

## Clashes Over Soviet Legacy in Vilnius: Artistic Activism and the Making of Public Space

**Lina Michelkevičė**

Institute of Art Research, Vilnius Academy of Arts, Lithuania.

### 1. Introduction

In this essay I will analyse two cases of urban resistance in Vilnius: Pro-test Lab project from 2005 against demolition of the Lietuva Cinema, and the activism against reconstruction plans of the Reformist Square from 2018. Despite the big time gap, the two cases relate to each other in several aspects, which are in focus here: 1) both of them were protests against tearing down architectural structures from Soviet times, and as such they may represent the broader wave of the late post-Soviet revisionism related to infrastructural changes in cities; 2) because they fought not only for material legacy, but also for public spaces which had a certain history of urban practices, these cases show the development of 'public space' and 'public interest' concepts within public discourse, and also how these very concept were embodied in the activist actions themselves; 3) as cases of activism, which involved many cultural professionals and artists among them, they are productive ground to start with when researching ways cultural professionals engage in social movements.

When it comes to social movements, urban activism is perhaps one of the most common forms of grassroots initiatives in post-socialist Europe, though often overlooked by social movements' researchers because of the excessive focus on nation-wide organised activism. "[W]hile there have been debates about the (non)existence of truly participatory social movements in Eastern Europe, [...] some research on East European cities has shown that grassroots movements are able to emerge in urban settings in relation to disputes over public spaces, non-corrupted urban planning mechanisms, or opposition to gentrification"

(Cisaf 2018, 192). As Kerstin Jacobsson suggested, "local, grassroots-driven, small-scale, low-key forms of activism—such as much of urban grassroots activism—represent an important component of post-socialist civil society as well as an important new phase of post-socialist civil society making" (Jacobsson 2015, 275).

A certain growth in urban movements after 2004 shows that a sufficient level of social welfare had been reached so that citizens of the new capitalist state could start taking care of their environment beyond the private sphere and matters of survival. Yet the rapid development brought its own problems, such as harsh privatisation that was hard to control due to insufficient legislative framework, and fast but not necessarily well-balanced urban development, especially in Vilnius. A lot of buildings and spaces, which previously belonged to the state or municipalities, during the 1990s—early 2000s, gradually became privatised and many changed their functions as a result. In Vilnius, but also in other Lithuanian cities, these included poorly administered cultural and leisure institutions. So-called cultural houses and palaces, several swimming pools, and a dozen of cinemas from the Soviet era, which all had become a burden for the administering municipality, were converted into shops, supermarkets, entertainment places, etc.; some were demolished in order to build new real estate. After Lithuania entered the European Union in 2004, urban developments also started to get new funding shots from the EU that were at times misused by municipalities due to the urge of "using and implementing funds".



Figure 1. Pro-test Lab in front of the Lietuva Cinema, 2005. Photo: Nomedas Urbonas. All rights reserved by the author.

## 2. Cinema Lietuva and the Pro-test Lab

A cinema called Lietuva (which means 'Lithuania') was one of two municipal cinemas—out of a dozen previously—that were still operating in 2005, at the start of the Pro-test Lab. Built in 1965 as a piece of functionalist architecture and the first widescreen cinema in the country with 1000 seats, Lietuva continued to operate without interruption for fifty years except the major reconstruction and technologic refurbishment in 1997. In 2002 the building was sold to a branch of the holding company Vilniaus Prekyba (the owner of the largest supermarket and pharmacy chains in Lithuania), with an obligation to continue the operation of the cinema until summer 2005. The state land lease

agreement as signed in 1994, defined the function of the land lot for economic activities associated exclusively with the purpose of cinema. Despite that, at the beginning of 2005 the company announced its intent to demolish the cinema theatre and to build a block of flats with a few small cinema halls—the project included the building up of an open square in front of the cinema building.

As an immediate response to the news, few separate initiatives took place: a few hundred gathered next to the cinema and a nearby supermarket, as part of the Vilniaus Prekyba group's supermarket chain, to protest against cinema's demolition; activist Evelina Taunytė (aka Candy Cactus) initiated a series of discussions on public spaces



Figure 2. SOLD OUT. Poster action on bridges and in public sites, Vilnius. Organised by Vilnius Citizens. Photo: Nomeda Urbonas, 2005. All rights reserved by the author.

held in the premises of the cinema (ELTA 2005; Reklaitė et al. 2016). The case also became the main trigger for the Pro-test Lab project<sup>1</sup>, which officially started in spring 2005 soon after the aforesaid protest. In the cinema lobby, previously used for the ticket office, artist couple Nomeda and Gediminas Urbonas set up a laboratory with the aim of researching, archiving and constructing possible and impossible forms of protest. The artists later described the

1 - The description of the Pro-test Lab project is based on the following sources: the media material collected in the project's website <http://www.vilma.cc/LIETUVA/> and its timeline <http://www.vilma.cc/lietuva-timeline/>; Urbonas 2005; Urbonas 2007; Urbonas 2008; Urbonas 2020; Kongress 2011; as well as on my own experience as an irregular participant in the project.

circumstances of the project: as for themselves, thinking about the problem of public spaces began in autumn 2004 after the invitation to contribute to the exhibition *Populism*<sup>2</sup> planned in Contemporary Art Centre Vilnius in 2005. Yet they also recollected several other initiatives in relation to Lietuva case and the general will to act: "There was [...] something in the air, so to speak, between people who

2 Populism was an exhibition project initiated by NIFCA, the Nordic Institute for Contemporary Art, and curated by Lars Bang Larsen, Cristina Ricupero and Nicolaus Schafhausen. Travelling between four European cities (Vilnius, Oslo, Amsterdam and Frankfurt am Mein) it aimed at exploring the relationships between contemporary art and current populist cultural and political trends.



Figure 3. Polyphonic Protest 4 inside the Lietuva Cinema, June 2005. Organized by Involved & Co:labUK. Photo: Mirjam Wirz. All rights reserved by the author.

before then were in no way related; or between groups of people, between ideas; there was a sort of Geist, you know” (Urbonas 2016).

Hence, the project joined together several initiatives and grew further by inviting various groups or individuals, dissatisfied with the present situation of public spaces, to join and to offer their protest scenarios. Among participants were students and teachers of the Lithuanian Music and Theatre Academy and Vilnius Academy of Arts, high school students, Architecture Students’ Club, community movement Erdvės Mieste (Spaces in the City), the Greens and leftist movements, cultural professionals and intellectuals, etc. Several organisations came into being in the course of the project, e.g., the citizen movement Už Lietuvą be Kabučių (For Lithuania Without Quotation Marks), as established by the artists themselves; for some groups, like the leftist movement that in 2007 eventually established

an organization Naujoji Kairė 95, or NK95 (New Left 95), the participation in this project was an important marker in the formation of their identity.

The diverse panorama of the Lab’s participants meant that there were various concerns behind the protest. I would group them as follows: untransparent and possibly unlawful decisions by the municipality; harsh privatization of cultural spaces and their subsequent elimination; the building itself as part of the modernist history and possible Soviet heritage; planned build-up of the public space at the front of the cinema, and the decline of public spaces in general. Diverse concerns resulted in a lively combination of different activities that merged characters of both protest and leisure time (screenings, architectural proposals, concerts, cooking parties, public discussions, TV and radio broadcasts, guided tours, activist performances, etc.).



Figure 4. Human-chain of swimming enthusiasts at the former site of a privatized and demolished public swimming pool, Vilnius. Organized by VILMA, 23 May 2005. Photo: Mirjam Wirz. All rights reserved by the author.



Figure 5. The Barking of the Dogs Won't Disturb the Clouds. The barking competition in front of the cinema. Organized by VILMA, 2005. Photo: Nomedas Urbonas. All rights reserved by the author.



Figure 6. Exploration of Space: Vertical and Horizontal Values, in front of the cinema. Organized by the citizen movement Už Lietuvą be Kabučių, 2005. Photo: Nomedas Urbonas. All rights reserved by the author.

Due to broader concerns around neoliberal politics and the fate of public spaces Pro-test Lab was also used as a protest and discussion platform beyond the particular case of the cinema, e.g., to support the strike of a chain supermarkets' employees, to question the fate of other cultural and public places in Vilnius (the Užupis district library, the Palace for Sport and Culture, the Žalgiris swimming pool, etc.), to discuss the urban planning strategy of Klaipėda port city, to support squatters, etc. At the dawn of the era of social media activism, the project also had its virtual side, an electronic discussion list. The list, which started a bit earlier and lasted much longer than the protest space, served as a place for coordinating participants' actions, sharing news, writing petitions, negotiating about actions or meetings, etc. It also incited heated debates, antagonism and polemics.

The physical lab continued until the eventual closure of the cinema in September 2005; yet the end of the project itself was never really clear due to affiliate activities, heated discussions on related issues in the media, legal processes, and eventually—the revival of the project's material as part of other projects by the artists<sup>3</sup>. Afterwards, the protest continued mostly as a legal battle, which included:

1) A petition to the Government of the Republic of Lithuania with around 7000 signs.

2) Two civil claims by the members of the citizen movement Už Lietuvą be Kabučių (For Lithuania Without Quotation Marks) against Vilnius Municipality and its decisions in relation to the Detailed Plan of Vilnius and the violation of the State property land lease agreement of the lot where the cinema was standing.

3) Two other civil claims by the company Rojaus Apartamentai (the developer of the housing project) against the members of the same movement. One of the claims asked for up to 500 000 EUR in order to reimburse losses that the company suffered due to the citizens' "experiments in the framework of the public interest", and for the temporal arrest of the defendant's properties. These claims were perfect examples of a strategic lawsuit against public participation, or SLAPP, which by raising irrational claims against activists, attempts to intimidate and put off people from participation in public issues rather than aims for actual justice and reimbursements.

---

3 The Pro-test Lab archive was exhibited in Gwangju biennale in 2006; as part of the Urbonas' project "Villa Lituania" in the Lithuanian pavilion at the 52nd Venice Biennale in 2007; and in other solo and group shows.



Figure 7. MO museum in place of the Lietuva Cinema, Vilnius. Photo: Norbert Tukaj, 2018. All rights reserved by the author.

4) Reassessment and correction of the Lithuanian translation of the Aarhus Convention. Passed by The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe in 1998 and entered into force in 2001, the Aarhus convention aims to guarantee the right of everyone to receive environmental information that is held by public authorities, the right to participate in environmental decision-making and the right to challenge public decisions in environmental matters. The activist group claimed that the convention's translation into Lithuanian was inaccurate, which supposedly led to rare use in practice and insufficient application in the national law. A new translation was approved and published by governmental institutions in 2009.

At the beginning of 2010, the developer announced its bankruptcy, followed by a threat to make one more claim against the citizen movement worth as much as 2 300 000 euros (8 million Litass). The legal processes ended in 2011 with the peace agreement among participating sides and commitment to withdraw all civil and administrative claims. The building was sold a few more times, after it was finally acquired by a private company that aimed to develop a modern art centre. In 2017 the cinema was turned down and replaced by the MO museum (opened 2018) built after a project by Daniel Libeskind.



Figure 8. The monument for Soviet partisans toppled down, Reformist Square, Vilnius. Photo: Rimantas Lazdynas, 1991. All rights reserved by the author.

### 3. Reformist Square and Protests Against its Reconstruction

The summer before the opening of the MO museum in 2018 another protest against a planned reconstruction took place in the city centre of Vilnius, just a few streets away from the former Lietuva Cinema. Separated from the main Pro-test Lab events by more than a decade and also much smaller and less ambitious in scale, the backlash against the reconstruction of the Reformist Square (Reformatų skveras), however, is interesting as a comparison when trying to understand certain dynamics of urban development in a post-Soviet city and public reaction to it.

The Reformist Square takes its name and its history from the Evangelical Reformed Church in Vilnius, which was the owner of the land lot since the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century (Mikalajūnė & Antanavičiūtė 2012, 222–229). The lot hosted a cemetery, a garden, several chapels and a wooden church, a hospital, a clergy residency, a school, and other related buildings; in 1830–1835 a new classicist church was built across the street, and the old church was torn down. In 1947 the church was closed and ten years later turned into a cinema for documentary movies called Kronika; the cemetery was destroyed, and all relics demolished. The lot with only two buildings remaining was made into a public park.



Figure 9. Reformist Square, Vilnius. Photo: Andrej Vasilenko, 2018. All rights reserved by the author.

In 1983 due to a planned monument to Soviet partisans the relief of the park was altered dramatically: stair-like concrete constructions, supposed to symbolise trenches and to serve as a pedestal for the sculptural composition of about ten figures, were introduced all throughout the space. Built in the terminal decade of the Soviet Union, the monument lasted very shortly; dismantled on 13 December 1991, it was one of the last Soviet monuments in Vilnius city, which rushed to get rid of any signs of the recent painful past. The square remained in the municipal disposition, while the church was given back to the Reformist community. The sculptural composition, after being stored for another decade, was given over to Grutas Park (Grūto parkas) open-air museum, where it is exhibited along with many other dismantled Soviet monuments and public sculptures. Yet, the pedestal structures remained untouched for another 27 years, and continued to be used for a practical purpose—as a substitute for benches. The

amphitheatrical relief became a sheer aesthetic quality and characteristic look of the park for the Independence generation, which grew up without ever seeing the monument in its complete form.

Due to a lack of decent maintenance, the concrete structures started to decay, prompting reconstruction plans, which now and then have been touched upon in the media since 2007. Nevertheless, the square has not been renovated or otherwise taken care of, except occasional trimmings and cutting down of diseased trees. The renovation project took off mainly when the building company EIKA, the developer of residential buildings nearby, undertook the funding of the technical project in 2015. The reconstruction plan prepared by Vilniaus Planas, municipally-owned corporation, was publicised in the media in June 2018 as the Reformist Garden (Reformatų sodas), after the municipality received EU funds for reconstruction and signed the reconstruction contract with EIKA.



Figure 10. Re:formatas festival in the Reformist Square, 2018. Photo by Andrej Vasilenko. All rights reserved by the author.

The project of the future garden included the complete removal of staircase structures, flattening of the relief and re-planning of the paths network, which also required cutting down part of the trees. Among the publicised features of the project was the restoration of the “historical relief”, which has been altered in the 1980s for the sake of the memorial composition.

The news caused a reservation and even an uproar among some, who felt the new plan was neither adherent to the historical truth, nor fair to those who used the park on a daily basis. Urbanists and architecture historians voiced their opinion that the project rather aims at unifying and deleting distinct faces of the city, than restoring the historical features (Gimbutaitė 2018; Ropolas 2018; Mikalajūnė et al. 2018). Some were worried about insufficient respect to the Reformist history and its cultural heritage, some blamed the removal of the Soviet structures as a wish to

“erase historical memory”, comparing it to plastic surgery, “when a city tries to make itself younger and to deny the epochs it lived through” (quote by Jekaterina Lavrinec in Gimbutaitė 2018).

In addition to many detailed reproaches to the project, such as the elimination of transit paths, introducing a fence and gates locked at night, completely demolishing the characteristic stair structures, cutting down around 1/3 of the trees, also healthy ones, in order to make new network of paths and to open up a space between the two remaining Reformist buildings (the synod building behind the park and the church on the other side of the street), etc., the protesters voiced concerns that indicated more general problems in the planning of urban spaces still persisting after nearly 30 years of Independence. I would summarize them as follows:



Figures 11 and 12. Re:formatas festival in the Reformist Square and a discussion about the reconstruction project in Vilnius Reformed Evangelical Church, 2018. Photo: Andrej Vasilenko.

1) The project is unspecific; park functions are unified; it has no unique character and echoes many other recent projects of public spaces. Entrusting the projects of public spaces (squares, parks and plazas) to municipally owned corporations and their architects solely threatens the city to become uniform and standard in its planning.

2) Despite declaring the aim to restore “historical justice”, it is insensitive to the historical layers of the place (both to the Reformist history and the Soviet past), and does little beyond demolishing concrete structures and levelling the relief.

3) The project was not communicated properly to the public prior to its final stages. As such, it presumably breached the right of everyone to participate in environmental planning guaranteed by the Aarhus convention.

The reaction to the planned reconstruction was very fast: in a week after the project was made public, concerned professionals, activists and residents of the neighbourhood formed a group, which started a discussion with the municipal administration, created a Facebook group and an online survey about the quality of the new project, initiated several public discussions with the project’s architect and other administering bodies involved, wrote a petition and loaded the municipality with letters requiring discussions with the society and respective changes in the project or an open architectural competition for a new project. The main protest initiators and participants were all from art and culture fields (pop singers Jurgis Didžiulis and Erica Jennings, film director Giedrė Žickytė, art historian Eglė Mikalajūnė, artists Ingra Miler, Milda Laužikaitė,



Figure 13. Reformist Square after the reconstruction, 2021. Photo by Tadas Šarūnas. All rights reserved by the author.

Laima Kreivytė, architects Gintautas Tiškus, Ona Lozuraitė, Justinas Dūdėnas, Jonas Žukauskas, and many others), so among other forms to start a conversation with the municipality was a one-day festival-protest *Re:formatas* in the square with a programme that included performances, public readings, workshop of protest signs, discussions, guided tours, concerts, and public games; also, an organized discussion in the Reformed Church among the Reformist community, activists, and the municipality about the future of the project.

Despite public discussions and approaches to Vilnius municipality and Remigijus Šimašius, the City Mayor, also despite the conclusion and advice by the Regional Council of Architecture to suspend the reconstruction and to pursue an architectural competition, very little was done to change the project. The assertion by Mindaugas Pakalnis, the Senior City Architect, voiced at the above said discussion, that “the project can be modified as much, as its essence stays the same”<sup>4</sup> represented both the municipality’s unwillingness to change the project, and the defective application of the Aarhus convention in the national law and practice, when a tardy notice allows for little or no participation. As Daiva Veličkaitė stated in her doctoral dissertation “Public Interest and the Conditions for its Implementation in the Field of Architecture” in 2019, “in contrast to what is required by the Aarhus Convention, the Law [of Territorial Planning] does not imply procedures, which would allow to collect information about the condition of the planned territory, and about problems and expectations of the community in the early stages of the planning, when there is still a possibility to consider alternatives” (Veličkaitė 2019, 83).

Regardless of the protest and attempts to delay the process until a mutually acceptable decision would be reached, the reconstruction started as planned with the demolition of Soviet structures in November 2018. It continued with minor changes in the project, i.e., the elimination of the planned fence, small alterations to the path network and planned zones, and the promise to reduce the number of trees to be cut. The public communication praised this decision as a common agreement stating that

“the Reformists Garden will be reconstructed after Vilnius citizens” (Činga 2018), although the Municipality’s promise to organize one more meeting with activists to discuss the alterations in the project was never kept (Budzinauskienė 2018; Alper 2018). Interestingly enough, the municipality relied on the support of the Reformist community (Lithuanian Society of the History and Culture of the Reformation, and The Consistory of the Lithuanian Evangelical Reformed Church), which was informed about the project a few years earlier than the rest of the society, and mainly asked for due commemoration of the Reformist history and architectural heritage, which included a monument to Lithuanian Reformists (LRIKD, 2018a, 2018b; INFOREF. LT, 2018). The reconstruction took longer than planned because of archeological finds and pandemic restrictions; hence, the park after its opening in summer 2021 still missed the monument due to the lack of funding.

#### 4. Contesting Soviet Legacy in Vilnius

Although very different in scale and progress, the two protests described above had a few things in common. Both of them started as a backlash against ill-considered attempts to reconstruct the city by cleaning it of Soviet legacy. The revisionist policy towards Soviet architecture and public art is characteristic of all post-Soviet states; and the more time has passed after the collapse of Soviet regimes, the more interesting it becomes. If the “first wave of revisionism” (Baločkaitė 2016, 18) in the early 1990s was rather an unquestionable part of liberation and historical healing process—monuments to ideologists and political heroes were sentenced to be toppled down, their names to be deleted from street and plaza plaques, any remaining signs of their past glory to be swept off—its sequel was much less universally accepted and had many more practical and ideological reasons (both overt and hidden) than a pure change of regimes.

“Both in Lithuania and other Central and Eastern European countries the first wave of revisionism did not touch “ideologically ambiguous” heritage objects: monuments to artists, who collaborated with Soviet regime, also squares, streets, and schools bearing their names; sculptures and panels that glorified the working class; monuments to the

4 - Recording of the discussion: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QX4hsDXgC0k>.

Soviet victory in World War II; architecturally significant buildings (cinemas, sport and culture palaces, stadiums), Soviet military cemeteries, and others” (Baločkaitė 2016, 18). Their ambiguity not only made these objects last longer, but also implied that their elimination nevermore would be as fast and univocal. Rasa Baločkaitė names several main reasons for the second wave of revisionism that started fifteen to twenty years after the first one: the worsening state of objects and buildings; changes in urban planning and infrastructure; Westernisation and Europeanisation of the former East, and on the other side, the tension and information war between some CEE countries and Russia (Baločkaitė 2016, 19). If infrastructural plans (whether hidden or open) are often here the main cause of removals, political tensions are among important, often unacknowledged, factors that may increase the society’s support. As to political anthropologist Arvydas Grišinas, “If we feel tension, for instance, due to repressions in Russia or Belarus, we can easily associate it to repressions in the Soviet Union. Soviet monuments in this case become signifiers of this inner association, and if we topple the monuments down, we use them also as scapegoats, certain mechanisms of coping with the tension” (Bankauskaitė 2021).

In the sense of revisionism, none of the cases I described before was as painful or long-term, as those of monuments, e.g. The Bronze Soldier in Tallinn (built 1947), the relocation of which from the city centre in 2007 caused two days of violent riots. Or statues on the Green Bridge in Vilnius (built 1952), representing Soviet workers, peasants, students and soldiers—their fate was discussed for a decade until their final removal in 2015 due to dangerously worsened conditions. Or a monument to Lithuanian writer Petras Cvirka, a proponent of USSR and Soviet collaborator, in Vilnius city centre (built 1959), which has been heating public discussion steadily since the 2000s, in the last years also due to intended reconstruction of the square it stands. The ultimate withdrawal of the statue from the national Register of Cultural Properties in 2021, which would necessarily end in its prompt removal as to Vilnius Municipality (Bertašiūtė, Jačasuskas 2021), was met both with approval and disappointment along with a concern about the further fate of the park itself.

Although pro-Russian powers have their say in these debates (e.g. Russian state-owned media platform Sputnik, which operates online news in Lithuanian as well, did not miss an opportunity to claim that Petras Cvirka’s monument case along with other monument removals are part of “an active fight against Soviet memorials” and “a campaign of historical revisionism” (Sputnik 2021)), and CEE states or municipalities sometimes tend to communicate conflicts about Soviet monuments as conflicts between pro-European and pro-Russian or pro-Soviet thinking (e.g. see Černiauskas 2015), neither proponents, nor opponents of the revisionist policy are so unambiguously classified. And this is especially so when we take into regard the post-Soviet generation, who are now in their late twenties: their liking or disliking of Soviet legacy may not necessarily be related to their political views, education or attitude towards memory politics, but often to their lifestyle and whether they have personal habits related to one or another object or public space. “While the generation, which grew up and came of age in Soviet era (I am part of it as well), was fighting the ghosts of their past,” wrote artist Laima Kreivyte, activist of the Reformist Square, “no one troubled to listen voices of the Independence generation, which had never seen the monument itself, and saw the staired space not in the Soviet, but in a larger cultural context unlimited by the Iron Curtain” (Kreivyte 2019).

Baločkaitė states that opponents of the second wave of revisionism are mostly “leftists graduated from Western universities, feminist cultural historians, philosophers. In their approach they argue for cultural liberalism, pluralism, openness, diversity, active memory, heterogeneity, anti-hegemonic thinking” while the revisionism proponents take more conservative stand and are represented by “right wing politicians, journalists, political observers, who base their position on common moral values, mobilisation of political community, an imperative to commemorate the statehood’s history, respect to victims of a totalitarian regime, and the need of public space safe from traumatic irritants” (Baločkaitė 2016, 20).

This panorama may reflect common moods as represented in the media, yet is not necessarily so in close-up. Whereas politicians and administrators tend to follow their political agendas, the positions of cultural professionals in

these debates are not so easily divided into simple pros and cons, rights and lefts. For instance, Simonas Kairys, the Minister of Culture since late 2020 and member of The Liberal Movement of the Republic of Lithuania, actively aimed for the removal of Cvirka's monument from the national Register of Cultural Properties and praised the positive decision by the Department of Cultural Heritage in such words: "Today is the big day for contemporary Lithuania. We chose values of a free country" (LRKM 2021). Whereas the previous Minister of Culture and researcher of literature Mindaugas Kvietkauskas has several times criticised this urge and doubted whether the renewed revisionism did not simply hide functional reconstruction plans of a larger territory (Jačauskas 2019; Kvietkauskas 2021). Historian Rasa Čepaitienė, who otherwise expresses conservative to nationalist views, in her heritage research and public opinions has nevertheless argued for preservation and re-actualisation of Soviet heritage claiming that its removal from public space becomes "a "reverse fetishism", which does not help the society to break free from Soviet mentality" (Čepaitienė 2015, 20). Art and Church historian, and a Catholic Church member Irena Vaišvilaitė sees the late fight with public objects from the Soviet period as a symptom of "cancel culture" and a "modern form of Maoism" (Bogdanienė et al. 2021). Meanwhile, leftist philosopher and public intellectual Gintautas Mažeikis has clearly stated in relation to the Cvirka monument's case: "This history [of the occupation of Lithuania] for sure does not need a monument; neither leftists, nor rightists, neither writers, nor tillers have anything here to be proud of. There is no necessity to keep such a monument in Vilnius centre. A tiny sculpture garden would replace it perfectly" (Bogdanienė et al. 2021).

Hence, the position a cultural professional takes in these battles is often influenced not only by their political views, or generation, but, differently from that of administrators, by their professional take on an object's historical, cultural, artistic value and context, its relation to larger communities of artists or cultural professionals and values they represent, its place in the tissue of a city, etc., and due to that may actually contradict their overall political stand. An attack against a memorial or architectural object may directly offend certain cultural communities—a bitter reaction

of the Lithuanian Writers' Union to the intended removal of the monument to writer Petras Cvirka is perhaps the clearest example of this. It is also always an attack against an artwork, and as such may be perceived as a broader attack against history of art and culture—as a wish to dispose of certain narratives and/or authors. The Lithuanians Artists' Association along with Lithuanian Society of Art Historians and AICA Lithuania in a public letter stated its position against the relocation of Petras Cvirka monument, defending it as a rare heritage of social realism in its original surroundings (LDS et al. 2019). The monument was also repeatedly defended as one of the last public sculptures by its author Juozas Mikėnas, a renowned modernist sculptor. The Lietuva Cinema activist group addressed a letter to UNESCO in relation to planned building works in Vilnius historical centre. The appeal to the historical surrounding was relied upon, since Lietuva Cinema (and in a very similar manner a much recent case of another cinema called Garsas in a medium-size city Panevėžys, which before being demolished in 2021 confronted a small scale but long-lasting opposition of the city residents) was much easier to dismiss as a "typical project". Cinema historian Lina Kaminskaitė-Jančorienė called such rhetoric a usual strategy used to push an object into "the zone of conflicted values or uncomfortable heritage, where most of Soviet heritage objects reside" and the society's trauma—Soviet occupation—an excuse behind the elimination of such objects (Kaminskaitė-Jančorienė 2019).

The debate is even more complicated and difficult to solve in spaces where several cultural strata are still present or remembered. The strict position of the Lithuanian Society of the History and Culture of the Reformation, and of many members of the Reformed Church, that the Soviet structures should be removed from the Reformist Square, relied on still alive memories for some and on deep conviction that the "historical justice" had to be restored. "It's very good that this Soviet relic, which desecrated our cemetery, is now going to be destroyed and the original relief restored. Our demands are minimal, they're not impracticable. Along with the renewed physical appearance, the spiritual body of the square—a monument to the Reformation and to the founding fathers of the Lithuanian literature will be erected", said the Society's chairman Donatas

Balčiauskas, claiming he himself painfully recollects the final destruction of the cemetery in the 1980s (Kielė 2018). The longing for historical justice, despite being utterly acceptable, is easy to manipulate and can be used to attract a community's support by filling certain "minimal demands", yet ignoring others. As cultural researcher Skaidra Trilupaitytė has noticed: "The arguments for the restoration of historical justice are really difficult to challenge with counter-arguments about trees, grasslands, public spaces, or certain laws of greenery" (Budrys et al. 2009). After all, the reason for concern is not necessarily the Soviet objects per se (or the "Soviet-nostalgia", a well-liked charge against their defenders), but the destiny of public spaces around (or as part of) these objects. In and around Vilnius historic centre the 'historical justice' argument is often disadvantageous for green spaces, since most of the squares here were created only after World War II in place of ruined buildings or repurposed open markets (Drėmaitė 2021). Nevertheless, public spaces become part of urban life as they are, not as they have been. Discussing the role of parks in the city Vaišvilaitė has written that "citizens in the city need city parks, so they habituate to places, which have certain elements of a park, even though poorly maintained and neglected—this is what happened to the Sapiegos Park, Missionaries Hill, or Reformist Square. Habituated to a derelict place, citizens inhabit it, establish their spaces and ways of being, and defend these spaces as Parisians did defend the Luxembourg Garden back in the days. It is their living and socialising space, and interference to such a space provokes a painful response" (Vaišvilaitė 2020).

### 5. Public Interest Embodied in Public Space

Another aspect important to discuss in relation to both the Pro-test Lab and Reformist Square activism, is the way they understand and discuss 'public interest' and 'public space'. Although these concepts may seem rather natural and omnipresent today, neither of them has been discussed to such an extent in the Lithuanian media before 2005. Responding to the post-Soviet wave of privatisation, Pro-test Lab raised questions in relation to 'the public' and questioned concepts of public interest, public opinion, and public space, and the way they functioned in the laws and executive actions of the post-Soviet state.

The project initiators stressed that "the movement UŽ Lietuvą be Kabučių [For Lithuania Without Quotation Marks] never set a goal to combat private business. Our opponent was only public authorities and their untransparent decisions that violated public interest [...]" (Judėjimas 2010). The movement made the "public interest" a buzzword in the media and a keyword in legal processes that continued long afterward. The petition (2006) signed by 7000 citizens, demanding for protection of the Lietuva Cinema, also asked "to guarantee democratic participation of the society in substantial decision-making of cultural policy in Lithuanian capital" (Urbonas et al. 2006); and in 2007 the activist group initiated an NGO called Institute of Public Interest's Protection (Viešojo intereso saugos institutas, or VISI). Although VISI never evolved into a visible and significant institution, it was nonetheless a moderate try to counterbalance the Lithuanian Free Market Institute (Lietuvos laisvosios rinkos institutas, or LLRI), which, founded in 1990 with a goal to foster free market and related ideas was very much visible in the media as a harsh supporter of any development based on private investments.

Despite the failure to protect the actual cinema building, the activist group was relatively successful in legal and juridical processes. The group members and related lawyers have publicly talked about the necessity to initiate the law of public interest (Jackevičius 2007) (it would never be approved though). Several strategic lawsuits against public participation (SLAPP) by the investing company against the movement members that were either rejected or ended with peace agreements became precedents to rely upon for future cases. A public forum on SLAPPs in 2018 in the Lithuanian Parliament, where one of the Lietuva Cinema activists architecture historian and heritage expert Jūratė Markevičienė took part and reported on her experience as a defendant in a SLAPP, resulted in a resolution addressed to the Lithuanian Government and Parliament, which asked to initiate changes in the Civil Code in order to facilitate the protection of public interest and to prevent lawsuits against defenders of public interest (Vilniaus bendruomenių asociacija et al. 2018). In March 2021, the Lithuanian Parliament finally formed a working group to prepare legal means in order to combat SLAPPs.

Members of the activist group also successfully appealed to governmental institutions in relation to the incorrect translation of the Aarhus convention that might have prevented the citizens from having the right to environmental information. The revised translation was published in early 2009, and it also became the main reason for the Supreme Administrative Court to renew the process in relation to Lietuva Cinema (Bernardinai.lt 2009). The Aarhus Convention was appealed to by the Reformist Square activists as well, who in their petition “Stop the Reformist Square project” asked for appropriate and timely application of the Aarhus convention in relation to the planning of all urban public spaces (Reformatų skvero iniciatyvinė grupė, 2018).

Next to the judicial gains, the bodily implementation of public space via continuous physical and discursive action is an important strategy of such protests, which also changes the overall perception of what public space is. Public space may be understood either instrumentally as “a system of places with a precisely defined urban functionality”, or as common space created by people who participate in it. “Urbanism defines the public space (by the organization of buildings) and architecture portrays it (by the construction of buildings). It is not however able to create it. Why not? Because the public space is our common space. We create it the moment we take part in something that goes beyond us, that we do not control ourselves”, says Fedor Blaščák (2010, 506).

The first approach understands public space as an urban function that is implemented (or not) by architecture and defined by governmental or municipal institutions. It comes from the perspective of urban planning—of architectural and even more so of administrative decisions, which shape the functional view of a city—allow and forbid, define purpose, measure proportions and allocate (how much space is meant for public purpose, for culture and recreation, for living, etc.). These decisions help to regulate flows of people, money, and material and immaterial goods in the city. Defending a particular architectural object or a particular place in the city means defending a particular implementation of the public space function, or a governmental or municipal property as opposed to private property. Yet, on the other hand, protesting by being in that

space, by bodily and discursively occupying it for a common interest means creating the public space “by taking part in something that goes beyond ourselves”. When the activist group founded its headquarters in the cinema lobby, when it became a lively and frequented place, when an open space in the front of the cinema was filled by people who protested, performed, discussed or simply spent their leisure time, when people gathered to Re:formatas festival to celebrate but also to accumulate their daily practices (to sit around, to walk a dog, to play ball, etc.) in one time and space, the architecturally implemented and bureaucratically defined public space got a bodily dimension as well.

Interestingly enough, this individual, bodily expression of public space and public interest may be unacceptable if anything ‘public’ is understood as abstract (i.e., as opposed to particular, individual) rather than as common. In his article called “The Defence of Public Interest or Profanation?” philosopher Žibartas Jackūnas calls the Lietuva case the first one among the simulations of public interest (Jackūnas 2013, 2–8). Jackūnas understands public interest as an abstract need of the majority, which is implemented by governmental institutions because they by definition represent the majority. In such an approach any down-top citizen initiatives that are not committed to representing anyone beside themselves, would be automatically classified as the opinion of a minority, hence unable to represent the public interest. The majority in this approach does not mean the bodily majority, yet correct procedures, and institutions, which follow them, and any embodied will is mainly seen as private. Therefore, the activists, bodily present in the Pro-test Lab or Reformist Square, manifesting the corporeality of the public sphere, breached the very abstractness of the majority, which is the base for such an understanding of ‘public interest’.

‘Public interest’ as a concept is dynamic, constantly changing and thus very difficult to grasp, so in law it is more often defined through judicial practice than in legislation (LVAT 2009: 326), nevertheless the right to represent and to defend what seems to be public interest is granted to everyone. As philosopher and urban activist Jakaterina Lavrinec has noted in a discussion on the protests in the Reformist Square, “I only want to remind, that law speaks not about the community’s opinion, but about the reasoned opinion

from the interested society. The interested society is indeed those who come and show their interest” (Budrys et al. 2009). So in fact public interest cannot exist without those who take part and express their interest, because if this was the case, the critical mass of practice would not be accumulated and no precedent would be set. Stripped of (embodied) practices, ‘public interest’ risks to become an unusable bureaucratic concept; after all, participation is precisely what the ‘interest’ stems from (Lat. *interesse* << *intersum*: to be in the midst; to be present; to take part in).

## 6. Conclusions. The Role of the (Artist’s) Occupation

From the two cases analysed we can see how grassroots movements in urban settings, though small in scale, tend to influence each other: even if distant in time, or of different scope, they gradually make a sort of conceptual rhizome with every segment being a support for the other. In this way some local initiatives with a more universal focus can accumulate, and sometimes even grow to the national level (a good example of this are various initiatives against tree cuttings in Lithuanian urban settings that roughly started in 2014 and peaked several years later).

The alertness about the destiny of public spaces weaved into a single narrative the cases that otherwise might have seemed pretty different—some of them relate to architectural objects and buildings, some to public squares, some to monuments in public squares, some to monuments on architectural structures. The Lietuva Cinema, Green Bridge statues, Reformist Square, Lukiškės Square (the former Lenin Square), Garsas Cinema, Petras Cvirka statue and square, and others are more than often recalled and discussed in parallel in the media and public opinions: all of them seem to be symptoms of the policy of public spaces, which is precisely the reason that incites opposition.

Post-Soviet revisionism is rather neatly interwoven into this policy: differently from the Soviet legacy that was eliminated during the first wave of revisionism, the arguments for the second wave seldom place ‘Soviet ideology’ in the foreground. Whether it was the Tallinn’s Bronze Soldier, Vilnius’s Green Bridge, Cinema Lietuva, or Reformist Square, the first and main argument for relocation or demounting was infrastructural changes or worsening

condition of an object. However, when the plans confronted critique or resistance, the Soviet origin and ideological content became a repeated argument. The Reformist square is an interesting case in this sense, because it was deconstructed in two phases. The sculptural group representing Soviet partisans was swept away by the first wave of revisionism as a clear representative of Soviet ideology, whereas its large architectural pedestal waited for much longer, until practical reasons and the imperative of historical justice dictated reconstruction plans. So the start of the new wave of revisionism is also related to the long-time neglect, when objects or spaces left untouched during the first wave remained, however, in a sort-of no-man’s land for years.

Both in protests and the media, the voice of artists and other cultural professionals is often stronger than the others’, because they do relate to contested spaces and objects not only as citizens or nearby residents, but also professionally, and tend to see them not as isolated stories, but as part of a city’s architectural and cultural fabric. “Values that we are defending, it is not the building itself. It is Lietuva as a public cultural space and a few decades long tradition of cultural life”, wrote the movement Už Lietuvą be Kabučių (Judėjimas 2010). Cultural professionals’ opinions on contested objects and spaces depend not only on their (dis)likings, or political values, but as much on their professional fields and interests.

There is one more important aspect about the cultural professionals, especially the artist’s role in activism, which relates to occupation. In the context of art Julia Bryan-Wilson, as well as Hito Steyerl, have written about ‘occupation’ and ‘occupying’, eloquently displaying the tight relation between all their meaning including holding the position and the control or filling up of time, space, or one’s own or the other’s attention (Bryan-Wilson 2012; Steyerl 2011). When it comes to protesting in public space, occupation is always present, even if shortly. Both the Pro-test Lab and Reformist Square activists occupied the spaces they aimed to protect; while doing that they were occupied with a search of legal, discursive, and performative means to influence the situation; they occupied their spare time with this new form of leisure; this occupation occupied the minds of many.

Yet, occupation also means job, or remunerated life, and I find it important to stress this particular meaning in relation to artistic activism, or activism as an artist's work. Differently from organized social activism, small-scale grassroots activism most often relies on free-time resources, i.e., leisure activism. Yet, for the artists in the Pro-test Lab and people they hired for particular tasks it was the project they engaged within their working time, it was their art work. And although precisely this may lead to conflict within the community, because many can resist the framing of activism as a project and consequently wish to expel artists for "privatisation" of the discourse (Urbonas 2007), it may also be among sources for effectiveness. Even though one can fully sympathize with the resentment of those who do not wish to be subjected to someone's (i.e., the artist's) project, one also may wonder whether this does not hide the thinking that artistic work (only) imitates processes and is never authentic, or is less authentic than the proper process, here, activism. In my opinion, the insistence to draw a line between art and activism makes little sense, because politically engaged art is political activism; like all participatory art practices, it creates aesthetic and social events simultaneously (Michelkevičė 2021, 265–274). Moreover, it seems to me that precisely artistic engagement, or art as work, was an important factor that made the Pro-test Lab in many senses effective—and more effective than the Reformist Square activism. Undertaking the activist task as their project, the artists presumably put all their efforts into making the project work—it is not something they occupy themselves with (in spare time), it is their occupation.

### Acknowledgment

This research was funded by the European Social Fund under the measure No. 09.3.3 LMT K 712 "Development of Competences of Scientists, other Researchers and Students through Practical Research Activities".

### References

Alper, M., 2018. J. Didžiulis apie Reformatų skvero atnaujinimą: taip ardomas pasitikėjimas, LRT.lt, 14 November 2018, <https://www.lrt.lt/naujienos/kultura/12/233942/j-didziulis-apie-reformatu-skvero-atnaujinima-taip-ardomas-pasitikejimas>.

Bankauskaitė, B., 2021. Įpaminklinta Lietuva: griaudami norime spręsti senas problemas, statydami iš jų nesivaduojame, 15min.lt, 6 June 2021, <https://www.15min.lt/naujiena/aktualu/lietuva/ipaminklinta-lietuva-griaudami-norime-spresti-senas-problemas-statydami-is-ju-nesivaduojame-56-1512618>.

Bernardinai.lt, 2010. Viešo intereso gynėjų pergalė – atnaujinta „Lietuvos“ kino teatro byla, Vilma.cc, 28 April 2009, [http://www.vilma.cc/LIETUVA/en\\_index.php?l=EN&mid=0&nid=505](http://www.vilma.cc/LIETUVA/en_index.php?l=EN&mid=0&nid=505).

Bertašiūtė, M., Jačauskas I., 2021. P. Cvirkos paminklas neteko teisinės apsaugos, žadama skverą išlaikyti viešąja erdve, 15min.lt, 24 August 2021, <https://www.15min.lt/kultura/naujiena/naujienos/paveldosaugininkai-isbrauke-p-cvirkos-paminkla-is-kulturos-vertybiu-registro-1104-1554104>.

Blaščák, F., 2010. Public Space, in: Baladrán Z., Havránek V. (Eds.), Atlas of Transformation, JRP | Ringier, Zürich, transit.cz., Prague, pp. 505–508.

Bogdaniėnė, E. G., Mažeikis G., Vaišvilaitė I., 2021. Article prepared by Čebatoriūtė E. Bandydas atsisveikinti su P. Cvirkos paminklu: teisingas siekis ar klaida? Bernardinai.lt, 8 June 2021, <https://www.bernardinai.lt/bandydas-atsisveikinti-su-p-cvirkos-paminklu-teisingas-siekis-ar-klaida/>.

Bryan-Wilson, J., 2012. Occupational Realism, in: Precarity and Performance, special consortium issue, TDR 56:4, 32–48, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/23362770>.

Budrys, Ž., Kreivytė L., Lavrinec J., Pocius K., Tomau Ū., Trilupaitytė S., 2019. Reformatų skvero aktyvizmas. Ar nuo to pradėdame? Public discussion, moderated by Mikalajūnė E., voice recording, 3 April 2019, Doctoral Department of Vilnius Academy of Arts.

Budzinauskienė, E., 2018. Vilniaus miesto savivaldybės pažadas visuomenei pristatyti pakoreguotą Reformatų skvero architektūrinį planą liko neištesėtas, Delfi.lt, 24 September 2018, <https://www.delfi.lt/verslas/nekilnojamos-turtas/vilniaus-miesto-savivaldybes-pazadas-visuomenei-pristatyti-pakoreguota-reformatu-skvero-architekturini-plana-liko-neistesetas.d?id=79140317>.

Čepaitienė, R., 2016. Disonuojantis, erzinantis, nepatogus? Pasmerktųjų politinių režimų palikimas Europoje, in: Patogus ir nepatogus paveldas, conference proceedings, LR valstybinė kultūros paveldo komisija, Kultūros ministerija, Vilnius, pp. 6–21, [https://vkpk.lt/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Patogus-ir-nepatogus-paveldas\\_leidiny\\_s\\_2016.pdf](https://vkpk.lt/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Patogus-ir-nepatogus-paveldas_leidiny_s_2016.pdf).

Černiauskas, Š., 2015. Russian-speaking Lithuanians upset at plans to remove Soviet-era monuments, The Guardian, 16 July 2015, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jul/16/russian-speaking-lithuanians-upset-plans-remove-soviet-era-monuments>.

Činga, E., 2018. Reformatų sodas bus atkurtas pagal vilniečių ir architektų kartu išstobulintą planą, Made in Vilnius, 27 August 2018, <https://madeinvilnius.lt/naujienos/aktualijos/reformatu-sodas-bus-atkurtas-pagal-vilnieciu-ir-architektu-kartu-istobulinta-plana/>.

Císař, O., 2018. Social Movements After Communism, in: Fagan A., Kopecký P. (Eds.), The Routledge Handbook of East European Politics, Routledge, London, pp. 184–196.

Drėmaitė, M., 2021. Interview by Miškinytė R. Architektūros istorikė tikina, kad visas apželdinimas Vilniuje yra penkiasdešimtųjų palikimas, Lrytas.lt, 25 August 2021, <https://www.lrytas.lt/kultura/istorija/2021/08/25/news/architekturos-istorike-tikina-kad-visas-apzeldinimas-vilniuje-yra-penkiasdesimtuju-palikimas-20530034>.

ELTA, 2005. Keli šimtai jaunuolių gynė kino teatrą, žygiuodami parduotuvėje „Maxima“, Delfi.lt, 12 March 2005, <https://www.delfi.lt/veidai/kinas/keli-simtai-jaunuoliu-gyne-kino-teatra-zygiuodami-parduotuveje-maxima.d?id=6237328>.

Gimbutaitė, M., 2018. Reformatų parko atnaujinimo projektas kelia nerimą specialistams: ar deramai atsižvelgta į vietos kontekstą? 15min.lt, 5 July 2018, <https://www.15min.lt/kultura/naujiena/vizualieji-menai/reformatu-parko-atnaujinimo-projektas-kelia-nerima-specialistams-ar-deramai-atsizvelgta-i-vietos-konteksta-929-996700>.

Inforef.lt, 2018. Konsistorijos pozicija dėl Reformatų skvero projekto Vilniuje, Lietuvos Reformatų Evangelikų bažnyčia, 8 September 2018, <https://www.ref.lt/konsistorija/875-konsistorijos-pozicija-del-reformatu-skve>

[ro?fbclid=IwAR1li5XKHwStRzNv4o7S\\_Jx3WbWo4eqK-f4umO8uKLYc4ULuS5pOPYIXnCml](ro?fbclid=IwAR1li5XKHwStRzNv4o7S_Jx3WbWo4eqK-f4umO8uKLYc4ULuS5pOPYIXnCml).

Jačauskas, I., 2019. Kultūros ministras kviečia neskubėti spręsti dėl P. Cvirkos paminklo, 15min.lt, 24 May 2019, <https://www.15min.lt/kultura/naujiena/naujienos/kulturos-ministras-kviecia-neskubeti-spresti-del-p-cvirkos-paminklo-1104-1149740>.

Jacobsson, K., 2015. Conclusion: Towards a New Research Agenda, in: Jacobsson K. (Ed.), Urban Grassroots Movements in Central and Eastern Europe, Ashgate, Farnham, pp. 273–287.

Jackevičius, M., 2007. K. Čilinskas: Šaliai būtinas viešojo intereso įstatymas, Delfi.lt, 25 July 2007, <https://www.delfi.lt/news/daily/lithuania/kcilinskas-saliai-butinas-viesojo-intereso-istatymas.d?id=13885474>.

Jackūnas, Ž., 2013. Viešojo intereso gynimas ar profanacija? Kultūros barai 12, 2–8.

Judėjimas „Už Lietuvą be kabučių“, 2010. Judėjimo „Už Lietuvą be kabučių“ atsakymas p. Arthurui Simonseniui, Vilma.cc, 14 January 2010, [http://www.vilma.cc/LIETUVA/en\\_index.php?!=EN&mid=0&nid=511](http://www.vilma.cc/LIETUVA/en_index.php?!=EN&mid=0&nid=511).

Kaminskaitė-Jančorienė, L., 2019. Kino teatras „Garsas“ – kultūros istorijos ir bendruomenės erdvė, 15min.lt, 10 June 2019, <https://www.15min.lt/kultura/naujiena/asmenybe/l-kaminskaite-jancoriene-kino-teatras-garsas-kulturos-istorijos-ir-bendruomenes-erdve-285-1157022>.

Kielė, J., 2018. Reformatų skvero laiptai veda į nesusikalbėjimą, Kauno diena, 19 October 2018, <https://kauno.diena.lt/naujienos/vilnius/miesto-pulsas/reformatu-skvero-laiptai-veda-i-nesusikalbejima-885172>.

Kongress 2011, 2011. Different Protest is Possible: Protest Lab, Recht auf Stadt. Platform für stadtpolitisch Aktive, 3 June 2011, [http://wiki.rechtaufstadt.net/index.php/Kongress\\_2011/Different\\_protest\\_is\\_possible](http://wiki.rechtaufstadt.net/index.php/Kongress_2011/Different_protest_is_possible).

Kreivyte, L., 2019. O kas toliau? LRT.lt, 29 July 2019, <https://www.lrt.lt/naujienos/kultura/12/1082500/laima-kreivyte-o-kas-toliau>.

Kvietkauskas, M., 2021. Kur veda skuba griauti Cvirkos paminklą? 15min.lt, 1 June 2021, <https://www.15min.lt/kultura/naujiena/asmenybe/mindaugas-kvietkauskas-kur-veda-skuba-griauti-cvirkos-paminkla-285-1513010>.

LDS (Lietuvos dailininkų sąjunga), Lietuvos dailės istorikų draugija, Tarptautinės dailės kritikų asociacijos (Aica) Lietuvos sekcija, 2019. Paveldas natūralioje aplinkoje (pozicija dėl P. Cvirkos paminklo), Lietuvos dailininkų sąjunga, 1 July 2019, [http://www.ldsajunga.lt/NAUJIENOS-1949?fbclid=IwAR3bCEebp1zN5mP2yWalcz2MEledSvbwjSV-J5YpZI\\_xLL\\_nlxO-gPaBEc9s](http://www.ldsajunga.lt/NAUJIENOS-1949?fbclid=IwAR3bCEebp1zN5mP2yWalcz2MEledSvbwjSV-J5YpZI_xLL_nlxO-gPaBEc9s).

LRIKD (Lietuvos Reformacijos istorijos ir kultūros draugija), 2018a. Vilniaus miesto merui R. Šimašui: Dėl Reformatų sodo/skvero atnaujinimo projekto kliuvinių, Lietuvos Reformacijos istorijos ir kultūros draugija, 16 August 2018, <https://reformacija.lt/wordpress/kreipimasis-i-vilniaus-miesto-mera-r-simasiu-del-reformatu-sodo-skvero-atnaujinimo/rastas-merui/>.

LRIKD (Lietuvos Reformacijos istorijos ir kultūros draugija), 2018b. Lietuvos Reformacijos istorijos ir kultūros draugijos neeilinio suvažiavimo Rezoliucija dėl Reformatų skvero atnaujinimo ir paminklo Reformacijai ir lietuviškos raštijos pradininkams, Lietuvos Reformacijos istorijos ir kultūros draugija, 15 September 2018, [https://reformacija.lt/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Rezoliucija\\_Reformatu\\_skveras\\_2018.pdf](https://reformacija.lt/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Rezoliucija_Reformatu_skveras_2018.pdf).

LRKM (Lietuvos Respublikos kultūros ministerija), 2021. S. Kairys: Pasirinkome laisvos valstybės vertybes, Lietuvos respublikos kultūros ministerija, 24 August 2021, <https://lrkm.lrv.lt/lt/naujienos/s-kairys-pasirinkome-laisvos-valstybes-vertybes>.

LVAT (Lietuvos vyriausiasis administracinis teismas), 2009. Lietuvos vyriausiojo administracinio teismo praktikos, nagrinėjant bylas pagal viešąjį interesą ginančių subjektų skundus (prašymus), apibendrinimas, Lietuvos vyriausiasis administracinis teismas, approved 18 March 2009, uploaded 16 January 2018, [https://www.lvat.lt/data/public/uploads/2018/01/16\\_apibendrinimas.pdf](https://www.lvat.lt/data/public/uploads/2018/01/16_apibendrinimas.pdf).

Michelkevičė, L., 2021. Būti dalimi. Dalyvavimas ir bendradarbiavimas Lietuvos šiuolaikiniame mene, Vilniaus dailės akademijos leidykla, Vilnius.

Mikalajūnė, E., Antanavičiūtė R., 2012. Vilnius Monuments: A Story of Change, Lietuvos dailės muziejus, Vilniaus dailės akademijos leidykla, Vilnius.

Mikalajūnė, E., Miler I., Žickytė G., Žukauskas J., 2018. Interview by Juocevičiūtė E. Reformatų skveras: lūžio taškas viešųjų erdvių atnaujinimo istorijoje? Bernardinai.lt, 9 August 2018, <https://www.bernardinai.lt/2018-08-09-reformatu-skveras-luzio-taskas-viesuju-erdviu-atnaujinimo-istorijoje/>.

Reformatų skvero iniciatyvinė grupė, 2018. Stabdykite Reformatų skvero projekto įgyvendinimą, Peticijos, <https://www.peticijos.lt/visos/74825/stabdykite-reformatu-skvero-projekto-igyvendinima/>.

Reklaitė, J., Taunytė, E., Visminaitė, A., 2016. Interview by Trilupaitytė S. Ar gali drugeliai sukelti audras? Retrospektyvūs pamąstymai apie lietuviškuosius protestus, Literatūra ir menas, 1 July 2016, <https://literaturaimenas.lt/publicistika/ar-drugeliai-gali-sukelti-audras-skaidros-trilupaitytes-pokalbis-su-julija-reklaite-asta-visminaitė-ir-ev-elina-taunyte>.

Vilniaus bendruomenių asociacija et al., 2018. Forumo „Strateginės bylos prieš visuomenės dalyvavimą Lietuvoje: ką daryti“ rezoliucija, Lietuvos Respublikos seimas, 23 October 2018, [https://www.lrs.lt/sip/getFile3?p\\_fid=9945](https://www.lrs.lt/sip/getFile3?p_fid=9945).

Ropolas, A., 2018. Reformatų sodas – Vilniaus pralaimėjimas. 15min.lt, 10 July 2018, <https://www.15min.lt/kultura/naujiena/vizualieji-menai/reformatu-sodas-vilniaus-pralaimėjimas-929-998894>.

Sputnik, 2021. Paveldosaugininkai išbraukė Cvirkos paminklą iš saugomų kultūros vertybių sąrašo, Sputnik Lietuva, 24 August 2021, <https://sputniknews.lt/20210824/paveldosaugininkai-isbrauke-cvirkos-paminkla-is-saugomu-kulturos-vertybiu-saraso-18294855.html>.

Steyerl, H., 2011. Art as Occupation: Claims for an Autonomy of Life, E-flux journal 30, <https://www.e-flux.com/journal/30/68140/art-as-occupation-claims-for-an-autonomy-of-life/>.

Urbonas, G. et al., 2006. “Kreipimasis dėl buvusio „Lietuvos“ kino teatro likimo ir su juo susijusio sostinės kultūros politikos formavimo, Culture.lt, 11 July 2006, <http://www.culture.lt/peticija/>.

Urbonas, N. and G., 2005. Interview by Lovink G. Hacking Public Spaces in Vilnius, Institute of Network Cultures, 22 June 2005, <https://networkcultures.org/blog/2005/06/22/hacking-public-spaces-in-vilnius/>.

Urbonas, N. and G., 2007. Interview by Ricupero C. Flying High, CAC Interviu 7-8, 60–63.

Urbonas, N. and G., 2008. Devices for Action, MACBA, Barcelona.

Urbonas, N. and G., 2016. Interview by Dūdėnas J. A004: MMC. Interviu su Gediminu ir Nomedą Urbonais, Aikštėje, podcast, 6 February 2016, <https://xn--aiktje-l4a40d.lt/a004-mmc-interviu-su-gediminu-ir-nomeda-urbonais/#more-198>.

Urbonas, N. and G., 2020. The Pro-test Lab, The Drouth, <http://www.thedrouth.org/the-pro-test-lab-by-nomeda-gediminas-urbonas/>.

Vaišvilaitė, I., 2020. Parkų ilgesys, Naujasis Židinys-Aidai, 1 October 2020, <https://nzidiny.lt/irena-vaivilaite-parku-ilgesys-nz-a-nr-5/>.

Veličkaitė, D., 2019. Viešasis interesas ir jo įgyvendinimo sąlygos architektūros srityje, Doctoral dissertation, Vilnius University, 2019.