

Advances in Science, Technology & Innovation
IEREK Interdisciplinary Series for Sustainable Development

Muhammad Nawaz Tunio · Hasim Altan ·
Shlagha Agarwal · Marina Checa Olivas *Editors*

Sustainable Design, Art, and Innovation

A New Paradigm on Creative Practice.
(Edition 1. Volume 1)

Advances in Science, Technology & Innovation

IEREK Interdisciplinary Series for Sustainable Development

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Shlagha Agarwal · Marina Checa Olivas
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Foreword

The concept of the Sustainable Creative Art: Inspiration from Nature (SCIN 2024 VI) was when creativity and ecology became seen as not adjacent undertakings but common needs. Specifically, the practice of art has assumed a crucial check-life space in terms of questioning, raising and revising the way humans relate to nature, particularly in the environment where the world is rapidly experiencing environmental issues. The book was conceived as a platform upon which various voices could be brought together of artists, scholars, designers, and practitioners to illustrate that nature was not only inspirational to aesthetics but also to duty, strength, and renewal.

Since its establishment the volume has been informed by three beliefs. First, the art not only mirrors the ecological realities but also intervenes, it is a catalyst of cultural and environmental change. Second, that sustainability should be regarded as a cultural crop, as such that needs stories, symbols, and common practices as much as scientific information and policy paradigms. Third, the speaking of nature invites us not only to admiration but to responsive action: to learn in nature and to be an agent of creation in a restorative and not exploitative way.

Subsequent chapters underscore three aspects of the breadth and richness of this view. They explore the use of artistic interventions as environmental research, urban murals, which transform the local sense of community by developing biophilic design, and collaborations, which promote resiliency to landscapes and cultures having to be under pressure. With such a wide range of content and approach, the contributions, nevertheless, have in common the ability to attain the results of sustainable creative practice as a source of ecological and social renewal.

With respect to this book, the scholarly contribution to it is one of the features that is represented by the legislative contributors to the book, in as much as the work of the chapters in envisioning new futures. Had you not had the generosity of the authors in sharing their knowledge and experiences, or the communities and networks (which collaborative impulse rings true through the pages). We thank you, fellows, whose feedback and intellects have now helped this book takes its fine form.

It is our hope that readers of these chapters will have a resource and an invitation. An article to find out more about the interaction between art and sustainability. A challenge to consider how creativity as inspired by nature can change their practices and institutions or communities. Because in the event that art has the ability to stretch imagination, it can stretch responsibility, to assist in visualizing and implementing futures where both human systems and natural ones co-exist.

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Preface

In an era where the urgency of environmental sustainability is more pronounced than ever, the intersection of art and nature offers a unique and profound avenue for inspiration and innovation. “Sustainable Creative Art Inspiration from Nature (SCIN) 2025” investigates into the symbiotic relationship between the natural world and artistic expression, exploring how the beauty and resilience of nature can inspire sustainable practices in the creative arts.

This book is a culmination of extensive research, thoughtful analysis, and creative exploration. It aims to provide artists, designers, and creative professionals with insights and ideas that not only celebrate the wonders of nature but also promote sustainability in their work. By drawing inspiration from the natural environment, we can create art that is not only aesthetically pleasing but also environmentally responsible.

The journey through this book will take you through various facets of nature-inspired art, from the use of natural materials and eco-friendly techniques to the incorporation of themes that highlight the importance of conservation and environmental stewardship. Each section is designed to inspire and challenge you to think differently about your creative process and the impact it has on the world around you.

As you explore the pages of “Sustainable Creative Art Inspiration from Nature (SCIN) 2025,” we hope you find the inspiration to create art that is not only beautiful but also contributes to a more sustainable and harmonious world.

Al Ain, United Arab Emirates

Hasim Altan

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Muhammad Nawaz Tunio

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Design-Driven Engagement and Aesthetic Strategies for Sustainability

Sustainable Urban Spaces. Public Art as a Catalyst for Community Engagement and Ecological Awareness

Alessandro Spennato and Valentina Grigoletto

Abstract

This study analyses how public art can catalyse community engagement and ecological awareness in urban contexts. The aim is to analyse how art installations in public spaces can promote sustainable behaviour and the active participation of residents in caring for the environment. Taking an interdisciplinary approach, the research combines field observations, interviews with artists and urban planners and surveys of citizens and local associations. The results show that public art installations, especially in collaboration with the community, increase the sense of belonging and stimulate collective debate on biodiversity protection, waste reduction and the importance of urban greenery. Works that integrate natural elements and sustainable design strategies help improve public space perception, creating opportunities for socialisation and awareness-raising. Furthermore, training and participatory workshops promote the transfer of knowledge and skills, fostering a sense of shared responsibility. The conclusions confirm that public art can effectively strengthen social networks and spread virtuous sustainability practices, making urban spaces more resilient and inclusive. To maximise the impact of such interventions, it is recommended that municipalities, artists, designers and citizens be involved synergistically in every stage of the process, from the conception of the work to its maintenance over time. This integrated approach allows urban areas to be transformed into places of dialogue, innovation and environmental responsibility.

Keywords

Public art · Sustainability · Community engagement · Urban spaces · Ecological awareness

1 Introduction

In recent decades, cities have become the scene of the most pressing global challenges: the climate crisis, biodiversity loss, the erosion of social cohesion and growing spatial inequality. In this scenario, the concept of urban sustainability can no longer be limited to energy efficiency or public green spaces, but must also include forms of social activation, culture and participation, becoming an integrated practice between ecology, social justice and spatial planning (Beatley, 2011; Musco, 2021). However, it is necessary to adopt a critical perspective that avoids rhetorical excesses and allows us to distinguish between the stated intentions and actual results of artistic practices in the urban context. In this context, public art takes on a new role: no longer a mere decorative element, but a catalyst for collective processes, critical thinking and shared care for the space, such as Ingo Maurer's installation in Milan (Fig. 1). It can transform marginal places into symbolic spaces, stimulate practices of self-representation and trigger profound reflections on our relationship with the natural and built environment (Cartiere & Zebracki, 2016; Miles, 1997).

Contemporary public art has undergone a profound transformation, shifting its focus from monumentality to relationship, from permanence to transformation, from a unidirectional message to the co-production of meanings (Bishop, 2012). This evolution has seen the growth of participatory and site-specific art practices, capable of intervening in urban fabrics as agents of social and environmental regeneration (Migliore, 2019). In Italy, experiences such as Matilde Cassani's Tutto in Palermo (Cassani, 2021) or the temporary urban projects of Caret Studio (2020) highlight how community involvement generates plural narratives and mighty acts

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Fig. 1 Light floating reflection by Ingo Maurer, 2006, Milan (@ Marco Menghi)

of symbolic appropriation of urban space. At the same time, on an international scale, projects such as Superkilen in Copenhagen (Boschetti, 2023) or the Asphalt Art Initiative in New York (Camocini et al., 2020) demonstrate how aesthetic and participatory interventions can promote cultural inclusion, perceived safety and ecological connections in historically neglected neighbourhoods.

Starting from these assumptions, this study aims to investigate how ecologically and socially conscious public art practices can catalyse urban spaces' sustainable development. Specifically, it will seek to:

- Understand how art installations promote sustainable behaviour and collective care for space.
- Analyse the dynamics of participation that emerge in artistic co-creation processes in urban settings.
- Assess the impact of artistic practices on the sense of belonging, the perceived quality of spaces and ecological awareness.

The study is structured in five chapters: introduction; definition of the problem and objectives; illustration of the methodology adopted; presentation of the results obtained from case studies and field research and finally, a critical

discussion accompanied by design and policy recommendations. As Gianfrate (2024) and De Certeau (2001) suggested, the city can no longer be seen as a simple physical container, but as a space for symbolic negotiation, dense with social practices, memories and collective desires. In this light, sustainable public art emerges as a powerful device for 'civic imagination' (Arendt, 1958/1964), capable of generating new visions of ecologically resilient and socially inclusive cities.

2 Problem Statement and Research Objectives

Over the last few decades, increasing urbanisation has put unprecedented pressure on ecosystems, accelerating biodiversity loss, increasing waste production and significantly altering the relationship between humans and their environment. According to the Global Environment Outlook (UNEP, 2019), more than 55% of the world's population now lives in urban areas, a figure set to rise to 68% by 2050. This scenario calls for a profound redefinition of urban design, which must synergistically integrate ecological and social issues (Musco, 2021). In addition to being centres of production and culture, cities have become places of environmental inequality, where access to green spaces, air quality and public space are not evenly distributed (Beatley, 2011; Dempsey et al., 2011). In this context, there is an urgent need to develop new practices capable of promoting 'ecological justice' through tools that are inclusive, aesthetic and transformative (Armato, 2016; Sadri, 2017).

Parallel to the environmental emergency, we are witnessing growing civic disaffection with public affairs, exacerbated by the crisis of trust in institutions and the increasing privatisation of urban space (Zukin, 2010). At the same time, it is recognised that participatory practices can generate dynamics of exclusion and tokenism or be exploited by institutional agendas. Therefore, it is essential to ask who participates, who is excluded, and how emerging tensions or conflicts are managed. The active involvement of communities is a necessary but insufficient condition for promoting sustainability and ecological justice: rigorous evaluation criteria and truly inclusive processes are needed. The reduction of spaces for collective action and participation contributes to widespread powerlessness and disconnection, negatively affecting social cohesion. In this context, there is a need to activate design tools capable of restoring citizens' active role in the care and transformation of shared space. Participatory public art—particularly site-specific and temporary practices—represents a possible response to this need, acting as a device capable of generating involvement, awareness and agency (Bishop, 2012; Spennato & Di Nardo, 2025).

The analysis of the relationship between public art and urban sustainability raises a series of questions that guide

the entire research process. The reflection focuses, first and foremost, on the ability of ecologically conscious public art to contribute significantly to the sustainable transformation of urban spaces. This involves investigating to what extent and through what means artistic practices, when activated in public contexts, can generate beauty or wonder and concrete change in individual and collective behaviour towards more sustainable practices. Another central issue concerns the effectiveness of participatory art forms in promoting a sense of belonging to places and disseminating shared ecological values. In this sense, the study aims to understand which devices, strategies and languages can actively involve local communities, stimulating processes of self-representation, environmental awareness and shared responsibility in caring for the territory. Finally, it is essential to examine the dynamics of interaction between artists, citizens and institutions to identify the models of governance and collaborative design that are most effective in building lasting and replicable interventions. The objective of the research is therefore twofold: on the one hand, to critically analyse artistic practices that succeed in activating new forms of urban sustainability and, on the other, to highlight the operational, relational and institutional conditions that favour their success or, conversely, hinder their impact. In summary, the chapter aims to intertwine the investigation of forms of public art with an assessment of their transformative capacity, within a methodological framework geared towards understanding participatory processes and their impact on urban space, both in physical and symbolic terms.

The study's central hypothesis is that when conceived as a co-participatory and sustainability-oriented process, public art represents a powerful catalyst for civic engagement and ecological awareness in urban contexts. The starting point is the assumption that aesthetics can act not as an ornamental element, but as a vector of symbolic and behavioural change (Mckinney, 2021). Theoretically, the work lies at the intersection of three fields: placemaking theory (Silberberg et al., 2013), the paradigm of art-based civic engagement (Helguera, 2011) and participatory urban ecology (Mang & Reed, 2012). The methodological and interpretative approach adopts a systemic view, which considers the work not as a finished object, but as a relational and dynamic process capable of activating new ecologies of urban living.

3 Methodology

The research proposed in this study is based on a qualitative and interdisciplinary approach to explore in depth the relational, symbolic and material dynamics that are activated in public art projects of an ecological and participatory nature. The methodological choice is motivated by the very nature of the subject matter, which cannot be understood through purely

quantitative metrics. However, an analysis of the processes, perceptions and interactions between the work, the space and the community is required. The corpus analysed consists of case studies selected for their design relevance, the variety of urban contexts in which they are located and their ability to integrate principles of environmental sustainability with participatory strategies. The selection was made by mapping projects carried out in Europe over the last ten years, focusing on Italian experiences that have stood out for using recycled materials, the activation of local communities and collaboration between artists, public bodies and local associations. Examples include the experiences of *StoDistant* by Caret Studio in Vicchio, *Tutto* by Matilde Cassani in Palermo (Cassani, 2021) and the numerous tactical urbanism actions implemented as part of the *Piazze Aperte* project in Milan (Camocini et al., 2020). Data collection techniques include direct observation in situ, semi-structured interviews with designers, facilitators and citizens involved and documentary analysis of visual materials, maps, technical reports and scientific publications. The participant observation method made it possible to identify the dynamics of use and appropriation of the transformed spaces, capturing elements often overlooked by official sources, such as gestures, informal use of places and the quality of interactions, as exemplified by interventions such as *Social Distance Circles in City Park* by Marcella Winograd (Fig. 2). The interviews were open-ended to bring out the plurality of meanings attributed to the artistic intervention and its ecological, emotional and community impact. The textual analysis of the collected materials was supported by thematic coding software to identify recurring patterns, dissonances and convergences in the actors' discourse. To add more analytical strength, a qualitative project evaluation grid was developed based on three indicators: (1) level of active citizen participation, (2) measurable ecological impact (e.g. materials, durability, post-event management) and (3) perceived transformation of the space (through observations and interviews). This typology was applied comparatively to enable cross-case analysis.

The research also draws on the Innovation-Diffusion Theory (Kim & Jin, 2023) as a theoretical framework for analysing the spread of innovative project ideas, such as those related to sustainable public art, within complex urban contexts. This model makes it possible to assess the replicability of interventions, the presence of cultural or institutional barriers and the willingness of local communities to adopt new environmentally responsible behaviours. At the same time, reference was made to the methodology of place-based research, which values the knowledge and experience of inhabitants as a fundamental epistemological source in urban design (Mang & Reed, 2012; Manzini & Jégou, 2003). A further level of investigation was conducted by comparing case studies in different cultural and geographical contexts to highlight how territorial factors, urban planning regulations



Fig. 2 Social distance circles in City Park, 2020 (@ Marcella Winograd). Site-specific intervention in an urban park during the pandemic, aimed at visualising physical distances as a tool for collective interaction and symbolic regeneration of public space

and collective histories influence the nature and effectiveness of artistic interventions. This comparison does not aim to identify universal models, but rather to outline a constellation of good practices and local strategies capable of inspiring new adaptive projects. Finally, the entire research process was conceived in a reflective and self-critical manner, in the awareness that the role of the researcher is never neutral. In this sense, an effort was made to balance the need to analyse phenomena with methodological rigour and the need to recognise the situated, complex and dialogical nature of making art in public space.

4 Results

The analysis of the selected case studies highlighted the effectiveness of public art as a tool capable of influencing the perceived quality of urban space, activating participatory dynamics and promoting a deeper ecological awareness. The results can be organised around three interrelated areas: strengthening the sense of belonging and collective identity, triggering shared ecological practices and the perceptual and symbolic transformation of space. In the case of Tutto (Cassani, 2021), the site-specific intervention created for Manifesta 12 at the Quattro Canti in Palermo, the collective performance activated a system of plural narratives, generating an ephemeral space that was deeply embedded in the

collective memory of the city. Local symbolic elements, such as confetti shooters and votive drapes, anchored the intervention to Sicilian ritual heritage, offering a new critical reading of the place. Interviews with participants revealed a high degree of identification with the event, perceived as an opportunity for urban redemption and cultural revitalisation of a historically charged space often marginalised in everyday life. Similarly, in Caret Studio's *StoDistante* project (2020), implemented in the central square of the municipality of Vicchio during the pandemic, a simple geometric pattern traced on the ground transformed a space into a relational device. The grid, created to ensure physical distancing, became an opportunity for collective reflection on the value of shared space and presence. Similar approaches can be seen in other tactical urbanism interventions, such as the street makeover project documented by Marek Lumi in Barcelona, where painted surfaces, benches and planters reconfigured a former vehicular area into a pedestrian-friendly public space (Fig. 3).

From a space to be crossed, the square has returned to being an agora, a place for observation and mutual listening. Field observations have recorded an apparent change in the use of space, with an increase in people stopping, conversations between strangers and spontaneous interactions between different generations. Another example of transformative intervention is the tactical urbanism actions in the Isola district of Milan, mainly the Piazza Tito Minniti project developed as



Fig. 3 Street makeover with tactical urbanism, 2021 (Photo by Marek Lumi). Temporary intervention in Barcelona based on tactical urbanism and participatory urban design strategies, to reduce vehicle traffic and promote socialisation in public spaces

part of the *Piazze Aperte* initiative (Camocini et al., 2020). Here, collaboration between the municipal administration, designers and citizens led to the creation of artistic signage, modular furniture and educational flower beds. Monitoring conducted over six months revealed a significant increase in the time spent in the space, a reduction in vehicle traffic and, above all, active participation by families in the maintenance of green spaces and the management of self-organised cultural activities. From a symbolic point of view, these interventions have in common their ability to construct a new grammar of public space, where the artistic gesture is not an end but becomes a mediator between place, memory and design imagination. However, not all the cases analysed produced entirely positive outcomes. For example, some projects that were initially welcomed with enthusiasm were subsequently contested by residents due to lack of maintenance or social exclusion dynamics. An installation in the Bovisa district of Milan was removed after a few weeks due to repeated vandalism, highlighting the need for more excellent care in follow-up processes. Although temporary, the works have left ‘operational traces’ (Altarelli, 2006), i.e. relational infrastructures and interpretative devices capable of prolonging the effect of the intervention well beyond its physical duration. In ecological terms, numerous projects have adopted strategies to reduce environmental impact through recycled materials, self-construction processes and circular economy approaches. This is the case of the street furniture made from recycled

plastic containers in the Ghigos—NABA project (2006), or the mobile installations presented at the Ferrara Architecture Festival, which, as reported by Trivellin and Mancini (2024), experimented with a digital warehouse model for the traceability and reuse of installation elements. These experiences demonstrate how public art can also play an educational role in promoting sustainable practices, helping to spread material knowledge and virtuous behaviour. Finally, a cross-cutting and particularly significant result concerns the communities’ empowerment. In all the cases examined, participation—whether contributing to the design, construction or simply conscious enjoyment—generated a tangible increase in the sense of belonging and responsibility towards the urban space. The testimonies collected speak of an ‘emotional reappropriation’ of places, where beauty is not decoration but a sign of care, presence and possibility.

5 Discussion

All the results from the cases analysed confirm that public art, when designed with a participatory approach sensitive to the ecological dimension, can constitute a genuine relational and transformative infrastructure for urban space. More than objects, art installations are temporary but generative devices capable of changing the logic of perception, use and governance of public space. From this perspective, art is an expres-

sion or decoration and an active agent in constructing a new urban ecology. This ecology concerns nature or materials and the relationships between bodies, environments and meanings (Bennett, 2023). As Ico Migliore (2019) argues, installation is a form of knowledge and participatory direction, activating awareness, belonging and shared responsibility. In the projects analysed, the transformation of spaces did not occur through major structural interventions, but through minimal signs, inserted into urban flows with intelligence and sensitivity, capable of making the invisible visible, enhancing the ordinary and regenerating the meaning of a place. It is in this perspective that we can understand the difference between space and place: space is potential, but it is artistic intervention that fills it with meaning, making it recognisable, shared and habitable (De Certeau, 2001; Norberg-Schulz, 1980).

This ecological intentionality is exemplified by works such as 'Art in Nature' by Studio Bianchi Spiazzi Architetti (Fig. 4), a temporary land art intervention created from intertwined branches, which engages with the environment both materially and symbolically. The practices observed adopted sustainability criteria in the choice of devices (use of recycled materials, modularity, disassembly), but above all, proposed an aesthetic of care, understood as attention to detail, to the

relationship with the context, and shared maintenance. As Trivellin and Mancini (2024) state, the success of a temporary installation does not lie in its permanence, but in its ability to trigger new ways of living, new forms of presence and relationship that can be reactivated and transformed over time. A second important element is the emergence of the work as a civic medium, as a space of contact between different subjects: citizens, designers, administrations, students and artists. In this dimension, the work becomes a space for negotiation, a public arena, an act of cultural mediation. Its strength is not in formal control, but in its openness to various interpretations and uses. This is the case, for example, of the Piazza Tito Minniti project in Milan, where the square has become a spontaneous laboratory of active citizenship, a playground, a green space and a performance stage. This leads us to consider public art as one of the most effective tools for reactivating the sense of agency of urban communities (Bishop, 2012; Helguera, 2011).

From a theoretical point of view, these practices lie at the intersection between placemaking, tactical urbanism and art-based civic engagement. They are practices that do not propose universal models, but open protocols capable of adapting to the context and available resources. As demon-



Fig. 4 'Art in nature', 2022. Temporary artwork made from intertwined branches in an urban park (credits: studio bianchi spiazzi architetti)

strated by the project by Spennato and Di Nardo (2025) in Perugia, the involvement of students in the design and implementation of micro-interventions has generated not only a spatial transformation but also a change in the perception and emotional relationship with the university environment. In this sense, the project becomes educational, activating conscious and critical citizenship. However, there are also critical issues. The first limitation concerns the institutional fragility of these projects: many interventions depend on the temporary will of individual promoters or ad hoc funding, without real integration into long-term urban policies. This risk of 'ephemerality without legacy' has been highlighted several times in recent literature (Camocini et al., 2020; Martino et al., 2021). To make such practices truly transformative, structural recognition by administrations is needed, as well as the activation of regulatory and operational tools that guarantee their continuity, maintenance and eventual transformation into permanent interventions. A second limitation is related to scalability: many interventions work well in limited contexts, with cohesive and active communities, but struggle to be replicated in more complex or fragmented contexts. In these cases, public art risks becoming an 'event' rather than a process, confirming gentrifying aesthetics rather than triggering inclusive processes. This is where the designer's role as facilitator, director and listener becomes fundamental, capable of working not only on form, but also on relationships, memory and collective desires (Borsotti, 2017; Gianfrate, 2024). Ultimately, what emerges from this discussion is the need to think of public art as an ecological-relational device, capable of acting on multiple levels—material, symbolic, social—and opening spaces for possibility, imagination and transformation. It is not a question of idealising the ephemeral, but of recognising its generative power to evoke desirable urban futures. One of the critical issues that has emerged concerns the ambivalence of temporariness. While on the one hand, it allows for rapid and adaptive experimentation, on the other, it can generate side effects such as memory loss, lack of continuity and absence of responsibility in post-installation management. Furthermore, its ephemeral nature can be used by administrations as an excuse to avoid structural commitments, favouring processes of cultural gentrification rather than genuine inclusion. In various contexts, participatory processes have been perceived as forms of 'symbolic participation', with no real decision-making power for less represented citizens, such as older people, migrants or people with disabilities. As Hannah Arendt (1958) stated, public space is always an act: it happens when we meet, act together and build a common world together. In this context, art is not a luxury but a democratic necessity.

6 Conclusions

All the study demonstrated how public art can be a powerful catalyst for civic engagement and ecological awareness, contributing significantly to the sustainable transformation of urban spaces. The adoption of temporary, participatory and site-specific artistic practices has proven capable of activating processes of symbolic appropriation, re-signification of space and the construction of a culture of shared care. Despite their apparent material fragility, these interventions have shown a remarkable capacity to generate lasting social, environmental and aesthetic impacts. The relational dimension of public art, which emerged clearly in the cases analysed, is one of the most important elements for understanding its transformative potential. Projects such as Tutto by Matilde Cassani, StoDistanto by Caret Studio and Piazze Aperte in Milan demonstrate that when artistic intervention arises from an inclusive process, co-designed with citizens, it can act as a lever for urban regeneration and civic activation. The direct involvement of residents in the production of the work helps to consolidate a sense of belonging and stimulate new forms of responsibility towards the local area. On an ecological level, the experiences analysed show how art can promote a sustainability pedagogy through minimal but significant gestures: the use of recycled materials, self-construction, the enhancement of spontaneous greenery and temporariness as a reversible and adaptive form of design. In addition to conveying symbolic messages, these practices have the merit of proposing new modes of urban design oriented towards the circular economy and resilience.

A central aspect that emerges from the research is the need to overcome the dichotomy between the ephemeral and the permanent. While temporariness allows for rapid and low-cost experimentation with innovative solutions, only the structural integration of these practices into urban policies can guarantee their long-term effectiveness. Institutions must recognise the generative value of public art and activate regulatory, financial and organisational tools that allow for the continuity and replicability of interventions. This implies a paradigm shift, in which the city is no longer seen as a rigid set of functions but as a dynamic organism, capable of learning and adapting through experimentation and listening to the communities that inhabit it.

At the same time, it is essential to consider the educational role of public art, particularly in academia and training. As demonstrated by the experience of students at the University of Perugia involved in the project led by Spennato and Di Nardo (2025), participation in actual urban transformation processes allows for developing critical, empathetic and systemic design awareness. In this sense, art becomes not only a tool for spatial intervention but also a pedagogical method, capable of training citizens-designers who are aware and attentive to their actions' ecological and social dimen-

sions. In conclusion, when conceived as a dialogical, situated and sustainability-oriented practice, public art represents a strategic resource for building fairer, more resilient and participatory cities. Its ability to activate imaginations, relationships and responsibilities makes it one of the most potent forms of contemporary civic infrastructure. To fully realise this potential, designers, artists, administrations and communities must work together to build a new urban pact based on beauty, listening and co-creation. Finally, it is essential to emphasise that promoting public art as a tool for sustainability cannot ignore a critical assessment of its operational limitations. Consideration must be given to the accessibility of participatory processes, the inclusion of marginalised groups and the ability of institutions to implement follow-up, monitoring and maintenance strategies. Only in this way, we can ensure that such practices do not end up as isolated events but contribute to profound and lasting urban transformation.

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