

Dani Abulhawa, Sheffield Hallam University, UK.

Commerce Masculinity

My paper considers some of the ways in which the built environment might be considered to constitute a gendered space, through exploring performances created by artists in that setting. These artists respond to urban space and assert their right to the city in interventionist ways that highlight deeply engrained gender politics at the heart of public urban space.

A number of practitioners (for example, Fiona Templeton, Lottie Child and LIGNA) have made artistic interventions into gendered public space. They use techniques, particularly the avoidance of spectacle, contact between strangers, and autotelic activities, to disrupt a culture of 'commerce masculinity' – which is manifested through possessive spectatorship and authoritarian ownership.

The creation of performance interventions in the public built environment is problematised by the co-option of subversive practices in commodity culture, which suggests the 'single-use' status of subversive performance, and questions the efficacy of political action and socially engaged practice in an increasingly commercialised public arena.

Dani Abulhawa is a performance artist and senior lecturer at Sheffield Hallam University. Her research is located within the mixed-modal discourse of play, public space and gender, which she has presented throughout the UK, continental Europe and North America. Dani's performance practice responds playfully and subversively to the built environment.

Toha De Brant, master student, University of Utrecht, The Netherlands.

Turning a corner of Marseille's central station into a stage of performance

Youths hanging around in public space, regularly depicted as 'invaders', are often excluded from prominent inner-city districts. Saint-Charles station illustrates an easy accessible public realm, where youngsters from varying neighborhoods come together to hang out, dance and perform. These encounters bring about a dialectical relationship between the dancers and their surroundings through the opportunities laid out in the physical environment at hand. It is a specific location where youth's perception of the urban realm is being contested by the different realities, tensions, and opportunities experienced. Turning a corner of Marseille's station into a stage of performance, it transforms beyond the designer envisaged function into a range

of diverse significance for its users and visitors. These youths look beyond the building as exclusively constructed for travellers, moving past ordinary perceptions and official conceptions. By using the material characteristics of the flooring, corners, and walls as objects of continuous play, the space materializes into a place they can identify with. Through attributing it with meaning, this location becomes an extension of the home for social purposes and an important aspect of identity formation. Saint-Charles station provides youth with an opportunity to be amongst and bond with like-minded people. The physical space and the people within it create a sense of belonging and contribute to youth's affiliation with society as a whole. We can deduce that the way youth envisions and uses urban space is an important factor to note if we want to include and not exclude this group in the current development of our cities.

Toha De Brant is an anthropologist, photographer and artist. Her affiliation with art has served as an important tool throughout her research and life. In the context of the masters program of Urban Geography at the University of Utrecht, she now investigates the role of photographic representation on insider and outsider experiences of place in Detroit

Searle Kochberg, maker, writer, teacher and PhD candidate, University of Portsmouth, UK.

Let me take you by the hand and lead you through the streets of London: Gay Jewish Male Provocations

There is evidence to suggest that for reasons to do with self-identification as 'other' that Jewish Londoners will have a heightened awareness of where they are within the public realm (paraphrasing Vaughan, 2012). In my conference paper I will introduce my appropriation of Benjamin's notion of the contemplative walk as an efficacious strategy to decentre, challenge and upstage history – in my case, the dominant representation of "authentic" Jewish London in mainstream documentary. I have taken an auto-ethnographic approach to my cine-ethnography: friends – my "family" of gay Liberal Jewish men - are filmed by me on their chosen Jewish walks on the streets of London. At stake are a few fundamental questions:

- If in a Liberal Jewish world view, religion is the preserve of the private sphere, what evidence is there of a tension between Jewish and Liberal identities in the walks of the Gay Jewish Liberal participants?
- To what extent are the walks an affirmation of normativity or a metonymy of something subversive?
- On the evidence of the walks and participants' experiences, to what extent is it easier to be VISIBLY Gay than Jewish on the streets of London (in an increasingly "inclusive" view of sexuality in normative Britain)?

Searle Kochberg is a maker and writer on cinema and other performing arts. He is currently pursuing a PhD at the University of Portsmouth in Auto-ethnographic Film and Jewish London. He teaches at the same institution. His areas of teaching are film studies, direction and script (fiction and nonfiction). Searle's short films have included *Leaving the Table* (2007) and *L'Esprit de l'Escalier* (2010) both of which enjoyed exposure at several international film festivals. He has edited the textbook, *Introduction to Documentary Production* (2002) and contributed to *Introduction to Film Studies* (2012) and *Promotion in the Age of Convergence* (2012). His only performed play, *Isle of Joy* was presented as a workshop performance at the Tristan Bates Theatre, London, 2007.

Sally Mackey, Royal Central School of Speech and Drama, University of London, UK.

Challenging 'liquid' place through two urban performances

'Challenging concepts of "liquid" place through performance practices in community contexts' (Challenging Place) is a three-year AHRC-funded practical research project, 2011-2014. This paper will identify research questions that scored the work, and reflect on relevant issues arising from two of the grant's urban projects.

Challenging Place asks to what extent contemporary theories of dislocation and transience are evidenced in particular 'real world' contexts and how performance practices can be used to consider relationships to place, even easing dislocation where it exists. Two urban community arts organisations are project partners: Oldham Theatre Workshop, near Manchester, and Half Moon Theatre, London. (A rural third, Cyrrff Ystwyth, was researched by co-investigators Margaret Ames and Mike Pearson from Aberystwyth University.)

In this paper, first, I will outline the theoretical musing behind this research which builds on longer-term investigations into place and its performance in community contexts. Challenging Place makes use of current academic thinking on place, mobility, liquidity (*pace* Bauman) and globalisation whilst also raising questions about how place and 'dislocation' is experienced; in real social contexts, there is wide variation. The research asked how performance can aid a re-envisioning of place using specific contexts. Oldham Theatre Workshop's project engaged with migrants and Half Moon with London youth using different forms of practice, from urban 'moments' to framed performance. The second part of this paper uses selected video extracts from each of the two projects showing performance practices in urban contexts and articulates how these impacted upon participants' understanding of, and response to, place.

Sally Mackey is Professor of Applied Theatre and Performance and Pro-Dean (Programmes) at RCSSD. She publishes on performance, place, community and the environment and is working on outputs from two AHRC grants currently: *Challenging Place* and *Performing Abergavenny*.

Idit Elia Nathan, Central St Martin's College, University of the Arts London, UK.

Performative Movements in a Holy and Contested City or 'Be realistic, demand the impossible'

Jerusalem has a long history as a city that is uniquely holy to all three monotheistic religions. The city has also undergone an interesting shift from been regarded as an urban space that accommodated a multitude of different ethnicities and a city that exemplifies co- existence (Misselwitz and Rieniets 2006:34) in the days before the establishment of the state of Israel, to being acknowledged as paradigmatic of urban conflict sites in more recent years (Boano and Martén 2013)

In light of this shift in paradigms, my paper will discuss two playful and performative artworks - Guy Briller's *Jerusalem Loves Me and I Love Jerusalem* (2010) and Public Movement's *Civil Fast* (2012) that collapse and break down gaps between the past and present, as well as the dichotomy between the religious and the secular in order to create participatory public events, that question and challenge Israel's governance and colonization of the city.

I shall demonstrate that the artworks propose a re-thinking of the city, which reflect on its links with different religious groups and recall its pre nation state days, to offer new routes for its possible future as the centre of the common state. I shall argue that it is precisely through their playful performativity, that the artworks discussed imply, solicit or propose movement through the city, echoing the idea that it is specifically embodied movement through the city that can offer 'new possibilities within space and society: it can open new routes, both literally and metaphorically.' (Wallach 2011:22)

Idit Elia Nathan: My practice is positioned between Visual and Performative arts. I am a PhD candidate (Practice) at Central St Martin's College of Art and Design – where my project 'Art of Play in Zones of Conflict' researches multi media contemporary artworks that are embodied and playfully interactive in the context of Israel Palestine conflict.