, and reiterating it through their mode of dress in a way which grants them greater agency in how that place is formed. This example is key to this framework. The fact that a group of people with a collective national identity has the ability to redefine and reshape their sense of “place,” independent from physical location, speaks to the power of performance in it’s ability to reshape our realities.

This idea relates once more back to Butler (1993), who, in her assertion of the citational functionality of performance, makes a crucial point regarding the opportunities for “formative power” in shaping our future political realities. She states that: “If there is a normative dimension to this work, it consists precisely in assisting a radical resignification of the symbolic domain, deviating the citational chain toward a more possible future to expand the very meaning of what counts as a valued and valuable body in the world.” (p. 22). Including the construction of place into the concept of performativity allows us to imagine the ways in which we might view, create, and maintain our places to accommodate different communities of people. By recognizing the performative, reiterative nature of place, we can intentionally work towards recontextualizing place in a way which increases a sense of accessibility and inclusiveness.

By recognizing the performative aspects of place, one can recognize, importantly, the ways in which our environment’s expressions bear influence on our own discourses and narratives. This framework allows us to more clearly imagine the ways in which we might construct and reconstruct place identity, by altering our expressions through place, thus, shifting our citational chain of norms, as Butler suggests (1993, p.12). Finally, a framework of performativity supports the need to examine the mechanisms of action which work to influence place identity. These mechanisms- such as the programmatic networks of Downtown Eugene, timelines, permitting procedures, budgeting processes, and practices of various artistic producers- while sometimes intangible, work to reiterate expressions of place. Moving forward, this research pays particular attention to the role of the arts programmer as a mechanism of action, and how their processes are shifting due to the influence of creative placemaking, and due to Downtown’s pressing community needs.



2. Claiming Liminal Space-Time

If we accept that the identity of a place is one which is performed into being through reiterative expressions over time, it is useful to look at some of the more expressive acts occurring within these spaces which work to perform place identity. This chapter focuses first on outlining the qualities of public spaces and the public sphere, then moves towards looking at the implications of programming artistic activities within these spaces. It asks: If place identity is performed, then how do the qualities of an outdoor, public space contribute to this expression? This question can be addressed only after further definition of the concept of publicness, and a discussion of the nature of public space.

Smith (2016) describes public spaces as entities which “symbolise (synecdochically) the cities in which they are located, but they can also communicate key values, and some public spaces have come to symbolise democracy itself.” (p. 18). Public spaces can be viewed as platforms for expression of a place’s value, performed by the people inhabiting it. If this is the case, then examining the expressive acts transpiring within these spaces becomes particularly important- as the activities which they hold and the messages they purport can be utilized as tools for performing democracy. Spaces which are public have the potential to act as democratic spaces. In addition, Smith (2016) defines “(g)ood public space...as inclusive space: that which invites a diversity of uses and a diversity of users.” (p. 24). I am in agreement with Smith in this regard: that, idealistically, a true public space allows for uses which are democratic and inclusive. However, this allowance alone may not equate to a public space. Janssens and Ceren (2013) argue that:

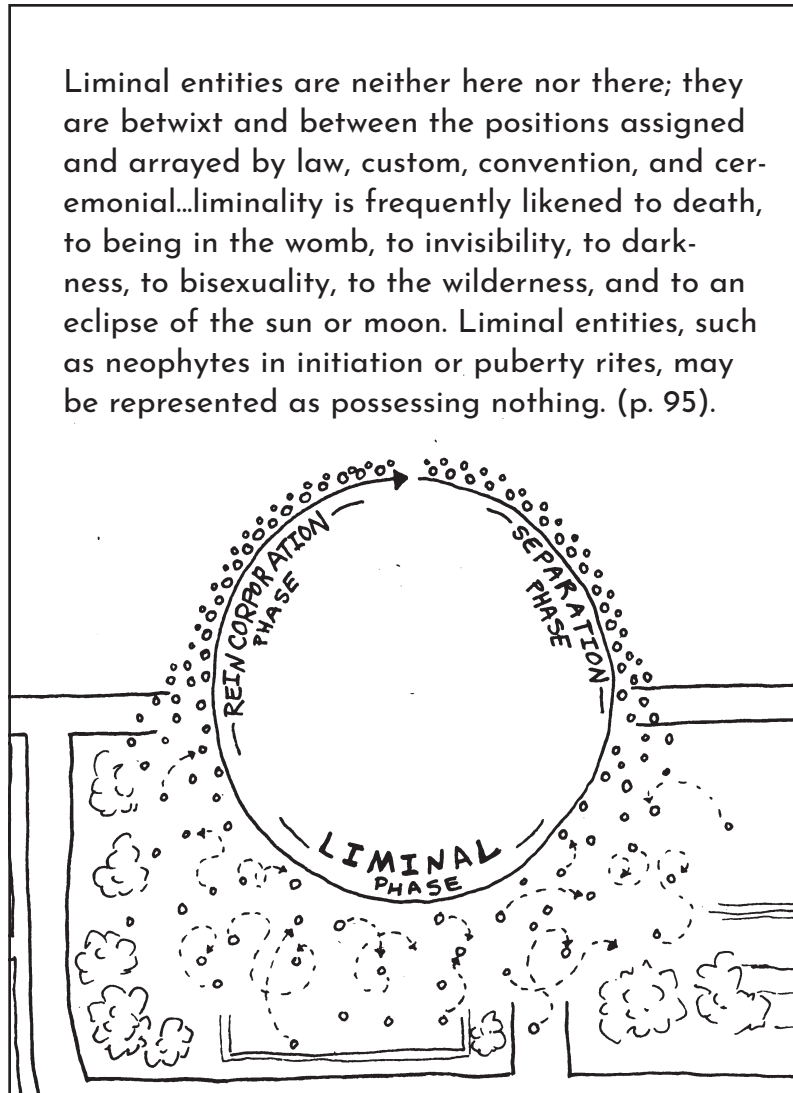
Physically accessible spaces such as empty squares, avoided dead-end streets or dilapidated parks, but also busy intersections or even supermarkets where people look past each other rather than at each other, fail to be public spaces. (p. 246)

Smith (2017) echoes this sentiment, noting that “just because people are sharing space does not mean interacting...(it’s) merely a platform for co-presence, rather than forum for sociability.” (p.25). Christiansen (2015) supports this idea through his citation of Iveson’s (2007) concept of “publics,” which he differentiates from the term “public.” According to Iveson’s definition, “public” refers to an entity in a fixed state, with legally defined shared spaces and activities, while “publics” refers to “the way that persons engage collective action and communication” (Iveson 2007 as cited by Christiansen 2015, p. 456). His term ‘publics,’ which takes an emergent-constructivist viewpoint, aligns well with the theories of performativity outlined in the previous chapter- recognizing places as existing as social activity and reiterated expressions- rather than as a stagnant entity.

These scholars highlight the important role of social interaction in defining the concept of publicness, and draw attention to the difficulty in achieving such dynamics amongst individuals. Outdoor public spaces, such as streets and public squares, allow for such a variety and mass of individuals to occupy them- many of whom are simply passing through, and operating based on individualized timelines- that opportunities for interactions are often missed. The difficulties involved in creating these forums of sociability can be better understood by viewing public spaces as liminal spaces.

The concept of liminality is best understood through the work of anthropologist, Victor Turner, who uses the term as a frame for exploring ritual processes in societies around the world. His work is derived from Arnold Van Gennep's (1909) concept of the "liminal phase" of a rite of passage- resting between the phases of "separation" and "reincorporation." Turner (1966) quotes Van Gennep in defining the liminal phase as the "transitional" phase of each rite, or the "threshold." (p.99). During this phase, as Turner describes it, the subject of the ritual sheds their social or societal standing, saying that:

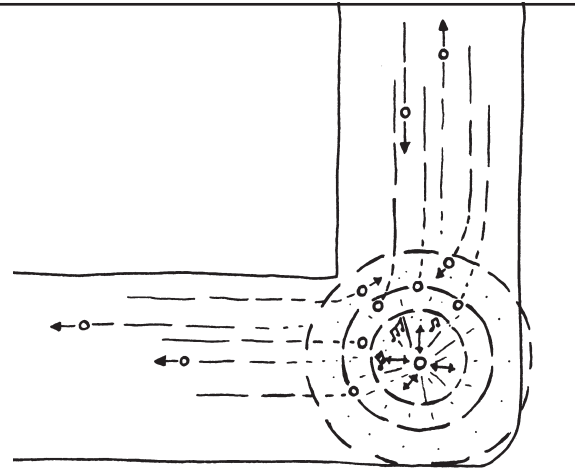
Liminal entities are neither here nor there; they are betwixt and between the positions assigned and arrayed by law, custom, convention, and ceremonial...liminality is frequently likened to death, to being in the womb, to invisibility, to darkness, to bisexuality, to the wilderness, and to an eclipse of the sun or moon. Liminal entities, such as neophytes in initiation or puberty rites, may be represented as possessing nothing. (p. 95).



An important concept Turner pairs with liminality is the term "communitas"- which he defines as the "communion of equal individuals" (p.97)- arising when members of a shared society enter into the liminal phase together, thus shedding their societal status, and becoming equals. In applying Turner's concepts to analyze the qualities of outdoor, public spaces, I would argue that they possess, in many ways, liminal qualities. Streets and public squares are experienced most often in transit, and could indeed be described as "betwixt and between." (p.95). However, reaching a state of communitas in a liminal space requires greater coordination of people within the space, and greater control over the variables of time and activity- something which ritual and intentional programming can provide. Smith (2016) looks at the ways in which organized events can lead to "temporal variations in activity," and questions whether such short-term changes can lead to "more permanent changes in the way spaces are conceived, perceived and lived." (p. 25).

Bywater (2007) recognizes the liminal qualities of public spaces, and the implications of facilitating art within them- examining the interactions between artists and the spaces themselves. He applies Victor Turner's (1966) concept of the liminal state to look at the role of the persons occupying it. He notes that buskers and passerbys alike initially adopt a similar, liminal status (p. 98) upon stepping out onto the street, but prefers the term "marginal" to refer to those people who- further than simply occupying the space- work to "contest ownership of the liminal street." (p. 103). This ownership, Bywater believes, comes from the act of "claiming attention by manipulating liminal spacetime." (p. 118). As he describes it:

Liminal spaces are contended for in transit. The crowd moves through the space, but the space itself is fixed and bounded. **If one wishes to extend possession of the space, the only dimension in which one may do so is in that of time;** the longer one can hold the attention of the crowd... the longer one holds the space. For the marginal occupants of such spaces- staking a claim rather than simply moving through- time is, literally, money. (p. 118)



Besides those who are physically occupy time in liminal, public spaces, there are less tangible mechanisms of action which can be considered to manipulate liminal space time- in the form of plans, policies, and procedures of a space. While public spaces are intended to serve all people of the public realm, this idea is somewhat complicated by the fact that public spaces are operated and controlled by small groups and individuals in positions of power.

Shutika's (2011) ethnography, *Beyond the Borderlands*, examines the quest for belonging amongst a community of Mexican immigrants in the small, Pennsylvania town known as Kennett Square. Specifically, she focuses on the role of events which highlight Mexican traditions, and how these help to establish a sense of place and identity for Kennett Square's immigrant population, observing how the events work as "a tool of political legitimization and identity construction." (p. 169). An important aspect of Shutika's ethnography lies in the fact that she questions the hierarchical implementation of these events- drawing attention to the power dynamics between city decision makers and the greater community. She notes that while festivals and events, from one perspective, can be seen as belonging to a collective community, from another, they are led by "a controlling interest, a group of people who are authorized to shape the event." (p.176). Even more specifically, she highlights the implications of holding these cultural events in the central, outdoor public spaces of Kennett Square's downtown. She observes:

As the long-standing (predominantly Anglo-European) identity of Kennett Square was slowly challenged by Mexican settlement, the English-speaking residents could no longer assume that they would continue to have preeminence over the public space... Thus, placing a festival celebrating Mexican cultural heritage into the heart of Kennett Square's downtown was a dramatic shift in the public face of the community. Consequently this seemingly small step in local ethnic relations made way for a shift in the place identity of Kennett Square. (p.230)

Through this work, Shutika highlights the idea that- as platforms for expression, and as expressive entities themselves- certain outdoor, public spaces may hold more power in influencing place identity than others. In her ethnography, this concept is illustrated when events focused on highlighting Mexican culture are held in Kennet Square's central, downtown spaces- catalyzing at least a small shift in the overall identity of the town. As she highlights, greater representation can have large implications for marginalized communities, allowing them to claim space and feel a greater sense of belonging in a particular place. Fred and Farrell (2008) build upon this idea, and discuss the monumental implications of opening the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian and the National Museum of African American History and Culture on the National Mall in Washington D.C. They state that:

The placement of these new museums on the nation's front lawn signals a new centrality for the expression of cultural diversity and a more open recognition that race and ethnicity are significant parts of the story of the American experience that deserve a more public presence and hearing. (p.165)

This provides a yet another shining example of the enormous symbolic power that certain public spaces can hold. It emphasizes the idea that the use of central, public spaces- especially those with a historical significance to a community, or even a nation, can act as expressions of value, and can act as performances of place identity. And, it highlights how the existing identity of a place influences future expressions within that space.

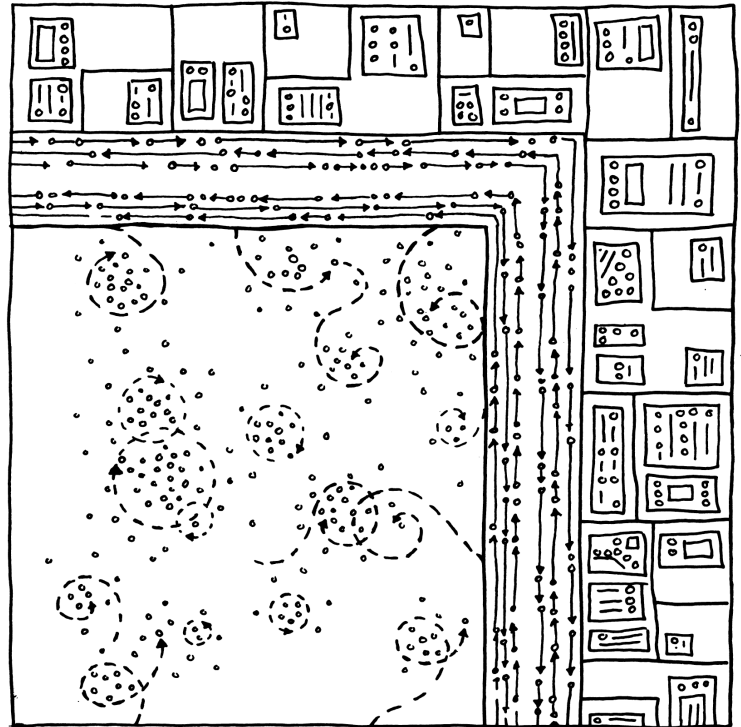
What we can conclude through the review of this literature, is that the identity of a public place is strongly dictated by the people who interact with it. It is defined by the "people who dwell", as Shutika has stressed, but also, significantly, by the "people who control"- those who influence policy related to spaces, and those who plan organized activity within them. The identity of a public place is formulated by people occupying multiple levels of social strata- from governmental workers, local business owners, to transient and homeless populations. Grodach (2009) notes that the determination of the 'publicness' of a space is a subjective process, and warns that while public spaces may bring a variety of social groups together, it can also work to reinforce existing social inequalities (p. 476).

The liminal qualities of city streets and public squares are not innately conducive to the building of *communitas*, as a social stratification still exists amongst its dwellers- sometimes in a way which is brutally clear. Carr and Dionisio (2017) discuss the evolution of urban planning practices, outlining the shift towards a more "procedural-participatory" model which includes community voices and input (p.74). They critique contemporary planning practices as failing to "integrate truly democratic representation in decision-making." (p.74). As a reaction to this analysis, they propose a move towards "creating **Flexible Spaces** that are minimally regulated, reconfigurable and democratically available on a rotating basis to individuals and groups who wish to use those spaces for activities of a limited spatial and temporal tenancy." (p.73) They define "flexible spaces" as spaces which "...are intended to offer reconfigurable, rotating, non-permanent, non-exclusive forms of land use that enable a broad range of spatial experiments. They categorize the people involved with such spaces as "activators"- those who manage the space during a set period of time, and "users" of the space (p.74).

Carr and Dionisio highlight a list of key advantages to focusing on the creation of flexible spaces. In particular, I am interested in the following arguments for such spaces:

1. They create opportunities for experimentation from different activators in the community through the minimization of regulation;
2. They alleviate the permanence of planning, which in turn, leads to political and policy flexibility;
3. They promote placemaking and community development;

”Flexible and short-term uses have a positive impact in connecting communities, and in linking people with places. **The shared activation of a Flexible Space can empower local networks** because it allows users and activators to develop new bonds of communication and trust.” (p.77)



They conclude with examples of how communities facing disasters and “economic disruptions” have found the use of Flexible Spaces to be particularly advantageous in planning efforts. However, they warn that this type of planning should not get pigeonholed as solely a reaction to distress in communities (p.81).

It seems that a true and healthy public space- one which is inclusive, democratic, and supports artistic activities- requires well-planned and thoughtful infrastructure, born from collaborative planning processes. Ploger (2010) builds upon ideas from Simmel (1981), noting that: “The eventualisation of space is not only a matter of multiplicity, diversity, and ‘being with the stranger; shaping flows and ephemeral situations in space, but also the quality of urban space being an event-space.” (p.862)

Through this literature, I can conclude that building more flexible spaces is key to eventualising Downtown as a whole- changing the overall quality, and expectations, tied to the use of its physical, outdoor spaces. With such variable elements at play in these liminal spaces, to alter behavior patterns within them can be a difficult task- and as a programmer of artistic activities, finding ways to simply (or, not-so-simply) alter the use of liminal space-time may be the first step. These considerations of space-use further emphasize the important link between physical infrastructure and human activities in the definition of place- a link which is addressed through such strategies as those of the Creative Placemaking movement, which I explore in the following chapter.

3. Creative Placemaking: Language of an instrumental art

An important aim of this study is to both explore and contribute to existing creative placemaking literature, and to engage with discussions regarding its benefits, risks, and functions. Primarily, I'm interested in exploring the interrelations between placemaking language and placemaking practice. The most widely acknowledged definition of creative placemaking emerged from the 2010, NEA whitepaper by Markusen & Gadwa, which stated:

In creative placemaking, partners from public, private, non-profit, and community sectors strategically shape the physical and social character of a neighborhood, town, city, or region around arts and cultural activities. 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. (p. 3)

While this definition offers a broad and generalized description of creative placemaking, the movement is more easily understandable when thought of in terms of creative city policy. Redaelli (2016) conceptualizes creative placemaking policy as a form of multi-level governance- comprised of research, grants, and partnerships as its primary tools. (p.10). Grodach (2017) provides a thorough timeline for the evolution of creative city policy- showing the trends of the integration of creative language into the realm of city planning and community development. He outlines how “creative placemaking”- a byproduct of the NEA’s 2010 “Our Town” grant program- emerged from the concept of the “creative class,” which emerged from the concept of the “public patronage” model. Grodach highlights the ways in which creative placemaking policy, specifically, differs from the more recent iterations, in that it “...aspires to be more directly community-oriented and art-based.” (p.87).

The evolution of creative city policy provides interesting insights into the ways in which arts leaders and arts supporters have strategically adapted their communications in order to gain support for creative endeavors. This idea comes from Grodach (2017), who notes that “(m)any urban cultural policy makers adopted the language of creativity hoping to seize an opportunity to garner new support for the art.” (p. 86).

Because Markusen & Gadwa’s definition is lengthy and broad, the term “creative placemaking” risks becoming an over-used, or misused, buzz word. While they are regarded as the “creators” of creative placemaking, the label itself has been interpreted and applied in a variety of contexts. Frenette (2017) notes that creative placemaking measurement is “complicated by the co-existence of several definitions.”(p.341). The concept’s lack of specificity, however, does not necessarily equate to a lack of intentionality. Frenette (2017) goes on to argue that this broad, sweeping definition was strategic, noting that the umbrella term “helped creative placemaking win unprecedented policy action, with practitioners and funders adopting multiple definitions to suit their particular circumstances” (quoting Markusen and Nicodemus, p.334).

Frenette (2017) goes on to quote Wilbur (2015) in saying that the definition of creative placemaking is intentionally broad in order to force “community-based art and public art to sit uncomfortably alongside market-driven efforts to hone ‘creative cities,’ cultural tourism and workforce innovation” (p.334). These scholars imply that the broadness of the creative placemaking label has acted as a conduit for creative practices to integrate with the strategic efforts of other city departments- allowing for increased emphasis on the instrumental uses of creativity and the arts within the public realm.

Boren and Young (2017) comment on the emergence of creativity and culture in the language of cities, noting that prominence of such language in Stockholm’s primary planning documents (p. 22). In speaking to policy-makers through their study, they found that three key understandings emerged for how creativity is conceptualized strategically within their planning- these are: 1.) social instrumentalism, towards social integration; 2.) economic instrumentalism, towards increasing global attractiveness; and 3.) intrinsic value of creativity for the sake of achieving a desirable, social existence (p.22). They note that these three categories are not mutually exclusive, and can be pursued in relation to one another by city departments and organizations. However, they provide criticism of the fact that, while they’ve seen creative language emerge within city planning documents, they form a complex and sometimes ineffective policy web, saying:

...these policies sometimes co-exist, although with different rationales, and that the relations between these policies, different user groups and target audiences (local population and/or globalized knowledge workers, tourists, etc) and individual art space directors form complex urban policy ecologies in which notions of creativity are contested and diversified from the overarching policy agenda. (p. 22).

In Stockholm in particular, they note that the “overarching policy script” is one with the aim to increase the attractiveness of the city in order to perform a more globally competitive identity. Richards (2017) highlights the shift in creative placemaking strategy towards a more “holistic” approach, which includes the “symbolic imaginings” of the city as an important element of place, along with the physical city and the lived experience. He defines these symbolic imaginings as being projected through images and branding strategies. (p.10). Returning back to the idea of intangible and tangible elements of place, I would argue that the branding of place is complicated in that it is situated between the two ends of the spectrum, in much the same way as are the mechanisms of action which I’ve previously defined. Branding includes tangible images, while at the same time, a place’s brand exists in the ways that people talk about that place. For this reason, communications can become a powerful tool in creative placemaking strategies.

I’ve seen this concept reflected in Eugene’s work towards place branding. And, while branding is an important element in the formation of place identity, it is, perhaps, not an entirely collaborative or community-inclusive process; a concept which is a cornerstone to the overall creative placemaking movement. The lengthy definition of creative placemaking given by Markusen & Gadwa (2010 p.3) describes the process as involving a variety of partnerships, across multiple departments. Creative placemaking, according to them, is described as influencing anything from public infrastructure, economic development, and public safety. Grodach (2017) supports this point by saying:

Creative placemaking programs have been adopted by the US department of housing and urban development, numerous philanthropic foundations....and state and local government. As such, it has significantly increased the number of actors and partnerships at different levels involved in funding and supporting arts activities in a wide set of communities. (p.86)

These scholars do well to acknowledge the ways in which creative placemaking language has been conceived and adapted as a reaction to a lack of funding for the arts. Through strategic partnerships, and by learning to work in tandem- and in direct collaboration- with other departments, fields, and professionals, the label of “creative placemaking” works to forge new paths towards more sustainable support systems for the arts. Creative placemaking, as a creative city policy term, seems effective as a pathway for garnering greater public support for the arts.

By providing opportunities for the arts to directly demonstrate their instrumental value through inter-departmental collaborations within cities, towns, neighborhoods, and other community jurisdictions, creative placemaking has allowed creative individuals, organizations, and groups to bring their voices to the table in a wider range of professional contexts. It has allowed creativity and the arts to gain a greater level of recognition and legitimacy, and has allowed for greater financial support for creative endeavors.

Examining the partnerships involved in the emerging creative placemaking literature provides a gold mine of knowledge regarding exactly how placemaking is being done. It is widely acknowledged that placemaking work relies heavily on strategic partnership. In episode 11 of *The Art of Placemaking Podcast*, Vice President for Arts & Culture of Levitt Pavillions, spoke about her work to create pavilions around large cities, in order to activate public spaces. She explained that, despite their standing as a national organization, they manage to maintain a community driven process- aligning nicely with what seem to be the core principles of creative placemaking. Through their partnership schematic, which they refer to as a “triangle partnership,” the national organization plants stages in cities throughout the United States, which are intended to provide opportunities for artistic experiences and cultural exchanges within communities. Lee highlights three common characteristics of these stages: 1.) At each stage 50 concerts a year are offered for free to the public (4:23). 2.) each stage is in an open-air formation, or what she refers to as “the 360 experience.” (5:19). 3.) high quality/production value.

Along with the stages built in each of these locations, a local nonprofit called “Friends of Levitt Pavilion” is created, with the specific intention of partnering with the city, the community, and the national organization. All of the stages are city owned, and located on city land, and cities enter into a 50-99 year agreement to maintain the venue. The associated “Levitt” nonprofit can then use the venue free of charge, and the National organization becomes a committed, life-long partner of the local nonprofit. The Levitt Pavillion “triangle partnership” provides an interesting example of how creative placemaking initiatives might be supported through strategic partnership models, and involving multiple levels of administration.

The sometimes complex, multi-tiered partnership models involved in creative placemaking projects offer inherent challenges in communication, based on the individualized needs and methods of operation of each of the partnering entities. Particularly interesting are the collaborative bridges which are being built between artists and city employees. Boren and Young (2017) explore the relationships between artists and local and city governments in creative placemaking work, and ask: “...what kind of ‘new conceptual spaces’ might facilitate the interaction, rather than opposition, of creative producers and policy makers?” (p.22). With this, they draw attention to the complexities of communications between two differently operating entities- with misunderstandings on both sides. They cite an example from O’Connor and Gu (2010) which looks at the role of the Manchester Creative Industries Development Services as being an intermediary between policy makers and creatives. They state that relationships between these two groups requires stronger strategy in order to be successful.

Creative placemaking: an "instrumental art"

The urban planning term “placemaking” urges for community driven, people-focused design practices, and creative placemaking specifically looks at the arts as a tool for catalyzing positive change (Grodach 2017). Salzman and Yerace (2017) explore creative placemaking as framed within a socio-political context- something they note as being a relatively novel concept. While placemaking literature has been more heavily focused on the built environment- relating specifically to the work of urban planning departments- they argue that a stronger focus on the people involved, saying that: “For us, the potential of placemaking to impact the socio-political context requires a focus on the people who engage the creative placemaking process.” (p.2). They go on to compare the impacts of creative placemaking to those of civil society, saying:

Many of our interviewees described the effects of their projects similarly to the way we understand traditional civil society; however, the process is different. Associations in the context of civil society are more persistent- they have by-laws and meetings and officers. If creative placemaking is a form of civil society, then it should be understood as pop up civil society: extremely limited interactions with durable effects. (p.5)

Doughty and Lagerqvist (2016) acknowledge the nature of public, city spaces as naturally providing fruitful opportunities for encounters with multiculturalism, but caution against assumptions that cultural diversity necessarily equates to urban democracy- rather, that note that it holds “ethical potential” (p.60). Specifically, they explore the opportunities created by migrant pan flute players in a busy public square, and observe that the music not only worked to effectively create ambiance in the space, but to create moments of “egalitarian togetherness, moments that encouraged co-mingling across multiple existing lines of difference.” (p. 65).

At the very least, it can be argued that events and activations in the outdoor, public spaces of Downtown Eugene provide this: the opportunity for people to connect with others who may differ from them culturally and from a socio-economic standpoint. Included in the definition of creative placemaking is the concept of collaboration and the involvement of community voice- and it might be assumed that such bottom-up approaches to planning and programming hold greater potential for addressing community needs than do top-down approaches. But what should be the role of creative placemaking practices in solving specific and pressing social issues within a community? Further, how are planners, programmers, and artists accounting for such issues in their work?

In her research exploring placemaking practices in Portland, OR, Redaelli (2017) highlights the response of an artists, who emphasized that “artists are not social workers,” even if they are creating art with social change as a major goal (p. 6). I’m interested in how this idea translates to Downtown Eugene- where the issue of homelessness and the presence of the “transient” population has been a pervasive and persistent issue for many years, and where creative placemaking practices are being strategically used to revitalize downtown as a place.

Eugene's Evolution as a "Creative Placemaking City"

From my position, as a current resident of Eugene, and as someone who has, through my professional work, been exposed to programming practices and conversations within the City, I have seen evidence of the language and practices of creative placemaking permeating the programming of Downtown, outdoor, public spaces. The greatest evidence of this lies in the City’s action of contracting the Project for Public Spaces- a New York City creative placemaking firm- to come in and work with the city. This indicates that there were (and still are) decision makers within the city who value creative placemaking as an approach to community cultural development.

Further, it seems that the work of PPS has left a noticeable influence on the city's programmers and policy-makers, and perhaps even, in turn, its artists. In speaking with Eric Brown, Associate Planner of the City of Eugene, I learned that the act of contracting PPS was born out of information gleaned from a "extensive community consultation effort" called "Envision Eugene" which occurred in 2010. From responses obtained through this evaluation, seven pillars were developed to guide the development of Eugene, included as a part of a document published by City Manager Jon Ruiz in 2012, titled "A Community Vision for 2032." These were: Provide ample economic opportunities for all community members; Provide housing affordable to all income levels; Plan for climate change and energy resiliency; Provide compact urban development and efficient transportation options; Protect, repair, and enhance neighborhood livability; Protect, restore and enhance natural resources; **Provide for adaptable, flexible, and collaborative implementation.**

Brown described the evolution from this work to the process of contracting PPS to come in and conduct an assessment of Downtown, specifically.

...the vision that came out of the Envision Eugene process was...that downtown was an important place. What kicked off the most recent placemaking work downtown was, you know, community outcry around feelings around feeling unsafe downtown. Particularly from women, who were being harassed on our downtown streets...we have a population of transient youth that frequents the space during the summer, so there's a whole host of issues that made people feel threatened downtown. So the impetus for the placemaking came out of that outcry. So, on the one hand, you've got the hopes and dreams of what people want to see downtown, and then you've got the reality of, uh, this more threatening environment. (personal communication, January 26, 2018).

Before PPS became integrated into the City's urban renewal strategies, the concept of creative placemaking emerged through the interest of the then Cultural Services Division Director, Tomi Anderson- the predecessor to Isaac Marquez. In his words:

...[Tomi] did a great job of bringing people together and getting them excited about placemaking, and then freeing up over \$100,000 for a contract to hire a firm out of NY...she started that fire...I think its important to know, that was the influence of one person who had vision and energy who made that happen. (personal communication, February 1, 2018).

Colette Ramirez noted that she gave a presentation on creative placemaking back in 2014, after Anderson brought the concept of placemaking to her attention- dropping off articles and resources in her office to encourage further exploration of the movement's driving ideologies.

As an awareness of creative placemaking practices began to spread amongst City employees, particularly within the Cultural Services Division, the planning conversations regarding Downtown spaces continued to develop. In 2016, the City of Eugene's Urban Renewal Agency Board approved a Downtown Urban Renewal Plan Amendment, which included downtown's Park Blocks and Open Spaces as a crucial urban renewal project. On the City's website, they outline the most crucial public spaces in Downtown Eugene; saying: "The four primary downtown public spaces are the Park Blocks, 10th and Olive, the Hult Center Plaza, and Kesey Square." (<https://www.eugene-or.gov/3882/Downtown-Public-Spaces>).

The City of Eugene recognized: 1.) the importance of these spaces; 2.) that there were necessary changes that needed to be made; and finally 3.) they knew, based in part on the feedback and process of Envision Eugene in 2010, that the changes required a “adaptable, flexible, and collaborative implementation” (Ruiz, 2012)- ideas which are strongly supported in creative placemaking practices.

On April 15th, 2016, Request for Proposals (RFP) was released by the City of Eugene Purchasing Office, calling for a “Placemaking Consultant,” with a closing date of May 20th, 2016. Already, the language of placemaking was influencing city processes, and there was already a desire to move forward with the Downtown urban renewal plans operating through the lense of creative placemaking’s guiding principles.

...all of the firms we reviewed besides PPS, they were, they’re different. They’re private firms, and they do landscape architecture, and planning projects... for profit. Whereas, PPS, they’re a nonprofit, they have, like, a visionary mandate to change the ways we think about downtown, and the way we think about places...which fit really well with what we were trying to do through the placemaking work. They also just, you know, put a better proposal together that provided better, you know, was a better value for the public. (personal communication, January 26, 2018).

Defining "**Activations**" through literature

In my experience working within the City of Eugene Community Events team, the most persistent placemaking language I hear is: “activations,” or more often, the verb to “activate.” While I’ve found traces of this term sprinkled throughout placemaking literature, I’ve yet to come upon a clear definition. The term also seems to have ties to urban planning literature. In their discussion of placemaking events, Salzman & Yerace (2017) briefly define the term by saying: “...a placemaking ‘event’ can be understood as whatever activates (or brings people to) the public space.” (p.2). I’m fond of this simple definition- and see this idea accurately reflected in both the research I’ve read, and the interviews I’ve conducted.

Bennett (2014) lists four primary instrumental abilities of creative placemaking, based on an assessment of an array of case studies. These are to: anchor, activate, “fix,” and plan. (p.77). He expands on each of these categories, elaborating on the term “activating” through the following passage:

Creative placemaking brings performance and participatory activities to public spaces (including plazas and alleyways) to make them more attractive, exciting, and safe...Planned public performances, flash mobs, and temporary and permanent works of public art have attracted residents and visitors to previously abandoned and underused spaces. (Bennett 2014, p.77)

While the existing definitions of the term are still sparse, the common thread seems to be that the process of “activating” involves attracting people to specific locales- particularly those which are currently underutilized- and catalyzing changes in the social interactions of those spaces. This seems to imply that these activations are working to rejuvenate, or enliven spaces which may have, at one point, contained more, or different, types of human action- that the “activation” will bring a public space back to life. Further, there seems to be an implication that “activating” means more than simply drawing people to a space- but that it necessitates a type of participatory activity as well (Bennett 2014) .

As mentioned in the previous chapter, I'm interested in learning how the concepts and theories of creative placemaking have been put into practical use, so the concept can be more easily understood by communities, artists and city leaders and decision-makers. While I have highlighted the intentionality behind the initial broadness of the creative placemaking movement, this was a strategy which seemed to prove useful for gaining support in its formative years. I would argue that, within the lifespan of this growing field, it is time to become more specific.

In the NEA Arts Magazine interview, *Defining Creative Placemaking* (Schupbach, 2012), Gadwa Nicodemus discusses the need for a greater number of in-depth, longitudinal case-studies to provide examples of the types of creative placemaking projects which are occurring, as well as clearly outlining their successes and failures. These failures, Markusen suggests, are the greatest way to "foster learning from others." Within conversations surrounding the use of creative placemaking as a tool for urban revitalization, there is room for further development of common language and terms amongst leaders- specifically focusing on the shifting definitions of events as a piece in creative placemaking strategies.

During my work for the City of Eugene, I've had the benefit of being exposed, through first-hand experience, to the ways in which creative placemaking language has entered the planning processes of the City- and the concept of "activation programming" seems to be the most prominent and clear example. By defining and framing this term, I hope that readers will understand the potentiality for creative placemaking language as a valuable mechanism of action- working as a tool to transform the programmatic structures and processes which influence the use of outdoor, public spaces for artistic, community-driven activities within Downtown Eugene.

FINDINGS



4. Activations vs. Events

Interviewees participating in this study were asked to differentiate between “events” and “activations,” in their own words, based on their individual, subjective experience with arts programming in the outdoor, public spaces of Downtown Eugene. Additionally, they were encouraged to provide examples in their explanations, and invited to comment on both the successes and failures of these concepts. Through these responses, a fairly clear and consistent definition of “activation” emerged, which was both consistent with the sparse literature I found on the term, and also built upon its existing definition- adding new layers and complexity to the concept.

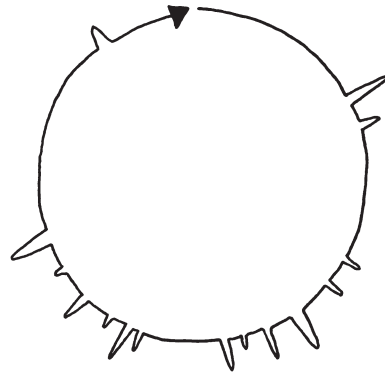
Rather than simply referring to the act of bringing people to a space (Salzman and Yerace, 2017), interviewees described “activations” as a distinct programmatic style, which, from my analysis, fit with the principles of the creative placemaking movement, and reflect recommendations provided by the 2017 Project for Public Spaces report. According to these responses, events and activations differ in four primary categories: **temporal qualities, spatial qualities, communications, and modes of engagement.**

Temporal Qualities

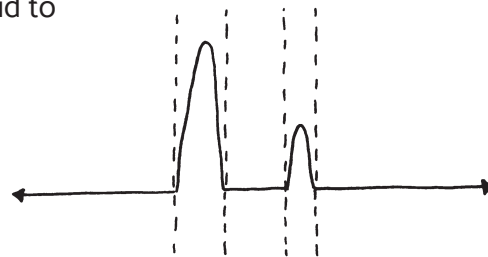
The most commonly reiterated difference between an event and an activation was the element of duration. **Events** were described as “one-off,” or “one-time-only” affairs.



They were described not only singularly, but as repetitious, isolated blips of activity in a cyclical timeline—as with monthly, quarterly, and annually held events.



In either case, events were said to have a clearly identifiable beginnings, middles, and ends.

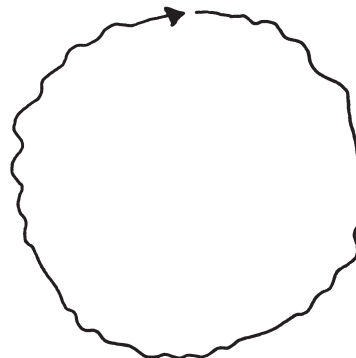


Activations, in contrast, were described as occurring on a more on-going or consistent basis.



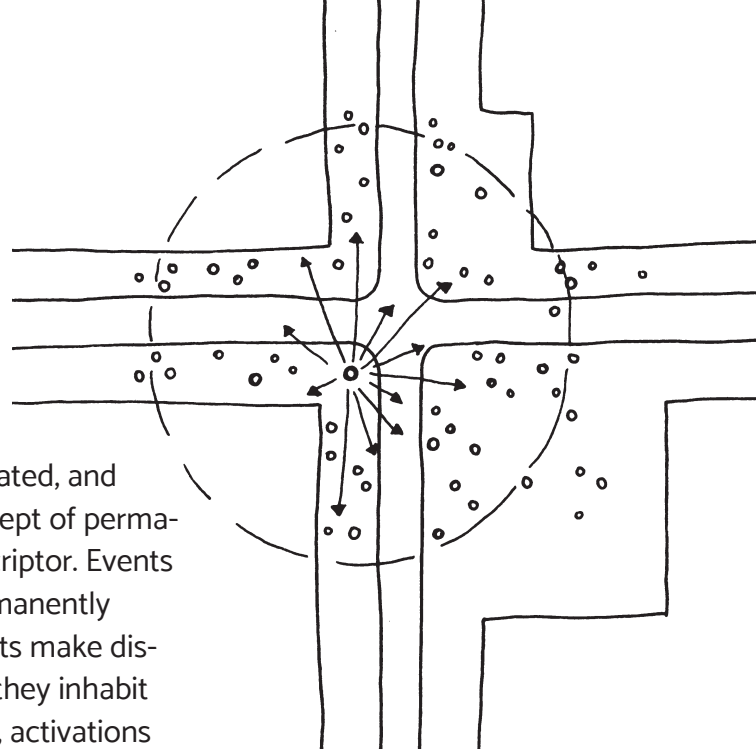
They were described as sustained activity, with less visible starts and stops.

Additionally, they were described as continued programming efforts to work towards specific long-term goals.



Spatial Qualities

Closely related to this element of time, is the element of space- which emerged from discussions of permanence in relation to city infrastructure. As previously discussed with Bywater's (2007) concept of liminal space-time, especially in these outdoor public spaces, time spent in a space is a function of the physical claiming of space.



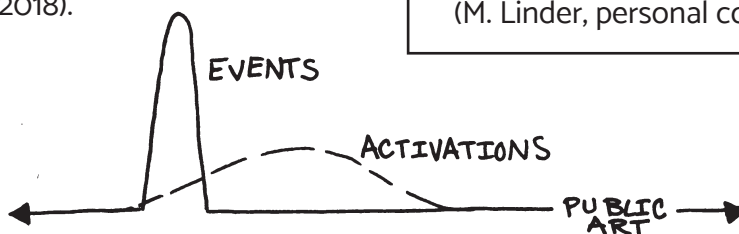
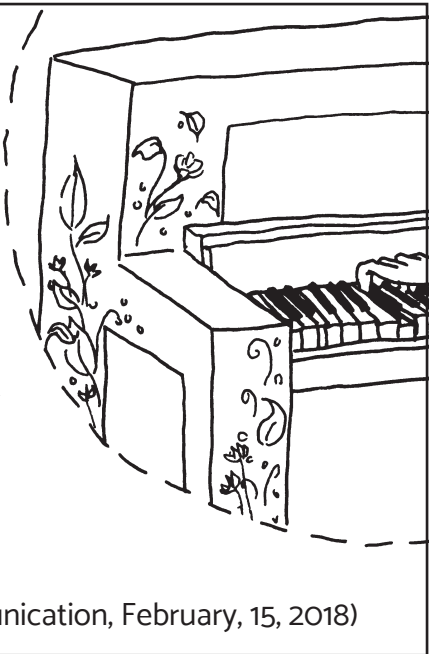
Time and space are concepts which are not easily isolated, and therefore should not be seen as mutually exclusive. The concept of permanence itself can be defined as both a temporal or spatial descriptor. Events were described by interviewees as activities which use impermanently placed or built structures, to create temporary activities. Events make distinct alterations to space, then, upon completion, the spaces they inhabit return to their previous state. In regards to spatial orientation, activations were described as more ethereal and ambient activities. They were noted for their abilities to re-contextualize spaces, by influencing the social interactions within them.

Though physical qualities of activations were less explicitly described, there were clear patterns in the examples which were given for "activations"- namely, busking activities, and the City's Playable Public Art program, which involves the movement of painted pianos around downtown, outdoor spaces. Both of these examples highlight the whimsical, unexpected quality of activations. Downtown Programs Manager, Mindy Linder described "activations" as existing somewhere between events and public art, such as murals painted on the sides of building.

Through the examples and descriptions provided by interviewees, it seems clear that activations are more closely linked to physical, city infrastructure than events. Harmonic Lab co-founder and ensemble member, Jon Bellona, described the abilities of activations to not only inspire new engagement within these spaces, but for increased interfacing ability between people in these spaces, and the spaces themselves (personal communication, February 22, 2018).

"...there's the spectrum of: the event that happens then goes away, versus the permanence of murals, but it's not something you interact with beyond looking at, and walking by. But then there's something like our "Playable Public Art Program, which is a very unique thing, and I would say that truly activates a space."

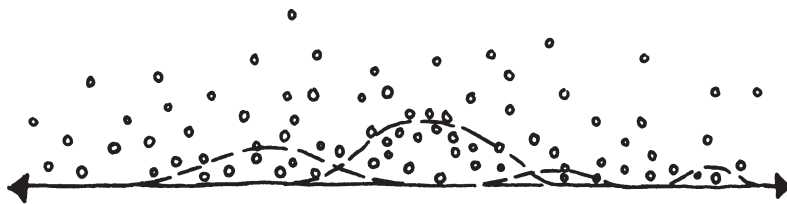
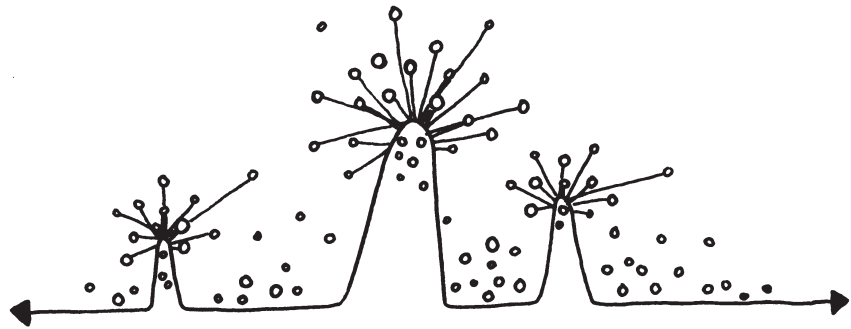
(M. Linder, personal communication, February, 15, 2018)



Communications

Another interesting theme which emerged from these interviews was the ways in which events and activations differ in communications- in regards to marketing and promotions, but also in the ways they each work to express, or perform, aspects of place identity.

Because events have more explicit timelines, as previously discussed, programmers can announce them, target desired audiences through their messaging, and receive more concrete assurance of attendance, for example, through RSVPs and ticket sales.



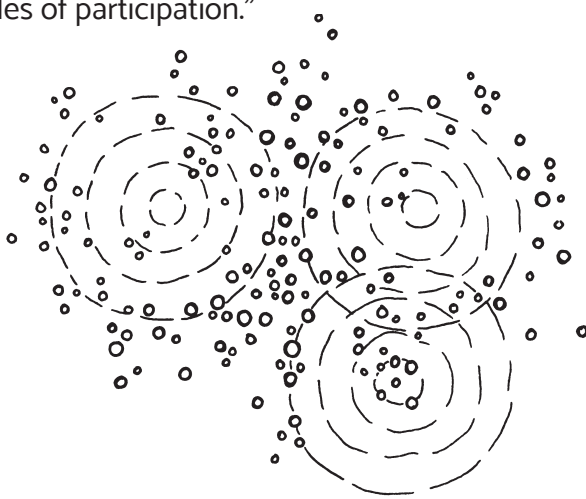
Because an activation is more nebulous and vague, it was described by interviewees as activity which is not promoted, but rather, happened upon. A couple of interviewees cited the French Quarter of New Orleans as an example of a positively activated space, because of the expectation of unexpected arts experiences.

As a form of communication itself, events were described as strategic tools for drawing people specifically to underutilized spaces- or, as Cultural Services Director, Isaac Marquez described it, to “get downtown back on people’s mind” (personal communication, February 1, 2018). This reinforces the idea that a place identity can be performed in part through the the communications about a space, and further emphasizes the ability of “place” to be built through intangible, “symbolic imaginings” (Richards 2017), and events can be clearly viewed as expressions of a place’s identity.

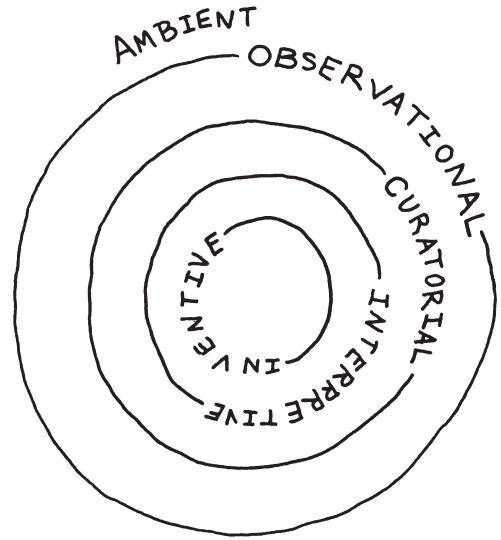
Modes of Engagement

Perhaps the most interesting distinction which emerged, was the degree to which events and activations offer various modes of engagement. Activations were described as providing greater options for degrees in which to engage with the activities of a space. Community Programs Manager, Colette Ramirez, described activations as containing layers of activity, saying:

“...we transform a space into a place by having people there with creative influences, different modes of participation.”

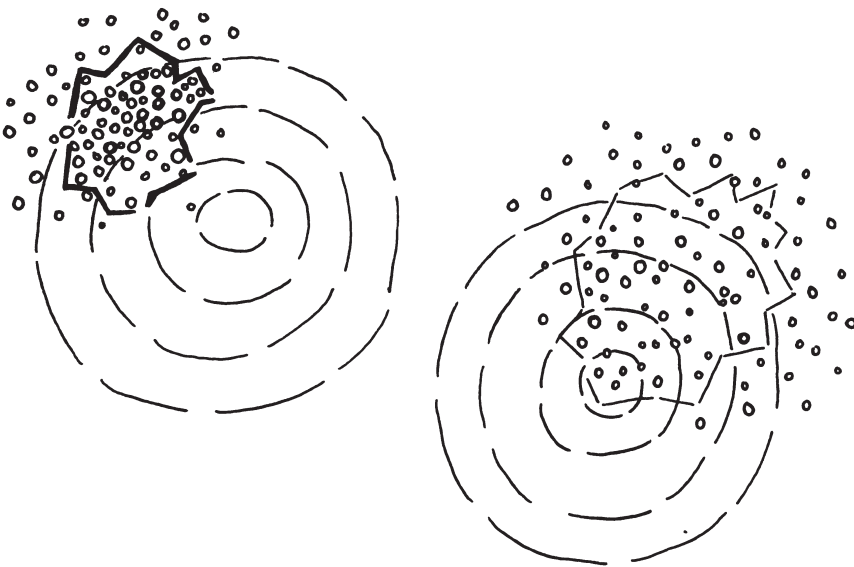


(C. Ramirez, personal communication, March 6, 2018)



(Alan Brown of WolfBrown's
5 Modes of Arts Engagement)

This sentiment was echoed by a number of other interviewees, and activations were described as offering the choice to participate more directly or more passively. Additionally, events were differentiated as requiring greater direct facilitation from programmers and artist, whereas with activations, the instigation of the activities and experiences are instigated by the participants, or “audience” passing through the space.

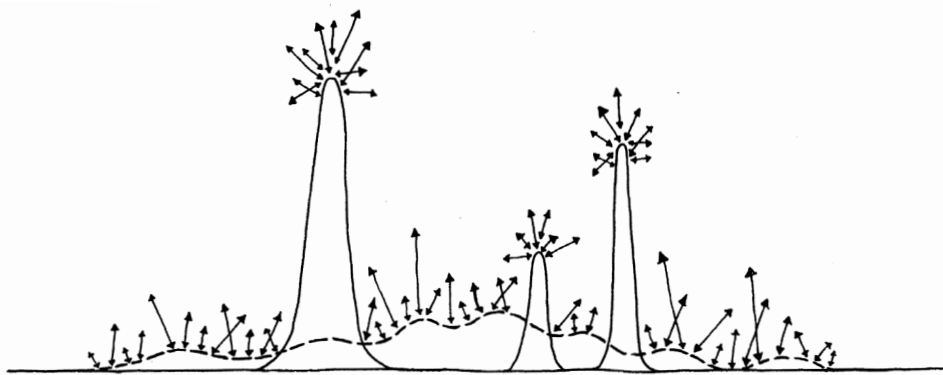


The Uses of Defining

Through these interview responses, and through participation and observation of the examples described, my understanding of the term “activation” has been significantly expanded. Rather than merely referring to the act of bringing people to a space, the programmers and artists I consulted used the term to describe a method of programming which is differentiated from that of an event. The two terms, in some cases, were described as having some overlap, the common use of the term “activation” amongst the networks responsible for programming Downtown Eugene’s outdoor, public spaces can be taken as an indicator of positive growth towards more shared creative placemaking language.

As I’ve previously outlined, the broadness of the term “creative placemaking” has been useful in its own way, especially as the movement first came into fruition. Now that the concept of creative placemaking is becoming increasingly acknowledged and utilized amongst city networks and arts entities, it is, perhaps, more useful now to move from defining creative placemaking as a broader movement, to defining creative placemaking as programming processes and language.

In a 2017 report of their Pre-Conference Workshop on Creative Placemaking, the Alliance for the Art in Research Universities (a2ru) urged for the importance of building lexicons and “glossaries of terms” for creative placemaking language, in an effort to bolster understanding of placemaking (p. 19). I would argue that the types of language which are needed can be split into two main categories: 1.) Umbrella Terms- such as descriptions of “creative placemaking” as an overarching idea or movement, and which articulate philosophies and ideologies; and 2.) Local lexicons (V. Lee, personal communication, April 1, 2018)- or, those terms used in exchanges between those who are “on-the-ground,” making creative placemaking happen in their communities, and which work to articulate the actions or processes of their work.



Differentiating activations from events can prove to be a useful tool for uniting artists, and individuals across various city departments in working towards common programmatic goals. Activations require different resources than events do; they rely more heavily on intangible infrastructure which works to influence social dynamics, and they follow a more elongated, elusive timeline than that of a typical event. A shifted viewpoint of this program infrastructure necessitates a shifted viewpoint of other elements, such as staffing, planning processes, evaluations systems, and, perhaps most importantly: funding mechanisms. Therefore, an increased consciousness of programming language can ultimately lead to greater sustainability for programs.

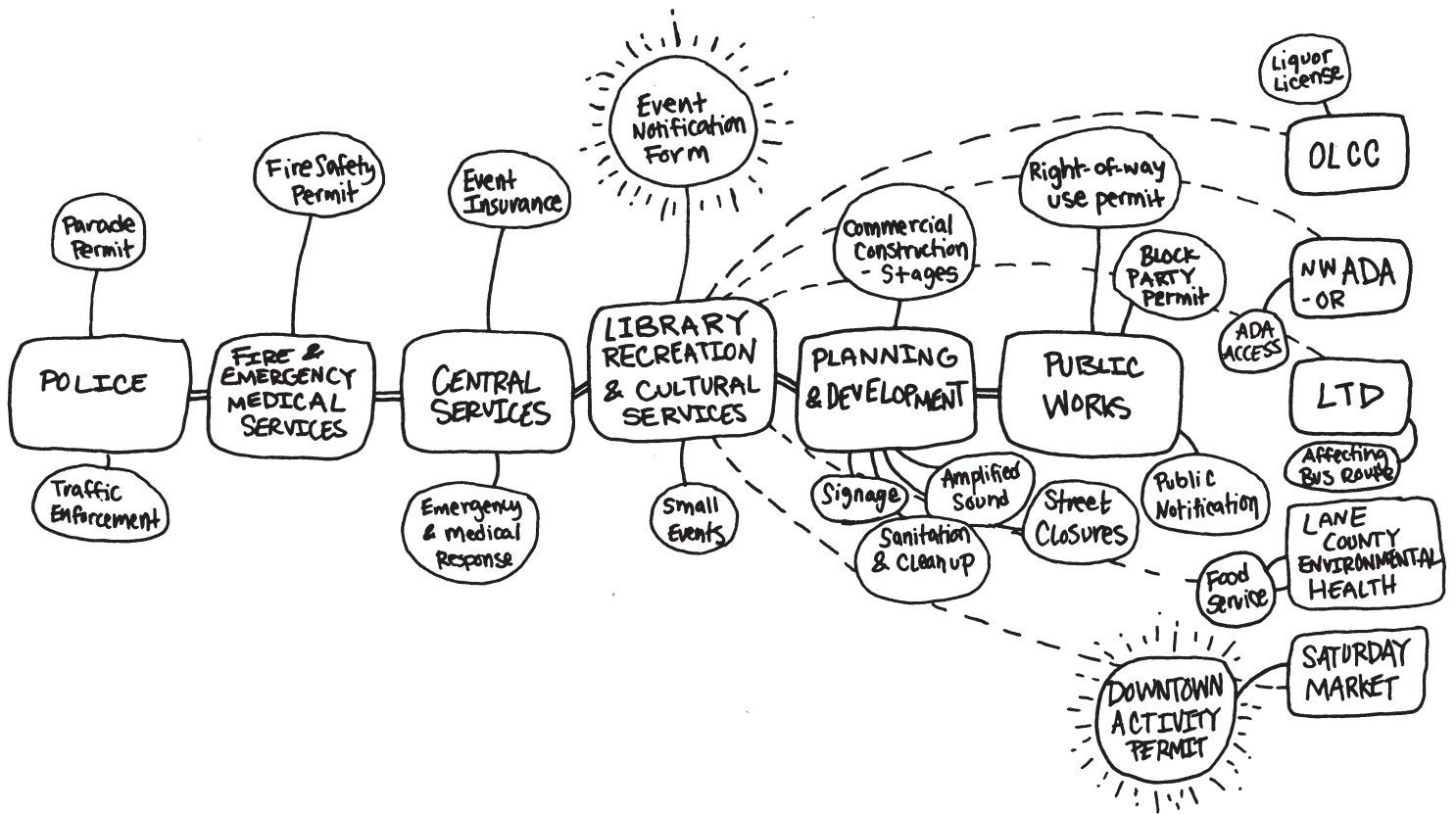
5. Downtown Infrastructure

With the knowledge that programmatic methods are shifting to include more activations, I felt it was important to learn how current infrastructure is working to support arts activities being produced in these outdoor, Downtown spaces. The City of Eugene hosts events in closed-down streets, and open squares such as the West and East Park Blocks and Kesey Square- creating temporary venues for performance and artistic experience. Through my interviews, I sought to learn more about the variable elements of these spaces, and how they are being programmed strategically in order to influence sociability and behavior patterns within their borders

What emerged were details regarding the challenges, benefits, and general procedures for artistic programming in these spaces. Additionally, I gained insights into the infrastructural changes which might better accommodate their use by programmers and artists, particularly, those utilizing more of an activation-style of programming. Relating back to the ideas presented by Carr and Dionisio (2017), I wondered if these spaces could be considered “flexible spaces,” according to their definition. It seems that, in order to determine how to make spaces flexible, the activities which occur there require analysis in order to know what accommodations they require. Finally, these interview responses highlighted the types of spaces required specifically by activations.

Procedures of Space

Through these interviews, I learned about the structure of the permitting and application processes for both city staff and community members to produce events in Downtown Eugene’s outdoor, public spaces. On their website, the city provides application materials for community members looking to produce their own events in public spaces, outlined in their comprehensive Special Event Planning Guide. This includes definitions of what qualifies as a “special event” (p.3), application timelines (p.3), permit categories (p.4), as well as the entire range of contacts for departments responsible for each step of the application and permitting process (p.5).

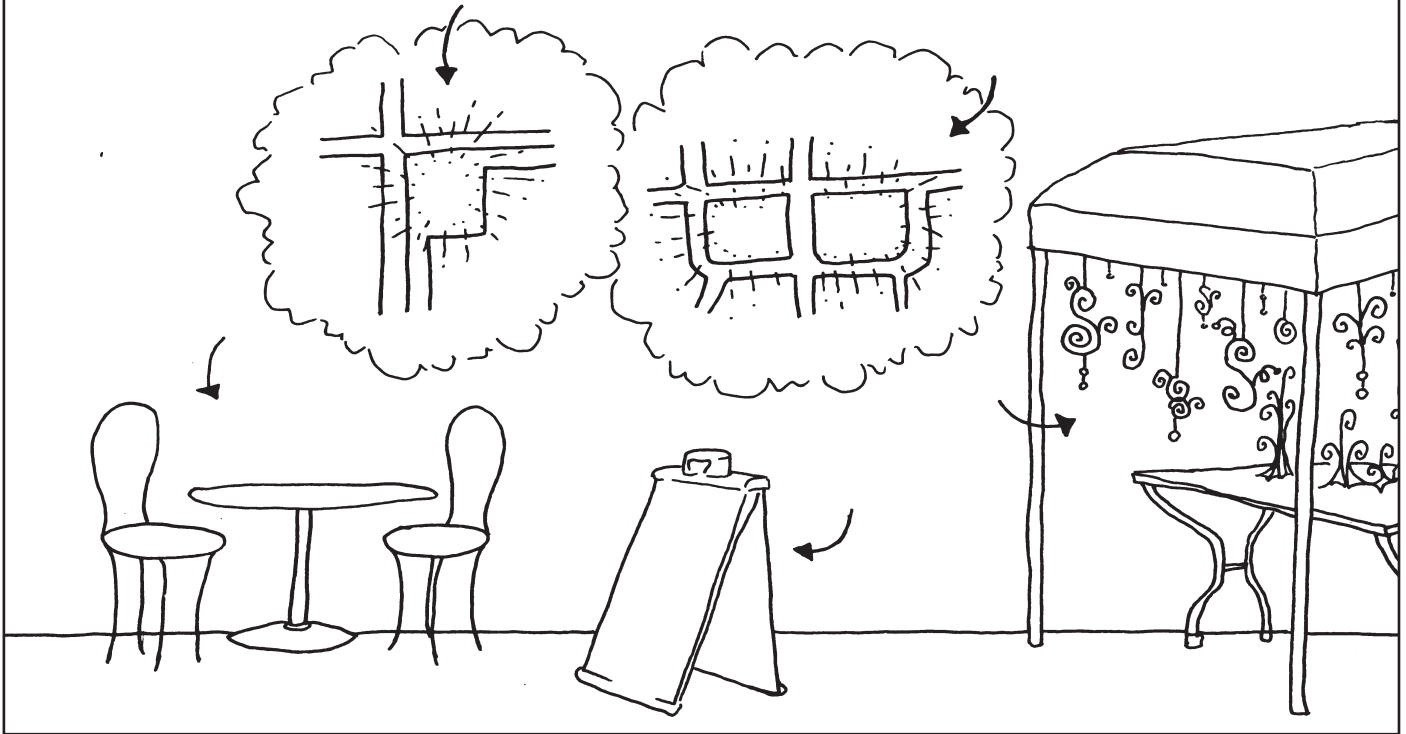


The process outlined in this guide involves all six city departments, and provides steps and links for connecting with the Oregon Liquor Control Commission (OLCC, the Northwest Americans with Disabilities Act, and Lane County Environmental Health.

Additionally, events occurring specifically within Downtown, in venues such as Kesey Square and the Park Blocks, are handled through a separate permitting process of the Saturday Market. I was surprised to learn the extent to which the Saturday Market helped to govern the use of outdoor, Downtown spaces beyond the market’s footprint and timeline. Courtney Kauffman of the Saturday Market outlined the 5 primary programs that they are in charge of enforcing:

1. Cafe seating;
2. Activity permits for Kesey Square and the Park Blocks;
3. Food carts;
4. Sidewalk signs;
5. Sidewalk commerce

"I think SM really is...one of the strongest stewards of public space in downtown...I think that's a large part of why we have the contract with the city to manage the various programs, because they really consider us an expert in the use of those spaces."
(C. Kauffman, personal communication, February 1, 2018)



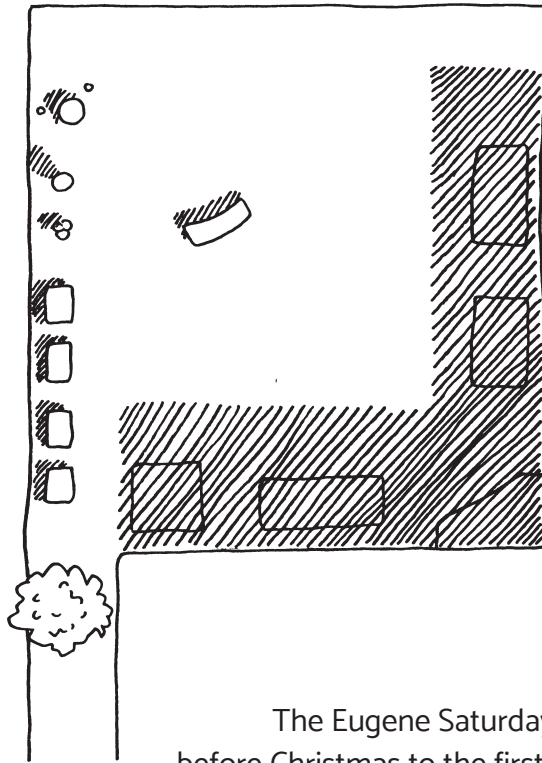
While all of the necessary steps for self-producing events are outlined in the city's document, as well as on the Saturday Market's website, the process is certainly not a simple one. There are many considerations and steps involved in producing an event in Eugene's public spaces. Ramirez discussed her goals for creating an "event-friendly city through permitting", so that members of the Eugene community can be more greatly empowered to become self-producers in Downtown spaces. However, she noted the complexity of the process, saying:

"I think the biggest hinder is that people just don't know- they think its harder than it is, they don't know where to go. We don't have one downtown website, there's information everywhere..." (personal communication, March 6, 2018)

Ultimately, while these processes are being managed thoughtfully by city employees, they act as a potential barrier to entry for community members interested in using them. These are clear examples of **mechanisms of action**- which are working to normalize behaviors within Downtown spaces.

Challenges of Space

Besides the complex permitting and application procedures for organizing activities within these spaces, there were a number of innate difficulties of the spaces themselves which were highlighted by interviewees. One of the most common mentions was of the weather. Eugene, OR experiences an average of 46.15 inches of rainfall annually, and nearly the entirety of its outdoor programming is limited to the months of summer and early fall.



With such a limited portion of the year being conducive to outdoor activities in Downtown's public spaces, there is much pressure placed upon programmers to facilitate positive community experiences within a concentrated period of time.

The Eugene Saturday Market closes from the last Saturday before Christmas to the first Saturday in April- a choice which their website attributes primarily to the fact that:

"The weather is terrible in Eugene during this period, and there are no fruits, vegetables or flowers, which constitute an important aspect of the market."

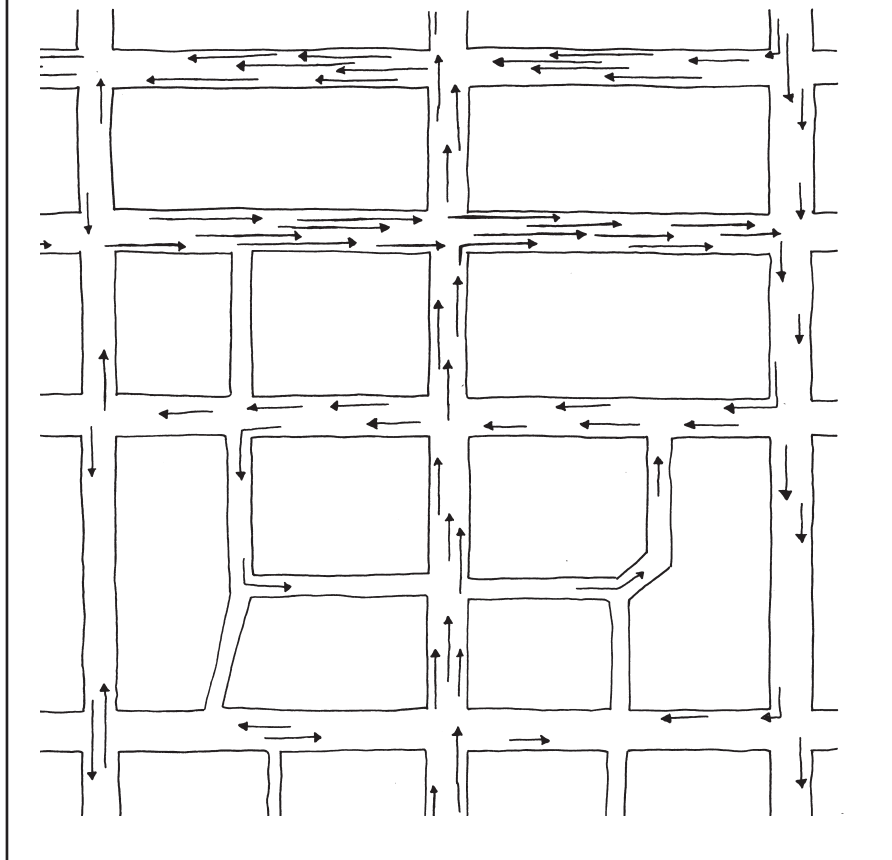
(<https://www.eugenesaturdaymarket.org/history-of-saturday-market.html>).

In addition to the generally limited window for outdoor programming, producing art outdoors means that artists are at continual risk to adverse weather conditions- including slippery surfaces when its raining, and overbearing sunlight during the summer months.

Other commonly noted challenges of the space were: access to electrical and water sources, and additionally, lighting and heat (for events programmed during the fall and winter months), and heavy traffic. Eric Brown of the Planning & Development division spoke of the extreme detriment posed by the roads surrounding Kesey Square and the Park blocks, preventing them from acting as proper civic platforms.

“One of the big problems for our downtown which contributes to a lack of place, is our one-way, multi-lane roads. So like, 6th, 7th, and 8th are all like, you know, people are going like 40 mi per hour through our downtown- like three lanes of traffic going 40 mi per hour through our most important- what should be our most important dt square....and if dt is going to be a destination, **we need to work with traffic engineers to figure out how to get people to downtown rather than *through* downtown.**”

(E. Brown, personal communication, January 26, 2018)

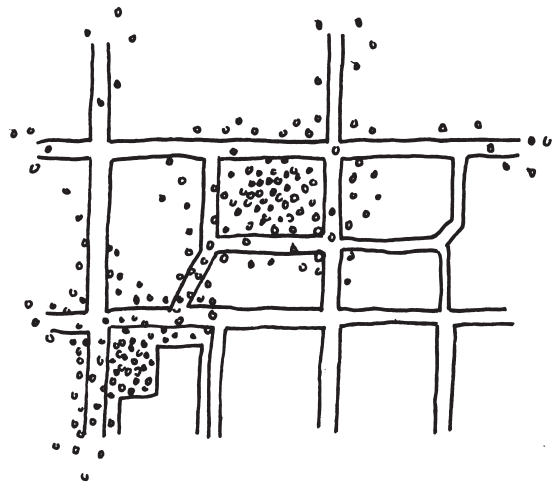


Additionally, the open air, non-confined aspects of these spaces pose challenges related to sound pollution, and the difficulties in navigating all of the different populations making use of the space. Many interviewees commented on the difficulties of attempting to appeal, and include, all people into these spaces, and that such open access and unpredictability in activity is a constant consideration.

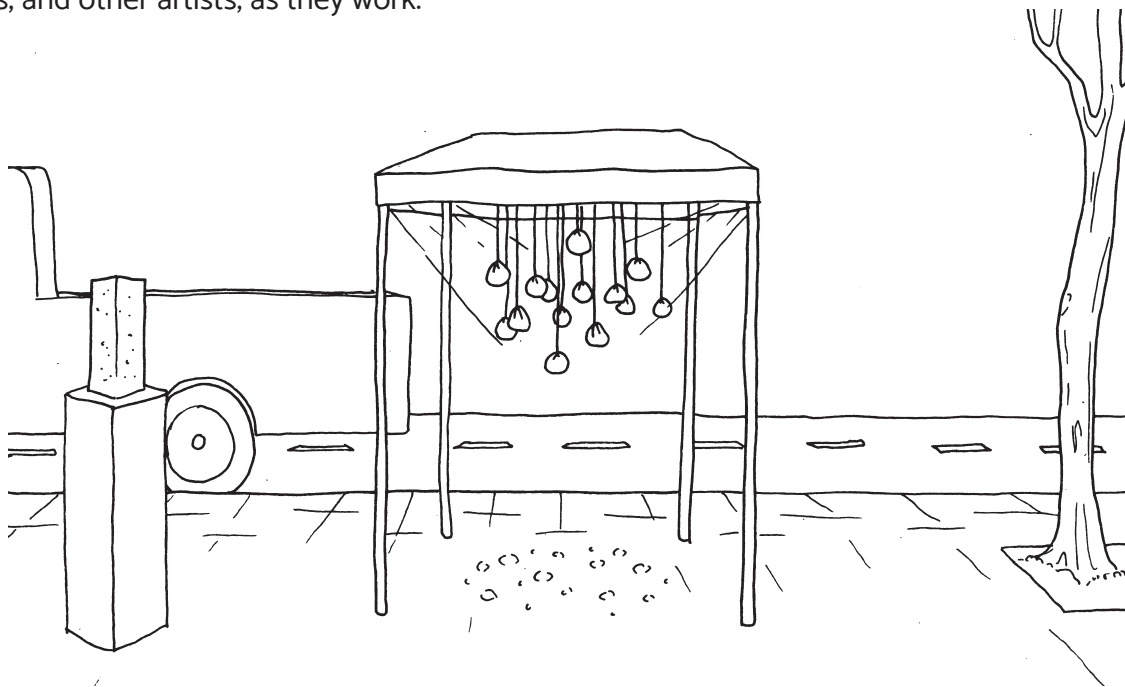
Eugene musician and street performer, Timothy “Banjo” Youngblood, highlighted the common blurred lines and misconceptions surrounding populations spending time in the streets- saying that buskers are sometimes unjustly lumped into the same category as transient and homeless individuals (personal communication, February 18, 2018).

Benefits of Space

Considering all of these challenges, and of the negative connotations associated with those who are claiming liminal space-time (Bywater, 2007) in Downtown Eugene, I was left curious to hear the benefits, motivations, and successes of programming in these spaces. Ultimately, programmers and artists spoke of the opportunities for inclusion and new social interactions, inviting participants of various socioeconomic statuses, ethnicities, and ages.

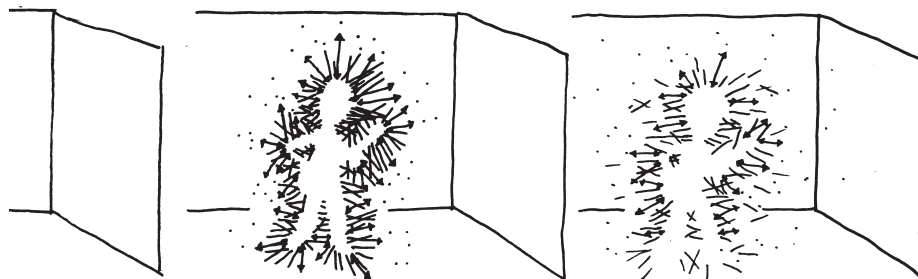


Artists, specifically, spoke of the creative innovation born specifically from these spatial challenges. ArtCity Eugene founder, Charly Swing, described the ways which a lack of art studio space led to the creation of the program “Studio Without Walls,”- where artists practice out in the open, allowing engagement with passerbys, and other artists, as they work.



(Based on work by Hana Behrs and Cari Ingrassia at the December 2017 event “Light Up the Night,” collaboratively produced by ArCity Eugene and Eugene Cultural Services)

Another common theme which emerged was that art held the power to “recontextualize” outdoor public spaces (Jeremy Schropp, personal communication, February 22, 2018), in addition to the general beautification it provided them.



Using the past to inspire future space-use

In the summer of 2017, working as an evaluation intern for the City of Eugene's Community Events, I was introduced to the history of the Eugene Celebration- a community arts event which occurred in Downtown Eugene for three full days in September from 1983-2013. Danny Kime, current owner of HiFi music hall, and a previous staff member for the event, described the Eugene Celebration as having a vested interest from many parties, and holding feelings of shared ownership within the community- with over 200 volunteers participating (personal communication, February 13, 2018). Courtney Kauffman of the Saturday Market described the Celebration as being a "big street fair" which celebrated downtown (personal communication, February 1, 2018), and many other interviewees described its successes as an event, due to its accessibility and wide appeal to different populations.

Apart from the gradual changes in the management of the event, which, arguably, led to its demise (a complex and nuanced Eugenic oral history for another time), the Eugene Celebration was considered by most interviewees to have been a successful use of downtown spaces for community-engaged arts experiences. Interestingly, a couple interviewees in this study noted that the aesthetically displeasing "pits" which used to occupy Downtown's empty blocks actually provided useful spaces which were able to become temporary stages during the three days of events. This idea beautifully illustrates the abilities of flexible spaces. While the past "pits" of Downtown Eugene are often regarded negatively, what I heard reinforced in my conversations with programmers and artists was that the Eugene Celebration made intelligent use of Downtown spaces, and they regarded the multiple, pop-up venues as a success of the signature event.

In addition to learning about the spatial successes of programmers, such as with the example of the Eugene Celebration, I also learned about struggles with space-use which have led to great moments of learning. During my interview with Downtown Programs Manager, Mindy Linder, she highlighted her past challenge of programming placemaking activities within the Hult Center Plaza during the summer of 2016. Linder was allotted a budget, and instructed to "activate" the sunken, outdoor, Hult Center plaza by the Cultural Services director preceding Isaac Marquez. The space held a variety of rotating, drop-in activities which involved direct engagement with the community. Included in these were: a Hawaiian Hula interactive performance and cultural education session, a Raptor Center demonstration with birds of prey, and Baby/Parent Yoga (M. Linder, personal communication, June 8, 2018). Aesthetically and creatively, the programming was positively received. Ultimately, however, it not well attended. As Linder described it:

...the Hult Center Plaza was not a great space for a number of reasons...one big reason is, it's between two streets that are essentially highways...And so, to expect families and pedestrians to come and "stumble upon" the Hult Center Plaza- which, to note, is also a sunken concrete pit- just makes no sense...the Hult Center is a destination itself, and people are used to being, expecting to go there for a performing arts event, and to go there for anything other than that is strange...to go there for a passive drop-in activity is very odd. And that was the kind of feedback we got: it was interesting and whimsical, but...it didn't make sense. (personal communication, February 15, 2018)

Linder described this initial placemaking experience as a “sort of laboratory” and, in this sense, the experience seems to have provided valuable information for placemaking programmers moving forward in Downtown Eugene. Further, this example may indicate deeper information about the Hult Center Plaza’s abilities in supporting activations. It seems the location may not serve well as a liminal space of artistic experience- but rather, as a destination for artistic experience- thus, perhaps the space is more conducive to events than it is to activations. This example supports the idea that, while the center is a highly valued arts establishment in Downtown Eugene, the physical qualities of the space strongly dictate the successes and failures of the activities occurring within.

As the findings of this chapter have shown, location, spatial orientation, and infrastructure are hugely important in supporting both events and activations downtown. Boren and Young (2017) discuss the challenging planning processes of creative policy, particularly in regards to the integration of artists and policy makers, saying:

...planners are beginning to explore how they can interact with artistic communities to influence the nature of planning and to get beyond rather mechanistic understandings of creative city policy, which has often focused on urban mega events and facilities. What is important is the **creation of spaces** in which this interaction can take place. (p.25)

This quote further emphasizes the need for flexible spaces, as defined by Carr and Dionisio (2017). In order for these to work effectively, they must provide the necessary amenities for the events and activations which occur there, inspire experimentation, and remain accessible for a wider range of community members to produce artistic activities within them.

6. Partnerships & Cross-Departmental Collaborations

Built into the definition of creative placemaking is the foundation of cross-sector partnerships, involving private, public, nonprofit and community sectors (Markusen and Gadwa 2010). Grodach (2017) notes that, as creative city policy, creative placemaking “has significantly increased the number of actors and partnerships at different levels involved in funding and supporting arts activities in a wide set of communities.” (p. 86) He provides the example of the NEA’s Our Town grant, which has partnership specifications written into their program requirements- calling for participation from at least one nonprofit entity and one local government agency. (p.87). The Creative Placemaking white paper by Markusen and Gadwa (2010) delves into some of the challenges of “forging and sustaining partnerships, saying:

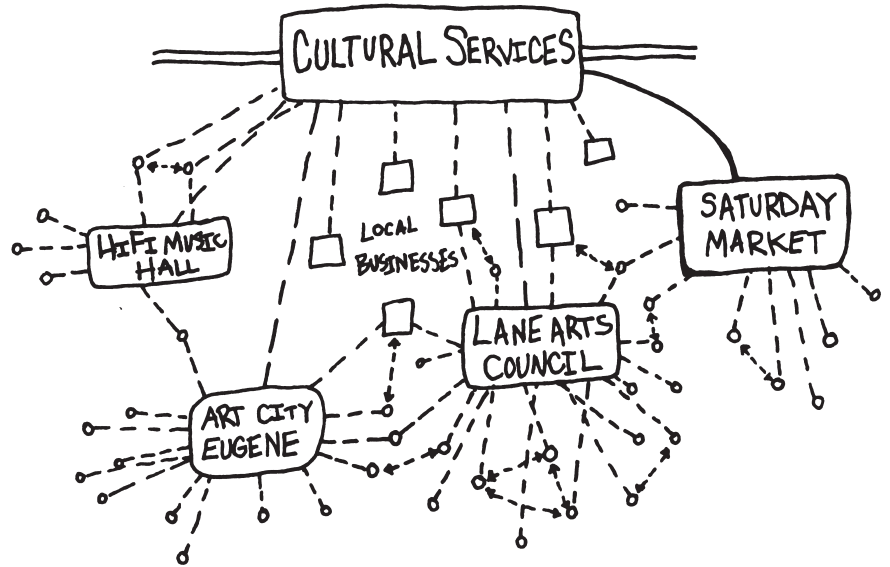
Partnership challenges include coalition building, courting public will...and navigating imbalances of power, skills, and resources. To make partnerships work, each party must understand and take seriously the priorities of its partners. Each must acknowledge what it does not possess in terms of skills and resources and patiently teach and share what it can bring to the table. (p. 36)

It is clear that partnerships are important to creative placemaking, both in that they’ve historically helped the movement to gain momentum, and in that they contribute to the overall success of creative placemaking projects. While the necessity of cross-sector collaboration is clear in these practices, the nature of their dynamics require greater, in-depth examination (Redaelli 2016, Frenette 2017).

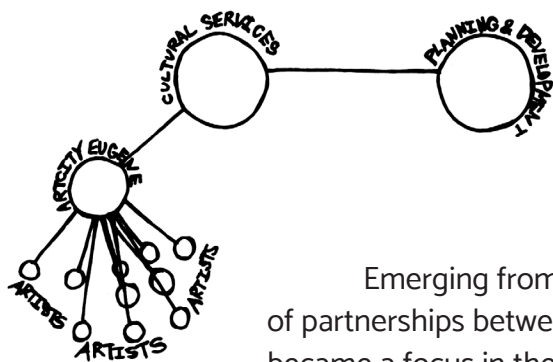
In my research, I asked interviewees to comment on the role of partnership in their activation and event programming in Downtown Eugene, and to comment on the nature of these interactions. What emerged were comments regarding the cruciality of partnership in this type of work- a response which was somewhat expected, and was echoed in the creative placemaking literature I reviewed. Respondents spoke of the importance of reciprocal relationships with partners, and the ability for partnerships to lend to more dynamic events and greater community impact.

Partnerships

Throughout my interviews, the Cultural Services and Planning & Development divisions of the City were described as connecting threads- bringing artists, planners, and infrastructural decision-makers together as a part of a bigger-picture plan. As Eric Brown noted, the role of a city planner involves bringing together “disparate professions and expertise, and articulating the community vision on behalf of the community, and trying to bring people together supporting that.” (personal communication, January 26, 2018).



The description of this intermediary, connection-building work was echoed in conversations with other interviewees, such as with Lane Arts Council Executive Director, Liora Sponko- who described her work as creating “ecosystems” of artists, community leaders, and businesses through events such as the First Friday Art Walk, and Fiesta Cultural.



Integrating Artists

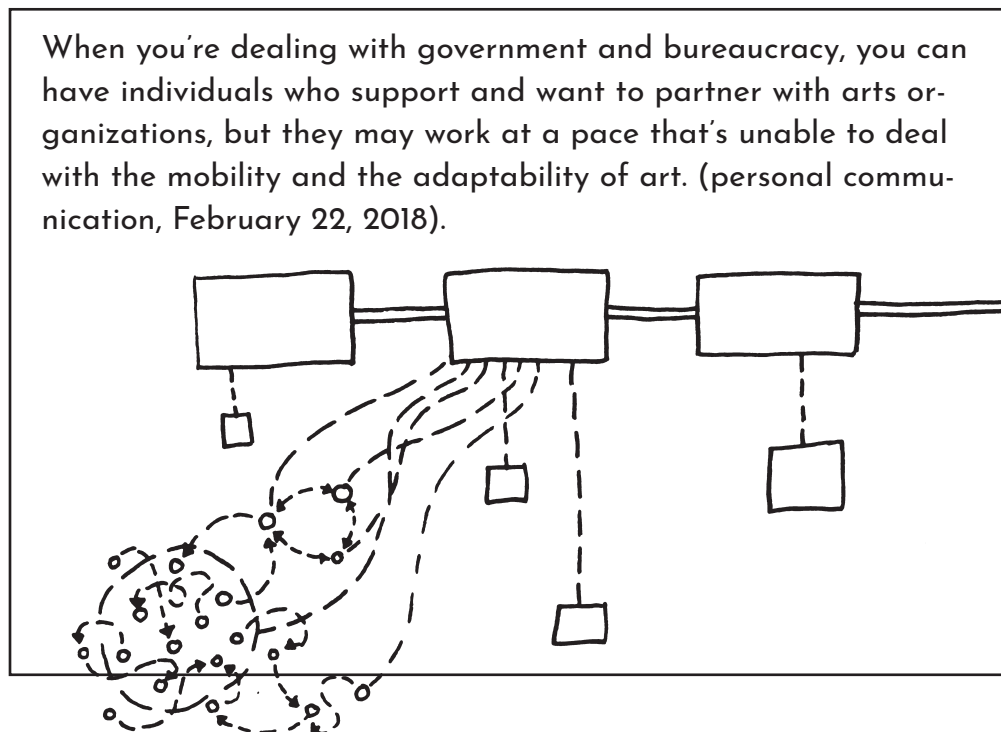
Emerging from these interviews were comments on the challenges and benefits of partnerships between City staff and artists. The role of Cultural Services, specifically, became a focus in these conversations- as this is the division which deals most directly with the process of artist curation and contracting for City sponsored events. Cultural Services Director, Isaac Marquez, spoke of the benefits of working with ArtCity Eugene, saying:

...what ArtCity’s done is they’ve gathered a collection of artists, and they’re organized, so when we work with them, like putting on an event that has 7,8,9 artists doing work...it’s much more efficient than if we were doing it...so I think our partnership allows for greater participation. (personal communication, February 1, 2018)

This statement not only demonstrates the strategy and efficiency which comes through partnership, but it also fits well with the previously reviewed definitions of creative placemaking; which highlighted the work's ability to increase the number of creative partners at various levels involved in producing activities (Markusen and Gadwa, 2010). For these networks to build- and, to build equitably- it is necessary to draw upon key intermediaries in order to bridge communications between different entities. ArtCity, as with Marquez's example, acts as an intermediary which links artists to the City.

In a number of these interviews, the idea that the City could play the role of the intermediary between artists and businesses, specifically, was raised. Jeremy Schropp of Harmonic Lab named this as a current weakness, saying: " I think we have a lot of work to do to bridge that gap between the business community and the artistic community." (personal communication, February 22, 2018). ArtCity's Charly Swing echoed the desire to strengthen these connections, and saw the support of the City as a way to work towards that goal- noting that the City support not only helped artists to make connections, but acted as a sort of endorsement for ArtCity to build legitimacy in the eyes of businesses, leading to future partnership opportunities.

While there are magnificent benefits to collaborating across different organizational entities, to do so requires strategic systems of communication to accommodate the differing modes of operation for each of the parties involved. Jon Bellona of Harmonic Lab noted the inherent difficulties in dealing with the slow processes of government agencies:



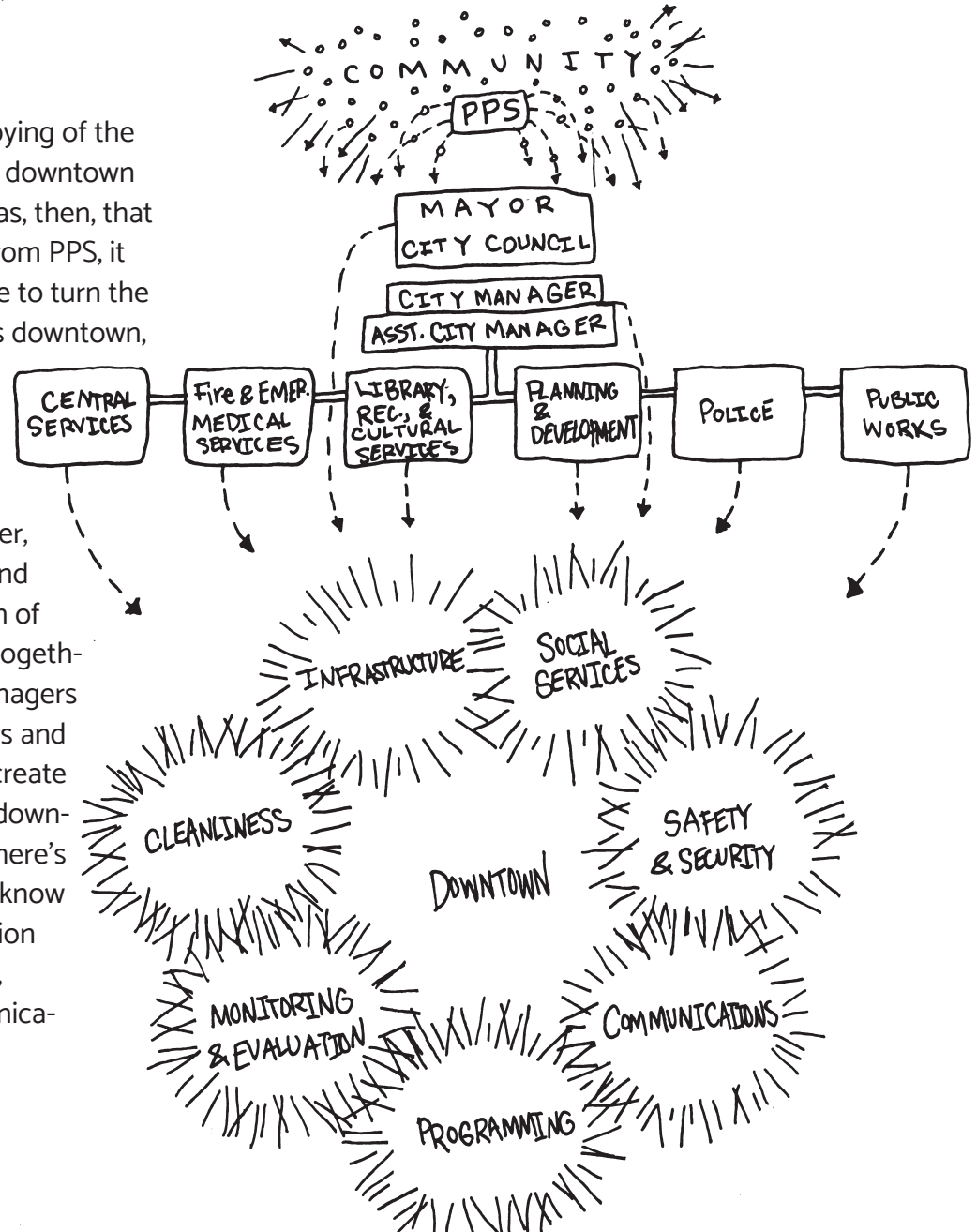
Arts organization and government agencies operate very differently in their mechanisms of action- both in flexibility and in the speed of their organizational processes. This is where negotiation comes into play in these partnerships, and where intermediaries can be especially helpful, since it is their work to navigate communications. Flexibility on all ends of a partnership is required. With the help of intermediaries- who must have greater adaptability, and a broader knowledge of all parties involved- these connections can be navigated more efficiently, and in a way that is more mutually beneficial to all involved. I'm reminded, here, of Boren and Young's (2017) call for the building of conceptual spaces to support the work of both creative producers and policy makers in carrying out creative city policy. These spaces can be built through effective collaboration models which support all sides of a partnership

The Downtown Operations Team

Emerging from interviews were accounts of the strategic cross-departmental collaborations being undertaken by the City of Eugene. The greatest example of this is the Downtown Operations Team- an initiative meant to address the dissatisfied community feedback regarding the neighborhood. The team was created directly following the final assessment produced by the Project for Public Spaces in 2017. Community Programs Manager, Colette Ramirez, described the creation of this initiative:

“...because of the lobbying of the local community, and downtown stakeholders, as well as, then, that report coming back from PPS, it was kind of a ripe time to turn the chapter on our efforts downtown, and so...

...City Council, City Manager, Assistant City Manager, and then the directors of each of the departments, pulled together a group of division managers and operational managers and said ‘okay, our goal is to create a safer more welcoming downtown, we trust you guys, here’s some funding, and let us know in a month what your action plan is.’ And so it was like, “okay.” (personal communication, March 6, 2018).



What resulted was the construction of an inter-departmental team within the city, born as a response to a creative placemaking evaluation, all with the purpose of addressing the homelessness situation, and the generally negative perceptions of Downtown. The leaders of the team began as Jeff Perry, the Facilities Division Manager, and the Cultural Services Director at the time, Tomi Anderson. When Anderson left her position with the city, Ramirez stepped in as co-leader of the Downtown Operations team with Perry, recognizing the important link between the initiative and the work of the Community Events team.

This collaboration model brings an interesting mix of professionals into a new organizational structure, which in turn, could lead to new types of problem-solving. As Downtown Programs Manager, Mindy Linder, described it:

“I thought it was very smart of the city to come to the conclusion that it required not just one department, not just urban planning or public safety, but everyone. Representatives from all the departments to be at the table, and to work together simultaneously and in tandem all at the same time. And shockingly, that’s not necessarily something that happens all the time. It was a relatively novel thing.” (personal communication, February 15, 2018).

Becoming curious after this interview, I looked for examples of other cross-departmental, city collaborations. Examples in literature were limited, though I found a case study produced by the Vision Zero Network, which discusses cross-departmental collaboration structures working towards eliminating traffic fatalities in cities such as Los Angeles, New York, and Washington D.C. I found the collaboration structures in these examples to be comparable to those of Eugene. As the document states:

One of the defining characteristics of Vision Zero is the fundamental focus on breaking down silos and uniting local stakeholders behind common goals. Cross-departmental collaboration isn’t simply advisable – its importance cannot be emphasized enough as a critical foundation to a successful Vision Zero commitment. (Szczepanski, 2016, p.1)

In both Eugene’s Downtown Operations Team, and those in the Vision Zero case study, the Mayor initiated the team’s creation in response to a pressing community need, pulled together city staff across divisions and departments, and formed specific committees within the overall team. This internal collaboration almost resembles the creation of a smaller, new organization within the larger, already-existing organization; driven by its own, specific mission. In her interview, Ramirez noted that the Downtown Operations team has twice now received one-time funding, and that, moving forward, she hopes for more sustainable funding mechanisms, as well as long-range planning, to aid the success of downtown and its public spaces (personal communication, March 6, 2018).

Building Strategic Networks

There are some distinctions to be made between the concept of Partnership, and a Cross-Departmental collaboration. While both mark examples of collaborative structures- composed of the same integral elements of trust, clear communication, and reciprocal benefit and support- they can be seen as differentiated according to their levels of bureaucratic strata. The cross-departmental, city collaborations provide a macro view, while partnerships occur on a more micro level. Cross-departmental collaborations within city governments, such as the example of the Downtown Operations Team, ultimately provide greater reach to the resulting partnerships which branch from them, creating a fractal effect, and thus, providing greater coordination and support across multiple partnerships.

What we see in these findings is more than evidence of the importance of collaboration and partnership- this is a fact which could be easily assumed, and is reflected in much of the creative placemaking literature. More importantly, what we see are the nuances of the collaborative systems which are forming the programmatic networks of Downtown, Eugene.

Further, what can be seen is the influence of creative placemaking theories and practices- and how these are bearing influence on the processes through which arts and cultural activities are produced. By articulating the difference between partnerships and cross-departmental city collaborations, one can see the importance of the latter in extending intentional, strategic efforts towards addressing a larger-scale community issue. In the case of Downtown Eugene, I believe the most prominent issues leading to negative perceptions are indeed, best addressed through the strategic, city-level, cross-departmental collaborations.

Through these findings, we are able to examine the unique position of partnership intermediaries- such as the City's Cultural Services division and ArtCity Eugene- in acting as a connector between organizational entities. In order to bridge gaps- such as those between businesses and artists- flexibility and skilled communication is needed. Additionally, what we see in these findings is the importance of collaboration in executing long-term planning and community revitalization goals. The Vision Zero Case study quotes Nat Gale, a Senior, Project Coordinator in the Los Angeles Department of Transportation, as saying: "...when you fund an initiative rather than a department you can have a greater impact" (Szczepanski, 2016, p. 6). In the case of Downtown Eugene, the strategic collaborations of the Downtown Operations Team ultimately provides greater reach and resources to improving its public spaces.

7. Addressing Community Needs

In order to gain a better understanding of the programmatic shifts in Downtown Eugene's outdoor, public spaces, I asked interviewees to identify what they felt to be the most pressing community needs of Downtown, and to name their role in addressing those needs as a programmer or partner of arts events and activations. Overwhelmingly, these responses echoed the responses found by Redaelli (2017), where Portland artists recognized that- even while working towards a bigger-picture goal of social change: "artists are not social workers" (p. 6). However, while this was a consistent sentiment in the interviews I conducted, it became clear that an awareness and consideration of the social issues of these spaces was unavoidable, and that they inevitably influenced the formation of programs.

Locating Downtown's "Needs"

Councilwoman Emily Semple (Ward 1, which encompasses Downtown) was able to articulate a number of issues contributing to negative perceptions of the neighborhood, including: the division between "people who like to live on the sidewalks, and people who are trying to run businesses," the need for law enforcement, mental health services, education, public arts activities, and, importantly: places for the homeless to sleep. In her words:

My biggest concern right now is Broadway, and we're having a lot of travelers coming this year, and in bigger numbers....really trying to get some more Red Hats. Just more ways for people to feel safer, and comfortable downtown. I'd also like to find a place for people to sleep, so when they're on the sidewalk, I can say 'please not here, but four blocks away you can lie down.' And people say, 'well I don't like who's downtown,' and I say, 'well, find somewhere else where I can ask them to go- because vaporizing is not a skill I have right now.' (personal communication, February 20, 2018)

This quote highlights the complexity of the issues at hand, and recognizes that certain areas are perhaps more problematic than others- such as along Broadway’s main, Downtown stretch. Worth noting in this section, is the distinction between the “homeless” population and the “transient” or “traveler” populations. This differentiation emerged in the PPS report, as a result of their conversations with the community:



We found in the survey and public workshops that Eugene residents do not typically distinguish among the chronically homeless population, the local youth who hang out in public spaces, and the traveler or transient population, largely under 35 and male, who are not permanent residents. (We learned from the police and social service providers that this is generally the breakdown.) The public tends to generalize and call them all homeless, vagrants, transients or travelers. (PPS 2017, p.21)

These populations are driven by different needs and life circumstances, are nuanced, overlapping, and they are often lumped together through their shared use of public space. This finding underlines the important role of police and social service providers in learning about the nuances amongst these populations, and makes these leaders crucial collaborators and consultants to those programming arts activities Downtown.

Addressing Needs through Strategic Collaborations

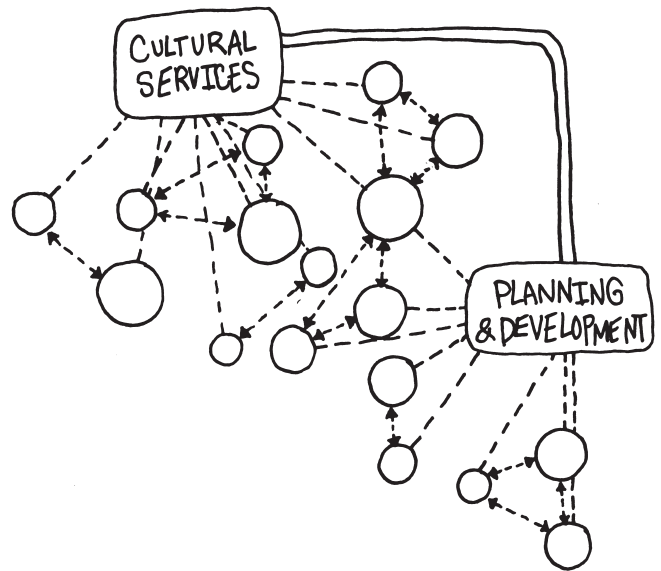
Through conversations with interviewees regarding community needs, the concept of strategic collaborations, again, reemerged as a key tool. Marquez described these collaborations as working in “lanes” of specialty to accomplish a common goal:



...to bring the things that you can bring to the table really well. There has to be coordination, but there shouldn't be confusion. We shouldn't be running events to pick up social services. (personal communication, February 1, 2018)

Linder highlighted the need for healthy, symbiotic partnerships between multiple divisions in order to solve problems, and described arts and cultural programming as existing within a “complex web” working to solve issues with both safety and economic challenges Downtown (personal communication, February 15, 2018).

From Eric Brown’s perspective in the Planning and Development division, the role of the planner is difficult in that it’s more restricted to working within the confines of the built environment. In contrast, he spoke of the cultural programming being facilitated through Cultural Services and Community Events staff as being “hugely important in making downtown vibrant, welcoming, and safe.” (personal communication, January 26, 2018). This comment illustrates the importance of the link between Cultural Services and Planning and Development specifically, for tying physical spaces and artistic activities more closely together. Additionally, it highlights the importance of the active, human element involved in the planning within the Cultural Services division.



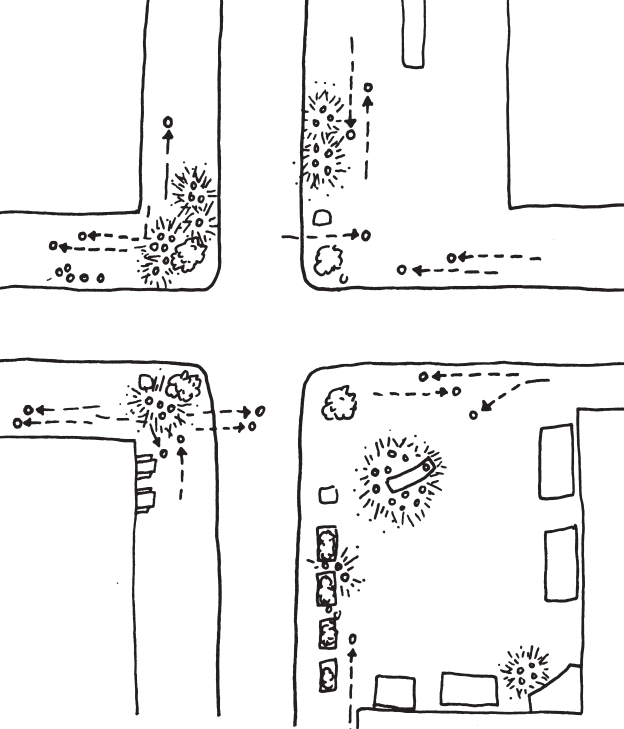
Engaging Different Populations

Through these interviews, it became apparent that one of the largest difficulties of the space is its divided populations. While creating engaging activities to suit all people is perhaps too idealistic a goal, there are certainly steps which can be taken to allow more people to feel safe, more included, and to socially engage in new and constructive ways. In particular, there emerged comments on the need for direct engagement with the homeless and transient populations Downtown. Local musician and experienced busker, Timothy “Banjo” Youngblood said:

...as it is right now, there’s not much to relate to downtown with the way its being run. There’s things that are consistently changing because they want to solve a problem that is never going to be solved: Broke people. It’s been a thing since the dawn of time...it’s not specific to Eugene. So, meet it. Approach it head on. Talk to broke people.” (personal communication, February 18, 2018)

Others reinforced this idea, and Charly Swing spoke specifically of the potential of engaging in arts activities in Downtown spaces. In discussing her desire for greater artist participation, she noted that the travelers were, in some ways, leading by example:

...they’re making art. A lot of them are playing the guitar, or just sitting on the street. You know, we’re like, leaving it all up to them. Right? We’re not owning it, they are. They’re owning downtown. They know what the rules are, and they’re doing what they want to do...they’re making music and hanging out with their dogs...and owning downtown. We need to own downtown. They’re actually showing us how to do it. Right? (personal communication, January 20, 2018).



I see this as an important point, for the fact that it forces one to check their assumptions about the proper use of these spaces, and who is currently using these spaces “correctly” and “incorrectly.” On the other hand, the freedom to *spend* time in a space must be balanced with the need to *share* time in that space. As Marquez relates it:

I think that as a city, we need to actually figure out how to take care of homeless people...you can build a beautiful building you can build a restaurant... but people won't naturally wanna be in a place if somebody is in their face all the time panhandling for money, or smoking pot in public, or urinating and defecating in public. It's just gross, and it's not what people want to be around, so they kinda come downtown, take a look, say it's sketchy, and leave.
(personal communication, February 1, 2018).

Besides the need to engage with the homeless and transient populations, an emergent interview theme was the need to engage with more culturally diverse populations through Downtown's arts activities. Liora Sponko noted that Lane County's Latinx community lives in different clusters, such as in the Whiteaker neighborhood, Bethel, River Road, and in Springfield, but that:

...they don't really engage as much in downtown Eugene, which is supposedly the hub for our community...but why aren't there Latino people here? And, it's the fastest growing population...
(personal communications, January 30, 2018).



Brad Garner of Harmonic Laboratory reinforced the concern for a lack of diversity in representation, and felt that Downtown programming was missing more globally-based arts:

Unlike most larger cities, contemporary dance is currently not a strong part of the conversation in the Eugene art community. This makes it difficult to attract talented contemporary dancers and choreographers to our community. Also, the Eugene art scene is currently represented predominantly by white artists. This makes it difficult to attract diverse populations downtown. (personal communication, June 11, 2018).

Jeremy Schropp of Harmonic Laboratory built upon this concern, saying that the few culturally focused events- such as Fiesta Cultural and the Asian Celebration- need to be represented throughout the year on more than one occasion (personal communication, February 22, 2018).

These ideas regarding cultural representation in artistic activities of outdoor public spaces reminds lead me to refer back to Shutika's (2011) comments on the relation between place identity and cultural representation in community spaces. If, as she states, the identity of a place is reflected directly in the people who inhabit it (p. 229), then Downtown Eugene's identity is heavily skewed towards representing the limited demographics who are claiming liminal space-time within its borders. Further, what these interview responses emphasize, is the need for sustained, repetitive cultural representation, and show the limitations of "one-off" events in influencing the performance of place identity.

Visibility & Altered Behavior Patterns

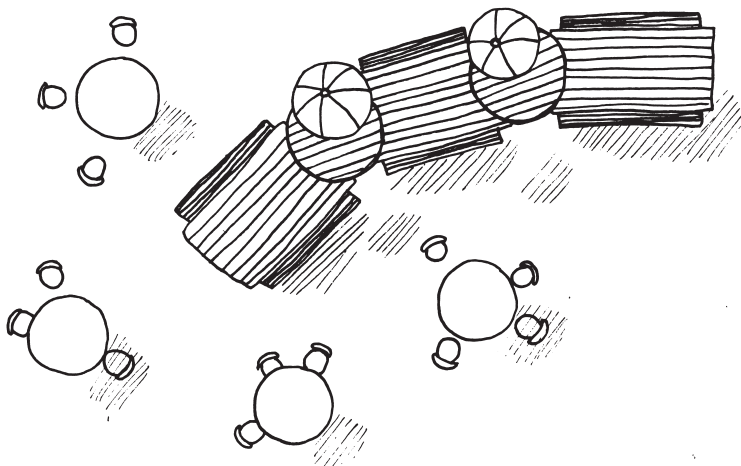
In learning about the role of the arts and cultural programming within the greater web of the City's Downtown initiatives, I was struck by the simple, yet powerful, contributions that programmers and artists could make. Owner Eugene's HiFi Music Hall, Danny Kime, identified the act of simply pulling people downtown to witness these issues is an important first step to addressing the them- something that arts programming can realistically achieve.

So, I know that those problems exist downtown. I try not to think about them in programming, we do our programming, and it allows people to come out, and they see what the issues are. They can see the positive side if they want, they can also see what also exists and needs to be fixed still. And that's the role of the **public platform**. (D. Kime, personal communication, February 13, 2018)



Kime's description of the "public platform" works well with Iveson's (2007) concept of "publics"- which, as opposed to the fixed "public," in that it is necessarily created through social interaction.

Perhaps the most interesting emergent themes were the small, subtle ways which programmers worked to alter behavior patterns in Downtown Eugene's outdoor, public spaces. Production Coordinator for Cultural Services, Kerry Weeks highlighted the importance of the simplicity of services that can be provided as arts programmers- such as setting up tables for diverse groups of people to sit together and enjoy a meal (personal communication, March 8, 2018). This is an example of a simple way to alter the use of liminal space-time by different populations- in some ways, transforming a liminal public space into a temporary destination point where lingering can occur.

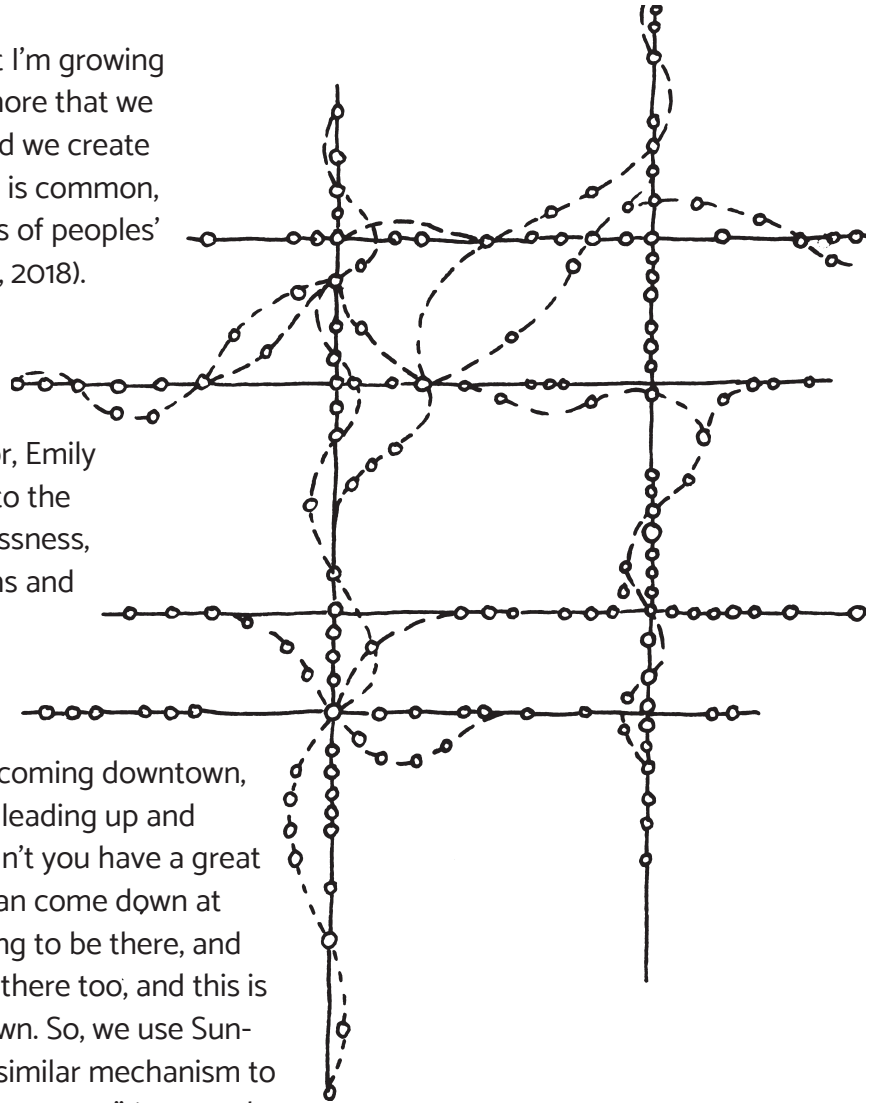


Weeks spoke of the arts programmer's ability to create little surprises to change the every-day experiences of these spaces, saying:

I have this funny perception of myself...that I'm growing synapses in people's brains. Because the more that we create experiences of joy and creativity, and we create differences of interaction with a space that is common, then, we create differences in the pathways of peoples' brains." (personal communication, March 8, 2018).

While Eugene Sunday Streets Coordinator, Emily Farthing, made it clear that she had no solution to the deep, structural issue in our society with homelessness, she did speak to her ability to change perceptions and behaviors through intentional programming:

We can trick [community members] into coming downtown, right, and in doing that, in the messaging leading up and messaging after, be like 'oh hey, yeah, didn't you have a great time downtown? Well guess what? You can come down at lunch, and those same food carts are going to be there, and that giant chess game, that's going to be there too, and this is going to be there too. And this is downtown. So, we use Sunday Streets and Transportation Ops as a similar mechanism to trick people into changing their behavior patterns." (personal communication, February 6, 2018).



Continuing to work in "lanes"

It is clear from these responses that the arts alone cannot solve deeply embedded social issues such as homelessness. However, the programmers and artists who were interviewed for this research emphasized the importance of bringing artists to the table in important neighborhood planning decisions, and for creative, artistically minded individuals to work in collaboration with other city departments and social services providers. The arts were described as one important player on a collaborative team, working to create safer, more vibrant spaces downtown, along with social services and public safety providers.

Besides working in parallel lanes to these other entities, and taking a big-picture view the needs of these spaces, it seems that the unique and powerful service the arts programmer can provide are discreet, creative mechanisms to physical, outdoor public spaces, in order to alter behavior patterns; in drawing people to otherwise unfavorable locations, in creating space for strangers to share liminal space-time, and in making differing populations more visible to one another.

8. Recommendations & Conclusions

This case study of Downtown Eugene provides an example for how creative placemaking can manifest within the networks of programmers working in outdoor, public spaces. Along with a shift towards more ambient, interactive, and ongoing activation-style programming, there have been new systems of collaboration and partnership built to support creative, community-driven changes in activity within Downtown's civic centers. This has shifted the role of the artist within the community, allowing for creative thinkers to contribute to important, city-wide initiatives. As I've highlighted in this document, the formation of place identity is a layered and complex process- as "place" is no concrete form, but rather, it exists in the reiterated expressions which occur in physical spaces. What these findings aim to articulate are the ways in which physical spaces- and even their intangible, associated memories- provide important context for each act of expression. Both the literature and the interview findings demonstrate how expressions in some physical spaces perform more loudly than in others- such as civic centers and downtown neighborhoods.

The City of Eugene is working to alter the place identity of their Downtown- strategizing to make the city safer, more economically prosperous, and more culturally and socially vibrant. With the influence of creative placemaking present amongst city staff and artist networks, I've recognized a shift towards activation-style programming, and greater collaboration across city departments, which ultimately leads to greater dialogue between the artists and infrastructural decision-makers. Additionally, this bottom-up approach seems to allow for new engagement with community members in Downtown activity.

This research project has left me excited for the future of public art in the City of Eugene, and hopeful for a more vibrant, less divided, downtown. Based on my findings, I've developed two primary takeaways, or recommendations, for cities interested in exploring the artistic instrumentalism which creative placemaking provides, in order to alter sociability in the civic hearts of their communities:

- 1.) Shifting towards increased **Activation Programming** to accompany events.
- 2.) Creating **Flexible Spaces** to support the creative, and spontaneous activities of artists and community members.

Activation Programming

I've come to appreciate the important role of activation programming in expressing the place identity of Downtown Eugene. As outlined in Chapter 4, an "activation" is a category of programming which, unlike events, does not focus on constructing a single arts experience, constrained within a single time and place. It offers greater sensitivity than events to the differing populations occupying those spaces, and to the efforts of social services and public safety providers. In an event, the action is incited by the programmer, while in an activation, action is incited by those who inhabit the ecosystem created by the programmer. Activations exist in the creation of environments, and have the ability to act as miniature, artistically crafted forums in liminal, public spaces- allowing community members to engage in new levels of sociability, thus lending to the building of healthy, civically oriented publics. They invite communities passing through them to interact in a common space in an uncommon manner, resulting in new interactions, and new senses of place.

It should be noted that events and activations achieve very different goals, and one need not fully replace the other. In many of the interviews I conducted, it was noted that events are useful for drawing people to a space that they might not normally spend time in, and for projecting an image, or place brand, to those who are not physically present. However, the abilities of activation-based programming to bring community members more subtly into contact with one another, through with more passive, ongoing activities, is a valuable focus, especially in areas with divided populations, as with the case of Downtown Eugene.

In any case, I recommend that city arts programmers, and artists, familiarize themselves with the distinction between activations and events, to build their vocabulary for working in these environments, and to build their portfolio by increasing the types of activities they are able to provide to their communities. By recognizing the subtle ways physical environments can be altered to influence the social interactions of a public space, programmers can expand their toolkits, and act more intentionally to create positive change in those spaces in tandem with other city departments, artists, and social services providers. As I've highlighted with the case of the City of Eugene's Downtown Operations team, this work requires strategic, cross-departmental collaborations in order to be effectively executed. In order to gain sustainable funding for such efforts, it will be important for programmers and artists to continue documenting activations, and practice articulating the nuance, and practical uses, of this type of programming.

Flexible Spaces

My second recommendation is for cities to work towards creating more flexible public spaces, in order to allow for greater variability in arts activities, to empower a larger base of community members to produce events and happenings, and to ultimately, lead to greater community engagement in these spaces. During my interviews, a number of concerns emerged regarding the infrastructural limitations of artistic programming in the outdoor, public spaces of Downtown Eugene. Most notable of these were sources for electric power, access to water, general logistical concerns related to street closures for large events, and the complex permitting processes. Additionally, one of the largest impairments mentioned was the weather. Programmers of these spaces must work within a limited window of the yearly calendar, from about June to October- when there is sunshine, and fewer days of rain.

Based on these conversations, the stated needs for future space and infrastructure improvements in downtown Eugene fell into two categories: 1.) a focus on increased technical capacity- particularly with amenities like electricity and water- for holding events in its outdoor public spaces; and 2.) a push towards a centrally located, indoor, public arts and cultural center.

Both outdoor and indoor public spaces play important roles in defining the public sphere, in catalyzing civic activities, and in bringing communities together. Both have their benefits and downfalls. Outdoor public spaces possess a liminal quality, and provide greater opportunity for a wider, more diverse variety of members to engage in its spaces. They are, however, more difficult to control. Indoor public spaces provide greater control for artists and programmers, yet can feel exceedingly more exclusive than liminal outdoor space. Grodach (2009) looks at the role of indoor art spaces as important public spaces which build community cohesion, describing them as “flexible and multifunctional,” with the ability to act as community gathering spaces (p. 475).

The qualities of a flexible space can exist both in the physical infrastructure, and in the mechanisms of action which influence those spaces, such as funds and permitting processes. In my interview with Colette, she stressed her desire to create more streamlined user-friendly procedures and processes for community members to organize their own events and programs, stating that: “one of my goals in my position is...to create an event-friendly city through our permitting.”(personal communication, March 6, 2018). Additionally, Downtown Eugene has recently offered a number of useful funding mechanisms to encourage community members to self-produce arts activities in these spaces. An example includes the City of Eugene’s recent “Downtown Program Fund,” described on their website through the following text:

The Fund aims to activate downtown Eugene’s public spaces by expanding artistic and cultural programming. Funding in the range of \$1,000 - \$5,000 will be awarded to organizations or individuals who wish to produce their own quality programming during the summer of 2018 in and around the Park Blocks, Kesey Square and the Downtown Library Plaza. Funding can support any artistic or cultural discipline, including visual, dance, music, theater, film/video/media and multidisciplinary fields. Downtown Eugene has great potential to be the civic, commercial and social heart of the city. The City of Eugene is working toward this vision through improvements to downtown infrastructure, public safety, social services and events. Activation of downtown public spaces through programming is a key strategy to bring people and positive energy to the spaces. We seek to expand the breadth and quality of downtown activation by supporting additional programming by cultural and artistic partners (<https://www.eugene-or.gov/3733/Downtown-Program-Fund>).

Important to note here, is that the description of the fund even uses the term “activation” in its mission statement. What the DPF is succeeding at is providing opportunities for community members to create their own artistic experiences, and to increase interactions amongst community members. While the use of the DPF does not exclude the producing of activities qualified as more traditional event, such as concerts, it still aligns with one of the more important qualities of a flexible space, which is that it gives agency to the community members- making producers out of community members rather than keeping that producing agency within the hands of bureaucratic entities.

Conclusions

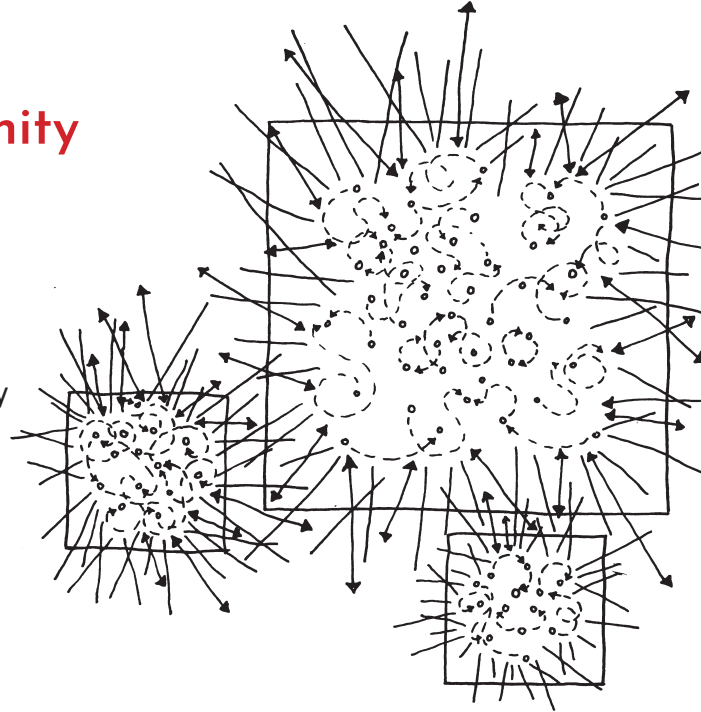
There's something about the culture of Eugene which invites activities in its streets- from festivals and fairs, to the (quintessentially "Eugene") Downtown Saturday Market, to the "transients" and travelers claiming liminal space time on its sidewalks. One of the pillars of the work done by the Project for Public Spaces is to treat "Streets as Places" - and I would argue that transient individuals sitting, resting, selling their wares on the street, are creating places of those streets quite effectively. Whether they are building positive, or inclusive, places, is up to debate, and not to the point of my conclusion. What is clear, however, is that the ways in which different populations are claiming liminal space-time in Downtown's streets are varied, and in many respects, divided across socio-economic strata. The trick for leaders in the community, is to program activations in these spaces which alter the use of liminal space-time, and have the ability to create new interactions.

The ultimate findings of this research show that there are specific shifts in the style of arts programming in Downtown Eugene, which are working intentionally to address pressing community issues, such as homelessness and the neighborhood's perceived identity crisis. These issues are complex, contentious, and require intentional, long-term planning. In the short-term, it is difficult to say what is "working" to solve these issues, and what is not. The city has increased the number of events being produced, especially during the summer months. Events are temporary, and can draw people to destinations, but are less effective in influencing spaces once their time has ended, and are less effective in influencing more liminal, outdoor, public spaces of Downtown. There are structural changes to Downtown's spaces that need to happen to support more community oriented, civic activities- including increased spaces for artists to engage with each other, and to create arts and cultural experiences for the greater community. However, given the current built environment of Downtown Eugene, I would argue for increased attention on activating its center. Associate Planner, Eric Brown identified the need for a

civic heart to the community

(personal communication, January 26, 2018).

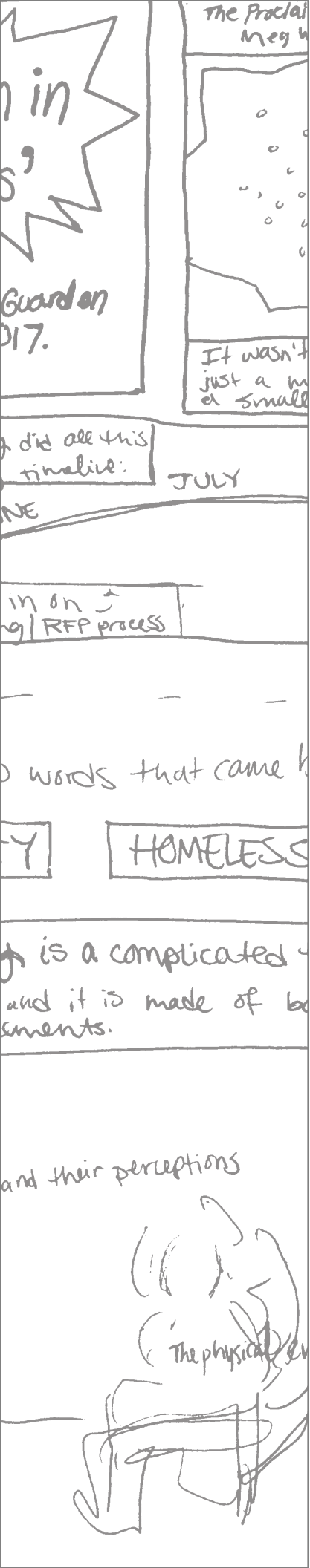
By shifting the role of the programmer to supporting mechanisms of action which provide more varied modes of participation, there will be increased opportunities for community members to self-activate, and to play a more prominent role in the expression of Downtown Eugene as a place. As highlighted by Richards (2017), events and marketing can be powerful tools in rebranding the image and identity of a city- a concept which he considers to be included within the more "holistic" definition of creative placemaking. (p.10). However, I believe there is a risk in relying too heavily on these mechanisms, as, within them, the expressive power lies in the hands of fewer individuals in positions of power. Alongside expressions of place through branding and events, there must also be continued opportunity for access to platforms of expression for its community members.



It seems apparent that artists, in particular, play a crucial role in these expressions, and work as intermediaries between city government and community members. For this reason, by giving artists greater support and access to resources, and by inviting the arts more equally into conversations surrounding urban redevelopment, there will be increased potential for strengthening the community at large. As stated by Boren and Young (2017), rather than positioning artists as opponents, we might think more strategically about “...how artists’ visions of creativity might be involved in co-producing more progressive urban policy.” (p.26).

In many ways, Eugene is already headed in the right direction; by providing opportunities such as the Downtown Program Fund, and by enlisting an activation-based programming mindset, inspired by the principles of creative placemaking. Through this research project, my view of creative placemaking has become significantly expanded. While the movement is widely recognized as a bottom-up, community-driven planning process achieved through multilevel, cross-sector governance, additionally, I see now that it is also a **delicate dialogue between infrastructure and artist**- achieved through the intermediation of cultural programmers. Creative placemaking practices- and, particularly, activation programming- allow for greater connection between environments and the communities which inhabit them.

The City of Eugene seems to be moving beyond one-off, “quicker-faster-cheaper” creative placemaking projects, and instead, adopting a shift in programmatic styles in order to achieve more long-term, permanent, and creative activations of place. By focusing more pointedly on supporting artistic collaborations and artistic “happenings” in its outdoor, public spaces, the identity of Downtown Eugene will be activated in a way which allows for greater performative agency amongst members of its community.



Reflections on Format:

The formatting of this research document has been both a joyously creative process, as well as a slight pain. While the entire process of piecing the document together was lengthy, and full of inefficient bouts of trial and error, ultimately, the experiment's been completely worthwhile. I've learned that incorporating images and words together takes three times longer than using one or the other; more than just the writing, or just the drawing, there was the overall look and design to worry about.

Ideally, if I'd had more time, I would have liked to have incorporated more images to balance out the text- particularly, to illustrate more of the document's theoretical concepts, and to have played more with the design of the typography. If I'd had more time, I would have enjoyed incorporating graphic ethnography into my research process, to capture more of the dynamics of the spaces described in the study. In the time allotted, however, my goal was to find a cohesive look, and stick to it as much as possible.

In reviewing the outcome of my final document, I am most satisfied with the balance of text and images in Chapter 4: Activations vs. Events. This chapter demonstrates a more even dialogue between the two, and because of this, the words and images are affected in interesting ways; the words become more rhythmic, and the images become more like symbols.

In short, this project has left me excited for future experiments with graphic research projects, where I plan to continue exploring the interplay between text and image.



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