Some considerations on the construction of Public Art Networks

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1. Introduction. A look to the past

Although it has not been until recent times that the concept of Public Art exists, it was formerly born as an ornamental presence in gardens and streets and squares. Today, Public Art includes any artistic language and materials, playing a role not only in the renewal or the development of urban public spaces, but also an important role of remembrance and identity.

The ancient naissance of Public Art was related to a demonstration of the power through ornamental sculptured works of art not only decorating public spaces but also visually dominating the scene. We all have in mind the image of the Sphinx of Giza, the mythological sculpture of 20 m high built in the middle of the 26th century BD, or the Trajan's Column which commemorated the victory of the roman emperor in the Dacian wars. Both are examples of this use of the sculptured art as a common way to impose the presence and dominium of emperors, kings, and any person related to the highest level of policy. Their archeological and historical values, joint to the artistic ones, often lead us to forget that they were created as powerful advertising tools for citizens. Very soon, beauty became a relevant factor in the production process for the official propaganda machinery.

Greeks, and later Romans, usually placed sculptures around the most significant buildings. Temples first and administration buildings were soon decorated with sculpture works of art representing their gods as spiritual leaders of their common life. We should remember the famous Seven Wonders of the Ancient World, commonly accepted as the most remarkable constructions in which we find the Statue of Zeus at Olympia or the enormous sculpture of the Colossus of Rhodes. The Mauseoleum of Halicarnassus had statues between the outer columns as well as two embossed borders with reliefs surrounding the entire building, while the Temple of Artemisia at Ephesus, current day Turkey, was so well placed that according to Antipater of Sidon, "Apart from Olympus, the sun never looked on anything so grand." Inside the temple, there was the statue of the goddess. As in the case of the Mausoleum, the temple's frieze showed bas-reliefs narrating scenes related to amazonomachy, ones on food, others on horseback, scenes that we know because since 1843 the Louvre Museum has had a collection of 43 panels and fragments that were part of this decoration.

Romans adopted the disposition and forms of Greek architectonic buildings as well as the sculpture canons. If they changed the names of gods and the image of their politicians, it was actually important their introduction of constructive innovations that we relate to engineering. Roman buildings followed Greek principles, especially those of Corinthian order, which Vitruvius picked up and described in his book On the Architecture in the first century BC. We can notice it studying the Maison Carrée at Nîmes and the Temple of Augustus and Livia at Vienne, both Roman temples very well preserved in these cities located in France.
Concerning this paper, the maintenance of forms, conceptions and the distribution of ornamental sculpted Roman works were considered a continuity of Greek ones until the 20th century when art historians began to think that there was a period in which Roman sculptors found and developed their own way of creating that even seemed they had influenced Greek artists. Nonetheless, it is worth noting that with Roman sculpture. We have for the first time copies of those considered best Greek originals which had disappeared. Today, we only know the Apollo Belvedere thanks to the Roman copy. The idea of having copies of works of art remained through the times and nowadays it still is a good practice not only concerning artists training but also for house decorations.

Fig. 1. The Mausoleum of Halicarnassus and the Temple of Artemisia, two of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World.
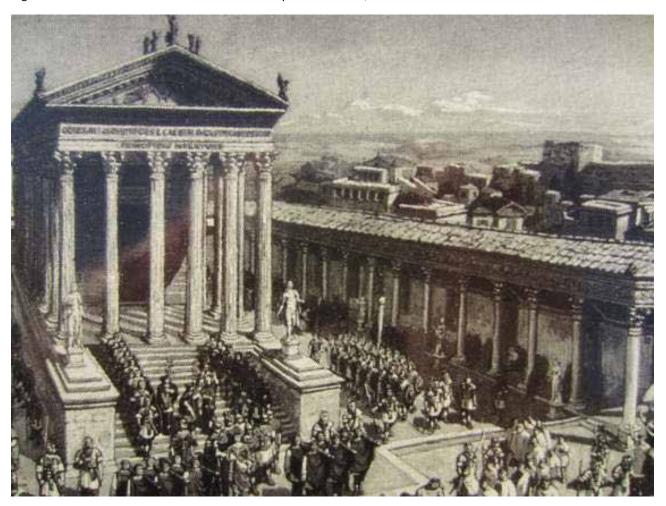

Fig. 2. The Maison Carrée at Nîmes from an engraving of the 18th Century

Fig. 3. Roman Campidoglio view by Etienne DuPérac, MET.

Fig. 4. Grosvenor Square before 1751 by Thomas Bowless, and King George I equestrian statue.

In the Renaissance period, when the citizenry attained the government of the cities, the sculptured elements that represent the power as a symbol of heroism through busts or equestrian statues of emperors and kings introduced a new figure, that of the leaders of republics such as the equestrian statue of Gattamelata by Donatello in Padua, a city of the Republic of Venice. In the case of Rome is just on the contrary. When the city was under the papacy dominium, Michelangelo afforded the Campidoglio Square's project with the equestrian statue of Roman emperor Marcus Aurelius centering the space, so both the pavement and the balcony to Spagna Square played an almost secondary role. The statue gives sense to the urban project as a medium of remembrance, honoring the imperial past of the city, so that without this object the space is empty: «La escultura trasciende de su significado original, ya no representa a Marco Aurelio sino a Roma, a la memoria de la antigua Roma

sobre la que se sustenta toda la plaza. Miguel Angel utiliza una pieza del pasado para anclar la plaza en la historia de Roma.» (De Lecea 2006).

The centered placement of the equestrian statue in the Campidoglio later served as a model in several cities of other countries and cultures, as could be seen in London's Grosvenor Square with the statue of King George I, who even wore a roman armor.

During the Renaissance period gardens were recovered as a part of the house, that is, houses and gardens were part a of a whole inseparable from each other. Thinking on those Roman-era gardens new ones were created surrounding villas in Rome and Florence, all them inspired by classical ideas of beauty and order. The new landscapes were designed for pleasure and contemplation. The late Renaissance gar-

Fig. 5. Garden of Simples in 1545, from Roberto de Visiani's L'Orto botanico di Padova nell' anno 1842.

dens were much larger and had a symmetrical layout (Attlee 2006). Nature was not the only element that composed them, but they included fountains, artificial lakes, benches, and decorative sculpture following an ornamental program commonly formed by mythological and allegorical representations, such as the Four Seasons of the Year or the Four Continents. They also contained marble statues of Greek gods and goddess related to love and beauty, as Apollo and Aphrodite, and also of Artemisia. Influencing French and British Renaissance gardens, these landscape style became a model to be followed later. In this period the love for botany was born, with the first botanical gardens appearing in (Impelluso 2007).

It was not until the Industrial Revolution and after the French Revolution when it really changed the concept of who should be represented in modern cities. Thus, in the 19th Century there were civilian characters, such as mayors or benefactors or philanthropists, who were introduced in the public spaces, in which they coexisted with sculptured representations from mythology characters, Greek first and then Roman, and also with allegorical representations such as the Four Continents (see Alexander Ham-

ilton works for NY's Custom House) or the Four Seasons, all them cohabiting with allegories to Commerce, Industry or Navigation, although this classicist iconography arrived to next century as it can be observed at the main entrance facade of the New York Public Library ended in 1911, decorated following a traditional and academic iconographic program, combining the presence of sited lions by Edward Clark Potter with allegorical imagery, that is to say, the two fountains to Beauty and Truth, and the representation of the Four Continents by Daniel Chester (Davidson 13).

Along this century, in many cities of the world monuments appeared that are authentic ensembles integrating both reliefs and statues, offering to citizens a very complete reading of the facts that they represent through allegories and symbols such as medallions, flags, fames and so one. In this sense, these monuments concentrate a one-time lesson of the history of the city or the country. In all these memorials, the narrative became a visually telling image, so that each part of the monument forms a whole that does not allow its dissociation unless the reading were broken and with it, its meaning. The monuments to Columbus in Barcelona and the Republic in Paris are two magnificent examples.

Fig. 6. New York Public Library main access, 1911.

Fig. 7. Monument to the Republic in Paris, 1883, by Bouvard and Gravigny architects.

2. The trangressive changes in 20th century

The turbulent world of the last century with two world wars, the recognition of workers' rights, the expansion of the right to vote not only for women but for the entire population, or the adoption of the charter of human rights among other facts, changed mankind, human values and human needs and hopes, creating new social symbols while the range of characters represented included writers, people from the entertainment world, people from the academia and teaching, film figures, members of the scientific community, popular creatures from animals to fictional characters...

All this continuous and transgressive changes produced at high speed during last century are represented in our cities. Meanwhile, the concept of art and beauty also changed, as well as the way and form of interpretations, appearing new artistic languages, introducing new materials and perhaps the most relevant, the change from a Public Art considered as an ornamental presence to a Public Art that openly uses abstraction not only in its forms but in conceptual terms. The ways of representation also included new elements, unknown until these days, as the combinations of verses of a poem, trees, and reusing materials in a way of working not far from Duchamp's "objets trouvés." Thus, if we remember Le Poète Assassiné written by Guillaume Apollinaire in 1916, were able to understand these new languages and experiences. He wrote the poem thinking of Pablo Picasso, but some years before, Apollinaire appointed that the process of ordering chaos was the real creation (Murphy 2016), a logical consequence of the ways of cubism and surrealism were taken on so when Tristoise asked to the Benin's Bird, that is, Picasso probably, "Une statue de quoi?, ... En marbre? En bronze?", the answer perfectly explained the philosophy

on which were based great part of the avant-garde principles: "Non, c'est trop vieux, …, il faut que je lui sculpte une profonde statue en rien,…". Apollinaire, without knowing it, was one of the writers and thinkers who opened the doors to new artistic experiences, and especially to abstraction in sculpture that began to appear first timidly in cities public spaces in the years of economic recovery after World War II.

Fig. 8. Land Art by Beverly Pepper, 1988-92.

Fig. 9. Dell'Arte by Jaume Plena, 1990.

Along with all these changes, it is clear that today's Public Art is an art with its own languages, its aesthetics, its function and meanings. Its presence goes beyond the traditional limits of streets, squares or gardens, to find it scattered in pavements, car parks, facades, partitions walls, roofs, docks, benches, tunnels, airports, train and underground stations, road infrastructures… Any place, any surface is good for a Public Art intervention as wells as any material, including

industrial products such as resins or spray paintings, regardless of its duration in the public sphere. It is the total freedom in this new world of artistic creativity, regardless of whether it is a public commission or a private initiative.

Fig. 10. Volcà del Paral·lel, Pedro Barragan, 1992.

Fig 11. Brumm-Rumm, David Torrents, 2013.

The romantic idea of a monument, which distances and even banishes the current, much more contemporary image, is completely doubted and challenged when the monument enters the social dynamics in a globalized world. It is in this sense that we must understand it under new readings and meanings. The sociologist and economist Prof. Manuel Castells emphasized the importance of public space at the local level as a communication space where people can re-estimate themselves in this era of globalization and how monuments were essential in the symbolic appropriation of this public space by citizens (Castells 2004).
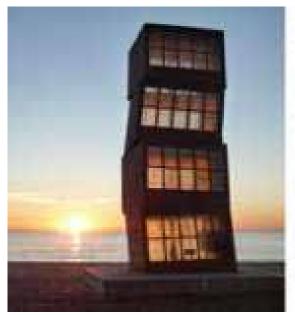
Fig. 12. Barcelona 1992: The Injured Comet by R. Horn, and Crescendo Appare by M. Merz.

Barcelona was the first city in the world in introducing installations as a current artistic expression in its public spaces not placed temporally but permanently, in a clear commitment to artistic modernity. The initiative was born in the years previous to the celebration of the Olympic Games in 1992. Under the name Urban Configurations, eight artists developed their work deciding the best location near to the coast, from the Ribera Quarter to the Barceloneta's beach. Very well placed, they are totally integrated in the landscape that surrounds them all, with independence if they are on a party wall or on the beach sand, being accepted not only by art specialists or art critics but also by neighbours.

The initiative did yield any success in other cities, probably considering that such works of art should be shown in a gallery or a museum but should never be a permanent work in outdoor spaces. It was not until 2008 when the city of Zaragoza, home of the Expo Agua Zaragoza (Water Exhibition), also included this Contemporary Art in the Expo Agua Artistic Interventions Program. «The case of Zaragoza differs from that of Barcelona in that a curator was not given the power to decide individually, but the works were selected by a jury made up of political authorities and contemporary art experts, through a public competition.» (Lorente 2010). Finally, twenty installations were selected and escaped throughout exhibitions grounds, now also part of the Jacobean Route as it passes through the city. While some works

of art still remain on the exhibition ground, three installations had a temporary character because they were always considered to be ephemeral as they were video image works.

Fig. 13. Espiral mudéjar by Diana Larrea, 2008.

At the end of the 20th century, new visions of memorials appeared. The idea of anti-monument, also known as negative-form monument, was explored especially by Horst Hoheseil in Berlin when he participated in the competition for the Memorial to the murdered jews in Europe. As James Young wrote when exploring the meaning of memorials, «Instead of a fixed sculptural or architectural icon for Holocaust memory in Germany, the debate itself—perpetually unresolved amid ever-changing conditions—might now be enshrined» (Young 1993). This idea was picked up in Bar-

Fig. 14. Solc, Homage to Salvador Espriu in Barcelona, 2014.

celona by Frederic Amat in Solc, his homage to the writer Salvador Espriu. Many people did not accept this homage reasoning that it should be more traditional and understandable, not a long black hole on the grass empty of decoration, they understood that Solc had nothing to do with Espriu's novels and poetry. However, Frederic Amat had in mind Espriu's life during the Franco years living in Barcelona his personal exile, away from writing almost always locked in his house, acting as notary. In consequence, as those actually black years for the republican writer, black was the hole left by the obelisk, the real monument to the Republic.

This example is not the only one we find in cities in which citizenry not always grasps the meaning of the monument and rejects it, since it is difficult to follow the idea of a monument through its symbolical meaning when it is not more

clearly expressed. According to Monleon, establish a relation between people and the work of public art is important in order to comprehend it, giving as an example the 1989 Monument Against Fascism in Harburg, a suburb in Hamburg, by Jochen Gerz and Esther Shalev-Gerz, a monolith that disappeared through time and that today only a plaque demonstrates its existence (Monleón 2000). Consequently, concerning new creative ideas related memorials, we appreciate two important aspects : «The monument has increasingly become the site of contested and competing meanings, more likely the site of cultural conflict than of shared national values and ideals». (Young 1999). In this sense, conflicts between citizenry, authorities (those who control public spaces), and artists appeared. A clear example is the now demolished Monument to the Fallen in the Civil War of Barcelona. Regardless of artistic values of the sculpture, based on Michelangelo's Pietà, it suffered attacks of groups

of anarchists and frequent graffiti denouncing fascism, so finally the statue was knocked to the ground, smashing it into pieces hence making it impossible to rebuild. In addition, there have also been conflicts born of cultural clashes, especially in recent years, when everything that seemed to have been overcome has been stigmatized more than once: racial issues, gender... and Public Art reflects this situation, in terms of its acceptance in public spaces, when the work is the object of constant brawls and even of mutilations.

Nowadays, in order to achieve a plural acceptation, open participative processes seem to be the best way to work. But sometimes surprises come with memorials. Everyone wanted it but no one wanted it up front. I give as an example the monument that remembers in Barcelona the victims of terrorism, initially planned to keep alive in our collective memory the horror and drama that was the attack on the Hipercor centre on Av. Meridiana in June 1987. The municipal Direction of Architecture and Urban Projects was in charge of its construction, but was met with the opposition from relatives killed an injured in the attack, as well as that of neighbors in the supermarket, to put the monument at its main entrance as they wanted to continue going there without having to see a sculptural structure that reminded them of what they have experienced. A grand pact was finally reached after achieving an agreement with all associations of victims of terrorism. A monument will be erected to all the victims, and a location would be sought close to it but at the same time far enough away from the mall.

Fig. 15. Sol LeWitt monument to the victims of terrorism in Barcelona, placed in 2003.

3. The creation of common catalogues raisonnés. Barcelona's experience

From 1903 to 2003, there were edited 14 books and near 30 articles in 2 magazines dedicated to the sculpture in the city. We can consider only two of them as catalogues, the first edited in 1903 and the last one in 1982. It was completely necessary to update this material with all technical data of all the works of public art, not only to know who is responsible for their conservation, but to open the way to have all the data related to the work itself and to its presence in public space, in order to have the maximum possible knowledge at the time of carrying out a restoration.

Which should be these technical data? To draw up first an inventory, it had been followed the same procedure that museums and collections, that is to say, files including the name or the names of the work, the authorship, the current location and those that may have been previously, the materials with which it is made even those on the pedestal. In case of a bronze work, the name of the foundry is added, and also the pavement or the surface in which it stands. More complex might be the data of the work because many times artists make a model, then a version in stone (currently sandstone or limestone when not a marble) or its foundry. Finally, the work is acquired or donated before being located in a public space. Therefore, we have a lot of data that we should know because all them are part of the creation and execution process of this work. Bibliography is also required to have all the existing information related to works. At this point it is clear that it has gone from an inventory to the stage of making a catalogue. In the case of Barcelona, the Urban Planning Department was, and still is, charged of the maintenance of the city's collection of Public Art, which is almost the 87% of the works that integrates the inventory. Consequently, the objective of creating a catalogue was initially based on the criteria under maintenance and conservation, as a museum needs to, but in terms of urban planning. The project was called Monere, remembering the Centrality of the Periphery, a project directed by architect Oriol Bohigas since 1980, which considered to enhance neighbourhoods through urban interventions included in the project an artistic work, dignifying neighbourhoods while endowing them with their own identity. As early as 1985, Bohigas was committed to working with completely contemporary criteria in urban space.

After deciding that the catalogue will be uploaded to the internet, allowing its diffusion and universally accessible, Barcelona's responsible team decided to call it a catalogue raisonée when, in reality, it will be an information system online. The project started in 2000 by Urban Planning Department, determining six working phases for the period 2001-2014, with their respective objectives. After deciding to organize the catalog based on an Information and Management System, and designing the computer system, developing the user's graphic interface and development of the software of the web, it was defined the cataloguing structure: technical data, biographical data, chronicles, commentaries, iconographies, images, additional documentation, geolocation of the works, and contextualization in relation to city's historic periods and urban development, and not related to artistic styles. There were also included unnoticed and not yet inventoried works. All public art works were newly measured and commented by experts under a present-day perception from a cultural point of view.

In this period the first presentations of the project took place, beginning with Lisbon (2002), and followed by New York, Barcelona or Porto in 2003. On July 5th, 2004, bcn.cat/artpublic was officially presented at the gardens of the historic building of the University of Barcelona. Establishment of contacts with other cities to make easier the development of similar projects: Almada, Lisbon, Zaragoza, Porto, as well as Torino, Birmingham and Manchester. Conceptualization of the idea of a European Virtual Museum of Public Art based in local museums. Barcelona's project was awarded by the Catalan Association of Art Critics (2005). It ended the first main phase. The web was functioning, translated from Catalan to Spanish and English.

At this time, the English version was completely available. The next step it was taken was the inclusion of the works in the transport system, public monuments at cemeteries, remembrance trees, historical memory plaques, and new subjects as reliefs and statuary in public buildings and those ones with especial relevance or meaning to citizenry to be edited in the system. During these years, the municipal Department of Architecture and Urban Projects began to develop the Management System for maintenance and conservation. At the same time, some promotional mea-

Fig. 16. Deputy Mayor Xavier Casas at the presentation of www.bcn.cat/artpublic on July 2004.

sures were taken, dynamiting the system introducing new itineraries, creating a set of publications with especial relevance in educational and cultural areas, and improving user's participation as well as the universal accessibility of the system to citizenry segments who due to sensorial deficiencies are not able to enjoy it. Next step was to develop the mobile APP that went live in 2014. Another measure was the attempt to introduce 3D facsimile in order to help the physical collection maintenance.

4. Opening the system to other cities: The case of Portugal
In 2005 the collaboration with the city of Lisbon and its Heritage Department to develop a system following Barcelona's model started. At the end of the year, it was published the Roteiro de Arte Pública, the Public Art guide and months before opened to public its virtual catalogue.

However the project was interrupted by political and economic reasons, although in 2009, the Lisbon City Hall created an Urban Art Gallery, appearing in 2010 the first number of GAU (Galleria d'Arte Urbana) magazine, and since 2016 in advance Street Art Lisbon. Although it seemed that the city was more interested in ephemeral projects and mural interventions which expressed more the day-to-day life of the people of Lisbon, they developed an informatics system that related the Art Public catalogue with the Catalogue of Lisbon Heritage, linking both through the «Imóveis de interesse municipal» (Properties of Local Interest).

Also based on Barcelona's information system, the city of Almada developed a first catalogue of Public Art, directed by the Casa da Cerca Contemporary Art Center and the Museu da Cidade under the officially municipal criteria that «A Arte Pública assume-se hoje como um dos pilares do desenvolvimento cultural, do conhecimento sobre a nossa história moderna, e de afirmação pública de um projecto autárquico assente em causas e valores» (Neto de Sousa 2006), editing a virtual catalogue, available both in Portuguese and English, and offering virtual tours.

Meanwhile the Portuguese Art Critics Association, in cooperation with the University of Porto, began the deployment of the catalogue and the information system of Porto, unfortunately, as it happened in Lisbon, external circumstances forced them to temporarily put the project aside.

The city of Porto has had an inventory of Public Art since 1999 made by Dr Abreu with scientific and academic rigor, in which the elements of public art were grouped in four concepts: memorial sites, elements of urban qualification, elements of architectonical animation and places of devotion (Abreu 1999). Notice that Professor Abreu did not use any artistic criteria to draw up the inventory but he started from the criterion of memory and citizenry devotion, and likewise urban development, of both urban spaces and architecture. Faced to obvious question of why in Public Art artistic criteria were not used, the answer lies in the survival of models and was of working that go beyond the academically established periods.

Fig. 17. Home page of www.lisboapatrimoniocultural.pt/artepublica

Fig. 18. Home page of Lisbon Catalogue to Properties of Local Interest.
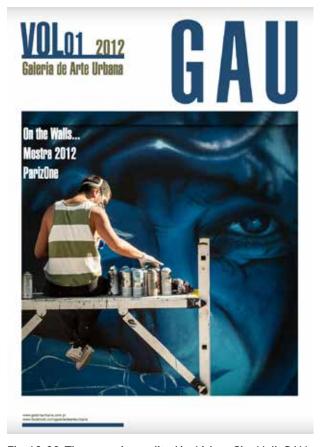

Fig. 19-20. The magazines edited by Lisbon City Hall, GAU n.1 and GAU n.2

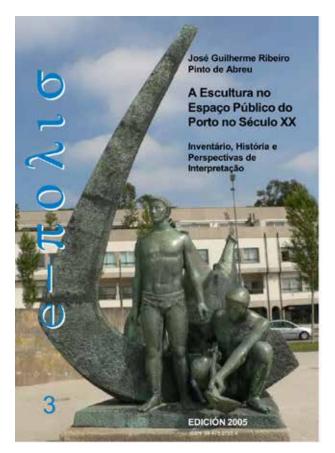Fig. 21-22. Almada's Public Art Information System

Fig. 23. Porto's inventory, J. G. Abreu.

On July 10, 2017, Porto launched a map of the city with 5 routes, making them with different colours on a city map, providing at the time the equivalent of a drop-down of the routes where each piece of public art is explained (Mapa

2017). Contrary to the criteria established by Professor Abreu in his inventory, the criteria adopted by the municipality of Porto with these routes was the idea of public art as an open-air museum, exactly the same concept that art critic Annemiecke van der Pass developed in an article (Van der Pass 2004) and journalist Lluís Permanyer used in his book of Barcelona's public art (Permanyer 2005).

Fig. 24. L. Permanyer, Barcelona, un museo de esculturas al aire libre.

Fig. 25. Map of Porto's Itineraries.

5. Zaragoza's project

Precedents: Portal of the Cesáreo Alierta Public School, and the Catalogue of Buildings and Sites of Historical-Artistic Interest: «The catalogue is the result from a collective work trabajo colectivo, carried out for a long cast of specialists under the coordination of professors Manuel García Guatas and Jesús Pedro Lorente, who respectively lead the consolidated team of the University of Zaragoza Observatorio Aragonés de Arte Público (Aragonese Observatory of Public Art), and a state research project funded by the Dictorate General for Research entitled Public Art for all: its virtual musealization and social dissemination -previously recipient of an aid from the Ministry of Science, University and Technology of the Government of Aragon to the interdisciplinary project A virtual museum of public art in the city of Zaragoza.» (www.zaragoza.es/sede/portal/arte-publico)

As the long-term common idea was to unify the consultation system and to be able to cross-link data between the similar projects that are being carried out in other Spanish and European cities, the catalogue card model that we have adopted necessarily consist on the same fields as that of the Barcelona antecedent (Lorente 2008). A framework collab-

oration agreement between the cities of Barcelona (Urban Planning) and Zaragoza (Information and Communication Department) was signed to develop its system following Barcelona's model, with also the essential collaboration with the University of Zaragoza designing the catalogue structure and discussing its contents.

Unlike Barcelona, the Zaragoza catalogue does not include those monuments that have disappeared but today are known either written or graphic understanding, from photographs to plans. On the contrary, they included archaeological sites which, in Barcelona, are considered part of the architectonical heritage. Concerning works in cemeteries, in Zaragoza is included an anthological selection «of some of the best pieces -provided they are unique works, not serial productions of the funeral industry, and that they are not inside any chapel, pantheon, or other architectural space- because at the end and after all, the churchyard in Zaragoza is still a public outdoor space without access control.» (Lorente 2008). Just because Barcelona's cemeteries are also public outdoor property of the municipality, these pieces were also included but, differently to Zaragoza, only those that were built by popular subscription or were public property.

Figs. 26-27. Public Art of Zaragoza. Example of a file and front cover of the book of the contents.

Another difference between both virtual museums lied in considering graffiti or urban art. In Zaragoza all this art was included from the beginning, while in Barcelona was considered much later and only those achievements were taken into account that, despite being ephemeral, were made in spaces determined by the city council on the occasion of celebrating specific cultural events.

If Barcelona's information system is structured in 9 introductory chapters, coinciding the history of the city and its urban growing and development, the responsible of Zaragoza's system decided not to do it. However, in each work's file is introduced the concept of period. The chronicle is also included, but there is no one in charge in charge of these contents, so each author of the file write it. So there is not a chronicle that explains linearly the history of the city.

A novelty was to make an entry dedicated to the biography of the character represented or the historical fact that he remembers and commemorates (Lorente 2008).

6. The case of English cities
Birmingham decided to create an online catalogue containing 10 pieces of public art works, basically under the con-

cept of sculpture and ornamental fountains. Each one has an explanation on its location, its artistic and cultural values, the materials and author's biography. These commentaries can also include poems if necessary.

As it can be seen, it is more than an inventory but less than a complete catalogue. Public art is understood as sculpture, and there are not more interventions such as the plaques on the pavement at the Jewellery Quarter, giving an example the ones at Newhall Street or Brindley Place. Someone is able to follow them in a walking tour by the quarter.

Fig. 28. Plaque on the pavement.

Fig. 29. Access to Manchester's collection of Public Art through the official site of Manchester Art Gallery.

In Manchester it was conceived the realization of a guide to public art «as part of a citywide project to research and document Manchester's public art. (...) This is a pilot project, and so is not a complete record of public art in the city. There's a more complete record on the Manchester Art Gallery website.»

The pilot's project includes works that exemplify a vast concept of public art, as the cities of Barcelona and Lisbon. However, when including a tree of remembrance, this is not a vegetal tree but a bronze one made by an artist. If somebody will want to know more, he should enter in Manchester Art Gallery official web site.

6. Towards an international network of Public Art?

If we analyze what the afore mentioned question is, of which we must say that it is in fact the main one, we quickly see that it is an ancestral motivation in the history of mankind, which is no other than the need to create iconic images of the idols that each community creates. In this sense, as early as in 1944, Siegfried Giedion warned that: «Monumentality devices from the eternal need of the people to own symbols which reveal their inner life, their actions and their social conceptions. Every period has the impulse to create symbols in the form of monuments, which, according to the Latin meaning, are 'things that remind', things to be transmitted to later generations.» (Giedion 1944). It is what

we call nowadays the transmissions of the collective memory for posterity.

Therefore, assuming the necessary presence of this permanent memory of these idols or symbols in the collective space and that we are part of this chain of transmission of knowledge, two different lines of work are open to us. On the one hand, to facilitate the maintenance and the conservation of the public art collections. On the other hand, knowing their origins and the reasons of their presence among the citizens. However public art goes beyond the idea of an iconic symbol when it explains the evolution of the territory where it is located. If we understand that «The evolution of public space, its constitution as a territory of urban expression and social articulation, is based, in large part, on the presence of symbolic artifacts that transcend the utility of utilitarian artifacts that populate the public space. In this sense, Public Art, its presence in the public space, can be understood as an indicator of the health of the public space, as well as its quality.» (Remesar, Ricart 2013). This concept can be applied provided we are talking about the relationship between these monuments that are publicly owned and are erected in public territory. On the other hand, if we analyze works of art that today are considered as public art but they previously were not, that is to say, of those that had been previously in spaces of private domain and currently are public, the idea of public art being an in-

dicator of the health of the public space is not the case, because it loses its sense when we cannot understand public space and public art only from the point of view of which it has been exclusively public from its origin. In consequence, only in the modern construction of the public sphere of the cities it is possible to apply the tag of an indicator in public art.

6.1. Why not an Open-air Virtual Museum?
In 2004, the already mentioned Annemieke van der Pass, a fervent believer in the concept of open-air virtual museums, organized and moderated a round table with the theme How is Barcelona's open-air sculpture museum like?. First of all, we have the concept of sculpture that brings together the collection, being clear that it is a selective concept which does not incorporate new ways to understand the languages of contemporary art that uses all kinds of materials and surfaces. Secondly, speaking only in terms of sculpture eliminates all those works of memory that can be presented in the public sphere either as a mural or as a tree. Finally, this sculptural concept of public art is in accordance with the idea of a monument of the nineteenth century, when in next century avant-garde removed the pedestal from the beginning and often looking for the most symbolic signs that narrated the intention or theme of the work.

On the other hand, an open-air museum simplifies a lot what public art is. There are many other considerations that act in public art, from citizen participation to university training work, from the fact they are in an urban and architecturally configured space. Therefore, it is not so much the product of an artist and his promoter, but of a series of agents involved in public space.

As Professor Lorente wrote, «In addition of studying and cataloguing, we [Barcelona and Zaragoza] performed other of the main functions of a museum, such as exhibiting, disseminating and explaining, and we were even collaborating in the conservation of the pieces, because thanks to the citizen collaboration of the users of this service, the City Council was being pointed out which pieces had emerged a flaw or vandalization, allowing a quick intervention of those in charge of cleaning or restoration» (Lorente 2008). Hencefort, we will speak only in terms of public art and virtual museums and not in terms of open-air museums.

6.2. From the European Public Art Portal to the Virtual Museums
As a result of the creation of the PAUDO network (Public Art and Urban Design Observatory) in order to structure a thematic network to contribute so that public art research and inventory projects develop from a common methodological basis indispensable for the fulfillment of the networks final objective, which is no other than the establishment of the Virtual European Museum of Public Art.

The PAUDO network had to allow and at the same time ensure that information would be exchanged between all participating members, information that would come mostly from university studies and research, as well as from the holding of conferences, symposia and other academic meetings. To these studies had to be added those researches made on the occasion of the restoration of public art works, thus conforming a valuable contribution on the part of the public administrations to the common knowledge on Public Art. The project requested a grant from the Spanish Ministry of Education and Science with the support of City Council of Almada, City Council of Barcelona, Complutense University of Madrid, Lusophone University of Lisbon, Manchester Metropolitan University, Technical University of Lisbon, University of Girona, University of Barcelona, and University of Zaragoza.

After the official opening on July 2004 of the Barcelona Public Art Information System, the cities of Barcelona, Lisbon and Torino submitted a bit for the European project Culture 2000 under the acronym LVPAM which mean Local Public Art Virtual Museum. The project was led by the municipality of Barcelona. The report explained that «The Department of Public Art has recently delivered a website that allow where citizens and people in general access to the whole collection of Public Art. This website is a Catalogue raisonné (...) which has been set up to be comprehensive without establishing any criteria for appraisal. The set of databases, supplemented with a geographic information system, provides details on the artists, technical and iconographic details and bibliographic references on the history of the work, as well as its present-day perception from a cultural point of view. (...) Its fundamental goal is to bring within reach of citizens, visitors and scholars the best information available on those elements that make up the identity of the city and its urban landscape.» (European Project 2005).

At the time, one of the policies of the Spanish Ministry of Education and Culture was to encourage the dissemination and study of heritage through new technologies. Consequently the design and creation of these virtual museums of public art was fully supported by the ministry. Unfortunately, the European project was not successful although institutions as ICOM already were working on similar subjects, listing all virtual museums around the world and dedicating a monographic issue of its magazine in which answering the question of «Does the virtual museum spell the death of the museum as we know it? », we can read that «The virtual museum is no competitor or danger for the "brick and mortar" museum because, by its digital nature, it cannot offer real objects to its visitors, as the traditional museum does. But it can extend the ideas and concepts of collections into the digital space and in this way reveal the essential nature of the museum. At the same time the virtual museum will reach out to virtual visitors who might never be able to visit a certain museum in person.» (Schweibenz 2004).
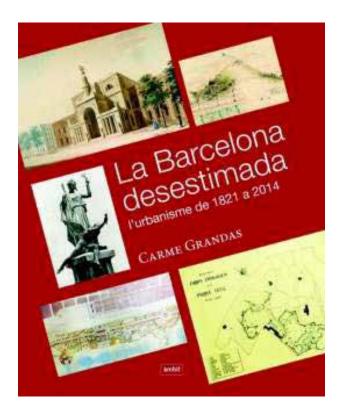
Abandoning the idea of creating a European Public Art Portal, work began on creating virtual museums. Despite the fact that the city of Turin 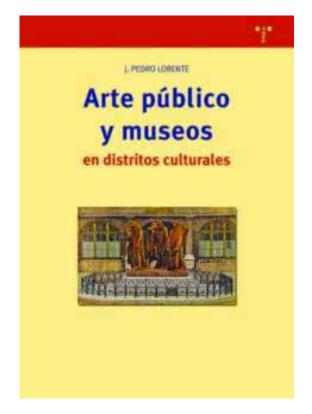stood out as it was not as interested in public art as in the heritage of its modernist-era establishments, some British cities, especially Birmingham and Manchester, were really interested in the project because, as many other British cities, they already had a previous inventory commissioned by the National Lottery and disseminated on the internet. Thus were born, after the world pioneer experience of the city of Barcelona, the first virtual museums of Public Art, those of the cities of Lisbon and Zaragoza as it has already been explained. From its begining, all this Virtual Museums of Public Art are financed exclusively with publics funds and have not any external sponsorship.

The next important step was taken in 2006 when some universities and public institutions signed the Almada Carter: Almada City Council, Aragonese Observatory of Public Art, Barcelona City Council, Zaragoza City Council, La Mina Consortium (St Adrià del Besòs, Barcelona), Faculty of Fine Arts of Lisbon - Technical University, Complutense University of Madrid, and University of Barcelona. Among the reached commitments, they stand up to continue the ongoing Public Art inventories as indispensable instruments for strengthening the identity and social cohesion and for the processes of education for citizenship, and seeking to ensure the consolidation of training and research structures

Fig. 30. Some assistants to Almada's meeting on May, 2006, at the Casa de Cerca.

Figs. 31-32. Front covers of books in which appear images from Virtual Museums of Public Art.

on Public Art in the various participant universities, which over time was joined by the Catholic University of Porto. Always understanding the subject of Public Art linked to urban design and closely related to the memory of the past of each city.

Barcelona joint to Zaragoza, Lisbon and Almada went on the creation of an European Virtual Museum of Public Art with free contents, universal access, and in country languages and English translations.

For some time now there have been voices that believe that public art must change its definition, as it is its intrinsic relationship with urban space and urban projects. In this sense, we should not work towards an international network of Public Art. But that idea only works if only a new model of understanding the city that was developed in Barcelona with architect Oriol Bohigas at the forefront is taken in account. This approach is absolutely linked to the idea of the urban project model that changed the image of Barcelona with a continuous policy of improvement that even received the maximum international recognition

with the RIBA (Royal Institute of British Architects) and the University of Harvard awards. However this belief forgets those public art works that were not directly linked to the design and conception of urban space, but we have a legacy of centuries spanning fountains, memorials, mythological sculpture, and a long list of others that includes parks, today public but which had been private.

Free universal access and with the minimum structure: these are the main advantages of a virtual museum. Its management allows not only immediate updates in the contents but also immediate interventions in the same pieces of public art, meaning that the system is able to receive through its own mail complementary information about the contents, and incidences on the works conservation and maintenance, allowing these immediate interventions on them. A weekly average of 4,800 visits from the starting of bcn.cat/artpublic in its three versions in Catalan, Spanish and English, makes possible having a better knowledge of the city, and joint to the diffusion of its graphic collection, integrated by more than 20.000 images, always with free character, allows the collaboration in exhibition catalogues,

books, magazines, Master and Doctoral Thesis, giving images for conferences and scientific forums. With Arte Público de Zaragoza the exact same thing happens. Its contents and image collection are an inescapable source for university studies, catalogues, articles and book publishing. Furthermore, virtual museums of public art are an ideal information system for high school and university studies, research, teaching, diffusion of historic and cultural heritage, exhibitions, and also to prepare future visits to the city.

Although the projects are an information and management system of public art, from the point of view of them it is interesting to test that it exists a physical object's collection, classified with criteria and argument, tending to preserve them. The collection is also disseminated in the net generating studies and researches, while at the time making possible the development of educative programs. Exhibit introduction will allow a deep knowledge and diffusion of these Virtual Museums.

Today, when culture has become a profitable commodity, everyone is looking for stimuli to dinamize it, offering attractive programs with the same temporary character of an exhibition that helps to increase the values of what we are responsible of and its conservation. Visits are important but now these activities have become key to attracting an audience other than tourism organized by travel agencies, and it is the public that it is made up of retired people who have a training and preparation with a critical and analytical spirit, who travel throughout the year alone, in pairs or in small groups, a tourism that already moves important income and that must be taken into account.

In order to dynamize and manufacture the scope of all the contents of Public Art, the corresponding mobile telephony application - App - was created in Barcelona, operating since 2015.

Fig. 33. The App Store of the Public Art of Barcelona.

Another way to dynamize public art is through TV channels. This is the last experience in Barcelona: public art becomes the protagonist of a series of programs that are structured territorially in different neighborhoods of the city. Through a route almost entirely on foot, the works of public art that a specialist comments are shown.

The program's aim is none other than, while offering the viewer, that is, the public, a better knowledge of the collection, to reduce acts of vandalism such as graffitti, and increase the esteem for these goods that are collective, making them their own and feeling proud of them.

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