



**UnCommon Public Space Group
University of California, Los Angeles**

**Association of the European Schools of Planning
Thematic Group on Public Spaces and Urban Cultures**

GOING PUBLIC: Framing events as a tool for inquiry in public space research

Online workshop, November 06, 2023 - Report

GOING PUBLIC: Framing events as a tool for inquiry in public space research

Workshop Date:

Monday, November 06, 2023, 4:00 pm - 7:00 pm CET / 7:00 am - 10:00 am PST

About the workshop:

Organized by the UnCommon Public Space Group (UPSG) at the University of California, Los Angeles and the Association of European Schools of Planning (AESOP) Thematic Group on Public Spaces and Urban Cultures, GOING PUBLIC was an online workshop that invited participants to engage the possibility of the "event" as a form of inquiry in public space research and as a tool to advance community-based goals related to justice and peace. The workshop was attended by 14 participants representing 8 countries, each of whom were engaging with events in their own community-based research or practice related to public space.

Workshop organizers Claire Nelischer, Andres F. Ramirez, and Gus Wendel highlighted examples from Los Angeles, sharing the recent work of UCLA's UnCommon Public Space Group that uses community-based events to explore pressing public space issues, and to advance justice and peace in urban public environments. Drawing from these examples, the organizers offered a framework for how to use events in public space research to foster bi-directional, place-based, and humanistic approaches to the study of public space and to generate new knowledge. In doing so, they emphasized both the epistemological and relational potential of events to foster peaceful and just relations in public space.

Participants then had the opportunity to apply this framework to their own public space projects. Drawing from their own diverse research experiences and ideas, participants engaged in facilitated, small group discussions on the limits and possibilities of events as tools of public space research, and worked collaboratively to develop and refine principles for such an approach, and prompting new questions, ideas, and opportunities. The workshop concluded with a discussion of avenues for further development and collaboration around the concept of events in relation to public space research.



Photographs from public space events presented by the UnCommon Public Space Group in 2022, which served as basis from which to conceptualize events as a framework for inquiry in public space.

Participant profiles:

LOCAL ORGANIZERS

Claire Nelischer a doctoral candidate in Urban Planning at UCLA interested in public space governance, civic participation, and urban design. Her current research centers on questions of spatial justice in the production and management of urban parks and public spaces, and the role of planners, designers, and communities in shaping shared public environments and outcomes.

Andrés F. Ramirez is a doctoral student in Urban Planning at UCLA's Luskin School of Public Affairs. His research interests include public space, Indigenous urbanism, insurgent planning and the role of media in the built environment. Prior to UCLA, Andrés worked as a writer, curator and producer in architecture and urban planning projects.

Gus Wendel is a doctoral student in Urban Planning at UCLA. His research examines urban planning's role in the formation of sexual space in Los Angeles, and the ways in which planning upholds gender, race, and class hierarchies within sexual minority communities. Gus is also the Associate Director of the UCLA Urban Humanities Initiative.

PARTICIPANTS

Christine Mady, Senior Lecturer, Department of Architecture, School of Arts, Design and Architecture, Aalto University, Finland

Eglė Pilipavičiūtė, architect and urban planner, Lithuania

Eurídice Hernández Gomes, social scientist, Brazil

Kristin Fleischmann Brewer, Deputy Director, Public Engagement at the Pulitzer Arts Foundation, St. Louis, MO

Nadine Abdalhay Alkahayat, Department of Architecture and Design, American University of Beirut and Beirut Urban Lab

Samruddhi Patwardhan, Program Officer and Faculty, Institute of Environment Education and Research, Bharati Vidyapeeth Deemed University (BVIEER)

Shamichael Hallman Director of Civic Health and Economic Opportunity at Urban Libraries Council, Washington, DC

Silvia Covarino, Associate Professor, Architecture and Urban Design, German University in Cairo

Stefania Ragozino, Researcher, National Research Council - CNR of Italy

Suzanne Scheld, Professor, Department of Anthropology, California State University, Northridge

Syed Hamid Akbar PhD students, Faculty of Architecture & Arts, Hasselt University, Belgium