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Placemaking Strategies and
Spatial Configurations of
Artist-Run Organizations
in Los Angeles

A thesis submitted in partial satisfaction
of the requirements for the degree Master of Arts
in Geography

by

Diane Ward

2012

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ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

Placemaking Strategies and
Spatial Configurations of
Artist-Run Organizations
in Los Angeles

by

Diane Ward

Master of Arts in Geography

University of California, Los Angeles, 2012

Professor Lisa Kim Davis, Chair

My focus in this study is on the role of artist-run organizations in creative cities. I argue that where artists decide to locate is not always predicated on amenities that already exist in place nor is it always determined by cultural trends that may cluster in certain areas of cities. Artists *create* places rather than simply consuming already constructed places and the places, in turn, condition this creation. The small-scale, artist-run organizations studied here have been under-examined in the creative cities literature. Artists are addressing questions of social and economic justice through their organizations and through neighborhood and community involvement. A look at the demographics of artist locations and occupations, brief histories that contextualize three artist-run organizations in Los

Angeles, and interviews with key figures in these organizations are presented. Placemaking goals and strategies, along with the resulting spatial effects of artist practices, are examined. The three case studies show that artists create places through involvement in their chosen communities and neighborhoods, often focusing on social and economic issues.

This thesis of Diane Ward is approved.

Michael R. Curry

David L. Rigby

Lisa Kim Davis, Committee Chair

University of California, Los Angeles

2012

for George and Jackson

*"For every atom belonging to me
as good belongs to you."*

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Part I: Research Overview

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Artists and creative cities: statement of the research problem

This study focuses on small-scale, artist-run organizations in urban metropolitan areas. It examines artists' agency in placemaking and the ways the goals they formulate and strategies they engage in differ from the "creative cities" normative prescription for urban revitalization embraced by Richard Florida and others (Florida 2002a, 2002b, 2004). Artists function as cultural consumers and producers in cities but also engage in constructing the places in which they participate in arts practices. Furthermore, the construction of these places is conditioned by the locales in which artists choose to live and work. Those choices are not simply based on amenities but also involve the desire to engage with, and affect, the communities and neighborhoods in which they work and live.

In twenty-first century cities, creativity permeates many social interactions and public events, both planned and spontaneous. When creativity is ever-present in the highly-mobile urban population that prizes social capital, the boundaries between cultural product and experience become blurred; for example, the sign-value of shoes overrides their functional value, the ability to track food trucks is a measure of one's social network connectivity and acumen and the

experience of 'grabbing a bite to eat' becomes an interaction with cuisines from around the globe mediated (and often hybridized and combined) by the place of consumption.

The impetus for this research is a simple question: if creativity pervades daily life, then what role do artists and their organizations centered around a self-conscious creativity play in the urban spectacle? These organizations, sometimes housed in an artist-run space, do not follow structural or formal blueprints when they are established. Although there is a lot of interaction between artists throughout the world and artists influence and inspire one another, there are differences in these spaces and organizations depending upon the places they are located. The objectives of artist organizations are sometimes focused on a local community and, at other times are intended to encompass regional, national, or international audiences and participants. What are the objectives and how do they affect organizational strategies? What spatial outcomes are possible and expected by activities initiated by artist-run organizations? These organizations are located in neighborhoods and form connections to communities. How do economic histories in these communities inform or limit the goals and strategies of these organizations? How important are self-defined roles for artists as individuals who critique social and economic relations?

1.2 Method and methodology

Los Angeles has experienced a large and steady influx of artists. Secondary data recording the number of artists in the workforce in American states, of artists' in- and out-migration to metropolitan areas, of these areas' nonprofit arts organizations and location quotients of selected cultural industries – including a focus on Los Angeles – are all presented in order to explain the lively creative activity by artists and workers in creative occupations (these two often overlap) in Southern California.

This research examines three Los Angeles artist-run organizations. The first is the Leimert Park Art Walk in Leimert Park Village in the Crenshaw neighborhood; the second includes several site-based community arts projects initiated by Metabolic Studio located on the banks of the Los Angeles River in an industrial area north of the Chinatown neighborhood in downtown Los Angeles; the third is the Public School – part of a global network of Public Schools – located on a walk street in the downtown Chinatown neighborhood. Through brief histories as well as interviews with key figures in these three organizations, the spatial effects of the goals and organizational choices of an artist organization engaged in placemaking in each neighborhood are examined.

Through semi-structured interviews (see Appendix A for interview questions) with key figures in each of three case study organizations,

I have painted a "picture" of the goals and strategies of each. "Key figures" refers to individuals I identified as having an intensive and long-standing involvement with the organization. These were often the community leaders or artists with particular visions and approaches to community building through cultural activities.

The specific study cases were chosen because their economic opportunities, goals, and resulting spatial reach are representative across a range of possibilities. Leimert Park is focused on a relatively small urban area and is attempting to draw in outsiders in order to build the community's autonomy and economic base; Metabolic Studio is both a funding source for other artist organizations and a source of site-based, community-centered art projects initiated and financially supported by the Annenberg Foundation; The Public School is self-consciously focused on local programming while being a part of a global network of Public Schools; it is a loose-based cooperative that evolved from an initial focus on social exchange, interactivity and participation by "multiple publics." As a poet, I have been involved in readings organized by The World Stage in Leimert Park and have read my poetry at the Poetics Research Bureau, housed at The Public School in Los Angeles; thus, I felt a certain comfort and familiarity in approaching prominent individuals in these organizations for interviews. Also, I believed I could use my prior insight and experience in order to direct the interviews and to follow up responses to my interview questions with comments conducive to opening up a discussion about these place-related issues.

1.3 Review of the literature

The importance of the arts in creating a place-identity for cities and metropolitan areas is built upon the assumption by scholars and policymakers that, in the new "creative economy," arts activities will function as a magnet for those engaged in cognitive-cultural economy occupations – filled most often by highly-educated workers – in sectors from motion pictures or recorded music to utilitarian but highly-designed products such as shoes and kitchen utensils (Grodach 2011; Scott 2008; Florida 2002). These sectors produce outputs whose sign-value to the consumer outweighs their utilitarian value (Scott 2008: 84-85). Firms in these sectors agglomerate locally in industrial districts or specialized clusters (Scott 2008: 84-85). The clustering of firms engaged in cultural economy outputs enables information sharing, buyer-supplier links, and labor pooling. This environment enables a pool of labor, including creative workers, to be more footloose. Artists' skills and knowledge fit into this agglomerative creative economy and they tend to be self-employed as well as footloose (Markusen 2006a: 1926). Florida's normative agenda to make cities appealing to high-skill and talented workers includes the development of bikepaths and cafes, for instance, but his regression analyses don't find art galleries particularly consequential in this process (Florida 2002, 2004 cited in Scott 2008: 80).

Markusen's research has focused on small-scale art spaces in their social and economic contexts. She identifies artists as more apt to be self-employed than those in the labor force as a whole, a function of the prevalence of contingent and contractual work in both arts and nonarts firms (Markusen 2006a: 1926). Artists cluster in central urban neighborhoods that are denser and tend to be transitional. These central locations offer more access to art schools, artist centers, affordable live/work and studio space, and nightlife opportunities (Markusen 2006a: 1930-31). Furthermore, for artists, the attractive forces of cities:

. . . include agglomerations of artist-hiring employers in media, advertising and arts, and entertainment industries, as well as amenities such as lower costs of living, recreational and environmental amenities, and rich and innovative cultural conventions (Markusen 2006a: 1928).

Markusen finds the metropolitan-revitalization-through-creativity literature to be negligent regarding the small spaces and organizations that form the infrastructure for artists to work, exhibit, and develop their art (Markusen 2006a: 1935). Her typology of "artist-centric spaces" includes: artist centers (dedicated spaces where access is mostly available to all comers); artist live/work and studio buildings, often found in close proximity or within arts districts where knowledge sharing can occur and where art walks are staged, raising artistic activities' visibility in the city; and smaller-scale performing arts venues often located in obsolete buildings, abandoned garages or theaters. Though underappreciated in urban economy literature, this intensive urban activity of smaller arts spaces can attract and nurture artists and contribute to the

stability and diversity of neighborhood economies (Markusen 2006a: 1934-1935; Grodach 2011).

What role – if any -- do artist-run organizations play in the region's economic growth? Richard Florida's *The Rise of the Creative Class* (Florida, 2002) posited the importance of the "creative class" in the regeneration of metropolitan areas. In subsequent and ongoing work, Florida delineates a set of indices quantifying the qualities, termed amenities, necessary to attract a sufficiently creative workforce. Florida's roadmap to regeneration and growth has been criticized for being overly-dependent upon a city model that is understood as nothing more than an aggregate of ". . . free-floating individuals . . . restructured simply by . . . [the] fine-tuning of their amenities so as to . . . attract targeted population groups" (Scott 2006: 81). The idea of creativity as it is used in Florida's measure of the creative class has been deemed "fuzzy" (Markusen, *Env & Planning A* 2006, Vol 38, p1924) and the very attempt to quantify creativity embodied in certain individuals (in Florida's model they are always highly-educated) has been challenged in favor of a creativity-as-a-commons with the potential for 'infinite returns to scale' (Bromberg in Edensor 2010, 218).

Despite the romantic vision of the lone genius, artists do not function as free-floating individuals. Creativity is socially constructed. Scott's, Markusen's, and Bromberg's more expansive definition of the role of 'creativity' in the urban economy moves away

from Florida's ideal city as an aggregate of creative individuals (whose presence attracts more of the same while discouraging the participation of all less-educated, less tolerant, and, presumably, less creative). Markusen's view of artists in the city recognizes that artists are often opposed to elite aesthetic and political values, instead -- and particularly through artist-run spaces -- lending a stabilizing presence (Markusen 2006 Env & A, 1922). Through art practices situated within particular neighborhoods, artists are able to challenge societal status quo in terms of content as well as in terms of the structure and organization of spaces and group practices.

Furthermore, Bromberg argues that artist spaces create the opportunity to embrace difference and nurture a *vernacular* creativity (Elsenor, 216). Vernacular creativity is grounded in the materiality and experience of everyday life -- a creativity that is neither elite nor institutionalized, not ordinary nor spectacular; it is identified by its commonness. Similar to slang, this everyday creativity is grounded in the contextual specificity of temporal, social, and geographic processes (Burgess in Elsenor: 117). This vernacular creativity is developed by people in place and, through its practice in artist-run spaces, may begin to formulate an approach that addresses Scott's point that ". . . any push to achieve urban creativity in the absence of a wider concern for conviviality and camaraderie . . . in the urban community as a whole is doomed to remain radically unfinished" (Scott 2006: 15).

Situated between the influences of 1960s political and social justice movements and the constraints of dwindling public resources due to neoliberal policies beginning in the 1980s, artists through their artist-run spaces began to address the confluence of questions of social and economic justice through cultural content as well as through organizational structures and goals. Scott points out that creativity is ". . . a materially grounded reflection of . . . challenges and opportunities;" creativity is a socially constructed phenomenon, not an extra-social abstraction that has suddenly developed (Scott, 2008, 77-78). Particular economic and social resources are available to artists in particular places. Through their spaces, artists engage in community building, formulate goals and strategies, and create places that are expressions of these particularities.

1.4 Definition of terms

1.4.1 Space

Artist-run organizations, often centered on small urban artist spaces, differ from both for-profit art galleries and publicly-owned art museums. The vernacular terminology for a site of artist activities, is *space*; used as in *arts space*. This terminology is also used in academic research when identifying the urban spaces that artists initiate and run (Grodach 2011; Zukin 1989). The three artist-run

"spaces" in this study, however, are not bounded spaces in the sense that a gallery or museum is a bounded space; they are not loft spaces, nor live-work spaces, but function as centers and points-of-origin for artistic activities that are conceived and enacted in specific places. These three artist-run sites are engaged in placemaking and in community building. Without the imperative to show a profit, these spaces often focus on education and community building, two goals often associated with art schools, museums, and city cultural institutions. Due to distinct place-based goals and strategies, the three organizations' goals and strategies in this study result in different organizational and spatial effects as they reflect and nurture the communities and neighborhoods in which they are situated.

1.4.2 Creativity

Creative as in the "creative city" and "creative economy" refers to an economy that encompasses the sciences, high technology, engineering, as well as the arts, a definition that Markusen finds too broad and urges that it be 'disaggregated' (Grodach: 75; Markusen 2006). In promoting an approach to urban revitalization using the "creative cities" model, artists and their creative practices function as amenities to attract the creative class (Florida 2002).

When not referring specifically to the creative economy or creative cities, I use the term 'creativity' in connection to artists, artists spaces, and artists practices. This creativity is one that is focused on building bonds of trust and social capital in particular places,

rooted in particular neighborhoods or communities, and engaging in creative and dynamic events and activities. It is a form of artistic work that is social in its resources, intentions, and effects.

1.4.3 Community and Neighborhood

This section will begin with an examination of the ways community and neighborhood have been defined by geographers in order to clearly delineate between a neighborhood or community as object of revitalization and a neighborhood or community as agent of (its own) revitalization. Artist-run organizations are not commercial enterprises, nor do they aspire to engage with the commercial art market. In order to situate the study's three artist-run organizations and the community-based arts practices each engages in, this section will trace the historical evolution of art markets as they transitioned from guilds to the academy in Western Europe; it will then examine the development of United States museums in the Twentieth Century, particularly their focus on the normative education of workers in industrializing urban areas.

Community, as defined by the Chicago School of sociologists, is the basis for social organization, an understanding that fostered a connotation with neighborhood. The Chicago School's understanding of community has its roots in German sociologist Ferdinand Tönnies' *gemeinschaft*, the mutual support of one's family and intimate community, the sort of support found in a rural village but able to be applied in an urban setting [Martin: 104]. Any definition of community

usually includes some reference to area, common ties, and social interaction [Knox: 48]. In this study, the concept of community as *related to neighborhood* applies most directly to one of the study sites, Leimert Park Village.

Neighborhood, although long conflated with community, has no fixed scale but is explicitly more territorial in its meaning than community. A neighborhood is usually an "urban area dominated by residential uses" [Martin: 494]. Although one can speak of a suburban neighborhood, the definition implies a neighborhood is relatively small and walkable and so the auto-centric and sprawling suburbs would not seem to fit very well into that definition.

The following typologies of community span a wide range of conceptions of community from those defined only by vague geographic boundaries to those that are focused more on shared activities and social interaction. They are useful to keep in mind when analyzing the different approaches to placemaking and defining community in the three study areas (Martin: 494; Knox: 48).

Type	Characteristics
Arbitrary	General localities and imprecise limits
Physical	Distinctive environments with clear boundaries
Homogenous	Distinctive and internally homogenous environmental and physical characteristics
Functional	United by particular patterns (i.e. working,

	learning)
Community	Contain close-knit groups engaged in primary social interaction

1.4.4 Placemaking

The artist-run entities in this study each have unique goals and strategies in their approaches to placemaking. Placemaking occurs in each case but a blanket description of the process would not apply to all. Place can be defined in a variety of ways including place as location (where an activity occurs or an object is located); place as a series of locales where everyday-life occurs; and place as sense of place (identifying with it as a unique community, landscape, moral order)(Agnew: 326 in Sage Handbook of Geographical Knowledge).

Furthermore, places are relational rather than bounded and are located in a series of networks (cultural, economic, political); mobility (as in commuting between places) is inherent and not anathema to places. Another facet of the definition of place is one that is particularly important in understanding why the artist-run spaces in this study defy bounded spatial description; a contextual view of place and time locates them somewhere in which some contexts are stretched over space (The Public School) and others are more localized (Leimert). Each place in this study is engaged in placemaking within a changing balance of an expansive, stretched context *and* a more local one.

Placemaking also occurs in cyberspace but is always "grounded

somewhere and in someone's sociospatial imagination." Finally and also important in understanding the artist entities in this study is that places provide venues and social settings for new ideas (Agnew: 328). Scott's theorized urban "field of creative and innovative energies" is an expression of this understanding of place (Scott 2008: 13).

1.4.5 Creative Economy

There are a variety of terms applied to the alternative model of post-Fordist economic organization and development that began to appear in the late 1970s: the New Economy, Cognitive Capitalism, Post-Fordism, Cognitive-Cultural Economy, Creative Economy, among others. This study will use the term "Creative Economy," often used to include those occupations that are filled by a highly-educated work force: science, high technology, and engineering (Grodach 2011; Scott 2008; Florida 2002). Highly concentrated in large metropolitan areas in the 21st century, this economy exhibits a system of production that is flexible, focuses on small production runs, has transaction-intensive networks of producers, heightened risk in the form of instability and unpredictability in the labor market.

In addition, this new creative economy enables the formation of "a distinct field of creative and innovative energies;" this field comprises links and nodes in a complex and constantly changing system of information exchanges. This ever-emerging field forms in cities with a new *everyday cosmopolitanism* of individuals that embrace a mix of culture and identities (Scott 2008). Scott, citing Lloyd and Clark

(2001) characterizes these 21st century cosmopolitan cities as "entertainment machines" where the urban spectacle is carried out in gentrified residential neighborhoods and high-design production spaces that attract privileged high-tier workers (Scott 2008: 17). This function of city-as-playground is often one of the more apparent roles that artists and their activities play in urban areas; it is not, however, always – or even often – the purpose of artists' practices.

Part II: Analyses

Case Studies



Figure 1: Case study sites in Los Angeles

Introduction

The practices that are developed by those associated with the artist spaces in this study can all be considered "community-based." However, the three artist-run organizations espouse different goals and strategies and depend heavily on how "community" is defined. In the

context of urban planning and the cultural economy, community-based arts *activity* has been defined as both the consumption and production of art that is reflective of a specific group of people whose geographic location and/or identify inform a shared sense of values and practices; artist-run *spaces* without a permanent collection nor a focus on sales as their primary mission (including, for instance, several storefronts on a city block that delineate a more generalized conception of space comprised of several discrete sites) can be defined as those that are publicly accessible and focused specifically on the support and presentation of regional art work (Grodach 2011: 74-77).

These diverse community-based arts centers can be situated historically in the expansion of arts audiences that began to blur the boundaries between artistic producers and arts consumers -- a shift identified by Zukin in her study of cultural changes around artists and live/work lofts in New York City in the 1970s. At the same time as this blurring of "who" engages in arts practices has affected those engaged in artist organizations in this study, there is a growing emphasis on the site, the geography, of artist spaces as an important component in the identification of community and, by extension, the purpose, goals, and strategies of the arts organizations themselves.

The three Los Angeles artist-run organizations in this study are specifically concerned with revitalization. However, they each pursue revitalization by way of community arts practices expressed through

specific needs and specific conceptions of community; therefore, the goals and the forms of each of these revitalizations differs accordingly. Leimert Park Village, through its monthly art walk through the streets of the local commercial district, is focused on economic revitalization through cultural activities. Metabolic Studio, through its various site-based projects is concerned with a more ecologically informed revitalization of communities of residents along with the neglected and degraded environments of the places in which they are situated. Finally, the Public School is concerned with the revitalization of the public sphere through educational programs sourced and executed locally all the while being consciously situated within a global network of artistic practices. The operational framework of the Public Schools promotes an expansive definition of community that is simultaneously global and local.

Introductory history of study sites

Leimert Park Village is a one-square-mile section of the Crenshaw district of Los Angeles, situated at Leimert and Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevards. Created in 1927 by architect Walter Leimert as an upscale, whites-only bedroom community, it once had a golf course and several airstrips (Howard Hughes learned to fly here). The area's commercial center, known as Leimert Park Village, is at 43rd Place and Degnan Boulevard. With a small park, coffeehouse, dance theater, movies, shops, boutiques, and art galleries, the village has developed

since the 1970s as a center for African American culture (Pitt and Pitt, 254).

By the mid-1990s, 14,000 mostly Chinese immigrants lived in Chinatown but the true center of Chinese life in southern California has migrated to Monterey Park and Alhambra. The Community Redevelopment Agency has maintained a project on 300 acres in Chinatown since 1980 (Pitt and Pitt, 89). This was the site of the artwork entitled "Not a Cornfield," a project initiated by the Metabolic Studio, and was a living sculpture in the form of a field of corn planted for one agricultural cycle transforming what was left from the industrial era into a renewed space for the public. The artwork was intended to act as a catalyst for the community's involvement; the California Department of Parks and Recreation established a state historical park at this site.

The Public School is located nearby in a storefront amidst Chinese bakeries and antique shops on the walk streets of Chinatown. While still the site of a vibrant Chinese cultural community, beginning in 2000 the vacant storefronts in the pedestrian walkways of Chinatown began to be rented by artists and developed into a vibrant cultural scene with bars, shops, commercial galleries, and artist spaces. Following the advent of the economic crisis in 2008, commercial galleries dealing in contemporary art relocated to Culver City but the artist-run spaces, for the most part, remained.

Chapter 2: Leimert Park Arts Community

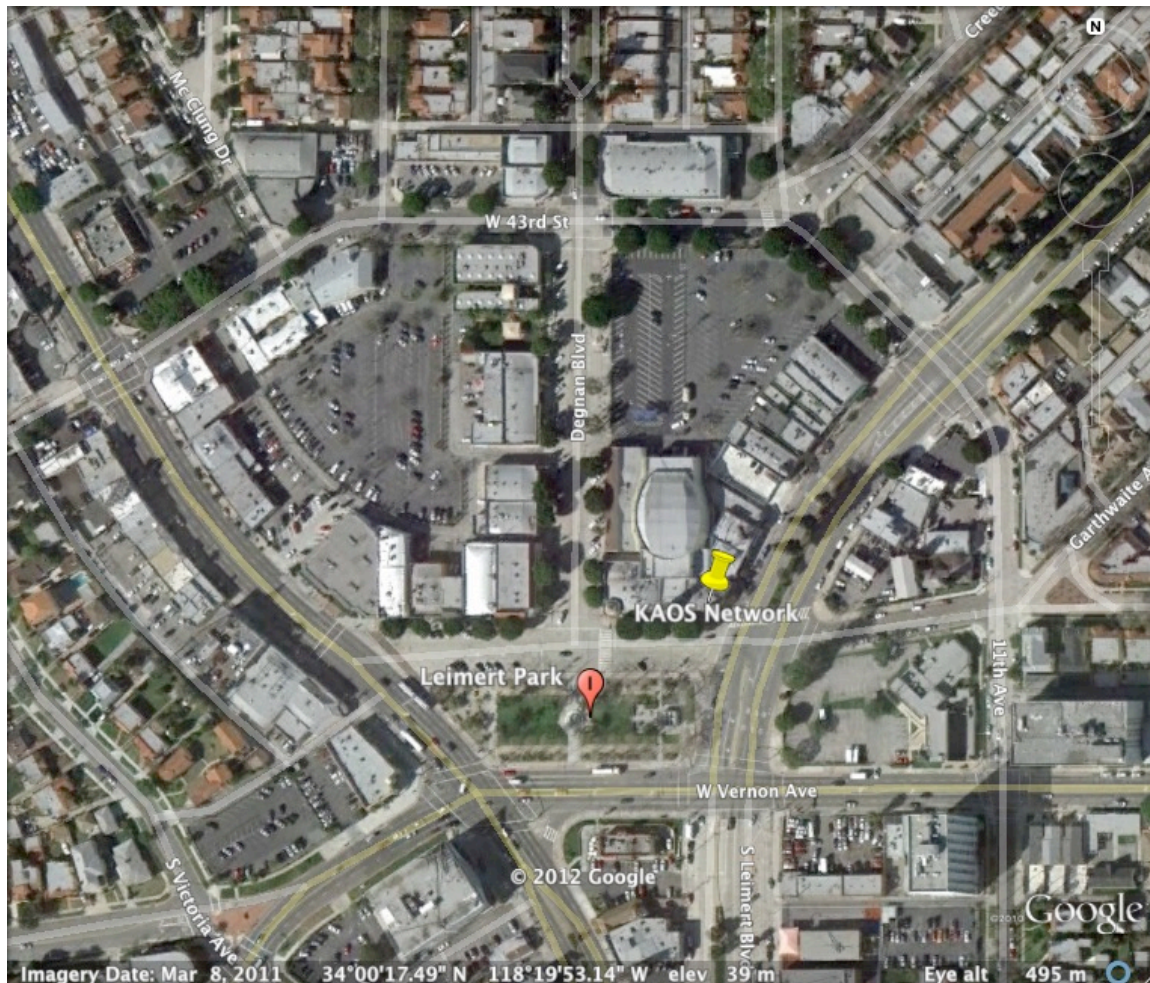


Figure 2: Case study – Leimert Park Village

Driving down the streets of Leimert Park Village, it is clear the Park, a rectangular green open space within the decidedly urban surroundings of South Los Angeles, is unique in its environs. It is almost as if the areas' desirable "park-like setting" (the sort Lewis Mumford would have found only in the suburbs) had been guarded and actively preserved through the periods of development and civil unrest

that have roiled the surrounding area. There is a sudden disruption of the fast-paced urban sprawl that is characteristic of car cities: wide streets, the lack of sidewalks, rail stations, and a center (Glaser 2011: 13). Pulling off Crenshaw Boulevard and onto 43rd Street, one has the sense of entering a more quiet and protected zone nestled within, but away from, the fast-paced traffic on Crenshaw.

There is no gated community here, however, and neither is there an urge to keep gentrification at bay; rather, the residents and local business owners want to attract strangers into their midst, to gentrify their neighborhood for themselves (Caldwell 2011). Glaser notes that cities built around trains and elevators (evidenced in Chicago's Loop and New York's Manhattan) would have shops on the streets whereas Los Angeles' retail businesses are more likely to be found clustered in shopping malls far from the streets and pedestrians (Glaser 2011: 13). Leimert Park Village, however, comprises a series of small shops that line a concentrated retail section of South Los Angeles. The residents insist that the new Crenshaw/LA light rail line include a station in Leimert Village. Ridley-Thomas, a member of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, writes that Leimert Park is a "gem," the center of L.A.'s African American arts scene with a concentration of cultural institutions unique to the region, singling out its "art walk that draws thousands of visitors from throughout the county;" Ridley-Thomas identifies Leimert Park as the Crenshaw community's Mariachi Plaza, Venture Boulevard, its Sunset Strip" (Ridley-Thomas, Mark. 5/26/2011. "Stop in the name of Leimert." *Los*

Angeles Times, A17).

Leimert Park Village is located within the eighth council district – the Crenshaw District -- along with Culver City and Inglewood. The rectangular Leimert Plaza Park is an atypical green oasis in South Los Angeles bounded by small shops, restaurants, bookstores, and arts spaces. Being on the street gives one the feeling of a cross between a classic, American town square and a bustling, urban community. To the north of the Park, the neighborhood comprises Spanish Colonial style homes, 1930s art deco apartment buildings, and post-war bungalows. To the east, high rise buildings house senior residents, including musicians and artists whose involvement in the Los Angeles African-American community reaches back to the heyday of the Central Avenue jazz clubs. Community building by local residents has centered around the arts and focused on nurturing local youth through programs such as "Project Blowed." Alongside this emphasis on neighborhood youth, there is the awareness that the history embodied in the lives of the local elderly residents is an integral part of the revitalization around culture and art that will enable Leimert Park to become a sustaining place of the African-American [population] in Los Angeles (Caldwell 2011).

On a Saturday, the tree-lined streets encompassing wide sidewalks and small business storefronts that surround Leimert Plaza Park are full of people who are greeting and interacting with one another. Jane Jacobs described a street in 1960s East Harlem that had an "old-city

side" full of public places and sidewalk loitering as well as a "project side," described as uninviting, impersonal, and full of anonymous people (Jacobs: 57). Leimert Plaza Park, as the geographic center of local merchants' and artists' placemaking, situates the "old-city side" in the center of the impersonal, anonymous urban. The intention, according to Ben Caldwell of KAOS Network, is that Leimert Park, and its monthly neighborhood art walk, will function as a magnet attracting cultural consumers from outside the neighborhood to a coherent presentation of the cultural production of local artists. This cultural center is also intended to be a center for those (particularly the youth) in the local African-American community whom he refers to as the "aggrieved," who have been discouraged from, or unable to, reap the economic benefits of their community's substantial cultural contributions of the past as well as the potential contributions yet to be realized (Caldwell 2011). For more than twenty-five years Caldwell, who began making films as a graduate student at UCLA in the 1970s, has run KAOS Network, a multi-media arts center that offers youth the support and space to develop as musicians and filmmakers (Markusen 2006: 12).

The neighborhood of Leimert Park was designed by the sons of Frederick Olmstead and developed in 1928 as an early prototype of a planned community (Gordon: 64). Although it was initially a whites-only community for middle-income families including whites-only housing covenants, Leimert Park is today a center of Afro-centric, community-based art in Los Angeles. Its many small storefront spaces display and

trade in a variety of African, and African-American cultural products (including clothing, food, books and records, musical instruments, various crafts products, as well as history exhibitions); community power and self-determination is being self-consciously retained, concentrated, and reclaimed through art spaces nurtured by the neighborhood's civic leaders. For instance, Babe's and Ricky's Inn closed its door in 2011 but was in operation for 40 years and was a transplant from Los Angeles' Central Avenue; the World Stage bills itself as an educational and performance arts gallery and is associated with the Watts Writers' Workshop.

Leimert Park is situated within the boundaries of the 1992 rebellion and violence that followed the acquittal of four white Los Angeles police officers of charges in the beating of African-American Rodney King. What some call the "Justice Riots" (Soja: 142) occurred following the 1991 killing of Latasha Harlins by a Korean grocer (who suspected the teenager was stealing food and who was sentenced to community service), the beating of Rodney King following a traffic stop, and the 1992 trial in which the officers were found not guilty (Johnson, et al., 357-358; Morgan: 26). While this rebellion was a multi-ethnic event – in contrast to the civil disorders of the 1960s – the officers' defense attorneys as well as the media played the "so-called race card," portraying King as dangerous and out of control – a stereotype that has often been "applied categorically to black males . . . especially if they reside in the inner city" (Johnson, et al: 358). South Central Los Angeles, an area renamed South Los Angeles in

2003 by the Los Angeles City Council in an attempt to combat negative connotations attached to the neighborhood, suffered from the same type of negative categorization (Sims 2003). Caldwell aligns the goals of the Leimert Park Art Walk and related cultural activities with this name change; one of the primary goals is to “rebrand” Leimert Park to combat the area’s “Boyz ‘n the Hood” profile (“Leimert Park Art Walk 2010”).

Many young people of color felt there were intentional attacks on them following the 1992 events that resulted in the widespread and violent civil unrest. The passage of Proposition 187 denying public education and health services to undocumented immigrants, Proposition 209 ending affirmative action, and California’s “three strikes law” that erases the distinction between violent and non-violent offenses as well as police corruption that came to light in the LAPD Rampart scandal (Morgan: 30) created an environment in which urban youth felt criminalized and intentionally singled out for attack. As noted by Soja, rather than reacting with hopelessness, there was a recognition by the “resilient working poor,” mostly people of color, that grassroots organizing would be an essential tool in combating this newfound recognition of abandonment – and unwarranted criminalization – by government and police (Soja: 143). One response to these circumstances was developed within the Leimert Park arts community. In 1994, filmmaker Ben Caldwell, founder of Video 3333 and KAOS Network, an art center, offered space to a local group of young hip-hop artists. These artists had been meeting at the Good Life, a neighborhood health

food store, at night and needed to find another space. The sessions at KAOS Network evolved into Project Blowed, Los Angeles's most influential freestyle hip-hop competition (Morgan: 30).

Caldwell made several visits to Cuba along with Adolfo Nodal, former General Manager of the Los Angeles' Cultural Affairs Department from 1988-2001. The experience of Cuban artists and cultural expression has been influential to Caldwell and informed the approach to arts-based cultural developments in the changing demographics of South Los Angeles. Beginning the late 1970s, the population of South Los Angeles has gone from one that is predominantly black to one that is mixed black and Latino with resulting tensions between the two groups (Johnson et al.: 359). Caldwell's visits to Cuba have informed his insistence that the black youth of South Los Angeles share profound historical experiences with their Latino neighbors; an insistence that the two groups can foster cooperation and shared goals – particularly around cultural production – and overcome animosity and violence.

The mission of KAOS Network, like the World Stage, includes pedagogy as well as performance art. Kamau Da'ood, a founder of the World Stage, makes a distinction between community art – the art practice of the Leimert Park spaces – and 'larger' art forms that are driven by money and the profitability of the project. KAOS Network's practice, similarly, is focused on pedagogy, operating on the local level (Gordon: 80).

A recent meeting of the Leimert Park Artwalk committee was held, as usual, at tables set up on the tree-lined sidewalk outside KAOS Network. Those in attendance represented neighborhood business owners, artists, and activists involved in a wide range of cultural activities including the creation of miniature dolls, avant garde dance and performance, curating film programs, health and nutrition education, public education, and music promotion. At the invitation of Caldwell, Judith Bowman, the Development Director of Robey Theater Company in Los Angeles (named for Paul Robeson) attended the meeting. Bowman, who is also an attorney, and Caldwell have known one another for 25 years; Bowman helped Caldwell apply for his first grant.

Caldwell oversees art walk planning meetings that are held every Saturday at noon. The art walks began in June 2010 and take place on the last Sunday of every month. The meetings are skillfully conducted in such a way that everyone has a turn to "report" on their progress – discursive tangents and commentary are allowed at the end of the meeting after the organizing business is concluded. Almost the opposite of a secret, back-room gathering, these meetings are hardly contained in any spatial way – there are about ten people at the table but at least a dozen more stop by during the meeting to offer help for the upcoming art walk, to ask where supplies and signage are kept, and sometimes just to say hello. The predictable location and time of these weekly meetings is an effective tool in building community involvement in the art walk.

Leimert Park Village is not so much an arts district as it is the historical center of black culture and arts in Los Angeles. As articulated by Caldwell, the community is carrying on and enlarging that tradition through a 'three year plan' that is in its second year. The first year involved establishing and publicizing the Leimert Park Art Walk, the second year is one in which the Art Walk will be 'monetized' (developing ways that artists can begin generating revenue that will remain in the community), and the third year will involve a retreat, after a corporate model, during which a 50-year plan will be established by leaders from the community.

Natural Cultural Districts are neighborhoods that are unique because of a density of assets (organizations, businesses, participants, and artists) that have positive economic effects (Seifert and Stern, 2005). These effects include increased innovation and creativity resulting in a growth in cultural production as well as the likelihood that these cultural assets will attract new services and residents. Caldwell is interested in using these economic development theories to strengthen the Leimert Park neighborhood while keeping the economic benefits in the neighborhood. Caldwell has been "in the community" since working at artist Mark Brockman's Gallery in the 1970s while attending film school at UCLA. He has held prominent positions in the Los Angeles cultural world: a professor at the California Institute of the Arts for 17 years, in the Community Arts Partnership (CAP) program administering free, after-school and school-based arts programs for Los Angeles youth; setting up proto-internet cafes during the 1984 Los

Angeles Olympics; working for the American theater and opera director, Peter Sellars; and running Kaos Network that trains adults and youth to use multimedia technology. Caldwell has a long history of being involved in writing and acquiring grants. Similar to artists interviewed in other neighborhoods in Los Angeles, Caldwell's experience of the growing restrictions and requirements of governmental arts grants ("you have to raise \$700,000 to be granted \$700,000") following the destruction of non-profits beginning during the Reagan administration in the 1980s has led to a desire to control his neighborhood's economic – and cultural – destiny (Caldwell interview).

Leimert Park was originally intended to attract moderately affluent (and white) city-dwellers who wanted to move to the suburbs; its park-like setting was advertised as being only "17 minutes by auto" from downtown Los Angeles (Gordon, 64). Its desirable location has not changed. As Sharon Zukin made clear regarding gentrification and artists in New York City's loft market, an influx of higher class people who make property improvements resulting in higher tax assessments drives out lower-class residents. Artists fulfill a leg in the process of changing fortunes. The old residents (artists) who are displaced by the new (non-artist) residents are not the true victims of gentrification. The initial arrival of artists taking up residence in live-work spaces drove out small manufacturers and other small businesses in declining economic sectors, those that had been rendered inefficient and noncompetitive by the "giant firms of monopoly

capital" (Zukin: 5).

Leimert Park and, indeed, the whole of South Los Angeles, underwent dramatic economic changes and restructuring that underlie the ethnic conflict noted previously. Koreans in addition to blacks and Latinos competed with one another for jobs and housing, among other public resources. The conditions created by declining high-wage, unionized manufacturing jobs affected south (central) Los Angeles, the traditional industrial core of the city. The growth of high-tech manufacturing in "technopoles" in the San Fernando and San Gabriel Valleys, and Orange County among others, coupled with the proliferation of maquiladoras just across the international border in Mexico, created new minimum wage jobs that were largely filled by undocumented workers (Johnson et al.: 361). This deconcentration of firms and jobs was not part of a process of gentrification in the same way that the decline of small manufacturers in New York had been. The jobs were gone and what remained were the workers – not the fabulous exposed brick, hardwood floor, and huge windows ripe for young creative professionals to convert to living space. The residents and artists of Leimert Park intend to embrace gentrification – but their gentrification will be carried out by the neighborhood's residents and for the benefit of the neighborhood itself.

The community members behind the Leimert Park Art Walk are well aware of the use of artists in neighborhood gentrification – as well as the attractiveness of the historic architecture and prime location of

their neighborhood. As Caldwell says, "We all know about artists and gentrification. We're not going there. We own our spaces." He does, however, embrace the idea of "gentrifying the neighborhood for the community." It is notable that this gentrification does not necessarily mean that cultural 'celebrities' need to relocate to the neighborhood. The Eileen Harris Norton Foundation opened the Leimert Project in a storefront on Degnan Boulevard in 2010, mounting solo shows of local artists. Backed by Eileen Norton who hails from Leimert Park, the final exhibit was of the work of New Orleans photographers [get specifics]. The exhibition space closed at the end of the summer in 2011. Norton, who has amassed a large collection of art by African Americans, would like to have located permanently in the Village but the amount of square footage she required would have displaced too many of the small, local businesses – she opted to relocate to another location in order to preserve the integrity of the cultural community (Caldwell interview).

While not technically a bounded "space" in the vernacular sense that people use when speaking of exhibition space, gallery space, or art space, the space that is encompassed in the process of making the place of the Leimert Park Art Walk on the last Sunday of the month and the placemaking role of the art walk community planning meeting on the sidewalk in front of KAOS Network each Saturday, involves a definite conception of the spatial boundaries of the Art Walk. It is a centripetal placemaking. The Leimert Plaza Park is on the southern boundary of the "walk" and the commercial streets comprising the v-

shaped layout of the immediate neighborhood all seem to lead to the Park.



Figure 3: KAOS Network

The meeting is a planning session, a strategy session, a rehearsal, and a workshop that will culminate in the end-of-the-month event. These meetings function as community-building discussion sessions, as well. Plans for upcoming events are discussed but local history – instructional narratives as reminders of the overarching goals and challenges of the community – is also ever-present. Caldwell “leads” the meeting, a role that mostly encompasses keeping the people present on track. Each person who attends reports on what they propose, what they are doing for the upcoming art walk. After many years in academia, Caldwell explains, he has no stomach for meetings that drag

on and so his main focus is to keep everyone on track – people can “talk” after the meeting. At one particular meeting, there are about a dozen people who are in attendance, some sit on chairs pulled up to the table under the trees in front of KAOS Network and some are carrying out tasks and “checking into” the meeting every now and then. Several passersby stop and exchange greetings with Caldwell and others at the table: some ask what they can do to help, ask after family members, promise to participate in the art walk. There is a feeling of that “old-city side” of the street that Jacobs wrote about, though this meeting is more of an “old-city center.”

A wide variety of arts practices are represented at the meeting. Karen relays all the attention her miniature doll collection has received recently in national magazines – they are on display in a storefront around the corner. Maria discusses the arrangements for a “Icee” truck to be present at the art walk. A choreographer / dancer proposes that a performance artist be encouraged to participate in the upcoming walk – she will “liven up the dead space” in the park; there is a richly detailed account of past performances. Eva volunteers to obtain some t-shirts and jeans for the event. There is a discussion regarding the fact that markets destroyed in the 1960s have never been rebuilt, that forty years have passed and there are the same problems today. A film will be shown at eight o’clock on the evening of the Art Walk; it will be Edgar Arceneaux’s mash-up of Dave Chapelle’s Block Party. Arceneaux is a Los Angeles artist and Executive Director of a non-profit organization, the Watts House Project, located across the street from

Watts Towers. The Watts House Project renovates residential properties in the neighborhood and provides venues to promote community involvement in the neighborhood. Judy Bowman of the Robey Theater (named after Paul Robeson) is visiting the meeting. She suggests sharing stories as part of the Art Walk. For instance, the story of Bronzeville in 1942 would be a good one; residents of Little Tokyo were deported to Manzanar during World War II and the area became known as Bronzeville as blacks moved in; one story that could be told is that of blacks who protected a Japanese child who escaped deportation. There is a discussion about applying for grants. Judy, who is an attorney and an effective grant writer, lists several Federal and private grants with deadlines that are approaching. Caldwell remarks that the community is one year into a 3-year plan; it's time to monetize the ideas that have been put into motion. The community should be tying its activities into metro money that's coming down the track as the new Crenshaw Line starts to be built. Others around the table begin to suggest other possible stories that could be told; local activist, Lillian Mobley, has recently passed away. There are others in the community whose stories should be told such as the artists Alonzo and Dale Davis. Eva suggests Bidy Mason; Caldwell suggests the UCLA African-American folklorist Beverly Robinson. Caldwell says it is time to think about organizing a retreat in order for community members to start planning the future of the Art Walk and the community efforts to promote the neighborhood. Derek, "the health guy," says officials need to create jobs that are creative not just infrastructure / transit jobs. His other activities have been

to meet with Good Shepherd Intergenerational home (they want to participate in the Art Walk), to speak to authorities about getting a crosswalk and crossing guard, to post a flyer calling for student volunteers. There have been a lot of responses to the flyer including the Venice High School football coach and others students who want to do community service and create a display at the Art Walk. It is agreed that shirts should be made for the volunteers but it's also important create a contract for volunteers and to pair them up with an older resident. The contract should stipulate no smoking or drinking and some behaviors that are geared toward safety. Los Angeles County Museum of Art's service corps could be a model: volunteers have to submit something, then go before the board. Caldwell suggests that elected officials could thank volunteers by writing each a letter of commendation. Django of Cine Freestyle will show music films during the Art Walk – which musical styles and which films (hip hop, funk, blues, jazz) will be determined by the composition of the crowd. There are young men who are gathering up A-frame signs and loading them onto a pickup truck at the curb; they discuss what repairs the signs need and where they should be placed in the neighborhood. The meeting draws to a close and people start to leave the table, some pick up the threads of conversations that began during the meeting – this is the time to “talk” – but all eventually drift away one by one, continuing on with their Saturday routines.

It is within this burgeoning experience of the city-as-playground with its upscale shopping, museum, concert, and cuisine adventures that

Leimert Park Village, one of the three study sites, is pursuing "self-gentrification" through a monthly art walk. The art walk transforms the Village into a place that is able to control the production, processing, and consumption of culture; however, instead of a "Carnival for elites," the Leimert Park Art Walk is only one facet of an ongoing community-building and placemaking project (Waterman 1998).

Chapter 3: Metabolic Studio

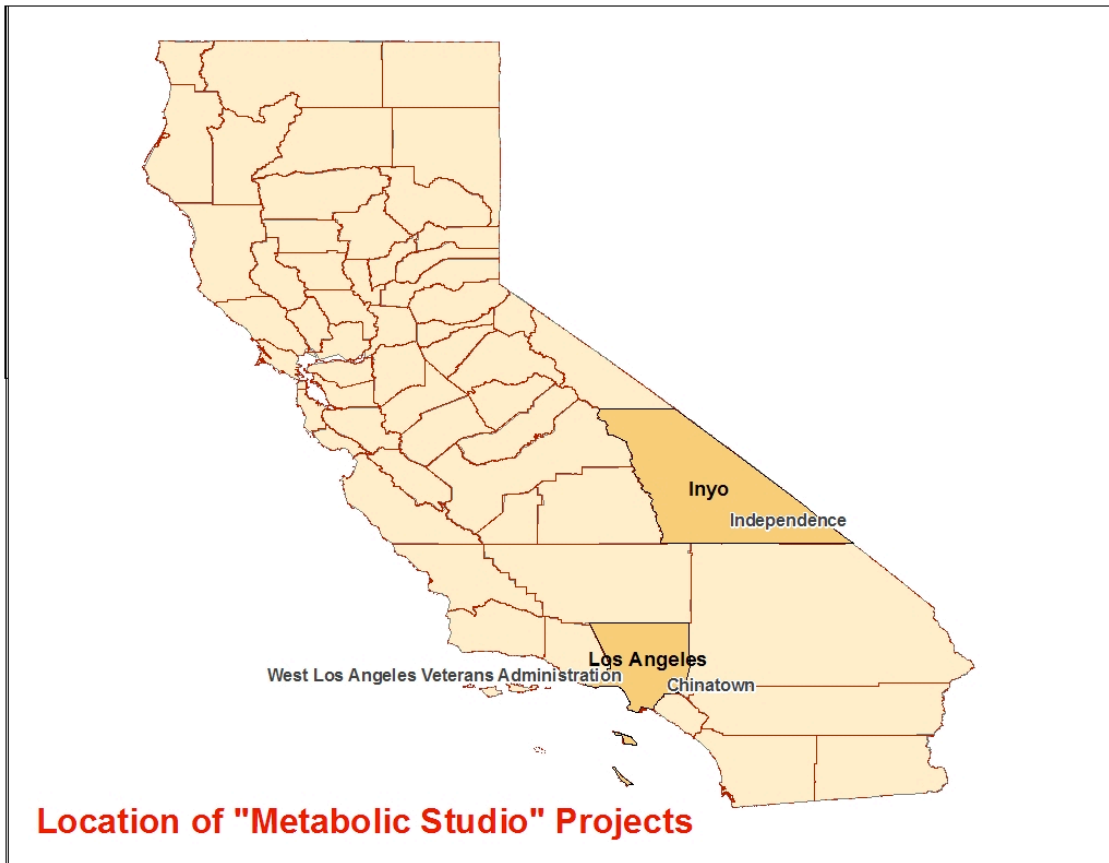


Figure 4: Case study – Metabolic Studio project sites

The Metabolic Studio is one of several Trustee Signature Projects spearheaded by trustees of the Annenberg Foundation. Other trustee projects include the Annenberg Community Beach House in Santa Monica, providing public access to a 5-acre, beachfront facility on Pacific Coast Highway that occupies the previous site of both a William Randolph Heart mansion and a private beach club; the Annenberg Space for Photography in Century City, a 10,000-square-foot exhibition space intended for digital and print photography and billing itself as the

"first solely photographic cultural destination in the Los Angeles area." Metabolic Studio grew out of Farmlab that grew out of a 2006 project entitled "Not a Cornfield."

Metabolic Studio was founded by artist and Annenberg trustee Lauren Bon. Bon received a Masters of Architecture degree from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, a Bachelors of Art from Princeton University, and is focused on "site based philanthropy," having initiated land art projects in Hong Kong, Belfast, Northern Ireland, and the United States ("Not a Cornfield"). Janet Owen Driggs was interviewed at the Studio on a warm August afternoon in 2011. The studio is located just northeast of the previous site of "Not A Cornfield," the land art piece initiated by Bon and currently the site of the Los Angeles Historic State Park.

The Studio is a combination office, exhibition, storeroom, and meeting space; there is a large kitchen with food being prepared on a 'professional' stove and a table where several people are eating. Several walls contain huge industrial metal doors that are rolled up (as garage doors would be) so that the outside and inside are joined. Inside, besides the table, there is a comfortable and intimate seating area with couches and a small table; a huge sign with 3-foot-high neon letters hangs on the wall nearby spelling out the words: "Artists need to create on the same scale that society has the capacity to destroy."

The intimate seating area is a cluster of small couches within a

large, open industrial space. It affords sight lines to the kitchen, the gallery, the storage room, the office, and the outside work area fronting the Los Angeles River. One has the feeling of being at the center of the action, a well-funded, strategic, and purposeful hub of activity. There are several men working to prepare one area for an exhibition; ladders, paint, and severe lighting comprise a quiet hub of activity in one corner of the large industrial space. The kitchen, in the opposite corner abuts an office space where several people are working quietly at laptops and on telephones; this area is cleanly designed and furnished with spare, contemporary wall cabinets, countertop-deskspace, and office chairs.

"We are very aware of being the forward guard of gentrification," Driggs volunteers after I give her a brief introduction to my research project. Driggs is a member of the Metabolic Studio, primarily conducting research and writing reports and working papers. She, along with the other participants in the Studio, devote on average one day per week, parsed in all different ways, on philanthropic projects, working with members of the Los Angeles arts community, some groups who have approached the Studio for funding and some that have been identified by those working at the Studio as having a need for support. The Annenberg Foundation, through Metabolic Studio, has supported many site-based projects over the past several years and, as a consequence, has been influential and "something of a heart" for the type of artwork that has some kind of locational identity. According to Bon, the Studio operates as a "site-based probe of the Annenberg

Foundation (Bon et. al: 2).

The recipients of Studio funding know one another, forming a loose network of artists working around social practice in, and on behalf of, various communities. Some of the groups that have received support include: Machine Project in Eagle Rock, Libros Schmibros in Boyle Heights, and the Public School in Chinatown. Driggs sees the Annenberg funding as more able to allow reflective art practices that can accommodate longer community involvement as compared to funding by governmental and municipal sources. The latter impose certain kinds of expectations, Driggs believes, and artists must jump through so many hoops – with requirements in terms of the size of audiences per event, the types of advertising of the event, securing additional income sources – that funding causes projects to be made in certain ways in order to meet the funding expectations.

Although there are groups that approach the studio for funding, the most prominent projects are conceived by artist and trustee Bon. Her site-based art projects involve local community members in a process through which these projects are realized. “Not a Cornfield” came about after Bon had been approached by California State Parks for funding for the brownfield site. With the goal of including local residents in the development of a state park on the site, Bon proposed the cornfield project.

As an outsider to the community, Bon’s project encountered

unanticipated resistance to the highly contested piece of land, land that is located in close proximity to Chavez Ravine, the site of a Mexican-American neighborhood that had been destroyed in the late 1950s in order to construct a stadium to house the recently relocated Brooklyn Dodgers baseball team. Bon enlisted Cuban-born, former General Manager of the City of Los Angeles' Cultural Affairs Department, Adolfo Nodal, to mediate with those who live in proximity to the park. Nodal proceeded to make the project "porous," in other words, no longer a static land art sculpture but a center – a place – where people could come and talk to one another.

Olivia Chumacero, an indigenous woman and knowledgeable gardener, joined the project and eventually began to oversee "The Anabolic Monument," a compost monument of decaying hay bales on the site where the cornfield was planted. Chumacero cultivates a Central American and American native garden on the site, offering edible and medicinal plant workshops; she has been invited to consult with the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, DC. According to Driggs, Chumacero has been instrumental in "educating" those in the State Park system regarding water collection and native plants; she has worked for the California State Parks Foundation that received a grant from the Annenberg Foundation.

Two additional California site-specific projects initiated by Bon include "Strawberry Flag" at the West Los Angeles Veterans Association and "Water and Silver" in Owens Valley in Inyo County on the eastern

side of the Sierra Nevadas. "Strawberry Flag" was a raised aquaponic garden constructed out of white PVC pipes arranged in parallel rows to form a rectangular "flag." It was maintained by a team of veterans employed by the Metabolic Studio in association with the Veteran Administration of West Los Angeles's compensated work therapy program. In addition to the garden, there was a working kitchen (serving tea everyday), and a Veteran-run print shop that produced a newsletter, *The Strawberry Gazette*, as well as labels for the strawberry jam that was produced by veterans in the kitchen (Bon: 2; Anderson).

Metabolic Studio's involvement with the Veteran Administration's compensated work therapy program lasted for one year and was terminated by the Veterans Administration in 2010. During this period, the Metabolic Studio was the second largest employer of compensated work therapy workers on the campus ("1888"). The Metabolic Studio maintains a presence on the site, however, with offices in the California Department of Veterans Affairs complex that is sited within the boundaries of the Veterans Administration campus. Bon composed a position paper to "open up a discussion on how we can better serve the numbers of people who are the human cost of war" (Bon: 2). According to Bon, "Strawberry Flag" was fully funded, insured, and staffed by the Metabolic Studio (Bon et. al: 2).

"Water and Silver" is a film project that will be completed and shown on the 100th anniversary of the opening of the Los Angeles Aqueduct. The film is described as a "reconciliation" Bon and the Metabolic

Studio are making within the historical context of resource extraction from the Owens Valley for the benefit of Los Angeles residents, its cultural production, and businesses. Water is identified as essential to the growth of the San Fernando Valley and silver as being "key to the evolution of film and photography" (AgH₂O). The film is described as a collaboration between De La Cour Ranch, a privately owned ranch that rents vacation cabins and grows organic lavender commercially (De La Cour Ranch) and the Master Gardeners of Bishop and Lone Pine, California, towns in the Owens Valley. The Metabolic Studio has made monetary contributions to local community gardens (Bodine 2011) and, through the "IOU Bank of Trust and Time" in the town of Lone Pine, the Metabolic Studio distributes "Metabolic Dirt Bags" containing soil produced at the De La Cour Ranch.

The site-based projects initiated by the Metabolic Studio are intended to revitalize targeted communities' connection to place. With the process referred to as 'reconciliation' (in connection to the Owens Valley film project), there is an emphasis on the human-environmental interface and the ecology of these sites. The economic constraints on the realization of these projects is not the overriding concern that it is for the Leimert Park community. Consequently, the centripetal model of attracting capital from outside a bounded neighborhood to support local cultural activities is not in operation; in contrast, there is a centrifugal model with projects (both initiated by Bon and funded by the Studio) cropping up at various distances. The Cornfield resulted in a State Park that is utilized by the surrounding

neighborhood; the Strawberry Flag project, particularly through the Position Paper, has resulted in a first-of-its-kind lawsuit against the Department of Veterans Affairs and other individuals filed by the American Civil Liberties Union along with homeless veterans (Russ). At the 2012 May Day march in Los Angeles, the VA site was one of the focuses of protest for the Occupy Movement and Organized Labor-led event (May Day). The AgH₂O film project in the Owens Valley has supported and promoted local community garden efforts and connections between residents and a local ecotourism business (Bodine).

Chapter 4: The Public School

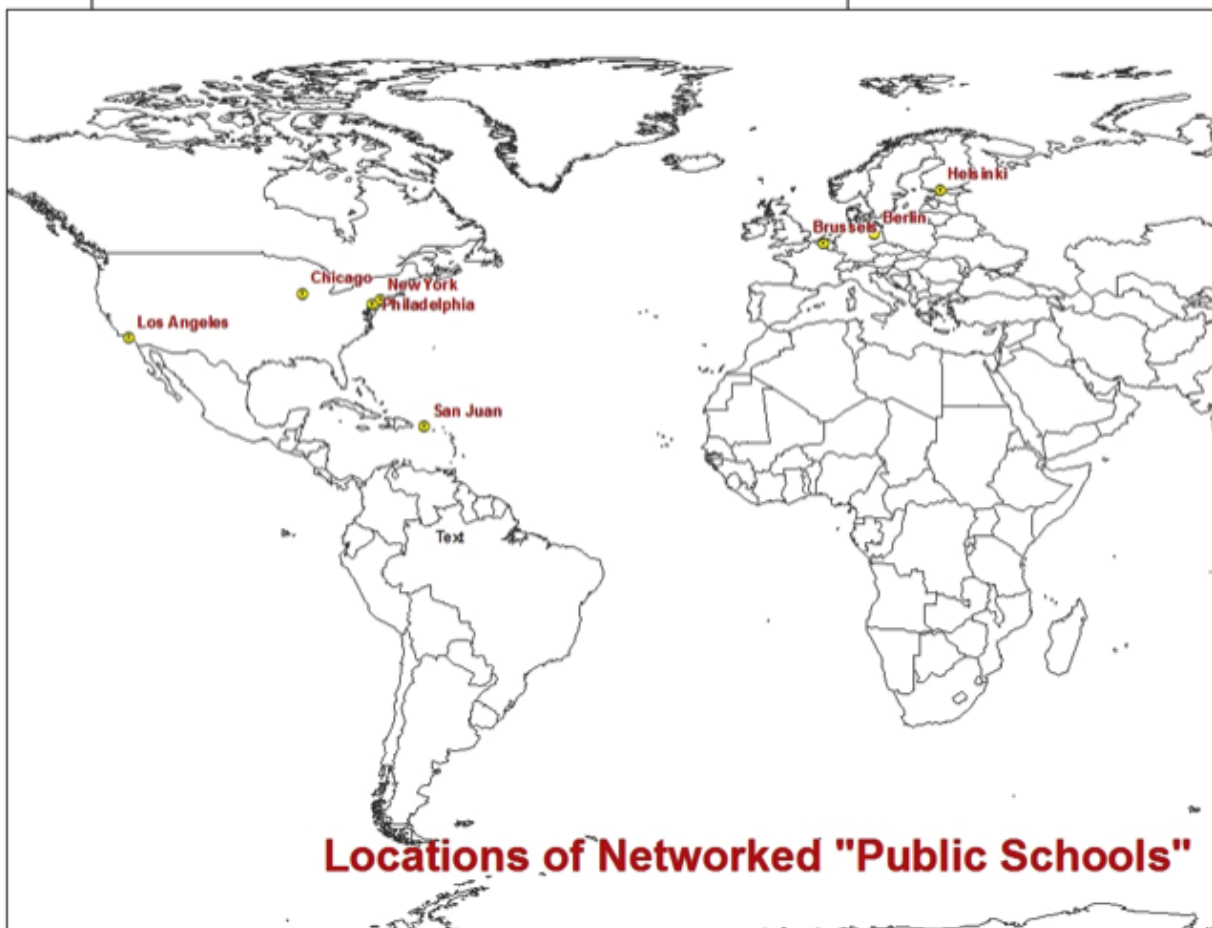


Figure 5: Case study – Public School locations

The restrictions of grant funding and the resultant loss of autonomous artistic and financial choice lead the artists and community leaders in Leimert Park to pursue a program of neighborhood “self gentrification” in order to have more control over their local economy. Artist run spaces that have sprouted around downtown Los Angeles’ Chinatown are concerned with organizational structures that not only retain their artistic autonomy but, by the process of constructing these organizations and opening them up to people and

projects that are not part of the traditional art world, they constitute a critique of the arts role in the larger cultural economy.

As of September 2011, there were almost a dozen artist-run spaces in the area surrounding downtown (including Chinatown, downtown, Lincoln Heights, and Highland Park – [provide map]). Since 2001, the Chinatown neighborhood has become home to a cluster of galleries and artist spaces; with the downturn in the national and world economy in late 2008 (referred to as “the crash” by one artist), there has been a locational bifurcation in which commercial galleries have moved from Chinatown to Culver City (or going out of business all together) while artist run spaces have remained, undergone transformations, and have begun attracting new spaces. The galleries that moved to Culver City became part of a cluster of commercial galleries that have developed a into the Culver City Arts District along La Cienega and Washington Boulevards. With almost 40 galleries present, the place has become a lively art market with a party atmosphere on nights when there are multiple exhibitions opening.

The artist spaces that have remained in Chinatown share the neighborhood with cafes, jazz clubs, and bars. With nearby RedCat as a venue for student and experimental works across all media, the focus of the neighborhood spaces has been on social interactions. Besides the Public School, Human Resources, a volunteer-run art/performance art space, has established itself as a “point of convergence for diverse and disparate art communities to engage in conversation and

idea-sharing promoting the sustainability of non-traditional art forms" (HRLA).

In 2001, Chinatown was already undergoing changes that were partially the result of business improvement district spending of more than \$1 a year on Chinatown's beautification and safety. Artists, gallery owners, and art consumers were increasingly living in the surrounding Mount Washington, Echo Park, and Silverlake neighborhoods, with the proximity of major art museums and visual art, design, and architectural schools a magnet. Redcat (The Roy and Edna Disney Center for Art and Technology) just off Grand Street across from MOCA (Museum of Contemporary Art) had opened in 2003 and was a venue for arts programming by the professors and students from the California Institute of the Arts (CalArts) in Valencia. One LA Weekly art critic declared, "It could be our East Village," referring to the vibrant artist run spaces that placed New York City's East Village at the vanguard of the contemporary art world during the 1980s (Anderton).

The first gallery to open on Chung King Road took its name, China Art Objects, from the site's previous site. One gallery owner described his new neighborhood as "trendily seedy, with rundown facades and romantic lanterns and washed-out, dirty, lurid, flaking colors" A local professor who had been a partner in founding an artist space for exhibitions and performances was already, in 2001, sounding nostalgic for the past (three years previous) when the neighborhood had been "nice and quiet." What had once been considered garish and synthetic

when Chinatown was built in the 1930s, was now charming; one art space founder described the "collision of young artists and elderly Chinese" as " 'so poignant, so exciting'" (Anderton).

Longtime business owners welcomed this influx of commercial renters and cultural workers. Younger Chinese-Americans could see the value of the increased revenue that resulted from cultural activities. The surrounding Chinese cultural and religious activities such as Chinese New Year were still observed and there was hope that the influx of arts activity would encourage more people to visit the neighborhood (Anderton).

When the economy took a downturn in 2008, the commercial galleries that had opened in Chinatown began to close up shop or move to the burgeoning commercial arts district in Culver City. Prior to 2008, the neighborhood was "crazy, every possible gallery space was totally full, rents had gone up to \$3500 a month" from \$1500 at the beginning of 2001 (Timmons, interview; Anderton). Graduate students from CalArts were especially involved in establishing arts spaces in Chinatown. The basement space known as C-Level is one example.

According to its web archive, C-Level was a ". . . cooperative public and private lab formed to share physical, social and technological resources. Its members are artists, programmers, writers, designers, agit-propers, filmmakers and reverse-engineers. Part studio, part club, part stage and part screen; C-Level is located in a basement in

Chinatown . . . and plays host to various media events such as screenings, performances, classes, lectures, debates, dances, readings and tournaments." It was active from 2001-2005. C-Level was run by a committee of ten artists who were all involved in technology to one degree or another; the original idea was to pool expenses for printers, scanners, video projectors and technological tools that were relatively expensive in comparison to 2011 costs. The rent for the space was around \$200 a month. The idea was to be a shared laboratory and any work that came out of it emerged from the artists involved. There was collective decision-making about a lot of aspects of things but there were many different groups doing different projects all identified under C-Level. These disparate ideological threads lead to institutional tensions (Allen interview).

After the group around C-Level disbanded, the space was passed onto a new group of people and renamed Betalevel. There were 10 people involved, each paying around \$50 a month. Many of those involved were graduate students at the California Institute for the Arts in Valencia. They didn't hang art on the walls, they hosted events. Over the course of three years – from July 2005 through December 2008 – Betalevel hosted 386 events, many were literary. Sometimes the audience consisted of only 5 people. The members of Betalevel began to add programming on weeknights as they realized they were empty 6 days out of the week. The space was passed on to a new group after the end of 2008 and it is still operating today with a preponderance of film showings (C-Level; Timmons interview).

In 2007, The Public School was also established in a Chinatown space. It was initiated by Sean Dockray who, since 2003, directed Telic Arts Exchange, a storefront space on the walk street, Chung King Road. Telic Arts Exchange hosted installations, performances, exhibitions, screenings, lectures, and meetings. The concept of art-as-event was at the base of Telic Arts Exchange; it was a place for "multiple publics to engage with contemporary forms of media, art and architecture . . . emphasizing social exchange, interactivity and public participation to produce a critical engagement with new media and culture ("About Telic Arts Exchange").

The Public School in Los Angeles was the first of the global network of Public Schools to be established. Other Public Schools have since been established in Berlin, New York, Brussels, Helsinki, Chicago, Durham, North Carolina, Philadelphia, and San Juan, Puerto Rico; it represents itself as a "framework" to support autodidactic activities. People propose classes to be taught (or classes they would like to take) in the space; past classes include: Walter Benjamin' The Arcades Project, Queer Technologies, Luck, Grant Writing, Sweater Making, Recording in Apple Logic 8, and more. These class proposals go before a rotating committee that makes a concerted effort to turn the proposals into classes. The committee structure requires one or two people to rotate out every few months in an effort to "deinstitutionalize" and "pass around power like a ball."

According to the website, the most popular proposals may not be offered, proposals greatly outnumber class offerings, and conflicts arise (The Public School). The organizational infrastructure does not require any editorial sensibility or leadership. The Public School is also looking for ways to optimize the use of its space. It has recently entered into an agreement with a group of local writers called the Poetic Research Bureau (PRB) who produce literary events. The agreement stipulates a small amount of money to be paid to The Public School by the PRB which agrees not to offer any classes (Allen interview).

One of the original founders of C-Level left that group and started his own, curated storefront space in Echo Park called Machine Project. Although it also offers classes, it is not a cooperative venture. It is curated by Mark Allen who found and rented the space and maintains control of decisions believing it is more efficient to have someone in that roll. He was influenced by two other projects, the Center for Land Use Technology ("masquerading as a governmental Department of Land Management") and the Museum of Jurassic Technology (which challenges people's understanding of a natural history museum). Machine Project hosts free events such as poetry readings, musical performances, and scientific talks and it also offers classes on the weekends. The classes (computer programming, electronics, sewing, hat making) are limited to about 10 people and cost about \$20 per contact hour (a recent I Phone programming class involved 12 contact hours or about \$250 per attendee). Out of the fee, the instructor is paid and

materials are covered. Over half of the funding comes from grants, primarily from private foundations. (Allen interview; Machine Project).

Allen wants to use his space to sustain ambiguity in everything around authorship. Machine Project is also a loose configuration of artists and performers who, as a group, are invited to do projects at museums or other institutions. These projects are often site specific and critique the relationship between the museum, artist, and audience (Allen interview).

The arts spaces that remain in Chinatown, including the Public School that is used in this study as a representative organization, focus on revitalization of the public sphere in which artists' roles in social and economic justice movements as well as critiques of societal norms and power relations. The participants in these organizations are often highly educated and work as art instructors at the various university art departments and art schools in Southern California. They hold influential roles in the alternative arts world by virtue of their skills and standing as producers of creative work. The form their creative production takes is, however, focused on and critiques the social and economic relationships as seen through cultural production. These artists are employed (sometimes intermittently or under-employed) and receive a certain status within the art world because of their connections to institutions of higher learning. Their ability to conceive of, and organize, public art events gives them a visibility

that enables them to affect the ways that art can promote social interaction (a stated goal of many of the artist-run spaces). For instance, *A Space Opera*, with Human Resources acting as its staging ground, was performed in July 2011 and involved multiple analog technologies (transistor radios, bullhorns, walkie talkies) throughout the streets of Chinatown to explore the concept of both an outer space opera and an opera in public space. Audience was invited to participate simply by showing up with some sort of analog technology on hand.

Part III: The broader political economy of artists and art

Chapter 5: Placing artists: the broader context

This chapter will examine the ways community and neighborhood have been defined by geographers in order to clearly delineate between a neighborhood or community as object of revitalization and a neighborhood or community as agent of (its own) revitalization. Artist-run organizations are not commercial enterprises, nor do they aspire to engage with the commercial art market. In order to situate the study's three artist-run organizations and the community-based arts practices each engages in, this chapter will trace the historical evolution of art markets as they transitioned from guilds to the academy in Western Europe; it will then examine the development of United States museums in the Twentieth Century, particularly their focus on the normative education of workers in industrializing urban areas.

Just after the middle of the Twentieth Century, the social effects of a growing fine art market, in which consumers of art (particularly performance art and "happenings") were more likely to hail from the middle class than previously, were seen in the gentrification of abandoned manufacturing spaces in downtown New York City and the adoption of an urban 'style' exemplified by the "artist loft" (Zukin). The neo-bohemian style adopted by those who took up residence in the

abandoned manufacturing spaces and neighborhoods began to be equated with an ability to be flexible and to "live on the edge," qualities that, interestingly, serve workers well in the insecurities of a post-Fordist economy (Lloyd).

A more distributed art market of consumers and producers grew alongside technological and economic changes resulting in a cognitive cultural economy in which, as Scott has shown, there have been profound occupational changes resulting in workers with the ability to think more creatively than was required by those in a Fordist economy. These creative workers are an integral part of Florida's "Creative City" and artists' creative activities are considered *amenities* that will be a factor in attracting members of a creative workforce. When sufficient numbers of these creative workers are in place, their effect will lead to significant metropolitan growth. This functional role of artists, however, has been critiqued as too narrowly defined and the very definition of creativity as too "fuzzy." Markusen calls for a more situated look at artists through their spaces and through their involvement and commitment to communities and neighborhoods in which they choose to locate.

Through a participatory ethnographic study of "Mess Hall," an artist space in Chicago, Bromberg has shown alternative ways of constructing an economy that is outside the art market and that is generative of community through an attention to the needs of community members in particular places. This dedication to community in particular

neighborhoods begins to address both Scott's call for attention to conviviality as well as Markusen's call for a more deeply situated examination of artists spaces to understand why artists locate where they do.

5.1 Creative economy and the evolution of art markets

The artist-run organizations in this study exist within a network of galleries, art schools and art departments in universities, 'creative' occupations that employ artists, and civic, state and municipal cultural events such as book festivals and art walks. This section will situate these artist organizations within historical changes in the commercial art market, art education and museums, and changes in arts consumer and arts producer roles that have resulted in a mutually generative process.

5.2 Brief history of structural changes in art markets

The *artist-run organizations* in this study, following Markusen's typology of arts spaces, typically make their activities and events accessible to anyone. However, this social-conscious attitude has not always been the case in arts galleries and museums, historically the bread-and-butter of the fine art market and the source of sales and financial support for artists through much of history. Although

wealthy elites have been patrons of the arts for many centuries, the system of dealers and artists in which the consumption of art is possible for the middle class, is a relatively recent development. Structural changes in the arts economy resulted in art appreciation and consumption by a growing middle class in large metropolitan areas. Beginning in the nineteenth century, these structural changes resulted in a spatial concentration of artists and art market activity in certain cities that continues through to the present day. Spatial concentration began under the Guild system and continued even after the system changed to one of journalist-critics, dealers, and gallery owners who speculated on the value of the *potential* output of individual artists. Artists are still concentrated in large metropolitan areas, with clusters of artists occurring in particular neighborhoods at particular times for a variety of reasons.

One of the outcomes of the change from the Guild system to the Academic system in nineteenth-century France was the enormous increase in the numbers of painters and the numbers of canvasses they produced. The previous Guild system had effectively regulated painters -- through the control of materials, sales, and "licensing" of local painters -- who produced a wide range of types of work, from simple wall decoration to sophisticated canvasses. The Guild system also exerted spatial control through local restrictions that guaranteed a decentralization of painters (White and White: 155-156).

Since the eighteenth century, an increasing number of more educated

citizens contributed to a growing public that could appreciate art. The cultural value of some forms of art was emphasized when presented as defining national cultural identities in public museums. These public museums housing national collections, such as the British Museum, the first national institution of its kind chartered in 1753 by Parliament (Meyer: 20) and the Metropolitan Museum in New York founded in 1870, evolved from the private museums of Renaissance and Enlightenment patrons of the arts and sciences (Loft Living: 84). The right of all citizens to view these collections was asserted one year after the overthrow of the French monarchy and the idea of a national gallery is a legacy of the French Revolution (Meyer: 21)

As the new Academic system began to take hold, a large number of artisan-painters who had been working under the Guild system and involved in the more decorative side of art production, were cut loose from any sort of regulation. The ascendant Academy was not interested in addressing the commercial aspects of artists' production (White and White, 155). In order to raise the social status of fine arts painters above a purely artisan class, the Academy, centered in Paris, adopted a centralized and rigid course of training. The central event of this system was the annual Parisian Salon. Due to this centralized system – in which painters could no longer be successful if they worked from distant provincial art circles – Paris became overloaded with painters of average ability who migrated in hopes of gaining success through the Academy's approval. The Parisian Salon attracted thousands of participants, its jury having failed at regulation by

limiting the *number of canvasses* that were submitted; it also failed to regulate the *quality of the work* by rewarding superior products. In this sense, government purchases and commissions proved inadequate (White and White, 156-157).

A new and much-needed system of regulation emerged in the form of a new arts economy of journalist-critics and dealers speculating on the potential value of individual artistic outputs. It was in reaction to the proliferation of canvasses and the Academy's failure to address the emerging market of average buyers (with a taste for the decorative art of the Impressionists) that journalist-critics began to occupy a more important position. These journalist-critics, working with art dealers, began focusing on the total career of individual artists, the cultivation of specialized markets for different styles of paintings, and the exploitation of the potential profit of unrecognized genius. The art dealers serviced both the *production* and *distribution* of the artistic output for their clients – middle-class art buyers, members of the industrial bourgeoisie. This speculation in as-yet-produced paintings promoted the idea of the lone genius struggling in opposition to the Academy's rigid definitions of aesthetic quality. Dealers could present a small number of works in the privacy of a gallery, an environment that suggested the private collections of artistocrats (White and White, 158-159; Zukin 1989: 85).

5.3 Evolution of American art museums

In 1864, in support of the ideal of democratic, civic-minded popular rule, the American, James Jackson Jarves wrote that government should support art museums just as it supported parks and libraries (Meyer: 21). Two kinds of museums existed in the United States at this time: the 'dime' emporium of curiosities operated for profit (the most famous operated in New York by P.T. Barnum); and the public gallery that was usually connected to an art academy, historical society, college, or library. Examples of the latter institutions – formed by spontaneous citizen initiative and organized as nonprofit corporations under the control of private boards of trustees from the professional and landed classes – included Philadelphia's Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts in 1805 and New York's American Academy of Fine Arts in 1802 (Meyer: 24-25).

Until the second decade of the 20th century, a division of labor persisted between museums that showed old art and bestowed canonization, and new art, shown in galleries that established the work's commercial value. In the United States, galleries such as Alfred Stieglitz's and exhibitions such as the 1913 Armory Show introduced abstract art to a growing number of potential buyers. The difference between museums and galleries became less clear, however, by the end of the 1930s. The previous decade saw the establishment of the Museum of Modern Art, the Whitney, and the Guggenheim, thus drawing attention to, and increasing the value of, modern art. (Loft

Living: 86-87).

After World War II, the center of world art production shifted from Paris to New York. Galleries began to be more effective at establishing (and raising) an artist's market value. Artists supplied the galleries who supplied the museums with product for exhibition in a process that equated aesthetic worth with market value (Loft Living: 89). Through the 1950s and into the 1960s, one way that artists began to react to this marketing system of museums, galleries, and individual patrons was by creating big, bulky, hard-to-sell work, by becoming 'free agents' and leaving one gallery that represented them for another, and by forming their own galleries known as artists' co-ops. Initially, co-ops were formed as an alternative channel to the marketplace, not as a statement of group aesthetics (Loft Living: 90-92).

The 1970s saw the rise of alternative spaces that provided an increasingly art-conscious public with an experience of proximity to an increasingly production-oriented art – as if the audience were with the artist, in the studio, at the moment of creating a new work. The significance of the audience sharing in this moment is, as Zukin points out, “. . . the studio becomes . . . perhaps the only place in society – where the 'self' is created. The studio-loft began to be the site of artworks through which both artist-producers and audience-consumers could engage in a shared exploration of self-doubt and self-expression. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, "Happenings" were an

expression of the audience's newfound involvement with the process of making art. The alternative spaces (coffeehouses, theaters, artists' lofts) themselves became important environmental aspects of "Happenings" (Zukin 1989: 92-94). The aesthetic experience was now a creation of the shared experience of the artist, the audience, and the space in which the work took place.

5.4 The emergent role of artist spaces

Zukin writes that ". . . museums are agents of culture and galleries are agents of the marketplace. . . . the functions of the former are educational and curatorial – show and tell . . . the functions of the latter are to show and sell" (Zukin 1989: 84).

In the United States, the ideas of librarian and museum director John Cotton Dana in the early 20th century can offer some insights into artist-run spaces and organizations created outside an art system of museums, galleries, and collectors. These spaces emphasize the importance of education and innovation, a role that Dana thought museums should be playing in a democratic society.

Appointed chief librarian in Newark, New Jersey in 1902, Dana proposed a new kind of museum, influenced by the ideas of Emerson and Thoreau. The simple and utilitarian structure of the Newark Museum was centrally located on a downtown street; its first exhibit was a

display of New Jersey textiles. Dana founded branch museums, created a school loan program, and integrated the museum program into the arts and science curricula of local elementary schools. Believing that objects merely make a collection and don't form a museum, Dana wanted to make ". . . the city known to itself, especially its young people; he also wanted to encourage improvements in manufacturing methods (Dana: 24 cited in Meyer: 39).

Dana's uncritical emphasis on manufacture precluded any sort of critique of American utilitarianism that this new museum could have provided (Meyer: 40). The structure of art museums in the United States at the time was half-private and half-public. When today's museums seek private sector money, the goals of building a unique and high-quality collection are stressed; ideas emphasizing education and civic duty, similar to Dana's, are used when museums seek to justify public support (Meyer: 44). Markusen identifies a third sector, the community sector (also referred to as informal, traditional, folk art, participatory), situated outside the private/public and for-profit/nonprofit binary (Markusen et. al 2006: 11-12).

In the context of historic distinctions between the roles of public and private museums, galleries, artists' co-ops, and alternative arts spaces, the artist-run organizations of today span the traditional educational role of museums, the alternative spaces of performance art, and artists co-ops that function as an alternative path to the commercial art market. Today we can add artist-run organizations

engaged in placemaking, utilizing a variety of strategies to meet goals that are generated in an ongoing and emergent process in particular places.

In a critique of Richard Florida's definition of a "Creative Class," Markusen objects to his conflation of creativity with high levels of education that ignores the creative aspects of occupations such as tailors and airplane pilots. Florida's *Rise of the Creative Class* has given birth to a healthy debate regarding the use of arts and artists as amenities in order to revitalize faltering urban economies. Markusen enters this debate with particular attention to what artists and activities centered on their spaces do *in place* and their role and commitment to neighborhood engagement beyond the exchange market. Her research looks at the changing funding and labor market for artists in the US between 1980 and 2005. Urban economies attract and nurture artists who are relatively footloose and move between and within cities. Cities are not all alike and produce skewed spatial distributions of artists and arts activities depending upon their particular educational and cultural offerings (Markusen 2006a: 1925-1928).

Markusen notes that Florida's creative class does not account for the spaces and organizations that form the infrastructure for artists to develop their creativity and careers. Beyond large, mainstream (anchor) institutions (museums, theaters), smaller spaces – both permanent and temporary – where artistic work is developed and

exhibited and where knowledge is shared needs to be included (2006a: 1932). Smaller spaces can make a substantial difference in the ability of a region and neighborhood to 'homegrow,' attract, and retain artists, raise the quality of artistic output, and raise the ability of artists to build careers in the art world. These small spaces are able to nurture artists and, in turn, strengthen regional and neighborhood economies in ways that magnify their contribution to equity, stability, and diversity (2006a, 1935).

5.5 Creative economy: definitions in context

The Getty's Pacific Standard Time's construction of a coherent historical narrative and high-profile position for the Southern California art world within the context of an international fine art market is a strategic undertaking when understood in terms of the current regime of the creative economy. This region-wide survey is bounded by a time period that runs from post-World War II through the end of the 1970s. It does not address the wide-ranging economic, cultural, and spatial effects of a more rapidly globalizing economy that began to take off in the early 1970s and has had profound impacts on artists in urban areas. In addition to a globalizing economy, agglomerative processes have caused urbanized areas to assume an increasing economic significance as the majority of the world's population has become urbanized (United Nations). Finally, the effects of the development of digital technologies and the decentralization

and globalization of manufacturing have resulted in an increased concentration in urbanized areas of "creative" workers employed in many occupations: both in a high-level problem-solving elite labor force as well as in occupations recognizable as more conventionally "physical" and yet involving high levels of cognitive-cultural content and requiring creative problem-solving in place of rote tasks of interaction with mechanized production (Scott, 2008, 67).

The ways artists participate in placemaking and community building in urban spaces in a changing economy, changing land use, and changing occupational definitions, needs to be contextualized within larger economic changes. In a study of human capital variations across the metropolitan hierarchy of the United States (1980-2000), Allen Scott identified human capital using a select group of variables. These variables are meant to describe workers' abilities and skills by analyzing proficiency in social interaction, analytical thinking, as well as practical know-how. This approach is intended to go beyond the existing literature's more circumscribed definition of human capital as a reflection of level of education [Scott 2010, 234; Florida 2002a].

Long-run economic growth is a result of increasing returns to scale enabled by expanding stocks of knowledge. Technological changes have contributed to an increase in labor market and wage level segmentation. In particular, the new digital technologies have been driving out routine forms of work from the economy while increasing

the demand for the cognitive and cultural (cerebral and affective); this demand occurs most often at the high-wage end of the labor market but has also affected the low-wage end. An examination of measures of human capital beyond educational variables reveals a concentration of cognitive-cultural skills in metropolitan areas at the upper end of the urban hierarchy [Scott 2010, 235].

The new cognitive-cultural economy, according to Scott, is comprised of several sectors, including: high-technology industry, business and financial services, media and audiovisual services, and fashion-oriented production. Scott maintains that a rise in a system of:

“. . . productive activity and associated labor markets founded on the increased mobilization of workers' aptitudes for independent thinking and decision-making and the radical deepening of opportunities for the deployment of specialized knowledge, empathy, imagination, and cultural sensitivity in the workplace . . . reflected strongly in recent spatial and temporal shifts in human capital assets in the United States" [Scott 2010: 236].

Ava Bromberg has written extensively about artist-run spaces and their organizational approaches that serve as critiques of a market – or exchange – economy around the arts. She has been involved as an artist and as a participant ethnographer in "Mess Hall," a globally networked and locally rooted space sustained by an economy of generosity and

conviviality, occupying a rent-free storefront in Chicago. This space offers a free way for people to socialize without being consumers, pointing to the possible role for non-economic neighborhood spaces (Bromberg: 214).

Beyond Mess Hall's relevance as a place, it is a political, social, economic, and creative project (Bromberg: 219). People attend events ranging from potluck meals to skill sharing workshops, exhibitions, meetings, and lectures. Event attendees may also be organizers in the future. The organizational structure is non-hierarchical; responsibilities are shared for everything from splitting basic utility costs, welcoming visitors, and answering their queries, to opening and closing doors for events and cleaning the bathroom. Mess Hall is not incorporated as a non-profit, avoiding any governmental strictures or fees and eliminating the need to spend time and resources on grant writing. This freedom from relying on granting agencies and their dictates is also a concern for the organizers of the Leimert Park Art Walk.

For Mess Hall, the group process is minimized and participants act as individuals, not representatives of any group. This results in what Bromberg characterizes as a *dissensus* model of organizing, with no forced unity "beyond a shared responsibility to each other and the mission to activate the space for non-monetary forms of exchange." No project is realized collectively -- individuals retain the responsibility to execute the project including providing resources

(for instance, mounting an exhibit, having food at an event)
(Bromberg: 221-222).

This organization of mutual trust and non-hierarchy functions to model what it seeks to spark (224). As in the artist-run organizations in Los Angeles (specifically the Public School and the Leimert Park Art Walk group) that are concerned with inclusion and emergent community, the organizational structure of these spaces becomes a creative act in itself. Bromberg believes creativity to be a public good – it is an "abundant, generative, and pervasive human capacity." When one person is being creative, it doesn't prevent another from being creative. Contrary to the notion that creativity is rare (the modernist concept of the artistic genius), Bromberg views creativity as a commons with the potential for 'infinite returns to scale' (218).

The emerging model for artist spaces in the creative economy is one that places organizational and distributional choices alongside aesthetic choices. The organizational choices are often intertwined with the aesthetic or style choices. These spaces are embedded in the creative economy even though they may not be participating in the global fine art world's market economy. This new economy is defined by increasingly flexible and malleable systems of production including small production runs and niche marketing with radically deroutinized and destandardized core sectors. Flexibility, volatility, and unpredictability are all characteristics of this new economy and result in interdependence among individual producers and the

predominance of part-time and freelance employment. This convergence results in a "distinctive field of creative and innovative energies" involving exchanges of information facilitated by interpersonal contacts [Scott 2008, 12-13]. Bromberg sees the distributional imperative of the creative economy as one that seeks to "develop an infrastructure for full participation in the fruits of technological, social, and cultural advances of our age and in the chance to make new ones" (Bromberg, 224). Artist organizations in Los Angeles are situated in particular places, generated by ongoing social activities with particular community-building goals.

5.6 Artists and regional economies

Markusen and Schrock utilize the PUMS (Public Use Microdata Sample) for 1980, 1990, and 2000 to study the distribution of artists across the largest U.S. metropolitan areas. They find that artists are a relatively footloose group that make a positive contribution to regional economic growth, choosing locales based on the presence of a ". . . nurturing artistic and patron community, amenities and affordable cost of living" (Markusen and Schrock 2006c: 1661). They look at self-employment trends among various artistic occupations, artists' income differentiation by region, metropolitan concentrations of designers and architects (related occupations with considerable artistic content). They trace the patterns of artistic advantage at the beginning of the 21st Century, with particular emphasis on Los

Angeles, New York, and San Francisco. These "Big Three" showed a reversal of the 1980–1990 trend toward decentralization beginning in the 1990s, with artistic concentrations in these three cities growing disproportionately and at the expense of the rest of the country (Markusen and Schrock 2006c: 1666–1668).

Despite the fact that arts' regional economic contribution is typically measured by totaling larger arts organizations' revenue, associated expenditures by patrons, and multiplier effects, this practice does not account for the fact that artists have disproportionately high rates of self-employment and direct export activity. Although performing artists are believed to export their art out of the region, other artists (painters, sculptors, photographers, authors) are more apt to export their work in addition to selling it locally because their work is embodied in an artistic product that stores artistic value for consumption elsewhere (Markusen and Schock 2006c: 1662). For this reason, economic base analysis of the arts has relied on industries rather than occupations resulting in the underestimation of the 'artistic dividend,' including artistic communities' economic contribution to a regional economy. In addition, the multiplier effect of local arts consumption is not taken into account (Markusen and Schock 2006c: 1662).

This artistic dividend can be thought of as a public good. Since ". . . every region must have a relatively unique economic base to thrive in a world increasingly integrated through trade with other regional

economies, . . ." this artistic dividend serves as an investment in the region's human capital and physical infrastructure that constitute 'art worlds.' It results in artists' contribution to the economic base through work and performances paid for by consumers and businesses elsewhere (exported artistic products) as well as through work that helps regional businesses win or expand markets elsewhere (Markusen and Schock 2006b: 1663). The artistic dividend is similar to a 'sports' dividend' but differs in some very important ways.

Professional athletes generally do not live year-round in the region whereas artists tend to be involved in their communities in many ways; many artists apply their talents to other business activities in the region whereas sports players do not affect the local economy in the same way; artists are often employed as teachers as well (Markusen and Schock 2006c: 1663).

Markusen does not address the impact of artists and arts establishments on sub-regional communities in this paper, although she notes that studies have found that both help stabilize and revitalize urban communities. There is a positive effect on regions as a whole when arts venues are decentralized across cities and suburbs resulting in highlighting the diversity of distinct neighborhoods that draw people across traditional boundaries for entertainment and recreation (Markusen and Schock 2006c: 1663-1664).

5.7 Artist organizations and their role in creating places

In urban areas, artists do not tend to work in isolation. Especially since the 1970s, artists in the United States – and elsewhere – have created communities in inner city areas. Unfortunately, artists are often perceived as the *avant garde* of gentrification although they are not necessarily the beneficiaries but are often forced to move out of neighborhoods once they begin to gentrify. The areas that attracted artists in the 1970s were often located in neglected manufacturing districts that resulted from the changing nature of firms and occupations in a post-Fordist economy. Zukin has written extensively about these neglected manufacturing spaces focusing particularly on lofts in New York City. For artists, the major attraction to these spaces in which they could both live and work involved large, well-lit spaces and low rents. Their aesthetic qualities – exposed red brick walls, bare wood floors, cast-iron facades -- however, became “bourgeois chic,” attracting middle- and upper-middle-class tenants who sometimes paid architects and designers to oversee extensive renovations in what would become live-only lofts (Zukin 1982: 2).

Lofts – artists’ spaces – as a new housing style emerged along the canals of Amsterdam and near the London docks, as well as in the old sweatshop districts of New York (Zukin 1982: 2). In New York City, exceptions to the illegal use of manufacturing lofts as residences were granted to artists once they had begun to occupy these buildings in large enough numbers and to represent themselves as a coherent

community in a 1960s development that Zukin labels "the discovery of the social power of New York artists." In the 1960s social context, artists joined other groups in demanding state public support. With an estimated 5000-7000 artists living in lofts, a major demand by the newly-formed Artists' Tenants' Association (ATA) was for the right of artists to use their manufacturing-zoned lofts as studio-residences. The city administration and the ATA eventually negotiated an agreement that legitimized artists' right to live and work in lofts, setting a precedent in which artists had a right to protected space. Lofts became the basis for artists' common identification within a community of interests that lead to future political mobilization (Zukin 1982: 49-50).

The residential conversion of manufacturing space set the stage for the end of traditional industrial activity and created the infrastructure for a "post-industrial" economy. Following on the heels of the artists using lofts for live-work spaces, these former manufacturing spaces were converted into housing for professionals, academics, executives and other service-sector employees; as housing, former factory space began to provide for the reproduction of the labor force (Zukin 1982: 19).

Arnoldus presents an examination of the complexity of artists' use of urban space in the context of the economy, squatters' rights, and government intervention in Amsterdam during the 1990s and early 2000s and finds that: "Squatted sites provided artists, cultural

entrepreneurs and others with place in the margins of urban development." In addition to cheap housing, squatted sites offered an environment in which there was freedom to ". . . organize, experiment and deviate from mainstream society" (Arnoldus: 205). The article finds that Amsterdam's official broedplaatsen ("breeding grounds") project to realize cheap rental studio or combined studio and living space for up to 2000 artists and cultural entrepreneurs had two target groups: individual artists and collectives of artists (Arnoldus 2004: 206-207). This official policy followed on protests regarding the evictions of 700 squatters in 1998 in the context of redevelopment schemes. Embodying the conflation of artistic practice and community building, these artist-squatter sites included other types of "production," including a bakery and bicycle repair shop (Arnoldus, 207).

The relationship between educational attainment and creativity is problematic in the creative class literature. Markusen argues for the disaggregation of the "creative class" (Markusen 2006a: 1937). She points out that creativity is embedded in workers and is best studied by occupation. In several studies Markusen finds artists as a group act politically on behalf of their interests *as well as* the interests of the often lower-income communities in which they choose to settle. It is difficult to represent 'creative' occupations outside of educational achievement. Official census occupational titles implemented in the late 1990s remain ". . . tied to educational content, despite a desire to base them on what people do rather than

what they know" (Marcusen 2006a: 1923). As we have seen, in formulating his concept of the 'creative class,' Richard Florida (Florida, 2002b) uses these census definitions to conflate creativity with high levels of education, ignoring the creative aspects of occupations – such as airplane pilots and tailors which fall outside his creativity tally. The result is that his finding of urban high-tech growth as a function of the presence of the creative class is, in essence, a measure of educational attainment.

5.8 Summary of literature

Creative workers are an integral part of Florida's "Creative City" model and, although artists are consumers of cultural products, they and their activities also function in this model as *amenities* that will attract members of a creative workforce. This chapter has looked at ways that artists can be understood as situated in particular places where an emergent sense of place is generated through artists' organizations and social interactions. These interactions take place between artists as when there is creative exchanges or planning sessions; interactions also take place between artists and the surrounding neighborhood and communities. Although commercial arts galleries and districts function as magnets for commerce and as places where the creative city spectacle can be staged and experienced, small, artist-run organizations and the locations in which they operate engage in a reflexive relationship of placemaking. The history

of the evolving structure of art markets, art museums, and artist live-work spaces all contribute to a more coherent understanding of how these artist organizations function and of the emphasis on social interaction that is often the impetus for events staged by these organizations.

Chapter 6: Artists and the economy

6.1 Introduction

The importance of creative occupations and of cultural sectors in urban areas is a central assumption in the 'creative cities' model. Artists construct, consume, and contribute to an atmosphere of creative spectacle that makes cities desirable places to be. Creative cultural activity is facilitated by the agglomeration economies of creative industries, occupations, and workers – including artists. The role within this milieu that artists see for themselves and their small organizations and spaces is not so economically or socially circumscribed.

This chapter contextualizes the large number of artists that cluster in Los Angeles. The number of artists in the workforce in selected states in the US; data regarding artists' in- and out-migration to selected metropolitan areas; these areas' nonprofit arts organizations and the locational quotients of selected cultural industries – including a focus on Los Angeles – are all presented using secondary data.

Given this clustering of artists – particularly striking in California where the size of in-migration is not as large as that of New York's; however, artists tend to stay in California, while a larger number eventually leave New York. The three study cases reflect a range of

economic opportunities, goals, and the resulting spatial reach of Los Angeles artist organizations spanning a range of possibilities.

Leimert Park is a bounded community in south Los Angeles; it is focused on community building cultural activities with the aim to draw consumers from outside the area in order to support economic growth. Metabolic Studio is both a funding source for other artist organizations and a source of site-based, community-centered art projects throughout southern California that are financially supported by the Annenberg Foundation; The Public School is self-consciously focused on local programming while being a part of a global network of Public Schools; it is focused on social exchange, interactivity and participation by "multiple publics." This variety of places that artists create within a single metropolitan area demonstrates that a creative cities approach must not only disaggregate occupations that require creative thinking (as well as ideas about what constitutes creativity), as Markusen asserts, but must also consider that a city is often contains multiple expressions of placemaking through small arts organizations.

In the context of the perceived advantages of artist activities for stabilizing and growing urban economies, *Pacific Standard Time*, the 2002 region-wide survey of the second half of the twentieth-century arts practices in Los Angeles organized by the Getty Research Institute is an exercise in placemaking that positions the Southern California region in a prominent place among cities engaged in a

global art market. In 2002, the Institute began to provide grants to scholars, libraries, archives, and museums who focused exhibitions on the period following World War II through the 1970s. With additional financial support from presenting sponsor Bank of America, the well-funded Getty Institute has purchased archives and papers from key players in the art world, produced an international symposium, a performance art festival, books and articles, as well as digitized primary sources, and film screenings. The Institute has awarded \$10 million in grants. Touted as a "collaboration, the largest ever undertaken by cultural institutions in the region," and enlisting over 60 cultural institutions, the Institute's goal was to "tell the story of the rise of the Los Angeles art scene" (PST 2/9/2011 press release). The Getty Institute's "Pacific Standard Time" is constructing a coherent historical narrative and placing Southern California in a high-profile position within the context of an international art market. The region's artists, their artistic output, as well as the artist networks and communities that have developed since World War II, come together to form a picture of Southern California as a dynamic producer of creative output that transcends the popular culture niche of the entertainment industry.

This chapter looks at the increasing clustering in metropolitan areas of artists and of the 'creative' occupations in which many are employed. To look at the distribution of artists among larger metropolitan areas (and within the Twin Cities metro area), Markusen and others use the 2000 Census PUMS (Public Use Microdata Samples)

dataset, a 5% sample that links occupation with migration behavior and socioeconomic characteristics. Causal questions behind changing spatial patterns were studied through the interviews. The subgroups she studies include: writers, musicians, visual artists, and performing artists; this does not include art teachers or art administrators, architects and designers (2006a: 1925).

Markusen also looks at the changing funding and labor market for artists in the US between 1980-2005 (Markusen 2006a: 1925). She notes, "Urban economies both attract and 'homegrow' artists . . . [who] move between cities, within cities, and between cities and rural areas at relatively high rates." Artists locate in clusters, finding support in local educational and cultural organizations, and producing skewed spatial distributions. Factors such as agglomerations of artist-hiring employers in media, advertising and arts, and entertainment industries, lower costs of living, and rich cultural conventions make some places more attractive than others (2006a: 1928).

Markusen finds that artists are more central-city oriented than other occupations; moreover, performing artists (actors, directors, choreographers, dancers) are more inner-city centric than are musicians, writers, and visual artists (2006a, 1930). She finds no clear relationship between artists and high-tech-driven urban growth. In addition, she finds that many artists choose to live in the most expensive and congested cities, calling into question Florida's contention that "talent" is attracted by "amenities" – a concept that

is shaped by preferences that vary across age, occupation, and other traits (2006a: 1931).

Florida's creative class does not account for the spaces and organizations that form the infrastructure for artists to develop their creativity and careers – including large, mainstream (anchor) institutions (museums, theaters) as well as smaller spaces, both permanent and temporary, where artistic work is developed and exhibited and where knowledge is shared. Smaller arts spaces can make a substantial difference to the ability of a region and neighborhood to homegrow, attract, and retain artists, raise the quality of artistic output, raise the ability of artists to build careers in the art world, and strengthen regional and neighborhood economies. (Markusen 2006a: 1932–1935).

6.2 Three scales of artists locational clustering

6.2.1 A National view

Certain states exceed the national average in terms of artists in the workforce. California and New York retain the highest numbers of artists in the United States, with thirteen other states exceeding the U.S. average for concentration of artists in the labor force. Location matters in terms of artist occupations as some states maintain artist occupations that surpass the national average. For example, as of

2010, Tennessee's artist workforce included 22 percent that were musicians (the national average is 9 percent) (NEA Research Note #105).

Table 1: States that exceed national average of artists in workforce: 2005-2009

State	Artists in Labor Force – Index to U.S. Average
New York	1.6
California	1.5
Oregon	1.2
Vermont	1.2
Colorado, Connecticut, Hawaii, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Maryland, Washington, Nevada, Minnesota	1.1

Source: 2005-2009 ACS PUMS, U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Commerce in (NEA Research Note #105: 17)

Factors that contribute to urban concentration of arts groups include large populations that can support and frequent performing arts companies and museums; schools and job opportunities require specialized workers who have the skills to stage performances and exhibit art works. Arts organizations, including artist-run organizations, draw from this pool of workers and results in the clustering or high concentration of these arts workers, accompanied by attendance rates at performing art and museum events that are significantly higher in metropolitan areas [Come As Your Are: 5]. The 2008 *Survey of Public Participation in the Arts* for the first time included questions regarding the variety of arts venues (specifically, outdoor performing arts festivals, live arts performances at school, and places of worship); however, there are no questions concerning

arts attendance in specific community or social contexts (Come As You Are: page 7).

Beyond policymakers' focus on elite art forms and not-for-profit arts organizations (that require public and private funding), more attention has been given to another sphere known as "unincorporated arts" (as opposed to "incorporated," a legal term with specific organizational structures) including a range of " 'citizen' " arts (indigenous, folk, traditional, community) (Peters and Cherbo 1998: 115). Involvement in these unincorporated arts organizations and activities represents grassroots participation and involves a large number of Americans (Peters and Cherbo 1998: 117). The identification of these organizations by the Internal Revenue Service, relies on the annual filing of the Form 990 (Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax); in 1998, organizations with less than \$25,000 gross revenue were not required to file the annual form (Peters and Cherbo 118) and today that amount is set at \$200,000 ("Form 990 Online." National Center for Charitable Statistics at the Urban Institute accessed on 3/28/2012 at exile.form990.org). As Peters and Cherbo indicate, it is the size of the organization that determines its inclusion as nonprofit arts or commercial / for-profit arts in the IRS and census data. This criterion does not document arts activity that falls outside the usual market exchange between producer and consumer; this type of arts activity, sometimes referred to as 'avocational arts activity' or 'personal arts participation' includes attendance at live performances, participation in arts education and lessons, and

participation in other types of cultural activities such as going to art fairs or reading poetry (Peters and Cherbo, 121).

6.2.2 Artists in California

According to the 2005-2009 American Community Survey, California had 363,430 artists in the state's workforce representing 2.0 percent of the state labor force; this number of artists in the workforce exceeds the national average by 50 percent, the second highest in the nation after New York state (NEA-R105: Table 4, pg 31).

Table 2: Nonprofit arts organizations in top 10 metropolitan areas, 2007

Rank	Metro	Number of nonprofit arts organizations	Number of nonprofit arts organizations per 100,000 residents	Share of all U.S. nonprofit arts organizations
1	New York	729	3.8	11.1%
2	Los Angeles	248	1.9	3.8%
3	Chicago	209	2.2	3.2%
4	Dallas	101	1.6	1.5%
5	Philadelphia	155	2.7	2.4%
6	Houston	84	1.5	1.3%
7	Miami	91	1.7	1.4%
8	Atlanta	70	1.3	1.1%
9	Washington	172	3.2	2.6%
10	Boston	168	3.7	2.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division; National Center for Charitable Statistics at the Urban Institute (NEA Research Note #100: 4)

Location quotients that compare those in arts occupations to the national average show that for many occupations California matches or exceeds that national average.

Table 3: California location quotients for selected cultural industries, 2010

Arts, Entertainment, and leisure	
Performing Arts Companies	1.1
Independent artists, writers, and performers	3.1
Museums	1.0
Historical Sites	0.2
Zoos and botanical gardens	0.9
Nature parks and similar institutions	2.0
Professional Services	
Architectural services	1.2
Landscape architectural services	1.6
Specialized design services (interior, industrial, graphic, other)	1.5
Photographic services	0.9
Information	
Motion picture and video industries	3.5
Sound recording industries	2.1
Radio and television broadcasting	1.1
Publishing industries, except Internet	1.0
Retail Sales	
Art dealers	1.1
Musical instrument and supplies stores	1.1
Manufacturing	
Custom architectural woodwork and millwork	0.8
Musical instrument manufacturing	2.4
Fine arts schools	1.1

Source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor (NEA Research Note #105: 17)

6.2.3 Focus on Los Angeles

For the period up until 2000, new artists' net in-migration into the Los Angeles area comprised 22% of the total of artists in the area (Table 4). This figure reflects the 19,250 artists who moved into the metropolitan area as well as the 8,918 who moved out, an unusually large number of artists arriving and relatively fewer artists leaving (As compared, for example to New York City in the same time period which attracted more artists but also lost more to out-migration.) (Markusen and Schrock 2006: 1670). This pattern held for all metropolitan areas examined by Markusen and Schrock, except Orange County, California and the DC-Maryland-Virginia metropolitan area which both saw a net loss of artists during this period. In addition, artists employed in cultural industries – particularly motion picture and video industries and independent artists, writers, and performers -- located in the Los Angeles area at a rate much higher than the national average.

Table 4: Artists growth and migration, Los Angeles

	Change 1990-2000	In/Out Migration ratio 1995-2000	New artists as % of total 1995-2000
Los Angeles- Long Beach, CA	20%		
Los Angeles		2.16	22%

Source: Markusen and Schrock, 2006: Table 3. Artists defined using the 1980, 1990, 200 census codes: authors, musicians and composers, performing artists, visual artists. Table 4. Arts rich metros.

Table 5: Los Angeles-Long Beach-Santa Ana, CA MSA location quotients for selected cultural industries, 2010

Arts, Entertainment, and leisure	
Performing Arts Companies	1.3
Independent artists, writers, and performers	5.3
Museums	1.3
Historical Sites	1.0
Zoos and botanical gardens	0.4
Nature parks and similar institutions	0.4
Professional Services	
Architectural services	1.4
Landscape architectural services	1.3
Specialized design services (interior, industrial, graphic, other)	2.1
Photographic services	0.9
Information	
Motion picture and video industries	8.0
Sound recording industries	4.4
Radio and television broadcasting	1.6
Publishing industries, except Internet	0.7
Retail Sales	
Art dealers	1.2
Musical instrument and supplies stores	1.4
Manufacturing	
Custom architectural woodwork and millwork	0.6
Musical instrument manufacturing	No Data
Fine arts schools	1.4

Source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor (NEA Research Note #105: 38)

A 2010 report prepared by the Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation for the Otis College of Art and Design, defines the Los Angeles region's creative economy as the market impact of businesses

and individuals involved in producing cultural, artistic and design goods and services. This definition consists of 1) creative professionals and enterprises that transform original ideas into practical and often beautiful goods; 2) museums, galleries, and performing arts venues that present these products in the marketplace; 3) activities around the apparel, toy and furniture manufacturing industries; and 4) arts programs in schools, post-secondary arts institutions, community foundations, and non-profits that provide financial resources and incentives to the creative arts (Otis: 1). It is the latter category that is the focus of this study. The Otis report identifies this category as the "support system that sustains creative activity." These small, not-for-profit, often collectively organized artist-run spaces would not have been considered as a positive factor in the Los Angeles economy before the advent of the Venice Beach coffee houses and the galleries on La Cienega that were organized by artists and that became instrumental in putting Los Angeles and the "L.A." brand on the art market map in the late 1960s (Schrank).

Nonprofit organizations (concentrated in the visual and performing arts sector, i.e. fine art schools, performing arts organizations, and museums) are defined by the U.S. Census Bureau's Economic Census as entities that are exempt from federal income tax. According to the 2007 Economic Census, the Los Angeles-Orange County region hosted 79 nonprofit visual and performing arts educational programs, or 27% of the region's total nonprofits; 125 theater, music, dance, and other

performing arts organizations, or 43%; and, 87 museums, or 30 (Otis: 15). The Otis report groups together arts schools and related programs in area colleges and universities (including visual and performing arts programs) along with independent artists, writers, entertainers, their agents and managers.

In its study, Otis College of Art and Design found the Los Angeles creative industries to be the source of almost 1 million jobs in the L.A. Basin. In addition to those employed by profitable companies in the professional service, entertainment, food service, Markusen's description of the L.A. creative economy workers includes this who have created storefront spaces where access to acquiring artistic skills and equipment, as well as the chance to exhibit and perform are made available for aspiring artists. These artists also engage in placemaking and promote community and business revitalization through their "gifts" of skills and leadership -- often with positive impacts on preservation of neighborhood legacies and histories, and the quality of the lives of youth, among others (Otis 2010; Markusen 2010: 9).

In 2002, in response to data indicating Los Angeles was home to more working artists than any other major metropolis in the U.S., the Center for Cultural Innovation (CCI) was established with the goal of supporting artists through business training, grant making and community-building. CCI, a nonprofit corporation, positions itself within the context of the Urban Institute, the Small Business

Administration, and the Ford Foundation Initiative: Leveraging Investments in Creativity (LINC); it seeks to link artists to the latest business tools and practices. CCI believes that artists are creative entrepreneurs and possess "natural creativity and tolerance for risk" and promotes economic independence of artists and states on its website that ". . . financial independence supports creative freedom" ("Mission & History").

Artists are creating new social roles through creative bridging across organizations (public, nonprofit, community, cultural industry) and through finding new partners in environmentalists, community developers, local business people, and educators -- developing goals and strategies that fit their local circumstances, resources and skills (Markusen 2010). The community sector is comprised of those who operate outside formal for-profit or nonprofit status and includes ethnic or affinity group festivals, performances in people's homes or parks, community networks for bartered artistic services, lessons, or products. "Pioneering studies of community-based artists celebrate this sector, the legitimacy of its art forms, its ability to bridge across class and culture, its changing character, its service to communities and individuals, and its functioning as an R&D arena for the nonprofit arts sector" (Markusen & Gadwa 2006, 385). The community sector is also comprised of forums and activities, public art works such as murals, youth cultural activities such as Project Blowed, blogs, and informal social networks (Markusen et al 2006: 13).

Chapter 7: Conclusion and future research

7.1 Findings

This study has explored the multiple forms that artist-run organizations have taken on in Los Angeles. These organizations are not focused on commerce or the art market. They function parallel to public and private museums and, as in the case of Machine Project's Los Angeles County Show, seek to critique the ways that art is socially constructed in museum exhibitions. These spaces have been contextualized through a historic overview of the changing power and economic relationships in art markets, art museums, and relations between art practitioners and art consumers. The diffusion of creative practices and the blurring of producers and consumers have come about in the context of the formation of a creative economy and the popularity of a "Creative Cities" approach to city planning and revitalization. The changing content of tasks and occupations in a post-Fordist economy focused on digital technology, outsourced low-skilled labor, knowledge clusters of high-skilled workers, and flexible, sign- (as opposed to function-) laden production have all had an enormous affect on the value of creativity.

Artists are shown to cluster in urban areas that offer creative employment opportunities. They do not, however, check their social and economic critical faculties at the gates of the city when they arrive.

This study demonstrates that artists continually practice creative placemaking with goals that are determined by the specific places in which they are located. Economic opportunities vary and also affect the goals of these organizations resulting in different spatial outcomes. As has been asserted, creativity is socially-constructed and it is through engagement with, and critiques of, social relations that these artist organizations operate. The spatial possibilities of arts practices in urban areas has been affected by digital, telecommunications technology. Food trucks, flash mobs, art performances that are unbounded by traditional galleries and spaces are all examples of a focus on the public exploration of social interaction through cultural activities.

This research shows, through the analysis of three cases, that artists, through small-scale organizations and spaces, create places that are conditioned by their locales in the following ways.

First, the organization of artist-run spaces becomes differentiated dependent upon specific places. Contrary to the assumption that artists, if enticed to move to a particular metropolitan area by lifestyle amenities such as cafes, bicycle paths, and living lofts, will function as amenities themselves making the area a magnet for creative workers, artists often make locational choices based on available opportunities to *create places* rather than to consume amenities that are already *in place*.

Secondly, the resulting spatial configurations of these artist activities are varied and dynamic, often defying conceptions of bounded neighborhoods and space. Given the differing economic and social resources available to artists in particular places, the goals and strategies of placemaking and community building through artistic practices are necessarily a reflection of the particular challenges and opportunities of those particular places. This research found that artists embrace this difference in creating places through their organizations. The neighborhood revitalization and community supporting goals of the Leimert Park Art Walk function differently from the Los Angeles Downtown Art Walk (organized around commercial galleries and the source of past conflict with local residents) (Downtown Art Walk; Newton) and from the Venice Art Walk, initiated in 1979 by artists to raise funds in support of the Venice Family Clinic and currently hosted by Google that recently relocated its Los Angeles headquarters to Venice ("Take a walk in Venice . . . "). Through practices such as these art walks, artists also engage in the creative construction, through artist-run organizations and activities, of social roles for artists as members and advocates of their communities and neighborhoods.

Third, in order to understand artists' roles in placemaking, it is important to consider smaller arts organizations and spaces as opposed to the more visible, visual and performance arts anchor institutions. Through interviews of artists in Minneapolis, Minnesota, Markusen has

shown that artists understand the potential for negative effects on lower income communities brought about by arts funding policies focused on anchor arts institutions. She found artists envision a more "Jacobs-like mosaic of neighborhoods," each with smaller arts spaces (Markusen 2006a: 1935). In contrast to artists producing artwork to be sold in commercial galleries, this research found that artists utilize their social capital to construct places in support of their specific locales.

Lastly, artists who engage in placemaking through these small-scale organizations often embrace their role of social critic and activist. Though artists are consumers of multi-scalar cultural opportunities in urban areas, they are often wary of seeing themselves as facilitators of cultural elite-led revitalization. Richard Florida's creative cities model for revitalization is able to appeal to urban development professionals and city officials not because it is revolutionary, but because it puts forth a creative strategy that is low-cost and market-friendly (Peck 2005). As New York's Mayor Bloomberg proposed, artists can step up to the task of transforming downtrodden urban communities (*Next American City* quoted in Peck 2005: 760). However, as Zukin has pointed out, artists, though often perceived as the *avant garde* of gentrification, rarely benefit from gentrification (Zukin 1982). Artists are instead often self-conscious and critical political actors (Markusen 2006a: 1936). This research finds that artists often employ creative practices (including arts practices and educational

activities) in community building and neighborhood revitalization through placemaking.

7.2 Future research

The study cases were chosen to be representative of a variety of practices and goals; there were many other possible spaces including Mariachi Plaza, Self-Help Graphics, Watts Towers Arts Arts Center, among others. Future research could include other spaces, exploring neighborhood and community building in various parts of the city. Public transportation in Los Angeles is being expanded and many of the neighborhoods welcome rail stations revitalizing opportunities. In this same vein, there are art walks that are staged by various communities throughout the city; future research could explore the purpose, conflicts, and benefits from these walks.

Arts education, whether through university art departments or dedicated art schools, has played a significant role in forming the skills and networks of the artists highlighted in this study. Future research could look at the various public practice programs in arts and their effects on approaches to critiques of social and economic relationships, as well as the effects on inclusion of multiple arts (and other) communities in planning and participating in cultural events. The role of artists, for instance, in the recent Occupy Movement has been substantial.

There is a tendency to see creativity in contemporary urban areas as all-pervasive and that there is a joyful spectacle that enables the consumption of and participation in creative activities. Future research could examine who is actually included in this party atmosphere and who is excluded, examining socio-economic and cultural status of individuals and communities and the relation to participation in urban cultural activities. The Metabolic Studio, for instance, inserts itself and its artist vision into locales, enlisting the people who are there in ways that are meant to enable a deepening analysis of the human-environment interface. However, are there lasting benefits from these site-based projects? What happens when the Studio project is finished?

Finally, the rising cost and resulting difficulty of obtaining a higher education has become a touchstone for student protests. Public school primary and secondary education is under attack with many advocating privatization through charter schools. With these economic pressures and the increasing possibility of distance learning, there are more and more educational opportunities that take place in virtual space. How do organizations such as The Public School fit into this development? What historical threads exist to understand these urges toward democratization and public access to educational opportunities? Future research could also explore this.

Appendices

Appendix A: Interview Questions

Answer for each space:

1. Is there a relation between the location of artist spaces and economic changes in Los Angeles?

2. Is there a relation between the mission and organizational structure and economic changes?

3. Do the artists who run these spaces have connections (institutional support) with art schools, affordable live-work and studio space, more established performance and exhibition spaces, training institutions, artists centers?

4. What municipal or state policies have been enacted to nurture arts spaces?

5. What community (artists-only, ethnic neighborhood, undefined) is the space intended to serve, nurture, and/or build?

6. Does the space/center play a role in the larger arts or cultural network?

7. Does the space/center intend to cultivate or foster specific engagement with the larger arts/cultural network?
8. What type of events do you host?
9. How often do you host events?
10. Are events organized around specific topics or themes?
11. How large is the space? How many people typically attend events? What is the range of attendance (largest and smallest)?
12. Where is the space located? Do the surroundings play a role or have an influence on the direction that the space / center has developed (and/or continues to develop)?
13. Is there a private or public source of financial support beyond the immediate participants in the space? If yes, do these financial supporters benefit from this supports (good will, elevated standing in city, a presence in the neighborhood, etc.)?
14. In attempting to translate ideas into concrete events, what problems have there been?
15. Who are the key players in the space?

16. What is the organizational structure?
17. Is the structural organization influenced or inspired by other artists space(s)?
18. Is the organization participatory (do people bring ideas and then accept the responsibility for realizing them)? (Economy: exchange, gift, generosity?)
19. Is there an attempt to source the members and/or community served in order to formulate future plans?
20. Is the space a resource for local community?
21. Do the events / activities generated by participants attempt to encompass or attract participation from those in communities in other locations?
22. Is the space intended to survive beyond individual participants?
23. Does the space play a role within a larger network of artists spaces? For instance, does it serve as a model for other spaces?
24. Which came first: creative choices or organizational choices?

Appendix B: List of Organizations and Sites of Artist Activities

AgH20
DWP IOU garden
234 N. Main Street, Lone Pine

Beta Level
in alley behind
963 North Hill Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Esowon Books
4331 Degnan Boulevard
Los Angeles, CA 90008

KAOS Network
4343 Leimert Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90008

Leimert Park Artwalk
Weekly planning meetings on
Saturdays on the sidewalk
in front of KAOS Network

Libros Schmibros
2000 East First Street,
Los Angeles, CA 90033

Machine Project
1200 North Alvarado Street
Los Angeles, CA 90026

Metabolic Studio
1745 n. spring Street, Unit 4
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Outpost for Contemporary Art
1268 North Avenue 50
Los Angeles, CA 90042

The Public School
951 Chung King Road
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Robey Theater Company
514 S. Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90013

Veterans Home of California, West Los Angeles
11500 Nimitz Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90049-4704

The World Stage
4344 Degnan Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90008

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