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The Politics of "The Public": Public Art, Urban Regeneration and the Postindustrial City -- The Case of Downtown Denver

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THE POLITICS OF “THE PUBLIC”: PUBLIC ART, URBAN REGENERATION AND THE POSTINDUSTRIAL CITY—THE CASE OF DOWNTOWN DENVER

by

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A thesis submitted to the
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This thesis entitled:
The Politics of “The Public”: Public Art, Urban Regeneration and the Postindustrial City—The Case of Downtown Denver
written by joni m palmer
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Date__________________

The final copy of this thesis has been examined by the signatories, and we find that both the content and the form meet acceptable presentation standards of scholarly work in the above mentioned discipline.
Abstract

This research project explores why public art continues to be aestheticized and instrumentalized, and is thus not an integral part of critical urban discourses in mid-size cities. It is through an examination of the “public” in public art that I endeavored to achieve this. The overarching question of this research is: What are the conceptions and dimensions of “the public” in public art planning and implementation? This research bridges disciplinary divides (art history, landscape architecture, architecture, planning, arts administration, and geography) in order to instigate a more holistic conversation about public art, urban revitalization and post-industrial cities.

Denver was chosen as the site for a case study because it has very noticeably attempted to re-imagine itself as an arts and cultural hub of the Rocky Mountain West. I conducted a field-based descriptive case study of the public art program. Qualitative data were collected through in-depth interviews with those involved in the production of public art in Denver: city officials and staff, civic stakeholders and creative professionals. The fieldwork portion of this research project took five months to complete.

I argue three main points. First, the “public” in public art is multi-dimensional. Public art programs, if they are to be taken seriously as players in re-imagining cities, must understand how...
people involved in the production of public art define “public” conceptually, and how they approach and employ “public” in an actionable manner. Second, by focusing on the production of public art within urban redevelopment initiatives in Denver I show how public art and urban development are not necessarily (currently) explicitly linked, but are related to one another in subtle and sometimes not so subtle ways. Finally, I argue that public art plays a significant role in the everyday lives of an urban public. It became clear from the interviews that there is a major distinction (albeit unacknowledged by the producers of public art) between who is involved in the decision-making for the city’s public art and who it is that receives/consumes public art.

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DEDICATION

For my mother, Joan Palmer, and my father, James M. Palmer, Sr., without whose love and support I never would have been able to complete this advanced degree.

Reading My Dissertation To My Mother

Today my mother asked me
To read her the first chapter
In my dissertation...
I am more than happy for the audience!
So, I read her the introductory chapter.
She shuts her eyes to listen,
And is soon raising her hands, adjusting some fine thread of thought in midair. She is Moving stray words and clearing way for others...
She is conducting a symphony of this exchange
As my words hit the air between she and I—
She moves them into a better order, one that clarifies and completes
The order of things.
I finish. My mother's eyes snap open—
"Lovely. Such interesting and good work, dear!". An incredible complement—
This symphonic response to my work, this silent exchange.

Sunday 2 May 2010 . 10.30 pm
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I owe a great debt to many people who have helped me to conduct this research and write this dissertation. The list is too long to record here in full, so for those who go unmentioned, please accept my apologies and gratitude.

First, I would like to express my sincere thanks to Tim Oakes. Thank you for agreeing to be my advisor at a time when I was very unsure about completing the Ph.D. work. I am grateful that you believed that I was up to the hard intellectual work of this project. I am fortunate to have had such a patient and quietly encouraging advisor. As well, you have become an important role model: your calm demeanor, collegial grace, intelligence and compassion are truly inspirational. Thank you.

Second, I would like to thank all of my committee members—Joe Bryan, Erika Doss, Sue Weidemann, and Kim Babon—for what each of you have offered me over the distance of this project. I appreciate your staying power and your contributions to my intellectual and scholarly growth.

Third, thank you to all of the people I interviewed. This research project would not have been possible without you. I appreciate your willingness to invest your precious time to help me conduct this research. In particular, I am very grateful to Kendall Peterson: she was always willing to help me find materials, contact people, and talk with me about public art in Denver.
Last but not least, I owe a great deal of thanks to my family. I have been very lucky to have family close by; they have been critical to my maintaining a semblance of sanity. Thank you Jennifer, for not letting me give up. Thank you Mick, for what are always stimulating conversations. Thank you Kate and Elaine, for asking me interesting and challenging questions about my dissertation. Even though they are not family, I owe a great debt to my friends Joern and Adam, thank you for your reliable comradery and exceptional thoughtfulness. I also have had family, who from a distance, have supported me and encouraged me. Thank you Julie, for always being willing to listen. Thank you Gabriella, for so many things: I can hardly begin to describe how much you have helped me survive these past six and a half years! And, as always, immeasurable thanks to my mother and father for many years of support. I wish my mother could be here to see this manuscript, to read it and to critique it.
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

As one begins to articulate forms of actual rather than metaphorical engagement, one must come to terms with exactly whom one is speaking to. (Lacy 1995, 37)

“Public art,” combining the two terms, comes doubly burdened as a figure of universal accessibility. (Deutsche 1992, 37)

1.1 Introduction

This research project examines the continued aestheticising and instrumentalization of public art (local government programs) in urban environments. In the last decade the pace and extent of urbanization has increased rapidly, and it is through the intersection of culture, economy and politics that cities are developing strategies to gain competitive advantage at multiple scales—the regional, national, and global (Champion 2008; Harvey 2008; Scott 2006; Harvey 1989). Public art is one of the cultural industries playing an increasingly important role in cultural economies and urban regeneration. However, public art has typically been discussed (primarily critiqued and commented upon) as individual objects that exist as novelties, attractions, or deliberately constructed tourist icons in the urban environment. Prominent examples of such pieces include early public statuary (e.g., monuments and memorial statues), early public arts projects (the results of initial federal and local funding for the arts) such as La Grande Vitesse (Alexander Calder, Grand Rapids, MI, 1969), and Tilted Arc (Richard Serra, New York City, 1981), and more recent works such as “The Blue Bear” in Denver, and Cupid's Span (Claes Oldenburg, San Francisco, 1999). Much has been written about the creative/cultural industries, in geography (Coe 2000; Scott 2006; Sharp 2005; Miles 2003), sociology (Zukin 1995; Du Gay and Pryke 2002), and urban planning (Champion 2008; Landry
2005; Peck, 2005; Montgomery 2003); however, little has been written about the role of public art as a component of urban revitalization. It has been depoliticized and aestheticized; that is, it is relegated to a “thing,” something to enhance or beautify the urban environment rather than as a key element in a critical urban dialogue (Deutsche 1986).

What, then, does it mean to talk about public art (in the United States) today? I contend that it is necessary to discuss public art in the context of urban revitalization and the post-industrial city because of the ways in which it is being employed, though not explicitly or comprehensively, by various cities as a means by which to differentiate themselves and compete with other cities at the regional, national and even global scale. I have chosen Denver as the site for a case study because it has very noticeably attempted to re-imagine itself as an arts and cultural hub of the Rocky Mountain West. With regard to public art, Denver has made significant additions to its collection in the last decade (e.g., “The Blue Bear,” Mustang, and National Velvet, and Light Chamber), all of which are large pieces that have garnered local and national attention, as well as, in some cases, controversy. As well, the city’s re-imaging efforts, which began in earnest with Libeskind’s addition to the Denver Art Museum, include numerous new developments and recently completed construction, including the Denver Justice Center, Museum of Contemporary Art, extensive housing and mixed use development in Lower Downtown, as well as the Auraria Campus improvement plans and the Union Station Master Plan. These major city developments provide fertile ground in which to pursue research that critically analyzes why and for whom public art is produced in urban environments.
Denver’s peer cities—based on comparable population and socio-economic attributes or similar historical growth and development characteristics: Kansas City, San Antonio, Albuquerque, Salt Lake City, Cincinnati, Sacramento—have all embarked on strengthening their arts and cultural assets, of which public art is a key component. Even though public art has traditionally been applied on a relatively small scale in terms of urban planning there is growing interest in the role public art might play. But, in order for it to be considered an integral component of the urban environment there is the need for cultivating new arenas of expertise and for exploring how public art can be integrated into urban planning initiatives. Therefore, my concern here is not to examine an individual object/piece of public art, but rather to explore why public art continues to be aestheticized, and thus not an integral part of critical urban discourses about the future of the city. As such, this research bridges disciplinary divides (art history, landscape architecture, architecture, planning, arts administration, and geography) in order to instigate a more holistic conversation about public art, urban revitalization and post-industrial cities.

My pre-dissertation research revealed that the production of public art is a far more complex process than has been written about in the literature. Public art is not, as many scholars have noted, a panacea, nor is it is simply beautifications inserted into an urban landscape (Deutsche 1996; Hall and Robertson 2001; Hall 2004; Sharp 2005). The politics of public art, as I have found in this research, suggest how it is a very important component of the political, social and cultural economy of the city. The complexity of
this production, which became clear to me in the dissertation fieldwork, revolves around “the public” in public art. I did not begin this research project with the intention of studying publicity, but I have found that it is at the core of why public art continues to be seen as mere enhancements in the urban environment. The question this dissertation begs is: What do public art programs need to do in order to be relevant in cities today and in the future? Therefore, in this dissertation I will argue that the “public” in public art is multi-dimensional. Public art programs, if they are to be taken seriously as players in re-imagining cities, must understand how people involved in the production of public art define “public” conceptually, and how they approach and employ “public” in an actionable manner. These various definitions, approaches and deployments have important social, political and cultural implications. I will argue, in the following pages, that in order for public art to be a meaningful part of city re-imaginings and urban initiatives, “public” (in its many dimensions and applications) in public art needs to be more fully examined by those involved in the production of public art in Denver.

1.2 The research question

This study complicates the current reading of public art in cities: it seeks to provide insights as to why public art continues to be aestheticized and instrumentalized in mid-size cities. It is through an examination of the “public” in public art that I endeavor to achieve this. The overarching question of this research is: What are the conceptions and dimensions of “the public” in public art planning and implementation? This research aims to address three components of that question: First, How is “the public” defined by the various actors, stakeholders and agencies involved in the production of public art in
Denver? **Second**, What are the “public” aspects of public art, both in terms of the process and outcomes of public art planning and implementation? Related questions include: a) How are the “public benefits” of public art conceived of in the process? and b) Who is thought to be the benefiting “public”? **Third**, what is public art’s role in urban planning initiatives? That is, what is public art’s role perceived to be, and what is its actual relationship with regard to other actors in urban regeneration projects?

Findings from my pre-dissertation research suggested that many different agencies, departments, individuals and interest groups in downtown Denver have the potential to meaningfully participate in the public art program. Yet the way the program is currently operating it is limited by its ability to guide and implement the diverse perceptions of public art as more than mere things within the larger urban planning framework and arts and culture agenda. Despite the public art director’s title, she (and the program) exist in what I am calling a “powerless autonomy,” in which she is not able to facilitate the potential of the public art program as a powerful actor in Denver’s urban regeneration. I suspected that this is due to the lack of a dialoguing armature, by which the multiple forces, agendas, definitions (of “the public” and public art), and audiences are unable to find a common ground. Therefore, I conducted this research in order to unpack the agendas and power relations that exist below the radar. And, I believed that in order for Denver to be successful in its re-imagining itself it must understand the complexities of what constitutes its “public.” In addition, in order for public art to become an integral, even fundamental, part of creating “a new Denver,” the public art program needs to
develop strategies by which it will no longer be considered just a thing to art’s and culture’s ideas and places.

I began this research with the following hypothesis: There exists a plurality of perceptions and definitions of “the public” and public art held by the various actors and stakeholders involved in urban revitalization and the production of public art Denver, which supports and propagates institutional relationships that account for the continued aestheticization of public art.

Attitudes held by the various actors involved in the production of public art in downtown Denver toward/about “the public” and public art inform their actions and the policies and initiatives they develop. It is this new attitude—held by various city officials and staff, members of the financial community, civic stakeholders and creative professionals—about “the public” as a consumer rather than a civic-minded citizen that allows for the continued aestheticization of public art in creative cities and urban regeneration initiatives. It is, therefore, the aim of this research to provide information to help guide those involved in the production of public art (in Denver) in addressing the following questions: How might Denver, as a postindustrial city, engage in urban regeneration that does not use public art “as a kind of public relations agent for redevelopment” (Baker 2002), but rather sees public art as contributing to Denver’s quality of life and growing a healthy economy? How might the Public Art Program manager work with other city officials and staff, members of the financial community, civic stakeholders and creative professionals in producing and planning for public art in downtown Denver so that it
more substantially contributes to the economic and cultural viability of downtown and help to improve the image and livability of downtown Denver? How can public art become more integral, even fundamental, to urban planning in Denver?

1.3 Significance of the study and contribution to geographical study

This research is significant because it expands the scope of the conversation about public art from individual objects or individual programs by focusing on the planning for and implementation of public art within larger urban regeneration initiatives. In order for public art to play a meaningful role in urban regeneration plans, we must, as Deutsche states, “dislodge public art from its ghettoization within the parameters of aesthetic discourse, even critical aesthetic discourse, and reinstate, at least partially, within critical urban discourse…” Theoretically, this research explores “the public” in public art in relation to urban planning and urban revitalization. This research illuminates the ways in which these values and attitudes are impacting the way cities engage in the growing global urban competition amongst cities. Methodologically, this in-depth analysis of the meanings, roles, and processes of urban public art production will be a model for comparative studies, for other people and of other places. I was able to attend public art committee meetings, city-sponsored symposia/conferences, and conduct repeated follow-ups with public art program and other city staff, all of which allowed for an ethnographic type of study of the challenges, conflicts, and dynamic nature of producing public art in Denver at this particular time. Empirically, this project focuses on the planning and implementation of public art in mid-size city urban regeneration efforts in the United States, an area of urban studies that has been understudied. In addition, it will contribute
to the practical arena of knowledge (e.g., in urban planning and development) of how various individuals and organizations, including their relationships with other actors, interact to produce public art.

The **principal contribution** this dissertation makes to geography is within geographical studies of the urban environment—the study of symbolic economies and the social production of urban space. In particular, this study of the production of public art in Denver focuses on questions about “the public,” which has become of great interest because of the increasing privatization of public urban space (Deutsche1996; Mitchell 2003). One of the key questions that emerged in the interviews was: Who is this “public” we purportedly serve under the auspices of public art? However, defining “the public” appeared not to be something public servants think much about. Even though public servants may not be overly concerned with the defining of “the public,” other people I interviewed pursued this question with great interest. The defining of terms is an arena of geographic interest that waxes and wanes. For example, the debate over defining public has gained a great deal of attention in the last decade as a result of the spatial turn in various related disciplines (Staeheli and Mitchell 2006). Therefore, a key contribution of this research is to ask: Why is it important to have a working definition of “the public” when cities embark on urban revitalization projects?

By focusing on the production of public art within urban redevelopment initiatives in Denver I show how public art and urban development are not necessarily (currently) explicitly linked, but are related to one another in subtle and sometimes not so subtle
ways. However, what became clear through my research (interviews, “slow reads,” review of archival materials, and attendance at public meetings and symposia) is the fact public art is an indeterminate and amorphous concept that is complicated by divergent (and often oppositional) perspectives on what art is and the meanings and make-up of the public.

My analysis of the intersection of public art and urban revitalization adds to the growing discussion of the post-industrial city within urban geography and anthropology, particularly how cities “re-imagine” themselves in an era of neoliberal urbanisms and experience economies (Zukin 1982, 1991, 1995, 1998, 2010; Harvey 1989, 1990, 2002). As the industrial base of mid-size cities such as Denver disappears, they have been forced to redefine and restructure themselves in order to remain viable in a globalizing world. The development of a creative city initiative is one example of the ways in which cities are attempting to create new opportunities in order to survive. Public art is only just recently explicitly mentioned as a part of city’s creative economy and urban planning strategies. Denver’s creative city initiative (Create Denver) and various urban planning and design initiatives are redeveloping former industrial urban areas as arts and cultural districts, hoping to strengthen the local creative economy while also increasing tourism and consumption. Such areas have become prime regions for integrating public art as a means to revitalize the formerly defunct urban areas. In focusing on the redevelopment of downtown, and urban areas as arts and cultural districts, I contribute to the urban and cultural geographical literature on the revitalization in the service of attracting “the creative class” and tourism. The “re-imagining” of cities involves both a (re)shaping of
the city image, as well as the construction of new urban landscapes (Zukin 1982; Sorkin 1992; Boyer 1994; Zukin 1995, Zukin 1998). These new urban landscapes include new architectures, landscapes and urban elements, and, increasingly, public art. However, public art is frequently referred to as simply beautifying the urban landscape (Deutsche 1996) inserted to provide distraction and to serve as innocuous tourist attractions, something referred to as the Disneyfication (“imagineering”) of urban space.

This research relies heavily on the work of Sharon Zukin, an urban sociologist, who examines the consequences of urban development schemes, which she claims precipitate “landscapes of consumption” and contribute to the continued employment of “symbolic economies” as part of creative cities initiatives (Zukin 1995, 1998). Zukin has made accessible and comprehensible the use of (Marxist) political economy whereby she interrogates the relationship between images (of the city) and the production of urban space and an urban public. While Zukin is not a geographer, her work is relevant to the discipline because of her examination of the impacts of social and economic change on cities (from the impacts on the built form and physical nature of the city, to the impacts on stakeholders and “the public”). As well, she has had a profound influence on how geographers engage in symbolic examinations of urban space through the ethnographic study of urban environments.

Finally, I argue that public art is pedagogical—it conveys a particular notion (in a specific time and place) of “the public” and art—and it is performative—it can call a public into being (voicing its concerns about and ideals of the city). That is, plays a
significant role in the everyday lives of an urban public. It became clear from the
interviews that there is a major distinction (albeit unacknowledged by the producers of
public art) between who is involved in the decision-making for the city’s public art and
who it is that receives/consumes public art. Although many people interviewed felt that a
higher level of expertise was needed in the decision-making process (i.e. art experts
rather than “Jane/Joe Public”) they all felt that public art is a unique form of arts and
culture, one that is a part of our everyday lives. That is, public art exists in the realm of
the ordinary. Raymond Williams’ essay “Culture is ordinary” claims that arts and culture
should not be the domain of, or controlled by, an elite. Rather arts and culture are
something that we all should participate in and contribute to, as Williams says: “a
tapestry of individual and collective actions and meanings.” This research contributes to
what I believe is a contentious debate about the extent to which the production of public
art is a collective, multi-authored production.

1.4 Goals of the dissertation

This dissertation is a descriptive project: it approaches the production of public art in
Denver, CO in terms of “how things are,” not “how things should be.” First, I seek to
further articulate how agencies, departments and individuals involved in the production
of public art define, value, and deploy notions of “the public” and public art. Second, I
am interested in how definitions of “the public” inform decision-making about public art
in Denver. Related to this is gaining an understanding of how these various actors and
stakeholders inform the re-imagining of Denver. That is, I wish to interrogate the
concomitant impacts of micro- and macro-level decision making in order to understand
the various interactions that legitimate and thus allow the implementation of public art in Denver’s urban public spaces. A final goal of this dissertation is to generalize these specific findings in Denver—articulating the relationship between “the public,” the production of public art, and urban revitalization—to situations and applications in the United States and elsewhere in the world.

1.5 Structure of the dissertation

This dissertation is organized into eight chapters. Chapters two, three, and four provide (respectively) a review of the literature, an overview of the research design, and information about the research site and urban context. Chapters five, six, and seven present the findings of the research. After both chapters five and chapter six I have inserted what I am calling “Interludes.” These interludes offer the material from the slow reads (which I discuss in the methodology chapter and explain in the first interlude) I carried out. And finally, chapter eight offers a discussion of this dissertation.

In chapter two I provide an overview of the literature that informs this research, which includes discussion on public, public art, and post-industrial cities. First, I consider the various ways of approaching and conceptualizing the public and consider various senses of the public: public sphere, public space, and public realm. Next, I discuss public art in terms of classifications, history, trends and debates, and developing a more sophisticated approach to the subject. Last, I link the public and public art to post-industrial cities and urban revitalization. I begin by discussing the strategies post-industrial cities employ as a means to survive amongst their peers and in a globalizing world. Following this I talk
about how public art is a component of these revitalization schemes, and then briefly
discuss creative cities initiatives as one of the more recent post-industrial survival
strategies.

The purpose of chapter three is to describe the research design of this dissertation. I
explain the methodology, data collection, selection of participants, analysis process, and
engage in a brief methodological discussion.

Chapter four serves multiple purposes. First, I situate Denver at multiple scales in order
to provide the reader with a sense of Denver locally, regionally, nationally, and globally.
Next, as a means of orienting the reader to the actual site of my study, I describe the
study area, downtown Denver. Following this, I provide a brief history of downtown
Denver, and offer some details about the Denver Office of Cultural Affairs, the former
department that housed the city’s public art program until this spring of 2011.¹

I provide a portrait of the research participants in chapter five and discuss a few key
points about the individuals I interviewed. In chapter six I turn to exploring how the
various actors in the production of public art define the public and how it is they employ
this term in their work. Chapter seven brings together findings about the public with
findings about how people defined, valued, and thus produced public art in Denver.
Chapter eight’s discussion serves three purposes: summarizing the study, discussing
limitations of the study, and suggesting future research.

¹ The Public Art Program is now housed in Arts & Venues, a new department created by the city when is
dismantled the Department of Cultural Affairs.
2.0 REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

To address a public or to think of oneself as belonging to a public is to be a certain kind of person, to inhabit a certain kind of social world, to have at one’s disposal certain media and genres, to be motivated by a certain normative horizon, and to speak within a certain language ideology. (Warner 2002, 10)

2.1 Introduction

“The public” is a complex concept that is (relative to public art and urban planning), as I will argue in this chapter, necessarily about people, spaces, and things. Furthermore, the public is not just a conceptual notion but is necessarily, as an entity, an embodied public; namely, individuals with particular moral, social, and political values. As such, when addressing or serving a public (for example, the people involved in the production of public art), it is essential that one is cognizant of who this public is: they exist within particular social worlds, regarding access to communication technologies, and with respect to their specific needs and concerns. “Public” also refers to types of spaces (e.g., public or private space) and things (e.g., the types of objects that occupy spaces (buildings, monuments), and the monies that pay for such things), which are important (and often contentious) elements of our urban environments. The public in public art is, therefore, multifaceted and complicated, which is what I will be discussing in this dissertation.

In this chapter I review the literature that provides a theoretical background for understanding the production of public art in Denver. The questions that drive this literature review are the following: 1) What are the prominent and relevant notions of “the public” that inform urban practices, from public art to urban planning? 2) How has
public art come to be defined and employed in urban America, particularly related to local government public art programs? 3) What is the relationship between public art and urban revitalization? That is, has public art been employed in urban revitalization strategies in post-industrial cities, and if so how?

This literature highlights the socio-political and economic nature of the production of public art. Therefore, this chapter is about the intersection of literatures on the public, public art, and urban revitalization. Key to this research are three concerns, which I address in this literature review: 1) there are multiple notions of “the public,” and given this there is a need to keep these multiple notions in play in order to better understand how “the public” is invoked in the service of particular social, political and economic interests, 2) public art is an ambiguous term at best, for which many people attempt to craft definitions; however, it is (as Patricia Phillips asserts) “the public” in public art to which we should focus our attention. That is: “The public in public art is defined by the subject rather than the object.” (Phillips 1988, 195), and 3) post-industrial cities have been employing various strategies in an attempt to garner status and prestige, as well as to survive in a globalizing world; yet public art has played a bit part in this conversation.

This dissertation intends to contribute to the growing literature (and the ongoing practices in cities) about public art in post-industrial cities.

The literature is organized in the following order: public; public art; and post-industrial cities, urban revitalization and public art. The sequencing is important because, as stated in the introduction, this dissertation’s focus is on “the public” as it relates to public art
and post-industrial cities. Therefore, the first set of literature I discuss focuses on “the public,” with regard to people, space, and things. In this section I discuss how it is that “the public” has been framed in order to build a framework for conversations about public art and the city. Next, I cover standard definitions of and approaches to public art. I include a brief history of public art to provide a context for Denver. As well, I discuss trends and debates, and end with a discussion about how we might move beyond what we currently have, which are simplistic definitions of public art. Finally, I locate the public and public art in a particular condition, urban revitalization in post-industrial cities.

2.2 Defining “The Public”

public adj ˈpə-blik
1 a : exposed to general view : open; b : well-known, prominent; c : perceptible, material
2 a : of, relating to, or affecting all the people or the whole area of a nation or state <public law>; b : of or relating to a government; c : of, relating to, or being in the service of the community or nation
3 a : of or relating to people in general : universal; b : general, popular
4: of or relating to business or community interests as opposed to private affairs : social
5: devoted to the general or national welfare : humanitarian
6 a : accessible to or shared by all members of the community; b : capitalized in shares that can be freely traded on the open market —often used with go
7: supported by public funds and private contributions rather than by income from commercials <public radio> <public television>

publicness noun
Definition of PUBLIC from Merriam-Webster dictionary

2.2.1 Introduction

Publics have become an essential fact of the social landscape, yet it would tax our understanding to say exactly what they are. (Warner 2002a, 413)

The public in public art is defined by the subject rather than the object. (Phillips 1988, 196)

Local government agency public art, unlike museum and gallery art, is created by and for
the public. Mandated by ordinance, it is unlike museums or galleries in that it is expected that there will be few barriers (doors, walls, fees, etc.) to someone seeing/experiencing public art. Therefore, this public has the potential to be demographically diverse. But, the public (in public art) is not just about access and viewing, it is also about space, people, and money. Pertinent to this conversation is whether that space is public or private. In terms of public space there are concerns about what public space is and the increasing privatization of public space. The public in public art also has to do with people, individually and collectively. An obvious issue is that “the public” will have to see it whether they like it or not, or if it offends them. At issue then is public participation. The level of participation depends on the individual. Public art is to a great extent about a public process, allowing people to voice, criticisms, opinions, and concerns. Regarding money, is the funding can be provided through public (city and county) funds, private monies (individual, corporate, etc.), or some merging of the two.

Since one of the aims of this dissertation is to understand how it is the public is understood in relation to public art, and public art in relation to urban planning, this portion of the chapter will cover the literature on “the public” as a foundation for the next two sections of this chapter.

In the late 1990s, Deutsche, Lacy and others instigated an important discussion about the “public” in “public art” (Phillips 1988; Seine 1992; Lacy 1995; Deutsche 1996; Massey and Rose 2003; Hall 2004, 2007). And, from the work more recently by geographers and other urban scholars, it is clear that “the public” is a complex term that does not have a
discrete definition, but rather it is something that needs continual investigation. It is simultaneously a term that is ideologically loaded with regard to how it is employed, and it is also a means of categorizing people. However, as Deutsche argues, “the public” cannot be formulated in singular terms alone (e.g., geographical terms, socioeconomic, etc.) and it is an ever-fluctuating means of categorization. All of which have consequences that I will discuss further in the findings chapters and in the discussion chapter. As I will argue in the forthcoming findings chapters, a failing in the production of public art in Denver is the unexamined “public” in public art. It is through a much finer grain of examining what “the public” is in public art and urban revitalization that I was be able to assess the politics of the public in public art and urban revitalization in Denver.

Furthermore, in an age of advanced capitalism (Harvey 1989; Soja 1989), “the public” is conceived of as a consumer, not a civic-minded citizen. Increasingly, neoliberal urban redevelopment attends to this public by creating attractive spaces for consumption (Harvey 1989, 2002; Scott 2006; Harvey 2008). Many of the creative cities projects taking place today are premised on creating active, livable cities for a public (that is assumed to be) interested primarily in entertainment and shopping. Harvey (2008) posits that in order to challenge the hegemonic neoliberal logics of urbanization we (“the public”) must take back the right to making the city. That is, the public needs to re-engage with the politics of city making, from its most mundane aspects to the larger, long-term projects that will have immense social, cultural, economic, and political impacts. Most recent urban regeneration processes have commodified urban life, “where
consumerism, tourism, cultural and knowledge-based industries have become major aspects of the urban political economy” (Harvey 2008, 31). These urban revitalization schemes have increasingly divided urban areas, materially manifest in the spatial forms of our cities (for example, gated communities, cultural districts, and surveillance of public spaces). However, public and private, as relates to public art are not, necessarily oppositional forces. Today’s city programs are quite interested in exploring public-private partnerships. Indeed, there are tensions that exist between these two realms but it is through their co-existence (Arendt 1958) that collaboration can occur that can be mutually beneficial to a city’s urban revitalization efforts. I will discuss this further in the next section of the literature review.

There is, strangely enough, no agreed upon definition of “the public” that is employed in the scholarly literature nor is there one that is employed by those practicing in the fields of public art and urban planning. What, then, are the prominent and relevant (to this research) notions of “the public” that inform urban practices, from public art to urban planning? More specifically: Who is “the public” in public art? The reason this question is such an imperative one to address in this research is because the National Endowment for the Art’s (NEA) Art in Public Spaces (the precursor to the majority of city public art programs) was created to enliven urban spaces and engage “the public.” As well, the current literature in public art emphasizes the ways in which public art is perceived to contribute to urban communities and urban spaces, providing many possible benefits to members of the public. Yet just who this “public” is, is not agreed upon by the multiple actors and agents involved in making public art happen in cities across this country. It
became clear to me, during both the pre-dissertation and the dissertation research, that what public means in one context, or to a particular agency or organization, may not be the same in another context.

The public in public art appears to be ambiguous at best. As I engaged further in the interviews for this dissertation I also asked the question: “Who uses this terminology and to what purposes?” The literature does not explicitly discuss how various urban actors employ these terms. This is the work of my dissertation, to better understand how this vocabulary does, in fact, play a role in the production of public art. Those involved in the production of public art do not seem to make distinctions between types of public; rather, they operate under the assumption that it is an undisputed and simplistic category. As I have learned from this research, a further parsing of the term is important to understanding the production of public art, particularly the questions of: by whom and for whom. The public is, as I will argue in this dissertation, multi-dimensional; that is, one must think about “the public” in spatial, temporal, material and human dimensions.

In this part of the literature review I will discuss five interrelated areas. I begin the conversation by talking about a key complexity of this term: making distinctions between public and private. I begin the discussion of what this powerful binary has come to mean by way of Hannah Arendt’s theoretical position. Next, I explore public via Habermas’ conceptualizations, in order to gain entrée to how “the public” functions in society. Habermas does not support multiple publics; it is Michael Warner and Nancy Fraser who further explore notions of multiple publics and tension/conflict. Staeheli and Mitchell,
based on their studies of scholarly articles and empirical research, are adamant that we do not attempt to define the term in a one-dimensional manner; it is the complexity of the terms that makes it a useful part of a larger geographical dialogue. As such, “the public” is comprised of multiple and (potentially) counter-publics, publics that are often ignored by public art’s political rhetoric. Conceptualizing the public is complex and deeply contested; in order to reach an understanding (and thus a framework for analyzing my interview data) I rely on Weintraub’s and Staeheli’s and Mitchell’s work (they provide a taxonomy that I use to analyze my interview data). Public is performative, material and spatial; it is through Lofland, McKee, Calhoun, and Low and Smith that I examine these dimensions of the public by way of the concepts of public sphere, public realm and public space. The summary of this section engages the next section of the literature review, it presents questions about “the public” in public art.

2.2.2 Making Distinctions: Public or Private?

The concepts of public and private have been central to Western political thought at least since the seventeenth century. In some respects, they have origins in classical Greek thought. (Okin 1998, 116).

Making distinctions between public and private, in the realm of public art, has become a very important part of the conversation, particularly with regard to money, sites, and the public art process. However, lay people, including (as I found in this research) the people involved in the production of public art. Typically make distinctions between public and private in very general terms. That is, they do not think about the social-political-economic aspects of these terms, which (as I will argue in forthcoming chapters) are consequential to the production of public art. Therefore, as a first step toward
understanding “the public,” I begin with this brief discussion about public in relation to private.

A point of departure, then, is visualizing the dichotomous relationship between public and private. Michael Warner, in *Publics and CounterPublics*, provides a table (below) that suggests the range of relations between public and private. I provide this as a means by which to imagine what public means in today’s society.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Public</th>
<th>Private</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>open to everyone</td>
<td>restricted to some</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>accessible (for money)</td>
<td>closed even to those who could pay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>state-related; now often</td>
<td>nonstate, belonging to civil society;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>called public sector</td>
<td>now often called private sector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>political</td>
<td>nonpolitical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>official</td>
<td>nonofficial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>common</td>
<td>special</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>impersonal</td>
<td>personal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>national or popular</td>
<td>group, class, or locale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>international or universal</td>
<td>particular or finite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in physical view of others</td>
<td>concealed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>outside the home</td>
<td>domestic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>circulated in print</td>
<td>circulated orally or in manuscript</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or electronic media</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>known widely</td>
<td>known to initiates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>acknowledged and explicit</td>
<td>tacit and implicit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“the world itself, in so far as it is</td>
<td>related to the individual, especially</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>common to all of us and</td>
<td>inwardness, subjective experience and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>distinguishable from our</td>
<td>incommunicable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>privately owned place in it”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Arendt)

Figure 2.1: Public and Private (Warner 2002, 29-30)

Hannah Arendt’s work is useful at this point, because for Arendt, in order for the public and private to exist they must do so in co-existence. She bemoans the facts of a mass society that has erased the borders and signifiers of these two realms; it has destroyed
both the public and private, rendering men and women lost, without a place in the world and without their privacy. Public process is one of those means by which people move between “worlds;” forging alliances amongst themselves for specific purposes.

Accordingly, for Arendt, “public” signifies two things: that which is seen and heard by others and oneself, and the human world (of inhabitation, artifacts and affairs) in which we live our lives. Appearance and presence are essential to our being assured of “the reality of the world and ourselves.” As well, it can be said that there are certain things—actions, thoughts, and things—that need to be transformed in order to be appropriate for public appearance (otherwise they remain private and intimately individual). Regarding the worldly aspect of public, this is what draws humans together in their commonality, across generations. It suggests that what we have in common transcends our earthly existence (Arendt 1998, 55). The term “private,” by contrast, implies living a life that is deprived of being seen and heard by others. There is, according to Arendt, a lack of connection to a common world of things, and to the permanence that a worldly existence promises (Arendt 1998, 58). A private existence is driven by individual wants and needs; it is epitomized by Arendt in the household, which is born of necessity and only includes power over what happens within its confines.

A fundamental condition of politics, according to Arendt, is “that it goes on among plural human beings, each of whom can act and start something new,” with results that are conditional and unpredicatable (Canovan in the Introduction (viii) to The Human Condition 1998). Arendt believed that “matters of practical politics, subject to the
agreement of many, …can never lie in the theoretical considerations or the opinion of one person” (Arendt 1998, 5). For her, action is not to be confused with work or labor, as action is political, and importantly “corresponds to our plurality as distinct individuals” (Canovan 1998, ix). The problem for her was that people were following a model that focused on making not acting. Acting is about power and responsibility in an unpredictable world where agreement is hard to achieve given the multiple actors involved. Therefore, crucial to Arendt’s notion of public are action (directly between men) and speech (persuasion not just talk), from which arises “the realm of human affairs” wherein that which is necessary to a communal life is discussed and created (Arendt 1968, 25). This communal life is one of Arendt’s two orders of existence of a human being: the one that is his/her own (private) and that which is communal (public).

It was feminist geographers who, in the mid-twentieth century, began to challenge the prevailing norms of public and private, with relation to gender, race, class, and sexuality. The “making” of public as male and private as female was enabled by a patriarchal system that saw domestic/private matters of little concern to the public world of work and governance (Landes 1998; Phillips 1998). Feminist scholars see this dichotomous conceptualization as perpetuating oppressive structures of gender inequality, leaving women and other marginalized peoples, confined to the private sphere (Rose 1993). The conversation in public art has not been gender-oriented, per se, but does (since the 1970s) prompt questions about marginalized populations, whether they be artists, minorities, or neighborhoods and city districts (Lacy 1995; Deutsche 1996; Kwon 2002). As well, and important to this work, the ways in which the state, city, civil society, and individuals are
classified as public or private varies greatly depending on the perspective, concerns, and intentions of the classifier (Weintraub and Kumar 1997). These classifications represent a hierarchy that privileges certain people, places, objects and activities. Such determinations have material consequences by way of spatial practices that are sanctioned appropriate. These decisions are not value-neutral and are used in evaluative ways, invoking ideals and promoting and supporting normative behaviors.

2.2.3 A functioning public

However exclusive the public might be in any given instance, it could never close itself off entirely and become consolidated as a clique; for it is always understood and found itself immersed within a more inclusive public of all private people, persons who—insofar as they were propertied and educated—as readers, listeners, and spectators could avail themselves via the market of the objects that were subject to discussion. (Habermas 1989, 37)

I now turn to Habermas’s work, as it is a valuable next step towards interrogating the meanings of (the) public in public art. Despite the narrow scope of his study, the above quote is important in that it suggests “the public” is not a monolithic whole; rather, even though a portion of the public may institutionalize itself as a recognizable “group of discussants,” it will never be “the public” in a totalizing way. It is to this point that I will return to after I provide an overview of some of the key points of Habermas’ work on the public sphere. According to Habermas (in *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*), and an important point to this dissertation: “The usage of the words “public” and “public sphere” betrays a multiplicity of concurrent meanings” (Habermas 1989, 1). He is perplexed and concerned by contemporary society’s inability to be more discerning (even precise) in its employment of the terms “public,” “private,” and “public sphere.” In this dissertation I (too) argue that these terms, in relation to public art, are not made use
of in a precise (and thus productive) manner amongst those involved in the production of public art. As a point of departure, Habermas calls “events and occasions “public” when they are open to all, in contrast to closed or exclusive affairs—as when we speak of public places or public buildings” (Habermas 1989, 1). This is, indeed, how the “public” in public art is often considered. It is necessary to further interrogate this term because there is so much more to “public” than this brief statement suggests. In terms of public art, it is critical that this language is unpacked in order to better understand how public art is produced: by whom, for whom, and within what social, political, and spatial structures.

The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere is a foundational text in contemporary studies on the public, and it is one that has incited much productive controversy. It is Habermas’ treatise—constructed from studies of seventeenth century to early twentieth century Britain, France, and Germany—about the transformation and (what he believed was ultimately) the degeneration of the (bourgeois) public sphere. For critical theorists and feminist scholars, the public sphere he focuses on is, though, an idealized bourgeois public sphere in which a normative discourse (founded on objective knowledge and moral-practical reasoning) is held amongst private persons who do not let status invade their conversations. These private persons are a very narrow slice of British, French and German populations, comprised of well-educated, propertied men; effectively excluding large portions of the population.

“The public” in the sixteenth century (Europe) referred to the subjects of the (state) authority. Typically “the public” referred to the educated classes, those who could read
and write, not the common \textit{man}. In seventeenth century France this public was: the lecturers, addressees and consumers of lectures and spectacles, and arts and literary critics (Habermas 1989, 31). In seventeenth century England (London, in particular) this public, intellectuals and aristocracy, was gathering in coffeehouses to debate the current economic and political issues. This public (which Habermas refers to as a bourgeois public that emerged in modern society) included those involved in the administration (state authority), officers, doctors, professors, and other “scholars” (Habermas 1989, 23). Hierarchically, the mercantile class fell just below this top tier of educated men, next were schoolteachers and other members of a reading public, and finally the “people” (or common \textit{man}). The relationship between public authority and subjects was, beginning in the eighteenth century, changing. These subjects now had a voice and the means by which to engage the state authority. Increasingly, as well, this public was becoming a consumer public because of increased access to goods (cultural products were becoming more accessible and were increasingly seen as commodities available to a purchasing public), services and ideas that moved between the state and private individuals.

In eighteenth century Europe, there was a large rural population as well as townspeople, a mostly illiterate population that was commonly referred to as “the masses.” These people did not have the education or the (monetary) means to join even “the larger public,” which consisted, at this time, of an educated and increasingly culture-consumption-oriented public. By the late-eighteenth century new publics were emerging. For instance, there was a theatre-going public, as well as a concert-going public (Habermas 1989, 39). These publics paid admissions fees to cultural events, relishing the
opportunity to hear music and see theatre as a part of their daily lives. The cultural
events public was also conceived of as an audience, a public being addressed in a very
particular manner. As well, with the rise of the domestic novel, the notion of literary
publics as audience grew (Habermas 1989, 49).

This (institutionalized and normative) public—an educated and civically engaged group
of private citizens—acted as a mouthpiece for “the public.” Habermas claims that this
public is “conscious of being part of a larger public,” suggesting that this group of
citizens clearly understands its role both to itself and those external to itself. This
educated and engaged public is thus (according to Habermas) a critical public, indicating
a distinction between types of public that emerged in modern society: the public as a
gathering of people for an event in public space (a prosaic public or the “public-at-large”) in opposition to a (critical) public that was a worldly and reading public.

Because of the rapid growth of institutional bases (such as salons, journals and social
organizations) in the late 1800s and early 1900s (in Europe and in the United States),
there was a growing number of people who become a part of this democratic political
discourse. Though Habermas believes this discourse is essential to democratic societies,
he feels that too many people dilute the quality of discourse. And, though unstated, it is
people outside of the bourgeois public sphere (read: well-educated, propertied men) that
are contributing to this dilution, and ultimately the degeneration of the public sphere.
Therefore, as Nancy Fraser makes clear, what he ignores makes the work extremely
important to conversations about the public sphere today: 1) Was it ever a reality that
these groups were able to disregard status and engage in rational, critical debate? 2) Habermas claimed that there was a growing and inclusive nature to the public sphere because of the introduction of print media and social organizations, but he does not question access (to these sources or the literacy of populations) or the elite nature of the social organizations he studies, 3) There were, indeed, people who challenged the exclusionary nature of the bourgeois public sphere, focusing on matters of common concern outside of bourgeois concerns, something Calhoun calls Habermas’ “inadequate grasp of everyday life,” and 4) There is a distinct lack of critical attention to gender; Habermas only speaks of minorities when he attends to the lives of a small number of elite women who are included in distinctly limited ways.

Despite what he ignores, Habermas’ work is, in fact, important for several reasons. First, because he attempts to understand a category of the public in a Western, modernizing, capitalist society and how it functions at a particular moment in time. For Habermas the public sphere is ripe with potential “as a mode of societal integration” at a time when personal freedoms must be defended against the state (Calhoun 1992, 4). Second, he asserts that the public sphere (essential to a democratic society) depends on quality of discourse and the quantity of participation in it. Like Arendt, Habermas stresses the shift in public thinking, that of private persons coming together as a public using their critical reasoning as a counterforce to authority (the state).

Another important contribution Habermas makes to contemporary conversations about the public, and particularly relevant to this dissertation, is a “refeudalization of society”
that leads to the emergence of a consumer public (Calhoun 1992, 21). For Habermas this plays a principal role in the degeneration of the public sphere: a consumer public emerges as the result of the blurring of the public and private realms. An expansion of access to information and material/cultural goods (what Habermas sees a lowering of the threshold of entrée to public society) leads not to increased debate about offerings but to compromise and a “passive culture of consumption and apolitical sociability” of “substandard participants” in public life (Calhoun 1992, 22). With the advancement of presses, and thus of journals and other weeklies, the public also became more self-conscious. It was via the arts and literary papers that critics informed, influenced and censored an educated/reading public. The debates that ensued within and from these publications represented a new public that was engaged in public debate amongst and of itself. I will discuss this aspect of the public—the public sphere (communication and debate)—in section 2.2.6 below.

The growth of the public relations industry, according to Habermas, exacerbates an already growing problem because the industry engineered “consent amongst consumers of mass culture” through staged spectacles (replacing the necessary discussions of a civil society). What Habermas does not examine is the increasing access to education, increasing literacy, and an enlarged leisure class composed of working class men and women. Again, there is a distinct separation between classes, between the elite producers and the critics of bourgeois culture and the newly-monied middle class that consumes (Habermas assumes) uncritically. And, this perspective does not allow for a non-
complacent consumer public in which people are making choices and acting as agents in their everyday lives (Peiss 1991, 820).

Habermas bemoans the fact that public discourse has ceased to exist, when, as Fraser and other like-minded critical theorists (e.g., Mary Ryan, Geoff Eley, and Michael Warner) assert, it now exists in multiple and different ways than Habermas imagined. Public discourse now focuses on different issues and such deliberation is not necessarily about already existing common interests but often time generates and clarifies new interests of various groups that have been marginalized (e.g., gays and lesbians, abused women, etc.). As well, public discourse is informed by social movements that have the potential to incite debate and introduce new items to the public agenda. As such, it seems clear that Habermas’ normative ideal was never a possible practical reality. Rather, it is more productive to recognize the plurality of movements and agendas, which as overlapping or even contentious spheres, imply “a field of discursive connections” or pluralistic networks of communications (Calhoun 1992, 38). This field, or these networks, are (necessarily) filled with contradictions and tensions, and impacted by external forces that keep them active and responsive to change.

For Bruce Robbins (The Phantom Public Sphere, 1993) it is critical that the term (public sphere) is “re-operationalized” such that it can be productively used in today’s urban discourse. He references Walter Lippmann’s The Phantom Public, 1925), quoting: “There is nothing particularly new in the disenchantment which the private citizen expresses by not voting at all.” Lippmann was convinced that “the public” was an
unattainable ideal. He was not optimistic about private persons forming “themselves into a responsible, well-informed public.” Lippman’s solution was “a delegation of authority to specialized, competent experts” be appointed to the task of representing the public; once again returning to a reliance on well-educated, wealthy, and powerful individuals. Rather the question today is not how to solve the problem of a public but to recognize that a single (mythic) public does not exist. One body cannot serve as “the public” because we are a diverse, multi-cultural society in which we can barely “find a unity which absorbs diversity” (Bloom by way of Robbins 1993, ix). But, if (as Robbins asserts) we forego the possibility of “the public” are we not robbing ourselves of its potential as a “collective possibility for democratic community governance” (Robbins 1993, xi). The public is not dead, but rather there is no one, idealized, normative public but a “multiplicity of distinct and overlapping public discourses, [and] public spheres…” (Robbins 1993, xii). And, as Rosalyn Deutsche (Deutsche 1990, 21) and Iris Marion Young (Marion Young 1987) note, because of a complex mixing of public and private today, there is constant multilayered negotiation that occurs in various venues\(^2\) in which there is an intersection of many different actors and agendas, which allows for “collectives of individuals (publics) to be acknowledged even if they do not often gather as a public” (Warner 1993, 248).

### 2.2.4 Multiple and counter publics

Some publics […] are more likely than others to stand in for the public, to frame their address as the universal discussion of the people. (Warner 2002a, 423)

\(^2\) These venues are the urban public spaces and public buildings, which according to Habermas are, state institutions, with the state being the “public authority” that is mandated to promote “the public or common welfare of its rightful members” (Habermas 1989, 2). In terms of this dissertation, the City and County of Denver are this public authority, under which the public art program is employed.
Habermas’ work is suggestive of—though he ignores various other publics (other than the bourgeois public) and idealizes a unitary bourgeois public—but does not explicitly articulate the fact that there are multiple publics. As well, he does not explicitly discuss the conflicts between publics. Therefore, it is to Michael Warner’s and Nancy Fraser’s work that I now turn to discuss multiple and counter publics.

According to Nancy Fraser, Habermas’ study does not, in fact, allow for multiple publics. Habermas is wary of multiple publics because he believes they will lead to the destruction of what he believes is a single, overarching, and productive public (Fraser 1992, 122). Habermas’ bourgeois public is, for Fraser, a “false we,” a fictional stabilizing force that does not represent subordinated social groups (such as women, working class, people of color). Fraser calls these groups *subaltern publics*; subaltern publics conspicuously create and circulate counter discourses that express and legitimate their identities, interests and needs (Fraser 1992, 124). The plurality of publics, says Fraser, better promote the “ideal of participatory parity” but only when there is interaction, exchange and debate, not merely discussion. Fraser’s diverse and multiple publics rely on inter- and intra-public relations that allow for an exchange of ideas and the generation of possibilities. As well, critical to this notion of publics, there are multiple and unequal publics who do not always reach agreement, but that does not necessarily mean agreement is impossible or even necessary. The challenge is to be sure that various perspectives amongst the publics are articulated so that deliberation occurs

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3 Particularly when he talks about a reading public, a theatre-going public, or a larger public. He does not distinguish these as multiple but it does appear, implicitly, that they can occur simultaneously in and across time and space.
without a resulting outcome in mind. Furthermore, Fraser claims there are strong and weak publics. Weak publics are those whose work focuses chiefly on forming opinions; they do not participate in decision-making. Strong publics are empowered publics “whose discourse encompasses both opinion formation and decision-making” (Fraser 1992, 125). Hence, a single (bourgeois) public is hardly, according to Fraser, adequate to envisioning democratic possibilities in today’s world. Rather, it is quite possibly that more hybrid forms of public are necessary to enabling the practical force of a democratic society.

Multiple publics have what Warner called “shades of difference.” These differences are manifest in identities, interests, needs, as well as ideologies, language, style of address and spaces of communication and exchange (Warner 2002b, 117). These shades of difference may be robust and glaringly obvious, or not. They are often built upon tensions or actual conflicts that distinguish one public from another. Publics may mark (differentiate) themselves and/or be marked by others. It is, then, important to acknowledge both integrative/mainstream and oppositional publics; that is, the dominant voices and those that challenge the dominant ideologies of the time and place. Both publics develop their own spaces, language, communication and media that allow them to have their voices heard, as well as to maintain and grow their communities. Importantly, though, different publics might not be voluntarily developed, they might occur because of exclusion or poor treatment by a mainstream public (e.g., the homeless). As well, of course, there are publics that establish themselves not as a subset of the public, but create a public that is in “confictual relation to the dominant public (Warner 2002a, 423). Such

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4 These are terms Craig Calhoun used in a presentation to the Ford Foundation: “Rethinking the Public Sphere” (7 February 2005).
publics, Warner calls counter publics, publics that are considered different from or subordinate to others, and sometimes regarded with animosity.

Relevant to this project, it is particularly problematic that segments of the population (certain publics) are often ignored, not consulted or not counted as a part of “the public” the city serves. Counter publics are aware of their subordinate status and are thus defined by this tension with the larger normative public (Warner). But there are those publics that do not expressly oppose the dominant public but are, rather, considered inferior to a larger, dominant public. Additionally, multiple and counter publics are important to this work because they are the public (not just individuals) that have differing views and desires from a dominant public, they might even oppose public art programs and/or individual projects. How they express their differences and opposition to programs and projects will vary, and it is this internal and external expression (communication and exchange) and circulation of ideas that I will discuss in section 2.3.6, the public sphere.

2.2.5 A taxonomy

- What is hidden or withdrawn versus what is open or revealed.
- What is individual, or pertains only to an individual, versus what is collective, or affects the interests of a collectivity of individuals. (Weintraub 1995, 285)

In order to “thicken” the conversation, I will bring a few more recent thinkers into the conversation: Weintraub, and Staeheli and Mitchell. Weintaub believes that public and private are distinct, but (counter to Arendt) he says they do not make sense until they are
paired in opposition (Weintraub 1995). There are, according to Weintraub, two fundamental and analytical distinctions between the two, beginning with distinguishing the private from the public: the public is that which is visible (and hearable) and is about collectivity. He further elaborates, “the public and private are used to distinguish different kinds of human action” … and “the different physical and social spaces, in which they occur” (Weintraub 1997, 7).

Staeheli and Mitchell, in a summative article in Progress in Human Geography (2007), employ Weintraub’s taxonomy in order to get at “the what” and “the where” of “the public.” Staeheli and Mitchell make clear that it is not just a matter of who the public is that is important to geography but rather it is “[t]he multiplicity of meanings of ‘public’ … that is enough “to make a theorist’s—or an activist’s—head spin” (Staeheli and Mitchell 2007, 793). Therefore the authors make an attempt to “locate” the public (with regards to spheres, realms, and spaces) according to how various actors define and where it is they believe the public is constituted. They use Weintraub’s taxonomy because it draws on various literatures to develop a normative classification of the public. What they do not attempt to do is find one definition of public; instead they acknowledge the complexity and dynamic nature of the term (historically and contemporarily) in order to allow for an examination of the different social-political-economic interests invested in these various definitions.

Weintraub’s taxonomy is based on what he sees as four conceptualizations of public (and

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5 Arendt believed that private and public co-exist; that is, they are not in opposition to one another, rather they make the other possible.
private): liberal economistic, republican-virtue, sociability-based, and economic-feminist. The first of these, the liberal-economistic model, sees the public and private distinction in terms of state administration versus the market economy. The operable terms in this model are the public sector, where basic rights and freedoms are located for people, and the private sector (or non-governmental) or market economy. In this view, the dichotomy is between state action and “contractually created organizations” (comprised of individuals).

The second, republican-virtue (or classical) approach is based on citizenship; that is, the notion that a public life is one that involves “active participation in collective decision-making, carried out within a framework of fundamental solidarity and equality” (Weintraub 1997, 10). Individuals are thus integral players in a political community, whereas privacy is located in the household. Political in this instance (versus the first conceptualization) is not about an administrative state but rather about action (See Arendt above) that includes discussion and debate, negotiation, and decision-making.

The third approach, public as sociability, relies on Rousseau’s and Jane Jacobs’ beliefs in tolerance and social contracts. Public life and the public spaces within which it occurs are at the heart of this approach. Sociability (Weintraub via Philippe Aries) is possible only when “diversity and social distance” are “maintained despite physical proximity” (Weintraub 1997, 19). This is Jane Jacobs’ quintessential streets of New York, where there are tensions and conflicts that are negotiated through conventions and daily interactions.
The last of these models, Staeheli and Mitchell call a Marxist-Feminist model because the underpinnings of this model is the well-established Marxist-Feminist dichotomy: domestic/family/personal/private and civil society/societal/market economy/public. In this model the private is not a residual (or even trivial) category to the public but rather, because of feminist scholarship, it is an important site of re-production (versus merely production).

Each of these models provides a way toward conceptualizing, locating, and even providing a vocabulary for discussion about, “the public” in contemporary life. What I attempt to do in this next section is spatialize the public in order to provide a means for discussing the public in public art.

2.2.6 Spatializing “the public”: The public sphere, public space, and the public realm

During the interviews for this research I asked various actors how they defined “the public.” I wanted to understand how they employed this term as a part of their work in public art. What emerged were three arenas within in which peoples’ definitions could be situated, the public as: sphere, space and realm. For all three arenas there is an implicit sense of “people,” “space,” and things, but important to each is how it is employed as an actionable term. Therefore, I consider three important concepts that pepper (inform and confuse) the conversation about public art and urban revitalization: the public sphere, public space, and the public realm. Staeheli’s and Mitchell’s article use of Weintraub’s taxonomy allows a further discussion about “the what” of public (and
private) and implies some of “the where;” therefore, I now turn to Lofland, McKee, Calhoun, and Low and Smith to more fully tease out conceptualizations of the public sphere, public space and the public realm.

The public is thus, in one way of conceptualizing it, a gathering of private people to engage in debate over matters of common concern; it is through this activity (both social and political) that a public is constituted. Important to this are the spaces within which publics constitute themselves and conduct their daily lives. In the following subsection I will discuss the public sphere, public space, and the public realm, as all are prominent terms used in the field of public art. For example, it is the public sphere through which debates about public art are conducted; public space is where the public art is located, and it is the public realm wherein negotiation occurs in order for public art to be installed and maintained. These terms are often are used interchangeably; they are, though, distinctly different, and importantly so.

*The public sphere.* Habermas uses the following quote as a means by which to fortify his argument about publicity.

> The public’s use of one’s reason must always be free, and in it alone can bring about enlightenment among men. The private use of reason, on the other hand, may often be very narrowly restricted without particularly hindering the progress of enlightenment. (Kant *What is enlightenment*, p. 5 via Habermas 1989, 106)

For Habermas, it is the responsibility of those persons who are of the educated public to speak to their fellow human beings. According to Habermas, such communication and engagement in debate are the pre-requisites for being a citizen of the commonwealth. Citizens’ liberties were to be guarded by common-wealth/state/public authority laws,
allowing one to express ideas, concerns and beliefs without negative repercussions. The “public sphere” is a virtual space where people (citizens) come together to express, share, and discuss their views, concerns, and ideals (what Habermas calls “matters of general interest”) without fear of reprisal (Hartley 1992; Habermas 1997; McKee 2005). This public sphere is not where we physically meet (public space) but rather, it is the space of communication, ideally the site of negotiation toward reaching agreement about civic matters.

This public sphere has changed (morphed and grown) with increasing populations and the advancements in technology such that Habermas notes “…when the public is large this kind of communication requires certain means of dissemination and influence: today, newspapers and periodicals, radio and television are the media of the public sphere” (Habermas 1997, 105). In eighteenth century Europe it was through the press, clubs, and letters (expressly addressing a reading and writing public) that the state was able to be in touch with the needs of civil society/the public. Today, social networking is the means by which this public sphere is manifest. This can readily be seen in the popular uprising this spring (2011) in the Middle East popular: social networking is vast in reach, grassroots, and tech-savvy.

According to Alan McKee there are five key concerns today about the public sphere held by both the academy and popular culture: it has become trivialized, over-commercialized, and purely about spectacle, creating a fragmented and thus apathetic public. According to McKee, trivialization of the public sphere has produced a culture consumed by trivia—
celebrity news, diets, sex tips—rather than engaged with the political affairs that do, in fact, impact their daily lives. The second concern he raises is that the public sphere has been over-commercialized to the point that the focus is on quantity (“stuff”) and appeals to the lowest common denominator. As such, over-commercialization has created a public sphere that is about spectacle, but with little substance or durability. In this scenario McKee claims people (as audience) have become passive and have short attention spans. As well, niche marketing has flourished, creating fragmented audiences thus fracturing any sense of a common culture, resulting in apathy. One can hardly call this public a citizenry as they are not politically engaged nor are they concerned about issues that impact society as a whole (McKee 2005, 2-3). The collapse of the public sphere is not a matter of its contraction (it is expanding due to the various technologies and institutions that allow for more regular and frequent contact and communication) but rather about its function (Habermas 1989, 4).

Importantly, the public sphere is constituted through discussion that takes place from the courts to the markets, and other commercial sites, as well as the other locales of daily life (Habermas 1989, 3). Though a life is lived in both the private (home) and public spheres, it is only in the public sphere that “that which existed became revealed, did everything become visible to all” (Habermas 1989, 4). The public sphere, according to Habermas, is an essential part of a social democracy because it is where citizens’ concerns and opinions (the “publicity of representation”) begin to take shape as a means by which to inform and impact the state. Pertinent to this project, people who are involved in the production of public art are parts of publics that engage with and constitute themselves
through the public sphere. This public sphere becomes their site of dialogue, which might today include: meetings (of advisory boards, selection panels, city council, etc.), member websites, twitter, YouTube, etc. Therefore the public sphere is a meaningful concept for thinking about public art because an active public sphere functions as a space for continued dialogue. Significantly, the assembling (virtual and otherwise) of private persons as a public is not concerned only with agreement rather it is a place for discourse and counter-discourse.

Public space. Public space, in contrast to the public sphere (discourse and milieu) and the public realm (legal, ethical, civic), is about access and representation (Light and Smith 1998, 3). In terms of access, public space is, broadly speaking, “space to which all citizens are granted some legal rights of access (Light and Smith 1998, 3); which implies that there are some normative limitations regarding time and appropriate behavior. This way of thinking about public space is not merely about having access but also the right to occupy or inhabit space. As such, there are “grades of access” that are allowed, which, of course, prompt conflict over the usage of public space (for whom, for how long, conducting what kinds of activities). Regarding representation, public spaces “are spaces in which citizens gather to form themselves into, and represent themselves as, a public” (Light and Smith 1998, 3). In this sense, public space is not just about individual access to spaces but the right of a group of individuals to be in the space (imagining and) expressing themselves as a public.
It is this sense of public space that people are most concerned about when they talk about the disintegration of public space. Not only is it a matter of the increasing privatization of public spaces but it is, potentially more meaningfully, about the fact that people do not imagine themselves as part of a functioning public, and therefore public spaces (as part of a civil society) have become defunct in the popular imagination. The increasing trivialization of a public discourse (as mentioned above in the section on the public realm) has consequently impacted the physical spaces of cities. Public spaces have become the sites for individual action, and frequently consumption (Zukin 1991; Sorkin 1992; Zukin 1995, 2010). For example, shopping malls became the public spaces of the 1990s, serving individual needs to gather (to chat, to pursue fitness goals, etc.). Such “public spaces” were highly regulated (security and enforcement of proper conduct) sites, not the public spaces that encouraged interaction amongst members of the public and necessitated tolerance and acknowledgement of being a part of a public (Jacobs 1961; Rybczynski 1995). There are, thus, two ideals of public space, according to Light and Smith: educative public spaces and entertainment-based public spaces (Light and Smith 1998, 5).

Educative public spaces emphasize the reality of cities: the gritty, diverse, socialities of urban sites. Such public spaces teach us about ourselves and our fellow human beings, (with whom we inhabit cities). Alternatively, entertainment-based public space is not about civil society (duty, politics, responsibilities) but focuses on manufactured experience. These spaces reflect a popular desire for spectacle and consumption (Gottdiener 1997). The American population has become accustom to spaces that are
privately owned, but seemingly public, such as entertainment complexes, malls, festival centers, and sports arenas (Boyer 1994).

Therefore, what counts as public space, in most peoples’ minds today, are sites of private profit not civic engagement (Low and Smith 2006). In the past twenty-five years cities have attempted to solve the perceived ills of urban public spaces through a “combination of environmental change, behavior modification, and stringent policing” (Mitchell 2003). Such actions are attempts to reassure the public that spaces will be “public” in that they will not have to encounter “undesirable users” or inappropriate behavior. People have become accustomed to these reassurances as urban and corporate planners have created, increasingly, what Mitchell calls “nostalgic” or “pseudopublic” spaces that are for entertainment and consumption not interaction or politics. These spaces are highly controlled, homogenized and thus safe from those who are “strange” to us. It is this sense of public that is increasingly deemed the official public to which creative cities initiatives cater. “True” public spaces are heterogeneous both in how they are physically manifest as well as who occupies them. And, they are the sites of daily activity.

Local government public art programs are dependent on public space for the sites of public art installations. As I will show in the findings chapters, public art is defined via public space. How are people involved in the production of public art define public space? Is the public in public art merely about access? Or does it include further distinctions, such as representation (of a civic nature) and ownership /property rights?
The public realm. The public realm is, according to Lofland, part of a trichotomy of the private, parochial and public realms.\(^6\)

The public realm is made up of the public places or spaces in a city, which spaces tend to be inhabited by persons who are strangers to one another or who “know” one another only in terms of occupational or other nonpersonal identity categories such as bus driver/customer. (Lofland 1989, 454)

It is separate and discrete from the private realm of primary relationships (e.g., friends and family in households and personal networks). The parochial realm, in contrast to the private realm, is “…characterized by a sense of commonality among acquaintances and neighbors who are involved in interpersonal networks that are located within ‘communities’” (Lofland 1989, 455). It includes the cafes, bars, and other spaces of a stable and unified neighborhood. The public realm is comprised of strangers or those who are merely categorically known to you (e.g., policemen, store owners, etc.). It is though social activities that it becomes a known geographical or physical territory.

In Lofland’s 1998 book *The Public Realm*, he expands on his earlier work (in which he stated more research on “the public realm” is needed) noting the normative or legal aspects of the public realm. Terms that are significant to Lofland as well as to the way that the public realm will be employed in this research are: strangers, choreography, civility, negotiation, cooperation. I begin this conversation with Lofland because, as with the public sphere it is not physical space *per se* but a means by which we understand physical spaces. It is a field or domain of interest or activity that includes the publicly

\(^6\) Lofland’s work is based on anthropologists and ethnographers work, in particular Goffman, Hunter, Mead, Simmel, Strauss, Wirth, and Whyte. Hunter’s and Mead’s work particularly drew on research conducted with tribes, villages and small towns. It is through Strauss’ work that Lofland extends Hunter’s and Mead’s work to the urban ethnographies of Gofmann, Simmel, Strauss, Wirth and Whyte’s work on the city.
owned spaces between buildings, which includes medians, streets, and other such sites.

In planning parlance, the public realm includes the public rights-of-way, those areas of lands the city controls but allows people and goods the right to pass over or travel through. It is an important part of the legal, ethical and civic urban fabric all persons experience. The public realm is, thus, slivers of land areas of the city. Typically it is the spaces between buildings and other public and private properties. When one speaks of the public realm, in planning terms, one typically is concerned with a “good quality of the public realm.” Which implies safety, security, proper maintenance, and ease of circulation. It is, then, the site of shared relationships (political, social, and economic) and disputations (public and private) (O’Sullivan 2009).

2.2.7 Operationalizing “the public” in relation to public art

The practice of examining (and thus operationalizing) the concept of “the public” in public art began in the early 1990s with the growing interest in multiculturalism and identity politics. Lacy’s edited volume, *Mapping the Terrain: New Genre Public Art*,...
was a watershed moment in public art because she made a distinction between a 
(normative) public art that was based predominantly on aesthetics and a “new genre 
public art”\(^7\) that grew out of a growing attention to site-specificity and an examination of 
and interest in engaging an audience. This stance resituated public as an “operative 
concept and quest” (Lacy 1995, 20).

As Lacy suggests, “the public” is a concept worthy of being operationalized as one 
engages in and examines (the production of) public art. The public, as I hope that I have 
shown in the above literature review can be conceptualized in multiple ways: 1) in 
(productive) relation to the private, 2) as that which is seen and heard by oneself and 
others, 3) as the sites in which we live our collective lives, 4) as audience (those being 
addressed and those who gather for particular events for which they conceive of 
themselves as audience, 5) in terms of multiple publics that are constructed and 
constituted in various ways (for example, via education, geography, culture, etc.); as well, 
6) there are potential conflicts between publics that create counter-publics, and with this 
7) suggests one must think of the voices, power and responsibilities of the public, all of 
which imply a citizen public. Furthermore, public is about communication and exchange 
(public sphere), space and place (public space), and is legal/jurisdictional (public realm). 
In the next section I discuss the various ways public art is categorized, its history, and 
current trends and debates.

\(^7\) Lacy coined this term as a means to shift the conversation about public art: to talk about its potentialities.
2.3 Public Art

Public art is not simply art placed outside. (Sharpe, Pollack and Paddison 2005, 1003) Public art, simply defined is art in an open public space… (Champion 2008, 115)

2.3.1 Introduction

These two quotes characterize the locational focus in defining public art, which has, unfortunately, limited the conversation to an unsophisticated approach that has hindered further development of research and practice alike. Definitions that focus predominantly on where public art is located ignore and thus undermine the complexity of “the public” in public art. This dissertation is based on the notion that (local government-run) public art is a product of a complex system that involves numerous actors, sites, and agendas. As such, it is not my goal to develop or promote a single definition of public art but to develop an argument for different definitions that speak to various social, political and economic objectives.

To better understand the complexity of this term/field I begin the conversation by talking about the standard definitions and approaches to public art. Next, with the intention of historically contextualizing current debates, I provide a brief history of urban public art in the United States, attending to issues about politics, patronage, values, eras, genres and new directions. It is through this history that I hope to suggest how public art in the United States is representative of many different forms, material, agendas, sites and actors. Then, I discuss the current state of public art (debates and trends) in the United States. Lastly, and most important to what this dissertation is about, I discuss how it is that we might maximize public art’s potential. I believe that we need to turn the
conversation to “the public” in public art, in order to develop an understanding (rather than crafting a definition) of its role in the post-industrial city.

2.3.2 Preliminaries: Classifying public art

As with many young or emerging fields, there has been an attempt to “fix” a definition of public art. Many people believe that “fixing” a definition of public art will bring coherence to the field. A typical generic definition is where many people start (and end) the conversation: Public art is “concerned with, or for the use of the people as a whole, representing the people, done by or for the people open to general observation or knowledge” (Hawkins, 1986, 669). Another, seemingly more specific, perhaps ideal, definition is that public art is situated in a visible, accessible place in order to ensure intentional or unintentional interaction between the public and the artwork (Lacy, 1995, 20). Both of these definitions avoid a direct confrontation with the operative term, “the public.” What, then, does it mean to bring these two terms into contact: public and art? This question, unfortunately, has been a minimal part of the conversation. What has dominated conversations about public art are the standard features of (ways of classifying) public art: function, funding source and scale of organization, and scope and type.

_Five primary functions of public art._ Here I will discuss what advocates for public claim to be the five primary functions of public art. First, they claim that it can serve, at its most basic level, to improve the aesthetics of a site/building. In such situations it is considered as ornament or decoration. Second, public art can serve as a means to
embody memory (of a place, space, person, event), and/or serve as an educational vehicle. Third, it can promote community building for geographically constituted or city-sanctioned communities such as neighborhoods. As well, it can build community amongst artists (interested in public art). Related to community building, public art can function as a landmark (commemorating a significant community event or serving to mark entry or arrival). Fifth, it can be a component of economic and urban revitalization. Once again, there is little attention to “the public” in public art. Though these are noble claims, they do not help to frame a conversation about how public art actually is public.

Funding source and scale of organization. Public art can be categorized according to its primary funding source (e.g., public or private funding) and/or according the scale of the organization (individuals funding public art versus state funding or national/global funding, e.g., UNESCO). Questions that arise in this area pertain to the organizational framework (e.g., within a local city government versus state government programming), method for gaining access to and distribution of funds, and objectives and extent of the program. At the individual scale, one person might fund and create arts works that are for the viewing pleasure of passersby. This type of public art is often located in someone’s front yard or in the public realm. They are not officially sanctioned. In some jurisdictions they are considered illegal acts. At the community scale, a neighborhood organization (e.g., HOA) may fund-raise to install an artwork for the community. At the city/local governmental level, an ordinance is passed to make official the funding, process, and future of a public art program. At the state or national level legislation is passed to create a program that will be overseen at the state or federal levels. UNESCO’s
public art efforts transcend national borders, working in a collaborative manner to introduce arts work into peoples’ everyday lives.

Official, city agencies, local government-sponsored programs are the most common form of public art programs. These programs depend primarily on mandated allocations (e.g., One-Percent-Programs, in which one-percent of capital improvement project budgets are allocated to public art). There are, though, other funding mechanisms for public art programs: annual appropriations, hotel/motel tax, sales tax, tax increment financing, development fees, and private gifts. In today’s economic climate, many programs are looking into public/private partnerships as well. And, there are multiple means by which they obtain work, including commissioned art, art initiated by artists, and donated art.

Scope and type of work. Public art can also be categorized according to scope and type of the artwork, which includes size, coverage, materials, media and mediums. Public art can be as small as a postage stamp-size painting and as large as an earthwork that covers acres of space. Public art is of multiple (and sometimes mixed) materials, mediums and media, such as metal, wood and ceramic, or constituted via digital technologies. Additionally, it can be ephemeral, temporary or permanent, which includes more performative works such as a dance performance. Genres of public art, too, are increasingly useful way to categorize public art. In Suzanne Lacy’s pioneering book, *Mapping The Terrain. New Genre Public Art*, she makes a case for a new genre public art, describing this new genre as one that is distinguished “in both form and intention”

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8 Although (based on my discussions with public art program administrators throughout the United States) most program’s public art collections are 90-99% funded by percent-for-art (of city and/or county capital improvements).
from what has heretofore been called “public art” (Lacy 1995, 19). She advances a new vocabulary as a means by which to engage in a more critical approach to public art. Significant to how people practice and critique of public art, Lacy introduces a focus on form, intention and process.

2.3.3 A brief history of public art in the United States

Public art has a history of being considered a luxury, a product of an elite society, and thus regarded with distrust by much of the public (Senie and Webster 1992, xi). Yet, “More than museum art, public art gathers the issues of its time and addresses a larger audience. With its built-in social focus, public art would seem to be an ideal genre for a democracy” (Senie and Webster 1992, xi). Much of the controversy about public art deals with appropriate form, placement, and funding, all of which have garnered far more controversy than consensus or celebration (Cartiere and Willis 2008, Knight 2008, Raven 1989, Senie and Webster 1992). Some may think this unfortunate yet such controversies have raised public awareness of public art (programs, artists, etc.) and have elevated the conversation about public art, encouraging questions and debate. Accordingly, as Senie and Webster state in the introduction to their edited volume, Critical Issues in Public Art, public art “must be viewed in the complex matrix in which it is conceived, commissioned, built, and finally received” (Senie and Webster 1992, xi).

A New Republic: The 1800s. Public art’s beginnings in the United States were primarily manifest through the installation of free standing memorials/statues and the decoration (external: e.g., friezes and other architectural ornamentation, and internal: e.g., the
paintings and sculptures that adorned the offices and hallways of federal buildings) of the architecture of the young republic (Senie and Webster 1992, xii). Some of the first pieces of public art appeared in the early 1800s. One of the first buildings to be adorned was the Capitol, most notably, the Rotunda. President John Quincy Adams struggled with the complexities associated with an elite patronage determining the art of the new republic; however, he ultimately supported government sponsorship of art, emphasizing how art would exhibit the nation’s progressive and civilized values (Senie and Webster 1992, p. xii).

Unfortunately, many of these early adornments were not deemed artistically sophisticated; that is, there was much disappointment in the execution of such important works. There were, though, many opportunities to express the new nation’s cultural values, especially in the nation’s capital. However, there were few artists and architects who had the experience to develop and implement worthy work. Therefore, in the mid to late 1800s there was great interest (and thus, travel and training) in European precedents. The City Beautiful Movement, which grew out of the 1893 Chicago World’s Columbia Exposition (Senie and Webster 1992, xiii), was a source of inspiration, and competition, for many cities. The renewed interest in neoclassical and Beaux-Arts art and architecture further influenced artists and architects in the United States to engage in education about, and travel and training in, Europe. The halcyon days of the City Beautiful movement were during the first decades of the twentieth century, when many cities, East, West and

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9 John Trumball began the first of his series of paintings of the Nation’s founders in 1786 images of the Nation’s founders for the Capitol’s Rotunda. The U.S. Congress officially commissioned Trumball’s series of painting in 1817. They were installed in the Rotunda in 1826. See the “Architect of The Capitol website for images and further details: http://www.aoc.gov/cc/art/rotunda/declaration_independence.cfm.
Midwest, made considerable improvements to the civic qualities of their cities, which included public buildings, parks and transportation thoroughfares. It was a time, to be seen again in the late twentieth century, when Americans made significant efforts to improve their cities, making them beautiful, functional, and desirable places (Wilson 1989, 1). This movement, though often spoken of only in aesthetic terms, was distinctly political and economic: it “demanded a reorientation of public thought and action toward urban beauty” (Wilson 1989, 1). As such, many different actors were involved, including planners; this was the dawning of comprehensive planning in the United States.

Comprehensive planning married beauty and utility, as well as cultivating a civic and patriotic spirit.

*World War I: Patriotism.* This civic and patriotic spirit re-emerged with a great passion after the First World War. The United States was emerging as a world power; as such, its cities were struggling to determine (and build) what it meant to be a great American city in the twentieth century. There were men to be honored, events to be memorialized, and a nation to be glorified. Small towns and cities were the sites of these monuments and memorials. Many of the debates emerging today, because of what Erika Doss aptly names, “memorial mania,” hark back to the debates over what were to be the proper memorials to World War I.10 One set of concerns revolved around the function of the memorials: should they be traditional sculptures/monuments or should they be interactive elements in the landscape, such as parks, playgrounds, recreation centers? Another set of concerns were about the position/stance of the memorial/monument: should it be

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celebratory, conciliatory, focus on the human costs of war, or about seeking international peace in the future (Senie and Webster 1992, xiii)? These issues arise with each war, conflict or violent event in U.S. history, and are thus, predictable debates that continue into the 21st century.

A Modernist approach. Early twentieth century public art was influenced by International Style architecture and modernist art and design, both of which were disdainful of ornament (Senie and Webster 1992). Such abstract and academically inclined styles were, in fact, not very accessible to a general public. And, because of the minimalist architectural philosophy, art and ornament were included after the fact, often as conciliatory gestures. These early stylistic and philosophical attitudes instigated what became known as “plop art” or “plunk art,” which still, though less common than mid-twentieth century, occurs today.11 The term “Plop Art” is employed as a negative term, describing public art, typically large sculptures, placed in front of office buildings, government and corporate plazas, parks, and other public venues. The term, coined and thereafter used in the art world, in 1969 (according to multiple arts sources, by James Wines), referred to public art that did not relate to its surroundings nor was it appropriate to the site/place. In addition, it was often thought of as art work placed in the public realm at the public’s expense and not to their pleasure. Many people note that Calder’s La

Grande Vitesse (in Grand Rapids) was an early example of plop art. It is, though, an interesting example of plop art that had a significant impact on the city’s urban renewal efforts (focusing attention downtown) and became, after a time, an iconic piece, to both the city’s administration and its citizenry.

The New Deal era. Though John Quincy Adams begrudgingly supported government sponsorship of art in the 1800s, it was not until the 1930s, during the Great Depression, that a federal program evolved. Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s New Deal Federal cultural programs were the United States’ first large-scale direct governmental support and investment in arts and culture. These New Deal efforts involved a succession of programs from 1933 to 1942. The first of the New Deal Programs was the Public Works of Art Project (PWAP, 1933), directed by Edward Bruce. It focused on providing artists, who were creating new works for public buildings (e.g., public schools, libraries, orphanages), with reliable and respectable daily wages. Also established in 1933 was the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA). This was a relatively short-lived program that provided federal grants to state and local governments. Many of the recipients of this support were theaters and performance venues (Adams and Goldbard 1995; Knight 2008; Park and Martkowitz 1992). Following the successes of the PWAP, Bruce lead the Department of the Treasury Section of Fine Arts, which was responsible for embellishing federal buildings with art works. Funding was provided on a case-by-case basis, and monies were allocated according to a 1% for art provision (the first such program in the United States). Competitions were held, thus enacting a competitive basis upon which to select artists (another precursor to today’s public art programs). Another
program, the Treasury Relief Art Program (TRAP), was introduced in 1935. This program was unique in that it demanded quality work; therefore, it was not only seeking to employ artists from the relief roles but wanted to choose only those artists who could provide quality work. The controversies that ensued over this elusive notion of “quality” foreshadowed the debates that arose when public art programs began were established in the United States. Many of these works were murals, located in post offices, of which many are still in existence today.

The most well-known and extensive program of the New Deal was the Works Progress Projects/Administration’s (WPA), which was introduced in 1935 (at the beginning of Roosevelt’s second term). The WPA was an expression of Roosevelt’s renewed commitment to arts, culture and social justice (Adams and Goldbard 1995). Energy was focused on what became known as the “Federal One” (the WPA’s Federal Project Number One). It was comprised of five major projects—the Federal Art Project, the Federal Music Project, the Federal Theatre Project, the Federal Writer’s Project, and the Historical Records Survey—all of which had major impacts and influence upon the development of public art programs at mid-century. These projects were incredibly unique as they attempted

To articulate and accomplish broad public cultural goals the designers of the WPA rejected the idea of setting up a program of subsidy for existing arts organizations. Instead of providing direct federal grants to these institutions, WPA leaders sought to break new ground with federal cultural support. As Federal Theatre Project director Hallie Flanagan said of her division, "We all believed that theater was more than a private enterprise, that it was also a public interest which, properly fostered, might come to be a social and educative force. (Adams and Goldbard 1995)

As such, they began an interest in and commitment to minority arts and culture, as well as
regional differences in the arts. The New Deal programs were not without criticism from conservatives, of which censorship was their response to “radical artists” and (supposed) communist artists. Today the debates over censorship are much wider, but still censorship does often lead to termination of programs, events, and projects, which is what happened to the Federal Art Project, which essentially ended in 1939.

As directly pertains to public art programs today, the Federal Art Project (FAP) focused on large cities, underscoring the support of local artists and the decoration of municipal and state public buildings. Not only did these programs employ artists, and the multiple other individuals and organizations involved in creating and installing the works, it also attended to the intellectual, spiritual, social, and emotional needs of individuals and communities at a time of great despair. These New Deal arts and cultural programs emphasized how arts and culture were one of the many aspects of all peoples’ lives; that is, they were not just to remain in the realm of “a rarefied art world. “(McKinzie 1973). An enduring legacy of the New Deal was the experimental nature of the arts and cultural programs combined with a nuts and bolts approach that put emphasis on getting projects built that would last for generations (Knight 2008).

1950s and 1960s. The General Services Administration (GSA) Art in Architecture (AiA) and the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) Art in Public Places (APP) were the result of the projects evolved during the Roosevelt administration. They did not, though, come into being until the early 1960s, after a decades-long hiatus from government support for the arts. President John F. Kennedy laid the foundation for many of the arts
programs that were created during President Lyndon Johnson’s administration. GSA’s Art in Architecture, established in 1963, “reserves one-half of one percent of the estimated construction cost of each new federal building to commission project artists.”\textsuperscript{12} The commissions were for large-scale works meant to “create a lasting cultural legacy for the people of the United States.” Commissions were assigned based on a panel review of potential artists’ to works. Panels were composed of the lead project architect, art professionals, and local community representatives. The intention of the selection of such works was that they would be meaningful to the overall project. Which is, too, a predecessor to today’s public art program selection requirements. The first city “percent-for-public art” program was implemented in Philadelphia in 1959. Followed a decade later by San Francisco, and soon thereafter, in the mid-70s, a multitude of other cities followed suit (See Defining Public Art section below for a more in-depth discussion).

Johnson’s Great Society Task Force (1964) helped to establish the National Endowment for the Arts and Humanities (now the National Endowment for the Arts, NEA), an independent agency of the Federal government, which was intended to develop a further alliance between the arts, humanistic studies and American higher education (Wetenhall 1992). Johnson signed the act in 1965, instigating an effort to provide quality art for all Americans. NEA’s Art in Public Places program was established two years later, providing matching grants to civic groups and university communities for the commissioning of art for public sites (Senie and Webster 1992, xiv). This program was to provide art to a wide audience of people and give agency to local communities in determining art in their public places.

\textsuperscript{12} See the GSA’s website for further information: http://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/104456
One cannot, as Seine and Webster assert in the introduction to *Critical Issues in Public Art*, talk about public art after the 1960s without talking about urban revitalization. The late 60s heralded a very new position for art in the public realm and in the national, political, and economic urban scene. Many Americans were afraid of cities and scared by an urban America that had become ugly and unsafe. Public art was meant, when integrated with planning and architecture, to alleviate these fears by making cities more inviting to a wider public. The Model Cities Act of 1966, a federal urban aid program (which ended in 1974), was intended to encourage comprehensive planning, as well as the modification of local zoning ordinances that would encourage (as well as benefit) developers to create open space as part of their development plans (which in due time became sites for public art). Additionally, this act emphasized citizen participation, involving communities and neighborhoods in decisions about their cities.

1967 was a watershed year for public art and the urban environment in the United States. The NEA’s Art in Public Places program (whose goal was “to give the public access to the best art of our time outside museum walls” (Jacob 1995, 53)), combined with the Model Cities Act, provided both an impetus and precedents for cities to create percent-for-art programs to enliven and enhance their urban environments. However, some of the early installations were more about prestige than specific sites and the public. “Public art became a part of urban renewal programs, as it had been in centuries past, functioning as an emblem of culture and manifestation of economic wealth, a sign of the power of its patron” (Senie and Webster 1992, xiv). There are two exemplary examples of this: Chicago’s Picasso and Grand Rapid’s Calder. Both of which instigated great hostility but
eventually became civic icons.

The first matching grant made by Art in Public Places was made in 1967 to the City of Grand Rapids, Michigan. Grand Rapids was in the midst of an urban renewal plan, and was seeking to commission an artist to create a piece for an urban plaza. Calder’s *La Grande Vitesse* was selected by a mayor appointed panel that was also comprised of NEA representatives. The sculpture was dedicated in 1969 and quickly drew a great deal of ire as well as praise. Many months of debate ensued, yet after a time the piece became a beloved city icon. Akin to the popularity of Denver’s *Blue Bear* (officially titled *I See What You Mean*), which one can purchase in multiple reduced size replicas, *La Grande Vitesse* was part of the official city letterhead and was emblazoned on the city’s garbage trucks (Halbreich 1988, 9).

It was not until this point that public art in the United States began to deviate from the “hero (typically a white man) on a horse.” Such bronzes were dedicated to the great historical figures that venerated “a version of national history that excluded large segments of the population” (Raven 1989, 1; Lacy 1995, 21). However, other issues came to the fore. The guidelines for percent-for-art programs fostered a bureaucratic mentality and a promoted a lowest common denominator standard. According to Patricia Phillips,

> To weave one’s way through its labyrinthine network of proposal submissions to appropriate agencies, filings and re-filings of budget estimates, presentations to juries, and negotiations with government or corporate sponsors, requires a variety of skills that are frequently antithetical to the productions of a potent work of art. (Phillips 1988, 93)

She calls this the “public art machine.” She was an early critic of what is commonly referred to as “public art by consensus” or, in Phillips words, “impotent art.” She railed
again the seemingly innocuous attempts at making the public art process democratic (for example, the inclusion of community members on advisory and selection committees); as well as the lack of effort in wrestling with the theoretical, political and practical issues that emerge from the proximity of “public” and “art.” So, now there was a movement in full force: contemporary art has left the museum. Phillips, though supportive of this idea(l), began the conversation, still at large today: who exactly is this art for? And, who is making the decisions about this art meant for a/the public? In the early years of installations (e.g., Calder’s piece in Grand Rapids and Picasso’s piece in Chicago), there were many who believed public art was heading down a similar museum-like path. That is, urban landscapes were becoming sites for display of great art by great (white, male) artists. Experts were in charge. And style and prestige held court rather than addressing a larger public.

In 1959 the first “Percent-for-Public Art” ordinance in the U.S. was adopted by the City of Philadelphia’s City Council. Original wording stated that the ordinance was intended “to provide aesthetic ornamentation of city structures.” This notion of ornamentation is outdated now, with many programs (including Denver) explicitly stating that public art is more than mere decoration or ornamentation. Philadelphia’s program now has more than 300 works of art in its collection. According to their website: “The intent of the Percent for Art Ordinance is to invigorate the City of Philadelphia's public environment by incorporating exceptional works of art into City construction projects. Works of art commissioned or purchased through the Percent for Art Program will hopefully engage lively discourse while raising community awareness and involvement in the future
preservation of the City's collection of public art.”

San Francisco established a public art program by city ordinance in 1969. Currently, the ordinance is a two percent-for-art program. King County, WA (which includes Seattle), another one of the first cities to adopt a percent-for-art ordinance—which is, as is most typical in the U.S. a one percent program—did so in 1973. The city’s website states, “The program integrates artworks and the ideas of artists into a variety of public settings, advancing Seattle's reputation as a cultural center for innovation and creativity.” Seattle’s collection is comprised of over 373 permanent works and 2,808 portable works (e.g., paintings, small interior sculptures). The city of Albuquerque, NM approved its ordinance by City Council in 1978. They too, have a large collection of more than 655 works (permanent and portable).

Land and Environmental Art: The 1970s. The emergence of land and environmental art in the 1970s, much of which was not public in terms of public monies, access, or location, had a profound impact on the public art world. The land/environmental art movement introduced new materials, new attitudes, and an overt politics to the conversation. Recently there has been a revival of this genre of sculpture but it is in the urban landscape, rather than isolated rural, exurban and suburban sites that were the sites of the early works. City programs are grappling with how to integrate such work into

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14 These numbers were provided, via email on 1 February 2011, by Ruri Yampolsky, Program Director, Public Art Program, Office of Arts & Cultural Affairs, City of Seattle
their collections, as well, issues of installation, maintenance and durability. The NEA added a stipulation to its programs in 1974, stating that public art should be appropriate to the site. This work, site-specific public art, was intended to engage “the public” by focusing their attention on particular social, ecological and historical aspects of sites (Kwon 2004). This by no means eradicated the creation of “plunk” or “plop art,” but did shift the conversation (and practice) enough so that a new genre of public art began to emerge.

In the mid-to-late 1970s more states, counties, cities and agencies began to enter into the work of public art. The U.S. Department of Transportation established its Design, Art and Architecture Program in 1977, allocating funds for art in new and renovated federally funded transit facilities. This landmark program paved the way for city art-in-transit programs and airport art programs.

Controversies and Communities: 1980s and 1990s. Two important art events (in the public realm) occurred in the 1980s: first, Maya Lin’s Vietnam Veterans Memorial (1981-1982), and second, Richard Serra’s Tilted Arc (1981-1989). Lin’s winning competition entry enraged many, inciting debates about what a memorial “looks like” (traditionalist versus new genre work) as well as concerns about: who should be allowed to memorialize which events (raising concerns about ethnicity, race, and gender). Another key work that shook the public art world was Tilted Arc. Serra’s work raised questions about the selection process, style of artwork, and criteria for good/successful public art. Tilted Arc was created for New York City’s Federal Plaza, under the GSA
program for art. It raised ire amongst office workers in the adjacent buildings, people who used the plaza, and government officials (involved or not in the process). When Serra was called to a hearing about his work, he defended the piece stating that he designed the work based on the specific dimensions of the plaza, and that removing work, or placing it in another location, would render it meaningless (Babon 2000). Much drama ensued inside and outside of court, yet these hearing did “set up a remarkable public forum for the discussion on public art” (Finkelpearl 2000, 56). Unfortunately, the selection process for the art work for the Federal Plaza was represented as an elitist endeavor that did not summon the voices of office workers or those who were in daily use of the plaza. In addition, there were those who argued that the piece was a subversion of government space: “this gigantic strip of rust is an arrogant, nose-thumbing gesture at the government and those who serve the government” (Finkelpearl 2000, 64). The art world supported Serra’s modernist, minimalist, site-specific piece as the work of a genius (Babon 2000). Serra’s defense of the piece was as such, “through its location, height, length, horizontality and lean, grounds one in the physical condition of the place . . . The viewer becomes aware of himself and of his movement through the plaza” (Serra quoted in Babon 2000, 124). *Tilted Arc* has become emblematic of: 1) the clash between the art world and a general public, and 2) art, good or not, placed in an inappropriate location. Serra’s piece was removed in 1989. The controversy was not for naught as it prompted:

Administrators all over the country revised their procedures for commissioning work. ‘Safeguards’ were put in place to avoid the excruciating public display everyone heard about in New York City. Word was out: ‘the public’ must be included in the process. The General Services Administration shuffled its procedures to be at once more bureaucratic (the GSA staff makes the final artist selection on the basis of an ‘objective’ series of evaluation criteria), and more
Lacy’s book, *New Genre Public Art*, was the product of a series of events that took place in the Bay Area in 1989. This program was created as a means for artists to talk about the ways they conceived of and implemented work about urban issues in order to reach audiences and potentially enact change. This all ran counter to the predominant and conventional views of public art of the time. She describes a new genre public art as a way “to distinguish it [this new genre] in both form and intention from what has been called “public art”—a term used for the past twenty-five years to describe sculpture and installations sited in public places” (Lacy 1995). This new genre public art used traditional and nontraditional means and media “to communicate and interact with a broad and varied audience about issues directly relevant to their lives…” (Lacy 1995). This work was about engagement and social intervention. As well, this new genre public art sought to operationalize “the public” in public art, and sought out (and hoped to activate) an active public. This book unconsciously began a conversation about genres of public art. What does it mean to categorize public art; that is, further explore the nuances as well as the more explicit materialities and agendas of public art? Genres of public art that have emerged (and have become a productive part of the public art vocabulary) include: permanent, temporary, community, performance-based, monumental, memorial, digital, sound, light, land art. Creating these categories allows for more meaningful conversations about what is a vast range of what public art can be. Furthermore, to more thoroughly understanding public art are additional more details about size and scale, location and position, cost of works (e.g., $, $$, $$$, $$$$).

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15 The lectures/events were part of “City Sites: Artists and Urban Strategies,” sponsored by the California College of Arts and Crafts (today known as CCA).
According to a brief “Timeline for the History of Public Art” in the United States (Cartiere and Willis 2008, 231-246), in 1994 the first degree-program in public art was launched at the University of California, Monterey Bay. Several other programs have emerged in the last fifteen years due to an increasing desire to better prepare artists for work in the public realm (which for some has become a mainstay of their artistic output) and to prepare arts administrators to run public art programs.

**Education, urban ecology, and local politics: Early 2000s.** Throughout the first decade of the 2000s there was a great deal of interest, and a more sophisticated approach to a public art practice that attended to education and outreach, collaboration, urban ecology, and local political issues. Simultaneously, there was a call for a more collaborative public art practice; for example, one found more and more that Requests For Qualifications (RFQ) and Requests For Proposals (RFP) required interdisciplinary teams, often with the artist as lead. Another key point of contention that emerged at this time was the hiring of international artists over regional or local artists for city or county projects. Local artists were feeling that international artists were being given precedence over local talent purely for prestige (with regard to: competition between cities for tourism, etc.).

2.3.4 Public art in the United States today: Programs, trends and debates

Currently, there are approximately 400 public art programs in the United States. According to Americans For The Arts’ Public Art Network, percent for art ordinance
policies are doing fairly well, though many programs are exploring other options for funding their growing collections. Programs are diversifying their collections, welcoming temporary works and performance works. Program collections are growing: as of 2010 most programs have at least two hundred pieces in their collection, a significant increase from a decade ago.

Public art programs can be found in urban, suburban, small town and rural environments, as well as college and corporate campuses. Support for these programs comes from federal, state and local government, private corporations, religious organizations and private donors. Current trends—and debates—in local government-run public art programs revolve around four key (and very much interrelated) issues, regarding the short-term and long-term feasibility of these programs: funding, evaluation, partnerships and collaboration, and ordinances.
Trend 1: Funding and maintaining programs. The first trend is one affecting most programs today, how will they fund and maintain (even grow) programs in today’s economy. There are, unfortunately, deep budget cuts occurring in cities, and arts and culture are usually the first to be cut. These programs have to consider how they will be sustainable in the current, day-to-day operations as well as the foreseeable future.

Budgets had grown in the late 1990s into the early 2000s by an average of 27.4% (Becker 2004). These budgets grew because, being percent-for-art programs, large bond projects had been passed and the one percent accounted for significant numbers or types (e.g., scale, artist renown) of public art projects. There are, as stated earlier in this chapter, multiple means by which public art can be funded, the majority of works are, though, funded by percent-for-art. Donations (private gifts) are complicated and often
problematic, implementing new or additional taxes (such as hotel/motel and sales taxes) are politically dangerous, and fund raising and auctions are time and energy intensive. More and more, programs are exploring public-private partnerships, though no one city yet has developed a good model yet.

*Trend 2: Evaluating programs.* The evaluation of programs—both process and product—is becoming a more common practice. Evaluation of a program allows staff (as well as advisory boards and communities) to consider various aspects of a program, and determine possible adjustment or changes. A non-profit think tank in the UK (ixia 2009, OPENspace 2005) has been a leader in this area, producing reports as well as toolkits that are being used worldwide. But, the work is focused in the UK, so much of the recommendations do not apply in the United States, given the significantly different administrative organization. However, the work has prompted programs in the United States to develop their own evaluation initiatives. Evaluations focus on funding, selection process, impacts, relationship to other city departments and initiatives, and success.

*Trend 3: Partnerships and collaborations.* A third trend is the exploration of partnerships and collaborative opportunities. The partnerships, as mentioned above, have been pursued primarily due to funding issues. But they have become important because of larger city initiatives (urban revitalization projects, creative city and cultural economy programs, and city imaging and marketing initiatives) because partnerships are essential not only in fiscal terms but also for generating interest and support, and viability. Some
more common partnerships that public programs are pursuing are with development agencies and individual developers, other city departments, Housing agencies, and regional organizations. In terms of collaboration, public art programs have found that interdisciplinary project teams (including artist led teams) are more productive and garner support from various stakeholders. For specific types of projects (e.g., parks and recreation, streetscapes) specifying in the RFQ/RFP that applicants must be interdisciplinary teams (which include artists, architects, engineers, etc.) and/or artist led teams. Recently published studies have shown that either type of team produces more viable, sustainable and creative solutions.16

Trend 4: Revisiting ordinances. The fourth trend—re-opening/writing the ordinance—is one that many cities are reluctant to pursue but they are having the conversation in order to think about their options. Most programs have no desire, particularly in this political and economic environment, to send the ordinance back to vote. There is a reasonable concern that any gains may be lost or that the entire program could be dismantled or diminished in scope (e.g., amount of the percent allocated to public art).

A public art ordinance is the legislation that establishes a public art program within a local city government. Typically, the ordinance establishes: 1) the financial mechanism that funds the public art program (for salaries and overhead), 2) identifies the unit of government (e.g., department, agency) that will house and manage the program, 3) creates the foundation upon which the public art policies and/or guidelines are developed,

16 See Americans for the Arts (AFTA) website for research publications and other materials: http://www.artsusa.org/action_areas/partnerships.asp
and 4) constructs consistent and reliable funding streams for public art (e.g., percent-for-art). According to the ordinances most programs have adopted, they organize their collection of works (and can only support and build projects) as permanent (and typically integrated with the site) or portable. As well, many programs have multiple funding mechanisms; that is, they use funds other than percent-for-art to implement the public art program.

The City of Denver’s ordinance is typical, it sates:

Any Capital Improvement Project (CIP) undertaken by the City with a design and construction budget over $1 million qualifies for the Public Art Program. The law states that one percent of the construction budget be set aside for the inclusion of art in the design and construction of new projects… . (Revised DRM 20-85)

According to the ordinance, works of public art include: sculpture, painting, graphic arts, mosaics, photography, luminal art, digital media (sound, film, video), crafts (e.g., clay, fiber, textiles), mixed media, earth works, decorative elements, portable art, and time-based artworks (See figures 3-8, below, for examples of a range of works of public art from various programs in the United States). However, the following are not considered public art: directional elements and signage, mass-produced works, reproductions, landscaping that is not designed as an integral part of environmental art, and displays or exhibit cases. This definition categorizes art as public by virtue of its media. Such definitions are typical of city ordinances as they do not question the “publicity” of art but rather look at art in terms of a product to be located on city-owned land and funded by public means. This research is not limited by the city’s definition of public art, rather it intends to interrogate the “publicity” of public art.
Public art program guidelines and policies further articulate the goals, objectives and strategies for the program; powers, duties, and responsibilities of the advisory board to the program staff (in Denver this group is called the Public Art Committee (PAC)); the selection, acquisition, de-acquisition process for public art; and maintenance and conservation of works. Other items that might be included are administrative roles and responsibilities, and (master) planning for public art. Guidelines and policies are typically reviewed and modified on a regular basis (every two to five years).

Figure 2.4-9: Examples of public art (All images are from the respective public art program websites). Top, left to right: “Major General John Fulton Reynolds,” 1884, Philadelphia, bronze, granite pedestal, artist: John Rogers; “Colloidal Pool,” 1988, San Francisco, ceramic tile medallion, artist: Lois Anderson; “Cruising San Mateo,” 1991, Albuquerque, artist: Barbara Grygutis
Why would a public art program rethink its ordinance? The big issue for many programs in the United States is what types of works of public art for which the ordinance allows. The types of work that have come under scrutiny include: multi-media/digital works, temporary installations, and performance-based pieces. Because of new media, mediums, and technologies, and the growing interest in digital art many programs are struggling to find ways to include and accommodate such works. As well, there is an increasing desire to commissioning (and encouraging) temporary (and ephemeral) public art and performance-based works as many cities have found that these kinds of projects animate urban space and draw people to the work as a unique event.

Therefore, arts administrators are finding loopholes within which to work as they are not willing to re-open debate about ordinances. The existing ordinances provide a great deal for most programs, but when city programs were instituted, digital technologies and the notion of performance-based public art was not even on the horizon. Therefore, most programs work with what they have, and carefully push the envelope to allow for different types of interactive pieces. There are, of course, advantages and disadvantages to these new realms of public art. Digital art works are the forefront of arts and media experimentation today. There are multiple (new) college and university programs that are producing sophisticated artists working in these digital media. These artists are looking to public art programs as a way to install their work (small, medium, and large scale) in a public forum and thus develop their practice However, though many programs are embracing these new practices/technologies, there are concerns about the costs—
installation, maintenance, recovery (from vandalism)—as well as durability of such works.

Temporary installations provide programs with the opportunity to “test” a piece; that is, install a piece that might be edgy or experimental, and since it is temporary the public can be reassured it will not be there forever. Performance pieces are a bit more difficult as far as making them work within the framework of typical city ordinances. Most city ordinances require some sort of permanence from the piece. As such, administrators and artists work together to create permanent components to these projects, which in itself is a formidable endeavor, thus sometimes adding additional work to the scope of the project. In addition, recent conversations have reintroduced notions of (urban) civic life, and how is it that public art plays a role in cultivating a civic culture and a democratic society. Such conversations have forced difficult questions about the selection process: who is involved and who is not (I will return to this issue in the findings chapters when I talk about those involved in the production of public art in Denver).

Based on the current conversations in the public art field (practice and academia) what needs to be discussed is how it is that public art might be better understood and its potential optimized, particularly in urban settings. As such, I move now from definitions, to potentialities.

2.3.5 Maximizing Public Art’s Potential: Developing its role not just a definition

Academic study of public art, particularly in the U.S., has long been the purview of art
historians, focusing on the history, aesthetics, and various material details of individual pieces. It was not until the early 1990s that art historians began to expand their inquiry, (influenced by the translation of Habermas’ work and the postmodern intellectual conversation of the late 1980s and early 1990s) incorporating philosophical debates about the public sphere, and further questioning public art’s relationship to politics, culture, and consumerism. It is only at this point that public art began to be a more complicated, interdisciplinary arena of research. And, more recently it is gaining strength, particularly by way of a human geographical perspective (seriously pursued in the UK, Singapore, and South Africa). In addition, public art is a bourgeoning profession (for artists, arts administrators and the like) whose aim is still, unfortunately, often limited to beautifying, enlivening, and entertaining urban citizens (Phillips 1988; Deutsche 1996; Sharpe 2005).

By the late 90s public art had (finally) become a recognized academic (sub)field. Not only is it a part of art history curricula, where it has historically been focused, it is also now included in interdisciplinary courses in American studies and geography. As well, architecture, landscape architecture and planning curriculums are increasing course options on the study of public art. However, it is still a field “without clear definitions,


without a constructive theory, and without coherent objectives” (Phillips 1988, 93). I do not believe, and I hope I have made this clear in the previous subsections, that it is not a definition we need, but a more sophisticated approach to discussing the political, cultural, economic, social, and spatial aspects of public art. What is important to Phillips asking us to develop clearer definitions, a constructive theory and more coherent objectives, are: the pluralities and the theoretical underpinnings she calls for. Geographers have contributed this because they ask questions about where public art occurs, but importantly, too, they asks the why, the who, and the how of public art (Chang 2008; Hall 2004 and 2007; Hall and Robertson 2001).

So, the point is not to “pin-down” a definition of public art, but rather akin to what Staeheli and Mitchell stated in their *Progress in Human Geography* article on publicity: “The point is not necessarily to change academic language, or to seek to reform public discourses (as if that was so simple), but rather to understand the different framings at work when the public, publicity, and public space are invoked. The point is to understand how and why these differences matter” (Staeheli and Mitchell 2007, 807). When I began this research I sought to understand how various actors “define” public art, but what I came to understand is that it was not so easy to get a clear cut definitions. Rather, I began to comprehend how various individuals and organizations understand what public art is and what it has the potential to be (for the city, a space, people). Furthermore, it was critical to understand how people understand (and operate via this understanding) the “public” in public art. This combination of inquiries has led me to think about how it is that a city program might optimize public art’s potential; that is, it is not about defining a
thing, it is more meaningful (and thus productive) to develop its role in the micro- and macro-scales of the city.

The “standard issue” definition. For most public art agencies (local, state and federal), public art is: “work created by artists for places accessible to and used by the public” (Becker 2004, 4). Public art programs, according to Becker, “are charged with administering the development and management of public art in their communities” (Becker 2004, 1). Importantly, he distinguishes, as many administrators do, between local governmental public art programs—which demand a public process (that varies by program), and (importantly) takes into account the site and other contextual issues—and art in public places programs—which are programs that focus on the acquisition of works of art for a project site (and unfortunately have the reputation of resulting in simply placing an acquired (purchased) sculpture on a street corner). The main distinction being that public art programs focus on designing a piece for a particular site, audience, environmental conditions, history of site, etc. (Kwon 2002; Becker 2004), and depend on public (and voluntary) support and participation. This is all well and good, but for Patricia Phillips such programs encourage mediocrity: their intentions for public art are either modest (mere amenities) or obviously ornamental (standardized embellishments) (Phillips 1988). According to Phillips, such an approach to public art reduces public art to making people feel good (which, though, doesn’t always happen), so why bother? For Becker, and other administrators, artists, other scholars (Raven 1989; Selwood 1995; Lacy 1995; Basa 2008; Knight 2008) it is worth it because public art encompasses and supports many different activities, from place-making to environmental activism,
employment (for artists, fabricators, and construction crews) and community-based initiatives.19

Can public art change peoples’ perceptions? Can works of public art alter peoples’ perspectives on the world? Related to this dissertation: Can public art change people and the city: space, experience, and image? According to political scientist Murray Edelman, the way people relate to the world is not as unchanging as we assume, because how we relate to the world is often based on inadequate information and unsubstantiated assumptions (Edelman 1995, 52). Edelman’s position is based on the notion that our reality is a social construction. That is, ways of seeing (and thus thinking and acting) are created, subconsciously, through the art we experience, thus shaping our realities. Art—both high art (e.g., novels, paintings, sculpture) and popular art (e.g., television, cartoons, magazines) provides the perceptual and conceptual means by which we operate in the world. Our perceptions of the world are subject to change, and (public) art exercises power in altering and shifting the way we think about the world. This can happen when the artist “explicitly expresses ideological views in a work; or indirectly assumes an ideological stance by examining a range of revealing social situations so that the viewer subtly derives a political outlook from relevant moral, social, economic and psychological premises thus the ideological thrust is deeper” (1995, 49-50). Edelman claims that art (and architecture) can exert an influence on political beliefs and actions, particularly in subtle ways, influencing, for example, how people vote. As well, he explores art’s potential for promoting diversity and democracy (as well as warning of its

19 As well, based on my research on the City of Albuquerque’s Public Art Program, public art is more than just the individual pieces: many people, jobs, and activities are involved in making public art happen.
more exploitative uses). As well, Edelman suggests that popular art can tend to simplify issues and confirm our expectations; whereas high art complicates issues, present multiplies perspectives, disrupts ways of thinking, thus provoking new questions and meanings. Art is thus political, at the individual scale, the collective scale, and it even has to have an impact at the urban scale. Yes, art can also be self-aggrandizing, elitist, as well it can be self-deprecating and experimental/exploration-driven. It is not a matter of good art or bad art, because both generate responses. He does note, however, that “bad art” tends to produce a public that yields to authority, while “good art” teaches people to question that authority or the “agreed upon” worldview. Art can, then, be made in the service of a particular politics, or it can prompt and support a more diverse politics.

*Developing a more sophisticated approach: Five themes.* The following five themes are what I believe will help us further develop more sophisticated approaches to research and practice. They have been essential to how I have, in this dissertation, analyzed the interview data and thus attempted to move research and practice forward. The first theme revolves around defining public art through both its origins within visual arts practice (as object) and its location within spaces of open public access (Miles 1997; Eaton 1990). But these researchers have, given the increasing privatization of urban space, furthered debate about defining what exactly is “public” space and what are the agendas for these art objects in urban public space. A second theme focuses on the social more than the physical aspects of public art. Deutsche’s approach to public art was to question the artist’s approach to the public dimension of public art. She argues that art *becomes* public when the art is intended to engage or address people/publics. Importantly, this
definition excludes art that is made from a self-referential or egotistical standpoint. It also (potentially) includes gallery work that attends to public concerns (Deutsche 1997; Lacy 1995). A third way to approach public art is by examining the process, the level of public engagement, involvement and participation (Hall 2007; Doss 1995; Lacy 1995). Fourth, urban and feminist geographers Doreen Massey and Gillian Rose emphasize that art becomes public through the public’s engagement with it, manifest when people attach meanings (and even “pet names”) to pieces. According to research in Milton Keynes, UK, Massey and Rose found that public art’s “publicness” is performative; that is, art becomes public through the myriad ways that publics engage with it (Massey and Rose 2003). And finally, urban geographer Tim Hall suggests that we differentiate art “by degrees” of publicness, rather than type, taking into account art that is a part of peoples’ everyday lives.

At a recent international conference on arts and society I attended, I became involved in a conversation with academics, artists and arts administrators from the UK, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa about how we each label art that is made to happen in public spaces. In the UK the most current terminology is community art not public art. The people from Australia, New Zealand and South Africa concurred, though the terminology varies, with regard to the focus of the art’s purpose and process. Community art is art that grows out of community regeneration initiatives. “The public” is far too abstract a terminology, and does not, for the agencies in the UK, express the genesis of the work and the social component. In the U.S. public art has become an umbrella's term for

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20 The Arts in Society: May 9-12, 2010 in Berlin, Germany. For information about the conference: http://artsinsociety.com_CONFERENCE-2011/
various genres of public. Each of these genres implies very different things about the
where, what, who, why, and how of the public art. What seems increasingly clear from
research, evaluative studies, and practice is that “the public” in public art is a complex
product and process. As such, “the public” is not just an entity (“Joe Public” as well as a
collective public) but is also multifaceted (in many ways, including spatially and
temporally). The public is not just those who view, experience, “weigh in on”, take
ownership, etc.—all of which is a very dynamic not static enterprise—it is about
relationships (interactions, negotiations, etc.) amongst many interest, including “the
public.” In the next section I apply these different senses of “the public” and approaches
to public art to the conversation about post-industrial cities and urban revitalization. It is
through this understanding of what “the public” is in public art and urban revitalization
that I will be able to assess the politics of “the public” in public art and urban
revitalization.

2.4 Post-industrial cities, urban revitalization and public art

2.4.1 Introduction

During the past 30 years, the meaning of ‘urban lifestyles’ has changed from a
fairly stable prerogative of social status (Weber 1946) to an aggressive pursuit of
cultural capital (Bourdieu 1984). … For cities, it stimulates the growth of both
for-profit culture industries and not-for-profit cultural institutions. These shifts
relate to a number of structural changes: the rise of postmodernism—as an art
form, a post-industrial mode of production and a concern with identity markers;
the growth of service industries; and the coming to maturity of the ‘baby boom’
generation, whose demographic weight and generally high expectations of
amenities have fostered consumer demand for distinctive, high-quality goods.
(Zukin 1998, 825)

What is the relationship between post-industrial cities, urban revitalization, and public
art? That is, how is public art employed in urban revitalization strategies in post-
industrial cities? When cities such as Denver found themselves on the brink of becoming deindustrialized cities, they sought ways to restructure themselves economically, and redefine themselves. Thus, in the 1980s Denver embarked on many ambitious downtown revitalization projects (e.g., The 16th Street Mall, LoDo redevelopment, and early plans for the new sports arenas). At this time, Mayor Peña reinvigorated the call (drawing from Mayor Speer’s early twentieth century boosterism) to create a “great city.” A critical element of Peña’s vision was arts and culture. It is at this point that the germ of the idea of the Department of Cultural Affairs and the Public Art Program were born. This vision and the development of city-based arts and cultural initiatives are an example of the ways many cities began to re-imagine themselves, creating new opportunities in order to survive in a postmodern world.

What has happened in Denver over the last three decades is proof of how the city has continued to work towards redeveloping downtown and its former industrial sites (derelict buildings and vacant lots) into vibrant commercial, residential, recreational, and tourism destinations. Integrating public art, though not always a conscious part of this revitalization, has contributed a great deal to what Denver looks and feels like today. In this dissertation I argue that public art is, in fact, one of these culture industries (a component of the city’s symbolic economy), borne out of post-industrial urban restructuring, that has changed Denver in significant ways, from its city image and attractiveness of downtown, to its becoming a more vibrant local arts community. As well, I will speculate about public art’s (potential) role in how the city is imagined, perceived and experienced.
I have organized this discussion about post-industrial cities, urban revitalization and public art into multiple sections. I begin by situating Denver within the post-industrial cities literature. I address the question: What does it mean to be a post-industrial city, in the 21st century? After which I provide an important context, via Sharon Zukin’s and M. Christine Boyer’s work, to understanding Denver as a post-industrial city that has engaged in particular strategies that have significant impacts on the economic and social landscapes of the city. Next, I explore the research that comes out of the UK regarding the role and impact of public art in urban revitalization. Two critical theorists/art historians in the United States, Rosalyn Deutsche and Patricia Phillips, have been very influential, providing commentary and criticism about public art and urban development. As well, research about and critique of public art projects and programs by Hall and Robertson (2001, 2003, 2007) are critical to this dissertation.

I began my dissertation thinking that I would be talking more extensively about public art and creative cities; however, during my fieldwork I found that the people I interviewed in Denver had little, if any, knowledge about creative cities. Admittedly, I did know at the time of the interviews that creative cities initiatives largely ignored the role of public art, but I was hoping that people had enough knowledge about creative cities to discuss the potential role of public art. So, I end this literature review by talking about the role of public art in creative cities initiatives. Though it is brief, it is important because it talks about one of the strategies Denver has employed to depict itself as an arts and cultural destination. Public art, as I will argue in the remaining chapters of this dissertation, is an
important part (albeit one that has not been integrated into larger initiatives) of how cities are re-imagining themselves. And, interestingly, it is through public art that, I believe, there is potential to engage various publics in re-imagining and re-experiencing the city.

2.4.2 Post-industrial cities: Status and prestige

First and foremost, the architecture of the post-industrial city is focused on status and prestige. In an increasingly globalized economy, local activities have to be staged internationally. By exhibiting architectonic objects that are as prestigious as possible, local authorities are demonstrating that they are to be taken seriously as sites where commerce can flourish. (Burgers 2000, 147).

Since the recession of 1973, urban governments have had to find ways to be more innovative in their approaches to securing the future of their cities. These innovations have primarily been in the realm of the entrepreneurial (Harvey 1989; Zukin 1995). As such, urban governments shifted their focus from the managerial practices of the 1960s that focused on local provision of services, to an entrepreneurial stance directly related to production, investment and consumption (Harvey 1989). This shift has resulted in the fragmentation of urban spaces and populations, manifest at the urban scale as uneven development that privileges private interests and affluent populations (Harvey 1989; Zukin 1995; Peck 2005).

Changing appearances and uses. Since the early 1980s Denver has undertaken multiple urban projects in order to economically revitalize a city whose industrial/manufacturing sector was rapidly declining. This revitalization, as is the case for many other de-industrialized cities entering into a new era as post-industrial cities, focused on increasing the attractiveness of downtown, for commercial headquarters; living, leisure and entertainment; and, of course, tourism. Cities have undergone significant change: no
longer are the skylines of mid-size cities dominated by industrial infrastructure; rather, cities landmark sites are iconic corporate architecture, parks and open space, and restaurants, museums, and leisure activities. In Denver today this change is visible through its efforts to become a city known for its arts and culture, as well as sustainability, educational opportunities, and other twenty-first century post-industrial activities (e.g., medicine and healthcare, technology, and education).

*Today’s mid-size city.* Denver is an excellent example of today’s mid-size, post-industrial city. Post-industrial cities are characterized by five elements: 1) predominance of a service economy (e.g., office work, education, government), 2) the increased dependence on an information economy (e.g., education, science and engineering, advertising), 3) a shift from applied pragmatism to a “knowledge society,” based on commodifiable yet theoretical, intellectual property-based mode of thinking and doing (e.g., data), based on a 4) technological society in which technology is used to decrease costs and risks, and increase advantages and productivity, supporting 5) an intellectual technology society that combines information, knowledge, and technology to facilitate complex and creative decision-making and problem solving (Bell 1973, Castells 2000).

Zukin contends that this postindustrial city is premised on images and the production of spaces of cultural production and innovation (Zukin 1995). It is through various forms of spectacle—from flagship museums and biennials, to festivals and marketplaces, to urban revitalization of formerly industrial districts and public art—that cities shape how they are imagined and experienced. This mix—of leisure, culture and creativity—has become
the trademark of today’s post-industrial city. It is the contention of this author that public art is one of the cultural components of this post-industrial city; so, of concern to this dissertation is: what kind of public is being produced (in the name of public art/arts and culture)?

2.4.3 On public art in the post-industrial city

“…cultural strategies of redevelopment also reflect the growing importance, in all mature urban centres, of a symbolic economy based on such abstract products as financial instruments, information and ‘culture’, i.e. art, food fashion, music and tourism. The symbolic economy is based on the interrelated production of such cultural symbols as these and the spaces in which they are created and consumed—including offices, housing, restaurants museums and even the streets.” Zukin 1998, 826

The origins of public art programs are urban and post-industrial: public art programs came of age during the de-industrialization of cities, characterized by extensive urban renewal projects in which art was used to beautify these new urban public spaces (Deutsche 1986; Phillips 1989; Kwon 2004). In the mid-1970s the Art in Public Spaces Program required that publicly funded art work be site specific, with the intention of public art playing a role in place-making (Kwon 2004). Public art has, thus, played an important if not always celebrated role, in the (re)making of urban space and place in the post-industrial city.

Chicago’s Millennium Park has become a poster child for incorporating public art in the redevelopment of urban public space. Millennium Park is, though, a unique example because it is, significantly, the result of a Mayoral initiative and successful public/private partnerships (Flanagan 2008). It does, though, show how public art can be a centerpiece
of an urban development project that is not only a draw (social, cultural, economic) for
visitors/tourists but also for Chicagoans. “The bean”, as Anish Kappor’s focal point
sculpture (*Cloud Gate*) has playfully become known, is not a product of a percent-for-art
program, but it has inspired many city public art programs to try and figure out how to
attract an internationally known artist to create an iconic piece for their city.\(^{21}\) As such,
many cities have been looking to create their very own bean that serves as both a city
icon and proof of world-class status (Flanagan 2008). This is an extraordinary example
of the power of the symbolic economy, of which public art is, I believe, an important
player.

*Producing landscapes.* Millennium Park is, of course, a smaller scale (than the city of
Denver) of the production of public art in an urban landscape. This notion of the
production of landscapes is, pertaining to the focus of this dissertation, best presented by
geographer Don Mitchell. In *The Lie of the Land* (1996), a very influential text in my
geographical education, Mitchell makes clear how landscapes have come to be what they
are is worthy of human geographical inquiry. He asks a very direct question in the
introduction to his book: “Why does landscape look like it does (because it has a very
clear function in its present form), and who made it look that way” (Mitchell 1996, 6)? In
this text he explores the relationships of various actors and agents (i.e., publics)—in
space and over time—in producing landscapes. In this dissertation I seek out who is
involved in making a particular landscape—the urban public art landscape in Denver—and
add the additional question: And, for what public do they produce this landscape?

\(^{21}\) Based on conversations I have had with public art program managers, public art advisory boards, and
artists from around the United States.
His work is critical to this research because it highlights the importance of looking at landscapes that might seem, initially, ordinary and static, when in actuality they are complex and dynamic systems created through macro- and micro-scale interactions, as well as complex power relations that inevitably affect local communities and the urban fabric. According to Mitchell,

‘Landscape’ is best seen as both a work (it is the product of human labor and thus encapsulates the dreams, desires, and all the injustices of the people and social systems that make it) and as something that does work (it acts as a social agent in the further development of a place). (Mitchell 2000, 94)

Landscape is a complicated term, which I will not pursue in depth here, but rather, I use the term as Mitchell does, “to indicate the broad sweep—or general look—of” a particular place (be it rural, suburban, or urban). Furthermore, he employs the term to “indicate the solid form of the built environment;” that is, the physical and material aspects of a place. And finally, landscape is representative of history, conflict, and change, including progress and decline. Landscapes are the product of a great deal of work (e.g., social relations, including labor, raw materials, tools, and strategies), which I explore in this dissertation in order to reveal the multiple relationships that go into the making/production of the urban landscape of public art in Denver.

Mitchell builds on Lefebvre’s work, a twentieth century intellectual who advanced an innovative inquiry into what he called the social production of space. In The Production of Space Lefebvre argues that in an era of advanced capitalism, urban space is characterized by a geography of uneven development manifested by fragmentation, homogeneity, hierarchization, and contradictions (Lefebvre 1991; Lefebvre et al 2009).
Lefebvre’s work prompted other theorists to investigate further how it is we conceive of and construct space through discourse and representation. His argument to synthesize the psychological, physical and social dimensions of space is fundamental to a dialectical understanding of space as both a social process and product.

According to Lefebvre’s socio-spatial dialectic, space shapes and is shaped by complex social, political and economic forces: “Space is permeated with social relations; it is not only supported by social relations but it is also producing and produced by social relations” (Lefebvre 1991, 286). At the urban level, the question germane to this work is: how does a particular city shape its unique social spaces to meet its particular needs in terms of economic production and socio-cultural reproduction. A significant contribution of Mitchell’s work is applying Lefebvre’s approach to the (social) production of landscape; that is: the introduction of the role (and agency) of human beings (individuals as well as groups, organizations, and institutions) in the production of space, the construction of the built environment, and the experience of the built landscape. Mitchell calls this “the work of landscape;” that is, landscapes are the result of work, the work of many different internal and external forces and factors. His work accentuates understanding the work of landscape within a larger spatial and temporal context, confronting the histories of a community, its individuals and its (political, economic, social and cultural) institutions. Thus, meanings are revealed through an understanding of these complex intersections.

Mitchell makes clear that understanding the social, economic, political, ideological and
technical, is what helps us to better understand both the materialist and symbolic aspects of the landscape. It is through these various social processes (which include communication, exchange, conflict, and negotiation) that spaces are produced and constructed for the everyday uses that become meaningful to each of us. In my fieldwork I sought to spatially, temporally and socially contextualize the various actors involved in the production of public art in order to develop a narrative that better explicates the complex network of processes and actors involved in producing public art in Denver.

Arguably, culture and creativity have always played important roles in the urban environment (Hall, Peter 1998). And, more recently, cities have, in obvious ways, employed culture as a means by which to increase their competitiveness both nationally and globally. Landscapes are the result of both physical and ideological work, employing culture to make a city appear in a certain way is therefore not only ideological but there is physical work to be done by particular people (organizations and institutions). The symbolic economy, which has become key to urban development and city re-imagining, is a means by which a particular ideology is presented. For cities today, arts and culture (and the creative industries) play an important role in the city re-imaging process; resulting in an aestheticization of the urban landscape with the hope of creating a new urban identity. The identity to which Denver aspires is more than just a sports town, but an urbane arts and cultural center of the Rocky Mountain West. This new narrative includes urban regeneration, whereby formerly industrial and working class areas have become sites for middle- and upper-class leisure (e.g., LoDo, RiNo, Santa Fe Art District).

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22 One can look to Bilbao, Toledo, Ohio, even Denver, as examples of how museum projects were initiated in attempts to re-vitalize, and re-orient perceptions of, the city.
and high-end downtown residential developments (e.g., The Spire), the courting of corporate headquarters, and, the creation of arts, cultural, and heritage projects (e.g., museums, theatre district, public art) employed to convert the city into a post industrial, knowledge-oriented, creative hub.

Clearly, Denver is focused on transitioning from a space of industrial production to one cultural production and consumption. While Mitchell speaks to the work of landscape, Sharon Zukin (urban sociologist) and M. Christine Boyer (architectural historian) argue that in the postindustrial city, the relationship between images and the production of space is critical. According to Sharon Zukin, in an age of declining urban industry, cities depend on a symbolic economy to survive and (even thrive). This type of economy is predicated on the production and consumption (and spaces for) arts and culture, from gourmet food and high fashion, to music and art (in galleries, museums, and public spaces) (Zukin 1995, 1998). Imagery and symbols play a critical role in the symbolic economy, responding to an “aesthetic urge” rather than concentrating on industry (Zukin 1998; Dutton 2009). Public space (e.g., plazas, streetscapes, parks) is, of course, vital to this urban symbolic economy, providing a visual, physical and psychological sense of a more livable urban environment. Public art, as both process and product, plays a significant, though unheralded thus far, role.

M. Christine Boyer, asserts:

The contemporary arts of city building are derived from the perspective of white, middle-class architectural and planning professionals who worry in a depoliticized fashion about a city’s competitive location in the global restructuring of capital, and thus myopically focus on improving a city’s
marketability by enhancing its imageability, livability, and cultural capital. (Boyer 1996, 5)

Public art, along with architecture and other urban design elements, has become a form of this publicity, instrumentalized to enhance the city’s desirability and competitiveness. Unfortunately, public art has been viewed only in terms of individual insertions, and depoliticized, resulting in (and perpetuating) what Boyer claims is a view of the city that does not consider all of these actions as part of a constructed totality. It is this understanding of the social construction/production of landscape that is sorely lacking in our conversations about the city. Public art, as I will argue in this dissertation, suffers as a result, becoming mere objects in the urban landscape, not consequential to a larger urban agenda (physical and/or ideological) or particularly political in the public eye.

*Symbolic capital.* Symbolic capital, of which public art is one manifestation, includes those goods and services that represent the taste, identity, and potential power of the city. According to Bourdieu, symbolic capital, as with cultural capital, are those goods and services that are sought after in pursuit of power, status, and prestige (Bourdieu 1984). Cities thus use arts and culture as a means to achieve urban elite status, even relying on them to have real economic staying power (due to the fact that they are key drivers in tourism, and as neo-industrial activities, which includes fabrication and manufacture of arts goods). New arts and cultural venues (e.g., flagship museum projects), restoration of historic sites, and public art (prominent pieces, for example: Pioneer Plaza in Dallas) are important magnets for cultural tourism. Denver’s Public Art Program Guidelines state that the intents and purposes of the program (established by the 1988 Order by Mayor Peña) are to “...expand the opportunities for Denver residents to experience art in public
places, thereby creating more visually pleasing and human environments.” This has grown into more extensive and ambitious aim: “…to enhance Denver’s quality of life and economic vitality through premier public venues, artworks, and entertainment opportunities.”

Multiple industries. The symbolic and cultural economies are not restricted to the fine arts, music or other media related sectors, and they are more than (just) strategies, they encompass actual industries, which involve people working in multiple sectors of the economy (Scott 2000, 39). In *The Cultural Economy of Cities*, Scott provides some much needed critique of Zukin’s work, clearly articulating how culture is not the only sector of the economy that has “ownership” of the symbolic economy. Spatializing (and, of course, temporalizing) the culture industry includes the sites of production, negotiation, communication, and implementation, which necessarily comprises the various actors involved at these various stages. These actors, and their agendas, are all part of the many publics I will be discussing in the findings chapters of this dissertation. Yet they are often invoked only as the consumers of such spaces, even considered “innocent bystanders.” These multiple publics, as I will argue in this dissertation, are an important part of enacting a symbolic economy. And, it is through the public sphere, public space, and the public realm that the symbolic economy is realized. Allen Scott states what now seems obvious: the inextricable interplay of place, culture, and economy. Scott’s work is pertinent to this research as a tempering and expanding of Zukin’s work: to include multiple sectors, publics, and place into the conversation about how post-industrial cities

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are restructuring and re-imaging themselves. The culture industry produces spaces (e.g., buildings, parks, and historical sites), events (e.g., performances, festivals, and exhibitions), and artifacts (e.g., purchaseable arts items and crafts), plays a role in revitalizing urban economies, and shapes urban landscapes. It has become increasingly clear, in the research (particularly by Americans For the Arts) and from the conversations I have had with artists and arts administrators, that we must consider the role of the many people and activities (beyond the artist creating the work of public art) that are involved in the production of public art: from service and manufacturing, to fabricators and installers, and maintenance staff. With regard to public art, the Denver arts community has been very vocal about the importance of supporting and growing a local system of production.

_Political agendas and exclusionary practices._ As part of this larger framework of the symbolic and cultural economy, public art has been used as an element in urban revitalization schemes for the purposes of promoting an urban identity and cultivating civic pride. This employment of public art (for example, civic monuments and large sculptures by internationally known artists at prominent public sites), according to Rosalyn Deutsche, is far from being politically neutral. Deutsche argues that public art is often employed to mask political agendas and is frequently complicit in exclusionary practices (Deutsche 1986). Such aestheticizations of the city are now common practices that engage formulaic means to recover (or re-imagine) a city’s image and improve urban quality of life, ignoring contextual differences and unique qualities of a

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24 Sharp et al (2005) note one of the most egregious examples—the 19th century Hausmannization of Paris—of how public art (and other creative and cultural urban elements) was employed to beautify a city, while also controlling urban populations (civil unrest) and creating environments for the urban elite.
particular location. Significantly, Deutsche calls for a conversation about public art and critical urban discourse (Deutsche 1996). Deutsche advises that we “… expose the authoritarian strategies that construct unitary images of social space” (Deutsche 1996, xiii). As such, she questions the process of the production of urban public space, and the limited role of public art in a critical urban spatial discourse. She questions the socio-political mechanisms that have aestheticized and neutralized art and urban public space. Deutsche challenges the continued practice of using public art as a vehicle for urban redevelopment, through which public art becomes a superficial element in urban beautification and city promotion (Scott 2006; Sharp 2005; Harvey 1989). Rather than public art being a part of a “critical urban discourse,” which demands that it be an essential part of an urban spatial practice, public art is often an ad hoc addition or relegated to urban improvements (Deutsche 1996). Deutsche’s work suggests that we need to delve more deeply into the social and political processes that produce and constitute public art as an urban spatial praxis. How might public art play a more significant role in the making of the city; that is: Why is public art relegated to being insertions in the urban landscape and not part and parcel of the manifestation of the democratic potential of the city? I will argue in this dissertation that in Denver, this conversation is not an explicit one nor is it one that appears to be on peoples’ minds, as they do not consider public art a political act nor do they consider it an important player in city imaging and urban design.

*Where it occurs and who it is for.* Patricia Phillips, critical theorist and art historian, directs our attention to those who determine where public art can and should appear,
suggesting that in order to imagine and create new urban landscapes that we cannot afford to be co-opted by corporate and/or private interests (Phillips 1988). This begs the question of by whom and for whom is public art being produced. More specific to this dissertation is who it is that the program (and producers of public art) believe they are servicing in the name of public art? Is public art for residents of the city, to reflect the unique history and character of Denver, or is it being used to sell the city to outsiders (visitors, tourists and potential corporate headquarters)?

**Quality of art.** As well, she questions how many have promoted putting public art in public spaces is inherently a good thing (Hall and Robertson 2001, 18). She asks us to be more critical of the process and the product of public art. According to Phillips public art’s intentions at the urban scale encourage mediocrity and are either modest (e.g., the creation of mere amenities) or obvious (urban embellishments), both of which are aimed at reduced to making people feel good, but this does not always happen (there are typically conflicts and controversies): so, why bother? (Phillips 1988). She believes, though, that public art can (and must, in order to contribute to a critical urban discourse) operate on both practical and philosophical levels.

Therefore, the questions we must ask are: 1) Can provocative public art endure the democratic procedure (as mandated by the city’s ordinance) of the selection panel and process?, 2) Can public art illuminate cultural ideas that other arts and cultural forms frequently cannot?, and 3) What is it that public art can uniquely do? For Phillips, though, there are four key problems that must be attended to, in order to raise the bar on
public art in the post-industrial city. The first is that public art is not just locational, it is, importantly so, social and psychological. That is:

…a public art that truly explores the rich symbiotic topography of civic, social, and cultural forces can take place anywhere—and for any length of time. … for it would not find its meaning through its situation in a forum, but would create the forum. (Phillips 1988, 192)

Secondly, and clearly related to the first issue she raises, public art has not been allowed to be a critical public catalyst, or to animate urban public space over time and generate meaningful dialogue. It is this dialogue amongst publics that activates the urban public sphere and public space. The third issue for Phillips regards what she feels is the tragedy of public art: that it could reconstitute the idea of the commons but too often minimum-risk is taken, and thus “the public art machine” sabotages its own potential. And, finally, what is and where is the commons today? Can public art help to resuscitate the commons? Should it be “asked” to bare the burden of this? She maintains that we have to get beyond thinking that the post-industrial urban landscape is just a “geographic grid of buildings, spaces and art!;” rather, “it is an ever-mutating organism sustained by multiple, interrelated vortices and networks and the private trajectories that complicate them” which includes “the invisible operations of huge systems and the intimate stories of individual lives” Phillips 1988, 195).

Critiquing claims. Hall’s and Robertson’s critique of the role of public art in urban regeneration is significant because they expose the lack of empirical data to prove that public art has a significant impact in urban revitalization. They do not, though, discount public art’s potential but rather suggest the need for research. Their work is very much dependent on Deutsche’s and Phillip’s critiques of public art as mere aestheticization, as
well as being complicit in mediocre urban (re)development projects. To this point, Hall and Robertson ask us to reconsider what have become the two reasons for the existence of public art: as an essential part of the cultural stock of cities or as “a panacea for a range of social problems” (Hall and Robertson 2001, 18). Are there other ways we might employ public art that is not merely about ornamental insertions or using it to superficially solve (a more accurate phrasing might be mask) problems?

In recent years public art has been lauded as making contributions to contemporary urban initiatives, in that it: contributes to local distinctiveness, attracts investment, boosts cultural tourism, enhances land values, creates employment opportunities, and increases use of urban spaces (Hall and Robertson 2001; Hall 1995, 2004, 2007). In a 2001 article, Hall and Robertson survey published accounts of public art projects and identify seven claims made by advocates of public art: 1) developing a sense of community, 2) developing a sense of place, 3) developing civic identity, 4) addressing community needs, 5) tackling social exclusion, 6) educational value, and 7) promoting social change.

All of these claims are noble, and much desired in many communities; however, they are worthy of skepticism. Hall’s and Robertson’s critiques, three of which I discuss here, are a constructive way to assess these claims. The first is comprised of two paradigms: productionist and semiotic. A production paradigm evaluates public art based on an “examination of its practices, structures and procedures of production” (Hall and Robertson 2001, 18). Yet, the authors state, this approach has unfortunately focused on the quality of (production of) public art works. A semiotic paradigm, locates “public art
within the ideological realm of the post-modern city” (Hall and Robertson 2001, 19).

Regrettably, much of this approach fails to include “the public,” in terms of experience and/or participation. Furthermore, the prevailing paradigm of urban public art is dominated by an ad hoc system by which public art is inserted into urban landscapes without a sense of the larger urban fabric or broader planning initiatives. Public art is frequently employed primarily based on visual attractiveness and urban aestheticization. For example, many public art installations tend to be flagship projects (e.g., the 2006 addition to the Denver Art Museum and its attendant sculptures) intended to enhance urban competitiveness. Yet these projects are not critically examined in terms of the implications with regard to larger (public) social and political concerns. That is, public art is not employed as an integral component of city imaging and larger space-making and urban planning efforts (Hall 2001; Miles 2004; Sharp 2005).

A second critique highlights the essentialist claims of advocates. Advocates do not often consider the contested terrain of public art. Nor do they recognize that any process of producing public art is partial—both in terms of the partiality of agendas and partial readings of places/sites. The third critique concentrates the conversation on the technocratic problems of public art. From its appealing to the lowest common denominator (what Phillips called “minimum risk art”), the allowance of public art to be hijacked by corporate interests, and regarding public art as a means to assuage a city’s societal ills. This critique asks us to think about how public art might “enliven public space through encouragement of controversy, debate, disagreement and discourse” (Hall and Robertson 2001, 20). That is, as per the writings of Deutsche and Phillips, we must
problematize the myth of an ideal city: public art will not solve our urban problems, particularly if we use it in an essentializing manner. Rather it has the potential to encourage dialogue and through this reveal differences, issues and concerns for the public to discuss in a democratic forum.

Tim Hall’s and Iain Robertson’s work also highlights the limitations in the research, and suggests further research. One area of research they claim is much needed is empirical research, research that presents “tangible, measurable economic, political, social, and cultural impacts of public art (Hall and Robertson 2001, 22). A second arena of research that Hall and Robertson propose, and which this dissertation attends to, is better understanding the relationship between public art programs and urban revitalization initiatives. Additionally, they ask: what does public art contribute to civic commentary and debate?

2.4.4 Wishful thinking: Creative Cities Initiatives

It is argued that policy should be sustainable and balanced, aiming to cultivate and protect indigenous production and be rooted in the local, distinctive attributes of place. Three principles are suggested to help embed the creative city: more workspace, fuller participation and better measurement. (Champion 2008, 111)

Creative cities are the most recent urban entrepreneurial project (akin to the 1980s urban imperative to attract jobs and mobile capital), the result of more sophisticated inter-urban competition, place marketing and market-lead development. Cities from Auckland to Toronto and Denver have adopted this new development formula (a combination of investments in cultural resources and urban enhancements) as a means by which to re-make themselves as attractive, world class, creative centers. Above all, as David Harvey
shrewdly notes, such cities have “to appear as innovative, exciting, creative and safe place to live, to play and consume in” (Harvey 1989). However, as Champion notes: there should be a concern that the instrumentalization of the arts will be detrimental to a sustainable urban growth and cultural production (Champion 2008).

The creative/cultural industries include those activities that have their origins in individual creativity, skills and talent that have the potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property (DCMS 2001, 4). The creative cities movement, and urban revitalization in general, believes that creative/cultural industries can provide a direct benefit to the economy. Because there is a global market for creative and cultural products, cities are growing their creative or cultural quarters in order to attract human capital, which the creative cities movement says is a key driver in urban competitive advantage (Florida 2005; Landry 2005).

Cultural resources, according to Charles Landry, are the raw material of cities; they attract visitors/tourists, increase resident spending, improve potential for (re)location and retention of firms, increase property prices, enhance quality of life, and entice skilled/knowledge workers to urban areas. Cultural developments are also promoted as generating civic pride and optimism and reinforcing local and regional identity. One of the dominant mechanisms of re-imagining cities is development of a flagship project (e.g., a new art museum, sports stadium, entertainment center or significant piece of public art). These projects symbolize, for many cities, the shift from industrial city to knowledge/creative city.
Public art, though not typically (and not explicitly), a part of the conversation about symbolic economy and cultural industries, is an important part of how cities have come to express themselves as thriving, vital, and competitive. According to Cheryl Hughes’ research, the top creative cities in the United States have (strong) public art programs (Hughes 2010). She shows that there is a strong correlation between existence of local government public art programs and Richard Florida’s high (positive) rankings of creative cities. Yet recent critiques of creative cities highlight the growing levels of social tensions and inequalities in creative cities. Investment in high-quality urban environments that are rich in creative and cultural amenities serve particular segments of the population (e.g., tourists, professionals, elite consumers, affluent residents); this begs the question: what about the other “public(s)”\textsuperscript{1}\? Additionally, pertinent to this research, how are various publics engaged in the making of the creative city? According to critics of the creative city movement, the creative city is the direct result of a neoliberal urban terrain that has privatized the city, and diminished the emergence of collective forms of action (Peck 2005; Harvey 2008). Neoliberal urban development has altered urban life, transforming it into a commodity, available to a limited public. Increasingly, creative cities initiatives are predicated on a formulaic script that is reshaping cities in an image conjured by developers, financiers and corporate capital. Yet a successful re-imagining of a city cannot be achieved through a formulaic approach that ignores local publics and distinctiveness, as well as local challenges and tensions. Imitations and serial productions are intended to reduce the uncertainty of urban speculations, but they are not long-term solutions. Furthermore, such attractive urban imagery often conceals what lies beneath the surface; that is, the economic and social problems of the city (Peck 2005).
There is an uneasy relationship between urban planning and the creative/cultural industries (Champion 2008). City planning departments are risk averse. As such, urban planners work quietly within the framework of neoliberal development agendas. Rather than embedding creativity into urban development, these creative strategies commodify arts and cultural resources. It is just this sort of objectification of arts and culture that perpetuates ignoring of spatially grounded social processes that inherently include a wide range of actors, intentions and agendas (Harvey 1989). Many cities, since the publication of Florida’s first book on the creative class and creative cities (2002), have jumped on the creative cities band wagon, hoping to attract this mobile, educated, health-conscious, tolerant, disposable income class in order to salvage their cities from post-industrial demise. Denver is one of those cities, along with its peer cities (e.g., Albuquerque, Toledo, Austin), that latched on to this idea without knowing how it would operationalize it. Local government arts and cultural programs have worked hard to develop means by which to collaborate with the more economically-driven aspects of this rush to become a creative city, yet it appears that public art programs are hardly ever invited into the conversation.

2.5 Summary: Public / Art + the Post-Industrial City

Urban scholars today are asking how we might “embed the creative city in everyday peoples’ daily lives” (Champion 2008). This is a big shift in the conversation, and one that has the potential to reinforce the role of public art in urban initiatives. Public art has not yet become an integral part of larger urban initiatives, nor has it been a significant
part of the conversation about how cities are re-imagining themselves. Interestingly
though, I believe it is through public art that there is potential to engage various publics
in re-imagining and re-experiencing the city. And, it is through the public aspects
(multiple publics, public sphere, public space, and public realm) of public art that there is
the possibility to change the way cities look and feel (are experienced), and how they
operate.

The next chapter covers the research design of this dissertation. The review of the
literature, combined with my pre-dissertation research, provided me with a foundation
from which I developed my research questions. It is to this material (research design,
data collection, data analysis, etc.) that I now turn my attention.
3.0 RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1 Introduction

This study of a city public art program is an attempt to reveal why public art is aestheticized and instrumentalized by local city governments (and related entities). An integral part of this investigation, then, is to better understand the conceptions and dimensions of “the public” in public art planning and implementation. To understand the interconnectivity between reasons for and perceptions of public art take place at different political and social scales required a research design that recognizes these dynamics and allowed the researcher to understand the what and the why of the production of public art. By interviewing people involved (at the various stages) in the production of public art, I was able to identify some of the factors influencing, as well as further questions about why (and where) public art transpires in the city.

In order to understand the place-based, multifaceted dynamics of this production process I chose the case study as a research design. I employed a combination of qualitative methods within this research design, including archival and documentary research, semi-structured interviews, as well as a methodology I have developed for this research, the slow read. During the course of this research I interviewed sixty-three people over a period of six months, and conducted slow reads of three public art sites over a period of nine months.

In this chapter I discuss the reasons for choosing the research design, methods, and participants. First, I discuss the components of my pre-dissertation research as well how
it informed the dissertation fieldwork. Next, this chapter outlines the type of data collection methods used, followed by a discussion of participant selection, and the analysis procedures employed to answer the research questions, as presented in subsequent chapters. Finally, I conclude by discussing the challenges of using the methods employed and how, despite the challenges, this research design provided me with a means of understanding the production of public art in a mid-size city, Denver, CO.

3.2 Pre-Dissertation Research

I had been involved in the public art field for several years before I developed my dissertation research project, as an artist, as a consultant to master planning for public art (Holiday Neighborhood, Boulder, CO; Lowry New Town Public Art Master Plan), and through my teaching (seminar courses and design studios). As well, as I began formulating this research I had the opportunity to travel to Brazil, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand. During this time (one semester teaching in a study abroad program) I was able to see what public art is in other countries and cities. I began asking questions, such as: How is public art defined in each of these places? Is the term public art the term employed, or is there some other terminology more appropriate to the particular place and time? How does public art happen in each of these places (i.e., funding, process, parties involved, time frame)? What is the purpose of public art (e.g., city branding, commemoration, urban design)? When I returned from this travel abroad I decided to conduct a case study in order to delve further into these questions.
I chose Denver as my case study site for reasons of convenience and curiosity. Because I had lived in the Denver metropolitan area for several years I was curious to learn more about the public art program. I had some knowledge of the program but even more questions. Admittedly, I began my pre-dissertation research with a superficial understanding of the public art program in Denver. Therefore, the pre-dissertation research allowed me to ask the following questions: 1) Who are the primary players in the city’s public art program? 2) What are the rules and definitions laid out in the city ordinance for public art? 3) Where is the majority of the city’s public art located? and 4) What are some key issues the public art program is dealing with currently? This phase provided me with a general sense of public art in Denver. It is through this pre-dissertation work that I was able formulate deeper questions, the questions that became my research questions. And, it facilitated the framing and development of the interview protocol, as well as generating a network of people I might interview or refer to when broadening my interview list.

This preliminary phase was composed of two parts: 1) informational interviews and 2) compilation of contextual data about public art, urban planning and design, and the “Create Denver” initiative. The informational interviews allowed me to field test my interview process (approach and questions) and helped me to build a list of potential dissertation interviewees. Additionally, during this phase I gained confidence in making contact with individuals and interviewing people; as well, I refined my questions so that I could develop an interview protocol for my dissertation research. This phase was essential to my being able to conduct the fieldwork as I made foundational contacts
DOCA staff) who continued to support me through the entire dissertation process. The second part of the preliminary research was an important way that I acquainted myself with analogue, digital, and human resources that I would need throughout the dissertation project. Pre-dissertation research was conducted during the summer and fall of 2008.

### 3.3 Research Design

For this research I used a case study approach, “an empirical enquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context” (Yin 2003, 13), to examine the production of public art in Denver. A case study approach allowed me to study the following two subjects, public art and “the public,” in a in-depth manner (as a descriptive study) via the perspective of a variety of actors (Kitchin and Tate 2000, 225) who are involved in the production of public art as part of the city’s public art program. The study of the production of public art requires specific methodologies in order to answer the research questions discussed in Chapter 1. Therefore, I needed methods that would allow me to understand the what and the why (of the production) of public art in Denver. Semi-structured interviews allowed me “a more thorough examination of experiences, feelings and opinions” (Kitchin and Tate 2000, 213) that I could not have gained through structured questionnaires or surveys. As well, even though I was focusing on the producers I needed to have a sense of how the public interacted with the public art. This was necessary in order for me to continue asking questions and to feel grounded in the fieldwork (the interviews); therefore, I not only compiled contextual information about public art, urban planning and design via archival and documentary research but also engaged in a methodology I am calling the “slow read.” The slow reads provided me
with an opportunity to engage with ‘the public’ and provided a means for me to continue to develop questions that informed the conversations I was having in the interviews.

The chart below represents the research questions and how they aligned with the stages of research and types of methods employed. The upper case “X” depicts a stage during which I focused on the research question directly. The lower case “x” indicates stages in the fieldwork when I was not focused directly on the research questions but was still engaged in some way. The hyphen appears in the “Slow Read” column to show that this methodology was not about responding to the research questions, but it was still an important part of this research (I will discuss this further in subsection 3.4.4).

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<td>3. Public Art and Urban Regeneration</td>
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Table 3.1: Fieldwork Methods and Schedule

3.4 Data Collection Procedures

In order to answer the research questions, I developed a set of data collection procedures that would allow me to, as thoroughly as possible, respond to the questions that directed
this research. The data collected for this study was largely qualitative in nature; I used a combination of methods to collect my data, including semi-structured interviews, archival research, attending meetings and events, and conducting “slow reads” (discussed further in subsection 3.4.6 below). Before I discuss the four methods in detail, I will briefly reiterate the research questions and the respective methods employed. Following this summary is a detailed explanation of each of the methods. By using different types of data collection I was able to address my questions from different perspectives and ensure that I was not limited and thus biased by particular sources (Maxwell 2004, 93). This triangulation strategy helped me to identify omissions of information, gaps in knowledge, and misleading statements. Using different methods throughout the fieldwork period allowed me to (continually) compare data collected thus strengthening my findings, because: 1) information from one source complemented information from another, and 2) in some circumstances information from a source filled in important gaps.

In order to answer the **first research question**—How is “(the) public” defined by the various individuals involved in the production of public art in Denver? And, how are these notions of “the public” employed in the discourse of urban regeneration efforts—I developed interview questions (for semi-structured interviews—discussed further below) that queried how individuals and their agencies define “the public” in terms of their daily activities and longer term programs and projects. That is, whom do they believe they are serving? I asked people if there were various terms, other than “public” used? And, if they believed there were multiple categories of public, how they are prioritized. In order to determine how the public is employed in the current discourse, in the analysis of this
data, I compare how different individuals and agencies define the public. As well, I referred to archival materials and meetings/event notes to determine how these terms are used in printed documents and spoken word.

The second research question focused on determining the “public” aspects of public art both in terms of the process and outcomes of public art planning and implementation. To answer this question I created interview questions that prompted individual producers/actors to talk about perceptions of their involvement (and the characteristics of that involvement) in the process, and to articulate their actual roles in the production of public art in Denver. As well, through interviews I attempted to ascertain how “public benefits” are conceived, and how it is that they believe such benefits might be achieved. Finally, through the interviews and by analyzing written materials I was able to better understand, 1) how different actors define a “benefiting public,” 2) to whom they believe they direct their efforts, and 3) who is included and excluded from these notions of “the public.”

I employed multiple methods to answer the third and final research question: How do local public art programs fit into a city’s urban regeneration efforts? It is through semi-structured interviews, archival research, attending meetings and events, and the slow reads that I endeavored to understand public art’s role in revitalizing Denver. I asked interviewees to articulate what they perceived to be the role of public art in urban regeneration efforts in general, and more specifically (in the urban regeneration initiatives) in Denver. To understand how various individuals perceived of the
interactions between the various actors involved in the production of public art I not only pursued questions in interviews but also listened to lectures, spoke with people and overheard conversations at the many meetings and events I attended.

The primary data were collected during May-October 2009. I continued to collect data through October 2010 as there were meetings and events to attend that were pertinent, even as I was writing the dissertation. I continued to conduct the slow reads throughout the dissertation process.

Logistically, this research was conducted in close proximity to where I was living during the fieldwork. Boulder is thirty to forty minutes North of Denver, an easy bus ride or car drive. As such, there were many benefits to my conducting the case study in Denver, most importantly the ease with which I could get to the interviews. Several times interviews were cancelled at the last minute or had to be rescheduled (in two occasions, several times), but it was not a huge inconvenience to reschedule since I was in the metropolitan area. Some of the challenges though were related to my proximity to the research site. Since I was not coming to the research site from a distant locale I appeared readily accessible, which did, I believe, lead a couple people to reschedule multiple times. As well, since I was so close to Denver I found quite a few meetings and events related to public art that I could attend; that is, I could have spent an inordinate amount of time at meetings, openings, dedications, etc. but found that being very selective worked far better in collecting contextual data.
When I began my fieldwork, the manager of the Public Art Program (Kendall Peterson) was settling into the position; at approximately one year at the helm she was a relatively new manager of the program. Kendall arrived on the Denver Public Art scene at a unique time. She took over the position after the long-standing manager stepped down from whom she inherited a great number of smaller projects and several very large projects—money-wise and in terms of physical size/extent, some of the largest installations in the program’s history. These projects were in various phases, from development of RFQ/RFP25, selection process, to installation. As well, she started the position with a new Mayor who was very supportive of arts and culture.

In addition, she and her staff were in the midst of dealing with a problematic public art installation (“The Blue Mustang” at Denver International Airport (DIA)) while also trying to “push the envelope” as to what was possible in public art within the parameters of the existing ordinance. Nonetheless, when I approached Kendall she was, though overwhelmed by the amount of work she was stewarding through the process, excited to hear that someone was interested in conducting research about public art (in Denver). She saw this as an opportunity (for herself, the program and the city) to think more critically about public art in The Mile High City. Kendall became a strong supporter of my research and an invaluable resource and conversational partner.

25 RFQ/RFP refers to the first public step in the public art process, the Request for Qualifications and/or Request for Proposals from interested artists. An RFQ or an RFP will be advertised or sent to a select group of artists/artist teams to respond to within a given time frame. See Chapter 4 for more about this phase and the other phases in the city’s public art program process.
Conducting my fieldwork during this dynamic time provided me with a unique situation in which I could observe a program thinking about a new phase in its life cycle as well as renegotiating its relationship with the various other urban actors involved in bringing Denver into the twenty-first century.

In the following subsections I describe the methods I used in my research and the reasons for choosing them.

3.4.1 Archival Research

Compilation of archival materials from city departments, public/arts organizations, newspapers, and local and regional magazines helped me to establish the historical and contemporary context within which this research is situated. Therefore, the purpose of this phase of data collection was three-fold: 1) to understand the history of arts and cultural activities in Denver; 2) to better comprehend the role, extent and support of Denver Office Of Cultural Affairs (DOCA) and the Public Art Program; and 3) to make myself aware of the complexities of and transformations in the Public Art Program since its inception, as well as the recent foment of changes. In preparation for my fieldwork, and at points during the fieldwork phase (typically times when I needed further details or clarification), I spent time collecting and reviewing archived materials (e.g., program reports, ordinances, plans, etc.).
Archival materials and other documents included print information and internet-based materials about public art, the public art program, and urban revitalization projects and initiatives (e.g., newspaper articles, annual reports, plans, maps and reports, and websites).

It is important to note in this section two important points about the archival research: 1) lack of archival materials available from the Public Art Program, and 2) use of online resources to gather archival information. First, because of multiple office moves over the life of the program, much documentation has been lost. In addition, maintaining historical records has not been a program priority. Typical of many public art programs around the country, Denver does not have a written history of the program. There are many versions of this history circulating around the city because there have been several managers of the program and a great number of people involved over the years of the official percent for art program. In order to develop an accurate timeline of the program it was necessary that I comb through the files available in the program’s office space and confirm through conversations with a number of people involved in public art (in Denver) over the years. Second, a considerable amount of my archival research was conducted online. I had not expected this, but expect that in many cities government information is increasingly available primarily online. And, given that the City of Denver has slowly been converting as much of its print material to digitally-based materials I found that much information was only available online.26 Some materials were also available in print version but copies were limited.27

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26 According to the city’s greenprint goals, established in 2007, with regard to waste minimization, the city plans to reduce citywide paper use by 20 percent or more. When I asked people in various city departments
This archival data contributed to my understanding of the historical, political, economic, social, and cultural issues and extents of public art in Denver and Colorado. As well, this phase helped me to relate the current happenings in the public art world to Denver and other cities, both national and international. These data were cross-referenced with the data collected in the subsequent data collection methods (See 3.4.2 below).

3.4.2 Semi-Structured Interviews

The primary means of obtaining data was through interviews of city officials and staff, civic stakeholders and creative professionals (artists and other spatial players such as landscape architects and engineers). The interviews addressed the following topics: defining “the public,” defining public art, perceptions of public art, justifications for public art, beneficiaries of public art, decision-makers involved in the process, nature of relationships between decision makers, and the role of public art in urban planning (See Appendix C for the interview protocol, which includes all questions, follow-up questions, and prompts). Semi-structured interviews were used to collect data from three categories of individuals. All of the interviewees were first contacted by email or telephone to explain the study and request and schedule an interview. The interviews lasted approximately one hour, and took place either in the place of employment of the interviewee or in a convenient location for the interviewee. The questionnaire used for about obtaining reports or other materials they would often tell me that I could (only) obtain it online, as part of a larger city-wide initiative to reduce waste at the source (http://www.greenprintdenver.org/waste/). 27 The City’s Public Art Guide is available in hardcopy but also available online: (http://www.denvergov.org/DenverOfficeofCulturalAffairs/PublicArt/PublicArtGuide/tabid/437255/Default.aspx). The city offers cell phone tours of its public collection as well. Many (city) public art programs are bringing an end to the printing of their brochures and maps in order to save money and to reduce waste at the source.
the interviews included a mix of open-ended and closed questions (See Appendix C: Interview Protocol). The interviews were carried out in Denver over a period of six months. The selection of participants will be discussed in section 3.5 of this chapter.

I employed an in-person interview data gathering technique in order to have direct, face-to-face contact. An essential aspect of conducting these interviews was establishing, quickly, a good rapport with the individual I was interviewing. As well, I made it clear that I respected their time constraints and did, in fact, keep to the sixty-minute time limit I had promised. Both of these were important because they put the person at ease and led to the person being open to my questions and, in general, offering contacts and references. The advantage of conducting interviews in person was that I was able to watch the person as s/he responded to my questions and then compose prompts to tease out further information.

I chose a semi-structured interview format for several reasons. First, I used this format because I was not planning on interviewing people more than once (Bernard 1988). Second, I wanted to find a happy medium, between the structured and the unstructured interview, as I did not believe that a standard set of questions in a particular sequence would be the best way to approach the various individuals I was interviewing. Nor did I believe a general question-and-answer format would provide me enough structure to make comparisons within and between categories of individuals. Therefore, I used an interview guide, a list of questions and topics that I needed to cover during the conversation; I adapted the questions and sequence according to the category of
interviewee I was interviewing. In the majority of cases it was necessary to adjust the questions according to the particular aspect of production in which the participant was involved. This guide helped me to focus the interview while also allowing for topical digressions as necessary, which proved fruitful because material emerged that helped me to identify new lines of inquiry and to understand different ways of thinking about public art and “the public.” The questions were both open-response (whereby interviewees answered in their own words) and closed-response (questions that the interviewee must answer from a set of prescribed choices) format.

Procedure. Choosing a face-to-face interview medium required a series steps. During the pre-dissertation research and key informant phases (See Table 3.1) I developed a lengthy list of potential interviewees. From this list I chose first tier participants (See 3.5.2 Tiers of Participants). The first step was making contact (typically by email) to request an interview; once the interviewee accepted my request we spent some time (via email) setting up the interview. I preferred meeting with individuals in their place of employment for reasons convenience as well as to see them in their work environment (See 3.7.1 The Place of Interviews), though several people preferred to meet in a more neutral zone (a coffee shop). By suggesting a convenient place for the interviewee I showed respect for their time, which resulted in the interviewees increased cooperation and likelihood of spending a bit more time with me, and greater attention to the questions. The post-interview stage involved thanking people (via email) and evaluating the outcomes of the interview. Evaluating the interview entailed determining if I needed a future meeting (or phone conversation or email) to clarify points.
I did not guarantee anonymity, though several people did ask to speak “off the record.” To me, this points to the political nature of public art. It is not just a matter of modesty, but not wanting to be “fingered” for negative comments or comments that might reveal some of the negotiations and politics of the production of public art. I could not guarantee anonymity because I wanted to as fully as possible explore the ways different actors defined terms, perceived the role of public art, and interacted with one another. It was, therefore, difficult to guarantee anonymity because of the size of the public art and planning communities in Denver. That is, it is most likely that the identity of some interviewees will be readily apparent to other interviewees or other involved in public art in Denver. I understand that not being able to guarantee anonymity could have limited my research (because some people may not want to speak “on the record,” and some people may not be as honest with their answers); however, I found that most people appeared to be willing to answer in a thorough and honest manner because they believed my research could have a positive impact on the planning of arts and culture in Denver.

Finally, I requested that the interviews be audio-recorded. The majority of participants were willing to be audio-recorded. However, two people who declined audio-recording, did so for reasons of privacy. In these cases I only took notes during the interview. In the other sixty-one interviews I audio-recorded the interview and took notes. Frequently I would turn off the recording device at what I thought was the end of the interview only to have the interviewee continue to talk, expand on a topic or question, or ask me questions about the research. At these times, post-recording, I would continue to take
notes of as much of what was said that was relevant to my research; these short intervals often proved quite insightful as people were often “off their guard,” elaborating on points and raising questions.

3.4.3 Attending Meetings and Openings

I was invited to attend Public Art Committee (PAC) meetings, selection meetings, openings and dedications as well as other events. These invitations were given after I had interviewed people: artists would invite me to the dedications of their work, art gallery owners invited me to openings, and Public Art program staff invited me to sit in on DOCA, PAC, and selection committee meetings so that I can ‘see’ the process of selection. Attending these various events allowed me to introduce myself to various groups and individuals, explain my research, and ask if I could visit with or interview them at some point in the near future. This proved quite helpful to making contact with some of the more reticent people, those who had at first declined my request for an interview. All information collected during this period was entered into fieldbooks, providing me with a resource to refer to when I prepared for interviews and for the writing of this text (See Table 3.2, below, for a list of events attended).

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<thead>
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<th>Meetings/Events Attended</th>
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<td>City of Denver Public Art Program</td>
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<td>Public Art Committee monthly meeting</td>
<td>30-Mar-10</td>
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<td>Public Art Selection</td>
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<td>Animal Shelter competition: Finalist presentations</td>
<td>1-Mar-10</td>
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<td>Public Art Dedications</td>
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3.4.4 Slow Reads

Astonishing things happen if one gives oneself over to the process of seeing again and again: aspect after aspect of the picture seems to surface, what is salient and what is incidental alter bewilderingly from day to day, the larger order of the depiction breaks up, recrystalizes, fragments again, persists like an afterimage. And slowly the question arises: What is it, fundamentally, I am returning to in this particular case? What is it I want to see again? (Clark, T. J. 2006, 5)

Since this research concentrated on the production of public art in Denver, particularly downtown Denver (where the majority of the collection resides and the part of the collection that is most well known), I decided to develop a methodology, the “slow read,” to help me better understand the public art that was produced by the people I interviewed. I chose three public art sites in downtown to study in-depth.

The development of this method began with a conversation I had with Dr. Joe Bryan, one of my committee members, when we were discussing the creative aspects of my dissertation (he was concerned that I not ignore my artistic predilections). As well, we were discussing how to “ground” my work in the public art that is produced. His
suggestion was that I ask a few of my interviewees to go to a public art site and discuss
the piece and process in situ. I thought this sounded like a good idea in theory but getting
people to take even more time out of their busy schedules seemed impossible and also
like I might be asking too much of them.28

*Site selection.* I chose the sites based on pre-dissertation research and the initial
(dissertation) interviews. I asked people which existing public art projects were the most
likeable, least likeable, and most controversial. Three pieces of public art were “on the
tip of everyone’s tongues”: *I see what you mean* (aka “The Blue Bear”), *All together now,*
and *National Velvet.* The slow read involved my going to each of these sites, fieldbook
and camera in hand to sketch, shoot, and observe; as well as to eavesdrop on and talk
with people. I present only two slow reads in the interludes: *National Velvet* and *I See
What You Mean.*

*Site and process.* The “slow reads” tapped into a different category of individuals (not
the producers of public art but the people who experience the public art once it is
installed), allowing me to gather information from the public, the place, and from my
own imaginings and wonderings during the site visits. It is in this way that I have
progressed through the slow reads, visiting the site multiple times during the period June
2009 – March 2011. Some of the issues raised by interviewers re-emerged on site where
they had a more visceral meaning or became means by which I pursued new avenues of
inquiry or new directions of questioning the installation/artist/site/public art program. As

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28 I emailed some of the people I interviewed after the interview and we corresponded in that manner, but
e-mailing is very different from someone finding the time to meet me on site for another discussion.
such, the people I interviewed as part of my fieldwork continued to impact me—a continuing dialogue beyond the meeting itself. This is, ultimately, what the slow read is about, having a continuing dialogue (with myself) about a work, one that keeps begging more questions.

These “slow reads” are thus a nested set of case studies (within the larger case study of Denver). My goal in conducting slow reads was to uncover what the interviewees either took for granted or had not considered. This approach allowed me to think viscerally about what the producers felt they were accomplishing and how the public might view or respond to public art (Eyles 1988). In contrast to the archival research and the semi-structured interviews, the slow reads examine how public art “inhabits” urban spaces and what people do and say when in the presence of public art. Therefore the data collected through this method complemented the interview data in terms of: 1) clarifying issues that arose in the interviews; 2) discovering new information about the pieces of public art; 3) beginning to understand how various publics engage public art; 4) challenging assumptions I held as a result of my own previous experiences and from the interviews; 5) confirming, to a certain degree, some of the ideals and notions held about public art in Denver; and, important to the current research and to developing further research, 6) posing new questions. This information proved to be of great importance because it worked as a sort of foil, prompting me to think about the relationship between production and consumption/experience. As well, these slow reads introduced me to the everyday lives of the public art that is produced; they revealed likely meanings and suggested new processes by which to produce public art.
Interludes. The interludes, positioned after chapters six and seven, illustrate some of the stories that emerged, questions provoked, and newfound insights. I am calling these interludes because they act as pauses between the longer, focused chapters of the dissertation. They are not intended to interrupt the flow of an academic work but are insertions to shift the reader’s thinking and attention to a piece of public art. In the final chapter of this dissertation I reflect upon the slow read as a method, how they became an integral part of the fieldwork and how they continued to inform me throughout the writing of the dissertation.

3.5. Selection of interview participants

Urban public art in downtown Denver is the result of the interactions amongst a diverse set of “actors, powers, institutions and bodies of knowledge” in both the public and private realms (Rose and Miller 1991, 188). These types of individuals each wield power in a multitude of ways that intersect and thus impact the final provision of art in (city) public spaces. As well, their ideas of “public” are certainly not fixed or universal. There are multiple publics, multiple interests, and multiple benefits to consider; as such, there are diverse and (often) competing interests and values related to decisions over public art. This is why it was important that I interviewed a variety of actors within different sectors (e.g., government departments and agencies, nonprofit organizations, private companies and individuals). An analysis of city/government policies also revealed a complex web of actors, agents, and agendas of public art planning. “…We see the end result of decisions or selections over time” (Babon 2000, 111), implying that without digging
deeper we will never understand the various interactions that result in the physical landscape we experience on an everyday basis.

The way I selected the people to interview was based on the various relationships people had with one another. Many of these relationships were not clearly articulated nor did many people initially realize there was a relationship to discuss. Therefore, my selection of participants was certainly not (entirely) random: the selection of the interviewees changed throughout the interview/fieldwork stage based on new information I obtained, insights, connections, and finding gaps in information or perspective. This is typical for case studies, particularly urban planning related research, as cited by other researchers conducting contemporary urban geographical/planning fieldwork.29

3.5.1 Finding a broad range of views and perspectives

In order to capture a range of perspectives and experiences, I developed a sample size of sixty-three individuals, representing a variety of perspectives/positions relative to the production of public art in Denver, CO. I attempted to generate a stratified sample to ensure sufficient representation; therefore, to answer the research questions and understand how public art is produced in Denver I identified three categories of actors (to interview): 1) city officials and staff, 2) civic stakeholders, and 3) creative professionals.

When selecting participants I combined two sampling techniques: purposive sampling and snowball sampling. Purposive sampling allows the researcher to choose a sample that reflects the issues she is interested in (Bernard 2000), while snowball sampling is a

29 See, for example, Judith Innes’ work on communicative action and interactive practice.
technique that allows the researcher to find specific individuals who are connected to each other according to specific activities or identities (Bernard 2000). The purposive sampling allowed me to choose participants based on their knowledge and willingness to talk about their involvement in public art in Denver, while snowball sampling led me to individuals working on issues related to arts and culture in the city-region. These individuals were selected (for the most part) based on key informants identifying potential interviewees whom they thought would be helpful to this research.

The initial people I interviewed, those I located through purposive sampling, were in the Department of Cultural Affairs (DOCA), of which the Public Art Program (PAP) is one of three programs. Since my research was on the city public art program, this organization supplied me with the names of many of the individuals I interviewed in the early stages of my fieldwork. On the other hand, there were many people DOCA and PAP staff did not direct me to; therefore, snowball sampling allowed me to delve deeper into the network of individuals involved in the production of public art in Denver. In the snowball sampling technique the researcher identifies several key informants who provide names of others they believe are likely candidates for the research (Bernard 2000). Consequently, this technique can result in some bias since the researcher will be following the network (known entities and possibly people with similar views and perspectives) of her informants, omitting individuals that are not party to such conversations (Baxter and Eyles, 1997). In order to address this bias, I sought out participants from various city departments, as well as people known to not necessarily
conform to the views of city staff. I also had to address the issue of finding less well-known individuals.

In order to address both of these biases I engaged in a process I called *tiered interviewing*, a process that was both period-based (May-June, July, August-October) and network-based. The first tier included those people in key/top positions within the decision making process for the production of public art in Denver. These first interviews provided me with information that helped me to think about the future interviews of artists, developers, and other stakeholders. As well, it was through this first set of interviews that I made the most contacts. These were the people who were able to direct me to future interviewees. However, I found that in the first tier of interviews, mostly city staff, I was not obtaining names of artists of color, women artists and non-local artists. Therefore, it was necessary to increase my network, which tiers two and three provided. The second tier interviewees were people I was referred to by the first tier people; as well, they were the people they I felt comfortable talking with once I had gained some foundational information from the first tier individuals. The third tier individuals were those people I had difficulty contacting (for reason of travel, interest, and making contacts through second tier interviewees). This final set of interviews allowed me to “fill in some gaps;” that is, to flesh out representation in all four of my categories.

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30 There is a strong allegiance to local artists in Denver but also, paradoxically, a desire to showcase international talent. For an example of this, see *Westword*, July 29-August 4, 2010 (Appendix E)
I had the most difficulty making contact with developers and people not supportive of public art in Denver. I believe they were unsure of my agenda. Developers were the most difficult to make an appointment with because of the added level of communication with their assistants or secretaries, many just did not return my calls/emails. I made several attempts to speak with someone in the City’s Office of Economic Development; however, I was met with a great deal of resistance. I did attempt (through follow-up email, phone calls, getting referrals from respected colleagues, etc.) to convince a couple individuals that interviewing them was meaningful to my dissertation, but both felt that I should be talking with someone in Cultural Affairs, not Economic Development.

I interviewed a range of artists, in terms of media, age, and public artwork experience. I interviewed three non-local artists via skype or phone. I wanted to interview local and non-local artists who had been commissioned by the city in order to gain some insights about the program and their experience of the process.
### Number of Participants

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Categories of Participants</th>
<th>Tier 1</th>
<th>Tier 2</th>
<th>Tier 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>May + June</td>
<td>July</td>
<td>August-October</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. City Officials &amp; Staff</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Civic Stakeholder</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Creative Professionals</td>
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<th></th>
<th>17</th>
<th>27</th>
<th>19</th>
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Table 3.3: (Categories of) Participants

3.5.2 Tiers of participants/interviewees.

**Tier 1: May + June: DOCA and the Public Art Program.** I began the identification of participants from discussions with the director of DOCA and the manager of the Public Art Program. Through these initial meetings I was able to attend DOCA Advisory Board meetings and the Public Art Meetings, both of whose meetings are open to the public. These women introduced me at the meetings, providing a way for my meeting others involved at this level of decision-making. The next step was to meet other staff in DOCA and the Public Art Program. This first set of informants (DOCA and PAP staff) and their logistical support enable me to reach the additional categories of informants that were so crucial to my research.

**Tier 2: July: Finding individuals outside of DOCA and the PAP.** To identify research participants that were not a part of DOCA or PAP I used two strategies: informant suggestions and attending meetings and gallery openings related to arts and cultural activities in Denver. At gallery openings and other arts and cultural meetings I was able to introduce myself and thus meet potential interviewees. Through this snowballing...
method I was able to meet people who were indirectly related, but meaningfully related, to the production of public art in Denver.

**Tier 3:** *August-October: Shoring up the sample.* This final tier included those people who had not been available prior to August or people that I had had difficulty scheduling an appointment (their schedule and my schedule combines made for some complicated calendaring of interviews). As well, some of these individuals were those who were initially reluctant to meet with me (many of whom I had to convince or have tier 1 and tier 2 people intervene).

3.5.3 Interview participants

The participants in this research were an educated population, which is consistent with how Denver is nationally ranked and how it is commonly characterized in the popular press. Twenty-three people had attended a four-year college and received a bachelor’s degree. Thirty-two people had attended graduated school and received a master’s degree. Four people held a Ph.D.. According to the educational areas of study this is a multi-disciplinary population. Many of these individuals had a background in the arts and humanities, which is consistent with areas of study for people involved in the production of public art nationwide. Of the sixty-three people I interviewed, eighteen were city officials and staff, twenty-nine were civic stakeholders, and sixteen were creative professionals. I interviewed far more civic stakeholders than both city officials and staff and creative professionals because this category encompassed a much broader range of individuals. Civic stakeholders included: advisory board members, arts (and related)
organization leaders, public art commission members, public art selection panelists, developers, business people, and directors of non-profit groups.

The findings (in all three chapters of findings) are discussed with regard to the three categories of individuals I interviewed: city staff and officials, civic stakeholders, and creative professionals. Within each of these categories there were subcategories 31, which I refer to on occasion but since I did not have a large enough sampling within each of these subcategories I do not make any broad interpretations; rather, I use comments from these subcategories to raise issues and questions that seem important to the overall conversation.

I interviewed thirty-four men and twenty-nine women. I did not develop the list of potential interviewees based on gender but rather on roles in decision-making about public art. It is just a rather “happy accident” that the total was almost an equal number of men and women.

3.6. Data analysis procedures

I did not use quantitative analyses because the goal of my research project was to gain insights into the processes by which public art is produced in a mid-size city in the United States, addressing the relationship between notions of “the public,” public art, and urban

31 Sub-categories included the following: City Officials + Staff: DOCA staff, Dept. of Planning, Dept. of Public Works, Dept. of Parks & Recreation, Theatres & Arenas, RTD, and Sheriff’s Dept./Detention Center; Civic Stakeholders: Create Denver Advisory Board, DURA, City Council, DDP, Public Art Consultants, Visit Denver, Non profit arts organizations, Public Art Commission, Public art selection panel member, DTD, developers, gallery owners, City of Aurora Public Art Program, Denver Art Museum; and Creative Professionals: artists, landscape architects, architects
revitalization in post-industrial cities. Rather, I conducted qualitative analyses for an exploratory project. I analyzed the information collected using an interpretive approach, emphasizing the role of basic descriptive units, patterns, and connections (Kitchin and Tate 2000, 229). This research is, however, not just a descriptive exercise; though this is the place where I began to understand the information I had gathered. The next level of analysis was converting the information (that I had collected in the interviews) into data by categorizing the interview responses and frequency of types of responses by respondent category (City Official/Staff, Civic Stakeholder, or Creative Professional). Lastly, I was in search of how these responses related to another and what the recurring patterns were (Dey 1993 by way of Kitchin and Tate 2000, 230). That is, I was looking for commonalities and divergences, key issues raised, and questions that emerged.

I treated the data collected by the four information-gathering methods employed (archival, semi-structured interviews, attending events and meetings, and the slow reads) differently. The information collected through archival research consisted of material about the public art program and DOCA documents (e.g. public art guide, city ordinance, DOCA policies), department of planning and Downtown Denver Partnership documents (maps, plans and reports), and newspaper and magazine articles (e.g., current public art issues and projects in Denver, history of public art in Denver, as well as public art in other mid-size cities).

Regarding the interviews, I transcribed key passages from the audio-recordings, but relied primarily on the notes taken during the interviews. I sorted the interviews by hand,
organizing responses into themes relevant to answering my research question(s). The main themes were defining the terms “the public,” public art, and urban revitalization; determining criteria for successful public art; the role of public art in urban revitalization, and the relationships amongst those involved in producing public art in Denver. Related to these main themes, I compared responses between categories of interviewees and found that there was little consensus in defining the terms “the public,” public art, and urban revitalization; as well, few people had explicitly explored possible criteria for successful public art, nor had they thoughtfully considered the role of public art in urban revitalization. Finally, what I found to be a complex web of relationships between producers was of interest to most people but not something people often acted on.

The materials and information obtained by attending meetings and events were recorded in my fieldbook. I used these data to contextualize data collected through interviews, thus providing me with further information about sites, people involved in the production of public art in Denver, and current debates.

Finally, the data collected through the slow reads were transformed into the two interludes found in this manuscript. The slow reads grounded this research in the sites of public art and suggested questions to pursue during the fieldwork as well as in future research.

In the findings chapters and the discussion chapter I use direct quotes and provide descriptions of meetings and events I attended. The use of a variety of data collection
techniques allowed me to confirm consistency between interview responses and identify important differences in attitudes, perceptions and actions, which will be discussed in the findings chapters.

3.7. Methodological discussion

In this section I am going to talk about some of the challenges I face while conducting my fieldwork. First I will discuss what Sarah Elwood and Deborah Martin call “the place of interviews.” I was not entirely insistent on interviewing people in their place of employment but greatly preferred it because of a desire to see the places in which these individuals made decisions. Second, I will discuss my, the researcher’s, positionality in the context of the interview power relations. Throughout the fieldwork it was clear that how I initially made contact with the interviewee, introduced myself, and conducted the interview had an effect on the interviewee’s comfort level and willingness to answer more challenging questions, and thus had an impact on the data collected. Such concerns about positionality (and reflexivity), particularly for “Women in the Field” have been discussed by feminist researchers only since the early 1990’s but have important ramifications for fieldwork whether it is urban, rural, or suburban. Lastly, I will discuss what I am calling the politics and poetics of writing-up and “through” the methods and findings. Inspired by Michael Crang’s 2003 and 2005 Progress in Human Geography reports on qualitative methods, I will briefly discuss the ways this writing is descriptive, interpretive, reflective, interrogative, and political and poetic (particularly the Interludes).

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3.7.1 The Place of interviews

I began my fieldwork knowing that I preferred to interview people in their place of employment (whether that be in an office environment or in a home office) but without any clear support for why this would be beneficial to me and to the research project. It is only after conducting the first several interviews that I realized how important it was to meet people in an environment where I could not only interview them but also observe (unobtrusive behavior observation) how they acted in the place where they were engaged in some aspect of the work of public art. In this section I will discuss why it is that the place of interviews is so important to fieldwork. Then, I will explore the micro and macro politics of the interviews. For example, in terms of the politics of location, city staff that I interviewed were all located in the Webb Building in downtown Denver. Yet many of them, though involved in the production of public art, did not know that their cohorts were a matter of a few cubicles away.

My question about where to interview people revolved around issues of where would be the “best” place to interview participants, with regard to this research, and the questions I would be asking them. Not only was I concerned with how easy it was for both of us to find the interview location, but also the logistics of getting to and from the site. Additionally, I wanted to choose places that would be conducive to a semi-structured interview; that is, adequate sound and lighting levels, low density, and a fine balance between informal and formal. All of this, I (only) realized after the first several interviews, contributed to the power relations between myself, the researcher, and the interviewee. For example, I met the director of DOCA at her office space, which was a
closed-door office space. Whereas I met the manager of the public art program manager at her cubicle, but we moved to a conference room for more optimal sound levels (away from phones ringing and people working in close proximity) and so that we could concentrate on the conversation between the two of us. These interview environments underscored the power relations that permeate interviews. The director of DOCA asked me to close the door to her office and remained seated behind her desk, which definitively put her in a place of power. What we had was a more formal interview during which I asked questions and she spoke at/to me from behind her desk, while the manager and I had a conversation between peers.

Sarah Elwood and Deborah Martin argue, in “‘Placing’ Interviews: Location and Scales of Power in Qualitative Research,” that interview sites are important sites where we not only receive responses to interview questions but also where we can learn (more) about the research participant; additionally, the interview site is a setting for social, political, and economic interchanges “that operate at and through multiple scales”(Elwood and Martin 2000, 250). With regard to my research, the interview sites thus related to larger sites of power and the production of public art. Therefore, interview sites are, in fact, not isolated conditions for the researcher and the interviewee; rather, they are “material space for the enactment and constitution of power relations.” As such, the spaces and interactions within them have an impact on the quality (depth, nuances, etc.) of the information gathered. It is the qualitative researcher’s responsibility to assess the power relations and interpret the subtle (and/or obvious) exchanges at work.
Another key issue to the place of interviews is the microgeography of interview sites, which provide a wealth of additional information beyond the interview responses (Elwood and Martin 2000, 652). I was interested in the various objects or props they had on display in their offices. For example, when I met with the Executive Director of the Denver Urban Renewal Authority (DURA) I immediately noticed the art work she had displayed on her walls (paintings and collages) and the sculptures (a human size piece) in her office. At the end of the interview she took the time, to me an explicit move to prove that she was interested in arts and culture at a personal level, to tell me about the art work. They were not mass produced art (e.g., posters, etc.), and she had stories for every piece. When I met with the Director of Facilities, for Denver’s Theatres and Arenas Division, I remarked on his collection of public art miniatures, replicas of “The Dancing Aliens” and “The Blue Bear.” He seemed very pleased that I noticed and spent a few minutes talking about why he had them and what he liked about the actual pieces (in fact, he knew the real names not just the ‘pet names’ for these installations, which in most cases people do not).

Another important aspect of meeting people in their places of employment was to see how they interacted with other people. Executive directors often had assistants who were easily at hand, often keeping their boss on schedule. This was one of the reasons I did need to maintain the sixty-minute time limit. The assistant would some times give me a tour of the office or facility, providing me with further information. Several people preferred to meet at a place outside of their office realm. For two of these people, their
work place was in no way associated with public art. In these cases, the individuals were involved in public art-related committees or citizens who were indirectly involved in public art. I met with these individuals before the start of the workday. I met one person in a coffee shop in Park Hill, a hip, urban neighborhood where she lived. She told me a bit about the coffee shop and the neighborhood before we began the interview; it was a means by which we became comfortable with one another but also a way for her to exhibit her community spirit. I met with the chairwoman of the public art committee at a coffee shop in Lower Dowtown (LoDo), near enough to her office that she came to meet me after work. But also, far enough away that she could speak openly about the work she was doing that is apart from the architecture firm for which she works. I also interviewed one of the principals of the firm for which she works; we met at the office. This was definitely a case of an explicit presentation of self, as architect, and indeed an architect who was not fully supportive of public art (Elwood and Martin 2000, 654). My position of being welcomed into an office or meeting someone in “neutral” territory clearly explicated the power relations of the place of the interview. In all of these conditions I was not necessarily seen as the expert; I was either on their turf or in a place where I had no explicit power.

I now explore the “politics of location” with regard to 1) where the interviewee is located within the city’s or an institution’s organization, and, most importantly for city staff (as noted above), 2) where one’s office is located in an individual building or in the city. I realize that office locations are often a product of available space but wish to explore the potential power relations of office location. Therefore, I use the term the “politics of
location” in two intertwined ways, by “investigating one’s location with respect to ensuing knowledge claims;” that is, “the psychosocial and epistemological dimensions of the politics of location” (Lorenz-Meyer 2004, 783-4) as well as the physical locale of the site of knowledge/production in order to better understand the effects and consequences of the location of these actors in the production of public art. In other words, I don’t wish to generalize about the place of interviews but physically locate these spaces so that there is an understanding, both metaphorically and physically, of who is at the center and who is at the periphery in the larger scheme of the production of public art in Denver. When I speak of the micro- and macrogeographies of interviews, I mean to talk about the multi-scalar embodied practices of interviews. Places of work are not only the sites of interviews for my research, but they are the sites of work for the interviewees, which can be places of power, places of vulnerability, places of invisibility, and places of empowerment. I began to better understand this when I met with city staff, the majority housed in the Wellington Webb Building at the edge of the Civic Center. The Public Art Program manager’s office is located along a windowed wall within a warren of cubicles. The director of DOCA had an office with a door and a plaque. Staff in the department of Parks and Recreation were not necessarily aware that the public art program staff were just a few cubicles away from them. The (structural and physical) organization of city departments and programs is not one that fosters communication or collaboration. Attending to the micro- and macro-geographies during the interviews, made evident to me that the public art program, though an important contributor to the image of Denver as an arts and cultural city, was not visible nor was it part of the larger circulations of power.
Importantly, Elwood and Martin define the interview site as “specifically the location where the interview—an exchange of information between the research and research participant—takes place,” which “reflect the relationship of the researcher with the interview participant, the participant with the site, and the site within a broader sociopolitical context that affects both researcher and participant” (Elwood and Martin 2000, 650). No site is neutral neither are the actors.

3.7.2 Methodological Challenges: Positionality: Interviews and power relations

Critical to any scholarship is a researcher’s awareness of her own position and how her position might influence the questions she asks, the way she seeks to address those questions, and the interpretations she gains from the study. Feminist scholars typically are invested in critiquing their subject positions; we “aim to, even if only ideally, …(gain) a full understanding of the researcher, the researched and the research context” (Rose 1997: 305). It is important, then, as a social scientist, to acknowledge the various identities (e.g., sex, race, class, education) that influence the research. Therefore, during the interviews I paid attention to the fact of my identities and positions—as a white, feminist, female who is educated as a landscape architect and planner, who has been involved in public art as a planner, artist and consultant—in the research design and in my interaction with the people I interview. My positionality impacts my interpretations and the questions I ask. For example, I begin this study with assumptions about the importance and breadth of defining public art. Therefore, I decided to ask the interviewees to define public art (in relation to the work they do) and to discuss the
rationale and importance of public art in Denver. Additionally, it is important that I am aware of the “double reflexive gaze,” which “looks both ‘inward’ to the identity of the research, and ‘outward’ to her relations to her research” (Rose 1997: 309). As such, not only is this a process of discovery for myself (England by way of Rose 1997: 309) but it is also a means by which I hope to contribute to scholarship and practice.

Related to what I have stated above, mutuality and reciprocity are key to this study, as knowledge is co-created between the interviewer and the interviewee (Moss 2002). My particular position and experience meant that I interacted with the interviewees in a different way than that of traditional approaches, which make a clear distinction between the academic researcher and the researched. One way that I enacted the principle of mutuality and reciprocity is by offering to share the results of my research with those I interview. I intended for this research to be shared with the city in order to make necessary changes to the public art program and the related departments and program so that the public art program can grow as an integral component of downtown Denver’s planning initiatives.

The interviews offered me the opportunity to meet a wide variety of individuals, which allowed me to examine how interactions (and thus the relationship) between the researcher and the interviewee influence data collection. I found that I approached, positioned myself, and interacted with participants in different ways, which impacted the data (collection) in both positive and negative ways. In order to delve more deeply into this I will discuss positionality at three levels: 1) how I, as the researcher/interviewer,
became directly involved in the social, cultural and political structures of the production of public art; 2) how the interviewees expectations of me and my work might have influenced their answers; and 3) how the recognition of commonalities between myself and the informant might affected their responses.

It was during the first several interviews that I experienced these relations of power in action. I found myself thinking about the power differentials or struggles expressed through the interactions (spoken word, word choice, tone, body language) between the researcher and researched (Wolf 1997). As such, these next sections are an articulation of three different types of interview experiences and the ensuing negotiations. The key point here is that ultimately interviews are about relationships, what someone is willing to share or even divulge depends on how it is that you interact, which is what these three categories of interview situations illustrate.

Two starting points for this discussion: 1) the difference between the identity I created for myself and the identity people created for me, and 2) the ways in which people responded to questions and how they asked questions or challenged me.

Interloper. This first type of interview interaction is what I am calling the Interloper. According the *Free Merriam-Webster Dictionary* an interloper is “one who intrudes in a place or sphere of activity.” Synonyms are: interferer, intruder, meddler (*Free Merriam-Webster Dictionary*). Based on the initial contact email many people thought that I was a young, inexperienced doctoral student. I found out that most people had expected
someone who was a young academic who did not understand professional practice or the actual workings of city departments. I was advised during the tier 2 interview stage to better explain who I was in my contact email. I realized that how people perceived me could be taken to be as an advantage or a disadvantage. As an advantage, if people felt I was a young academic without much professional experience they want to teach me about the field. From this perspective, I learned about things I might not have asked about. And, if I remained humble and careful to maintain a certain sense of naïveté, I was able to draw out a great deal of information from people. Some people, though, saw me as an outsider, expecting I could only approach this work as an academic. From this stance, I was a bit of a bother. I understand this position having been in this same position when I was working as a professional (in city offices and as a landscape architect): you do not have a lot of time to explain things to someone who doesn’t understand the work-a-day world. If I divulged my educational background and work experience several people expected that I might know more than them or at least think that I did. This occasionally proved to be a big disadvantage because people shut down or did not go into detail when responding to questions. I did, though, tell some people about my educational background and professional practice experience because I felt it might help us to “get down to business” and delve a bit deeper in the conversation. For each interview it took some time to establishing a base point for the conversation. It was up to me, though, to develop a relationship with the person whereby they understood that I wanted to hear what they had to say.
Reporter / Journalist. This second type of interview situation can be best described as the reporter / journalist: an interviewer who is an educated and objective individual. It is a different take on insider / outsider, one that is not quite as tense as the academic / interloper experience. Crang, in his 2003 Progress in Human Geography, begs researchers to more fully examine the divide between “being insiders (good but impossible) and outsiders (bad but inevitable)” (Crang 2003, 496). Being perceived (and received) as a reporter/journalist I was able to be both an insider and an outsider, or maybe, neither. People approached me as someone to talk with about public art; that I might raise public awareness, tell an interesting story. These people seemed to working according to how the Free Merriam Webster Dictionary and other online dictionaries define a journalist is “A writer who aims at a mass audience,” and “collects and disseminates information about current events, people, trends, and issues. That is, someone who reports the news.

But there were also those who were skeptical: they saw the political nature of this research, these were the people who wanted to “talk off the record.” They understood the complex politics of “the public” and public art, regarding what it is you can/should or cannot/should not say because it just may end up in print. It is at this point in my fieldwork that I began to recognize my work as a political project, because public art is a part of the politics of the city. People know that it is about money, in particular, and relationships, just like other political processes in the city. It’s just that most of the time people do not think about public art in this way; they typically think about it in aesthetic terms, an enhancement, or even as a gift.
Confidant. Finally, there were the people with whom I shared a similar experience and/or background (education, travel, professional practice, and even personal background). I refer to this situation as the confidant relationship because such relationships suggest a familiarity and, as such, a willingness to share information they might not otherwise share. These people were comfortable with me and felt very much at ease to share information and experiences. With regards to professional experience, once designers knew that I, too, was a designer they typically rose to a higher level of conversation, expecting me to be familiar with terms, sites, and professional practice. The same was true for the artists; once they heard that I was an artist and had completed some of my own installations, they became more open to my probing their process and opinions.

Personal background and travel experience also played a role in the interaction. I come from a working class background, which resonated with quite a few of my interviewees. As well, travel experience—talking about sites of architecture and art—was a means by which we connected. Finally, when I spoke with women they were far more likely than the men to talk about problems with regard to collaboration, communication and power. They seemed to sense that I, too, would be privy to negative experiences or attuned to such issues, and that I would be interested in the conversation. As well, and this is a small subset of all of the interviewees, I was heartened by the way some women talked about the demands of their work life on their personal life, as a mother or as a care-taker. These women showed no signed of discomfort or shame, but spoke of this as the reality of their lives. I do not believe that these women would have spoken of this if the
interviewer was a man. These women talked about “coming up through the ranks” (of
men), working long hours, and being frustrated by lack of communication and
collaboration.

3.8 Summary
In this chapter I have described how I conducted this research project. In particular, I
discussed: 1) my approach to the research design, 2) data collection and information-
gathering procedures employed, 3) the process of selecting participants, 4) how I
analyzed the data, and 5) some of the methodological challenges encountered.

In the next chapter I will tell you about the research site by situating Denver globally,
nationally and regionally. Denver is a city that has important ties at all of these
geographical scales. These ties are important to understanding why public art is
produced in Denver. Furthermore, I provide a brief history of downtown Denver (the
study area for this research) since its early gold rush days through intervening years of
growth and growing pains, struggling with its identity, to its current state of a city trying
to define itself in the twenty-first century.
4.0 RESEARCH SITE AND URBAN CONTEXT

Downtown Denver is a thriving district centered around a mile-long pedestrian promenade lined with outdoor cafes, and is home to three new professional sports stadiums, 300 restaurants, a restored historic Lower Downtown (LoDo) district, a collection of museums, a variety of galleries and shopping destinations, the second largest performing arts center in the nation, and three college campuses. Roughly 110,000 people work in Downtown Denver, and over 9,000 live in the Central Business District, LoDo and the Central Platte Valley. (Downtown Denver Partnership, Inc. May 2010)

4.1 Introduction

The study of public art in the United States reveals the multiple and different dimensions of the relationship between “the public,” public art, and urban revitalization. The connections and exchanges between people and processes at various public, institutional, and private levels required the type of research design I described in chapter three, one that recognized the dynamic and multivalent processes involved in the production of urban public art. I conducted this case study in the city of Denver, focusing on downtown Denver, because it offered a unique opportunity for the study of urban revitalization and public art. Firstly, Denver is one of several mid-size U.S. cities re-imaging themselves as cultural centers (one means by which the city is engaged in this endeavor is through the “Create Denver” initiative33); as well, it is gaining regional and national attention as a creative mega-region34 (Florida 2005; Brookings 2008; Florida

33 The Denver Office of Cultural Affairs (DOCA) developed “Create Denver” as a means by which to support, promote and grow the creative sector in Denver. According the city’s website, the creative sector includes creative enterprises such as galleries, film and music businesses, not-for-profit theater companies, independent artists, as well as performance venues and arts districts. The “Create Denver” plan consists of advocacy and technical assistance, policy recommendations and programmatic initiatives that will help creative enterprises thrive and thus “contribute to Denver’s quality of life and the economy by providing unique experiences to residents and tourists, and creating jobs and expanding the tax base.”

34 The greater Denver metropolitan area is “one of the 40 leading mega-regions that power the global economy. With, nearly 4 million people and $140 billion in economic activity, it ranks as one of the top
2008). Secondly, the public art program in Denver, which is now twenty-two years old, is in the midst of reviewing its program in order to better serve a growing metropolitan region with increasing interest in the arts and culture\textsuperscript{35} (Brookings 2008).

Downtown Denver is part of a larger metropolitan area that is the twenty-first largest in the United States. The Denver-Aurora metropolitan region is the largest urban region in Colorado, located along the Eastern face of the Rocky Mountains. Denver is the state capital. The metropolitan area has a population of 2,552,195, a growth rate of 13% since 2000 (Berube et al 2010) Denver thus provides a unique opportunity to study a mid-size city that is in the midst of developing strategies to grow and sell itself as an urban, arts and cultural mid-size city, of which public art and attentiveness to a changing public are important issues.

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss why I chose Denver as the site for this case study, to further explicate how it is that Denver can be understood as an important city at the regional, national, and global scales, and to situate the public art program within a physical, historical and (city) governmental context. In this chapter I explore Denver as a significant city at multiple scales: the global, national, regional, and local scales. There has been much hyperbole about the importance of Denver amongst Denverites, something many consider a backlash to the inferiority complex it suffers from whenever dozen mega-regions in the United States.” Florida, Richard. \textit{Rocky Mountain News.} Saturday 22 March 2008. “Among the 40 ‘megas.’ Denver grabs lofty rank in global economy.”

\textsuperscript{35} Denver’s Public Art Program was established under Executive Order No. 92 in 1988, by Mayor Federico Peña. In 1991 the language of the Executive Order was revised, approved by City Council and became law. \textit{Denver Municipal Code (DRMC)} 20-85, et. seq.
it enters a bust cycle after a boom. It is from this point of departure that I discuss Denver’s current attempts to re-imagine itself as an arts and cultural hub both regionally and nationally, and for some … globally.

Denver is in the midst of reimagining itself. There is a long history of this desire for Denver to positively position itself. What makes this version different from the past is that there is a global focus. Former Mayor Hickenlooper’s efforts have benefited the city in terms of its national status (e.g., The Democratic National Convention in 2008). His administration pushed to create the state’s new Creative Industries Division (July 2010), merging the former Council on the Arts, Office of Film, Television and Media, and Art in Public Places program with the state Office of Economic Development. Colorado and Denver, in particular, is positioning itself to be the “Creative Capital of the Rocky Mountain West.”

This effort focuses on creating a strong brand identity, one that relies on a “grow your own” creative workforce.

4.2 Situating Denver: Global connections, U.S. mid-size cities, and Rocky Mountain Megas

While much of the focus on cities in the past decade has been on global cities, recent research has begun to focus on small and mid-size cities (Erickcek and McKinney 2004; Florida 2005; Bell and Jayne 2006; Brookings 2008; Zimmerman 2008). Research on mid-size cities has made important contributions to understanding political and economic decision-making about urban revitalization and competitive advantage with regard to

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cultural infrastructure and planning in order to strengthen city identity and improve quality of life. Recent attention to mid-size cities highlights the importance of this tier of city in both national and the global city networks. According to Edward Glaeser, a Harvard economist and urban expert, "The key now is the middle-sized city, 750,000 to 2 million people, that can provide enough amenities, enough of the right sort of labor pool, to attract companies, encourage expansion and create jobs." Why are these rankings important to Denver? Denver has long had an identity crisis, worrying that it will forever (only) be known as a Western cow town full of cowboys and dust. In the last three decades there has been an even greater push by its boosters to position Denver as another one of the United States’ mid-size cities; that is, not a Western city only driven by cows, oil, and sports. Accordingly, Denver now competes with other mid-size cities, greater metropolitan areas such as: Austin, Charlotte, Cincinnati, Kansas City, Richmond, and Salt Lake City. These cities showcase the same amenities more often seen in larger cities: professional sports teams, world-class zoos, symphonies, and opera companies; professional theaters; plus major museums and other attractions (of which public art is playing an increasing role).

4.2.1 Global connections: Denver and the global cities network

Paradoxically, the enduring competitive advantages in a global economy lie increasingly in local things—knowledge, relationships, and motivation that distant rivals cannot match. (Porter 1998, 77)

Denver Mayor Federico Peña, in his 1983 inaugural speech, spoke of making the city of Denver a world-class city. His vision for Denver was one that would carry on the great work of the city’s founders, to grow Denver in prominence locally, regionally, nationally and globally. Peña’s claims for Denver becoming a world-class city might have seemed
like hyperbole in the early 1980s, but with rapid globalization the city has, to a certain degree, found its way to being a middle tier city in the global economy.

There are many different rankings of cities available by which one can begin to understand the complex nature of the urban global world. Most of these rankings focus on the economic variable as paramount to determining world city status and global connections. I will discuss three here: Foreign Policy’s “Global City Index,” The Brookings Institution report “U.S. Cities in the World City Network,” and Globalization and World Cities Study Group and Network’s (GaWC) “Atlas of Hinterworlds.”

Relative to many other indexes, Foreign Policy’s “Global City Index”\(^{37}\) is one of the “thickest” because it takes into account five dimensions of cities\(^{38}\): Business Activity, Human Capital, Information Exchange, Culture Experiences, and Political Engagement. This index ranked sixty international metropolitan areas; Denver does not appear on their listing due to the method of scoring through these accumulated variables. It shows, by including human capital, culture and politics (and showing their significance in growth and stability) the consequences of multiple external forces other than the financial, commercial and marketing sectors.

\(^{37}\) First Index was published in 2008, in collaboration with A.T. Kearney and the Chicago Council on Global Affairs.

\(^{38}\) “Business Activity”: the value of a city’s capital markets, the number of Fortune Global 500 firms headquartered there, and the volume of goods that pass through the city; “Human Capital”: the percent of residents with university degrees, the number of international schools, the size of the immigrant population; “Information Exchange”: the number of international news bureaus, the amount of international news in leading local papers, and the number of broadband subscribers; “Political Engagement”: the degree to which a city influences global policymaking and dialogue, the number of embassies and consulates, major think tanks and international organizations, and political conferences. Accessed on 30 July 2011 from URL: http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2010/08/11/the_global_cities_index_2010
The Brookings Institution report “U.S. Cities in the World City Network,” examines business and financial connectivity at the city level within a world cities network. It looks for patterns of linkages across the globe, focusing on economic mutualities between cities. “This study treats world cities as the global service centers of contemporary globalization” (Brookings 2005, 2). The report states, quite explicitly, that the United States can no longer take its dominance for granted. We need to, according to Brookings, think about global relationships, strategies and consequences in all of our major U. S. cities. But, the report alerts us to an important point with regard to cities: Globalization is about transnational processes, and the primary agents are not cities but the advanced producer firms that locate in cities. The report thus describes a new scale of inter-city relations that are dependent on worldwide service areas (I will discuss this further below, as Brookings relies on GaWC and Peter Taylor’s work on hinterworlds). The findings highlight the fact that New York and Los Angeles are not the only important U. S. nodes in a world city network. Therefore, Brookings organizes U.S. cities according to ten strata. Denver falls at the top of Strata V: it is not a global city (Strata I: New York, Strata II: Chicago and Los Angeles); it is not a major gateway, financial or media center (Strata III: San Francisco, Miami, Atlanta, Washington, D.C.); nor is it a regional capital or specialist city (Strata IV: Boston, Dallas, Houston, Seattle). This is something that the former mayor of Denver, John Hickenlooper quietly challenged, implementing several initiatives to reposition Denver as a regional capital, culturally, politically and economically. Strata V, comprised of Philadelphia, Minneapolis, St. Louis, and Detroit, includes the leading cities of the “less important regions” of the U.S. Nonetheless, as this report highlights, all cities participate in the global economy, and in a globalizing world,
which, as noted by Foreign Policy’s rankings, includes more than just the economic.

Additionally, and equally important, findings from this report tell cities to focus on their central business districts, nurture the creative work force, promote the distinctiveness of place, and cultivate a cosmopolitan perspective.

Peter Taylor’s work, particularly in his 2005 article about leading world cities, underscores relationships, to the point that “leading cities can only be identified and understood in the context of their relations with myriad other cities across the world” (Taylor 2005, 1595). According to Taylor, cities “operate together in groups that form networks of activities;” that is, “Every city exists as a cluster of activities that are interlinked to clusters of activities in other cities” (Taylor 2005, 1594).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sphere of activity (globalisations)</th>
<th>Network formation agents ('interlockers')</th>
<th>Number of cities</th>
<th>Year of collection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Economic</td>
<td>100 global advanced producer services firms, of which: 315</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18 global accountancy firms/groups</td>
<td>315</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15 global advertising agencies</td>
<td>315</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>23 global banking/finance corporations</td>
<td>315</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11 global insurance companies</td>
<td>315</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16 global law partnerships</td>
<td>315</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>17 global management consultancy firms</td>
<td>315</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>446 multinational enterprises from Fortune's</td>
<td>3682</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural</td>
<td>33 global media conglomerates</td>
<td>185</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>44 global architectural-engineering firms, of which: 234</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>21 global architectural partnerships/groups</td>
<td>234</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political</td>
<td>76 UN agencies</td>
<td>405</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>195 national diplomatic embassies/offices</td>
<td>320</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 city government global organisations</td>
<td>2133</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>83 global NGOs (humanitarian/environmental)</td>
<td>149</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 768 615 scientific papers</td>
<td>70</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Global 500</em></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Data collected for a different analysis by Alderson and Beckfield (2004) and adapted for interlocking modelling.

Figure 4.1: Spheres of Activity (Taylor 2005, 1597)

Taylor’s research contributes to the GaWCs work in that he builds on the notion that cities are more than mere economic centers; therefore, evaluating cities in the world city

39 Peter Taylor founded the Globalization and World Cities Study Group and Network (GaWC) in 1998, his published research can be found on GaWC’s website as well as in academic journals.
network must also look at cultural, political, and social globalization processes (See Figure 4.1 above). GaWC organizes world cities according to alpha, beta, and gamma cities, ranking them according to advanced producer services, focusing on business, finance, and commerce. The process of world city network formation (again, not about individual cities but rather about dependencies and interdependencies) is through the “institutions that use cities as networks in the everyday pursuit of their goals” (Taylor 2005, 1595), which allows cities to interlock through daily urban activities.

Additionally, measuring the importance of a city, according to Taylor, is based on both the size of the node (amount of activity that occurs “there”) in a global network and the importance of that node within a larger system of cities (connectivity between cities). This taxonomy is unique in that it Taylor emphasizes that notion of cities as “ground points” within the larger machinations of globalization; that is they are “locales where globalization is produced and reproduced” (Taylor 2005, 1605). Cities thus “project their influence over surrounding regions economically, politically, culturally and socially and today such projections have become global” (Taylor 2005, 1606). In the past, these realms of influence (and dependence) were known as hinterlands—non-urbanized regions (delimited jurisdictionally by, for example, county boundaries) economically linked to the city (center). Often, cities’ hinterlands overlapped. Taylor, though, says that globalization problematizes this ideal of a hinterland; rather, he proposes: “we refer to hinterworlds to indicate the geographical scale and nature of service provision by world cities” (Taylor 2001, 52). Thus, hinterworlds have no (physical) boundaries; they are

instead complex patterns of intensity and coverage of a city’s (external) relations with other cities.

What does this all mean for Denver? More specifically: Is Denver a consequential site in a global world? According to the GaWC, Denver is a gamma level city: a city that links smaller regions or states into the world economy. Its peers (the Gamma+ cities) at a global level are: Montreal, Nairobi, Stuttgart, Vancouver, Cape Town, Minneapolis, and Seattle. These cities do, in fact, have global significance culturally, politically, and economically. Taylor’s work (including more factors other than the economic, See Figure 4.1, above) amplifies this and thus places Denver in a relatively strong position, globally and nationally (U. S.): New York (1), Los Angeles and San Francisco (2), Boston and Chicago (3), Washington, D.C. (4), Atlanta, Denver, and Miami (5). Taylor’s “Atlas of the Hinterworlds,” maps hundreds of cities across the globe, showing how various cities are, indeed, interconnected.41

According to the rankings discussed above, “connectivity” is the key to understanding an urban global world. As Taylor insists, cities do not exist in a vacuum nor do only the top cities matter. In addition, Taylor’s research, as well as Foreign Policy’s ranking, show how important it is to take multiple variables into account when ranking cities globally and nationally. Both Taylor and Foreign Policy bring cultural, social, and political variables into the formula for ranking cities, clearly adjusting the rankings to take into account human and social capital.

41 To view the “Atlas of Hinterworlds” go to the GaWC URL: http://www.lboro.ac.uk/gawc/visual/hwatlas.html
According to Cheryl Hughes’ research these combined variables—cultural, social, political, and economic—are important to a city’s attractiveness. Her work addresses the question: “Does the fact that a local arts agency offers the public performing arts programs, visual arts programming, an arts education program, a public art program, or access to a cultural facility affect the ranking of the city” (Hughes 2010, 40)? She aligns her data collected about local arts agencies in the United States with Richard Florida’s Creative City Rankings. What many mayors of mid-size cities, Denver included, latched onto when they read Florida’s 2002 book *The Rise of the Creative Class*, is that cities that support arts and culture are appealing to members of the creative class (Hughes 2010, 45). Former Mayor Hickenlooper was so enamored with Florida’s work that he initiated the Create Denver program as a means to propel Denver forward in the rankings of desirable U.S. cities. If Hughes’ research had been available at that time, Hickenlooper would have realized that public art is a key part of making a city attractive to the creative class. Hughes found that cities need to cultivate multiple arts and cultural offerings, and public art was an important part of a city’s offerings. Interestingly, her research revealed that cities with a public art program ranked considerably higher on Florida’s index than cities without a program (15.00 compared to 27.00). Furthermore, she found that public art programs are “the second-most popular program for a local arts agencies to have in its cultural portfolio” (Hughes 2010, 47). This dissertation does not attempt to develop any such ranking but this conversation does beg the question of how city rankings might be

further expanded, taking into account public art and quality of life in the ranking of U.S. cities.

4.2.2 Mid-size cities

There is increasing interest in mid-size cities in the U.S., Canada, Europe, and Australia (Baston 1999; Uchitelle 1999; City of Rochester 2002; Brookings 2002; Bunting et al, 2007; Budge and Butt 2009). Mid-size cities grew the fastest in the United States in the last decade; as well, the fastest growing cites were largely in the South and West (this proves to be true in both the 2000 and 2010 Census). These cities are the sites of growth in the service sector as well as in technology and tourism, much of this due to the large college-educated and highly skilled population. Public-private collaborative investment in downtowns of mid-size cities has contributed to these cities’ prosperity, primarily in the realm of sports stadiums, waterfront development and university expansion. In addition, these mid-size cities have international airports that are the hubs for major airlines, thus making them connection and distribution centers. Finally, these cities have the amenities, labor pool, and a lower cost of living than their large city counterparts, which translates, for many economists, into the places where businesses can start up, grow and survive (if not thrive).
Yet there is no agreed upon definition of what the mid-size city is exactly. These various (and competing) definitions are based primarily on population size, but what all of them have in common is the fact that mid-size cities are not the largest cities nationally. In the United States, the rankings of cities have typically been small, medium and large.\textsuperscript{43} However, as we see more regional agglomerations of cities, into metropolitan regions and mega-regions, I believe we need to find a finer grain for talking about cities in the United States. Rather than an overly simplistic three-tier system I suggest a nine-tier system that provides for three subcategories within each: small, medium and large. Such a system

\textsuperscript{43} See for example, The Brookings Institution reports, Newgeography.com, and popular press rankings of cities.
would recognize the cities that fall “between the cracks” of small, medium and large.

Comparing Denver to New York City is like comparing apples and oranges. Some rankings list Denver as a medium city, and others list it as a large city, in the same category as New York! However, more realistically, Denver is part of a class of mid-size (or medium size) cities that play a significant role in the national economy, and have global notice as well.

Recent research on immigration and U. S. cities suggests that it is the mid-size cities that immigrants are flooding into, not the largest cities in this nation: “While big cities have been the traditional gateways for America’s waves of immigration, mid-size cities are becoming the new destinations.” Some of the cities this research cites are, in fact, Denver’s peers: Las Vegas, Dallas-Fort Worth, Minneapolis, El Paso, and Sacramento.44 These peer cities are, for the most part, located in one of the two regions of greatest growth in the last decade, the West.45 There are important implications to this growth in the West, in particular to a voting public, with regard to shifting of Congressional seats and adjustments to the Electoral College. The West, particularly the intermountain West, is gaining greater political strength; as well, it is becoming an arts and cultural counterpoint to the coasts. Cities in the West are historically small and medium-size cities, which much of the country has discounted relative the large cities on the coasts. However, with this new interest in mid-size cities, other cities will begin to see Denver in

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a new light, one that suggests that Denver and its peers are consequential nationally and globally.

An emerging U. S. trend for mid-sized cities is pursuing an image as an urbane, cosmopolitan city. Denver has taken this very seriously. Since the 1970s, Denver has attracted a young, agile, outdoors crowd that enjoys good bars, sports, and high quality entertainment. Yet (since the mid-90s) Denver has struggled to be known as an urbane city, as a city with good food and culture. In order to be taken seriously—as a city and as a cosmopolitan destination in the U. S. (not just the West)—Denver has attempted to reposition itself as a place that has all that people came here for in the 1970s and more. The new Denver Art Museum (designed by architect Daniel Libeskind), completed in 2006, was a critical move to position Denver as a cultural center, where West coast and East Coast could meet to enjoy culture at one mile high.

The image of Denver as the city of the American West, is based on its spectacular views of the mountains and its cow-town/cowboy town history. Many people still imagine that Denver is a “cow-town,” and as such think that it does not have much to offer. But still, scores of people come to Denver because of this history—inspired by the American Western mythology. Denver is at an interesting crossroads, as it does not want to diminish the tourist draw of the “Old West,” but also wants to welcome more urbane visitors, and potential residents, seeking good food, cultural experiences, and a visit to the mountains.
4.2.3 Rocky Mountain Megas

Recent Brookings Institute reports (part of the “Blueprint for American Prosperity” series) discuss rapid changes in the cities in the American West, and explore the ways that these megapolitan areas are changing the national urban landscape. Mountain Megas of the American West are those areas where prosperity is based on three interrelated dimensions: sustainability, productivity and inclusive growth. The Intermountain West (See Figure 4.3, above) is, according to Brookings, experiencing a major transformation, one that distinguishes it from nostalgic notions of The Old West and from a late 20th century New West, to a 21st century New New West. This is the West

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46 According the “Mountain Megas,” a Brookings Report, megapolitan areas are “vast, newly recognized ‘super regions’ that often combine two or more metropolitan areas into a single economic, social, and urban system.”
of exploding urban populations, rapidly expanding economies, an increasingly a
migration destination (from within the U.S. and from abroad). As such, the American
West that is grappling with challenges that will inevitably impact its future: maintaining
and further developing *infrastructure*; cultivating and supporting *innovation* through
public and private ventures; ensuring a diverse population, supporting its *human capital*
such that the West does not devolve into a divided society; and, of course, creating
*quality places* that are sustainable, accessible, and equitable. How each of these “megas”
respond to these challenges will vary according to its individual history and aspirations;
and, it will depend upon on leadership, at the city, metropolitan, and state levels.

Denver is part of one of five urban agglomerations in the Intermountain West: Sun
Corridor, Front Range, Wasatch Front, Greater Las Vegas, and Northern New Mexico.
As one of these high-growth areas, Denver is, “experiencing some of the fastest
population growth and economic and demographic transition anywhere in the country”
(Brookings 2008a). Denver’s growth and increasing economic prosperity poses many
challenges but also suggests a new era for the city, in terms of improving and building
upon existing infrastructure, innovation, human capital, and quality places (Brookings
2008b). All of the major cities in the Intermountain West—from Phoenix-Tucson, to Salt
Lake City, Las Vegas, to Denver and Albuquerque—are peer cities competing for
attention. An emerging trend in these mid-size American cities is the pursuit of an
“image” that appropriately communicates its urbanity: that it is a cosmopolitan city.
Taylor’s work suggests that cities should not think in terms of competition but in terms of
relationships, which I believe particularly applies in the Intermountain West in the 21st
century. The strength in this area is that these cities offer very different climates, economically, socially, culturally, and physiographically. They do, of course, share some traits in common, which gather them as a unique region, The American West.

**4.2.4 Colorado’s Front Range**

The Front Range urban system is linked North to South by I-25; it is comprised of Fort Collins, Greeley, Boulder, Denver, and Colorado Springs. These cities are home to the majority of (Eastern) Colorado’s population, employment, and economic and cultural activity. It is the second largest and “one of the oldest urban spaces in the Intermountain West, having established itself in the 1870s and 1880s as the dominant trans-shipment point between the Midwest and California” (Brookings 2008). In 2007 approximately 3.9 million people lived in this Front Range community; it has continued to grow (See Census 2010 figures). The same challenges as discussed above—infrastructure, innovation, human capital, and quality places—face Colorado’s Front Range cities.

Three critical areas, particularly pertinent to this research, are innovation, human capital, and quality places. Innovation is strong along the Front Range, with Boulder as a nexus of entrepreneurial activity. There are a number of colleges and universities along the I-25 corridor, with four of the state’s major institutes of higher education residing in the region (University of Northern Colorado, Colorado State University, University of Colorado Boulder and Denver, and University of Denver). As well, the I-25 metropolitan corridor is heavily investing in its urban transportation system, to meet the needs of the increasing population. Denver, as the largest city along the Front Range, has been involved in major urban development in the past decade, adding housing to the
downtown, building and improving parks and open spaces, and expanding its cultural offerings. The Denver metropolitan population is 2,176,687.

Figure 4.4: Colorado’s Front Range (Brookings Institution 2008)

4.2.5 City and County of Denver

Today, approximately 610,346 people live in the consolidated jurisdictions of the City and County of Denver, an area of 154.97 square miles. Of which several tens of thousands live within the city limits of Denver. The population in downtown Denver—increasing with more residential units being built downtown—is expected to increase considerably over the next five to ten years.
Denver was founded in 1858, and became the city of Denver in 1860 (as part of the Kansas Territory). In 1861 it became a part of the Colorado Territory, and became the state capital in 1887. The city and county of Denver came into existence in 1902.

The regional, national, and global image of Denver, CO USA is that of a Rocky Mountain City. It is the “Mile High City,” a city people expect to find in the mountains. Therefore, much of what one finds along the 16th Street Mall is about the Rockies (whether that be the sports team or the mountains). The stories that are omitted are those of the Platte River, Cherry Creek and the high plains. None of this is deemed “sexy” or attractive (with regard to tourism or being a corporate headquarters draw). And, there are other stories that have diminished in value over the years particularly the role of the river and the railroads, and of Auraria—the original city. This is, though, changing. REI (an outdoor gear store) chose to locate its Denver store on the Platte River, in order to use it (celebrate it, in fact) as demonstration grounds for water sports. The city is formulating plans to better engage (physically and in people’s minds) the Auraria campus, which is separated from the downtown by Speer Boulevard (which to many is a substantial barrier). Through these efforts the city hopes to celebrate the Auraria Campus as a lively, historic site, and make it an integral part of the Denver urban fabric.

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47 From having visited the Denver region since 1972 and the numerous conversations I have had with people over the years, I have found that people do not know about the Platte River or Cherry Creek. And if they do, they do not understand their significance (founding of the city, floods, day lighting initiatives, etc.). Most people visiting Denver, and even those who have moved here from elsewhere, don’t identify Denver as a high plains city, which is what it is.
4.3 Study area

I chose the city of Denver as the case study for this research because it provides a unique opportunity to study a mid-size city that is in the midst of developing strategies to grow and sell itself as an urban, arts and cultural mid-size city. And I chose to focus on downtown Denver because this is where the majority of the city’s public art collection resides. In 2008, the city’s collection totaled nearly 300 works of art (which include indoor and outdoor original art works). Approximately sixty outdoor pieces are sited in downtown Denver. This is due to the fact that downtown Denver is the focus of political

Figure 4.5: City of Denver, Public Art Program, Downtown Collection (City of Denver Public Art Program N.d.)

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48 This number is according to the 2008 Public Art Policy document, produced by the Denver Office of Cultural Affairs.
(state Capitol, courthouse, etc.) as well as arts and cultural activity (performing arts center, Denver Art Museum (DAM), Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA), among others) in the metropolitan region. That is, this is where the major bond projects and city and county-funded construction projects occur.

Downtown Denver neighborhoods include: Union Station, Five Points, Lower Highlands, Auraria, CBD, Civic Center, Congress, Capitol Hill, North Capitol Hill, City Park West, Speer, Whittier, Country Club, Cherry Creek, Lincoln Park (See Figure 4.6, below). The focus of the downtown district is the Union Station, Auraria, CBD, Civic Center and Capitol Hill. This is where one will find the primary cultural facilities, the 16th Street Mall, The Auraria campus (Metro State College, University of Colorado Denver, and the Community College of Denver), The Capitol and Civic Center Park, the financial district. The downtown population is composed of residents (increasing number over the past five to ten years due to residential development focused in the downtown district) and a large and varied “transient population,” consisting of people who work downtown, students, and tourists. Tens of thousands of people move through downtown Denver via public transit (e.g., light rail, busses, Free Ride on 16th Street).
The city of Denver was founded along Cherry Creek and the Platte River, two of the natural features that mark downtown. I-25, Colfax, Speer Boulevard, Broadway, and, at the Eastern edge of the city, Colorado Boulevard, are the primary thoroughfares. The 16th Street Mall is a major axis bisecting downtown; it has been a significant street, along with 14th, 15th, and 17th streets, throughout the city’s history. Currently it connects the Lower Highlands neighborhood to Civic Center. The “Free Ride” provides free public transit along its 1.2-mile length that focuses on the pedestrian experience. It is a major tourist attraction, offering hotels restaurants, bars, shopping, and other entertainment venues. Coors Field (MLB franchise: Colorado Rockies), Invesco Field at Mile High

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The map is available at the following website:
(NFL franchise: Denver Broncos), and the Pepsi Center (NBA franchise: Denver Nuggets; and NHL franchise: Colorado Avalanche) are also located downtown. Downtown does, indeed, now, presents a wide variety of offerings for people of diverse interests and needs.

Figure 4.7: Downtown Denver (Downtown Denver Partnership n.d.)

50 Map available from the Downtown Denver Partnership’s website: http://www.downtowndenver.com/
4.4 The urban historical context: Downtown Denver, redevelopment, and public art\textsuperscript{51}

The time will come when men will be judged more by their disbursements than by their accumulations. Denver has been kind to most of us by giving to some health, to some wealth, to some happiness, and to some a combination of all. We can pay a part of this debt by making our city more attractive. Robert W. Speer, Address to Denver Chamber of Commerce, May 24, 1909 (Leonard 1990, 140)

The identity of Denver is entwined with the myth of the American West; it is based on resource extraction (mining, oil, natural gas), agricultural production and raising livestock. It has been, since its founding as a city, a site of political and economic transactions.

Today, Downtown Denver is the site of multiple economic sectors from federal to state-levels, high-technology and education, commercial, financial, and distribution services, as well as cultural and tourist sectors.

\textsuperscript{51} I would like to thank the following people for helping me construct a history of Denver via the lens of public art; as well, these individuals helped me to flesh out a more comprehensive history of the public art program, which had not heretofore existed: Mary Chandler (Writer/researcher, Fentress Architects; former Art, architecture and preservation writer for the \textit{Rocky Mountain News}); Noey Congdon (former Commissioner, Denver Commission on Cultural Affairs), Greg Esser (former Public Art Program Manager), Greg Geissler (former Executive Director of the Public Art Program), Kendall Peterson (current Public Art Program Manager), Robert Mangold (artist).
In this section I provide a brief history of Denver making connections between city building and urban development. In section 4.5.1 I provide a history of the public art program. Since one of the aims of this dissertation is to examine the production of public art in an urban environment and to examine how it is that public art is a part of urban planning and redevelopment initiatives, I will interweave this history with landmark planning, development and redevelopment projects that have impacted the city in significant ways. This history is divided into seven eras, from the founding of the city in 1858 to its current, burgeoning status as a “cultural capital.” These eras are based primarily on the attitudes, agendas, and actions of the Mayors of Denver since each

52 This image is available from ArchNewsNow.com: http://www.archnewsnow.com/features/Feature244.htm
mayor, or in some cases pairs/sets of mayors, has had a profound impact on how the city
grew (spatially, economically, and aesthetically). When the city was in the midst of its
boom era, the 16th Street Mall was conceived to take advantage of the ski industry boom.
During the late-80s Denver experienced a bit of an identity crisis (as it did in the late-
90s); during this time Denver was in rebound phase, trying to figure out its (potential)
future(s). These identity crises prompted the city to move forward with some large
initiatives, meant to put Denver “on the map”—and not just in the West.

Again, since the focus of this dissertation is on “the public” and public art, I will suggest
in this section how arts and culture physically manifested particular ideologies, and were
instituted during very specific socio-political eras.

4.4.1 1858-1871: Gold Rush and mineral wealth

Denver began as a gold rush town, feeding on the greed of gold panners, and a layover
town for those continuing westward. Initial settlement concentrated at the intersection of
the Platte River and Cherry Creek. During this period there was little energy exerted to
city-making, instead the focus was on survival. Denver was a rough and tumble town,
filled mostly with bars, brothels, supply stores, and tent encampments until the 1870s.

Denver City was officially formed on 7 November 1861. During this first era, the city survived a fire (in 1863) and the first of many floodings of Cherry Creek.

4.4.2 1871-1900: Growing Denver: Connections to North, South, East, Midwest and West

It was not until there was the threat of Denver being bypassed by the Union Pacific Railroad that Denver recognized the need to build itself as a city. Denver businessmen raised $300,000 to develop a railroad that would connect them to the railroad that was running through Cheyenne, Wyoming. Denver was still a pioneer town, a cow-town and cowboy town. It was, though, a growing town, one that, because of railroad lines that connected it to the North, South, East and West, was becoming a prime service center, distribution center, and center of finance.

Streetcar suburbs began to emerge, and grow, in the late 1800s, as the population grew and well as the wealth of the city. The streetcar suburbs, though, did allow for the
beginning of sprawl. It was at this time, too, that the city statesmen and businessmen
(prompted a great deal by women in the community) began to think about the level of
sophistication that existed (or rather, did not exist) in Denver. This was a time to develop
Denver as a respectable town, one that was not just for miners, cowboys and other
transients. The Denver Artists Club was founded in 1893. This group of artists in the
Denver area anticipated a city of art and culture. Much of this impetus came from their
finding a shortage of cultural activities that many of them had been involved in back East.
This group became the Denver Art Association during the Speer administration, and
through that administration had a meaningful impact on the city. DAC was committed to
providing arts and culture to the public, not just the elite of society. In 1917 this artists
club became a more official organization of the city, the Denver Art Association. They
began Denver’s first official gallery, and as such were the foundation for the Denver Art
Museum, which was officially organized in 1923. The Depression of 1893, though, did
have a tremendous impact on Denver, economically as well as culturally and socially.
4.4.3 1900-1930: The City Beautiful

Figures 4.12 and 4.13: L: Civic Center, Denver, photo. by L.C. McClure,1932; R: Pioneer Monument, Civic Center Park, created by Frederick MacMonnies of France, dedicated on June 24, 1911. Both images are from the Denver Public Library, Western History Department.

The first large-scale public art works appeared in Denver during the early decades of the 20th century. These first pieces celebrated a thriving city, with a population that was eager to prove its urban status. This was the era of the City Beautiful, a consequence of influence of the 1893 Columbian Exposition in Chicago. Mayor Speer’s public works (boulevards, parkways, park system, playgrounds, etc.) were the result of what he learned from the massive public works project in Chicago. He began creating agencies and articulating the roles and responsibilities of staff and the public in making Denver a great city. The City Beautiful movement was not just an aesthetic movement, though Speer did believe this could uplift the civic spirit, it was an ideology that emphasized the scenic values of the city and prompted the first true boosterism in Denver.
Denver the beautiful, blest be her name
Hearts of her subjects with pride are aflame
Crowned with bright glory that never can wane
Denver the Queen of the Mountain and Plain.
—From Denver Municipal Facts, 1910

Speer’s first term in office came at a time of turmoil: years of rapid and unbridled growth from 1870-1890, a depression in 1893, and the push for major reforms in education, labor, and women’s rights at the turn of the century. He heralded a new century for a strong mayoral positioning in Denver; that is, mayors who actually enacted change to what was now a sprawling, high plains, arid city. Mayor Speer’s public works projects served a population that increasingly had more time, and a desire, for leisure activities, which included outdoor recreation (athletics and physical fitness, including hiking and biking), cultural endeavors and entertainment. One of Speer’s major accomplishments was building Denver’s Civic Center Park. The Art Commission helped him to realize this vision of a park-like civic space near the Capitol grounds. It was not just the realization of this park (and the park system he set in motion) but the attendant architecture (e.g., Greek Theatre, Colonnade of Civic Benefactors) and memorials (e.g., Pioneer Monument). Speer’s work, though, did not ignore the more banal elements of the cityscape, such as streets, sidewalks, water and sewer; all of which became critical infrastructure for the future of the city.

Speer used Municipal Facts, a city government weekly magazine, to inform (and, of course, publicize) staff, business people and the public about the programs and public works projects of his administration. To Speer, the City Beautiful movement was not just

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53 Speer’s administration began publishing Municipal Facts in 1909: “Although it cost approximately $20,000 a year to print, the mayor justified it as an important vehicle of communication between the government and the taxpayer” (Dorsett and McCarthy 1986; 147)
“playing politics;” he believed that making a city beautiful inspired and motivated a public to participate in and care for a city.

Ugly things do not please. It is much easier to love a thing of beauty—and this applies to cities as well as to persons and things. Fountains, statues, artistic lights, music, playgrounds, parks, etc., make people love the place in which they love. (Leonard and Noel 1990, 140)

Another of his major contributions was that he propelled city hall into thinking about (and acting on) beauty and culture in Denver (Leonard and Noel 1990; 140). Speer relied on the Denver Art Commission (DAC) to advise him on making possible “a city of grace and charm, an American Paris” (Leonard and Noel 1990; 142). The DAC proposed, reviewed, and pushed dozens of projects, from the burying of telegraph and telephone lines, to ornamental street lights … creating inviting and safe places for the public (Leonard and Noel 1990; 142). His vision was more than just a statue here and there (Leonard and Noel 1990; 148), his City Beautiful was a combination of making government more efficient, providing basic (and essential services), promoting good public health, and planning for the future of a great city (Leonard and Noel 1990; 148).

It is from Speer’s efforts to champion arts and culture that, after his second (and last) term and his death, such projects and improvements continued (for example, the beginnings of the Denver Art Museum in 1922 and the advancement of the Denver Public Library in 1910).
The decades before and after the world wars saw the emergence of Denver as an industrial city, a site of manufacturing and distribution. Post-World War Two, in particular, was a time of great change in the city, as many young men returned from the war to a bustling Western city. The suburbs grew and the downtown began struggle to prove itself useful. The automobile was gaining importance. Denver was no longer a cow town, but was booming again, this time as a defense-related manufacturing and oil town.
4.4.5 1950-1980: The auto-oriented city

Denver was growing dramatically in the 1970s, and with it were environmental concerns. Much of these problems were associated with air pollution due to traffic congestion and sprawling suburbs. The city gained an unflattering image of a smog-filled city that did not appreciate its natural amenities. Unfortunately, views of the mountains were blocked by new skyscrapers and the scenic countryside marred by billboards and poorly planned commercial development.

Yet this was also a crucial time in the development of the arts and cultural scene. By 1970 the art museum was in need of an expansion. It was confined by its very modest location in the city and county building. A new building was constructed, now known as the North Building. The building, a unique landmark in the Denver cityscape (due to its

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54 It was not until the closure of Lowry Air Force base in April of 1994 that the toxic nature of military installations started to gain wide spread attention. The closure of Rocky Flats in 1992 further alerted people to the existence of urban toxic sites in our midst.
twenty four-sided shape and the use of distinctive tiles on its exterior surface) was designed by a well-known Italian architect, Gio Ponti.

4.4.6 1980-2000: De-industrialization

Denver was a city in the midst of change. It was no longer, like so many other mid-size U.S. cities a major manufacturing center. Prior to World War II Denver’s manufacturing focused on the processing and shipping of minerals and ranch goods. During the war, specialized military industries thrived. However, this military-based manufacturing began to deteriorate after World War II. But it was not until the 1980s that the city truly began to recognize how much the city had changed. Abandoned and deteriorating buildings, rail yards, and manufacturing sites became eyesores. The changing nature and functioning of the city was reflected in city planning projects and the population that was
drawn to Denver. The development in the last two decades of the twentieth century focused on the service sector. Denver was becoming a white-collar town.

The 1980s and 1990s were the beginning of a new era during which the city began to think about urban tourism. The 16th Street Mall was shaped by a late 1970s desire to provide a draw to the downtown for all of the skiers, hikers and recreationists who were arriving in Denver (Stapleton at that time) but “heading for the hills,” thereby not investing their tourist dollars in the city (or even county) of Denver. Attracting people downtown, using 16th Street’s proximity to the financial district and Capitol Hill, was a way to draw people downtown, after a major downturn in the 1960s and 1970s. A Percent for (Public) Art Program was introduced as an Executive Order under Mayor Peña, and made Law under Mayor Webb, to enliven the urban environment.

The Mall was completed in 1982, again designed by a well-known international architect (I. M. Pei) at a time when tourism in Colorado was beginning to boom. The new airport was constructed in 1995, and the new convention center completed in 1997. Mayors Peña and Webb both were proud promoters of Denver as a diverse city that offered national league sports and was a bourgeoning arts and cultural tourism center of the American West.
4.4.7 2000-2010: A post-industrial city: The experiential city and the consumption-oriented city

Figure 4.20 and 4.21: L: Bronco’s Country, Larimer Square, 29 September 2006, photo by author; R: Platte River Valley Pedestrian Bridge, 29 September 2006, photo by author.

For Denver, the first two decades of the twenty-first century have heralded a city that is concerned with being a destination city, for both those looking for a place to live/move and for tourists. Mayor John Hickenlooper was a big promoter of Denver as a “creative city.” This urban approach is one of an experiential and consumer-oriented city.

Hickenlooper focused on growing Denver as a post-industrial city, a city with numerous institutes of higher education, robust growth in high-tech and biotech, and a city with a strong entrepreneurial spirit. The current mayor continues to tout the city as an attractive place for new residents to move, locals to explore, and visitors to come enjoy its diverse indoor and outdoor entertainments. The mountains are still a major asset, but one of many reasons to come to Denver.
Mayors Webb and Hickenlooper promoted and built major cultural projects as well as top flight sports venues. Hickenlooper, in particular, has worked hard to develop cross-sectoral strategies to promote Denver as more than a cow town, oil boom and bust town, or sports city/ski town. His administration has focused its efforts on (re)development that coheres the fragmented sections of the city, both close-in neighborhoods and those further a field (through light rail, arts districts, etc.). Hickenlooper has been a strong proponent of the arts, and during his term the city has seen a great deal of progress made in making Denver a city that attracts a broad audience in terms of age, education, and interests.

In the next section I discuss the logistics of the public art program, as one program under the Denver Office of Cultural Affairs.

4.5 Denver Office of Cultural Affairs

DOCA, a public sector arts and cultural entity, serves the city and county of Denver. It is one of many City and County departments, agencies, and offices. Departments are established and can only be abolished by the City Charter; whereas agencies and office are established either by order of the mayor or by city ordinance. The Public Art Program is under the auspices of the Denver Office of Cultural Affairs, and is one of eight programs and initiatives, including One Book, One Denver, and the Create Denver initiative. During the time I was conducting this research, Erin Trapp was the Director of the Denver Office of Cultural Affairs, overseeing ten staff, to accomplish DOCA’s

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55 See Appendix D: City of Denver documents for the 2006 City Organization Chart. This chart is available from the City of Denver’s official site: http://www.denvergov.org/DenverCityGovernmentAnOverview/tabid/424414/Default.aspx
mission “to advance the arts and culture in the City and County of Denver.”

In addition to the programs and initiatives in DOCA, an advisory board helps DOCA staff to achieve the mission and goals of the office. The Denver Commission on Cultural Affairs is comprised of accomplished leaders in the arts, business and education, all of whom are appointed by the Mayor.


The Denver City Council plays an important role in helping DOCA accomplish its mission and goals. The City Council is composed of 11 elected district council members and two at-large members. The City Council has the authority to pass and change laws,

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56 This map can be found at URL: http://www.denvergov.org/Portals/695/documents/Revised_Final_Districts.pdf
resolutions and ordinances, as well as to budget city money. Regarding the study site for this dissertation, Downtown Denver’s City Council districts are: District 8 and District 10.\footnote{For further information about Denver City Council, please go to the following URL: http://www.denvergov.org/Default.aspx?alias=www.denvergov.org/citycouncil} According to the city’s website, District 8 is “bounded by 40th Avenue to the north, Colfax Avenue to the south, and extends from the northeast corner of downtown Denver to the west side of Holly Street.” This area includes vital historical neighborhoods such as, Five Points, City Park, North Capitol Hill and Northeast Park Hill. City Council District 10 is bounded by on the South and West by Cherry Creek, on the North by Colfax, with Colorado Boulevard demarcating its Eastern edge. The neighborhoods encompassed by district 9 include: Capitol Hill, Congress Park, Cherry Creek, Country Club, and the Golden Triangle. It is in these two districts that one will find the Convention Center, Civic Center, Denver Art Museum, Botanic Gardens, and the heart of Denver’s historic park and parkway system.

Each year DOCA compiles a “Report to the Community,” an annual assessment of DOCA’s achievements, with a glimpse into upcoming endeavors. According to the most the most recent report (2009),\footnote{To see the full report go to the following URL: http://www.docareport.org/} and the upcoming 2010 report, Denver has accomplished a great deal, from expansions and renovations at the Denver Botanic Gardens, Denver Museum of Nature & Science and at multiple Denver Public Library branches, to progress on the Clifford Still Museum, scheduled to open in 2011. Local arts and cultural institutions have had big changes in leadership, and despite the economic crisis, attendance has been steady. DOCA launched new programs in 2009 and 2010, including
the first Biennial of the Americas (summer 2010), “a celebration of the art, culture and ideas of North and South America that recognizes how our fates are closely linked” (DOCA 2009).

There has been steady progress in the many programs DOCA support, often in partnership with other city departments, state agencies, and local nonprofits. DOCA provides multiple cultural opportunities, from Doors Open Denver; free concerts at various city venues; One Book, One Denver; Denver Poetry; as well as numerous special events and film events.

Denver sees itself as the economic and cultural hub of the state, and as such has invested great effort at the city level, both in DOCA and now through the Office of Economic Development, cultivating the creative sector. The Create Denver initiative “seeks to strengthen the overall health and vitality of Denver by supporting the growth and development of the creative sector, including creative enterprises such as film, music, art galleries, art districts, fashion and graphic design and individual artists.” Create Denver is still a small program, one program within DOCA, but through its efforts much has been accomplished in terms of policy recommendations, programming, technical assistance and advocacy.

The Public Art Program has expanded in its offerings as well, from fifteen to twenty new installations in the past two years to expanding its public education and outreach through tours, workshops, and lectures.
4.5.1 Denver’s Public Art Program

Denver has the opportunity to make a bold and lasting statement through its new public art program, which will provide returns to the city for years to come…The creation of memorable and inviting public spaces is needed to keep Denver competitive as a city in which to live, visit and enjoy. Mayor Federico Peña, March 1988

Denver’s public art program is unique in that it has a mature collection accumulated over one hundred years, initially due to mining wealth that created the opportunity for art to come to Denver.59 As well, it is due to Mayor Speer’s visionary leadership, his commitment to growing a distinctive downtown and city park system. Mayors McNichols and Peña were the instigators for a contemporary public art program in Denver, Mayor Webb made it law and began the city’s accumulation of works of art by international artists. As well, it was in the early 1990s that The Foundation began, a fund raising group that augments public funds for art. The current strength of Denver’s program is thus the result of this lengthy and varied background, as well as the ability and determination of many people taking advantage of multiple opportunities in the last couple of decades.

Denver’s Public Art Program (PAP) is often referred to as “The Percent for Art Program,”60 or sometimes just “The Program (for Public Art).” Both refer to the

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59 Please See Appendix D (DOCA Documents) for an Inventory of key public art works in the City’s collection.
60 Percent for Art Programs are designations by which a percentage, typically 1%, of the budget for city (and in Denver’s case, also county) construction and development projects will be spent on artwork for public facilities. According to Denver’s Policy, the Public Art Ordinance directs that any Capital Improvement Project (CIP) undertaken by the City with a design and construction budget over $1 million qualifies for the percent for public art program.
administrative and bureaucratic capacities of the program but Denver’s Public Art Program is more than just a percent for art program (which primarily highlights where public monies for public art come from), it also includes public outreach and education, artist workshops, the Urban Arts Fund, etc. It is important to make clear that Denver International Airport’s (DIA) public art program is governed by the same ordinance and overseen by the same Commission but, according to Policy, it is managed separately from the city and county program. The public art administrator at DIA is hired by DIA.

The City of Denver’s Public Art Ordinance states,

…that any Capital Improvement Project (CIP) undertaken by the City with a design and construction budget over $1 million qualifies for the Public Art Program. The law states that one percent of the construction budget be set aside for the inclusion of art in the design and construction of new projects … (Revised DRMC 20-85).

According to the ordinance, works of public art include: sculpture, painting, graphic arts, mosaics, photography, luminal art, digital media (e.g., sound, film, video), crafts (e.g., clay, fiber, textiles), mixed media, earth works, decorative elements, portable art, and time-based artworks. However, the following are not considered public art: directional elements and signage, mass-produced works, reproductions, landscaping that is not designed as an integral part of environmental art, and displays or exhibit cases. This definition categorizes art as public by virtue of its media. Such definitions are typical of city ordinances as they do not question the “publicity” of art but rather look at art in terms of a product to be located on city-owned land and funded by public means. This research is not limited by the city’s definition of public art, rather it intends to interrogate the “publicity” of public art.
The Public Art Program is administered by the Denver Office of Cultural Affairs and overseen by the Denver Commission on Cultural Affairs. The Denver Commission on Cultural Affairs is a citizen group appointed by the Mayor to advise the City on arts and cultural issues.\footnote{This quote is from the DOCA’s former website, which can be found at: http://www.denvergov.org/doca/DenverOfficeofCulturalAffairs/PublicArt/tabid/436800/Default.aspx}

Denver’s Public Art Program is ranked highly amongst its U.S. peer cities. It has gained notoriety in recent years for projects (e.g., *The Dancers, Blue Mustang, and I See What You Mean*) that have rankled the local public and provoked spirited conversations by local and national art critics. These conversations have proven fruitful for the city as they have raised awareness about the program and gotten people discussing the role of public art.

The mission of the Public Art Program is about: “Engaging the public, informing the visitor and adding vitality to Denver’s cultural landscape.” Therefore, the artworks are selected through a public process that includes citizens, local artists, design professionals, and others who have a stake in the public art site. The selection panels are appointed specific to the location of the proposed installation. The process is often a lengthy one as it involves a range of actors, from the DOCA and PAP staff, to the individual project selection panel, the Public Art Committee (PAC), and finally Denver Commission on Cultural Affairs and The Mayor. The Public Art Committee (PAC) is composed of people who have interest in and special knowledge about nitty-gritty/technical rather than big picture of public art (the bog picture of public art is part of the purview of The Commission).
In terms of public art planning, there are two primary documents that direct the efforts of the PAP staff: the Public Art Planning Document and the Public Art Policy Document. These are companion documents, to be considered together when plotting the future of the program. The Planning Document primarily outlines short-term goals for the Public Art Program, which inevitably shift because of changing budgets and staff and thus departmental priorities, as well as other factors. It is a tool the public art staff uses to chart larger programming goals beyond day-to-day operations of the program. In contrast, the Policy Document, published in 2007, is a long-term framework document that the staff relies on relative to the basic structure of their operations. The Planning document is re-considered every two years and relies on input from multiple individuals and groups involved in the public art process.

When I started writing this chapter I had no access to an existing recorded history of the public art program in Denver; it had never been officially documented. Rather, it had just continued to evolve without anyone taking responsibility for documenting the history. Many records were lost during changes in policy, moves to new office spaces, and transitions to new administrations. As well, recording a history of the program has never been a priority (as is the case in most public art programs around the country) since staff’s focus has been on the public art process, installation, and conservation. In order to write this brief history I interviewed people who have been involved in public arts in Denver since the late 1960s. These individuals helped me to identify three key eras in Denver’s public art history. It is from these three eras that I developed the six historical eras (see above) to describe an urban history of downtown Denver. The first era was
under Mayor Speer (1904-1912 and 1916-1918), who created the “Give While you Live Campaign”, and championed public patronage of the arts through his work developing public spaces and the city’s park system. The second, era occurred during Mayor Peña’s administration (1983-1991), during which time he enacted an Executive Order, creating a voluntary city office for public art. Greg Geissler headed The Commission on Cultural Affairs from 1982-1991. The third era was Mayor Webb’s years in office (1991-2003). Webb changed Peña’s Executive Order into Law, establishing the ordinance followed today. Greg Esser was the director of the program during this era, creating policies, formalizing processes, and establishing the program’s vision and mission.

Mayor Robert Speer was committed to making Denver a beautiful and cultured city. He created and supported the (Denver) Art Commission in 1904, to make possible many public works projects during his two terms as Mayor. The Art Commission was in charge of various arts and beautification related activities in the city. For example, according to the minutes of the second meeting of the commission, they approved the change in the seal for the City and County of Denver. They also discussed the erection of a fountain at the intersection of 16th Street in Broadway. As was typical of the commission, members were asked to conduct research on fountains in other cities, to seek out money donations for obtaining and installing the new fountain. Additionally, the meeting included a discussion about artistic street lighting, street signs and public highway advertisements.
There was, to be sure, much that the Art Commission, individuals, and other organizations and city departments did for arts and culture in Denver between 1918 and the early 1980s, when Mayor McNichols began The Mayor’s Commission on the Arts. An example of this is a program that became known as “Art in the City,” a brief yet important chapter in Denver’s history of public art. The beginnings of this program hearken back to Mayor Speer’s ambitions to make Denver an “American Paris;” that is, bringing art into the urban landscape, this time on street corners and traffic medians. The project was initiated and was also successful, at the time, due to a desire to add visual interest in the downtown, improve the attractiveness of traffic thoroughfares, and make what was then referred to as the “Center of the Rocky Mountain Empire” more livable. Denver was, in fact, following a nationwide push to improve urban visual environments.

“Art in the City” was also important historically because it set a precedent for the forthcoming percent for art program (1988) as a collaborative enterprise between public works, the traffic department, artists, business people, and the Denver Art Commission. Potentially an urban legend, but another proposed impetus behind this project, which purportedly was called the “art in the islands” initiative, was to replace the dying Dutch Elms. This seems a plausible and, indeed, an innovative approach to the situation.

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62 Information about “Art in The City” was compiled from an interview with Robert Mangold on DATE at his studio, Art Yard, and from the project brochure, which Mangold generously lent to me (See Appendix).

63 “Each of the triangles has been thoroughly reviewed and approved by the Parks Department for their maintenance and quality, by the Public Works Department for their engineering and other related construction problems, and the Traffic Department for any visual interference,” Robert Mangold, from “Art in The City” brochure.

64 Dutch Elm disease spread through cities (and campuses) across the United States beginning in the late 1960’s. Dutch Elms were planted as urban street trees in great numbers, and such massive monoculture plantings then succumbed to the disease. Many cities and campuses attempted to save or replace the trees, but eventually either left the gaps or replaced with another species (often another Elm species or variety).
According to Robert Mangold, though, one of the major instigators of “Art in The City,” it was a way of inserting contemporary sculpture in the city. The Department of Parks and Recreation was most interested in populating the corners and islands with something (other than trees), because people were running over young trees (such that they weren’t able to establish mature trees along the city’s major traffic routes). Either way, it was a program that did, in fact, get art into the public realm, and at a time (late 1960s/early 1970s) when the automobile was beginning to dominate the urban landscape.

“Art in the City” was a project conceived of by the I-25 Arts Alliance and the Denver Parks & Recreation Foundation (DPRF) and The Park People. Mayor Speer started the Denver Parks & Recreation Foundation because he needed a vehicle for dealing with monies and donations (of art), which City Council was not dealing with appropriately.

In the late 1960s Robert Mangold was invited to be on the DPRF at a time when the city

65 Robert Mangold was a professor of art at two Denver higher educational institutions: University of Denver (1960-1964), and Metro State (1965-1995). His current studio is called Art Yard.

66 I-25 Artists’ Alliance: a consortium of artists living in the I-25 corridor, stretching from Northern Colorado to Pueblo, CO

67 “The Park People was created in 1969 by a small group of park enthusiasts interested in raising private funds to support Denver's extensive parks and recreation system. The Park People was incorporated in 1981 and has, in its nearly 40 year history, infused millions of dollars into Denver's parks through the restoration of existing park infrastructure, such as fountains, historical park buildings, and through new construction, such as playgrounds and recreation facilities. Through our annual "Denver Digs Trees" program, we distribute and plant more than 1,000 public trees each spring. Many of these trees are planted in Denver’s most underserved neighborhoods. Our volunteer "Community Forester" program trains citizens to act as stewards over Denver’s urban forest. The Park People manages Denver's Gates Tennis Center -- one of the country’s premier public tennis facilities. We also raise private funds for public park projects, including building renovation, landscape projects, and historic preservation of park structures.” From URL: http://www.theparkpeople.org/
had a lot of art in the city but did not have a budget for conservation\textsuperscript{68} nor any protocols for accepting, locating, etc. donated works.\textsuperscript{69}

In the early 1960s there was little support for or cultivation of contemporary art in Denver;\textsuperscript{70} the Friends of Contemporary Art grew out of this deficit. Susan Cannon and Robert Mangold approached the Director of the Art Museum, when the Ponti building was being built, to ask about the museum’s collection; they were told that there would be no contemporary art or photography as an art form, and that the museum was not

![Figures 4.23 and 4.24: L: “Untitled,” 1975, Gerald Cross, Northwest corner of Speer Blvd & Colfax; R: “Untitled,” 1975, Robert Mangold.\textsuperscript{71}](image)

\textsuperscript{68} For example, Robert was involved in early conservation efforts in Civic Center’s Greek Theatre, to save the murals (1941 by Allen Tupper True, artist) from pigeon damage.

\textsuperscript{69} For example, fountains and memorials, many of which still exist today, were donated and then placed in various parks out of convenience or political maneuverings.

\textsuperscript{70} In the early to mid-1960s there was only 1 contemporary art gallery in Denver, \textit{The Gallery}, in Cherry Creek. \textit{The Gallery} and colleges/universities were the only places you could see contemporary art and such art by locals. Together with Sue Cannon, a member of The 400 Club (the 400 richest people in Denver), they convinced people that contemporary art was something Denverites liked and appreciated, this grew into the group \textit{Friends of Contemporary Art}.

\textsuperscript{71} Both images are available from the Downtown Denver Public Art guide, available as a PDF from the DOCA website: \url{http://www.denvergov.org/Portals/701/documents/DwntwnGuide_final%20round.pdf}
interested in living artists, and definitely not local artists. This furthered their cause such that by the time the museum opened, Friends of Contemporary Art were able to organize the Burns Park Sculpture Symposium (Denver Contemporary Sculpture Symposium) in 1968, which introduced Denverites to the local contemporary art scene. According to Mangold, “In November 1971, The Park People and the I-25 Artists’ Alliance got together to solve the problem of beautifying but also about the problem of people driving up onto the islands and medians and destroying the young, recently planted or not yet mature trees.” By March of 1972, artists were asked to develop proposals for 17 sites. During the summer of 1972 the Denver Art Commission gave their approval to the proposals. Many of the pieces have been removed or relocated over the years for safety reasons and maintenance issues (damage from weather and traffic), due to changing road alignments and, strangely enough, due to the maturing of vegetation (which has overgrown some of the sculptures). Funding for the program was endorsed by the Mayor and the City Council ($25,000). The project also garnered funds from the National Endowment for the Arts. ($24,000). The Park People raised monies for the organizational costs ($3,000). And, matching private funds rounded out the monies needed to implement the project.
I am indeed proud of Downtown Denver, Inc. the artists’ organization, The Park People, and the Denver Art Commission for their unselfish efforts to transform some of our dismal traffic islands into oases of beauty. I am sure all of our citizens, as well as out visitors, will be pleasantly surprised and aesthetically rewarded if their plans become reality and transformations are accomplished. I urge everyone to help in this worthy endeavor and to all who are so doing—may success be yours!
—W. H. McNichols, Jr. Mayor, 1973

“Art in the City” marked a major shift in the thinking about how public art was a part of the urban public landscape. It was at this time that the last pieces were installed in Civic Center Park, last of the “great men on horses” statuary.

Greg Geissler moved to Denver in 1982, from Tacoma, to become Director of The Mayor’s Commission on the Arts for the last 18 months of Mayor McNichols term (1968-1983). Geissler was Director (for a total of eight years) for both of Mayor Peña’s terms, leaving when Webb entered office. It is during this time that many cities were recognizing the important role of arts animating and positively impacting cities. Denver was the only major city at that time without some sort of citywide local arts agency to foster and promote the arts. Mayor McNichols started the commission to work in an advisory capacity, tapping local advocates for the city and for the arts (e.g., Donald Thiel, publisher of The Denver Post, Jeanne Fuller, local political figure, and Henry Lowenstein, local artist). McNichols’ commission grew out of the (Denver) Art Commission, which had oversight of private donations, recruiting donations, and acquisition and approval and siting of artwork in the city’s public spaces.

Mayor Peña (1983-1991), a young Hispanic and unknown politician (until he ran for Mayor), ran on the motto, “Imagine a Great City.” The arts were a big part of his vision
for Denver. When he entered office he did some house cleaning: the old art commission was dissolved and a new comprehensive Mayor’s Office of Cultural Affairs created. Peña’s city government was much leaner than today. Most of the time Geissler worked with just one administrative assistant. In his second term he began working on a 1% ordinance, at which time he had a public art coordinator who helped him work on the new airport, and make decisions about the new convention center and new libraries. His responsibilities were very broad and translated into multiple programs that exist to this day, for example: grants programs for arts organizations and neighborhood arts, and the Mayor’s Award for Excellence in the Arts. Significantly, Mayor Peña was director of public works yet still pushed his message of how the arts were important to the city. For example, at the beginning of Mayor Peña’s term in office he did a slide show, for his cabinet, of public art from other parts of the country. It was not the conventional projects that Peña showed, but rather more innovative works: art integrated into light rail, airports, conventions centers and recreation centers (e.g. Sacramento, Phoenix, Seattle, Orlando). But there was no support in city council to for an ordinance, so Peña signed an executive order, for projects up to $500,000. This was a limited budget but served the city well for the short time in was in effect.

In addition, the Colorado Scientific & Cultural Facilities District (SCFD),72 a landmark legislation to support cultural institutions, was passed in 1988. This was, for Peña, part of his continued efforts to support the arts and culture at a metropolitan, regional and

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72 “By Colorado law, the organization's primary purpose is to "provide for the enlightenment and entertainment of the public through the production, presentation, exhibition, advancement or preservation of art, music, theater, dance, zoology, botany, natural history or cultural history.” From URL: http://www.scfd.org/?page=about&sub=1
state scale. When the bottom fell out in mid-80s, in the middle of big projects at the new convention center, the Mayor’s Office of Cultural Affairs continued doing projects but in neighborhood settings, integrating arts into public improvements (libraries, swimming pools, infrastructure improvements, etc.). The office involved neighborhoods in the decision-making process and involved whichever department was a part of the project. For example, this was the first time city traffic engineers were involved in such projects, and they were excited to be included! It is through the executive order that Peña ensured that public art would be a part of the original convention center and the Buell Theatre.

It is during this time that the administration began to focus on hiring (and supporting) local artists for city projects (those projects for which the state contributed money, thus making the projects open to Colorado artists). At DIA, art calls were open to local, national and international artists, broadening the range of venues in which to nurture and grow local talent. This was an important strategic move, one that didn’t let Denver remain second-class to places like Seattle and Minneapolis. Surprisingly there wasn’t much controversy because citizens supported spending taxpayer monies (from bonds) to support local artists! The last project Geissler worked on was the downtown public library by Michael Graves, which was completed under the Webb administration.

Greg Esser became manager of a public art program (1991-1995) that was “up and running”: with a new airport under construction, for which there were a number of commissions awarded (and several in fabrication); the Colorado Convention Center for which public art works were being dedicated; and a number of park pieces recently
completed. There was not much time for a smooth transition, as Geissler’s resignation
was accepted within thirty days of Webb’s inauguration, when his staff was not yet
assembled. It was, though, a time of a strong mayoral form of government, which served
Webb’s ambitions well. Therefore, Peña’s work laid the framework for the art program to
move forward; he enabled and empowered the next decade’s worth of growth. When
Mayor Webb entered office in 1991, he enacted Peña’s Order into an Ordinance that
directs that 1% of the City of Denver capital improvement projects over $1 million to be
set aside for public art.

The first official inventory (locating pieces, tracking down art works, artists, and
information, and assessing conditions/structural integrity of works) was completed
through a strong partnership with the University of Colorado Denver (Lorre Hoffman,
sculpture department), and the airport. Jennifer Murphy was responsible for the initial
public art pieces at DIA, bridging the shift from Stapleton to DIA, as well as the Peña and
Webb administrations. In addition, Wilma Webb (Mayor Webb’s wife) was instrumental
in creating the city’s first master plan for public art, completed in 1995, which focused on
formalizing the public art process. When Esser arrived there still wasn’t a strong
connection to the local arts community; he attempted to bridge this gap, building a
stronger sense of identity and commitment to local artists. John Grant became the Public
Art Director in 1995, at which time the city and the program were going through an
aggressive growth phase. Grant focused on international artists.

During the Webb administration it was thought that the 1% of construction project
budgets was too small an amount to obtain significant, or even high-quality, art works. The Commission put forth a “bundling scheme” that allowed the combining of monies from projects in order to generate enough funds for more substantial pieces and better allowances to artists. As the program started to grow there were minor crises with works (e.g., improperly functioning, maintenance issues) that prompted the development of a deaccessioning policy. Because of the many projects that were begun during Peña’s administration, and the development of new public projects, Webb’s years in office proved to be very productive years for the public art program. There were library, school and fire station projects, the new Denver Art Museum, the new Convention Center (with 15 public art sites), and smaller projects like wastewater and traffic. There were, of course, growing pains during the Webb years, including concerns about whether the selection process was democratic enough. Wilma Webb questioned the dearth of black artists involved in public art. Though many people protested her activist inclinations, she did make people aware of issues of diversity in Denver’s arts and culture scene. Key public art projects that were begun in the late 90s and realized in the early 2000s, during John Hickenlooper’s tenure as Mayor (2003-2010) were installations at the Performing Arts Complex (e.g., Borofsky’s *The Dancers* (2003) and Botero’s *Man* and *Woman* (2), Donald Lipski’s *The Yearling* (a donation, 2003), Lawrence Argent’s *I See What You Mean* (2005)) and multiple, less visible projects and programs such as programs to consolidate and generate further funds for public art, workshops for artists interested in getting involved in public art, and the Mayor’s Excellence Awards.

John Grant resigned as manager of the public art program in January 2006, having
brought a great number of international artists and large-scale works to Denver. As well, Grant was willing to court controversy. He managed and vehemently supported two challenging additions to Denver’s collection: the *Blue Mustang* piece by Luis Jiménez at DIA (2008) and *National Velvet*, by local artist John McEnroe (2008). Both of the pieces tested Denver’s public, and aroused conversation that previous pieces had not inspired. Importantly, the Jiménez and McEnroe pieces were installed, and celebrated, under Kendall Peterson’s watch. Peterson has been a strong advocate for public art and public artists. She has done a great deal of outreach and education for public artists, keeping them informed of opportunities and explaining the submission and selection process. Her work has been organizationally and logistically focused, which has served the program well during a time when many projects have come to fruition.

Peterson became manager of the program in 2006, at which time she was tasked with developing a new master plan (the previous one was completed in 1995). However, she didn’t believe that it would help move the program forward, in terms of policies, identifying and connecting with tiers of neighborhoods, and implementation of current projects. The program is set up by ordinance as a percent for art program; therefore, a master plan wouldn’t help also because the budget is variable year-to-year. Instead, she created a policy document, a conceptual document that clarifies policies and tracks the process of the program. Which became the template for what she calls a “hopes and dreams” planning document, a more nimble document that is updated every two years. This document focuses on external, dynamic forces (the economy, the administration, and bonds initiatives); as well as, outlining successes and failures, directions of the program
(future projects, staff, outreach, etc.), and an assessment of the accumulating collection. It is not, though just an internal document, she relies on The Commission and the Public Art Committee to contribute and eventually “approve “ the document. The document is, finally, published for “the public” in order to help clarify and elucidate the program’s mission statement.

The big debate is, always, according to Peterson: what is public art going to be? The public art program has grappled with these questions recently because of an influx of challenging projects, from the new works at the newly constructed Denver Justice Center (which generated questions and concerns about security and appropriateness of art in detention centers and court houses), to Janet Echelman’s 1.26, a high-budget temporary piece associated with last summer’s (2010) Biennial of The Americas, and the current interest in and debate about digital, performance, and temporal works.

There has been a great deal of progress, yet a lot of the same questions still come to the fore about artistic quality and merit, managing the volume of projects, how to engage informed panelists and broaden that base, which are universal questions when working with public dollars. The future of the program appears to be achieving a balance of local, regional, and international artists who work in a variety of mediums and approaches.

4.6 Summary

In this chapter I have explained why I have chosen Denver as the site for this case study, and suggested why it is that Denver is a good choice for a case study that other mid-size
cities might learn from. In order to understand the production of public art in Denver today it was essential that I understood the history of public in Denver, as well as the potential motivations behind creating and maintaining a public art program. Chapter two (the literature review) combined with this chapter provide that information. In order for a city to benefit from this research it would first have to understand its history and the impetus behind developing their program. Lessons can be learned from Denver, particularly amongst cities that share the same growing pains and post-industrialization pains as Denver.

Denver’s Public Art Program is in a transitional time. It has been moved to Theatres and Arenas during the late spring of 2011 because of a city budget crisis, along with the other programs that had been under DOCA. This is a substantial move, and differentiates it from its peer cities, which all have cultural affairs or cultural services departments (I will speak to this further in chapter seven). But, the public art program staff continues to pursue its mission. The 1988 ordinance that helped to establish the program still stands. It is a matter of the context within which the program works. What will happen to the arts and cultural reputation of Denver is yet to be seen. Does not having a Cultural Affairs office put the city in a disadvantageous position? This question is not in the scope of this research, but is an important question that will need to be addressed at some point in the near future. What I address in the findings chapters (chapters five, six, and seven) are the following: In chapter five I provide a portrait of the people involved in the production of public art; this chapter serves as a precursor to chapters six and seven.

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73 The city claimed that by dismantling DOCA and moving the public art program and other DOCA programs to Theatres and Arenas there would be a 1.2 million dollar savings for the city.
because it reminds us who is involved in producing public art in Denver. Chapter six attends to the question: Who is “the public” according to these individuals involved in producing public art in Denver? While chapter seven, the final findings chapter seeks to better understand how public art is being instrumentalized to improve Denver’s quality of life, reputation and ranking.
5.0 INTRODUCTION TO THE FINDINGS CHAPTERS

5.1 Introduction

This is a short chapter in which I provide a portrait of the people who participated in the research. Inserting this chapter here is important because this information goes beyond what belongs in a methods chapter and it provides key information for the reader to understand what I discuss in the upcoming findings chapters (chapters six and seven).

Originally, for the purposes of interview methodology, I organized the interviews into three categories of interviewees—city staff and officials, civic stakeholders, and creative professionals74—but these categorizations don’t fully represent who these people are. So, in this section I present a few key things you need to know about the interviewees in order to begin to understand the context in which public art is produced in Denver.

5.2 A portrait of the research informants: Three things you need to know about the interviewees

A preliminary portrait of the majority of people I interviewed suggests an educated, white-collar, urban, white population (See Table 5.1, below). As a broad generalization, this aligns with what I have seen (with respect to those involved in the production of public art) in other mid-size cities.

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74 Please see Appendix B for a full listing of individuals interviewed (research participants).
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<th>Civic Stakeholders</th>
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Table 5.1: Informant Demographics (n = 63)

Digging deeper into the demographic data, it is clear that people involved in the production of public art do, indeed, have (and need) particular sets of skills. As I learned from the list of interviewees’ professional titles and scope of responsibilities (and was
made clear to me while I was speaking with these people), this population is, by majority, white-collar workers, with at least a bachelor’s degree and upper-level professional skills. Four people I interviewed did not have a college degree. All individuals expressed the need for education in their line of work, though for several this did not involve obtaining a college degree but instead entailed apprenticeships or taking college courses. The areas of (educational) study show that people fell into three broad areas: arts and humanities, law and business, and social sciences. The majority of people had a background in fine arts, design, and planning, which was apparent in the skills, language, and references they employed in their work.

Beyond this broad portrait, there are three things I learned about these individuals (from the demographic questions at the beginning of the interview) that help to situate these people in the social structures that I believe affects their approaches to “the public”: 1) titles and responsibilities, 2) time on the job, and 3) how one’s job relates to public art.

5.2.1 What’s in a title?

I asked people for their professional titles—which most often I already had from whomever referred me to the person, their business card, or from a website—because I

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75 List of professional titles: administrator, art dealer, artist, assistant director, board member, business owner, chief development officer, co-chair, commander, committee member, community builder, consultant, councilwoman, department chair, deputy director, director, division chief, executive director, manager, managing member, owner, president, principal, project manager, public artist, sculptor, specialist, vice president

76 Areas of Study: art history, architecture, political science, urban planning, sociology, civil engineering, environmental planning, landscape architecture, history, criminal justice, psychology, business administration, fine arts, interior design, accounting, philosophy, graphic design, law, physical therapy, communications, international studies, religion, studio arts
wanted to hear how they professionally referred to themselves. City staff and officials
did not problematize
the ways in which they referred to themselves, but artists and developers seemed more
wary, concerned with clarifying the way they depicted themselves “to the world.” Many
of these individuals seemed concerned with how they were perceived, particularly in
terms of what people thought that they were “doing.” I found that it was the scope of
responsibilities that more accurately expressed how people were, indeed, involved in
decision-making and action-oriented positions. It is not just a fact of their job title or
description but, in fact, what it is that these people “do” on a daily and weekly basis.

When I began interviewing creative professionals, it was the artists who talked about the
complexity of the title “artist.” So, after I completed the first couple of interviews with
artists, I began asking them: “What do you call yourself when you are out there in the
world?” I had not anticipated the need for this question, but it did help start the
conversation about what public art is and why people do (or do not) choose to engage in
it (which I will discuss in the next chapter).

Artists do more than make art. According to the majority of artists I spoke with, they do
more than (just) make art. This became clear not only from the discussion about
professional titles, but also (much more so than for the other categories of people I

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77 Scope of Responsibilities: manage, develop, stabilize, advocate, catalyze, include, implement, oversee,
regulate, permit, review, work with, inform, contract, design, install, construct, plan and put in place,
operate and maintain, collaborate, coordinate, supervise, administration, consult, help, raise awareness,
partner, educate, support, create, promote, produce, motivate, build, interpret, fabricate, engage, curate,
teach, provide guidance, direct, make
interviewed) from asking them about the scope of their responsibilities/work. For working artists, an important part of the scope of their work often includes: advocating for the arts, fabricating work, installing work, and educating people. Four of the people I interviewed stated that being an educator (having a post at a college or university, as a tenured or tenure-track faculty or as an adjunct or instructor) was an important part of who they are. As an educator they were responsible for educating, training, and supporting (sometimes even mentoring) the next generation of artists. Artist-educators felt a certain responsibility to teach their students about the multi-faceted nature of the life of an artist. The women artists spoke of the fine balance between work and family (and for one artist, single-parenthood). An often overlooked part of being an artist is the business of becoming a financially secure artist. Many spoke of being advocates for the arts and for other artists. As advocates they had to be articulate about their work (the medium, the message, the venues they chose) and the work of other artists, and how the arts benefited society at many levels. A few of them (three) also help other artists create their work; as such, they work in the capacity of fabricators and installers. One artist even helps run a gallery that showcases the work of other artists. His gallery openings are informal gatherings for artists and supporters of the artists/arts. These Friday evening events have become de rigueur for a particular spectrum of Denver artists who want to come to talk about their work and the challenges of being an artist in Denver, and to talk about upcoming events. This is partly a political group (the politics of being an artist in Denver) and partly a support group (Denver has never been all that supportive of contemporary and/or provocative artists).
Don’t call me a public artist. Some of the artists said that what one calls oneself is somewhat about “playing the game.” Titles may work for city staff and other professionals who have more clearly articulated professional titles, but for artists it depends on the audience. For many it is a “tough call,” because if one says s/he is a painter, people only expect paintings. Or, as one artist said, if she calls herself a sculptor, “Unfortunately for many people this implies statuary.” And yet for others the term “artist” is the best (and most succinct) way to explain the breadth of their work, suggesting that they “do a lot of different things” (in various mediums, in terms of advocacy, etc.). But, qualifying the term can be useful, given (again) the audience. For one artist, he felt that saying he was an artist was just the start of the conversation, because then he would talk about the medium (e.g. painting), and filter down to more of the specifics of his work (e.g. scale of work, subjects of study, clients, etc.). Additionally, if an artist is competing for a job and wants to be considered for her painting abilities, then she will call herself a painter. But, in another situation, if it is appropriate to the conversation, she will call herself a mixed-media artist.

So, for artists it is not just a matter of a professional title but which term they choose to use in particular conditions: on applications (for grants, for RFQs and RFPs), in professional settings (e.g., at gallery openings, in educational settings, when working with a city or in an institutional setting), and in social situations. To further complicate matters I then asked these people: Do you ever call yourself a public artist? Not one of the artists I spoke with referred to him/herself professionally as a public artist. On occasion, most of these artists said, they would talk about public art as one of the things
they “do.” Several of the artists were adamant about the limiting nature of the term “public artist.” As one person told me: “…to be a public artist is a very narrow function (in terms of functioning as a specific type of artist or creating a certain kind of artwork). The fact is there is little opportunity to be funded or to make a living (solely) as a public artist.”

Personal Politics and Professional Profile. I found that developers, too, saw a complexity in the professional title they used in conversation. “A developer” is a rather broad title that does not, according to majority of individuals I interviewed, fully portray what it is they do and why they do it. The business cards for developers list their title in terms of their role in the firm (for example: managing partner, executive director, etc.). A further nuance, which several men found important to explicate in the course of our conversation was: what it is, from a more philosophical perspective, they actually do. One person seemed a bit perturbed when I suggested he was a developer (he told me that the term was rather crass and over-simplified). He said that he calls himself a “Community Builder”, not a developer, because of the negative connotations associated with the title “Developer.” Such distinctions were clearly important to how these men saw themselves as contributing to the city of Denver. It is from the question about scope of responsibilities that I gained a greater sense of their contributions.

How do titles and responsibilities (the roles people play) affect (even condition) how they approach the public? Based on this research, it appears that titles and responsibilities do
have an important influence on how individuals define and approach “the public.” I will discuss this further in section 5.3, the summary section of this chapter.

5.2.2 New blood versus years of experience?

Noteworthy in the pool of interviewees is the number of years someone had been in their position. By and large, the city officials and staff I interviewed had been in their job for “1- 5 years.” Many of these peoples’ positions were the result of hirings or appointments during the previous (Hickenlooper) administration; as such, they were an important part of the former Mayor infusing fresh views and ideas into city departments. There were equal numbers of people who had been in their jobs for “6-10 years” and “16-20 years,” and two people who had been at their job for twenty plus years. Civic Stakeholders, too, had mostly been in their positions for “1-5 years.” This makes sense because many of these individuals were in volunteer positions in which people typically serve two to three (and occasionally five) year terms. Or, in the case of a few individuals, they were recently appointed to executive or high-level management positions.

Creative Professionals were unique amongst these three categories of interviewees. Fifteen of the individuals in this group had been artists, landscape architects or architects for “20 plus years.” This is not surprising given that creative professionals who have made a name for themselves have been hard-at-work for a number of years before they became well-known and respected in the community. These people were sought after because of their “track record;” in other words, for their invaluable work experience. One of the artists I interviewed was a young artist who is an emerging player in the Denver, and national, art scene. Denver has never been a large national arts player, nor
has the local community necessarily supported emerging contemporary artists. This is, though, changing. For example, the public art program has been developing more workshops for and directing projects at emerging artists. Three people said they had been working artists for “11-15 years;” these individuals are considered solid local artists who are committed to this place and also connected to what is happening elsewhere.

It appears that having a mix of young or new blood and people with years of experience is a healthy thing for Denver. Denver has a reputation of being youthful, but clearly it is important to have mentors who shepherd emerging talent through the changes in their professional lives. As well, infusion of fresh or new ideas is not just about youth, it is also about people moving between jobs, switching careers, and taking on new (or different) responsibilities. The “changing of the guard” on selection panels and advisory committees is a good example of this.

5.2.3 What does it mean for one’s job to be related to public art?

“My work does not relate in a direct way, but …” — Civic Stakeholder
“Not as closely as it could be.” — City Staff
“On several levels: as a selection panel member, as an artist creating public work, and as an advocate for public art.” — Creative Professional

From the very beginning of this research I thought there might be various ways someone could participate in the production of public art but I did not know the potential range of possibilities in which someone might participate. In order to ascertain how people were involved in public art, I asked people: “How does your job relate to public art (in Denver)?” I asked this question as part of the demographics section (at the beginning of the interview) in order to begin the conversation about how this person might be involved
in producing public art in Denver. The above three quotes represent the majority of responses I received from the three groups of people I interviewed.

*Denials and unappraised contributions.* Many people, initially, did not consider their job as one that related to public art in Denver. However, when I asked the question again, but in slightly different phrasing (in the last section of questions): “What is your role in either the creation of or planning for public art in downtown Denver?,” I found that people were able to further articulate their role (some even noted the nuances of their role(s)), or they talked about the role they might potentially play. This suggests an interesting externality of conducting this research: prompting people to think further (even more profoundly) about their role in the production of public art.

*Ways of contributing to, or participating in, the production of public art.* Interviewees responded to this question in a variety of ways, ranging from their job being directly (in an administrative capacity) related to public art, to not directly, if at all. I found nine categories for which people articulated their role (See Table 5.2, below).

DOCA staff stated that their work is directly related because they were: 1) the director of the department within which public art is housed, 2) the administrator of the public art program for the City of Denver, or 3) implementing the program and interacting with citizens on a daily basis. A few city staff said that their work was related significantly because of their relationship with the public art program. For example, some staff in Public Works and in Parks & Recreation felt that they were an important interface in
helping make public art happen on the city properties they were in charge of. One person mentioned how their buildings and open space hosted or were the stages for public art. As such, this person felt that it was his responsibility to be aware of public art projects occurring in his domain. One particularly interesting response came from a Public Works staff member who stated that she held a neutral position about public art, but that her job related to public art when it was in the public right-of-way. I found that for the majority of city staff their work did not relate to public art on a regular (if even frequent) basis, but as the Public Works staff member stated, it became a part of her job (only) because public art was a component of a larger project. Staff responses suggested that they felt imposed on, on occasion, but for the most part they were open to working with public art staff (I will discuss this more in Chapter 7, in terms the production of public art).

In terms of Civic Stakeholders, the responses ranged from “Not directly if at all,” to “Different at different times,” and “At several levels.” For those civic stakeholders on boards, commissions, and panels associated with DOCA or the public art program, they were clear that their work was related but on a voluntary basis (as members of a board or commission or selection panel). One of the gallery owners said that his work related to public art because he advocated for the arts and supported artists who were involved or might be involved in public art. One developer said that he “fell into this work,” because of a hotel project in downtown Denver. This seemed to be the most common way that people found their work related to public art: they were called into service because public art was a part of a larger project.
Creative Professionals (which includes landscape architects, architects, gallery owners, and artists) spoke about how they were creators and supporters of, and advocated for, public art. But at first, most people (in all of the interview categories) did not see how their work related to public art in Denver. It took a bit of prompting to get most people thinking about how what they did was, in fact, related (in some way) to the public art program in Denver. More specifically, the artists’ responses were not only that their work was related in terms of creating art but also in advocating for public art and supporting local artists. Many city staff and stakeholders mentioned that they supported the arts. But, though they said they were supporters they did not see this as an obvious way of contributing to public art in Denver.
### Table 5.2: Role in the Production of Public Art

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ROLE IN PRODUCTION OF PUBLIC ART</th>
<th>City Officials &amp; Staff</th>
<th>Civic Stakeholders</th>
<th>Creative Professionals</th>
<th>Total Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Directly: directing, administrating, implementing</td>
<td>4 (14%)</td>
<td>1 (1.5%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5 (3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significantly: departmental relationship with the public art program</td>
<td>1 (3.5%)</td>
<td>1 (1.5%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2 (1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Different at different times or at various levels</td>
<td>7 (24%)</td>
<td>11 (16%)</td>
<td>13 (19%)</td>
<td>31 (19%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Related but on a voluntary basis</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8 (12%)</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>8 (5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does not relate to public art on a regular (if even frequent) basis</td>
<td>2 (7%)</td>
<td>5 (7%)</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>7 (4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creating art</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3 (4%)</td>
<td>18 (26%)</td>
<td>21 (13%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocating for public art</td>
<td>5 (17.5%)</td>
<td>18 (27%)</td>
<td>19 (27.5%)</td>
<td>42 (25%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting the arts and local artists</td>
<td>7 (24%)</td>
<td>18 (27%)</td>
<td>19 (27.5%)</td>
<td>44 (27%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not directly if at all</td>
<td>3 (10%)</td>
<td>3 (4%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6 (3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of responses by interviewee category</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>166</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.3 Summary

In summary, this material suggests some of the complexities of the people who are directly or indirectly involved with the production of public art. First, people involved in the production of public art are a varied lot, who are often multi-disciplinary. And, these people interact with people with varied backgrounds (education and experience), skills

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78 Total number of interviewees, n = 63; numbers according to interviewee category: City Officials and Staff, n = 18; Civic Stakeholders, n = 29; Creative Professionals, n = 16. This table reflects the answers people gave me, which included multiple roles.
and interests. Second, what people call themselves in the professional world does seem of consequence, and does impact how they think about public art and operate within the system of production. Third, there is a wide variety of ways people contribute to and participate in the production of public art. As well, the perceptions of their contribution and participation is not always well-considered (that is, clearly articulated either verbally or in terms of self-recognition). That is, people need to be prompted to think about how it is that there work is a part of the production of public art. Finally, a question, to which I will direct my attention in the upcoming findings chapters: How is it that someone’s position or role influences how s/he approaches (both figuratively and literally) “the public” and public art?
6.0 DEFINING “THE PUBLIC”: FRAMING THE CONVERSATION

“Who do I believe I am serving? If not the public, then who is it I am serving (in the name of public art)?” — Artist, interview

6.1 Introduction

Defining the public has gained greater interest recently for urban scholars and practitioners. One reason for this is the increasing privatization of public space. Concomitant to this is an increasing interest to more thoroughly articulate the distinction between public and private today, and thus make this language more meaningful to an urban discourse. This kind of inquiry has increasingly been taken up by urban geographers who no longer wish to work with abstract, disembodied concepts of the public (Staeheli and Mitchell 2007, 792). Significantly, geographers don’t just ask the what (is public) and the who (is public), but also the where and how of public. There has been little debate in the public art field on this matter. In this chapter I identify the ways (the) public is conceptualized and employed by people involved in the production of public art in Denver. I found that there were many different definitions, with some overlaps and multiple confusions about the who, what, where, and how of the public. Therefore, in this chapter I discuss the categories of definitions of “the public” used by people involved in the production of public art in Denver. As well, it appears that people did not recognize how they might better conceptualize (the) public as a part of their work. (This, too, I discuss in this chapter.) Rather, as is typical in both the literature and in practice; “the public” is an enigma. But, this is not just an academic debate, it is consequential with regard to how people establish, implement and sustain a local government public art program.
In the next section of this chapter, I explore how various people in this sample defined the public, and thus frame the conversation about, and the practice of, producing public art. I end the chapter by talking about how “the public” (as well as other, related words and phrases) is used (employed and deployed) by individuals, in order to produce public art.

6.2 Who is “the public”?

Several senses of the noun public tend to be intermixed in usage. People do not always distinguish even between the public and a public, although in other contexts the difference can matter a great deal. The public is a kind of social totality. Its most common sense is that of the people in general. A public can also be a second thing: a concrete audience, a crowd witnessing itself in visible space, as with a theatrical public. Such a public also has a sense of totality, bounded by an event or by the shared physical space. (Warner 2002a, 413)

Geographers vary a great deal in how they define public and public space (Staeheli and Mitchell 2007). It appears that those involved in the production of public art also differ widely in their definitions of these terms. And, more importantly, they seem to struggle with these terms. At a very basic level, it appears that most of them have never been asked to articulate a response to: Who is this public we purportedly serve (under the auspices of public art)? As well, not only is it a matter of having difficulty articulating definitions but it is a matter of conceptualizing the public in a way that helps them do their work. The purpose, then, of this chapter, is to begin to understand these different conceptualizations and further the conversation about the public in public art. I believe that the conversations I had with the people I interviewed got them thinking more carefully about how they might, from their observations and experience, develop working
definitions. This might just be wishful thinking, but nonetheless, I believe it is imperative that people working in this arena understand the implications of this vocabulary in order that they might employ it in more skillful and productive ways.

6.2.1 A wide variety of terms used, but to what purposes?

While talking with the informants, they used various terms either to refer to the public or in lieu of “the public.” Some terms were obviously more preferred or used more often, but it did not appear that people were ranking or prioritizing these terms. Instead they were using some terms to be more specific (e.g., teens, African Americans) or to be more inclusive (e.g. people, everybody). In some cases they used terms as shorthand for a term they felt was too generic (e.g., community) or too abstract to be meaningful (e.g., the public). The figure below (Figure 6.1) is a visual representation of the variety of terms used in the discussions with research participants about “the public.” This visualization is based on a word count of terms people used when defining and discussion “the public.” The largest type font represents those words used most often, while the words in smallest type were mentioned but not used often by the interviewees.

Figure 6.1: “The Public”: word cloud (created by joni m palmer using wordle software)

79 Terms were weighted in the wordle software in order to create a visual hierarchy in the word cloud.
People involved in the production of public art use a wide variety of terms to refer to or in lieu of “the public.” These terms do not instigate definitions of “the public” (See Figure 6.1, above) but establish vocabulary that is persistently used. In order to meaningfully manage the array of terms used by the individuals I interviewed (and as expressed in Figure 6.1), I have grouped them into the following categories: general public, civic public, public as audience, and public as sub-populations. These categories align in different ways with the definitional categories discussed later in this chapter (See 6.2.2, below), though they do not necessarily align in mutually exclusive ways.

*The general public.* The general public is very broad and inclusive. As one city staff person noted, this is one of the challenges in a niche marketing age. The general public, though, is still part of the city’s concerns. Terminology that populates this category are: people, everybody, anyone, the masses, passersby.

*The civic public.* The civic public is an active public, participating in and contributing to the city in which they live. This category includes: citizen, taxpayer, constituent, voting public. The public art program manager highlighted the fact that she is a custodian of the taxpayer’s money, NOT a curator of a collection (e.g. private museums). As a custodian she is promoting the visual arts through the taxpayer’s money. This, she said, differentiates the public art program from other (private) programs, as she does not have the freedom to put her favorite or what she deems the best art out there. Other city staff talked about how serving the “the public” pertains to land and facilities the city owns. This has particular importance when talking about the public art program because the
city’s percent-for-public art program allocates monies (e.g., from bonds people have voted for) only for city property.

*The public as audience.* This is a public that is specifically addressed and is often a consumer-oriented public seeking entertainment; sometimes this public is a paying customer or a client. The people who used this term included some Civic Stakeholders (developers in particular), Theatre and Arenas staff (City Staff), and several of the artists (Creative Professionals).

*The public as sub-populations.* These sub-populations are based on gender, age, ethnicity, race, ability, interests, and type of use. Interviewees used specific sub-populations by name when they wanted to be very specific, for example: art lovers, teens or the elderly. As such, they were limiting the scope in order to more accurately or specifically attend to concerns, issues or problems a particular population was facing. Interestingly, when people used the term “they” or “them” they seemed to be distancing themselves from a public (a sub-population), suggesting that some publics are “other.”

6.2.2 Definitions: Approaches and dimensions

When I asked research participants to define “the public” from a professional perspective (that is, in the capacity in which I was interviewing them: e.g., as an artist, as a member of the city planning department, or as a public art selection panel member), most people had not ever articulated a definition for “the public.” This surprised me. Upon further reflection, I think that most people thought this was an academic question because I was a
Ph.D. student asking them about it. Furthermore, the public seems to be just an accepted, unquestioned part of the vocabulary for many of these people. No one had ever asked them to articulate their thoughts on it, nor had they debated possible ways of conceptualizing the/public. But, it is not just an academic question, as was revealed during the interviews (by way of comments and questions) and by the emails I received afterwards.  

The question I posed to people was: “How do you (or your organization) define the public?” At first the question seemed somewhat mundane or inconsequential to people. But once I probed a bit further, asking, particularly of city staff—e.g., “Whom do you believe you are serving as a city employee?” Or, “How it is you serve this public in your daily work?”—the question became a more difficult and interesting question: it began to take on implications and consequences. The following Table (6.1) is the result of an interpretive analysis of the information I gathered from the interviews: I developed categories of responses after intensive examination of the interviews. The definitions people gave me fell into four categories: geographic, service-oriented, strategic, and political/economic. Additionally, I found that people’s definitions also included temporal and dynamic as well as inclusive or limiting dimensions.

The categories of definitions are not merely conceptual classes but they inform how people approach or employ “the public” in their work. As well, what I discuss below is a

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80 Several people emailed me after the interview to let me know that they had been thinking further about the terms, and that it got them thinking about not only how s/he employed it but also how others might define the terms.
recognition of the dynamic and behavioral aspects of these definitions. First, I will
discuss the categories as approaches in rank order or frequency of occurrence (See Table
6.1): geographic, service-oriented, strategic, and political/economic. I will then discuss
the dimensions of the definitions of “the public”: inclusive, limited, and variability.

6.2.2a Approaches

*Geographic approach.* A geographic approach to defining the public focuses on the
physical area within which a particular public is located. For example, the people who
live within the Denver city limits indicate a City of Denver public. Also, publics can be
defined by unmistakably named (typically official) neighborhoods that have distinct
boundaries, for example: Capitol Hill.

In Weintraub’s terms, public as sociability best informs this particular approach (and
elucidates an important dimension not explicitly raised by the interviewees) because
more so than any of the other categories a geographic approach is about space, place, and
sociability. At the very core of Weitraub’s public as sociability is the *where* of public
life: the public spaces within which one enacts public life. Important to this approach is
that these spaces are symbolic sites of display and self-representation (Staeheli and
Mitchell 2007, 795). And, they are quite possibly the sites of tensions and conflicts that
are negotiated through social conventions and daily exchanges. These are the places
where people literally come into the public (eye), either literally at neighborhood festivals
or more figuratively as a Denver public that has a name and a voice. These sites,
according to Staeheli and Mitchell “may or may not be open or chaotic; it may or may
not be heavily regulated by the state [city], or by specific interest, such as mall owners” (Staeheli and Mitchell 2007, 796). Thus, a geographic approach makes, to a certain degree, the public a more physically grounded entity: they become, in this way of conceptualizing the public, an embodied presence in actual space and time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DEFINITIONS OF “THE PUBLIC”</th>
<th>City Officials &amp; Staff</th>
<th>Civic Stakeholders</th>
<th>Creative Professionals</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Approaches</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geographic</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service-oriented</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
<td>27.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political/economic</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dimensions of definitions</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inclusive</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limiting</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>43.75%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variability</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.1: Defining “the public”: Approaches and dimensions
Total number of interviewees, n = sixty-three; numbers according to interviewee category: City Officials and Staff, n = 18; Civic Stakeholders, n = 29; Creative Professionals, n = 16. This table reflects the answers people gave me, which included multiple answers when individuals were providing definitions.

Regarding City Staff, a geographic approach is an important way they (as individual staff and as departments) visualize (and deal with) the public. Given the programming in DOCA and the public art program, the public is conceived of (in large part) in scalar terms, both geographically (areal) and quantitatively (numbers of people). Important to how staff conduct their work in public art, the scale of their public runs from individuals and families, to neighborhoods and communities. A geographical approach aids them in administering the program: e.g., targeting areas and servicing the people in those areas.

For Regional Transportation District (RTD) staff the public is a little different at each
location. For example, at Union Station commuters are the main public. At other sites (e.g., RTD stations) the surrounding community becomes an important component of decision-making in terms of dealing with issues specific to that locations (e.g., noise pollution, light pollution).

Of the Civic Stakeholders, developers did not use the geographic approach as often, but when they did it was so that they could literally map out the people they were servicing or impacting in some way. One developer spoke of how the public can be conceived in concentric circles, similar to the department of public works’ impact zone: 1) customer base, 2) neighbors within 1 mile, and 3) the community at-large (e.g. greater metro Denver). Within each of these publics there are particular vested interests that must be responded to. And this is the key to a developer’s public, responding, always, to the audience one is serving: customers, clients, tenants, residents, occupants, etc.

Creative Professionals employed a geographic approach as it helped them to understand the context of the site of their work. Not only was it locational, but it was also about place. Once they knew where the site was located (in the city, in which neighborhood, near the Platte River, etc.) they began to research the history, ecology, and other characteristics of this particular (physical) place in order to develop a design response.

Service-oriented approach. This approach is informed by both Weintraub’s liberal-economic model and Habermas’ perspective on public authority. For Habermas it is the public authority’s mandate to promote the public welfare. The local government (the
City of Denver) is the public authority that develops and maintains public spaces and public buildings, as well as public art, in order to create well-regulated sites for a functioning democratic society. A service-oriented approach is one that, according to Weintraub’s liberal-economist model, adheres to a state (or city/county government) regulating economic development, and standardizing behavioral norms in public space. As such, this approach demands, to a certain degree, that its adherents enforce the “logics and rationalities of the governmental system” (Staeheli and Mitchell 2007, 796).

This is translated, for City Staff in their every day working world, as whomever it is who is being serviced by the department, at that time. Many staff in the various city programs and departments thought about the public via whomever it was that they sought to serve. For example, a Create Denver staff said that I “don’t think about “the public” in the same way as One Book/One Denver (a DOCA run literary program),” rather she focuses on “a slice of the public,” those who are in the creative community (e.g. creative professionals, including: business people, financial consultants, and various artists). In the departments of planning, public works, and parks and recreation, staff stated: “it depends on what you are doing.” In planning, the public can be an applicant, customer, or a recipient; the public can also be a broader group of stakeholders (those who are most impacted by a particular action), as well, the public are the steering committees, those who attend public meetings, and any others who are always welcome to be a part of the process. The issue for them is how do you contact these various publics? In order to communicate with them you need to know who they are and where they are. This was the first suggestion of
the need to have an operationable definition of “the public,” one that allows a staff
member to do her/his work (I will discuss this further in the last section of this chapter).

Accordingly, the Public Works staff tended to align with the mission of their department:
“to deliver the services that help to define the quality of life in Denver.”81 Their public
changes according to those whom they are serving, for example: Mayor’s office, city
council, developers, contractors, business community, internal clients (other city staff)
and external clients. For example, much of the time public is an (external) client, “Joe
Blow” who comes to the counter in need of help. Since their work is construction and
safety oriented they interacted daily with the public, and for them “who would NOT be
the public?” Two of the questions that helped them to narrow this broad public are the
following: 1) where are you geographically (job site)? and 2) where are you in the
process? That is, who is currently involved as a member of the public. For example, at
certain points in the process the citizens in the project “impact zone” are invited to
participate and at other times they are not. Sometimes, one staff member said, it is a
matter of who one is talking or working with. That is, which segment of the public are
you concentrating on: the contractor, the community, or business people? Finally, they
also mentioned a regional, and even national, public: those other users of the final
products of their work.

Civic Stakeholders, primarily those people who were on (served in the capacity of)
selection and advisory committee, talked about service. These people were doing a

81 From the Denver Department of Public Works (DPW) website:
service to their community. They were serving, simultaneously the city (public art program) and the citizens by helping implement the public process. Only one developer talked about service. I believe he was unique because he had lived in Denver for many decades and felt a commitment to bettering this community (e.g., economically, physically, experientially). He was doing a service to Denver, one that he was proud of.

Again, none of the creative professionals talked about the public in terms of service. They were not doing a public service nor were they serving a public, rather they felt they were engaging people and places.

**Strategic approach.** A strategic approach differs from a service-oriented approach because it is not about serving (or servicing) but working with people/the public. This approach it does not consider the public as a citizenry (directly related to a public authority); rather, this approach to the public considers the public in terms of an individual’s or organization’s accomplishing a particular goal of her/his work.

Within the Civic Stakeholder category, business people and developers spoke strategically about “the public.” When working with the public, several of these stakeholders said they do three things: 1) identify, 2) acknowledge/recognize, 3) communicate, with an end goal in mind: to develop partnerships. For Creative Professionals, a strategic approach to the public was definitely not about serving people but more strategic and philosophical in that it related to identifying long-term goals (of their work and the community) and finding a means to achieve this. For a small, internet-based nonprofit (Civic Stakeholder), the founder was most concerned with targeting and
reaching the public as those people with whom you want to have a conversation: these are the “arts people” locally (Denver arts scene), nationally and internationally. It is this point that further highlights the issue of communication. One targets a public (e.g. an arts public) strategically, in order to connect with them and make something happen.

Three City Staff defined the public strategically; all three of these people were directors or managers. This is important because they were thinking in terms of the overall aims of their department, program or group. For the Creative Professionals, they too, were thinking about the goals of their work (e.g., body of art work, professional practice). The public is not who they serve; the public (and this is particular to this approach) is (perhaps philosophically) those people who are the recipients of the products of their labor.

*Political/economic approach.* A political/economic approach to defining the public is informed by Weintraub’s liberal-economist and republican-virtue models. In this approach the public is defined according to two things: 1) the public is defined in relation to local government administration, and 2) the public is conceptualized as community, citizens, taxpayers and constituents. This view of the public relies on the public process established by the ordinance that makes public art possible. This approach sees the public as comprised of individual citizens and taxpayers who see themselves as integral players in a political community. Thus, this is not a purely administrative (or top-down) approach but one that requires interaction between the public and city staff, and expects public action through discussion, debate, and involvement in decision-
making. According to Staeheli and Mitchell (2007), this approach is thus open to
counterpublics (Warner 2002) and subaltern counterpublics (Fraser 1992), who will
contest normative actions and decisions, thus prompting the potential transformation of
public space (through enhanced public dialogue).

One of the first people I interviewed was the director of DOCA. She stated very clearly
that she believed there was “no such thing as a monolithic public.” She went on to
explain that “the public” is ideally about civic engagement; that is, one is present in the
community: participating, engaging and contributing. The implications of this kind of
public are that it has responsibilities: a civic imperative to participate in the making of the
city. As such, one is a member of a citizenry and this implies responsibilities;
unfortunately this is often confused with a very generic public that merely exists (i.e.,
does not participate). The consequences of a generic public are that it does not accept its
civic responsibilities to engage but is a passive public that does not contribute,
participate, or even care. This public is thus largely, and merely, a geographic entity: they
are those people who live in the metropolitan region.

A handful of the Civic Stakeholders conceptualized the public in a political/economic
manner. But, of course, their definitions of “the public” depended on the scale and scope
of their work. These people said that they do not get to what they called “a granular
level;” that is, they did not work with individuals. Rather, as in the case of The Western
Arts Federation (WESTAF), a service organization that supports the advancement and

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82 She was a first tier interview, which means that it was though her (and others in this tier) that I began to
frame the conversation as well as broaden my reach to others involved in public art in Denver.
preservation of the arts, they are not beholden to “the public” but they have a constituency that is comprised of state agencies, artists, advocacy groups and arts organizations. Even though they are one step removed, they believe that the general public does benefit from their work. For people on the selection committees, they were thinking about the actual communities within which citizen-taxpayers lived. They saw their work as an important part of a local government democratic process for creating public art.

Interestingly, none of the Creative Professionals mentioned defining the public in this way. They were more apt to define the public in inclusive or geographic terms. I think this is because they focus, particularly the artists, on developing a response to a site and the people who inhabit it. They do know, of course, that what they are involved in is an administrative, governmental, legal situation (because they are being paid by local government and their work is assessed according the city ordinance) but this is not what concerns them most in making their work. There are an increasing number of workshops nationwide (provided by public art programs as well as arts organizations) that focus on the political and economic aspects of being a public artist. The result being that artists are becoming more knowledgeable and capable of working with and through the administrative, political, legal, and economic issues of public art.

6.2.2b Dimensions

Inclusive. Conceptualizing the public inclusively means thinking of the public in broad, even generic, terms. The public is everyone and everybody. This was important to a
number of staff and creative professionals because they believed that you cannot discount or ignore anyone if you are talking about a local government program that is to service the city.

Creative Professionals provided yet another set of dimensions to the conversation. Notably, they reminded me: “You and I are the public.” When one is involved in decision-making and making public art it does appear that it is easy to forget that 1) we, too, are the public, and 2) we (those making decisions about public art) cannot be the public by proxy. That is, we do not have the authority to represent another person or entity by virtue of being on a selection panel. This notion of public by proxy disturbed a number of artists because they felt that they only met or understood a sliver of the larger public. They were interpolating a larger public from the small number of people they dealt with. This was one of the risks of the job: not being able to gain a full sense of this larger public, but nonetheless thinking that you could grasp it. I believe this is why so many of the artists took a geographical or exclusive approach as well. These other approaches were secondary to being inclusive. They felt they should be inclusive (appealing to everyone) but to refine ideas that had to attend to the particularities of a site (place) and the particular audience (e.g., those people who worked, played, lived there). This is, as I now realize, a big predicament for the artists. For the artists who felt public art was inherently, and vitally, a democratic process, they had to find ways to work with an abstract ideal. That is, they had to create their own process (aside from bureaucratic one) through which they could do the things that make the work meaningful to them and to the public they were working with and for.
I use this last paragraph as a transition to the next category, which I am calling a limiting dimension to defining the public. Both the inclusive and limiting dimensions are informed by Weintraub’s Marxist-feminist model because of issues of difference, inclusivity and hegemonic practices. These approaches beg the question: Who is included in/as “the public” by public authority as well as by the individuals involved in the production of public art? Some of the artists took what I felt was an admonishing tone (rightfully so, to be truthful) when they said: do not forget children and teenagers. And, they added, the public is everyone who can see, hear, touch, feel; as well as those people who cannot. This is a different way of thinking about inclusivity: it moves beyond an abstract notion to an actual physicality\(^\text{83}\) of the public. Board and committee members (civic stakeholders) also seemed to be keenly aware of those members of the public we often ignore or forget, for example: the homeless, the disabled, and disadvantaged youth.

**Limiting.** Thinking of the public in such terms can be either a positive or negative framing of the public. A positive way of thinking of this, as a number of the interviewees noted, is to limit who you include in your definition of the public in an attempt to focus your work. Which translates to thinking about the public that is specific to the experience of/at a site (who lives, works, plays there). A negative perspective is to think of exclusivity as excluding people who deserve to be acknowledged. I do not believe that

\(^{83}\) By physicality I mean: attending to the actual bodies of the public. That is, what are their physical and mental abilities, and what is their physical size/stature.
anyone took latter this perspective. It appears that interviewees were aware of exclusive practices, in which they did not want to partake.

As part of the City Officials and Staff, Theatres and Arenas is “responsible for the acquisition, construction, maintenance, repair, management and operation of the City's public assembly facilities.” The director of Theatres and Arenas thought in more limiting terms when he spoke of his responsibility: to the people he was mandated to serve. For him, the public are those people who have paid for a venue (paying customers, audience) and those who are people passing through. As such, they are concerned with appealing to these publics by providing a clean, welcoming, pleasant site for entertainment.

Two more groups (that are part of the Civic Stakeholders) that are heavily influencing the vitality of downtown Denver are the Denver Theatre District (DTD) and Visit Denver. DTD is a nonprofit created to enhance and promote Denver’s theatre district. According to people at DTD they don’t think in terms of the public but rather in terms of an audience in a particular area (the downtown theatre district). This audience is defined in terms of experience: those walking through (locals, service workers, etc.), performance-goers, and tourists. For this group, audience is the operative term, as they are a performance and experience-oriented organization.

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84 From the City & County of Denver's Department of General Services, Theatres & Arenas division website: http://www.denvergov.org/Default.aspx?alias=www.denvergov.org/Theatres_and_Arenas
Visit Denver, the official travel and visitor bureau for the city and county of Denver, thinks of the public also in terms of an audience: the people who are visiting Denver for any number of reasons. Visit Denver’s mission is to market the city to bring people here; it is not driven by residents. An exclusive approach is what helps Visit Denver focus on particular publics, thereby not overextending themselves (beyond their mission). They represent an important public, a public that keeps the city alive, working, and changing. This public uses many of the same services and venues as a resident public but they are not a permanent contributing force.

Limiting who one frames as the public is what helps individuals and organizations focus their work on a particular place and public. Some people did use the term in the following manner: “We focus exclusively on those people who will be using this park on a regular basis.” The public in this instance are those people who use that space. For example: The Colorado Convention Center caters to conventioneers mostly from outside the region; while a college campus caters to students, faculty and staff, and Colorado Boulevard public art is primarily for a drive-by public.

Variability. A public is potentially variable because of cyclical changes (daily, weekly, monthly, and seasonally), because of changing interests and agendas, and in the demographic composition of a public over time. I include this category because enough people (thirteen) talked about how the public was not a static category of people. What also prompted me to include variability was a discussion I had in the tier 1 interviews with public art staff. They reminded me that the public also includes those people who
are in this city for brief periods or varying extents of time, and with different interests and
different agendas: e.g., tourists, business travelers, and students. For each of these
publics the staff must attend to particular needs, and often at particular times of day, of
the week, of the year.

Of the Civic Stakeholders I interviewed, developers acknowledged that who they serve
has changed over the last decade. For example, the Denver Pavilions were originally
envisioned for a downtown (business and residents) public, but its public is now
primarily a tourist public. This may, though, once again change. These individuals think
about the public in both quantitative and qualitative terms: with regard to the nuances of
numbers and the specific issues at different sites. Once again, the idea of a monolithic
public was eschewed, in favor—for those developers who thought of themselves as
community builders—of thinking in more plannerly, sense of place, community-driven
manner; they thought of the public in terms of community, residents, and neighbors.

Downtown Denver has a cyclical public. For example, there are over 100,000 employees
who come into downtown Denver for work every weekday. This particular public has
varied needs, many of which are distinct from the needs of residents and visitor/tourists.
As such, the Downtown Denver Partnership (DDP) is in a unique position as its public is
twofold: 1) everyone: a general public that includes downtown visitors, residents,
employers and employees), and 2) particular to the mission of their organization, the
members of the business improvement district (e.g. property owners, business people).
They are concerned with publics (variable and changing) that inform the planning process for downtown and those people who use downtown.

An important and related concept to variability, implicit in a number of peoples’ comments, is what one developer said: “At first I don’t know who the public is …, they are emergent, the sense of who the public is narrows over the duration of the process.” This is important because one gets to know who the public is by working through the project process, and a public (or multiple publics) often reveal itself over time.

6.2.3c Patterns, complications and skepticism

Not only is the public an essential part of these peoples’ lives (those involved in the production of public art), it clearly does, as Warner says, tax their understanding to say exactly what it is (Warner 2002a, 413). But, once people are prompted to render a definition, some very important perspectives and approaches are revealed. According to the people I interviewed, the most common way to conceptualize the public is those people who occupy a particular geographic area. This does not, though, appear in the literature about the public. However, I believe it is a useful means by which to visualize a public, particularly with regard to public art, which (according to Denver’s ordinance) is about art for a specific site. Those who live in physical proximity to the site (and potentially claim some sense of ownership) or are regular visitors to the site, become a constituency based on geographic location. Being able to literally locate, and thus physically approach, these publics, enables one to engage them in deliberations about the site and the possibility of public art. It does not, though, guarantee that all possible
publics will be rooted out. This, as Fraser notes, is the challenge of accepting the fact that there are easily reached and not so easily reached publics, which includes dominant voices and marginalized and even subversive voices. As well, acknowledging and providing a forum for debate does not assure agreement amongst these publics. But, according to Fraser (and Deutsche) it is just this coming together that makes for a democratic society (and in public art, a democratic process, which many of my respondents were keen to follow).

Patterns. The following are a few of the patterns I believe characterize how City Officials and Staff, Civic Stakeholders, and Creative Professionals each conceptualize the public. The most common ways that City Officials and Staff define the public are: geographically and service-oriented. As well, their definition is one that is inclusive, that is, they include everyone in their definition of the public. Civic Stakeholders’ definitions focused more so on service-oriented and strategic approaches. Whereas the Creative Professionals, by a large degree, defined the public geographically and were broadly inclusive. The conversations I had with individuals, which I recount below, will help you to better understand (as it did for me) these definitional categories. Importantly, none of the Creative Professionals approached the definition from a political/economic position. This approach was not a common approach by any of the categories of interviewees. It appears that few people are thinking about the public (as it relates to public art) in terms of taxpayers, constituencies or citizens. Finally, Creative Professionals tended to think of the public in inclusive terms, that is: everybody is “the public.” Less so, though, for City Staff (50%) and Civic Stakeholders (28%).
Definitions of the public appear not to be employed in a mutually exclusive manner. I did not ask people to rank their use of definitions, but from the conversations I was able to ascertain through which definitions people most commonly worked. There were, of course, contradictions, which I believe are part of the challenge of working with the public. And, these contradictions point to the fact that most people had not before tried to formulate a definition.

Complications: Multiple definitions. As is clear from Table 6.1, people did not necessarily have just one way of thinking about the public. For example, the manager of public art spoke of the public at multiple levels, which is, it seems, what makes her position so difficult: having to deal with multiple (meanings of) public(s). For her and her staff: very broadly, the public are those (people) who experience the city. More specifically, when they are talking about the public art program, they are talking about taxpayers. And, finally, if they want to talk about the small segment of the public that directly experience (or benefit from) public art, they are talking about workers and clients who inhabit the building and places that have public art. For this public, she (the manager of the public art program) said, “This is their every day experience, this is their art!”

Parks and Recreation staff were the departmental group that by far talked the most about how they considered the public at multiple scales, from individual citizens (key people), community and neighborhood groups (e.g., HOA), council people, maintenance, to
tangential special interest groups (e.g., greenway groups, not for profits). For each project they identify the public in terms of geography/proximity and interests. As well, they differentiate between users, the public that is actively using space versus a broad customer service-oriented approach to the public.

Another example of the use of multiple definitions are for those individuals involved in the city’s public art program in advisory capacities (volunteer service on committees and selection panels). The definition of “the public” these individuals work with includes “the masses,” taxpayers (referencing the public art statute), and “the people” (that is individuals, including elected officials and the committee members themselves). Others talked about “the public” in a geographic sense: the residents and workers living and working in (or near) the site area. These individuals felt they were serving the Denver community, but also particular neighborhoods/districts (the specific sites of the public art), as well as visitors, visual artists and the larger arts community.

Each of these definitions of public have implications about how the producers of public art conceptualize, visualize and, thus, treat the public. One that seems particularly problematic is thinking of the public as user. This conceptualization of the public appears to be the result of a service-oriented point of view. Dealing with the public as user is a detached mode of operating, one that does not consider a flesh and blood socio-political being. A user is not a political participant; this suggests Fraser’s weak publics, those who are removed from the decision-making process. They are, essentially,

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85 These people were, for the most part, architects, landscape architects, engineers, artists and gallery owners.
considered “end users”: customers who do not contribute to or participate in the making of the space.

Complications: “Still to be determined.” Board, commission, and selection panel members all mentioned the complicated nature of the question, given that they had not had this discussion within their group. For one member of the Create Denver Advisory Board they had not yet defined “the public” because they didn’t have an exact audience yet. Another board member mentioned that it was difficult to identify an exact public: their public is the creative sector, which is for them a moving target. That is, many people the board considers part of the creative sector don’t explicitly imagine themselves as such. This, for the Create Denver Board, is something they acknowledged they must do better: identifying the public they are serving.

Skepticism. There were several artists who were skeptical of this conversation, for them the problem is (even) attempting to define “the public.” For them, such (over) categorization pits publics against each other. Rather, as artists, they thought they should just be thinking about who the immediate user is and/or who it is they want to reach in the name of a particular project. There is, nationwide, a concern by artists that the general public is prejudiced against art (e.g., they feel they are not well-educated about art and are thus not accepting of unconventional, edgy or provocative work). Another issue raised by artists is that public art programs think too much about what the public wants and needs, when only a fraction of the public is actually represented. It seems, to these artists, that it is futile to even attempt to define the public; instead the artist is there to
respond to the place, of which one aspect is the people. As well, some artists took the stance that “you just can’t satisfy everyone.” Since there is truly no homogenous body of “the public,” there are segments of the population an artist may never reach. The assumptions is that there is a continuum of this public: from those who are not interested in or open to art, to those who are sophisticated consumers of art. Some artists target the more difficult end of the spectrum while others gravitate to those with whom they have an allegiance. Related to this, a handful of the artists noted that the public is bureaucratically defined for you when you are assigned a space (boundaries imposed) and the artist is thus told who the public is that s/he will serve. This may seem a bit cynical, but in some ways the public art process does set the rules. Most artists do, though, find ways to make it a more palatable process for themselves by conducting research that allows them to see the history and nuances of a site and its publics.

The skepticism some people expressed about “pinning down” a definition is something I believe Fraser would say is healthy because it acknowledges, though not explicitly, possible hybrid, even intimate, forms that allow one to get at the “practical forces of a democratic society.”

In this section I have discussed the terms people use when referring to the public, and I have discussed peoples’ definitions of the public in terms of approaches and dimensions. As well, I mentioned some of the complications and consequences of the various terms and definitions employed. In this next section I will focus on what I am calling “For the sake of multiple and counterpublics;” that is, I will speak to what I found: that people
involved in the production of public art in Denver do, in fact, believe there are multiple publics for public art. I also suggest that there are important counter- and subaltern-publics that play a critical role in public art in Denver.

6.2.3 For the sake of multiple publics and counterpublics

In general, then, we can conclude that the idea of an egalitarian, multicultural society only makes sense if we suppose a plurality of public arenas in which groups with diverse values and rhetorics participate. By definition, such a society must contain a multiplicity of publics. (Fraser in Calhoun 1992, 126)

The majority of the sixty-three people interviewed (60%) emphatically said “Yes” there are, indeed, multiple categories of the public. The remaining people provided further explanation, which I believe suggests they were starting to develop a more nuanced approach to “the public.” Only three people I interviewed did not believe there are multiple categories of “the public.” For those who responded “No,” they either didn’t think it was a constructive task or they felt that it diminished a sense of “the public” being inherently diverse. My sense was that these people felt that there was some sort of strength to be had by talking about the public as a whole: it promoted a sense of belonging to a larger whole, and if taken in this way might bolster their arguments for public art being for everyone (not just particular sub-populations of art lovers).

Multiple Publics. The majority of people interviewed were able to do their jobs because they acknowledged (albeit unconscious of this vocabulary) multiple publics. They operated under the assumption of what Arendt believed was a fundamental condition of politics: there is a plurality of human beings who live, work, and play in the human world in which we live our lives. For the most part, the producers of public art are
responding to that (or those people) which is seen and heard. As stated above, the ease with which we acknowledge only those publics we see or hear (from)—visible publics—complicates matters because there is often an invisible public we do not see or hear, are peripheral in our vision, or those we “erase” from our vision (by not listening to or looking for them). This was clearly important to a handful of the artists, who worked with sub-populations that were often ignored. Increasingly, various sub-populations are being attended to in the name of public art. For example, appealing to and educating children about public art is of increasing interest to arts programs in K-12 curricula. As well, many city programs are working with the homeless, the elderly and other marginalized groups to have their voices heard in the public art selection process (through outreach programs, workshops and other such means).

Civic Stakeholders brought to the fore the emotional and social aspects of these multiple publics. As one developer said, once we recognize that “there are multiple (categories of) publics in each project, we must figure out how to communicate with each of them.” This same person continued, “There are visible and invisible publics (typically minorities) and the numbers are not always equal.” Our perceptions of the public for a site are often only of the visible public—the public that attends meetings, the public that calls offices, etc.—but the invisible public is critical too, … in terms of building a strong city.

From a Fraserian perspective, these multiple publics are comprised of many types of publics. There are multiple and hybrid publics that consist of cultural events publics, arts
publics, anti-public arts publics, and include various subaltern and counterpublics; all of whom have different interests, agendas, and expectations. And, for each of these, there are assumptions about them, which inform how we deal with each of these publics. Warner prefers to speak of the “shades of difference” that exist amongst publics: needs, ideologies, identities, interests, language, spaces of communication, and sites of address. These shades of difference are sometimes obvious, and sometimes not. It is to these shades of difference that the more sophisticated city staff, stakeholders, and creative professionals attend. DDP staff suggested a multidisciplinary public, which refers to the various expertise, skills, and interests of the business community/public they deal with (e.g., contractors, businesspeople, financiers, etc.). For DDP staff, articulating such a public helps them to better serve, appeal to, or deal with the various publics they work with or to whom their work is directed.

As one city staff said: “Some projects lend themselves to specific publics,” for example, some neighborhood parks have a family public opposed to the Colorado Convention Center which has a tourist public. That is, there are multiple publics and one must determine which public is the focus for a project. Making this distinction is based on, for example, the program for the space and the location of the space. As such, one then focuses attention on one of these multiple (possible) publics. Based on the interviewees responses to whether there were multiple publics, it appears that most people (from all three interview categories) saw the public as diverse, and that it was this range that made the public complex, and sometimes difficult to work with. The planners I interviewed highlighted the importance of breaking down “the public,” as it is an unwieldy,
ambiguous, and abstract concept that needs to be thought of in more specific, concrete, and thus useful terms. For staff working in communities (City Officials and Staff: public art, parks and recreation, public works, planning), this is an everyday activity of literally looking around at who it is you are dealing with. “The public” becomes very real at this point. It is at this point in the conversation that interviewees began to talk about engaging “a” public/ (group of) people. There is, therefore, a recognition that they are working with one possible public amongst multiple publics.

For some City staff there are certain publics they regularly deal with, from a regional public to a downtown public, a business public or a resident/neighborhood public. RTD’s publics are comprised primarily of, obviously, a commuting public, but there are other publics in their purview, including a resident public who do not use public transit but are impacted by it. They do also break down the publics further in order to deal with unique conditions, for example: a special events public (which implies the need for additional fleets or extended operating hours), or a disabled public (which necessitates certain design, wayfinding, and other accommodations).

A handful (6%) of the (sixty-three) people I interviewed, Creative Professionals (particularly artists) and Civic Stakeholders, alluded to what might be called an “elite public,” a subset of the public that has a sense of entitlement to certain amenities or resources. This suggests a cohesion of interests and voicing of concerns, which I believe most likely occurs in particular neighborhoods (geographic approach) and/or around a particular issue (political/economic and exclusive approaches) A couple of the developers
noted that these multiple publics might not be known when a project is being developed. When a development is in the planning stages there is a somewhat ideal or market-driven sketch of who the public will be. As the process moves into the more concrete phases, a public emerges, with their unique needs, wants, and expectations. One person who emphatically said “Yes, there are multiple publics,” was also adamant about there being what she called “an unspoken dichotomy”: the community as public and the leadership/elected officials as public. Her concern was how to get support from both. Therefore, she said, she is always working both angles.

Each of these multiple publics are not necessarily mutually exclusive, as people can fit into multiple categories, but once distinctions are made (and it appears that for city staff these distinctions better allow them to do their jobs more efficiently and precisely) these different publics do have special(ized) interests, needs, and expectations.

Conflicting, Counter and Oppositional Publics. A city councilor I spoke with stated that there is no the public but rather there are certain factions (of residents), which unfortunately leads to siloing. In her district these factions include: African Americans, Hispanics, Native Americans, developers, and residents. She attempted to work with each and amongst these publics. Yet, there was often conflict. This suggests a reality about publics: the marking of themselves as a special interest group versus the marking by others of them as factions. Special interest groups are typically positively addressed; whereas, when a public is referred to as a faction they are considered different, difficult,
and even contrarian. This is an important part of the production of a public: how “the public” is conceived, constituted, and perceived.

Only two people, of the sixty-three interviewed, (a city councilperson and a developer) suggested that publics might be in conflict with one another. The majority of people did not talk about the interactions between publics; I do not think of this as a prominent part of their daily work in the production of public art. A couple of people (in tier 1, City Officials and Staff) suggested I talk with individuals who opposed the public art program. I was not able to talk with any of these people because they either outright refused to meet with me or did not return my calls/emails. For me, this would have been an opportunity to talk with an oppositional public. In public art, an *oppositional public* could either be in opposition to the program (e.g., do not believe public monies should be spent on art) or are opposed to particular projects (e.g., a neighborhood that opposes an artist’s design for an installation). These situations do, indeed, occur, but were not mentioned in the interviews. Was this a matter of positive thinking? Maybe so, but more so, I think it is a matter of ignoring conflict, or not wanting to freshen old wounds.

Nor did people talk about *counterpublics*, those publics that define themselves counter to, or as alternative to, the dominant voices or mainstream conversation (Warner 2002b). Counter-publics in public art might be comprised of those people who have ideas about public art that run counter to the commonly held notions of public art. For example, local government public art operates under the guidelines of the city ordinance and does not allow for certain types of art (e.g., certain temporary works, and works that are not on
city-owned land); some people think that the city should support and legitimize, but not necessarily fund, some of these other forms. Another example is people who believe public art should explicitly challenge people’s values, beliefs, and the norms of society. Such work is not often chosen because city programs do not want to offend or alienate publics. Counterpublics are constituted through a shared disagreement about views of what public art is. There are graffiti artists (as well as supporters and some academics) who believe they are involved in producing public art. They are counterpublics because they are aware of being counter to the mainstream, and they define themselves (and their practice) in opposition to a normative public art practice.

Another type of alternative public that did not arise in the conversation: Nancy Fraser’s subaltern publics. She distinguishes subaltern publics from Warner’s counterpublics by focusing on subordinated social groups of, for example, working women, people of color, and gays and lesbians. They constitute themselves as a subaltern public by creating “parallel discursive arenas where members of subordinated social groups invent and circulate counterdiscourses in order to formulate oppositional interpretations of their identities, interests, and needs” (Fraser 1992, 123). They are not just seeking to educate people or raise issues of common concern, but rather they are creating forums for debate and seek to broadcast their discourse in order to unite, empower, and liberate. Subaltern publics comprised of subordinated social groups might bring some very interesting issues to the table, broadening the conversation about public art. Lacey’s new genre public art might tap into such groups to not only raise awareness but also to publicize, through public art, alternative interpretations of their needs, concerns, and roles in society. For
example, Hispanic communities might enact public art in these terms as a means of raising awareness of their particular concerns and empowering their community members.

Selection panel members (Civic Stakeholders) said that the selection panels (which are comprised of members of the public, and are mandated by the public art ordinance and program guidelines) provided venues for lively discussion about and selection of public art. “Yes,” several people admitted, “the conversations become heated, but are, ultimately, productive.” These conversations become heated because of conflicting views about public art, from choice of artist, materials and style, to cost of work and siting. As well, these conversations were further animated as individuals represented counter- and subaltern-publics concerns. Some panelists truly did believe they were acting on behalf of a public; therefore, they felt a commitment to be thorough (which meant lots of questions and debate) and objective. Other panelists did, as well, feel they represented the public, but they believed they were playing the role of expert, and thus felt they were responsible for making the best decision for a site and for the public.

Without the expression of opposing views, several people felt that it would not be a democratic or public process. As one person said, “It wouldn’t be an interesting process either!”

6.3 Summary: Operationalizing the term

Having interviewed sixty three people for this dissertation (and having talked with planners, creative professionals and arts administrators around the country), I now
I will begin with the first point by asking: “Why is this important?” I believe that if people who are involved in the production of public art cannot define “the public” (it appears that most are rather vague about it or use labels, not definitions, which cannot be operationalized), they cannot effectively address those they serve under the auspices of a public art program. That is, they need to make “the public” an actionable concept in order to work with those people the ordinance states they must serve. Most of the people I interviewed had never before considered defining “the public.” As a part of their work (lives) they do not discuss definitions and ways to operationalize these definitions according to job duties, in relation to others they work with, or under different circumstances. But I did find that there was a great deal of implicit similarity—in terms of who they thought they might be serving—amongst people in the three categories of individuals I interviewed, as well as within departments, organizations, and committees. The differences are often glossed over, though it seems there must be some consequences to people working toward a shared goal without a common understanding of the language they are using. It is, then, a strange predicament for the city’s public art program to be in, when the very notion of the public has not been explicitly addressed. If the public is to
be a meaningful, and useful, term in the equation—public + art—then it is necessary to have this conversation.

The manager of the department of planning responded to my questions about the public with his own question: “Is it (this term, “the public”) an operable term in practice?” He answered his question by suggesting that we need to break it down in order for it to be useful. What I believe he was talking about was the means by which the term is operationalized by different people, departments, and groups. As is obvious from what I have been discussing, the public does not exist; instead, there are multiple publics. These publics are varied, variable, and sometimes in conflict. And, they are people we listen to, see, hear, and with whom we communicate and interact. Therefore, in order to make the term (and concept of) the public useful in the daily work of people involved in producing public art there is a need to think about who comprises a (with regard to projects they are working on) particular public. Once this is done, those involved in the production of public art can attend to publics’ specific needs.

Regarding the second point, not only is there a wide variety terminology people use in their work, for example: public, community, and users, but also public space, public sphere, public realm, public monies, public authority, etc. Unfortunately people do not realize that when they are speaking with someone (a colleague, a community member, etc.) they might not be working with the same meaning in mind. That these terms mean such different things to different people makes for misunderstanding and potentially
unnecessary controversy and ill will. As well, there is room for vagueness, which can lead to miscommunications.

As for the final point, the people I spoke with may believe that there are, indeed, multiple publics but they are not 1) an inherently diverse public that represents various interests, needs, and abilities, and 2) citizen publics that constitute what Fraser calls strong publics. The notion of multiple publics at first seems to be a positive approach to the public, in that there is recognition of different types of publics, but the problem occurs at the point where these multiple publics are viewed not as socio-political individuals but as consumers, audiences and target markets. The public is then a weak public, a public that can then be instrumentalized in the name of promoting Denver as an arts and cultural urban center.

6.3.1 Prioritizing, customizing, targeting, oh my!

A monolithic public does not, indeed, exist, rather there are, as Fraser claims (and as I have found in this research), multiple and unequal publics. The production of public art, as a result of a democratic process, then demands dialogue, debate and negotiation. For Warner these multiple publics can be distinguished through “shades of difference,” which may or may not be obvious. The onus is, then, on the producers of public art to parse out these differences and create forums for dialogue, debate and negotiation amongst these multiple and sometimes unequal publics.
At the broadest level of defining “the public” there are no limits, the public is everyone and anybody who are the users of a city-owned facility, be it a park or a building. That is, whomever happens across it, physically or virtually. However, as staff admitted, this becomes a bit unwieldy. To make it more manageable (even meaningful) they usually break it down, by: age (e.g., kids, teens, elderly), scale of experience/interaction (e.g., car, bus, lightrail, bike, pedestrian), gender, income, etc. Mostly, though, it comes down to who lives there (residents) or works there (employees and clients).

Moreover, there are particularly unique situations in the public art program, such as the airport, where the public is, so to speak, a much more “captive audience.” At Denver International Airport (DIA), “the public” are passengers (enplaning and connecting), visitors (picking-up passengers, people attending a meeting or just hanging out), and “others” (e.g., Amnesty International handing out fliers), as well as the everyday people such as DIA employees (who number in the thousands), tenants and their employees. As such, the public at DIA is varied yet very specific in how they use the airport spaces. Another unique setting is the new downtown Denver Justice Center (detention center and courthouse). “The public” that is attended to here is both very broad (encompassing a wide variety of people in terms of age, education, race, physical ability, occupation, etc.) and very specific (e.g., in terms of who they are and where they live). According to Sheriff’s Department representatives I spoke with, the public in this circumstance is fourfold. From a law enforcement standpoint, it is anyone (citizens of Colorado) who is not in uniform. It is also the community or people in the community that they serve. As well, it is the community in general, taking into account the diversity of an urban
population (e.g., age, gender, race, sexuality, etc.). And finally, for this particular facility it is the community that uses this facility: employees, legal staff, general public, and inmates. An issue that arose for this particular facility was for which public was public art being created? Or, more crassly, which of these deserve public art, a mild reference to concerns that inmates/detainees did not deserve public art.

As one of the interviewees told me: “a monolithic view of the public doesn’t work face-to-face, or in the everyday.” This aligns with what Michael Warner and other scholars have said about the public: there are multiple and potentially counterpublics or subaltern publics (Fraser 1992; Warner 2002). Additionally, this research has revealed that there are many different terms employed by these people in order to better do the work they do. That is, they use more specific language than “the public” in order to be more precise in how they characterize, and more specifically address, who they are working with (in terms of interests, abilities, numbers, location, etc.). There are negative consequences to not being clear about whom one is serving, which include people feeling misunderstood and a sense of being over simplified (with regard to the complexities and nuances of publics). Addressing people in particular ways shows that one has listened, is paying attention, and is attentive to issues directly related to particular people and the publics of which they are a part.

Furthermore, most of them do prioritize, in some manner, these publics. And, they prioritize in order to accomplish their work, or as one interviewee said, “to do so successfully.” Of the people who said there are multiple publics, seven individuals
outright said “No” when I asked them if they prioritized the publics in their work. Four of the artists said that they did not prioritize because they created their work for everyone, regardless of age, gender, or education. It seemed to raise the ire of a couple artists because they felt that prioritizing was undemocratic and that if public art were truly to be public it has to be a democratic process that was not selective in any way. A third artist said that prioritizing would imply that one group of people was more important than another, and this was antithetical to what public art is all about. Though this same artist then said that their first response was to the client, the city, and then to a broader public who might encounter the work produced. One of the city planners I spoke with said that the planning department’s responsibility was to everyone; therefore there could be no prioritizing, no hierarchy. This staff person qualified this statement by adding that the planning staff rely on councilpeople and other elected officials to listen to constituents and relay concerns and ideas to planners, so that the planners can respond to the greater public.

Of those who said that they did prioritize these publics, some were not shy about the fact that priorities have to be made in order to complete projects. Public works staff were the most resolute on this stance, saying that their commitment to public safety meant making priorities. But also, one staff added, these priorities change according to services, timelines and sites.

A few people said that yes, in fact, they did prioritize but didn’t explicitly think of it in those terms. Rather they looked at the overall picture and tried to assess impacts,
individual needs and overlapping objectives when working on a project. One civic stakeholder said that there were often higher (and unavoidable) priorities that were critical to the success of the project.

Seven people qualified their response to this answer, as opposed to the use of the term “prioritize.” These responses shifted the conversation to one that was more about the politics of language. Two artists talked about how the word “prioritize” implies a hierarchy, which, as those who said there was no prioritizing, suggests one group is more important than another. Instead, one artist said, he preferred a more operational term, one that would help him do his work. He wanted to use (what he said were) more proactive terms, and terms that didn’t suggest discrimination. The terms he used were targeting, focusing, and honing in on. Another artist said that instead of thinking about prioritizing, she customized work to a particular site and group of people. For city staff it seemed that some were wary of using certain terms, as such they wanted to use a more refined language (e.g. not about prioritizing but targeting), and in some way it seems they were protecting themselves (in advance) from a public that might feel slighted. Or, as one staff member said, prioritizing implies privileging, and this is not something we do in this city. Another way a couple of city staff preferred to talk about this was by talking about how dealing with publics is a balancing act. This seemed a polite way of saying, “everyone has an equal say but …”. Civic Stakeholders seemed to prefer the term target. Two of the developers used this term when talking about the public or audience for a particular project: “We target certain audiences so that we can design a positive experience for them.”
It is not my point to make “prioritizing,” “customizing” or “targeting” dirty words. Nor do I want to say that such strategies are without implications and/or consequences. Since, as this research has revealed, the public is considered more or less as a customer, audience or target market, it makes sense that the people I interviewed would need to think in terms of prioritizing, customizing or targeting. In an age when cities are highly competitive and public art is starting to play a role in city imaging, the public is managed in such a way that the city can accomplish the production of public art in an efficient manner.

6.3.2 We are all “the public”

It seemed important to eleven percent of the sixty-three people I interviewed (mostly Creative Professionals, particularly artists, but also Civic Stakeholders) that we acknowledge that we are all “the public”: whether someone is a city staff, elected official, selection panel member, member of a neighborhood association or a homeless person. This suggests a very broad definition of the public, but it is important because it suggests an expectation that everyone is in some way engaged in the making of the city. They may be a passive or active public, but no matter, they should have a voice (and should be listened to equally). Furthermore, several civic stakeholders and creative professionals said that those people involved in the production of public art are the public by proxy. Which means they need to be listening to the multiple/possible publics who should be informing the decisions they make. This runs counter to those committee members and artists who felt that they are the experts, and should therefore be allowed to make
decisions regardless of “the public,” because the public does not know how best to produce public art (I will speak to this further in the next chapter).

6.3.3 Politics of the public

“The public” is still, though, used for its rhetorical power. “The public” is employed politically in order to establish a sense of unity: to suggest that we have enough in common to be grouped into one monolithic whole: the public. In some ways this can be comforting, implying we share enough in common to come to agreement over various city related issues.

Within this unity there can, of course, be diversity: inherent diversity which still allows for common interests. But, thinking of the public as a united front is problematic, because it diminishes the multiple and various voices that comprise a diverse society. There is, in fact, a great degree of difference in opinions, values, and beliefs such that there is a critical need to acknowledge them and create a variety of venues for dialogue and debate (Deutsche 1996).

The idea that there is a universal public is increasingly acknowledged as a fiction (Warner 2002). And, it is not a stable or static public; publics are conceptually and materially dynamic. In the last few years, the “public” in public art has come under scrutiny because of an ever-increasing demand to attend to the diversity of urban populations. As such publics are now being conceived of in terms of multiplicity and changeability, which cultivates working relationships that do not rely on normative ideals. Furthermore, publics exist only by virtue of their imagining themselves and
being imagined by others. This idea of public requires a certain amount of reflexivity as the idea of public “is rooted in the self-understanding of the participants” (Warner 2002, 7). There is an uneasy paradox in this, as the making of a public is a mutually constitutive process. It is equally important to acknowledge that the “making of a public” is always as struggle, at various levels of consciousness and unconsciousness. That is, there are multiple forces at work that subordinate individual desires. Thus, public art is becoming better understood in terms of a political and social process in which artists, selection panels, and others, as well as a participatory audience, come together to construct a public that engages in the making of public art.

Importantly, it is through particular discourses that a public is produced. It is through the public sphere that these discourses are enabled, allowing publics to come together to express and exchange their views, concerns and ideals. This has become an important part of the process of public art, encouraging this kind of dialogue, and creating venues in which it can occur. For many public art programs, blogs, e-newsletters, and public events provide this forum for communication. Public art programs mean to engage “the public,” and even encourage the constitution of various publics that will inform the public art process (and products).

The public is about politics, representation, exclusion and inclusion, and ultimately about relationships. The public is literally and metaphorically large, variable, and dynamic. These interviews suggest that “the public” is a complex, dynamic and often emerging entity that one must track in some way in order to understand, and thus, best serve their
needs. But, this public is also multi-scalar. Not only is it temporally-based but it is geographically-based. And, additionally, spatially-based. A member of one of the selection panels talked about why a recently installed public artwork was chosen: It was chosen because it worked for multiple publics: the homeless, commuters, and the neighborhood that is emerging. It works because it also appeals to a larger city public (which includes city officials), as well as people who don’t live downtown. It is a landmark. It is a delight. It is historically-grounded. It starts a conversation. Obviously, this artist found a way to get to know these publics, and to use that knowledge in a meaningful way through his work.

I did not seek to find a definition of the public, and, indeed, did not find an agreed upon definition. It was my sense throughout the research that this complexity of meanings had the potential to be a productive part of the urban public art discourse. But, I was not sure how. Therefore, what I have outlined in this chapter, in order to flesh out this complexity, is the range of approaches to and dimensions of defining the public, and who employs them. Based on the interviews, I discussed some of the ways people operationalize the public in their work producing public art. It is to the production of public art in a post-industrial city (Denver) that I direct my attention in the next chapter.
**Interlude I: Introduction to the Slow Read + Slow Read I: “National Velvet”**

It’s not what you find, it’s what you find out. – David Hurst Thomas

**Introduction to the Interludes**

The purpose of these interludes is to share with you the research I have been conducting on the slow read as a methodology for studying public art. The slow read was a research tool that helped me to not only document my experience of fieldwork sites (in this case, urban public art installations) over time, but also the slow read played a critical role in enhancing my ability to understand how others (“the public”) experienced the site/installation. As well, it helped me to articulate (and respond to) questions about the artist and others involved in the production of an urban landscape. I found that this methodology complemented the other qualitative methods I employed (e.g., archival research, interviews, and attending meetings). By experiencing the installation over time (approximately 18 months), I was able to further (and continually) interrogate the installations, as well as my preconceptions and initial impressions. The “slow read” became a vehicle for posing questions and pursuing new avenues of inquiry.

I began the slow reads in June 2009; I completed them in late spring 2011. In these interludes I am presenting some of what I have culled from the fieldbook entries in order to express the process of the slow read. The gray blocked entries are verbatim entries from my fieldbooks. The other texts are the edited and recomposed thoughts from the fieldbooks.

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86 The fieldbook is the notebook I use in the field to record my observations, conversations, etc.
Regarding the content and format of the interludes, they are comprised of written narratives, photographs, drawings, and other images. They are in fact stories—woven together from my observations, conversations with people, and lingering questions—about two pieces of public art.

This interlude, the first of two, includes this brief introduction in which I provide background information: 1) what/who inspired me to develop this practice, as well as the various influences that helped me to develop the slow read as a methodology, 2) the methods and tools that are integral to the slow read, and 3) a brief overview of the two slow read sites.

**Inspirations.** The slow read was inspired by a first year Harvard University Graduate School of Design requirement. My first year design instructor, Professor Beth Meyer, required first year master of landscape architecture students to choose a local site to visit on a regular basis throughout our first year of study. We were to spend time at the site (at different times of day and different times of the week), experiencing it and documenting it (primarily through drawing). I wish that I had some of my first year sketchbooks at hand, but they are buried dark and deep in the basement of my house in Albuquerque. What I do remember is the following: The site I chose was a vacant lot on my way to and from campus everyday. The lot housed an old ruin of a garage. There were always small piles of debris, and in spring and summer fresh young growth, suggesting that on occasion the site was maintained. It caught my eye one evening when I saw a hollowed
out window glowing with autumnal light. From then on, my stopping by was a daily ritual.

*What I learned: Occupation, “emptiness,” and light.* This exercise was the beginning of my inquiry into landscape as theatre. It led me to read J.B. Jackson’s essay “Landscape as Theatre” (in *The Necessity for Ruins*). And, it prompted me to learn more about theatre design, from classical to contemporary. I was fortunate, because that year Robert Wilson, stage director, was involved with the American Repertory Theatre at Harvard. I attended all of the performances. This experience thus prompted me to not only ask questions about the site but also about my education and the practice of being a designer.

Over the years I have given my design students similar such exercises but it was not until I was involved in this dissertation research that I began to more fully evolve Professor Meyer’s exercise: to develop a method of inquiry that provides a means for something more than “quick” or “lazy reads.” Those of us who study landscape(s) are accustomed to visiting landscapes as sites for learning; however, such visits are not often thought of as a potentially rigorous and time-sensitive method of inquiry. The slow read offers a means by which to engage in a more rigorous, longitudinal study of sites.

*Developing a methodology: Influences.* Developing the slow read was instigated by one of my committee members, Joe Bryan, as a means to ground the theoretical nature of the dissertation. This dissertation focuses on the production of public art; therefore, I focused on those people involved in the decision-making about and creation of public art.
I did not interview the public as part of the interviews I conducted. These slow reads are, in some instances, the voice of “the public.” Future research will expand on this. I present the slow reads in what I am calling “Interludes,” which occur (including this as the first) at two different points in the manuscript as a way to speak directly to and about public artworks as they occupy a physical place in the city and in the city’s imagination.

I have drawn from geography, anthropology and the humanities to develop a methodology that would best serve me in the dissertation research. Primarily, I drew from the work of T. J. Clark, an art historian, and Nietzsche, the German philosopher.

T. J. Clark asks: “Why do we find ourselves returning to certain pictures time and again? What is it we are looking for? How does our understanding of an image change over time?” (Clark 2006, 5) In his book *The Sight of Death. An Experiment in Art Writing*, Clark chronicles his encounters with two of Poussin’s paintings, *Landscape with a Man Killed by a Snake*, and *Landscape with Calm*, both of which hung in a room at The Getty Museum at the time of his visits. Clark returns daily to this room to record (what he realizes after the fact) his shifting responses to both the paintings and to the time and place of his experience of them. His meditations, cum analysis, range from the deeply personal to the global political to, of course, the art historical.

T. J. Clark employs the notion of what he calls a slow read as a means of getting to know this pair of paintings. Repeat visits allow him to become intimate with the paintings, and
thus provide him with a wealth of material and questions that “thicken” his understanding of the paintings, and suggest new connections and provoke further research questions.

*Festina lente* (“Make haste slowly”) – Erasmus/Aldus. In the preface to *Morgenrothe*, Nietzsche demands that his work be read slowly, knowing full well “that slow reading may prove especially difficult in an age of haste and hard work” (Cascardi 2009). The slow reading that Nietzsche imagined is similar to the protocols of “close reading” advocated by Post-World War II literary criticism’s New Criticism. “Close reading” required the reader to slow down enough to “devote close attention to what is said and how it is said” (Cascardi 2009, 2). One does not rush through the reading to finish the task but rather pays attention to the nuances. Reading in this way requires discipline and practice, allowing “oneself to be guided by the text, …to follow its lead, rather than lead it” (Cascardi 2009, 2).

The dangers of reading too fast are well known (e.g., missing nuances and subtle, yet key points): fast readers have an inability to follow threads and find pleasure in the fine grain of language. As well, according to mid-twentieth century literary criticism, these readers rush through a text listening only to themselves, engaging in a self-made drama that is far removed from the text itself. How then, does one read slowly and also proceed along one’s own path? Nietzsche, it is said, threw obstacles in the path of a reader who attempted to read too quickly or read with a particular (end) notion in mind (Cascardi 2009). His writing was an iterative act: writing, listening, reacting, and revising. He wrote to prompt people to wander without a final purpose. This kind of writing was
intentionally fragmented, with synthesis and distillation a part of the process of reading. Nietzsche advocated this notion of “slow reading” for a particular book, *Morgenrothe*, which he wrote, even designed, for “dipping into, not reading straight through.” He composed the book for a particular audience, requiring skills that most people would never be able to master.

Clark speaks to the importance of reading something—a pair of paintings, in his case—time and again:

> Astonishing things happen if one gives oneself over to the process of seeing again and again: aspect after aspect of the picture seems to surface, what is salient and what is incidental alter bewilderingly from day to day… (Clark 2005, 5)

It is to the elusiveness, the complexity, and the interdependence of parts that Clark believes we must attend to over time in order for the truth to emerge. For Nietsche one needs to read slowly and closely to reach such a level, which he, as author, hopes for from only the best of readers.

As geographers we often speak of learning how to read a landscape. A “good” reader, which many of us hope we are, is a practiced reader, drawing on many different clues, experiences and training or education. I believe that this kind of reading demands the return to the place, whereby one does not seek conclusions but is open to further inquiry, responding to the changing context(s) of one’s reading and of the place. This type of reading requires one to read at multiple levels at once, which is, of course, a hard-earned practice.
I am calling this practice a slow read, a combination of close and slow reading, because the key to it is slowing down, and returning to take a closer look.

**A Methodology: Methods + Tools**

![Fieldwork tools (photography by author)](image)

The slow read is a performative act: “...a deep kinesthetic attunement that allows us to attend to experiential phenomena in an embodied rather than purely intellectual way” (Pineau 1995, 46, by way of Denzin and Lincoln 2005, 415). And, it is a practice, in the way that both Nietzsche and Clark suggest, something one “does” time and again. As well, it is a methodology, and as such refers to a mindful choosing of a set of methods that best serve a particular trajectory of inquiry.
The methods I chose were ones that allowed me to tap into local points of views, and what Moll and Greenberg (1990) refer to as “community funds of knowledge” in up close and personal ways. As such, I employed the following methods: participant observation, which included taking extensive field notes, involving mappings and drawings; photography; and informal conversations with people who were on site. The essential items I needed with me (on site) to conduct the slow read were: a fieldbook, writing and drawing utensils, and a camera.

*Drawing in situ.* Much of my time at the slow read sites involved drawing, which included diagramming, drawing (representative, analytical and symbolic), and producing other images that conveyed various stories about the site. Such drawing is a tool for thinking, out loud, if you will. Representative drawings attempt to accurately capture that which we see or are experiencing. More interesting to me are the analytical and symbolic drawings. Analytical drawings try to “create some order and meaning out of what we see” (Crowe and Laseau 1986, 8). These types of drawings will often focus on a particular aspect of the scene or attempt to reveal that which is not visible (e.g., structural information about a house). Symbolic drawings are made with the intent to stand for a general concept. For example, rather than a representational drawing of a tree one might draw a cartoon version that expresses the upright nature of a trunk with a balloon of foliage atop it; this is an image most people will recognize and accept as a “tree.”
Photographing in situ. Photography is used as more than evidence of the site.

Photography as research method—the act of photographing the site and reviewing the photographs—is employed in three different ways: as photographic survey, for studying context(s), and for posing questions. I was less interested in illustrating the piece of public art than tracking my experience of the piece and site, and using photography as a means to revisit the piece and come to new conclusions.

The first way that I used photography was to create a photographic survey of the piece. I was making use of a realist approach, which considers the photograph as an accurate record of a site. This is one of the most common ways of using photography in research: the photograph serves as a visual description of that which one has seen. For human geographers there is, though, more to it than just “snapping a picture.” Photography can be used in an investigative manner, what Ricki Sanders (a human geographer) calls “looking with intention” (Sanders 2007, 181). In this manner, photography is a means of collecting data, recording a site, and presenting information (to compare, contrast and discuss). I took many photographs of each of these installations, generating a catalogue of images that expressed cyclical change (diurnal, weekly, and seasonal). An important aspect of recording the site is to direct one’s observations and focus (or frame) the image in a thoughtful way. It is in this way that I studied the artwork, as a whole and through the details.

A second way I used photography was to study the context, not only of the piece but the context within which I was taking the photography. Therefore, this way of using photography is also self-reflexive. As a self-reflexive act I was thinking about: why I was taking the photograph, how I was being perceived by others (e.g., as tourist, as
scholar, as woman out on a walk, etc.), and what I was going to do with the photographs.

According to Tim Hall, this post-structuralist way of making use of photography:

rejects the notion that the photograph is simply a record of reality. Rather it views
the photograph in quite different terms, not as an evidential document, a fragment
holding a captured truth, but as something that is embedded within and part of a
number of cultural contexts. They would argue that no matter how many
photographs are taken a photographic survey can never capture reality in its
entirety. Photographic surveys will inevitably be partial and will represent the
choices made by those responsible for their construction and the constraints they
were working within. (Hall N.d.)

In this manner, I was concerned with the choices I was making and the context within
which I was taking the photograph. This photography was a research act, a way for me to
study the piece. As such, I studied the piece as its own entity but also within its larger
context. For example, I photographed the approach to the piece from different
intersections, and I shot different backgrounds of the piece. I even photographed one of
the pieces (I See What You Mean) from twelve stories above (from the office of one of
the people I interviewed for this dissertation), in order to begin to understand how people
working in the nearby office buildings saw and knew the piece.

Another aspect of this use of photography was thinking about how these images would be
produced, viewed or circulated. When I was taking these pictures I was thinking that
they were primarily for my own use, to look at and study at some later date. But, I
showed these pictures to people when I was telling them about my work, which elicited
comments about my work and the installations. Furthermore, some of these pictures are
included in this document, as visual devices to help the reader “see” certain aspects of the
piece, and as expressions of some of the things I was thinking about.
The last way I used photography as part of the slow read was to help me to pose questions for further research. Tim Hall calls this approach “studying society by making images.” According to Hall, this approach is a way to open oneself to different voices, experiences and meanings (Hall n.d.). The aim of this approach is not to find answers or come to conclusions but rather to:

convey experiences (potentially of both researcher(s) and research informants), to raise questions about the subjects examined and the processes and strategies employed in the research and its subsequent representation. (Hall n.d.)

This approach is akin to experimental texts that explore possibilities, challenge the reader, and create experiential narratives. I used this manner of photographing the site, as well as the images themselves, to question (or even deconstruct) assumed readings and meanings of the site and images at hand.

*Sites of Slow Reading.* The yellow stars (Figure II.2) denote the two sites of the public arts works I studied. I chose these sites based on location and public art commentary and debates. *National Velvet* is at the North West end of 16th Street, an extension of the 16th Street Mall. Its extension to and beyond the Platte River allows it to serve as a major pedestrian corridor that connects the Highlands neighborhood with Civic Center. The other piece, affectionately known as “The Blue Bear,” is on 14th Street. Fourteenth Street is what the city is calling its “Ambassador Street” because of its historical importance in the founding of Denver and it is the street where the convention centre, performing arts center, University of Colorado Denver, and several of the city’s five-star hotels are located. These two pieces raised the most interesting commentary in the initial interviews (Tier 1) I conducted for this research: these two works were noted as pieces
that were successful but in ways that sometimes defied what people thought public art should be.

Figure II.2: Slow Read Sites
National Velvet was dedicated in November 2008. Local artist John McEnroe won the commission in 2006 to create a public artwork for a plaza at the base of The Highlands Pedestrian Bridge (over I-25). National Velvet was controversial from the start. During the selection process panel members were divided over selecting this piece because it was not (obviously) site specific. When it was installed, people were outraged by the cost of the piece, as well as offended by the erotic suggestiveness. To this day, the piece incites many citizen’s ire. The controversy can be understood along three lines: funding/cost, artist intent, and the purpose of public art. However, many people think this piece is successful for the same reasons the controversy rages.

Lawrence Argent’s I See What You Mean, installed in 2005, peers into the Colorado Convention Center from 14th Street, the main entrance to the convention center. It was
installed in 2005 as part of a multi-million dollar expansion of the convention center.

Since then, it has fondly become known as “The Blue Bear.”

![Image 1](image1)

**Figure 11.4: I See What You Mean (photograph by author)**

It has become a city icon, most notably used by Visit Denver to promote the city as an arts and cultural center that doesn’t take itself too seriously. One can even purchase replicas (in 4” and 8” sizes) at the Visit Denver information center on the 16th Street Mall.

![Image 2](image2)

**Figure 11.5: 8” replicas of “The Blue Bear” in display case in the Colorado Convention Center lobby (photograph by author)**
**Slow Read 1: National Velvet**

An important part of the “slow read” is, as T. J. Clark expresses in his experiment in writing, is to “write out” the observations, thoughts, and questions. These interludes in my dissertation are, for me, this opportunity, an experiment in public art writing. These are some of the stories I have been collecting about *National Velvet* (and *I See What You Mean*, in Interlude II).

![National Velvet Postcard (created by joni m palmer)](image)

Figure II.6: *National Velvet* Postcard (created by joni m palmer)

It is through months of “reading” *National Velvet* that I began to know and appreciate the piece. Slow reading this piece helped me to better understand the wide range of responses to McEnroe’s installation. It also challenged me to learn more about it and the artist. Each time I went to the site new issues and questions arose. I pursued those that were most curious or interesting to me. Certainly, though, some of the questions might have come to me from reading news articles, etc., but it was the visceral experience of the site that made these questions meaningful and even urgent.
A controversial installation. The controversy that surrounds *National Velvet* is representative of some of the big issues and debates in public art. The first issue concerns the funding and cost of pieces. This piece cost $50,000, which to many people seems like a lot of money, but in the public art world it is a small amount that barely covers materials, fabrication, and installation costs. Many people were shocked by the cost of *National Velvet*, prompted to a great degree by what the piece looked like. Pet names for the piece ranged from silly (“pile o’ red socks”) to pornographic (“flaccid penises”). A good number of people were outraged that an artist would be paid $50,000 to create something that was hard to understand. Not only did people not understand what the $50,000 paid for (which was *not* an artist salary), they did not know the background to the piece.\(^8\)

\(^8\) Controversies such as this prompted the Public Art Program to develop online video and cell phone information tours to provide some education about the piece, the artist, and the public art process.
This piece was created out of a partnership between the city’s public art program and Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT). The pedestrian bridge was a CDOT project, and initially the idea was for a piece of artwork for the underside of the bridge. A small group of artists were selected from those who replied to the RFP. John McEnroe’s work was selected because the panel believed his approach was unique and appropriate to the site. Which leads to what is another debate in public art, the validity of the artist’s intent. Public art as I have said, is an ambiguous term at best. The process of selection is vastly misunderstood, and the purpose of public art not agreed upon even by those involved in the production of public art. The artist’s intent is an important part of this conversation but does it have to direct the way people “read” and critique it?

*National Velvet* grew out of the artist’s studio explorations and gallery pieces. John McEnroe is an artist who uses the production of a piece to study materials and process. As such, *National Velvet* arose from this kind of study, and for many people this runs counter to the purpose of public art and what should be the intention of the artist. The piece was not specifically created as a response to the site. This angered many people, as they believed public art should be site-specific. The ordinance suggests this but it is an ambiguous statement, because there are many ways a piece can relate to a site.
How a piece relates to a site and the purpose of public art are important parts of the conversation about public art. McEnroe’s piece, as is his way, challenged both of these notions. I think this is why I came to like this piece. Risk taking is not commonly a part of the public art world, particularly in Denver. This lack of risk taking (the program administrators and selection panels desire to not offend or challenge people with difficult messages or mediums) was one of the concerns for quite a few of the people I interviewed. It is understandable but is it forgiveable?
What purpose does this piece serve? Kendall Peterson (the city’s public art program manager) made clear to me (in one of our early conversations) that public art in her view was not about functional pieces nor was it about solving problems. I believe *National Velvet* works on multiple levels: as an artwork, as a source of conversation, as a landmark. But, I can only say this because I have visited the site so many times and have watched how people experience the piece.

Figure I1.9: Fieldbook entry (from the author’s fieldbook)
It serves as a landmark. Many pieces of public art, the larger pieces, serve as landmarks in the built environment. As a landmark, people use certain pieces to direct their movement through the city, as a way to gauge how far they have travelled, or as a meeting point that is hard to miss. Even smaller pieces can do this, but they must have some presence that makes them a notable element in the landscape: color, light, size, absurdity.

Figure 110: National Velvet at night (photograph by author)

Friday 17 September 2010 @ 9.20pm
Going Home: a nighttime beacon
I hadn’t realized (or is it that I had not consciously recognized?) this before: I use it to track my progress on my drive to Denver from Boulder and back again!

In the morning light it shimmers and catches my eye as I approach downtown. It marks my arrival, along I-25, in downtown, and alerts me to my upcoming exit. At night, when I am leaving downtown, it let’s me know that I am pulling away from lower downtown (LoDo) and Highlands.

I just left LoDo a few minutes ago … I take the I-25 North exit off Speer and merge left onto the expressway, and there it is, on my right just under and past the bridge, lit up like something from the fourth of July or something from a B-horror flick (a little garish, strange, and a little creepy). I guess I have been looking to, even for, it every time I leave
Denver after my class. It is an unconscious nod to my departing the city proper and heading home.

Much of my experience of this piece has been as a vehicular experience, at sixty miles per hour one only catches glimpses of the piece. It serves as a landmark, though, too, at street level, when one approaches the pedestrian bridge (that spans I-25) from Platte Street. This approach is rather cinematic: framed views obscure and reveal the piece, creating a sense of anticipation and curiosity.

Figures II.11-13: Approach: *National Velvet* (photograph by author)

*Hung.* Its appearance has provided for a multitude of “pet names,” many of which suggest the piece is not exactly a “proper” artwork for the public realm. These names suggest that people are, indeed paying attention, that they are thinking about what they encounter in the urban landscape. These names are, though, the result of closer
(pedestrian or bicycle) experiences, during which one sees the piece in detail, and sees them as socks, water balloons, or even penises. Even if these names are derogatory, still, people are taking notice and, obviously, the piece is memorable.

Figure 11.14: National Velvet: detail, (photograph by author)

Friday 10 July 2009 @ 2.55 pm: 90 degrees a sunny hot summer day
My first thought when I saw it from 10’ away: water balloons!

As I approached, a construction worker—a big guy, swarthy, blue jean overalls, construction hat and tool belt—was looking at it from about 8’-10’ away, then he walked up to it, … and tentatively reached up and touched it. I watched him from the corner of my eye, as we both circled the piece looking at it from various perspectives. Finally, I asked him what he thought of it: “I LIKE it,” he said with a big boyish grin and a chuckle. “It looks like water balloons,” he said with a burst of energy, and then, “I wonder … how he made it. It looks real heavy.” We both cocked our heads, both of us kind of smirking, thinking out loud: “Did he fill water balloons and spray with fiberglass, after puncturing to let some water out?” He then pulled out his cell phone: “I gotta take a picture of this for the guys back at the shop—he paused—“they aren’t really into art, but sick guy stuff, ya know?” He was nodding his head as if he thought I understood. I said, “Well, some people may say this is kinda sick.” “Yeah, see that one hanging down like that? Wish I were hung like that, no more lonely nights for me, if ya know what I mean.” He chuckles and then turns a bit red, not sure if he had embarrassed or insulted me. I just laughed. “Hey,” he said, wanting to continue the conversation, “you don’t expect to see stuff like this, here, in Denver. I’m a native. This here is sophisticated stuff. You’d expect this kinda thing in San Francisco.” He nods. His palms are face up, arms and shoulders lifted, a gesture of complicity and confusion. “Gotta get back to work. Enjoy.” So, here’s a guy who happens on this piece and his narrative runs the
gamut from childhood hi-jinks to material matters, then to the erotic, and finally, to city pride.
7.0 THE PRODUCTION OF PUBLIC ART IN DENVER

7.1 Introduction: Locating “the public” in public art

Public art is an important visual element in today’s urban environments, yet there is a
dearth of research about how public art is produced. Often, people do not explicitly notice
public art unless if is one of the city’s large, celebrated pieces: such as Barbara Grygutis’
_Cruising San Mateo_ in Albuquerque, NM; Mark di Suvero’s _Sea Change_, along the
Embarcadero in San Francisco; or Lawrence Argent’s _I See What You Mean_ (a.k.a. ““The
Blue Bear””) in Denver. These pieces seemingly demand our attention. But there is
much more to public art than these monumental pieces (monumental in terms of size,
cost, and typically, artist renown or prestige). Nor do people understand all that it takes
to make public art occur in the urban public spaces of our cities. It is for this reason I
have pursued this dissertation research. In this chapter I will describe the what and why
of public art in a mid-size city, in particular, Denver.

It is my contention that how people employ the term “the public” is meaningful to how
public art is produced in Denver. I believe this is the case based on what I have learned
from interview participants: how they defined the term in the work they do (related to
public art). As I showed in chapter six, there is no _one_ or universal public (“the public”)
for whom public art is being produced. There are multiple publics, with varying needs,
opinions, and expectations. Also, and importantly, the producers of public art are one of
these publics. They are a civic public, which is key to the material, human, and symbolic
value of public art programs. In this chapter I speak to the material, human, and
symbolic value of public art programs. Two questions drive my writing of this chapter:
1) Why is the production of public art important to Denver? That is: What does it “do” for the city? and 2) What is public about public art?

I begin this chapter by locating “the public” in public art, via the terms public sphere, public space, and public realm. Starting the chapter with this conversation is a way for me to begin articulating what is public about public art. These terms are complex and often misunderstood terms in the academy. In practice they are used in both ambiguous and particular ways. Based on the research I have conducted, I think that when used in particular ways they can be productive, signifying the role of a particular individual in the process of producing public art. If used interchangeably, they only confuse matters.

After this initial conversation I delve into the ways people define public art, what it is they believe public art contributes to the city, and what they think makes for successful public art. Next, I return to who is involved in the production of public art. This time I explore these actors via knowledge, expertise, and interactions. Following this, I speak directly to the why and what of producing public art in Denver. Why is public art important to mid-size cities like Denver? And, as a summary to what I have been discussing throughout this dissertation, why (for what purposes) is public art produced?

7.1.1 What’s “the public” got to do with it?: Space, realm, sphere

Very few of the people I interviewed used all of the following terms: public sphere, public space, and public realm. Only two people did so: the manager of the planning department and a public works staff member. Other people used one or two of these
terms: 1) in very particular ways with regards to their work, or 2) as if they were interchangeable. The most commonly used term was public space. People used this term to denote the location of public art in city-owned or publicly accessible sites. A handful of people, mostly City Staff and developers, used the term public realm. For them, this term was an explicit way of speaking to the location of public art in the rights-of-way in the city (particularly streetscapes and medians). The phrase “public sphere” was only used by a couple of people, and at that, not used necessarily in the way that I will be speaking of here.

Public space. The majority of people I spoke with used this term, not when talking about “the public” (see discussion in previous chapter), but only once I started talking with them about public art. Location plays a dominant role in how people define public art. For example, as one interviewee told me: “Public art belongs in public spaces.” Across all categories of people involved in the production of public art—City Staff, Civic Stakeholders, and Creative Professionals—a general understanding of public space was: city-owned properties and/or spaces accessible to the public (that is, everyone). The table below (Table 7.1) shows how it is that people conceptualize “public space.” Everyone that I interviewed thought of public space in terms of access. A majority of City Staff, half of the Creative Professionals, and almost half of the Civic Stakeholders considered ownership as a key component of defining public space. Defining public space in terms of representation was not as important to people; and the educative and entertainment-based aspects were not mentioned at all.
City Staff were much more likely to be thinking about (and acting on) this term by way of city property. I attribute this to the fact that they are involved in a very direct way with these spaces in their daily work as a City Staff member. Developers, too, were thinking in terms of public space as city-owned property, but in addition to this they used the term in relation to privately-owned land. For the most part, artists employed the term to imply space that is open to and (visually and physically) available to the public. These different ways of using the term suggest how it is that people conceptualize public space as a part of the work they do. If they have no clear intentions for which to utilize the term, it was meaningless, and confused conversations with others.

Everyone I interviewed thought of public space with regard to access: “space to which all citizens are granted some legal rights of access” (Light and Smith 1998, 3). Implicit to this, so it seems from other comments people made, is that such spaces are largely open to the public regardless of day of week or time of day. City Staff were most aware,
though, that not all public spaces are available twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. For example, city hall and courthouses are public spaces, but with limited hours. As well, they mentioned the types of activities permitted. Staff were concerned about people sleeping in, urinating in and creating disturbances in public spaces. To be more explicit, the kinds of behaviors expected in public spaces are normative behaviors for which no one will be harmed or offended. For the Creative Professionals, artists in particular, access meant seeing and physically occupying: the reason being, that since they were creating art works for the city (and “the public”), they were concerned that people be able to not only see the works but also experience them to the degree intended.

The next most common way that people identified public space was by ownership or property rights. City Staff, presumably because their work directly relates to city-owned properties, thought of public space with regard to the spaces/properties the city-owned (from buildings to parks and plazas). Amongst the Civic Stakeholders, those involved in advisory capacities to the public art program thought along the same lines as City Staff. They were, it seems, following the words of the ordinance, which suggests that placement of public art is on city property, using capital improvement funds. The developers’ stance, not surprisingly, considered ownership by way of public versus privately-owned property.

Others among the Civic Stakeholders, who were not developers, did mention the debate around privatization of public space. They raised concerns about the loss of truly public space to private development. A few people mentioned that there were many spaces in
downtown Denver that were privately-owned properties but that people assumed were public. There were, thus, expectations as to their access and what could happen there. These individuals were suggesting the existence of entertainment-based public space, though they did not speak directly to this. It is important to this conversation because artworks in these presumed public spaces are assumed to be public art. But, as I will talk about later in this chapter, this art is not public art in the multiple dimensions necessary to a city public art program mandate.

Creative Professionals, such as architects and landscape architects, were the most likely of this category to think in terms of the ownership of public space. Artists were, of course, aware of the ownership issues (they were hired by the city), but this was not a primary concern for them.

A small number, compared to the previous conceptualizations, thought of public space in terms of representation. Civic Stakeholders were, by far, the individuals who were thinking that public spaces “are spaces in which citizens gather to form themselves into and represent themselves as, a public” (Light and Smith 1998, 3). Some City Staff did think in this same manner, particularly the planners. Public space in this sense is more than mere access, or even individual access: it is where people gather as a collective, and where they can express themselves. Accordingly, public space is one of the privileges we have in a democratic society. The democratic dimension of public space and public art were important to a number of people (in all of the categories). Even though no one mentioned public space in educative terms, the concern about the democratic dimensions
of public space suggest that having and maintaining public space is key to our learning about our fellow human beings.

Public Realm. The public realm is a term very few people used in our conversations. Those who did use this term, used it in reference to rights-of-way (R.O.W.). Planning department and public works staff used this term to refer to those slivers of land areas in the city that are seemingly “no man’s land.” Developers, too, were aware of this language, supposedly because of the legal aspects of development, and requisite negotiations with the city. One of the Public Works staff told me that it was important that we recognize rights-of-ways in public art, particularly because they are often the interstitial spaces where there are multiple concerns about safety, entry and egress, and emergency vehicle access.

Public Sphere. The city planning manager used this term when he was talking about the importance of public communication and debate in the making of a city. A Public Works supervisor also used the term when he spoke of informing the public about infrastructure closures and other problems. The public sphere, it appears, is an important part of the process of creating public art. It is not a physical space but rather a virtual space of communication, exchange, and debate. Publics are, as Habermas asserts, constituted through such discussion. It is only through the public sphere that “that which existed became revealed, did everything become visible to all” (Habermas 1989, 4). In an age when publics can be large numbers of people and widely dispersed, there is a need for forums for communication that enable these people to converse and debate issues in the
common interest. Public meetings, newspapers and such are not as widely used in this manner today. Rather, people rely on websites, e-newsletters, and twitter to convene over issues. Public art programs around the country are tapping into this means to engage, and inform, publics about public art. Based on this research, in order for public art programs to survive, and be fully public, it is very important to cultivate interest in and knowledge of the public art program in order that people will become engaged in all aspects of the production of public art.

The public realm and the public sphere may not be language typically used when talking about public art but they are concepts that will, I believe, help elevate the conversation. By which I mean two things: 1) allow people to be more specific when they are talking about space versus communication, and 2) move the conversation into more specific and higher intellectual realms. This is what Suzanne Lacey was, essentially, doing with her introduction of a “new genre public art”: she sought to challenge people to speak about public art in less superficial terms, and (thus) sharpen the conversation about public art. As well, by doing so, she resituated public art such that people took it more seriously, and therefore, cultivated an attitude about public art that advanced it as its own field of study. When people employ these terms, as well as the phrase “public space,” in specific ways, they become useful to how we think about space, people, and the constituting of publics that are involved in producing and experiencing public art.

7.2 Public Art: Not just about labels

“Wow, this is the first time I’ve ever tried to define it.”
—Artist, interview
One interviewee (an artist) claimed: “all art is public.” I have heard this claim before, from other artists, in other cities. But my question has always been: What makes art public art? And, what makes art public? Mind you, I was talking with people about the City and County of Denver’s Public Art Program, a local government arts agency. I was not talking with people about a broader notion of public art, rather I wanted them to talk about what public art *is* in relation to the city’s program.

It is my contention that public art is public in very particular ways. In this part of the chapter I discuss how people define public art. Initially I asked people to define public art. I found that this question stumped the majority of people I interviewed. I believe this is because most people, artists included, had not taken the time to define the term. Questions that helped to further elucidate this were the following: 1) Who is public art created for? 2) What does public art contribute to the city of Denver?, and 3) What is successful public art? These questions are not just academic inquiries: I think that just as it is important to have a working definition of “the public” in order to work with the public, one must also have a working definition of public art. A definition (that is not just labeling, which oversimplifies what public art is and can be) allows one to do two things: 1) have richer conversations about the subject, and 2) better approach the subject from various perspectives (e.g., practical, logistical, philosophical, etc.). As I showed in the previous chapter with regard to “the public”, it is useful in people’s work to have an operational definition of the daily vocabulary of their working world. In order for the various actors involved in the production of public art to work in productive ways I believe they need to have a better understanding of how their colleagues are defining the
term; as well, they need to be thinking about what it means to the city (built environment) and the people who will encounter the projects.

Learning about the ways different individuals defined public art further accentuated how important it is to think about who was answering the interview questions. I found that disciplinary/occupational biases were strong; that is, the scope of someone’s work (their job responsibilities) greatly informed their responses. This may seem an obvious point but, more importantly, it is clearly evidenced in the interview responses. The responses by individuals within each of the categories of respondents—City Staff; Civic Stakeholders; and Creative Professionals—very often hewed to a common consensus. Yes, there were anomalies, but for the most part one can gain a fairly good sense of what people know and how they operate, with regard to public art, based on the their work role and educational background. This is meaningful because it shows how important it is to know the types/categories (i.e., their job titles and responsibilities, as well as their educational and occupational background) of people with whom one is working in order to develop a common ground for talking about the production of public art.

Based on all of the interview responses, the majority of people defined public art according to four aspects: funding, where/location, how/process, and why/intent of public art. Table 7.2 (below) presents the percentage of people in each of the three interview categories who defined public art according the above fours aspects. Accordingly, public art is first and foremost funded by public mandate and with public funds. Second to funding is the location of and access to public art. People felt strongly about it being
“easy to get to,” and that it must be sited on publicly/city-owned land. Third, a more ambiguous characteristic than the previous two, the intent (of the artist and the art) must be: that it will be experienced by “the public,” which for most people meant “everyone” (See Chapter Six for this discussion). And, fourth, public art is about a public process, primarily focusing on the selection of the art by members of the public.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>City Officials &amp; Staff</th>
<th>Civic Stakeholders</th>
<th>Creative Professionals</th>
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<tr>
<td>How: Process</td>
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<td>28%</td>
<td>31%</td>
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Table 7.2: Defining Public Art: Four Aspects

7.2.1 Funding

For most people, public art is public because it is funded by public (city) mandate. They distinguish it from other art one might find in the city based on the funding mechanism or source of funds. That is, as one Civic Stakeholder said: “First and foremost it is art purchased with public dollars.” A further clarification is necessary, as one of the City Staff noted: “It is art the public pays for through bond initiatives.” This suggests the role of the public: voting on bonds. Not all bonds pass. But, as part of a civic public, one will want to participate in such decision-making. For example, the new Justice Center. Public art that is a part of this complex was possible because of the passing of a bond initiative that made possible 1% of construction funds that were allocated for (multiple

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89 Total number of interviewees, n = sixty-three; numbers/percentages according to interviewee category: City Officials and Staff, n = 18; Civic Stakeholders, n = 29; Creative Professionals, n = 16.
pieces of) public art. This public art includes works both inside and outside the building, and is comprised of a wide variety of types of art (size, material, media/medium, and experience).

I found that only a handful of people—the public art program staff and public art committee members—were able to explain the nuances of the funding mechanisms for public art. People who were on selection panels, as well as staff in other departments (who worked with the public art program on recent projects) were unsure as to how the allocated funds were distributed amongst the large number of people working on a project.

The majority of the city’s collection (95-99%) is funded by the 1%-for-art mandate (this amount is typical for city public art programs nationwide) established by the ordinance. Funding, it appears, is the primary way most people define public art because it is the dominant feature of the ordinance, and it is from this (component of the ordinance) that the other requirements are put in place (e.g., where such art can be located in relation to the construction site and selection process). Additionally, as a City Staff member told me: “Having an ordinance in place that directs use of city funds for public art implies a responsibility of the city to its citizens.” So it seems there is a connection between funding public art and a civic public. As well, an artist said that since this legislation is still in place (and has not been questioned during the recession) it proves that the city (leaders and the public) does have a stake in making this a livable city.
The number of people I spoke with who did not understand the funding mechanism (they knew about the percent-for-art but not much more than that) is, it seems, representative of the general public. Several people mentioned how few people “out there” understood how public art is funded. One person even hazarded a guess that at least 50% (and suggested that it was probably more like 75%) had no clue that there was a percent-for-art program. This is the case in most other public art programs in this country, which has spawned a movement nationwide by public art staff to educate the public about percent-for-art programs. It is important to note that between 1-5% of Denver’s collection is not funded by the 1% allocation. These pieces are the result of other funding sources, e.g., donations, private support, and partnerships with other agencies and organizations. The city is following the lead of other public art programs who are developing materials to be clearer (and more transparent) about how public art is funded.

7.2.2 Location and Access

The second most common way people defined public art is by location. Many people who said location was a key determinant coupled it with access. Access, in terms of location, appears to mean that a piece is easily accessible: visually and physically. In this section I will speak to how access, in relation to location, is actually more complicated than just the visual and physical.

First, location-wise, people said public art is in public spaces. As I spoke of earlier in this chapter (7.1.1), ownership and access are important to how people conceptualize public space. When I asked people about public space without reference to public art, they were
more likely to talk about access. Yet, when coupled with public art, most people were speaking in terms of city-owned land, more so than they were concerned with access. This was the case, too, for artists, and this is probably because of the contract they had with the city (in which it is made clear that the site is city-owned, with all the attendant legalities). Civic Stakeholders, too, were thinking in terms of city-owned properties.

Public Works staff and planners also noted that a significant amount of public art in the collection is in the right-of-way (e.g., in streetscapes and medians). Parks and Recreation staff added that a good number of pieces are in city parks and open space. This clarification is important because it appears that many people have a limited notion of what public art is and where it can (possibly) be located. Parks and Recreation and Public Works staff work with the public art staff frequently, though sometimes indirectly, in making public art happen.

Location, on city-owned land, is key to how most people define public art, yet access, too, is of consequence. And, access is more complicated than absolute location. What, then, does access mean? There are multiple ways of thinking about accessibility in human geography: 1) physical access, 2) costs (e.g., money, time and effort), 3) visual access, and 4) intellectual or emotional access. These can be applied to public art as well. Beginning with the first category of access: it has to be physically accessible. Two people noted that it must “always be accessible;” by which they meant twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week access. Not all of the public art in the city’s collection is accessible at all hours, any day of the week. Much of the collection is installed in public buildings,
which have limited hours and some of these public buildings require a security check. Nonetheless, the general idea is that people can physically encounter it: see and experience it. Regarding cost, artists emphasized that public art is free (no fees) and easily available (with little effort and readily available any time) to anyone. City Staff were not as likely to talk about costs, for them physical and visual access was most important.

Visual access raises some interesting questions. First, if an installation is visually accessible but behind a fence, is it *fully* accessible to a public? Most people seemed to think that the physical and visual aspects should be paired, because access to public art implies an experience. Second, with online access people can see the public art collection any time they want, if they have an internet connection. The public art program has greatly expanded its visual and informational database so that people can see and learn about the collection in the privacy of their own home. This is important access because it is informative and educational. But having visual access on a screen does not necessarily do justice to all the pieces in the collection.

The last of these ways of thinking about access is in terms of intellectual or emotional access. This was of concern to many people, though they did not necessarily express it in these terms. Artists were concerned about people enjoying and appreciating their work. They recognized that if the public includes everyone, then they must some how make their work appeal to and be understandable to a wide range of people. Short of informational and explanatory texts, some pieces take a verbal explanation or time to
understand. This can be problematic for some artists, because they are concerned that peoples’ attention spans are too short for them to take the time to think about what they are looking at or experiencing. For some artists, this is the point: it is not a one-liner. They want to challenge or provoke people. But, is the piece accessible in every day terms? Is there a level at which anyone can appreciate the piece? This is something selection panel members were concerned about. Those who were critical of what they consider risk-averse pieces, complained that we need to raise expectations. For the public art staff, they focused on educating people about (public) art. In order to widen the potential range of pieces the city might some day acquire, people need to learn more about the possibilities. As well, a significant number of people noted: you have to have a balance in the collection, the challenging and provocative, to the whimsical and easy-to-read pieces.

7.2.3 For all intents and purposes?

Artists and the public art program staff were, by far, more interested in the intents and purposes of public art than the other interviewees. The former director of DOCA spoke about an artwork’s intent: it is intended to be experienced by members of the public, which she said means low barriers to seeing or experiencing public art, and access regardless of state in life. The manager of the public art program was adamant about three things in relation to intents and purposes: 1) public art is not advertisement: its purpose is not to advertise goods or services, 2) one of the program’s intention is to push the envelope and engage artists and the public in new ways (e.g., media and messages), and 3) public art’s purpose is not to decorate or solve pre-existing problems.
Artists’ concerns about intents and purposes, arise I imagine, due to their concern about the creative process. Though all categories of individuals were concerned that public art’s intent be focused on the public and that its purpose is to engage the public, artists wanted to push this a bit further, to include personal motivations and agendas. An artist’s motivation might be to challenge people to think differently about a particular site (e.g., its history), thus the intent of the piece is to engage people in a critical way. They may be focused on all ages and abilities, knowing full well that the piece might not be fully accessible to everyone. For a couple of the artists they were “shooting for” reaching everyone, but hoping that the deeper message of the piece would reach some. In some ways this suggests that the artist needs to know the site and its particular public, thus honing in on those who will be there regularly and will be able to read the piece to its fullest extent.

Does all public art have to, as Patricia Phillips suggests: act as a critical public catalyst? That is, to animate the public sphere and generate meaningful dialogue? Many of the artists talked about a desire for their work to generate (thoughtful) conversations but did not think it was a necessary part of the definition of public art. At this point in the conversation, people were focusing on what makes something (an artwork, an installation) public art. They were not yet talking about what it can “do.” As I said earlier, it is a combination of ways of thinking about public art, beyond labels, beyond simplistic definitions, that allows for a more sophisticated conversation about and
enactment of public art. These are important distinctions, which I will be discussing later in this chapter.

7.2.4 Process as Product
First, I must note that when I am talking about process in public art, it is multi-faceted and can be quite lengthy, as there are many steps and actors involved. The process begins long before an artist is selected (it includes the process of developing the RFP/RFQ, selecting selection panels, etc.), includes working /negotiating with the artist once s/he is selected, involves multiple levels of administration, and continues through to installation. Also, this is a choice the artist makes, of entering into a contract—literally and metaphorically—with “the public.” This contract includes the process. For many public arts administrators the process is their focus. Following the process and completing it means success (which I will speak to later in this chapter).

Only seventeen of the sixty-three people I interviewed defined public art by its public process. For these individuals, this was a very important part of what makes public art public. This relates to the earlier conversation (in 7.1.1) about public space and representation. When people spoke of the significance of a public process, they became quite animated, and it was apparent that this, for them, was very consequential: the process was symbolic of public representation. According to the ordinance, anyone can participate in the selection of public art. The program staff encourage public participation, and adhere to a process set forth by the program policy. The selection process is reviewed every few years, and one of the main points of concern is having “the
Artists were anxious about the process. The selection process was for them a worrisome part of the process. Several artists mentioned how they did not want to merely appeal to the lowest common denominator, which for some was what such a process supports (See Patricia Phillips comments in chapter two about mediocrity and public art). They were, though, very understanding of the reality of a lengthy process. The public art process is, by ordinance, a lengthy process because it is not just chosen by the program manager, program staff or a panel of experts. The process is thus more time intensive because there are several steps in the selection process, which includes educating people about public art. The onus lands on the artist, to a certain degree, to educate selection panels and convince them that their work is a good fit for the site and its public. But, as the manager of the program in Denver contends, it is also up to the staff to educate all who are involved in the process, to help them open their minds to the possibilities of public art in Denver.

Having been involved in public art as a (innocent) bystander, artist, planner, and administrator, I have come to understand how one cannot just look at the end product as the installed piece. Public art can be an administrative and political nightmare. A piece may not live up to its (or the artist’s) potential because of many possible factors and forces that must be taken into account. A good example of this is Janet Echelman’s *1.26*, installed as part of the Denver’s Biennial of the America’s (summer 2010). I was less than enthusiastic about the piece when I saw it *in situ* (See figures 7.1, 7.2, and 7.3,
I was not impressed with the piece during the day, particularly the way the piece is tethered to the ground in an unfortunate engineering solution that was an unconscionable treatment of the civic landscape. But, as someone who was involved in making the project happen noted, the critique of the piece must be informed by the process; that is, one needs to incorporate an understanding of the process: scheduling, funding, and longer-term goals. Getting the Echelman piece to Denver was a big coup for the city. It energized the public art staff and its advisors: it got them thinking about what public art can be.

Figure 7.1: 1.26, Janet Echelman: Installation in background and tethering in foreground (photograph, joni m palmer)
Figure 7.2: 1.26, Janet Echelman: Site of tethering (photograph, joni m palmer)

Figure 7.3: 1.26, Janet Echelman: Tethered (photograph, joni m palmer)
Thus far, I have established that something (an artwork, an installation) is public (art) because of four things: use of public funds, a public location and accessibility, an intent to serve and engage the public, and the enactment of a public process. The implication here is that public art is public because of each of these points, and all of them together.

7.2.5 Caveat: What it is not

Clearly, though, for many people, particularly the public art staff, there are things public art is not. And, there are things it is not supposed to do. It was only when I asked people if they could draw a line to demarcate what is public art and what it is not, that they began to talk about the relationships between public art, street furniture, architecture and landscape architecture.

The landscape architects I spoke with—City Staff, Civic Stakeholders, and Creative Professionals—tended to conflate landscape architecture and art/public art. This was not a surprise to me, having taught in the field and practiced as a landscape architect. What concerned me was that these landscape architects did not appear to want to make distinctions. Architects, too, thought of their buildings as art. What might making such distinctions do for landscape architecture, architecture and public art? I believe it comes down to what I stated at the end of the previous section: something is public art by virtue of funding, location and access, intent and process. As well, and this is something no one stated explicitly in the interviews, public art is created by artists or artist-led teams (this is a very clear statement in the RFP/RFQ released by the public art program). An artist has a particular way of thinking and doing that distinguishes her/him from a landscape
architect or architect. They are brought into a similar vein of work as landscape architects and architects—to serve the public or a client—when engaging in public art, but this a choice an artist makes (as I will discuss below).

The manager of the public art program brought this to a finer point by referencing the ordinance. The public art program, she said, is not going to use public art to solve problems or fix problems in an existing or proposed facility. Often, she noted, there are high expectations of what public art can do, but sometimes we have to just let it be art. Another point she made, of great consequence to public art programs, is that the collection is not curated similarly to a museum collection. She (and her staff) do not pick and choose the public art; it is a public process by law. The collection thus is not by default, it is intentionally based on public participation. In addition, the public art staff firmly stated that public art is not: signage, off the shelf, solving problems for the building, for redesigning or decorating a building (it has to be created in a collaborative manner, between artist and architect). But clearly, despite these distinctions, the staff said that we cannot think of public art as a thing or just a percentage of a project. This diminishes its value. The public art staff need to educate people—other City Staff, Civic Stakeholders, and Creative Professionals—about what public art is not. There is a persistent perception of public art as things that are placed in the urban landscape; such perceptions detract from the ability of the public art program to advance public art as critical elements in the making of the city. The program, as such, continues to exist as a “powerless autonomy”: a program that makes decisions according to the parameters of
the ordinance and the guidelines the staff have created but the program has no power in relation to other departments and urban initiatives.

7.2.6 Public art is not for all artists

The artists I interviewed all commented on how public art is not something all artists, or in fact many, want to be involved in creating. Table 7.4 (below) presents how one artist makes the distinctions between artist, painter, and public artist. It appears, from these interviews, that many artists make clear distinctions amongst these terms, in order to clarify the focus of the work. An artist must, as one artist told me, be willing to shift her/his thinking because public art, versus “art” is about: being a pragmatist, serviceability, feasibility, appropriateness, and safety. As another artist remarked, the responsibility of an artist when making public art is to make it work on a public site, which means dealing with maintenance and vandalism, amongst other things. One of the artists, a painter, observed that many of the art pieces she made for galleries or for patrons would not survive in public space. She began working in public art as an avenue to creativity and because she was tired of what she saw in the public realm. She, as other artists expressed, gets frustrated with the process: the need to have empathy for all actors, the questioning of her work by people who are not necessarily interested in what she is doing as an artist, etc. But, as another painter said, these projects enlarge his practice “because in public art my directive is to understand everybody, not just an elite public (galleries).” The experience of working on public art projects has informed his gallery work and vice versa, and this artist felt this was important to his growth as an artist.
Studio or gallery work can be accomplished almost solely in isolation, this is not the case in public art. Another reason this type of work is not for everyone is because of the complex web of relationships the artist is beholden to. This harkens back to the public process aspect of what makes something public art: the artist has to be willing to partake in a lengthy process that demands a great deal from the artist (e.g., from defending her work to community members, negotiating changes with staff, to coordinating installation).

Some artists continue to work in public art despite, even because of, the frustrations. One artist, who has created public art and been on selection panels, said he remains in the public art field as an advocate, to challenge the normative expectations of public art in Denver. He depicted public art as the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Public Art from Artists POV</strong> vs. <strong>Public Art from Public/Administrative POV</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- engage emotionally + intellectually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- stimulate conversation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- audience and public aesthetic limits work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- not just for “sitting on”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- any artist has a chance to win a commission</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

When he described this visualization he said, “The pendulum swings side-to-side depending on the people involved, and this is where the inherent tension of public art is
located.” He does not wish to be complicit in “public art as a harmless art,” and feels that his public duty is to raise awareness and voice his concerns.

7.3 Who is public art for + What does public art “do” for the City of Denver?

One of the questions implicit to what the artists were talking about in the above section is: who is public art for? I have so far talked about how people define public art, but as I noted in the introduction to this chapter, several other questions are critical to fleshing out what public art is, and why we create public art. Who is it we expect we are creating public art for under the auspices of the public art program? And, what is it we think creating public art “does” for the city of Denver and its publics?

7.3.1 Who is public art for?

As I had found when I asked people to define the public, this question prompted some similar responses. Instead, though, of the wide range of categories in defining the public (geographic, political/economic, service-oriented, strategic, variable, inclusive, and exclusive), interviewees spoke of a slightly narrower range: geographic, inclusive, and exclusive. To challenge people to be more specific about who it is public art is created for in Denver, I asked them: is it for residents, visitors, or both? This question is relevant because of what I will be speaking to in 7.6 of this chapter: Why create public art?

_Inclusive, exclusive, and geographic._ By far, people (in all categories) felt that public art was created for everyone: regardless of age, sex, race, education, etc. Once again, several people noted that we cannot forget or ignore people with disabilities, the homeless, or
children, teens, and the elderly. Also included are residents and visitors, whomever it is experiencing the city, no matter the time frame. In terms of exclusivity and geography, who public art is for “depends on use and the location.” According to the staff who made this comment, they focus on the community (or residents) who use public spaces on a regular basis. But they did also acknowledge that there are spaces that attract certain users because of the location. For example (a much used example by interviewees), the convention center is for everyone but primarily it is visitors (tourists and conventioneers) who use the space. The public art for the convention center is a kind a showcase of local and international talent, something Visit Denver highlights in its materials.

Residents and/or visitors? I asked this question because I had not seen this attended to directly in the literature (academic or practice). If, as many people told me when they were talking about what public art does for the city, public art is about the everyday, then public art is, it seems, primarily for people who live (and work) in Denver. It is for, according to City Staff, Civic Stakeholders, a general public, a civic public, multiple publics, and public as audience. A civic public is the public that participates in producing (e.g., through decision-making) public art, and feel it is their responsibility and the city’s to responsibly use city funds for public art. Multiple publics are all the possible people who might encounter public art, wherever they are in the city. Public as audience is a public that seeks out public art, an arts and cultural public.

Artists and other Creative Professionals all said that public art is for everyone, but added, that they looked to the residents (and users of the site) primarily when developing their
ideas for a piece. But they acknowledged that public art is, of course, for visitors. And, as one person mentioned: it is these visitors who return home and tell their friends and colleagues about arts and culture in Denver.

“It’s for residents, but if it is really good, it’s for visitors” (City Staff member 2009). This sentiment is one that suggests the tension about who public is actually created for. Local artists have been frustrated by what they feel are the city’s continuing efforts to attract international talent, thus discounting the local talent. The Visit Denver staff I spoke with talked about how public art has the potential to attract cultural tourism (public as audience for public art). “We are not there yet (in Denver),” she said, “but look at Millennium Park in Chicago!” The overall tone, though, was that we should be creating public art for Denver residents, and that it is a positive additional benefit for visitors.

It’s for artists, too! … and all the other people involved in producing public art. Only two people spoke to this point: that public art is an opportunity for artists to develop their work and make a living. Public art is not necessarily created for them, but they are one of the beneficiaries. When I interviewed people in Albuquerque, NM, numerous people (City Staff, Civic Stakeholders, and Creative Professionals) talked about how important it is that we not forget that public art is also for artists: as a means of making a living, as a way to develop their work, and as a showcase for their work. These same people also talked about how public art employs a much wider range of the public than one might think: from the artists to fabricators, construction crews and City Staff. This is a unique way of thinking about who public art is for, and one that I think is important to consider
when we talk about the benefits of public art.

7.3.2 What does public art “do” for Denver?

Perhaps a better way to talk about benefits is to ask the question: What does public art contribute to/“do” for Denver? According to Hall’s and Robertson’s survey of public art projects, there are seven claims made by advocates of public art: 1) develops a sense of community, 2) develops a sense of place, 3) develops a civic identity, 4) addresses community needs, 5) tackles social exclusion, 6) is of educational value, and 7) promotes social change. I did not, in this research, hear these claims as such. Particularly, people did not talk about how public art tackles social exclusion or how it promotes social change. There were intimations of its being of educational value and helping alter people’s perceptions of the world (hopefully, according to several artists, opening peoples’ minds and enlarging their world views). What I did find were three categories of public art’s contribution to the city of Denver: quality of life, city image and identity, and economic stimulus. Table 7.3 (below) shows what percentage of the interviewees believed that public art contributed to the City of Denver according to these categories. No one had any data to support what they were talking about, but I don’t think that’s the point. The point is that people believe public art does make a difference, or at least that it has the potential.
City Officials & Civic Creative
Staff Stakeholders Professionals
WHAT PUBLIC ART CONTRIBUTES TO DENVER

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<tr>
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<th>City Officials &amp; Staff</th>
<th>Civic Stakeholders</th>
<th>Creative Professionals</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quality of Life</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City Image and Identity</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Stimulus</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>0%</td>
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Table 7.3: The Benefits of Public Art

*Quality of life.* Public art contributes to the quality of life in Denver in both tangible and intangible ways. People spoke of quality of life in terms of city livability and, at a more intimate scale, the impact on their everyday lives. This appears to be a very important part of what public art does for Denver, but also why it is important to have public art in the city. According to all of the categories of interviewees, public art makes a city more livable because it enhances our experience of the built environment by stimulating our attention to the world around us. It creates a welcoming atmosphere by bringing meaning to places, expressing the history of places, and let’s you know, in a visceral way, that you are *in* Denver. Not only does public art add visual interest (something to look at) in the urban environment but also serves as landmarks that orient and ground people. In this way it humanizes the city, and makes it a more interesting and seemingly safe place to be, or return to and explore. Much of what people were talking about was the pedestrian experience, which makes sense since many interviewees paired livability with the everyday.

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90 Total number of interviewees, n = sixty-three; numbers (percentages) according to interviewee category: City Officials and Staff, n = 18; Civic Stakeholders, n = 29; Creative Professionals, n = 16.
A majority of people said public art had an impact at a very basic level: walking down the street. According to one of the planners, public art elevates an individual’s quality of life by providing him with opportunities to look outside himself and connect to a larger world. Because, as an artist commented, for many people this is the only way some people encounter art: public art brings, joy, even delight to a moment in your day. It breaks up the monotony of daily life, and wakes you up to possibilities. It exercises your brain and enriches your life: you learn new things, you think new thoughts, and you might even be educated about your city. It forces you to pay attention to the world around you. And, it has the potential to create dialogue, and at the street level gets people talking with one another. For many artists this is what most of them seek to do when creating public art. For the planners, it is an essential part of the art of making cities.

*City image and identity.* Public art is increasingly used in city image campaigns (see Interlude 2), a means by which to “sell” the city to individuals, families, and businesses in the midst of considering relocating to Denver. Significant pieces can, as one City Staff member remarked, put the city “on the map” (nationally and internationally). Jimenez’ *Blue Mustang* at DIA and Argent’s *I See What You Mean* are good examples of this. The first was a controversy that raged in the metropolitan area (citizens were concerned about what kind of image the “demon horse” portrayed of the city), and nationally and internationally (it made the arts section of the *New York Times* and *The Wall Street Journal*). The controversy about *Blue Mustang* made people aware of public art in Denver, and suggested the city was not afraid of risks. At first, people (City Staff and public alike) squirmed at the press. But, as the public art program manager said on *Colorado Matters* (a local NPR show), “It’s good, free press.” People were, finally,
talking about public art in Denver! This, it seems to me (in terms of the publicity of public art), is a step in the right direction: toward cultivating dialogue and debate amongst publics in order to make a liveable city.

For City Staff, Civic Stakeholders and artists alike, public art is a physical manifestation of Denver being an open, compassionate, and cultural city. The director of parks and recreation told me that when he interviewed for his job in Denver he was impressed with the amount and quality of public art here. He said it showed him that the city invests in the public realm, and that the city has a sense of humor. It was one of the final points in his making the decision to move here with his young family. The public art in Denver, as one developer commented, expresses the city’s attitude: eclectic, pride of place, and with a Western perspective. It is “showing off,” but in a fun and easy manner.

Denver has struggled with its art reputation for quite some time, and it has struggled with an inferiority complex. The councilwoman I spoke with said that having a public art program in place gives Denver a reputation of being more art friendly and art curious.

The image the city projects, both to its citizens and the “outside world,” is one, according to the former director of the Denver Art Museum (DAM), that shouldn’t be concerned with erasing the image of a cow town or sports town, but one that speaks to the wonderful mix that makes Denver unique. He added, that one of the reasons he came here was because Denver has taxed itself heavily for cultural enrichment.
Economic stimulus. Surprisingly, only five people mentioned economics as one of the benefits of public art. In the last five years research has shown that arts and culture are an important segment of the urban economy (AFTA 2011). Public art, it seems, is not just about art in public spaces but is also about the money that public art “puts into economy.” Public art is one component of bringing attention to the arts in a city: it draws people downtown where they spend time and money (AFTA 2011). The production of public art stimulates a broad-based creative economy: providing opportunities for artists to make a living, as well as the multitude of others involved in the production of public art (Palmer 2011). The Americans For The Arts extensive research suggests that people should be thinking about the economic aspects of public art, but still (nationwide) the focus has been on arts and cultural venues and events not public art. I believe this is because public art is still considered a thing that is placed in the landscape. Public art remains to be seen as objects not part of a larger city-making strategy. That is, public art is not regarded in the same way that arts and cultural venues are: as part of urban planning and economic initiatives. Therefore, Denver is not alone. But, it appears that Denver is not moving in the same direction as other cities. Other mid-size cities are strengthening their public art programs and cultural affairs departments by aligning them with economic development and planning initiatives. The recent dismantling of the public art program (during the summer of 2011) demonstrates how Denver does not consider public art an important part of the city’s economic strategies and city image-making projects. The public art program was moved to Theatres and Arenas, which is chiefly a managing and maintenance arm of the city. Program offices were moved out of the Wellington Webb building, where the planning, parks and recreation, and public
works departments are housed. Now, staff no longer have the accidental opportunity to talk with and exchange information with other City Staff who are a part of making public art happen in Denver.

One of the few people who mentioned economics, the public art program manager at DIA noted that economic stimulus is an important part of what public art contributes to the city. He then added, this is not a cop out or wishful thinking answer, but it is a way (based on AFTA research) we must think about public art in order to sell public art programs. But, DIA’s program manager was the only public art staff to mention public art and economic development. Other public art staff spoke about budgets. One developer spoke about how the city could use the public art program’s collection brochure to greater advantage, as a tool for selling the city to hotels, business people and tourists (cultural tourists, in particular). It is an economic generator, albeit a small one, he said. One of the reasons I think most people did not mention the economic contribution to public art is because they thought it was an insensitive way to talk about the arts. One of the developers explained that he did not want to be taken as crass or not community-minded, but: “We need to,” as two other developers observed, “become much better at looking at the arts from a business perspective.”

7.3.3 Material, human, and symbolic value

When I asked people if they felt there was a need for, or value in, having public art in Denver, I asked them to rank their response on a 1-10 scale: “1” represented no value and “10” represented great value. Six people declined to rate (or said they could not attach a
number to the value) the value of public art. The majority of people (thirty) said that there was great value in having public art, and a public art program in Denver. Nineteen people ranked the value at an “8” or a “9”. Five people said that they valued public art at a “5”, “6”, or “7”. And three people said there was little or no value in having public art in Denver.

For those who believed there was great value, they were speaking to the same things they had talked about when asked about what public art does for the city: improves the quality of life, and builds a positive city image and strong sense of identity. The manager of the planning department elaborated: Its value lies in it being evidence of care, and the inciting of a civic dialogue. These people not only felt there was value in having public art but also a need. They expressed this in the following terms: providing public art is one of the essential elements that a good city provides for its citizens. People who valued public art at an “8” or a “9”, noted that there are a lot of things the city needs to provide for its citizens, of which arts and culture is a high priority but not a top priority (such as education or infrastructure). Ranking the value at a “5”, “6”, or “7” meant that there were other services that need to be ranked higher, services that attend to the health and well-being of the city/people. One of the individuals who said there was little to no value, qualified her remark by saying that in her work, as a public works staff, public are does not “add” anything to the functioning of the city. It often, she admitted, causes problems in their work, with regard to safety and obstruction in the right-of-way. Another person, one of the Creative Professionals, said that there were far too many
things the city needs than public art, such as rising poverty, homelessness, and poor access to healthcare.

In summary, how people defined public art, thought about what it contributed to the city, and how they valued public art was based on three things: the material, the human and the symbolic. Public art is a material (physical) manifestation of a civic-minded society, one that values arts, culture, a livable environment, and the contentment of its citizens. Materially, public art enhances public spaces and provokes dialogue. From a human perspective, public art provides people with the opportunity to serve the community, participate in the making of the city, and generates conversation amongst its publics. The public sphere is where much of the human value of public art occurs. Symbolically, public art is a means by which a city proves itself as vibrant, urbane, and attractive place to live, work, and play. But, what kind of public art is it that enhances the city, that engages people, and that symbolizes an urbane environment? Some people told me that any kind of public art—good or bad—was good for the city. It is to this question that I now turn my attention.

7.4 Measuring Success

One of the gallery owners I interviewed warned me that determining whether public art is good or bad, successful or unsuccessful is a matter of opinion. We then talked about some parameters for having this discussion: good versus bad, successful or unsuccessful, favorite or not, whether one liked a piece or not, and finally does it work? Another question that one of the public art staff asked me: Is there such a thing as bad or unsuccessful public art. As I noted earlier, many public arts administrators claim that
there is no such thing as bad public art. They say that just having a program is a victory or a success. And completing the process—that is, installing a piece—makes for success. But I wanted to understand more than whether people liked a piece or not, or which was their favorite. In many fields there is a productive discussion about success, my question was: how might this apply to public art?

7.4.1 Is it just a matter of differences of opinion?

I think it is important that people have personal opinions about public art. This shows that they are thinking about it and even attaching meaning and value. Discussing differences of opinion contributes to a public dialogue. During a couple of my slow reads I encountered people debating a piece of public art. I was surprised to find perfect strangers, in one case, talking happily about their opinions on the piece. They even started asking questions, turning to me (obviously, and now sheepishly so, eavesdropping) to ask if I knew how much it cost. This was a display of what interviewees said is important to quality of life in Denver, engaging the world around us. These discussions are important because stating why you like or dislike a piece forces one to articulate what it is about the piece that attracts one or repels one from it. Is it the artist, or is it just the color? Do you find it offensive? Do you not want your children to go near it? These kinds of conversations might appeal to Patricia Phillips, who suggested in her 1988 essay “Out of Order, The Public Art Machine,” that public art should be a critical public catalyst and generate meaningful dialogue. So, differences of opinion are part and parcel of what public art is about, and potentially generate critical debate and meaningful dialogue.
The table below (7.4) is the product of a conversation I had with one of the artists I interviewed. I present it here as an example of how people view public art in very different ways. In addition, this table shows three things that contribute to the next section on successful public art: 1) appearances, 2) familiarity, and 3) ease in describing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>“The Blue Bear”</th>
<th>DIA Mustang (or National Velvet)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cuddly and cute</td>
<td>Erotic, sexual, formidable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessible: physically, emotionally, and intellectually = familiar</td>
<td>Not familiar = unknown - scary - too provocative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not challenging: It’s a big, blue bear!</td>
<td>Challenging - Where does it “come from”? - What to think of it?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not difficult to describe or grasp</td>
<td>Difficult to describe or grasp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What bad thing can you say about it?</td>
<td>It’s the appearance that incites most of the negative comments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Who is going to say anything bad about a teddy bear?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trite - easy, simplistic</td>
<td>Not Trite! - strong and complicated back story</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7.4: Opinions of an Artist: Bear versus Mustang

7.4.2 Criteria for successful public art

I found that engaging interviewees in a conversation about particular pieces helped to develop an evaluative framework. If we do not evaluate public art, how then are we to advance the practice? I don’t think that claiming a piece is successful will (or should) enable a prototype or example for future art work. But, the patterns that I found in these interview responses suggest that there are criteria people use to determine whether or not a piece is successful. Most often, according to these interviews, it comes down to
whether or not it “works” on the site or for that particular place. Furthermore, someone might find a piece successful but not like it. Liking is a personal opinion, success is more objective. Furthermore, being unsuccessful is not necessarily just the opposite of success.

One City Staff claimed that ““The Blue Bear”’ is an undisputed success because it is iconic and loveable, celebrates a local artist, the work is specific to the site, and it is (in art historical terms) “an object lesson.” All of these things are part of why people love the bear. And, as the table above (7.4) shows, it is physically and emotionally accessible, playful, and easy to talk about. It is not, though, an undisputed success, for some people the bear is a “one-liner.” People who felt “The Blue Bear” was a “one-liner” contend that it does not challenge people: “It is cute but not much more.” This comment reflects the opinion that public art should challenge peoples’ ways of thinking about the world, and prompt them to think more deeply about the world around them. As well, for some people, “The Blue Bear” is not very interesting: it is “one-liner” because there is no reason to return, you “get it” at first glance. The large pieces in the city’s collection all seem to generate divisive responses. But, as I found, there are criteria that provide a meaningful way to talk about public art; table 7.5 (below) presents this criteria.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUCCESSFUL PUBLIC ART</th>
<th>UNSUCCESSFUL PUBLIC ART</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Siting</td>
<td>Poor craftsmanship and execution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Durability</td>
<td>Poorly sited or detracts from the site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Craftsmanship and quality of work</td>
<td>Not the right scale for the site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engagement</td>
<td>Not visible or does not have presence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visibility + Presence</td>
<td>Unclear intention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appealing</td>
<td>Inaccessible: physically or intellectually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Works on multiple levels</td>
<td>The result of a broken process</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7.5: Criteria for Successful and Unsuccessful Public Art

Public art, according to this sample of participants, is successful because of seven things (in order of most to least importance): appropriate siting, durability, craftsmanship, engagement, visibility and presence, appeals to a general public, and it works on multiple levels. Siting was the most important item to all of the people I interviewed: well-sited means that it is incorporated in a thoughtful way with respect to the larger site/setting. And, the piece should be unique to the site; that is, it won’t work well anywhere else.

With regard to craftsmanship, people were concerned about the quality of work, from both an artistic perspective but also from a practical perspective. Public art, much of it exposed to the elements, must be durable. And, it must withstand maintenance (e.g., power-washing, mowing, etc.). If public art is to be successful it must engage people, evoke emotion (or some response), and hopefully start a conversation. Because it is in public space, accessible to all, it must appeal to a general public. As one artist said, everyone should “get it” at some level. And, finally, it should work on multiple levels. As one civic stakeholder said, when I showed him this list, “At a very basic level, it should meet all of these criteria.”
But public art, as I learned, can be successful in many different ways, during the process. Related to engagement (in Table 7.5, above) it can be successful because it creates excitement. This excitement should exude from the artist, a panel selection member said: we should feel her/his passion for the project. It should also create excitement amongst the selection committee and within the community. This for many artists showed them that there is the potential for ownership, and beyond success, that people will like it and care for it.

The public art program manager was not comfortable stating which pieces in the collection she felt were successful because she didn’t really think of it in these terms but rather she felt a sense of satisfaction when a project followed policy and the public process was completed. This is a kind of success, as she said: “Enacting the ordinance and the process is quite a feat in and of itself!” Other public art programs talk about success in terms of an enduring program and implanted projects. In this way, a piece of public art is successful because a public process is performed.

Public art can be an accidental success, so said one staff member. The piece, “the pack of wolves” at Denver Museum of Nature and Science, is one that was installed without much fanfare but is an overwhelming success, particular with families. It appeals to children: they wanted to look at it, talk about it, and most of all, climb all over it. “Just watch peoples’ reactions,” he said, “that’s how you know a piece is successful.” It does not matter if the responses are positive or negative; what matters is that people are noticing it and responding to it.
You cannot, as ten people warned me, emphasize excellence or beauty. None of the criteria listed above allude to either. Excellence and beauty are personal matters, one selection panel member reminded me, “If we started selecting art on these criteria, the conversations would never end.” Staff and the public art committee spend a great deal of time developing the RFQ/RFP for a project as it must be well written and clearly state the objectives of the project. The criteria listed in Table 7.5 (above) help with some of the practical and universal issues. But for the process to be smooth and move towards a successful piece, the selection panel must have specific project criteria to follow, which public art staff say is the best way to ward off “art by consensus,” or what some people say is “dumbing-down to the lowest common denominator.” The following are the pieces in the Denver collection that are pieces most often mentioned in the interviews as the most successful works (I am using the names people used): “The Blue Bear,” Borofsky’s Dancers or “the aliens,” The Blue Horse, and “the fat people” at the Performing Arts Complex. Not surprisingly, all of these pieces have pet names, have a strong presence, and have generated controversy.

Public art, according to this sample of participants, is unsuccessful because of seven things (in order of most to least importance): poor craftsmanship and execution, poorly sited or detracts from the site, not the right scale for the site, not visible or does not have presence, unclear intention or does not resonate with people, inaccessible (physically or intellectually), and, the result of a broken process. I initially thought these might just be “the flip side” of what makes public art successful, but they are more than that because they refer to specific aspects of the piece or the process.
The most problematic of these, particularly for City Staff, is if a piece deteriorates easily or requires constant maintenance or major repair. In the worst-case scenario, it is a hazard to the public. *Tilted Arc* was mentioned by several people as a cautionary case that embodied failure in public art: it was too aggressive, cut off views, was an obstacle, and was the result of a corrupted process. There are a couple pieces in the city’s collection that have incited public ire. The principal concerns (particularly about Barofsky’s *Dancers*) were about an undemocratic selection process, and questions about funding and hidden agendas.

The next section attends to the subjects (as in who is involved in the production) of public art, leaving behind, for a short time, the objects produced. I provided some information about the participants in this study in chapter five: now I turn to them as actors in the production process.

### 7.5 The “who” in the production of public art: Actors, knowledge, expertise, and interactions

In chapter five I provided a brief portrait of the people who participated in this research; I now return to these individuals to discuss them as a set of actors with particular knowledge, expertise, and relationships.

#### 7.5.1 Actors: Roles in the production of public art

Just as the publics public art is produced for are multiple so are the actors responsible for making public art happen. Each person acts in particular ways (e.g., managing the public
People fell into four categories with regard to their role in the production of public art (See Table 7.6, below). People felt that what they did (their role) was direct, indirect, only when needed or no role at all. When I asked people what their role was in the creation or planning of public art in Denver, they, for the most part, replied in a very simplistic manner. To some degree their responses were direct and stated the obvious, particularly for City Staff. For example, it was fairly clear who had a direct role: director of DOCA, manager of the public art program, public art program staff, and the artists who were creating work for the program. For those who had an indirect role, it ranged from supporting and advocating for, to providing expertise on a regular basis, and facilitating or coordinating others who were directly involved. The director of parks and recreation said that his role was not direct but rather was indirect in two ways: 1) he supervises staff who work closely with public art staff, and 2) he has a cooperative relationship with the DOCA staff. Another example is what a public works staff member described to me: “Not directly, mostly I stay out of the way, but … I work with other
departments and agencies to make sure that work in the public realm (the right-of-way) meets all standards, is safe and is maintainable.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ROLE IN THE PRODUCTION OF PUBLIC ART</th>
<th>City Officials &amp; Staff</th>
<th>Civic Stakeholders</th>
<th>Creative Professionals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indirect role</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct role</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only when needed</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does not play a role</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7.6: Role in the Production of Public Art

A third way that people were involved was on an “as needed basis.” These individuals roles included: providing expertise for specific projects (contract work), serving on selection panels, and working on a specific public art project for a limited period of time.

For example, a member of the planning staff told me that she is only involved when a project comes under her purview. The fourth category included those individuals who said they had no role in the production of public art. I found this a curious response because I was interviewing people based on their being involved in some way in public art in Denver. I did talk with these people further about their response but did not push them to say they were involved because this is an important finding. I would say that these people were, in fact, involved but in indirect or subtle ways. How people are involved in the production of public art varies a great deal, and often their role is a “bit part,” or seemingly insignificant to her/him. It could be a conversation one has at a

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91 Total number of interviewees, n = sixty-three; numbers (percentages) according to interviewee category: City Officials and Staff, n = 18; Civic Stakeholders, n = 29; Creative Professionals, n = 16. Multiple responses were included in all categories.
dinner party, introducing an artist to someone on a selection panel. But, for these to be significant, I believe they must also be things these people do on a regular basis, not a “one time deal.” Two of the developers said they had no role, but then one man went on to say that he was working on a project with the city and someone had mentioned the possibility of a public art component.

I also found that some people were inspired by our conversation to reflect further upon their role, an existing role, or a potential role. One of the public works staff, a supervisor, was obviously energized by the conversation, and told me at the end of the interview that he wanted to get more involved with the public art program. His role had been very indirect, but he posited that he could play a more direct role by instigating projects or talking with public art staff about possible collaborations.

7.5.2 Knowledge, expertise, and interactions

I was, perhaps, most surprised by the responses (and the ensuing conversations) to the questions about people’s knowledge of the public art program. Particularly interesting were the questions it prompted for me, beginning with: How is it people obtain knowledge about the public art program? I did not begin by asking this question but added it after the first several interviews when it became clear to me that not only did I need to know what kind of knowledge they had of the program but under what circumstances and in what ways did people gain this knowledge. From a practical perspective two things are very important: 1) How is this knowledge, or lack thereof,
impacting public art in Denver? and 2) How do we inform and educate, as well as inspire, people about urban public art programs?

**Knowledge of the program.** What does it mean to have knowledge of and about the public art program? When do you know enough to productively contribute? When do you not know enough, and therefore are not a beneficial contributor? And, how are you going to gain the knowledge you want or need?

I asked respondents to rank themselves on a scale of 1-10 (ranking oneself at a “1” meant no knowledge; a “10” meant that someone was very knowledgeable). I found five categories of knowledge: very knowledgeable, knowledgeable, some working knowledge, knew something of and about the program, and no knowledge (See Table 7.7, below). Not surprisingly, only 11% of people considered themselves very knowledgeable, meaning they were well-versed in the program collection, people, procedures and policies. Only 3% of the interviewees said they had no knowledge of the program. I think these people were very ill-confidant of their knowledge because they did know the public art program existed but didn’t want to hazard any guesses about the policies or collection. Both of these individuals did not know any of the staff, were not sure of what art they saw in Denver’s public spaces was considered public art, and had no idea of the process by which art was selected. The majority of people fell into the “knowledgeable” and “some working knowledge” categories. Those who were knowledgeable said they: 1) had a solid knowledge of the collection, 2) had a very good sense of policies and procedures, and could paraphrase the ordinance, and 3) knew the
public art staff fairly well. When people said they had a working knowledge they meant that they had a good sense of the rules and policies but not the nuances of the process. These people knew enough about the program to work with staff when necessary, but did not necessarily know the staff by name. They knew there was an ordinance for a percent-for-art program but knew little else about it. Seven individuals stated they knew something of and about the program. That is, they knew it existed, they knew some pieces of the collection, and knew there was an ordinance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KNOWLEDGE OF THE PROGRAM</th>
<th>City Officials &amp; Staff</th>
<th>Civic Stakeholders</th>
<th>Creative Professionals</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10: very knowledgeable</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 – 9: knowledgeable</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 – 6: some working knowledge</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 – 3: knows something about the program</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1: no knowledge</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7.7: Knowledge of the Program

But, how did these people come by this knowledge? For those who were very knowledgeable, they were working with public art on a daily basis. And, had been doing so for quite some time. Individuals who rated themselves as knowledgeable said this knowledge came from: working on public art projects or with public art staff frequently, participating in various parts of the process, watching installations and attending

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92 Total number of interviewees, n = sixty-three; numbers (percentages) according to interviewee category: City Officials and Staff, n = 18; Civic Stakeholders, n = 29; Creative Professionals, n = 16.
dedications, and visiting the collection. A working knowledge of the program came from having been on a selection panel, working on one, maybe two projects, and seeing the collection on occasion. The seven people who said they knew something about the program might have been more knowledgeable in the past (e.g., been on selection panels under a previous manager) but just had not kept themselves informed, were just beginning to learn about the program (educating themselves or had only recently considered being on a selection panel), or had read (or heard about) about a recent project in the news.

Why would someone have no knowledge of the program? Many staff, Civic Stakeholders and artists said they believed that 50% or more of the public did not know the city had a public art program. There was concern that even if people did know there was a program, they did not know there was an ordinance, and had no sense of the public process. This, for many people I interviewed, was why the public expressed outrage when a piece they did not like was installed. Educating people about the public art program, as a program staff member told me, is very difficult because people do not have the time to educate themselves about the program, or they learn by hearsay, which often provides people with incorrect information. The staff are reaching out to teach other departments, agencies and the public about public art. They offer workshops, tours (walking and biking), dedication ceremonies, brochures, and information (including interviews with artists, videos of project installations) on the city website. All of this goes a long way to raising awareness and knowledge, but what seems vastly more
important are two things: having people involved in the process and developing relationships.

Participating in various and multiple parts of the process (e.g., being on selection panels, being a PAC member, creating a piece of public art for the city) played a large role in how people came to understand the program policies and procedures. And, it was only through participating in the process that people began to understand the program’s funding mechanisms. Additionally, touring the collection or have a working or personal relationship with a staff member helped considerably.

Developing relationships was also key to increasing knowledge about the program. The director of parks and recreation noted that they were recently moved to the same floor as public art, which he felt helped cultivate personal relationships and further knowledge of the public art program. A few other City Staff acknowledged that proximity to public art program offices allowed for unplanned greetings and meetings in the hallways and visual access to information and people.

Committee of experts. The people who play significant roles in producing public art in Denver are people who have a solid breadth of knowledge about the program: ordinance, policies, funding mechanisms, selection process, and collection. These people also are considered experts, and are sought out for continued involvement. Not only do these people have a working knowledge, they have specialized skills, and in some cases, educational background (from degree programs, college courses, and self-tutoring). It is
this combination that enables a core group of people to maintain and advance the program. And, this is not just public art program staff. Kendall Peterson (manager of the program) has surrounded herself with experts. The Public Art Committee (PAC) is her committee of experts who help her not only with the “nuts and bolts” of implementing the program, but they are also intelligent advisors on a variety of issues related to public art. She is very picky about selecting her selection panel members. The selection panels are comprised of people with various levels and areas of knowledge about the project and the site, and have expertise in relevant areas. These are not just any public that is participating in selecting public art. These are well-informed, well-educated, and passionate members of a cultural and civic public. The implication being that there needs to be a panel of “citizen experts,” not (just) 'local Joe and Jane' from the community? What does this say about the public nature of public art? This approach seems to suggest that the art is paid for by public money, sited in a public location, and selected by a public process (per the city ordinance), but the public and the process must necessarily be limited to those people who are educated in the arts. Artists, and particularly those who have been on selection panels over the years, raised the most concerns about this. They were, though, of two minds. On the one hand, it is essential to have community members (e.g., users of the space, members of the general public) involved in order to get “buy-in” at an early stage, and to encourage interest. Also, it is important to hear what they have to say about public art: their opinions need to be heard because the selected artwork will be a part of their daily lives. And, it creates an opportunity to educate them about public art. On the other hand, artists felt that the public does not know enough about art to be making long-term decisions. One artist even
said, “Would we let just anyone off the street choose the architect or contractor for a building?” How public should the process be? Is it a matter of public art serving the city’s publics, but chosen by a committee of experts who know their constituencies and, as such, serve as the public by proxy? I have no answers to this, but it is a big debate in public art practice. And clearly, in Denver the conversation is already at hand. But, the wording of the ordinance and guidelines would have to be changed. And that is something, as I discussed in the literature review, most programs are not willing to re-open.

7.6 The “why” and “what” of the production of public art in Denver

I have thus far in this chapter discussed what people involved in the production of public art in Denver believe public art “does” for the city (with regard to improving quality of life, enhancing city image and identity, and boosting the economy); the added material, human and symbolic value of public art; and what they think makes for successful public art (durable, responds to the site/context, high craftsmanship, engaging, visible, appealing, and works on multiple levels). In this section I take this conversation further, discussing why public art is important to and for the city, and some of the challenges these various actors face in producing public art.

Public art, according to the people I interviewed, impacts the prosaic or everyday lives of the people who live in, work in, and visit the city. This is clearly important to all of the people I spoke with, and though hard to quantify, it can be readily heard when people talk about their experience of the city. In addition, as Ben Adler notes in a 2009 article in The
well-designed public spaces are good for real estate values and provide opportunities for small, local business to prosper. He goes on to argue:

“People like living in well designed, carefully thought out urban environments,” says Ricardo D. Barreto, director of the Urban Arts Institute at Massachusetts College of Art and Design. "Public art is about more than putting a statue in a corner. It is linked to urban design." (Adler 2009, 48)

So, not only are the arts, particularly public art says Adler (because public art projects employ a wide variety of people and are often quickly “shovel-ready”), a sensible economic investment, the arts have an important and positive impact on people’s decisions about where to live and has a daily impact on their lives. According to Gary Steuer, Philadelphia’s chief cultural officer, “The intrinsic value of public art relates to the aesthetic value of a work of art;” that is, it has value as an artistic expression. According to Steuer, public art’s instrumental value relates to the ability of art to educate, create jobs, increase real estate value, build citizens, increase tourism, and provide other benefits” (ASLA dirt 2011). It is to public art’s instrumental value in the urban environment that I now turn.

7.6.1 What is public art’s role in urban planning and urban revitalization?

I found that most people believed public art was not a high priority in the city’s urban planning and urban revitalization initiatives. But, they thought it could or that it should be a higher priority and play a larger role in the making of the city. More people thought that it could play a larger role than those that felt it should play a larger role, mostly because it is just one element in a much larger hierarchy of urban needs. Furthermore, as

93 According to Adler, “Arts are actually a great form of economic investment, particularly public art, and they should be amply funded in the stimulus package. Every year nonprofit arts organizations generate $166.2 billion in economic activity, support 5.7 million jobs, and send almost $30 billion back to government, according to Americans for the Arts” (Adler 2009, 48).
cautionary statements, several people said 1) it is not going to solve city problems: Public art is not a panacea and should not be advertised in this way, and 2) it is not just a matter of having a lot of it, it must be thoughtfully integrated into the planning and design process so that it becomes a meaningful part of the urban experience.

Public art can play a role, then, both in physical and/or tangible ways, and in less tangible ways. Yet, it appears that people felt the key to public art playing a meaningful role (that is, not just aesthetic insertions) is that City Staff and other professionals (in multiple departments, agencies, organizations, and firms) work in a collaborative manner. In addition, there were other things that people felt needed to be done. First, artists must be brought into the process much earlier. Not only did artists feel this was important (because they felt like outsiders or mere decorators when brought in (too) late in the project process) but architects and public works staff said it was problematic when they had to rethink and reorganize (project schematics, budgets, and schedules) in order to accommodate public art. This is a common problem in public art: public art is often brought into a project as an afterthought. Not only does this disrupt the process, it also creates bad feelings and upsets relationships. Publicizing public art and making it a clearer part of bond initiative, said one developer, would help all involved (staff, professionals and the public) better understand the role public art is going to play. The role of public art in each project will be different; therefore, its role is defined on a project-by-project basis. And, it is in the beginning phases of a project that teams must prevent possible misunderstandings and problems down the line. All of this highlights how the public art program is often operating as a “powerless autonomy”. The public art
program staff are working under the auspices of the ordinance but not within a larger framework of city imaging, economic development, and city planning. They do “make public art happen” (which is an accomplishment they are proud of) but they are often merely accommodated. And, much of the time, the art works they install are considered objects that enhance or beautify but are not an integral part of the larger urban fabric.

Physically, as one mechanism for revitalizing areas, public art can be a unique identifier of a district, community or neighborhood. It can serve as a landmark or anchor, and as a messenger for urban initiatives. But clearly, it has to be considered at part of an overall strategy for a district, community or neighborhood. Public Works staff (and other staff, too) were noticeably concerned that public art work at the intersection of the needs and requirements of the various departments, such as Public Works, Police and Safety, arts and culture, planning, environmental health, etc. One Public Works staff member said that public art is an important component of the urban pedestrian and vehicular landscape. For example, public art could be a part of traffic calming measures, but only if it is a thoughtful component of streetscape improvements.

Public art to these people, obviously has the potential of being one part of the larger “ecosystem” of the city, in both literal (or physical terms) but also figuratively (as a part of the way people think about urban planning and revitalization). It has to, though, and the planners were clear on this point, be worked on at multiple scales, from the macro- to micro scales. In other words, it must be considered as part and parcel of the large areal scale, and must be attended to down to the details of an individual project.
The intangible components of making public art a part of urban planning initiatives are that it become a part of a larger civic, urban dialogue. Not only do staff and professionals involved in producing public art have to work in a more collaborative manner, the public needs to be better educated so that they, too, become more involved. Public art can be instrumentalized to boost the economy, improve neighborhoods, and change the image of a city, but it can also be a means by which to increase citizen involvement. Many of the people I spoke with wished that more of the public knew more about public art, and that they were more involved. There are concerns, of course, about what role various publics should play (see “Committee of experts” above), which I think this is part of what could make a strong and vital community dialogue that could help resituate public art.

7.6.2 The work of public art: challenges and obstacles

Landscape is always both a material form that results from and structures social interaction, and an ideological representation dripping with power. (Michell 1996, 34)

I hope that I have made clear that a great deal of work goes into the production of public art. Public art is one part of the urban landscape, and one that is the result, as Mitchell says, of social interactions and ideological forces. There are multiple actors, factors, and forces at play in creating public art, and in making it an integral part of the urban environment. Important to understanding the production of public art are the challenges and obstacles people, organizations, and departments encounter when trying to do their work. The most common challenges, stated by the interviewees, are the lack of resources, which include budgets, staff, and time. These limitations make it difficult for people, particularly City Staff and Creative Professionals, to accomplish all that they
want and need to do.

DOCA staff talked about how they operated like a small non-profit, making them even more anomalous in a city system in which they, contrary to their counterparts, are about inducing and supporting delight and pleasure. Challenges particular to the public art program include being understaffed, lack of an ability to develop broad education campaigns (to teach people about why public art is important and how it happens; as well as to counter the misconceptions about artworks and funding of pieces), as well as being limited (by ordinance) as only able to use funds at the CIP site. This, too, underlines the “powerless autonomy” of the public art program. The program operates within a system that does not necessarily understand the what, why, and how of public art. Other City Staff and the public often dismiss public art as simply objects of pleasure not essential components of a great city. They operate in a rather autonomous mode, as a program that was created by an ordinance, but the program is essentially powerless in that it is not part of a larger conversation about the city.

Staff in other city departments mentioned that a central challenge of working in a bureaucracy was: the difficulty in bringing multiple parties together for coordination and implementation of a project. More pointedly, several staff said that coordinating, collaborating and communicating with other departments were major obstacles to satisfactory completion of work. As well, with so many different stakeholders for individual projects, it is often “a monumental effort to get everyone on board!”
Create Denver advisory board members commented on the fact that they seem to operate in an organizational vacuum, and in one that does not have an overall or definitively outlined vision. Other Civic Stakeholders mentioned how the economy has been a considerable challenge for the arts and cultural scene (in general) in Denver. External forces also come into play as delays or frustrations, such as the multiple layers of decision-making and approval (e.g. City Council), inconsistency in visions, and conflicting agendas. Interestingly, one developer mentioned the challenges of dealing with unintended consequences (unforeseen impacts of a project) or things beyond one’s control.

People involved in the selection of public art work raised concerns about rubber-stamping projects for the sake of efficiency and to more quickly complete work. For instance, in some cases working with artists takes a great deal of time and energy. Once an artist is selected there is often the need to massage a proposal to make it work better. But, the challenge is not to damage the integrity of the artist and her/his work in the name of efficiency and time constraints. Additionally, the selection process can be a lengthy and time-intensive process; it often takes time to gain momentum, which demands a commitment from those who volunteer.

Surprisingly, the former director of the Denver Art Museum said that the biggest challenge he faced was getting “Denver over the fear of being a cow town!” He wished that peoples’ mindsets were more akin to; “The Denver Art Museum (and arts and
Particular challenges for creative professionals was finding opportunities, finding other artists to work with, and facing the vertical learning curve that comes with each new project. Not only were artists concerned with making art, but with the challenge of making “good” art. Related to this was a frustration with having to work with (and present to) a public that is not (necessarily) educated about art or public art. The politics of the system (the city bureaucracy) and the day-to-day machinations of completing a project were very frustrating to most of the artists. Though they realized that this is a choice they have made, to do public work, which is dramatically different from studio/gallery work.

7.6.3 Philosophically, prosaically, and administratively

To do the work of producing public art it appears that people perform their work by way of three operational frameworks. I end this chapter with this conversation because it became clear to me that these frameworks are important to cultivating a critical dialogue about the production, benefits, value, and success of public art in Denver.

People involved in the work of producing public art operate via multiple (and often simultaneous) approaches: philosophical, prosaic, and administrative. A philosophical approach is one that focuses on the possibilities of a public art, and how art might be public. Philosophical definitions struggle with the relationship between art and public, and question the quality of art by consensus. A prosaic approach is reliant upon a general
sense of what art is and how it operates in public space. This approach focuses on how art functions in (or is a part of) the ordinary circumstances of our lives. Finally, an administrative or technical approach focuses on the pragmatics, regulatory framework and logistics of the program.

There is, of course, some overlap of these approaches. In order to develop a greater understanding of the breadth of public art, people need to understand these various approaches and consider the reasons why someone operates in this manner, and what the implication are for each. For the most part I found that Creative Professionals are working from a philosophical and prosaic stance. The administrative definition is something they do not necessarily feel constricts them (though a couple artists felt that it had the potential of “dumbing-down” the work) but something they mildly take into account as they refine the design of the piece towards finalizing the scheme and installing the work. It appears that Civic Stakeholders and City Staff are, because of their professional responsibilities, working from prosaic and administrative perspectives. Many of these people are concerned about the why and the how of public art. Responses often revolved around accessibility and peripherally relied on the formal or technical aspects of public art (the ordinance). I found that people, in all categories, did not feel restricted by the ordinance but rather, for the civic and business stakeholders and city officials and staff the ordinance was a benchmark, a framework within which to work and possibly to push against (quietly and with intent). A unique category of the Civic Stakeholders, those individuals who serve in advisory capacities, find themselves juggling the philosophical, prosaic and technical in order to attend to the wide variety of
issues they have to deal with. As well, the public art staff find themselves having to shift approaches depending on the task at hand. These approaches are not mutually exclusive, nor are they (necessarily) in opposition to one another. They are, I think, a framework for creating a finer-grain of conversation about public art.

7.7 Summary

At the beginning of this chapter I wrote that two questions drove the writing of this chapter: 1) Why is the production of public art important to Denver? and 2) What is public about public art? I return to these two questions as a means of summarizing this chapter and as a way to turn toward the discussions chapter, which comes next.

It is clear, from this research, that people believe public art is important to Denver, in terms of quality of life, city image and identity, and economic stimulus. And even though I found (during the initial questions of the interviews) that the majority of people defined public art according to four aspects (funding, where/location, how/process, and why/intent of public art) it appears, in the end, that public art is public because of the process. What was revealed by the entirety of the conversations is that people did, in fact, at some level (consciously or not) understand that the process of public art is unique. Public art involves a unique set of actors and approaches, and results in a wide array of products and possibilities.

Public art does, in fact (a point made by many of the people I interviewed), play a significant role in the everyday lives of urban publics. Public art is a part of the city’s
everyday urban fabric that people (residents and visitors alike) encounter on a regular basis. Yet there is a lack of recognition of this critical aspect of public art. Public art is currently (in Denver) not playing an integral role in the city’s planning of a complex urban fabric; instead, public art is an afterthought or is considered only on a site-by-site basis. I believe this is because the public art program has a weak relationship with other departments and programs. That is, public art is still just an object placed in the urban landscape, something that is not as consequential as other city improvements (e.g., streets, public buildings, etc.). Public art is growing its collection, but still it is a collection of things (lots of large animals are showing up in Denver) that the program, as a “powerless autonomy”, is curating.

In the next, and final chapter, I conclude this dissertation with a discussion about key findings, central themes and implications, reflections on the limitations of this research, and proposals for possible future research.
Interlude II: Slow Read 2: “I See What You Mean”

“I See What You Mean: Why a bear? Why a giant, curious blue bear, specifically? Lawrence Argent: There’s iconic Colorado imagery – the Rockies, the Flatirons and all that – that I think is a little bit overused, a little passé. So I thought about what it is like to be a resident here and the journey one takes down either corridor (14th St. and Speer Blvd) when one notices there is a convention occurring. I’m always interested in what might be going on in there, the exchange of information, ideas and ideologies. But there’s never really any indication from the outside what’s going on inside. I had recently seen a photo in the newspaper of a black bear looking into someone’s window and that resonated with me. As for the blue color, that was actually an accident – originally the bear was going to reflect the colors of Colorado, with sandstone colors and things like that. But a printout of the design came back blue by mistake, and I thought that was much more exciting. And it was serendipitous, because [I learned later] that the black bear was very important to the Native American Ute tribes that lived in Colorado – and also that one level of spiritual enlightenment for the Utes was the “blue” level” (Visit Denver 2008).

Introducing “Mr. Blue”

Hardly anyone knows this piece of public art by its official name: I See What You Mean. Rather, they know it by what it is: a big blue bear. It is a formidable piece of sculpture: 40’ tall and 10,000 pounds of molded polymer, concrete and steel.

Figure 12.1: Mr. Blue (sketch by joni m palmer)

Tuesday 16 June 2009 @ 2.15pm: sunny, pleasant 80-degree day
I brought a group of geographers (GIS-types) from China here during the summer of 2008: they swarmed the piece, smiling and laughing, taking pictures, posing for each other (and friends/family back home). [The landscaping was not in last summer, nor was
The big blue bear has become a much beloved piece of public art in Denver. It is the one piece the majority of people I interviewed said was the most successful, and which many claimed as their favorite piece of public art. For others, “The Blue Bear” is a one-liner: it is cute but nothing more. It is harmless, and to them this is its weakest point, it doesn’t challenge nor is it thought provoking. It is, for many (residents and visitors alike) a “photo op,” fun, easy to approach, and not too hard on the eyes. It endures as a popular piece, which many people find playful and a good expression of our (the City of Denver) identity: We don’t take ourselves too seriously.

Thursday 19 June @ 6.30pm: A Conversation with 2 Gals at The Dusty Boot Saloon, Centennial, CO
I am sitting on the outdoor patio at The Dusty Boot Saloon, reviewing my notes from the day, when two gals next table over ask me: “Whatcha doin’?” Obviously they are here on happy hour, enjoying the late-day sunshine … wanting to chat. So, I show them my fieldbook (sketches, notes, etc.) and tell them that I spent the afternoon with the big blue bear. They both know the bear, so ask: “What’s it called?” I tell them the official name and the name most people call it. One of the gals says: “I didn’t know its real name, but now that you’ve told me, it makes a big difference to know it.” I ask them, should there be a nameplate or something so that more people know its name? The same woman responds: “No, not just a small plaque, but need something… because it does have a name!” The other gal says that the bear is not sophisticated enough for the convention center: “It’s great for kids, but the convention center is more than that. We [the city] are more than that.” I tell them that I am a Ph.D. student studying public art in Denver. One of the women asks me my thoughts on the horse at DIA. … I ask them what they think of it (the controversy, what it says about Denver, etc.). They talk for a bit between themselves, and then (as if this is their answer) one of them says: “I guess we just adapt, that’s what public art is, it becomes a part of the city and part of us!”
People are, indeed, thinking about the public art that they find/see in Denver. Though, typically, it is the large pieces of public art that grab peoples’ attention: they have opinions about the public art they encounter and they have questions about it. Most of them, though, do not know who to ask. Of the many members of “the public” that I eavesdropped on or chatted with, most of them had a lot to say about public art. Most of it was pretty interesting, at least to me.

Tuesday 30 June 2009 @ 2.05 pm: “A Crane + A Bear”
Landmark: “I’m right by the big blue bear …” I overhear a man in a shirt and tie say into his cell phone, as he paces to and fro in front of the convention center, briefcase in hand, watching the taxis line up on 14th street.

Quietly whimsical: a “bear” of a man approaches, walking toward me gazing at the blue bear’s head, and a faint smile alights on his face.

A place to pause: A man and his young sons passing by: the boys are captivated, but walk with their father at street/curb edge, then one darts away, hops on the flagstone, and walks up to the bear and puts his hands on the bear’s legs, like touching a huge beast, firm but gentle. His father beckons and they move on.
I’m watching a few men saunter over to where the blue bear faces the window, they stand just below him, looking in, as does the bear…smoking cigarettes, a pause and they wander around on the flagstones at the base of the blue bear, and head back to the street—taxi drivers taking a break.

The construction site across the street is active—the crane swinging lazily across the air, getting into position …

As I walk away I spot a man taking pictures of the big blue bear … [I am now calling him, “Blue” or “Mr. Blue” because I can’t keep writing such an impersonal phrase for this beast I am getting to know.] … I ask him a couple questions and he says he was willing to sit and chat; unfortunately I am running to an interview …

I ask him what he thinks of the piece: “most public art is just there, ho hum … I like this piece, perched against the glass, it’s an impressive piece, the size …”

He was here with his daughter. From the Bay Area for the Aurora Softball tournament. The name of her team is: The Bears.

Tuesday 30 June 2009 @ 7pm: Would it be useful to read this piece, or any piece of public art, via a Lynchian lens?

Based on what I wrote earlier, I am wondering if using Lynch’s 5 elements (The Image of the City, 1960) would be a useful way to read public art: paths, edges, districts, nodes, and landmarks? “The Blue Bear” is definitely a landmark, it serves (now that they have installed seating) as a node, but it does not really act as a path or an edge or a district. But, it is a part of these. Thinking that it might, in fact, be a useful way to map public art…in order to understand how a piece functions, in and of itself, and in the urban context.

* A changing landscape. Landscapes of public art are, themselves, not static. I had not really thought about this before: How does a change in the landscape change the perception or experience of a piece? Typically, the site of an installation is alarmingly static in its immediate confines, but the context will inevitably change.
Wednesday 17 June 2009 @ 5.41 pm: Landscape with bear…

What’s up with the fence + landscaping?
- Why? + Who’s idea—Convention Ctre?
  - What did Lawrence think about this?
  - Context-driven? But why not just have bear/nature in direct contact or dialogue with bldg/street/city?

⇒ if you get rid of the fence you have a sense of him lumbering through (suburban) vegetation to get to this building—his curiosity = peering in, that he stumbled upon this.

The fence eradicates all of this story line 😞
  - Is this a way of ‘softening’?
  - Is this a way of corralling him/keeping him (art) in his/its place?

Fields of Intensity. One day when I was visiting Mr. Blue, I started thinking about how he seemed to change (even charge, like an electrical impulse) the street, but only within a certain distance or from certain directions and perspectives. With only the slightest memories of high school physics, my brain somehow dredged up this terminology: the electric field (of) intensity.

“…the electric field concept arose in an effort to explain action-at-a-distance forces. All charged objects create an electric field that extends outward into the space that surrounds it. The charge alters that space, causing any other charged object that enters the space to be affected by this field. The strength of the electric field is dependent upon how charged the object creating the field is and upon the distance of separation from the charged object. … Electric field strength is a vector quantity; it has both magnitude and direction” (Henderson 1997-2011).
It don’t think a piece of public art has to necessarily be large (like “The Blue Bear”) but it has to have a presence by which it has an impact on people and the city. “The Blue Bear” is clearly a part of the 14th street streetscape. He “belongs” to the Colorado Convention Center, but he is a part of this part of the city because you can see him from the cross streets and from buildings on adjacent properties.
For Sale.

Wednesday 1 July 2009 @ 7.02 pm
Hot day today—took some pics of Mr. Blue today...tourists milling about, taking pictures of him and with him.
I purchased a Blue Bear replica (8” size for $18.99; 3”-4” were $12) today at the VisitDenver shop on 16th Street Mall. You know it’s a beloved piece when people want to purchase a replica. Jennifer said one of the associates at her firm has one on her desk. I have also seen it in other city staff offices, e.g. on Mark N’s desk and thought what a great idea and I need one! He has his high fiving one of the alien dancers.

Friday 10 July 2009 @ 11.15 am: After interviewing Jayne Buck at VisitDenver
Q: Can PA play a role in selling the city?
A: It is just one entity (PAP) = / + just one part of selling the city. The Blue Bear is unique, not necessarily public art...is it public art or is it an icon by which people recognize Denver of a mascotting of an icon
⇒ we refer to it is as “The Blue Bear,” but that is not the official title! But it works ... for the city. I See What You Mean does not roll off the tongue as easily 😊
⇒ Important to her now because it is working as an icon for them = showing arts and cultural vitality of Denver
She is an advocate for public art when it works to sell the city = jmp: crass or pragmatic?
But as part of marketing arm of Denver does promote PA in Denver = Blue Bear!
Curiosity and the innovative play on words
Also used as a mascot + purchaseable one, at that
PA is not the first thing we think about but part of the picture. Blue Bear is most iconic.
Other pieces in city not a focal point like BB is. Happy it is here, enriches experience for
visitor = use it to sell Denver as a creative place

Figure I2.6: My Mr. Blue (photograph by joni m palmer)
Figure 12.7: “Film poster” ad for blue bear (5280 2010)
A Beloved Piece of Public Art. What a wonderful expression of love for Mr. Blue. The Ladies Fancywork Society’s S & M treatment seems quite appropriate to what Argent talks about in the interview about the piece. And, it appeals to me because my first response to Mr. Blue that he was an escaped bear (from the zoo or from the wilds) who was peeping into the Convention Center.

![Shackling the Big Blue Bear](image)

15 February 2011 @ 10.34 am: Can a piece be too beloved?
I immediately think of the National Parks and the strange and remarkable phenomenon of parks being “loved to death.” There are a number of parks that have been so ‘overused’ (far too many visitors) that the Park Service can’t keep up with maintenance, conservation, and initiating new programs and facilities to accommodated the large number of people entering and experiencing the park.

Public art doesn’t necessarily have the same issue, in terms of numbers of users (people experiencing) a piece, though Millenium Park’s “Bean” might prove to be an interesting case on this point… Rather, the issue raised in the PANlistserv about is the question of a piece of public art being “too beloved.” One might wonder if any public art can be “too beloved.” What does/might this mean?

There are several notable instances of manifestations of peopling adoring a piece of public art, the most well known is a piece in Fremont, Seattle. I do not see such occasions in Denver, particularly the pieces I am ‘attending to.’ People do not adorn them, nor do they seem to visit regularly. They do, though not to the same extent as the Fremont piece, bring friends to see the blue bear. Maybe this is because the blue bear has been replicated, for sale. And is seen in a great deal of Denver press, magazines, ads, etc.
One can see the work without (ever) having to be there, one can even place it in one’s home or office…

**Thoughts on the Slow Read**

The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes, but in having new eyes. – Marcel Proust (1871 - 1922)

*What is it that the slow read offers as a methodology?* I think of it akin to slow food versus fast food. Not only is it about moving slowly, appreciating the process, but it is also about engaging in a dialogic task, or even a dialogic quest. The slow read is…an opportunity. It is, in many cases, a privilege. Because it takes time and energy. But, it is necessary, as designers and planners, that we slow down …and read places over time. The time period can vary, but what is essential is that ones “takes time.” There are challenges, of course, which include being at, on, with the site over time, and then making sense of what you learn. The slow read offers the opportunity to encounter a place / a site over time: Letting things sink in; Allowing questions to emerge. This can be part of the challenges of the slow read. But it is also what makes it essential to how we know places. Through the slow read one can get beyond first impressions, perfect conditions, and the apparent ease of knowing a place quickly. This is an ethnographic way of approaching the reading and writing of a place. By ethnographic I mean that the “ethnographic researcher spends extensive time involved in the everyday activities of that which she is studying, and tacks back and forth between interacting with the place and analyzing the cultural meanings that shape that place” (Silvey 2003, 92).

*Public Art as ensemble of views and vantage points.* These slow reads have been an interesting experiment in reading and writing public art, helping me to think—simultaneously—about how it is that I see the piece/installation and how it is others
might see it. If public art is truly “public” then, as Doty suggests in his poem “The Theory of Multiplicity,” it is an ensemble of views and vantage points that are the accomplishment of a work. We all contribute to it by our interacting (as Doty says, “dis-or regarding”) that we make it whole.

What I knew / was this singular aspect, this vantage, in this light, /but didn’t its actuality consist of being seen multiply?” /And this /was in some way an accomplishment, / a contribution to the work; it took all of us / to make the garden known. / No one could assemble / the entire vantage we made together.
—from “The Theory of Multiplicity,” Mark Doty

Writing it out. For my dissertation “writing it out” allowed me time to compare fieldbook entries and situate the work within the larger spatial and historical contexts of Denver, the artist’s work, and public art. As well, by writing out my observations I was thinking through the site, asking questions anew, each time I visited.

Clark states that part of him “flinches from the glamour of always probing deeper as a looker, piercing the veil, staking emotional ownership of the image” (Clark 2006, 5). But the key for Clark is not to “‘write pictures to death’ as most art historical writing does,” rather he wants to “write the life of the painting in the here and now, too” (Clark 2006, 8). Clark cautions his reader: “Writing automatically aims, or pretends, to be attentive. It likes details. It thinks the details lead directly, magically, to the picture’s “answers.” False vividness gives way abruptly to clever summing up.” That is, it is important to not lose a sense of the first time, and the “tripping from day to day” (Clark 2006, 12). Some of the keen pleasures for Clark were finding patterns, looking at details and trying to make sense of them within the larger scheme of things.
The nature of writing out the slow read is not a matter of trying to change one’s mind, or someone else’s for that matter, about the place/the piece but to effect a better understanding of what one is reading, and thus how one writes about it will be more indirect—less, as Clark says, “superintended” (Clark 2006, 50).
8.0 DISCUSSION

I began this research with a very broad aim: to gain insights into how public art is produced in a mid-size city in the United States. Choosing Denver was not merely a choice of convenience but it was, as I have learned, a good choice because public art is at an interesting crossroads in Denver, and in this way provides some interesting insights for other cities. Many cities are struggling to support the arts at the local level. Previous research has shown that the arts, and public art in particular, are an important economic, cultural and social force in the city (AFTA 2011, Hughes 2010). Yet, in these economic times, the arts are one of the first things cut from city budgets. For a city that has been pushing hard to be a known arts and cultural hub, the dismantling (this spring of 2011) of Denver’s Department of Cultural Affairs was a significant move. The fieldwork for this dissertation was completed in October of 2010, at which time there were no conversations (or even rumors) circulating about such changes to the department or its programs. The public art program still exists, but as I will discuss in this final chapter, there are some challenges it will face, particularly in its new home department, Arts & Venues.

It was my intention in this research to provide insights about why public art continues to be aestheticized and instrumentalized in mid-size cities. As such, I have endeavored to understand why these practices persist and how such practices hinder the field and the practice of public art from becoming a vital partner in urban planning initiatives. I realized that in order to understand why these practices persisted in public art I needed to examine what lies at the heart of local government public art programs: the “public” in
public art. In order for public art to be aestheticized and instrumentalized, the producers must, I believed, be in some way supporting (even facilitating) these practices, albeit in unconscious or unmindful ways. That is, I needed to understand three things. First, how do various actors, stakeholders and agencies involved in the production of public art define “the public.” I needed to understand how people employed these definitions in their work, and identify the socio-political implications of these definitions. Second, I needed to understand what people felt public art contributes to the city; that is, what are the perceived contributions and benefits? Third, and critical to how this project might inform future research and impact current practice, what do people (the producers of public art) perceive public art’s role to be in urban planning initiatives?

In this chapter I will summarize the findings of this research, discuss some of the limitations of the research, and present some ideas for future research. But first, I would like to discuss four things I have accomplished in the process of conducting this research.

8.1 Four things accomplished

First, it is through the act of conducting the research—interviewing people and talking with various city officials and staff, civic stakeholders, and creative professionals—that I was able to raise awareness of public art. By this I mean that just the act of talking with people about public art forced them to be more mindful of public art and their role in the production of public art. This may seem an obvious outcome of the research process, but I found it to be a profound and positive consequence of the research. I believe that I did cause people to reflect more critically on public art, and that these reflections impacted
how they contributed to the production of public art, because of the questions they asked at the end of interviews or afterwards (in emails): 1) they expressed dismay that so many people (including for many, themselves) did not have reliable and robust knowledge of the program, 2) when they attempted to define the public and public art, they struggled to articulate a definition and openly reflected on this, and most surprising and possibly most impactful, 3) they began to question their role in the production of public art (e.g., the roles they might play, and how they might play a larger role). I think this is a substantial accomplishment, given that many of the people I met with had not ever had lengthy conversations about public art.

Another accomplishment of this research is that I now have the material to provide the city with an assessment of the program, particularly with regard to knowledge of the program, definitions, contributions, and success of public art. Third, I believe that this work can inform future research and practice. I have developed a replicable methodology for conducting case studies of public art. And, what I have learned about why the aestheticization and instrumentalization of public art persists will be useful to other programs grappling with similar issues. Lastly, and this is more of a personal accomplishment than the previous three, I was able to explore the politics and poetics of writing through and writing up results. The slow reads were one aspect of this. Developing a methodology and testing it in the field was a great pleasure. The slow reads (as interludes in this manuscript) are incomplete. That is, they showed me how important it is to continue to read these sites for new insights and questions.
8.2 Summary of findings

To a great degree, Rosalyn Deutsche’s work prompted this research to examine the continued aestheticising and instrumentalization of public art (local government programs) in mid-size cities. Based on this research, it is clear that Deutsche’s call for “an alternative, possibly transformative [public art] practice” has definitely not been directly responded to by local governmental public art programs like Denver (Deutsche 1996, 60). It is in this summary of findings that I articulate the consequences of Denver’s inability to transform its public art practice.

8.2.1 Key findings

What I found to be the case in Denver is that public art does not play an important role in transforming urban practices; it has not (since Deutsche’s writings in the late 1980s through the mid 1990s) become an integral part of critical urban spatial discourses. Why is this the case? I have found that it is through the existing socio-political behaviors and mechanisms that public art continues to be considered politically neutral and merely novel objects in the urban landscape. Therefore, public art in Denver continues to be practiced in a neutral manner, allowing public art to be used as a supporting element in urban improvements and beautification. To be more grounded and direct: Denver is missing opportunities to engage its publics and has not begun to understand the significance of public art in the making and re-imaging of the city. Crucially, the public art program has not established itself as a political, social, and cultural presence. Nor is the program pursuing the ways that public art can play a major role in Denver’s urban planning initiatives and in the production of publics and public space. As I have argued
in this dissertation, public art needs to be explicitly situated and enacted in relation to various other initiatives, activities, and dialogues that create the fabric of urban life (Deutsche 1996, 63). The people I interviewed who are involved in the production of public art obviously, as I found in this research, do think of public art as more than mere decoration but they have not explicitly advanced this view to those who have the ability to enact change (which includes elected officials, program managers, and, of course, the public). As such, public art remains as symbolic gestures and novel insertions.

_The productivity of muddied understandings of “the public.”_ The objective of this research was not to sort out the best definition(s) or to establish a single definition of “the public” and public art; rather, I sought to explore the ways different definitions speak to different social, cultural, political and economic needs or objectives. What I found was that not only are there multiple definitions, and thus understandings, of “the public” but there is a productive ambiguity to this. Let me begin by speaking to three points that helped me to get to this key finding.

First, defining the public is, as I found through my interviews, a difficult task for people. It is important that once one has begun to articulate a definition that s/he is aware that the definition employed has consequences: these definitions express attitudes held by the various actors involved in the production of public art, and inform their actions, and the policies and initiatives they develop. I also found that people involved in the production of public art use a wide variety of terms to refer to the public. Even with this wide array of terms, the public appears to be perceived in terms of a consumer- or audience public
not a civic-minded public. That is, most of the people I interviewed did not expect the public to participate in decision-making or the making of the city. Rather, the public are those who receive or consume public art. Participation, which for Habermas and Fraser are essential to democratic societies, seems today to be more of an unrealistic ideal as well as a burden. Lippmann, in the early twentieth century, spoke to this difficulty of engaging an increasingly busy and consumer-minded public (Lippman 1925).

Second, there is a tendency to acknowledge only those publics we see or those we hear from—visible publics. This visible public becomes the public, and this public (like Habermas’ bourgeois public) ignores those people not seen in public meetings or heard from in the popular media. These “other” publics include a wide variety of people, from the homeless, and working class, single parents, minorities, and others who have become peripheral to the operations of a democratic society. There are, as I noted in chapter 6, necessarily multiple publics that are often in conflict with one another. It is through dialogue and debate that conflicts and tensions are better understood and negotiated (not necessarily resolved). It is not the point, as Fraser argues, that we come to consensus, but rather that we engage in dialogue and debate about the future of our cities.

Third, in this dissertation I have been talking primarily about the producers of public art but one of the findings of this research is that “the public,” too, is part of the production of public art. I had not considered this when I began this project because I had separated “the public” from the producers. What has been made clear though, is: 1) the producers of public art are, too, the public, and 2) it is because of multiple publics that public art has
the potential to be a productive challenge for cities. People involved in the production of public art are, in their daily lives, a part of one of many publics in Denver. And, when they act professionally on behalf of public art they are in many ways enacting the public by proxy. This is an interesting embodiment of an abstract notion of public, and one that many of the people I spoke with mentioned. In order to make the public an actionable concept, the producers of public art must think of the public as embodied presences in the physical, political, economic, and social landscape.

It is through these subfindings that I gained access to one of the key findings of this research: muddied (or ambiguous) understandings of “the public” can be productive. This productivity is possible when people engage in conversation, and debate, about who this public is for whom public art is created. Such conversations and debates give rise to questions that need to be attended to: 1) how to make the selection process “truly” democratic, 2) how to create circumstances in which healthy, democratic debate is possible during the selection process, 3) how to create opportunities for negotiation about and acknowledgement of diverse reactions once the art is selected and then installed, and 4) what possible roles might public art play in urban regeneration strategies.

The productivity of this ambiguity is best exemplified by the multiple publics involved in (the production of) public art and the interplay between these various publics. Because many of these publics are dynamic and fluid, it is important to understand how normative conceptions of “the public” and public space is/can be very limited and constraining. Yet, as I stated in the previous chapters, we must acknowledge that “the public” is,
indeed, comprised of embodied presences that have the potential to transgress normative constraints. It is through these transgressions that a normative public art process might be transformed.

*Public art is pedagogical and performative.* With regard to public art, I have found that it is multiply public in terms of sphere, space, and realm. It is through each of these that public art is possible. The public sphere is what enables the process to occur. If people are not aware of, informed about, and engaged in conversations about public art, public art cannot, in fact, be produced. The availability of and access to public space (and in the case of public art it is city-owned property) is the physical venue for public art. The public realm represents the legalities and politics of public art.

Public art is pedagogical. Since public art is—by the very nature of combining these two terms (public + art)—indefinite, a public art program conveys a particular notion of what it means to bring public and art together. Public art programs thus act in the capacity of teaching people about the potential of public art. If educating the public is not intended as a way to quell controversy but rather to illicit well-educated dialogue and debate then there is the possibility of creating conversations about the present and future of the program. Public art, as something that is more than individual insertions, cannot happen without debates about working definitions and approaches that enable people to think about the roles public art might play in urban planning and revitalization.
And it is through this pedagogical stance that public art is performative. The public art process can call a public into being if the process (policies and procedures) is geared towards recognizing and promoting conversation and debate amongst multiple publics. The failure, then, of public art in Denver is, partly a failure of the program staff (and others involved in the production of public art) to understand the publics’ rights to have a say in public art. If the process is truly wholistic (not just about public art but also about city making) and democratic, it will engage citizens in acts of agency that advance public art as a means of contributing to the development of the democratic potential of the city.

8.2.2 This was not just an academic exercise

The findings from this dissertation accentuate that this research was more than an academic exercise. There are several ways that these findings can inform the practice of public art, one that enables it to be less apolitical and more consequential to the making of a city and its publics. I begin by talking about program histories as a way to educate people about public art and its role in the history of the city. Next I discuss the importance and productive potential of creating forums for dialogue about public art and its publics. And finally, I talk about resituating public art politically, intellectually, administratively, and physically.

Program Histories. Most public art programs now have a robust database of their public art collections. Inventories of public art program collections are critical to informing staff, stakeholders, and creative professionals about the breadth of the collection they are working with, but it also informs the multiple public about what it is that the city has
purchased in the name of “the public.” However, in order for public art programs to be taken seriously, histories of the program need to be written so that people understand the past and present of public art so that they can envision potential futures of public art.

When I began this project there was no written (or “official”) history of the public art program available. The program has, indeed, changed over the past one hundred years. Yet the only way to chart a trajectory of the future of the program (one in which public art is no longer mere things to urban planning initiatives and the city’s arts and cultural agenda) is to understand the past successes and failures. It was quite an undertaking to write a history of public art in Denver because no one had ever endeavored to record the history, and much documentation of the program had been lost. Writing a historiography of the program helped me to situate the public art program within social, cultural, and political contexts. Contextualizing the history of public art within the overall history of the city helped me to understand that public art has not just recently appeared in Denver. Public art was, in fact, an important part of Denver’s maturation, though not often celebrated or openly discussed as such. I believe that documenting the history will facilitate a better understanding of the challenges of creating and maintaining a public art program. And, showing that public art is a vital part of the city’s history will provide staff with material for making arguments for maintaining and improving the program, and for making it a more integral part of city initiatives.

Creating forums for dialogue. Many public art programs nationwide are creating e-newsletters to provide information to the public about public art: the selection process,
staff biographies, upcoming project installations and dedications, etc. However, these e-newsletters typically reach those people who already have knowledge and just want to stay up-to-date. The challenge is to reach people who do not know much (if anything at all) about the public art program; to get them involved in the production of public art; to help them to understand that being included in the process is an entitlement of citizenship, one that can help them to feel agency in the making of their communities.

In order for public art to become an important part of the urban planning agenda, there must be a recognition of the value of public art plays in the everyday lives of an urban public. It became clear from the interviews that one of the primary contributions public art makes to the city is to quality of life; it is part of peoples’ every day experiences. As well, it is something that people notice, and it becomes a part of their routine or, as one person said, shows that the city cares about the urban environment and peoples’ daily lives. But, there is, clearly, a major distinction (albeit unacknowledged by the producers of public art) between who is involved in the decision-making for the city’s public art and who it is that receives/consumes public art. Although many people interviewed felt that a higher level of expertise was needed in the decision-making process (i.e. art experts rather than “Jane/Joe Public”) they all felt that public art is a unique form of arts and culture, one that is a part of our everyday lives, and necessitates the voices of “the public” in decision-making.

Public art’s democratic potential, then lies in its ability to engage these many different publics. It is only when public art programs actively cultivate dialogue and debate,
amongst multiple, counter- and subaltern publics that they will be able to raise the issues (new and old) that will move a program forward as an integral part of the urban conversation.

*Resituating public art.* I wrote in the prospectus for this dissertation: “In order for public art to play a meaningful role in urban regeneration plans, we must, as Deutsche states, “dislodge public art from its ghettoization within the parameters of aesthetic discourse, and reinstate it, at least partially, within a critical urban discourse.” Quite honestly, I was not sure what this meant when I wrote it in spring of 2009. I understand this better now, and rephrase it as the following: In order for public art to be a significant urban actor, it must become an integral part of the urban discourse and resituated such that it becomes a part of the political, administrative, economic, intellectual, cultural, social, and poetic work of making a city. Therefore, there must not only be public engagement but also a resituating of public art so that it is an integral actor in the making of the city.

The City of Denver’s public art program operates as a “powerless autonomy” in that it is not considered by others as directly contributing to the making of the city, nor is it considered and promoted as an integral part of what makes Denver a livable, attractive, and economically vibrant city. This is the case because the program itself and the staff are not well enough known or understood. While this might be the case for many government departments, I believe it is particularly problematic for the Public Art Program because of the relationships it needs to have with other department staff and the citizens of Denver. Just because they are not well understood does not mean they cannot
accomplish their work, but it does make it a lot more difficult and provides room for misconceptions. Because public art is provided via capital improvement project funds and bond initiatives (and, for large projects is a prominent feature of new construction) it becomes, potentially, a contentious issue when large projects are constructed and scrutinized. Other city staff do, in fact, need to understand the policies, process, and even the role of public art in order for public art to be planned and installed in ways that are well integrated with other departments’ projects. Regarding the citizens of Denver, it is important that they, too, understand the policies, process, and role of public art especially when controversies arise.

With regard to Create Denver, and important to conversations about arts and culture in Denver, public art is still not considered a part of the cultural industries playing an increasingly important role in cultural economies and urban regeneration. It is still, in Denver, discussed as individual object placed in the urban landscape, the result of individual capital improvement projects and bond initiatives. Until this changes, public art will not be a part of the conversations about the future of the city.

My inquiry was fueled by my curiosity about how various actors conceptualized the public in public art planning and implementation. Additionally, I was interested in how urban public art programs fit into creative city initiatives. During the course of the interviews I found that very few people (only ten people of sixty-three people interviewed) had any real sense of Create Denver or an understanding of creative cities initiatives. This was a surprising early finding, which forced me to reformulate my
questions, asking people to talk about public art’s relationship to urban planning and urban revitalization. Urban revitalization was regarded in very broad terms, equivalent to the redevelopment of urban spaces that had been neglected and fallen into disrepair.

I believe that I have accomplished the aims of this research, and have some significant findings to contribute to the literature. Furthermore, and I speak to this later in this chapter, I have been able to formulate and pursue a question that was only a germ of an idea when I began this research: How might we resituate public art in order to make it a more meaningful and productive part of the making of Denver?

Interestingly, since the demise of the Department of Cultural Affairs in late spring (of this year, 2011), the Create Denver initiative has been renamed. Its new name (Creative Sectors Initiative) reflects a shift in thinking at the city level: the city is no longer pursuing a creative cities initiative but rather focusing on a particular sector of the economy. This is an important departure as the new focus is on artists and business, not on further developing (and marketing) Denver as an arts and cultural destination. Even though few people knew much about creative cities or Create Denver, it was, to those who were interested and active, an important way to talk about Denver as a place that supports arts and creativity. I think that there was room for educating people about Create Denver, and better incorporating public art into its agenda; however, this opportunity is lost with the dissolution of DOCA. If the Public Art Program operated within DOCA and the larger city structure, as a “powerless autonomy” it is now less so.
The implications in dissolving of DOCA, and merging its programs with the Division of Theatres and Arenas to become Arts & Venues Denver, suggests an unfortunate focus on event locations (management and maintenance) and objects. It appears that a larger arts and cultural agenda for the city has been subsumed by a money-saving strategy for a cash-strapped city. Denver’s peer cities all have a department of cultural services or affairs, which act as the large entity that provides the public art program with entre to larger urban issues. The departments of cultural affairs tend to have a higher profile than their counterparts in parks and recreation or theatres and arenas because of the increasing competitiveness of cities based on arts and culture.

As well, where the public art program is physically located seems very much consequential to the relationships it has with other city departments and staff. The program staff offices are no longer located in the Wellington Webb Building, where planning, public works, and parks and recreation are located. Now, the public art program is located several blocks away, which may not seem that far until you aren’t visible to other staff who are integral to producing public art, or you aren’t encountering people on a regular basis (something city staff said was an important part of acknowledging and learning about the public art program).

Based on this research, I would suggest that public art will remain just a thing to art’s and culture’s ideas and places unless it is elevated to being part of a discursive urban cultural practice. People are interested, as I found in the interviews I conducted, in having
conversations about public art’s potential; it is a matter of developing frameworks through which such conversations to occur.

This study of public art in Denver has attempted to develop frameworks that might help to establish the beginnings of a critical urban discourse, in which public art is considered an actor equal to planning, public works, parks and recreation, and all of the other entities involved in making a city.

8.3 Limitations of the study

There are limitations to any research, and in this study there are two limitations I will briefly discuss: generalizability and the selection of research participants. These limitations are not things that I expect to fix, but rather have pointed me to how I might expand this research (which I discuss below).

Generalizability. The generalizability of the findings of this research is limited because public art is produced and functions in different ways in different cities. Some of the aspects in which differences might occur (and which should be examined in future research) are: actors, ordinances, history of the program, and bureaucratic structure. This research was not intended to characterize the production of public art in mid-size cities; rather it provides a method by which to study the production of public art in mid-size cities. And, it provides a set of questions other cities might consider when trying to understand how it is that public art is produced in those cities.
Sampling. I spent a great deal of time developing the list of people I would interview. Snowball sampling and the tiered method of interviews allowed me to gather names during the entire time of fieldwork. This was important, because if I had relied only on the first tier of people I interviewed, I might not have been able to obtain as much coverage as I did in terms of perspectives and roles. On the other hand, I think that interviewing people who opposed public art (e.g., city council members, business people, city staff) or who were contrarians to the cause would have helped me better understand controversies in and blockages to public art. If I were to conduct this study again, I would be more aggressive pursuing such people.

8.4 Future Research

The key findings and the limitations to this study led me to formulating the following research agenda. I will briefly discuss six of the future research projects I am currently considering.

Producing publics. The production of publics is a rather new area of inquiry in human geography and planning. As I learned in this research, there are certain publics to which public art appeals, such as those people who are educated in the arts and attend arts and cultural events. I would be interested in exploring what kinds of publics urban arts and cultural initiatives are pursuing and hoping to produce or support? That is, public art is produced but through its engagement with multiple publics, and strong (multiple) publics are also produced through their involvement in decision-making in their city. How might
these publics vary by community, city, even country? What are the agendas and vehicles by which these publics are pursued and produced?

Operationalizing “the public.” I was dismayed by the lack of curiosity and knowledge about “the public” amongst the city staff I spoke with. Furthermore, a review of the literature provided little comfort. I believe it is critical, particularly in planning, architecture and landscape architecture, that there be a fuller knowledge about the history and theory of the public in order for practitioners to operationalize the term in their daily practice. I would like to conduct further empirical study of design and planning professionals in order to gain a better understanding of how they employ the term. Such information would be very useful for a teaching curriculum because it would connect the history and theory of “the public” to contemporary urban practices.

Conversations with “the public.” Since the focus of this research was on the decision-makers in the production of public art, I would like to learn more about how people in communities and neighborhoods perceive of public art and the process by which it is produced. Conducting a series of longitudinal case studies of the neighborhoods that are in the process of receiving public art would allow me to follow the process and better understand how the community participates in and perceive the public art process, as well as what they think public art will do for their community.

The “how” of public art. In this dissertation I primarily examined the “what” and “why” of public art but did not cover the “how” of public art. Many programs are struggling to
educate their publics about this: the process by which public art is produced. Few people understand the funding mechanisms, timeline, and actors involved in making a public art project happen. They also do not grasp the complex social, political, and economic web of interactions at work. I would like to study how different programs elucidate this process, and simultaneously use this as a means to cultivate a public that is engaged in the process and strengthen relationships with other urban initiatives. Part of this project would be to map the power geometries (in the production of public art) over time and space, by tracking an individual project in order to understand where there are opportunities to improve the process as a more integral part of the making of the city.

*Who deserves public art?* There is little research about public art in “negative” or “punishing” environments (e.g., prisons and detention centers). Yet these spaces, when they are funded by capital improvement funds and bond initiatives, have percent for arts funds available. The controversy that has arisen is that such spaces (the people who occupy them, particularly the detainees) are not “worthy” of public art, or public monies should not be spent on improving these environments. This controversy has been brewing in many cities and was manifest in Denver when the new Justice Center/Detention Center (jail) secured funds for public art. There was an outcry about “giving” prisoners public art. The study I would like to conduct would be called: “Innocent until proven guilty: Who is ‘worthy’ of Public Art?—The Denver Justice Center/Detention Center.”

*Comparative case studies.* The last of these potential research projects would be twofold in scale: a series of case studies of mid-size cities in the United States, and a series of
case studies of public art in cities in other countries. Based on my public art consulting
work in Albuquerque and this dissertation work in Denver, the first case study would be a
comparative study of Albuquerque and Denver. Interestingly, when I conducted very
similar research in Albuquerque, I had very different responses to some of the questions.
From a global perspective, I would like to look at the agendas, language, politics, actors,
and process of the production of public art in Brazil, South Africa, New Zealand and
China. I have chosen these locations because the what, why and how of public art in
each of these locations is vastly different from the United States, and from each other.

I began this research out of curiosity, based on my own involvement in public art (as
landscape architect, planner, and artist), global travels experiencing “public art” in other
cities and countries, and an interest in knowing more about public art in Denver. The
project grew out of a desire to better understand my own involvement in public art, which
led to a desire to know more about the program whose collection I was experiencing on a
daily basis. I hope that this research will encourage further examination of “the public”
and further explorations about the relationship between public art and urban planning.
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APPENDIX

A. Human Subjects paperwork
B. List of research participants
C. Interview protocol and consent form
D. Inventory of noteworthy public art works in the City’s collection
E. DOCA documents
F. City of Denver documents
G. Additional archival materials
APPENDIX A: Human Subjects paperwork
Dear Joni,

Your HRC protocol has been reviewed and determined to be exempt, effective 4/30/09. A signed and dated copy of your informed consent form is attached. This is the form you must use for consenting subjects to your study.

Please note: If you are going to be interviewing subjects at their workplace during work time you must obtain a letter of agreement from the employer prior to starting your research.

Good luck with your study and thank you for your concern for the welfare of human participants involved in research.

Claire
Claire Dunne, Ph.D.
HRC Education Coordinator

Attachment: 0309 30 Palmer consent form.pdf (229k bytes) Open

Attachment: 0309.30 Ltr_Exempt_Review.pdf (99k bytes) Open
Project Description

SUBMIT SAC APPLICATION IN LIEU OF THIS PROJECT DESCRIPTION IF YOU ARE USING GCRC. Please submit your qualifications for conducting such research.

This description should be as complete as possible. **Note that this is a template only**; use as much space as needed to provide the information described below.

**Project Title:** The Politics of “the public”: Public Art, Urban Regeneration and the Postindustrial City—The Case of Downtown Denver

1) **Purpose and Significance of the Project.** (This should be in terms understandable to knowledgeable laypeople. **DO NOT** simply cut and paste from grant proposal, or your request may be returned without review.)

In the last decade the pace and extent of urbanization has increased rapidly, and it is through the intersection of culture, economy and politics that cities are developing strategies to gain competitive advantage at multiple scales—the regional, national, and global (Champion 2008; Harvey 2008; Scott 2006; Harvey 1989). Public art is one of the creative/cultural industries that is playing an increasingly important role in cultural economies and urban regeneration. While public art has become big business over the last decade, city public art programs still remain powerless in many respects because of unbalanced power relations amongst decision-makers and also made difficult by the spatial politics of where public art programs are housed within a city’s departmental structuring. I propose to examine how urban public art programs fit into the overall process of urban regeneration by interrogating various actors’ views of “public” and public art within the context of a particular creative cities initiative, “Create Denver.”

This research seeks to gain insights into the processes by which public art is produced in a neoliberal, late capitalist, urban environment. It is particularly timely given the growth of public art programs and the proliferation of creative cities initiatives over the past five years (Champion 2008; Scott 2006; Landry 2005). As well, it will examine how ‘the public’ is perceived by various actors and agents, and thus advance a richer understanding of how these perceptions and definitions of “the public” direct the deployment of arts and cultural agendas as a means by which to enhance urban environments for a particular “public.” Much has been written about the creative/cultural industries, in geography (Coe 2000; Scott 2006; Sharp 2005; Miles 2003), sociology (Zukin 1995; Du Gay and Pryke 2002), and urban planning (Champion 2008; Landry 2005; Peck, 2005; Montgomery 2003); however, little has been written about the role of public art as a creative/cultural industry critical to creative cities initiatives. In addition, when public art has been discussed as a component of urban revitalization, it has been depoliticized and aestheticized; that is, it is relegated to a “thing,” something to enhance or beautify the urban environment rather than as a key element in a critical urban dialogue (Deutsche 1986). Therefore, my concern here is not to examine an individual object/piece of public art, but rather to examine how a public art program operates within the complex machinations of a city’s urban regeneration efforts.

As such, this study will complicate the current reading of public art in cities; it will provide a nuanced understanding of the power geometries of public art and its multiple publics. The overarching question of this research is: What are the conceptions and dimensions of “public” in public art planning and implementation within creative cities initiatives? This research aims to address three main questions: First, How is “public” defined, and by whom?—i.e., how are these notions of “the public” employed in the discourse of urban regeneration efforts such as “Create

*Updated by jmpalmer 03/23/09*
Denver”? Second, What are the “public” aspects of public art, both in terms of the process and outcomes of public art planning and implementation? a) What is the extent to which members of this community (agencies, departments, individuals and interest groups) have input into the process of public art planning? b) How are the “public benefits” of public art conceived of in the process? c) Who is thought to be the benefiting “public”? Third, How do local public art programs fit into creative city initiatives?—i.e., what is public art’s role perceived to be, and what is its relationship with regard to other actors in urban regeneration projects?

In relation to these questions, my central hypothesis is: there exists a plurality of perceptions and definitions of “the public” held by the various actors involved in public art and “Create Denver,” and these initiatives are increasingly dominated by neoliberal, consumerist approaches to urban regeneration that support and propagate institutional relationships that account for the continued aestheticization of public art.

This research is significant because it expands the scope of the conversation about public art from individual objects or individual programs by focusing on the planning for and implementation of public art within larger urban regeneration initiatives. In order for public art to play a meaningful role in urban regeneration plans, we must, as Deutsche states, “dislodge public art from its ghettoization within the parameters of aesthetic discourse, even critical aesthetic discourse, and reinstate, at least partially, within critical urban discourse…” Empirically, this project focuses on the planning and implementation of public art in mid-size city urban regeneration efforts in the United States, an area of urban studies that has been understudied. Theoretically, this research explores new attitudes about “the public” as a consumer rather than a civic-minded citizen, in relation to urban planning and creative cities initiatives. This research will illuminate the ways in which these new values and attitudes are impacting the way cities engage in the growing global urban competition amongst cities. Methodologically, this in-depth analysis of the meanings, roles, and processes of urban public art production will be a model for comparative studies, for other people and of other places. In addition, it will contribute to the practical arena of knowledge (e.g., in urban planning and development) of how various individuals and organizations, including their relationships with other actors, interact to produce public art.

Findings from my pre-dissertation research suggests that many different agencies, departments, individuals and interest groups in downtown Denver have the potential to meaningfully participate in the public art program yet the way the program is currently operating limits its ability to guide and implement the diverse perceptions of public art as more than mere things within the larger urban planning framework and arts and culture agenda. Despite the public art director’s title, she (and the program) exist in what I am calling a “powerless autonomy,” in which she is not able to facilitate the potential of the public art program as a powerful actor in Denver’s urban regeneration. I suspect that it is due to the lack of a dialoguing armature, by which the multiple forces, agendas, definitions (of “public” and public art), and audiences are unable to find a common ground. Therefore, this research seeks to unpack the agendas and power relations that exist below the radar, because I suspect that in order for public art to become an integral, even fundamental, part of creating “a new Denver,” the public art program needs to develop strategies by which it will no longer be considered just a thing to art’s and culture’s ideas and places. Therefore, the outcomes of this research will help to answer the following questions: How might Denver, as a postindustrial city, engage in urban regeneration that does not use public art “as a kind of public relations agent for redevelopment” (Baker), but rather sees public art as contributing to Denver’s quality of life and growing a healthy economy? How might the Public Art Program Director work with other city officials and staff, members of the financial community, civic stakeholders and creative professionals in producing and planning for public art.
in downtown Denver so that it more substantially contributes to the economic and cultural viability of downtown and help to improve the image and livability of downtown Denver? How can public art become more integral, even fundamental, to the mission of Create Denver?

2) **Methodology of the project (again in lay terms; DO NOT simply cut and paste from grant proposal.)**

   a) **General description of the structure of the project**

   For this research I will be using a case study approach, “an empirical enquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context” (Yin 2003, 13), to examine and describe public art activity within the context of the “Create Denver” initiative.

   The data to be collected for this study, largely qualitative in nature, will include printed information about public art, the public art program, and the “Create Denver” initiative (e.g., newspaper articles, annual reports, plans and reports, and maps). Compilation of archival materials from city departments, public/arts organizations, newspapers, and local and regional magazines will establish the historical and contemporary context within which this research is situated. Additionally, data will be obtained through interviews of city officials and staff, members of the financial community, civic stakeholders and creative professionals (artists and other spatial players such as landscape architects and engineers). The use of different types of data collection (e.g. interviews, and archival records such as newspaper articles and planning documents) will enable me to address my questions from different perspectives and ensure that I am not limited and thus biased by particular sources (Maxwell 2004, 93). I will conduct my fieldwork in Denver, CO from April - August 2009.

   b) **Please list the Key Personnel of this research project. (Key Personnel are individuals, including the principal investigator and collaborators, who contribute in a substantive way to the scientific development or execution of a project, whether or not they receive compensation from the grant supporting that project.)**

   Joni M Palmer, Doctoral Candidate, Principal Investigator

   Dr. Tim Oakes, Advisor

   c) **Please list all locations at which the research will take place.**

   Denver metropolitan area

   d) **Description of the subject population including recruitment methods, age, type, and number of participants. Include copies and scripts of advertisements (including Buff Bulletin/campus E-memo notices). Please note that any additional recruitment procedures would require HRC review as a change request.**

   Urban public art in downtown Denver is the result of the interactions amongst a diverse set of “actors, powers, institutions and bodies of knowledge” in both the public and private realms. These individuals each wield power in a multitude of ways that intersect and thus impact the final provision of art in (city) public spaces. As well, ideas of “public” are certainly not fixed or universal. There are multiple publics, multiple interests, and multiple benefits to consider; as such, there are diverse and (often) competing interests and values related to decisions over public art. This is why it is important to interview a variety of actors within different sectors (e.g. government departments and agencies, nonprofit organizations, private companies and individuals), and at various levels.

   Pre-dissertation research revealed that the various players in the production of public art (in Denver) define “public” and “public art” in various, nuanced ways; as well, they have differing opinions of the role of public art in urban regeneration, and have varying degrees of desire to include other players (for example, the public/the ‘non-experts”) in the decision-
An analysis of city/government policies also revealed a complex web of actors, agents, and agendas of public art planning. “…We see the end result of decisions or selections over time” (Babon 2000, 111), implying that without digging deeper we will never understand the various interactions that result in the physical landscape we experience on an everyday basis. Therefore, in order to capture the range of perspectives and experiences, I expect to create a sample size of 75 - 90 individuals, representing a variety of perspectives/positions relative to the production of public art in Denver, CO. Individuals will be selected through two means: 1) Purposeful Sampling: key informants will be selected based on their knowledge and willingness to talk, and 2) Snowball Sampling: individuals will be selected based on key informants identifying potential interviewees who would be helpful in this research. The research sample size is approximate as I will be attempting to generate a stratified sample to ensure sufficient representation of the following four categories of actors: 1) city officials and staff, 2) members of the financial community, 3) civic stakeholders and 4) creative professionals. All of the interviewees will first contacted by email or telephone to explain the study and request and schedule an interview.

i) Please indicate the number of participants over the life of the project you intend to enroll*:

*Subject enrolled is determined by those who sign consent forms over the life of the project, not by the number of people who complete a study or who meet screening standards that are assessed after signing a consent form. If appropriate, describe any differences between the number you intend to have sign consents and your intended number of final participants after attrition.

In order to capture the range of perspectives and experiences, I expect to create a sample size of 75 - 90 individuals, representing a variety of perspectives/positions relative to the production of public art in Denver, CO. The research sample size is approximate as I will be attempting to generate a stratified sample to ensure sufficient representation of the following four categories of actors: 1) city officials and staff, 2) members of the financial community, 3) civic stakeholders and 4) creative professionals.

* Please see attached: Informed Consent Form

ii) Please indicate the number of participants expected to complete the research over the life of the project:

75 individuals

e) Description of the procedures involving human subjects (including procedures which may be deceptive, embarrassing, or discomforting to participants). Describe what the participant will encounter: when, where, and how long. If deception is to be used, attach a copy of the debriefing form or statement.

The interviews will last approximately one hour, and will take place either in the place of employment of the interviewee or in a convenient location for the interviewee. The questionnaire I will be using for the interviews will include a mix of open-ended and closed questions that will help me to analyze how various city officials and staff, members of the financial community, civic stakeholders and creative professionals (artists and other spatial players such as landscape architects and engineers) perceive of “the public” and public art as they move forward with the “Create Denver” plan.

f) Description of any surveys, questionnaires or interview schedules to be used (copies must be attached)

Please see attached: Interview Protocol

Please see attached: Potential Interview List

3) Description of the risks and benefits to participants

a) Any risks to the participants should be described

Updated by jmpalmer 03/23/09
No foreseeable risks

b) Benefits include any benefits that the participant may encounter for participation, as well as the benefit to society or science in conducting such research. Benefits should not be overstated; it is acceptable to indicate that “There are no direct benefits for participating in this study.”

There are no direct benefits for participating in this study. However, I do expect long term benefits to cities, staff, planners, designers, etc. in terms of knowledge about the issues raised in this research.

4) Description of means for ensuring privacy for participants (including a statement of either confidentiality or anonymity; if you intend to audio- or video-tape participants, describe final disposition of the tapes [e.g., erased, destroyed, given to participants; if retained, explain how long and how confidentiality will be maintained]. If DNA is collected, indicate the specific use to which it will be put, how confidentiality will be maintained, and how long the material will be retained.

From the “Informed Consent” form:
Please understand that your participation is voluntary. You have the right to withdraw your consent or to discontinue participation at any time. You also have the right to choose not to answer any question(s) for any reason. There are no foreseeable risks or benefits associated with participation in this project.

I would like to use your responses—including direct quotes from the interview—but understand that you may wish to maintain your confidentiality. At the bottom of the consent form, please indicate whether you waive the right to confidentiality or want to preserve it. If you wish to preserve confidentiality, your name will be stripped from the interview transcription and I will use only quotes from the interview that would not reveal your identity. With your permission, I would like to make a digital audio recording of the interview in order to augment my own note taking. All of the audio recordings from this study will be erased after one year from the conclusion of this project. Being audio taped is not a requirement for participation. You may still participate in the study should you choose not to be taped. If you choose to be taped, you may have a copy of the recording if you wish.

5) Investigator’s qualifications to conduct the study (attach CV, or describe qualifications).

I am uniquely qualified to conduct this research because of my educational background in urban and cultural geography, landscape architecture, and city and regional planning. As well, I have professional practice experience as a landscape architect and planner, and as a public artist, project manager, and public art planning consultant. Additionally, my international travel has exposed me to a wide range of approaches and attitudes toward urban public art. These experiences have helped me to reconsider the possible purposes and practices of urban public art and the role(s) it plays (or might play) in urban planning initiatives. Finally, being in close proximity to the City of Denver provides me the opportunity to, on a weekly basis, arrange interviews, tour new public art installations, and attend meetings and other related events.

* Please see attached CV for a more detailed listing of qualifications: CV March09

6) Attach consent form(s). Written informed consent documents are required by the HRC for review and approval for participants in protocols that are considered regular or explicable. If the protocol qualifies for an exempt review, but includes video and/or audio taping, a written consent document is required; in most other cases, verbal consent is required. If your participants include persons aged 7-14, you must provide a written assent form with simplified language to be signed by these participants, as well as a parental permission form to be signed by the parent/guardian. Participants aged 15-17 normally may sign a written assent form in the same language used in the permission form provided to their parents. Please include protocol title, PI name, date, and page numbers.
on the consent forms. *(For help, see the sample consent and assent forms, and instructions, on the HRC web site.)*

* Please see attached: Informed Consent Form

7)  *For funded projects, provide a copy of the contract/grant proposal with this completed application.*

No funding has been obtained for this project.
HRC Request for Review

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Investigator Name:</th>
<th>Investigator Department:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mailing Address:</td>
<td>Campus Box:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daytime Phone:</td>
<td>Email:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Check One:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Check One: Faculty [ ] Staff [ ] Graduate Student [ ] Undergraduate Student [ ]

Type of Review Requested:
- Exempt (select category) Use Exemption Worksheet to make preliminary determination
- Expedited (select category) Use Expedited Worksheet e to make preliminary determination
- Regular [ ]

Project Title: Number of subjects to be consented:

Student Information:
Complete the appropriate boxes ONLY if you are a student conducting research. Please contact the HRC if you have questions regarding student research.

Is this project being conducted as: Course Project [ ] Masters or doctoral thesis [ ] Other [ ]

Faculty Advisor: Department: Phone: Email:

Funding Information
Complete the appropriate boxes ONLY if your research involves funding. Please contact the HRC if you have questions regarding funding.

Is project currently sponsored/funded? □ Yes-SUBMIT PROPOSAL □ No

Grant Title:

CU Proposal #: Funding Agency:

Vulnerable Participants:
Check the appropriate boxes ONLY if your research targets a specific vulnerable population. Please contact the HRC if you have questions regarding vulnerable participants.

People Engaged in Illegal Activities [ ] Fetuses [ ] Children (<18 years of age) [ ] Prisoners [ ] Mentally/Cognitively Impaired [ ] Pregnant Women [ ] Non-Literate or Non-English Speaking [ ]

Updated by jmpalmer 03/22/09
Special Considerations
Check the appropriate boxes that apply to your research.

- Use of Deception
- Genetic Research
- Secondary Data Analysis (analysis of data collected for purposes other than the proposed analysis)
- Survey Research/Interview/Questionnaires
- International research

- Drugs (see below)
- Medical Device (see below)
- Blood Sample (Draw?)
- Watching or Listening to AV Materials
- E-recruitment/data collection

- X-ray, DEXA, MRI, CT SCAN
- Microneurography
- GCRC (Please submit SAC application in lieu of the pages 4-5 of Request for Review)

Drug/Device Information:
Complete the appropriate information ONLY if your research involves a drug, biologic or medical device. Please contact the HRC if you have questions. Be sure to list ALL drugs and devices, not only those requiring an IND or IDE.

ALL Drugs or Devices used:

If applicable, list the IND/IDE number(s) for the drugs/devices used.
IND # __________________________ IDE # _______________________

Acknowledgements
Submission of a protocol to the HRC requires that the Principal Investigator and Faculty Advisor (if applicable) read the following statements regarding Conflicts of Interests and Investigators and/or Faculty Advisors Responsibility.

Conflicts of Interest: (for more information see: http://www.colorado.edu/VCResearch/conflictsofinterest.html)

The Principal Investigator must disclose any known or potential conflicts of interest between any investigator involved with this research and the funding source, drug provider or device provider.

‘Conflicts of Interest’ include but are not limited to:
  • Stock (holding or options) in a sponsoring organization by an investigator or PI.
  • PI or investigator serving as a Director, advisor, or consultant to the sponsoring organization.
  • PI or investigator with other vested interests such as the inventor and/or patent holder of the test article.

Are there any Potential Conflicts of Interest? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please attach copy of the Conflict of Interest Management Plan

Investigator’s Responsibility:
Once the protocol has been approved, it is the Principal Investigator’s (PI) responsibility to report any changes in research activity related to the protocol. The PI must provide the HRC with all protocol and consent form changes and revisions. The HRC must approve these changes before the PI can implement them. All advertisements recruiting study participants must also be approved by the HRC prior to their use. The PI must promptly report all unanticipated problems or adverse events associated with this protocol to the HRC. All projects must undergo a renewal review at least annually to renew the approval for the protocol. Failure to comply with these federal regulations may result in suspension or termination of the protocol.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT: I have read and reviewed this application and accept responsibility for the research described. I further attest that I am fully aware of all the procedures to be followed, will monitor the research, and will notify the HRC of any significant problems or changes.

Updated by jmpalmer 03/22/09
Faculty Advisor’s Responsibility:

It is the responsibility of the Faculty Advisor to oversee student research and ensure that the student is conducting human participants research in accordance with the federal regulations and HRC policies.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT: I have read and reviewed this application and accept responsibility for the student research described and mentoring of the student under my direction. I further attest that I am fully aware of all the procedures to be followed and will ensure that the research is being conducted according to federal regulations and HRC policies.

For HRC Office Use only

Approved

Recommendations:

__________________________________________________________________________
HRC Panel Coordinator Date

Project Description

Submit SAC application in lieu of this project description if you are using

Updated by jmpalmer 03/22/09
GCRC. Please submit your qualifications for conducting such research.

This description should be as complete as possible. **Note that this is a template only; use as much space as needed to provide the information described below.**

1) **Purpose and Significance of the Project.** (This should be in terms understandable to knowledgeable laypeople. **DO NOT simply cut and paste from grant proposal, or your request may be returned without review.**)

2) **Methodology of the project** (again in lay terms; **DO NOT simply cut and paste from grant proposal.**)
   a) General description of the structure of the project
   b) Please list the Key Personnel of this research project. (Key Personnel are individuals, including the principal investigator and collaborators, who contribute in a substantive way to the scientific development or execution of a project, whether or not they receive compensation from the grant supporting that project.)
   c) Please list all locations at which the research will take place.
   d) Description of the subject population including recruitment methods, age, type, and number of participants. **Include copies and scripts of advertisements (including Buff Bulletin/campus E-memo notices). Please note that any additional recruitment procedures would require HRC review as a change request.**
      i) Please indicate the number of participants over the life of the project you intend to enroll*:
      *Subject enrolled is determined by those who sign consent forms over the life of the project, not by the number of people who complete a study or who meet screening standards that are assessed after signing a consent form. If appropriate, describe any differences between the number you intend to have sign consents and your intended number of final participants after attrition.
      ii) Please indicate the number of participants expected to complete the research over the life of the project:
   e) Description of the procedures involving human subjects (including procedures which may be deceptive, embarrassing, or discomforting to participants). Describe what the participant will encounter: when, where, and how long. If deception is to be used, attach a copy of the debriefing form or statement.
   f) Description of any surveys, questionnaires or interview schedules to be used (copies must be attached)

3) **Description of the risks and benefits to participants**
   a) Any risks to the participants should be described
   b) Benefits include any benefits that the participant may encounter for participation, as well as the benefit to society or science in conducting such research. Benefits should not be overstated; it is acceptable to indicate that “There are no direct benefits for participating in this study.”

4) **Description of means for ensuring privacy for participants** (including a statement of either confidentiality or anonymity; if you intend to audio- or video-tape participants, describe final disposition of the tapes [e.g., erased, destroyed, given to participants; if retained, explain how long and how confidentiality will be maintained]. If DNA is collected, indicate the specific use to which it will be put, how confidentiality will be protected, and how long the material will be retained.

5) **Investigator's qualifications to conduct the study** (attach CV, or describe qualifications).

6) **Attach consent form(s).** Written informed consent documents are required by the HRC for review and approval for

Updated by jmpalmer  03/22/09
participants in protocols that are considered regular or expediteable. If the protocol qualifies for an exempt review, but includes video and/or audio taping, a written consent document is required; in most other cases, verbal consent is required. If your participants include persons aged 7-14, you must provide a written assent form with simplified language to be signed by these participants, as well as a parental permission form to be signed by the parent/guardian. Participants aged 15-17 normally may sign a written assent form in the same language used in the permission form provided to their parents. Please include protocol title, PI name, date, and page numbers on the consent forms. (For help, see the sample consent and assent forms, and instructions, on the HRC web site.)

7) For funded projects, provide a copy of the contract/grant proposal with this completed application.
APPENDIX B: List of research participants
**APPENDIX B: List of Research Participants**

**Tier 1: May+ June**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kendall Peterson</td>
<td>City Officials + Staff</td>
<td>Public Art Director, DOCA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ginger White</td>
<td>City Officials + Staff</td>
<td>Sr. Economic Development Specialist / Create Denver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Janet Meredith</td>
<td>Civic Stakeholder</td>
<td>Advisory Committee Member, Create Denver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jil Rosentrater</td>
<td>Civic Stakeholder</td>
<td>Director, Art in Public Places, CO Council for the Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ellen Ittelson</td>
<td>City Officials + Staff</td>
<td>Sr. City Planner, Community Planning &amp; Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christopher Wineman</td>
<td>Civic Stakeholder</td>
<td>Advisory Committee Member, Create Denver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erin Trapp</td>
<td>City Officials + Staff</td>
<td>Director of the Denver Office of Cultural Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Duncanson</td>
<td>City Officials + Staff</td>
<td>Engineering Manager, Dept. of Public Works</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gordon Robertson</td>
<td>City Officials + Staff</td>
<td>Director, Dept. of Parks and Recreation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tracy Huggins</td>
<td>Civic Stakeholder</td>
<td>Executive Director, Denver Urban Renewal Authority (DURA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rudi Cerri</td>
<td>City Officials + Staff</td>
<td>Public Art Administrator, DOCA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brenda Tierney</td>
<td>City Officials + Staff</td>
<td>RTD/FasTracks Public Information Manager + Public Art Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter Park</td>
<td>City Officials + Staff</td>
<td>Community Planning &amp; Development, Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark Najarian</td>
<td>City Officials + Staff</td>
<td>Director of Facilities, Theatres and Arenas Division</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark Bernstein</td>
<td>City Officials + Staff</td>
<td>Downtown Area Planner, Dept. of Parks and Recreation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pam Schooley</td>
<td>City Officials + Staff</td>
<td>Sr. Landscape Architect, Dept. of Parks and Recreation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cassie Milestone</td>
<td>Civic Stakeholder</td>
<td>Urban Planning Manager, Downtown Denver Partnership</td>
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**Tier 1: May+ June**

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<td>7 male + 10 female</td>
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<td>Civic Stakeholder</td>
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<tr>
<td>Creative Professional</td>
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**Tier 2: July**

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<th>Name</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carla Madison</td>
<td>City Officials + Staff</td>
<td>Councilwoman, District 8 (downtown Denver)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheila Doll</td>
<td>City Officials + Staff</td>
<td>Plan Reviews Supervisor, Dept. of Public Works</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eric Crotty</td>
<td>Civic Stakeholder</td>
<td>Public Art Committee member (also a landscape architect)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Randy Schnicker</td>
<td>City Officials + Staff</td>
<td>Engineering Supervisor, Dept. of Public Works</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barbara Neal</td>
<td>Civic Stakeholder</td>
<td>Public Art Consultant, Stapleton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deborah Jordy</td>
<td>Civic Stakeholder</td>
<td>Executive Director, Colorado Business Committee for the Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jayne Buck</td>
<td>Civic Stakeholder</td>
<td>Vice President, Tourism, Visit Denver (The Convention &amp; Visitors Bureau)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reed Weimer</td>
<td>Creative Professional</td>
<td>artist</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## APPENDIX B: List of Research Participants  total n = 63  |  p 2 of 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title/Role</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Shannon Daut</td>
<td>Civic Stakeholder Deputy Director, WESTAF (Western States Art Federation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Ken Hamel</td>
<td>Civic Stakeholder Executive Director, denverarts.org</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Joe Richie</td>
<td>Creative Professional artist/sculptor/fabricator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Mike Macarella</td>
<td>Creative Professional artist + business owner (June Works)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Garrison Roots</td>
<td>Creative Professional artist/sculptor + dept. chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Ivar Zeile</td>
<td>Civic Stakeholder selection panel member, art dealer, gallery owner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Matt Chasansky</td>
<td>City Officials + Staff DIA - Art Program Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>Darrell Anderson</td>
<td>Creative Professional artist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>Maria Cole</td>
<td>Civic Stakeholder Chair, Public Art Commission (also an architect)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>David Brehm</td>
<td>Civic Stakeholder selection panel member (also a landscape architect)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>Chandler Romeo</td>
<td>Creative Professional artist (also 'civic stakeholder' ...)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>Dennis Rubba</td>
<td>Creative Professional Landscape Architect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>Rori Knudtson</td>
<td>Creative Professional artist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>David Erlich</td>
<td>Civic Stakeholder Co-Executive Director, Denver Theatre District (DTD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>Marie Kielar</td>
<td>City Officials + Staff Division Chief, Denver Sheriff Dept. --&gt; selection panel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>Trine Bumiller</td>
<td>Creative Professional artist / painter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>Tamara (Tami) Door</td>
<td>Civic Stakeholder President &amp; CEO, Downtown Denver Partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>Cecily Cullin</td>
<td>Civic Stakeholder selection panel member (also Assist. Director/Curator, Center for Visual Art)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>Jaime Kafati</td>
<td>City Officials + Staff Court Services/Civil Division, Denver Sheriff Dept. --&gt; selection panel</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

City Officials & Staff 6  
Civic Stakeholders 12  
Creative Professionals 9  

### Tier 3: August + September + October

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title/Role</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>Anthony Radich</td>
<td>Civic Stakeholder Executive Director, WESTAF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46</td>
<td>Susan Cooper</td>
<td>Creative Professional artist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47</td>
<td>Jim Green</td>
<td>Creative Professional artist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>Lawrence Argent</td>
<td>Creative Professional artist</td>
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<tr>
<td>49</td>
<td>John McEnroe</td>
<td>Creative Professional artist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>Chuck Perry</td>
<td>Civic Stakeholder Developer: Partner, Perry Rose LLC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51</td>
<td>Jill Hadley Hooper</td>
<td>Civic Stakeholder selection panel member (also artist, Rino, Ironton gallery)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52</td>
<td>Rebecca Vaughan</td>
<td>Civic Stakeholder selection panel member (also artist, academic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53</td>
<td>Tom Gleason</td>
<td>Civic Stakeholder Developer: Director of Governmental Relations and</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### APPENDIX B: List of Research Participants  total n = 63 | p 3 of 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ID</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Role</th>
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<tr>
<td>54</td>
<td>Catherine Widgery</td>
<td>Creative Professional</td>
<td>Communications, Forest City, Stapleton artist (not local = Massachusetts based)</td>
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<td>55</td>
<td>Jerry de la Cruz</td>
<td>Civic Stakeholder</td>
<td>selection panel member (also an artist)</td>
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<tr>
<td>56</td>
<td>Marda Kim</td>
<td>Civic Stakeholder</td>
<td>Executive Director, EcoArts</td>
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<td>57</td>
<td>Deanna Miller</td>
<td>Civic Stakeholder</td>
<td>City of Aurora Public Art Program Manager</td>
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<td>58</td>
<td>Mickey Zeppelin</td>
<td>Civic Stakeholder</td>
<td>Developer: Zeppelin Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59</td>
<td>Keat Tan</td>
<td>Creative Professional</td>
<td>Architect: Justice Center + Hyatt Hotel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>Carlos Fresquez</td>
<td>Creative Professional</td>
<td>artist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61</td>
<td>Walter Isenberg</td>
<td>Civic Stakeholder</td>
<td>Developer: President/CEO Sage Hospitality, Denver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62</td>
<td>Tom Gougeon</td>
<td>Civic Stakeholder</td>
<td>Developer: Chief Development Officer, Principal, Continuum Partners, LLC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63</td>
<td>Lewis Sharp</td>
<td>Civic Stakeholder</td>
<td>Director, Denver Art Museum</td>
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<table>
<thead>
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<tr>
<td>Civic Stakeholders</td>
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<tr>
<td>Creative Professionals</td>
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### Tier 3 = 19 | 13 men + 6 women

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Total n = 63</th>
<th>City Officials + Staff = 18</th>
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<td>Civic Stakeholders = 29</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Creative Professionals = 16</td>
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APPENDIX C: Interview protocol and consent form
The Politics of “the public”: Public Art, Urban Regeneration and the Postindustrial City—
The Case of Downtown Denver Principal Investigator: Joni Palmer

PARTICIPANT INFORMED CONSENT FORM
18 March 2009

Please read the following material that explains this research study. Signing this form will indicate that you have been informed about the study and that you want to participate. We want you to understand what you are being asked to do and what risks and benefits—if any—are associated with the study. This should help you decide whether or not you want to participate in the study.

You are being invited to participate in a research project conducted by Joni M Palmer, a graduate student in the University of Colorado’s Department of Geography, Campus Box 260, Guggenheim Hall 110, Boulder, CO 80309-0260, office phone (303) 735 1084. This project is conducted under the direction of Professor Tim Oakes, Department of Geography, Campus Box 260, Guggenheim Hall 108, Boulder, CO 80309-0260, office phone (303) 492 8310.

Project Description:
The purpose of this study is to examine the processes by which public art is produced in Denver, and in particular, to look at the process in relation to the “Create Denver” initiative. The proposed research project builds on my pre-dissertation research, which included initial interviews with key stakeholders and the collection of planning documents, newspaper articles and other printed materials. Qualitative data are being collected through in-depth interviews with city officials and staff, members of the financial community, civic stakeholders and creative professionals.

My concern here is not to examine an individual object/piece of public art, but rather to examine how the public art program operates within the complex machinations of downtown Denver’s urban regeneration efforts. This study will help us to better understand the role of public art in urban regeneration efforts with regard to the city’s multiple publics. The overarching question of this research is: What are the conceptions and dimensions of “public” in public art planning and implementation?
Procedures:
If you agree to take part in this study, you will be asked to participate in an interview with the principal investigator (Joni M Palmer). You are being asked to participate in this study because you are a city official, city staff, member of the financial community, civic stakeholder or creative professional (artists and other spatial players such as landscape architects and engineers) involved in public art and/or the "Create Denver" initiatives in downtown Denver, CO. You were identified as a possible participant in this research in one of five ways: 1) through professional networking connections, e.g., meeting at conferences, field visits, etc., 2) through the recommendation of someone involved in public art and/or "Create Denver", 3) via an internet search, 4) from public art publications and listservs, or 4) through the recommendation of someone else who has (previously) participated in this study.

You will be asked to respond to a questionnaire during an interview that will take approximately one hour of your time. During the interview I will be asking you questions regarding your awareness, views, and involvement in public art in downtown Denver, CO. The interview will occur at a place of convenience for you.

Please understand that your participation is voluntary. You have the right to withdraw your consent or to discontinue participation at any time. You also have the right to choose not to answer any question(s) for any reason. There are no foreseeable risks or benefits associated with participation in this project.

I would like to use your responses—including direct quotes from the interview—but understand that you may wish to maintain your confidentiality. At the bottom of the consent form, please indicate whether you waive the right to confidentiality or want to preserve it. If you wish to preserve confidentiality, your name will be stripped from the interview transcription and I will use only quotes from the interview that would not reveal your identity. With your permission, I would like to make a digital audio recording of the interview in order to augment my own note taking. All of the audio recordings from this study will be erased after one year from the conclusion of this project. Being audio taped is not a requirement for participation. You may still participate in the study should you choose not to be taped. If you choose to be taped, you may have a copy of the recording if you wish.
Benefits:
There are no direct benefits to you from taking part in this study. Any benefits of the study are not necessarily benefits to the individual subject, but rather the benefits of conducting this study may lead to a better understanding of the production of public art in mid-size cities.

Cost to Participant
There are no direct costs to you for participation in this study.

Subject Payment
You will not be paid for participation in this study.

Ending Your Participation
Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You have the right to withdraw your consent or stop participating at any time. You have the right to decline to answer any question(s) for any reason.

Questions?
If you have any questions regarding your participation in this research, you should ask the investigator before signing this form. If you should have questions or concerns during or after your participation, please contact joni palmer via email: joni.palmer@colorado.edu or by telephone: 303. 735. 1084 (office) or 505. 228. 1886 (cell).

If you have questions regarding your rights as a participant, any concerns regarding this project or any dissatisfaction with any aspect of this study, you may report them—confidentially, if you wish—to the Executive Secretary, Human Research Committee, 26 UCB, Regent Administrative Center 308, University of Colorado at Boulder, Boulder, CO 80309-0026, (303) 735-3702.

You may request that your inquiry remain confidential. The Human Research Committee will send you a copy of the University’s compliance agreement with federal regulations from human subjects, if you wish to review it. You will retain a signed copy of this consent form, and the University of Colorado at Boulder will retain a signed copy.

Authorization:
I have read this paper about the study or it was read to me. I know the possible risks and benefits. I know that being in this study is voluntary. I choose to be in this study. I know that I can
withdraw at any time. I have received, on the date signed, a copy of this document containing 4 pages.

Audio Tape Consent
I am consenting to be audio taped during the participation of this research.
____ Yes, I would like to be taped during my participation in this research.
____ No, I would not like to be taped during my participation in this research.

Confidentiality Statement
A. I understand the above information and voluntarily consent to participate in the research project entitled “The Politics of Public Art, Urban Regeneration and the Postindustrial City: The Case of Downtown Denver.” I waive my right to confidentiality.
Name of Participant (printed) __________________________

Signature of participant _______ Date _______

B. I understand the above information and voluntarily consent to participate in the research project entitled “The Politics of Public Art, Urban Regeneration and the Postindustrial City: The Case of Downtown Denver.” I wish to maintain my right to confidentiality.
Name of Participant (printed) __________________________

Signature of participant _______ Date _______
Signature of researcher _______ Date _______

For IRB Use Only
This consent form is approved for use from 4.29.09 through Exempt.

[Signature] Panel Coordinator, Human Research Committee

Informed Consent Form . jmp . 4 of 4
INTERVIEW PROTOCOL: for city officials, staff, members of the financial community, civic stakeholders or creative professionals

STUDY TITLE: The Politics of “the public”: Public Art, Urban Regeneration and the Postindustrial City—The Case of Downtown Denver

Revised: 5 May 2009. joni m palmer

Date: _____ ___________________ 2009

Category: 1. city officials and staff 2. members of financial community 3. civic stakeholder 4. creative professional

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tier 1</th>
<th>Tier 2</th>
<th>Tier 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name of Individual: ________________________________</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization: ______________________________________</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview #: ______</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Informed Consent form completed and signed? Yes No

Permission to tape record? Yes No

Employer agrees to interview at workplace? Yes No

Hello … Name of Informant.
Thank you for taking the time to participate in my research.

So, to begin our conversation I would like to confirm a few of things:

1. **Confidentiality Statement**
   a. confirm that the participant waives right to confidentiality
   \[\Rightarrow\] You have waived your right to confidentiality, by what name shall I address you in this session? e.g., first name only
b. confirm that the participant wishes to maintain right to confidentiality
   → Since you wish to maintain your right to confidentiality, how would you like for me to address you during this session?

2. Permission to tape record this session
   a. confirm permission to tape record this session
      → Thank you for allowing me to tape record this session. The reason for my asking for your permission to record this session is that there is the possibility that I will be using your responses—including direct quotes from the interview—in my dissertation document.

      If you agree to be audio taped, I will start the digital audio recording of the interview in order to augment my own note taking.

   b. confirm that participant does not wish to have the session recorded
      → I will not be recording this session, so will now begin taking notes for future reference.

3. Confirmation that employer agrees to my interviewing you at your workplace:
   YES    NO

Do you have any questions before we get started?

BEGIN AUDIO-TAPE, if approved by subject…

I am a Ph.D. student in the department of geography at the University of Colorado at Boulder. This interview is part of my dissertation research, entitled: *The Politics of “the public”: Public Art, Urban Regeneration and the Postindustrial City—The Case of Downtown Denver.*

I provided you with a brief overview of my research in the Informed Consent Form; but will again tell you a bit about this study, if you so desire…

The purpose of this study is to examine the processes by which public art is produced in Denver, and in particular, to look at the process in relation to the “Create Denver” initiative. The proposed research project builds on my pre-dissertation research, which included initial interviews with key stakeholders and the collection of planning documents, newspaper articles and other printed
materials. Qualitative data are being collected through in-depth interviews with people like you: city officials and staff, members of the financial community, civic stakeholders and creative professionals.

My concern here is not to examine an individual object/piece of public art, but rather to examine how the public art program operates within the complex machinations of downtown Denver’s urban regeneration efforts. This study will help us to better understand the role of public art in urban regeneration efforts with regard to the city’s multiple publics. The overarching question of this research is: What are the conceptions and dimensions of “public” in public art planning and implementation?

Therefore, this research is not just about what the public art program does but how public art is achieved within the context of urban regeneration efforts in Denver.

Logistics:
This interview will last approximately one hour. The questions I’ll be asking will include a mix of open-ended and closed questions that will help me to learn how various city officials and staff, members of the financial community, civic stakeholders and creative professionals (artists and other spatial players such as landscape architects and engineers) participate in the production of public art, and how individuals perceive of “the public” and public art related to the “Create Denver” plan.

Thank you for taking the time to talk with me. I appreciate your honest feedback and appreciate the time you have taken to help me with this research. As a reminder, I would like your response to these questions from your perspective as a decision maker/creator/stakeholder in public art and the creative cities initiative in downtown Denver.

Before we proceed further, I want to provide you with a chance to ask any questions that you might have about this research. Do you have any questions about the research at this time? If not, there will be time for questions/comments again, at the end of the interview.

The questions for this interview are organized into 7 sections: 1) Questions about you, 2) General questions about your work/the organization for which you work, 3) Definitions and Valuation of “public”, 4) Definitions and Valuation of public art, 5) Urban Regeneration and Creative Cities Initiatives, 6) The role of urban public arts in creative cities initiatives, and 7) Communications and interactions.

To begin, let me ask you a few questions about you:

**SECTION 1: Opening questions / Demographics**

Gender  M  F

Professional Position / Title
What, specifically, is your position called? _____________________

What is the scope of your responsibilities in this position?

How many years have you been in this position?

How does your job relate to public art (in Denver)?

Which best describes your educational background?
___ High School Graduate or GED
___ Less than two years of college
___ Two Year College
___ Certificate Program
___ Attended college/university but did not (receive a) degree
___ Four year Bachelors Degree
___ Master’s Degree
___ Ph.D.

Area of study: ____________________________________________

What is your age?
___ Under 21
___ 22-34
___ 35-44
___ 45-59
___ 60+

Where do you live? e.g. downtown (district?), suburb (which one), Boulder, etc.

How long have you lived at this location?
How long have you lived in Denver/the Denver metro area?

SECTION 2. Definitions and Valuation of “public”
How do you/your organization define “the public”?
That is, whom do you believe you are serving?

Probe: …How is it that you serve “the public,” in terms of daily activities and longer-term programs and projects.
Do you use other terms, other than “the public” (for the same set of people referenced above)?

Do you believe there are multiple categories of public?

Follow-up: If so, what are they?

Probe: How are these multiple categories of public “used” or referenced in the context of your work?

Are these “publics” prioritized in the work of your organization?

If so, how? Please explain …

SECTION 3. Definitions and Valuation of public art

What is public art?

Follow-up: here do you draw the line? = when is it not public art?

Probe: What does it include?

Probe: What are some examples here in downtown Denver?

Probe: What makes art public?

Follow-up: How would you distinguish public art from architecture, landscape design, or other forms of design or improvements?

What/How does public art contribute to downtown Denver as: a city, a community, a place to visit, a place to live?

Follow-up: Do you think there is a need for—or value in having—public art?

No Value  1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10  Great Value

Follow-up: Can you provide some examples of/ways how public art contributes to downtown Denver?

Probe: For example, as a place to live, public art might contribute to the quality of life by providing points of interest and activity.

What do you think is the strongest rationale for public art in downtown Denver?

Probe: What do you think is the strongest rationale for public art in similar cities?

e.g. beautification, economic reasons

Is public art mostly for residents, or… for visitors?

Follow-up: How do you think public art is perceived by people who live in or visit Denver?

Probe: Is there an awareness of it?

What are the “public benefits” of public art?

Follow-up: How is it that you believe such benefits might be achieved?

Who benefits from public art (programs, projects, events)?
That is, who is this benefiting “public”?  
Probe: geographic groups, social groups, user groups; the city; etc.

How do they (each) benefit?  
Probe: If you can, please provide an example.
Probe: Do you think there are public benefits that stem from public art? 
Do you think some people, organizations, etc. benefit more than others? 

Are there other people (groups, ages) you think should also benefit, but presently do not?

Do you believe there are any costs (other than monetary) to the public? 
Probe: Do you think there are disadvantages or limitations? 
If yes, what are they?

Given what you've said so far, what do you consider to be a successful example of public art in Denver? 
Follow-up: what are the criteria for public art being “successful”? 
Probe: is the successfulness based on the piece or on the site? 
If one or the other, How might the piece fare in another location? 
And, how might the space fare without the piece?

Given what you've said, what do you consider to be an unsuccessful example of public art in Denver? 
Follow-up: what are the criteria for public art being “unsuccessful”? 
Probe: is the unsuccessfulness based on the piece or on the site? 
If one or the other, How might the piece fare in another location? 
And, how might the space fare without the piece?

SECTION 4: Urban regeneration and Creative Cities Initiatives
How do you define urban regeneration? 
Follow-up: Is there another term you use/might use?

Do you think there is value in urban regeneration efforts in Denver? 
Follow-up: If so, why? If not, why not?

What do you know about creative cities and the Create Denver initiative? 
Follow-up: Relative to the other issues facing the region today, how important do you think this initiative is for Denver?

How are you involved in the “Create Denver” initiative? 
Follow-up: Could you describe some examples of how you are involved in “Create Denver”? 

Page 6 of 9
What criticisms are you aware of regarding “Create Denver”/Creative Cities?
Follow-up: What would your response(s) be to those critiques?

Who set(s) the agenda for “Create Denver”?
Probe: What I mean is, who is influential in directing the goals and mission of the organization and to what extent? (e.g. city staff, board of directors, etc.)
Probe: Who is involved in the decision making process and to what extent?
Who has input?
That is, who might be the various people involved in decision-making?
→ e.g., actors: city staff, consultants, etc.
How much is “the public” involved in the decision-making process?

SECTION 5: The role of urban public arts in creative cities initiatives
What do you consider to be the role and place of public art in urban regeneration plans?
Follow-up: What role (if any) do you see public art playing in urban regeneration/"Create Denver” in Denver?

Based on your professional perspective, do you see public art as a high or a low priority in the Create Denver initiative?

Low 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 High

Follow-up: What are the various levels of public art literacy, concern and action amongst decision makers?

SECTION 6: Communications and interactions
This next set of questions is about how decisions are made; that is, your perception of the decision making process, and your role in decision-making. I’d like to get a sense of the types and extents of interactions among decision-makers, creators and stakeholders. As well, I would like to understand how this supports or hinders your work.

There are, of course, many policies, guidelines, and ordinances governing planning and design in Denver but, in your view:

What is your role in either the creation of or planning for public art in downtown Denver?
Probe: Could you describe some examples of how you are involved in public art projects in the city?
Probe: How would you characterize your involvement in the process?
Probe: What it is you ‘do’: tasks, amount of work, at the center or at the periphery?

What do you know about the public art program in Denver?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
How are decisions made about new works of public art?
Who proposes, selects, funds, and plans for public art in downtown Denver?

Follow-up: What are the roles of the mayor's office, city council, planning board, arts commission, etc. in the process?

→ how did you come this knowledge / why don’t you know more?

Do you believe the planning procedures for public art are easy to understand?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Not easy to understand Easy to understand

If the procedures are easy to understand, what is it about the policy or stated procedure (2 or 3 things) that makes it easy to comprehend?
If the procedures are not easy to understand, can you explain why and provide an example?

What is the nature of the relationships/interactions you have with others involved in the production of public art with regard to “Create Denver”?

How would you describe your organization’s relationship with other organizations, city agencies, etc.?

Poor 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Excellent

Follow-up: examples? e.g. communication, sharing of information, etc.

Are the social and political interactions amongst the various “players” positive and productive or negative and disabling?

Negative 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Positive

Follow-up: Could you provide an example of when collaboration worked especially well?
Follow-up: Could you provide an example of when collaboration didn't worked especially well?

Suggestions of other people I should contact and interview?
• Can I tell this person that you suggested I contact her/him?
• Do you have contact information for this person?
• If you think of anyone else I might contact, please let me know – you can email me or call me.

**Debriefing**
You’ve given me some very interesting information; unfortunately, that’s all the time we have. I would like to thank you for your participation. If you have further thoughts or comments, please feel free to contact me. Again, thank you for your time.
APPENDIX D: Inventory of noteworthy public art works in the City’s collection
APPENDIX D: Inventory of noteworthy public art works in the City’s collection

**Pioneer Fountain, 1911**
Frederick MacMonnies
Civic Center Park
Image: joni m palmer

**On The War Trail, 1922**
Alexander Phimister Proctor
Civic Center Park
Image: joni m palmer

**The Trapper, 1920**
Allen True
Greek Amphitheatre West
Image: joni m palmer

**Windsong, 1971**
Robert Mangold
Downtown Children’s Playground at Speer Blvd. and Wynkoop Street
Image: joni m palmer
Articulated Wall, 1985
Herbert Bayer
Denver Design Center
Image: joni m palmer

When Legends Run Free, 1991
Rich Sargent
Denver Museum of Nature and Science
Image: joni m palmer

Leap of Faith, 1995
Patty Ortiz
Speer Blvd. and Elitch Circle
Image: joni m palmer

Man and Woman, 1998
Fernando Botero
Denver Performing Arts Complex
Image: joni m palmer
Scottish Angus Cow and Calf, 2001
Dan Ostermiller
Denver Art Museum
Image: joni m palmer

The Yearling, 2003
Donald Lipski
Denver Public Library
Image: joni m palmer

King and Queen, 2001
Brian Swanson
Market Street Bus Statio
Image: joni m palmer

East 2 West Source Point, 2003
Larry Kirkland
Wellington E. Webb Municipal Building
Image: joni m palmer
Dancers, 2003
Jonathan Borofsky
Denver Performing Arts Complex
sculpture park
2003
Image: joni m palmer

Indeterminate Line, 2004
Bernar Venet
Colorado Convention Center
Image: joni m palmer

O’ Truth of Earth, 2005
Joseph Kosuth
Circling exterior of Hyatt Regency at Colorado Convention Center
2005
Image: joni m palmer

Wheel, 2005
Edgar Heap of Birds
Denver Art Museum
Image: joni m palmer
I See What You Mean, 2005
Lawrence Argent
Colorado Convention Center
Image: joni m palmer

Big Sweep, 2006
Coosje Van Brugger and Claes Oldenburg
Denver Art Museum
Image: joni m palmer

Colorado Monoliths, 2006
Beverly Pepper
Denver Art Museum
Image: joni m palmer

All Together Now, 2007
Robert Behar and Rosario Manquart
14th Street and Curtis Street
Image: joni m palmer
National Velvet, 2008
John McEnroe
16th Street Pedestrian Bridge
Image: joni m plamer

Mustang, 2008
Luis Jimenez
Denver International Airport

Light Chamber, 2010
Dennis Oppenheim
Denver Justice Center
Image: joni m palmer

Trade Deficit, 2009
Joseph Riché
Broadway and Blake
Image: joni m palmer
Sun Spot, 2011
Laura Haddad and Tom Drugan
Denver Animal Shelter
Image: joni m palmer

Virga, 2011
Patrick Marold
Delgany Pedestrian Bridge
Image: joni m aplmer
APPENDIX E: DOCA documents

Public art policy document, 2009

Public art planning document, 2008

Public art master plan of the public art process, 1995
PUBLIC ART MASTER PLAN

of the

PUBLIC ART PROCESS

MAYOR'S COMMISSION on
ART, CULTURE and FILM

WELLINGTON E. WEBB
MAYOR
CITY and COUNTY of DENVER
Wellington E. Webb
Mayor

Mayor's Commission on Art, Culture and Film

Public Art Master Plan
of the
Public Art Process

Amended Fall, 1995
September, 1993

Mayor Wellington E. Webb  
City and County Building  
1437 Bannock Street, Room 350  
Denver, CO 80202

Dear Mayor Webb:

On behalf of the Mayor's Commission on Art, Culture and Film, I proudly present to you the following document — The Public Art Master Plan of the Public Art Process — for your consideration and approval. The Public Art Master Plan of the Public Art Process is in implementation of the Public Art Process, paragraph 2), which provides for the Mayor's Commission on Art, Culture and Film to develop a Public Art Master Plan for the City and County of Denver.

The Mayor's Commission on Art, Culture and Film, the Mayor's Office of Art, Culture and Film and interested citizens have worked diligently for several months to develop a public art process which represents our vision of public art for the City and County of Denver.

The Mayor's Commission on Art, Culture and Film is quite fortunate in that we were able to utilize the very capable services of Marshall Kaplan, Dean of the School of Public Affairs, University of Colorado at Denver and Barbara Cox, President, The Coordinator, Inc. in facilitating deliberations in this effort.

The Public Art Master Plan of the Public Art Process takes into consideration the selection, maintenance and funding of public art as well as addressing the uniqueness of Denver's rich diversity of cultures. It includes an innovative outreach and marketing component.

The Mayor’s Commission on Art, Culture and Film is indebted to your foresight in creating a public art ordinance. It is our hope that the following pages have captured the essence of Ordinance 717.

Very truly yours,

Wilma J. Webb,  
Chairperson
Mayor's Commission on Art, Culture and Film

Wilma J. Webb
Chairperson

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In 1991, Denver Mayor Wellington E. Webb proposed to City Council Ordinance 717, Series of 1991. It was adopted for the purpose of incorporating works of art into public buildings and spaces. The Ordinance allocates one percent (1%) of the total estimated construction cost of those city capital improvement projects whose budgeted estimated cost of construction and design is equal to or greater than one million dollars ($1,000,000.00) for the design and construction of public art.

The intent of Ordinance 717 (D.R.M.C. 20-85 et. seq.) which established the Public Art Program is clear. Carefully selected public art—art appropriate to and located in the public spaces created by public funds—should be used to enhance the visual qualities of, and visual experiences provided by, public facilities. The strategic placement of public art in public places will add a dimension to Denver’s quality of life and will help extend its national and international reputation as an urban and urbane place to live, work and re-create. In March, 1993, the Mayor’s Commission on Art, Culture and Film adopted a Public Art Process to implement the Public Art Program.

Public art according to the Ordinance includes, but is not limited to: sculpture; painting; graphic arts; tile; mosaics; photography; crafts; mixed media; earthworks and environmental installations, and decorative, ornamental or functional elements related to the improvements or renovations. It is created by the combination of skill, emotion, intellect and imagination of individual artists.

Public art is funded by public monies. Because of this fact, it should meet fundamental standards related to quality. Further, the standards should illustrate the sensitivity to the unique and important art contributions of different ethnic and racial groups. Importantly, standards should

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1. Appendix II
2. The Public Art Process, adopted and effective March 19, 1993, is defined in Appendix I.
also reflect sensitivity to different art media, composition, materials, durability and other relevant criteria.

Clearly, public art should relate well to its intended location. Sometimes public art should be used to help inform observers concerning the function of its home. Sometimes it should help direct people to and/or through space.

Public art should go further. It should lend content, interest and, perhaps, even pride to different kinds of public spaces. It should provide a variety of challenging, positive, thoughtful, contemplative and, yes, even humorous experiences to its observers. Succinctly, public art should help enrich the lives of those who “experience” it.

Vision

Denver is fortunate. The Public Art Program will provide the wherewithal to offer public art in different kinds of public spaces or settings. Opportunities will range from large buildings to small ones, from city spaces to regional spaces to intimate neighborhood places, from places that lend themselves to the extended viewing of art by citizens at their own desired pace to places which require more impressionistic, rapid viewing.

A cohesive vision and set of overall objectives is required to respond to the many opportunities to "place make" through public art in Denver. These objectives are:

- The Public Art Program shall assure the location and placement of distinguished art in public places. While the quest for the selection or certain acquisition of "eternal" art is probably beyond us, the quest for outstanding art that is likely to survive temporary fads and live beyond our lifetime is not.

- The Public Art Program shall be used to enhance the environment—the place in which visual art is located. The art selected shall relate to the size, scale, dimensions, purpose, and surroundings of the public place. It should help extend the attractiveness of public spaces and their relationship, as well as significance and meaning to the neighborhood or community around them.

- The Public Art Program shall provide increased opportunities to the citizens of Denver to understand, learn from and experience the varied work of outstanding artists. Public art shall add a dimension to the lives of the citizens of Denver. It should facilitate personal growth. To the extent possible, the program, not necessarily each individual piece of acquired art, shall be directed at strengthening the historical and cultural uniqueness of the city. Overall, it should help lend substance to the image of Denver as an urban and urbane environment.

- The Public Art Program shall provide Denver with distinguished art and shall draw from the "best" artists in the world. Every effort should be made to assure the identification, development and participation in the Public Art Program of outstanding regional, state, metro area and local Denver artists of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Their work shall strengthen Denver's historical, cultural and community uniqueness.

- The Public Art Program shall reflect a selection process which is open, predictable, fair and competitive. Limited competitions for, and direct selection of, public art shall be permissible when the needs of specific kinds of public spaces clearly suggest artists with specific kinds of backgrounds and experience or when there is a recognized time constraint with respect to selecting artists for public art projects. The final decisions and criteria generating final selection of artists and acquisition of public art shall be made available to the public.
Organization, Roles and Missions

Two key related organizations are to be responsible for carrying out the Public Art Program. They are the Mayor’s Commission on Art, Culture and Film (MCACF) and the Mayor’s Office of Art, Culture and Film (MOACF). Their role and mission as critical advisors to the Mayor is crucial to the success and impact of the Public Art Program.

Mayor’s Commission on Art, Culture and Film (MCACF):

MCACF is composed of a representative group of citizens—lay and professional—involved or interested in the achievement of an outstanding Public Art Program in the Public Art Master Plan of the Public Art Process.

The membership of the Mayor’s Commission shall reflect the ethnic, social, demographic and geographic diversity and composition of the city. The Mayor’s Commission shall include at least eight (8) members of acknowledged accomplishment as either non-professionals or professionals in one or more of the following fields: architecture, art criticism, art education, art history, choreography, dance, communicative arts, crafts, folk and ethnic arts, literature, media arts, music, opera, painting, photography, sculpture, theatre, including community theatre, and urban design; two (2) members representative of the film industry; three (3) members representative of business and labor; four (4) members representative of the geographic and demographic diversity of the city; and, as a non-voting member, the Director of the Mayor’s Office of Economic Development as an ex-officio member (D.R.M.C. 2-213). 3

MCACF shall continue to provide overall art policy consistent with its Ordinance responsibilities to the Mayor and direction to MOACF concerning the Public Art Program. While it may delegate specific responsibilities to subcommittees4, MCACF shall be the “keeper of the public art” vision in Denver. Individuals willing to serve on the Mayor’s Commission shall be stewards of the Public Art Master Plan of the Public Art Process. They should be committed to helping secure the best possible public art for the City and County of Denver, consistent with resource constraints and the specific needs of the public places which provide a home for public art in Denver. Acting together, they shall reinforce and sustain Denver’s commitment to a public art selection process that is open, competitive and fair. Significantly, the commitment should be one that is sensitive to Denver’s unique culture, ethnic diversity, rich history and promising future. They shall strive to assure effective, continuous strategic outreach and marketing programs regarding public art.

These programs shall serve to expand opportunity for artists to participate on an even, competitive playing field. Acting together with MOACF, they also shall assume responsibility for the development and initiation of an effective maintenance program concerning public art. 5

Finally, they shall assume prime responsibility for evaluating the effectiveness of Denver’s Public Art Program and for modifying the process as set out in the public art policy and for modifying related programs to assure that Denver’s Public Art Program fulfills its objectives.

Mayor’s Office of Art, Culture and Film (MOACF):

MOACF shall provide the principal personnel to administer Denver’s Public Art Program. MOACF consistent with its Ordinance responsibilities (D.R.M.C. 2-191) shall facilitate MCACF's varied roles and missions with respect to the implementation of the Public Art Process. Along with MCACF, MOACF shall advise the Mayor and, through the Mayor, the City Council on public art policies, programs and projects. MOACF’s staff shall be sensitive to the city’s cultural and racial diversity.
MOACF shall work with MCACF to develop and implement public art related strategies, programs and projects for MCACF and the Mayor’s review and approval. Governed by the policy framework provided by MCACF and policies and processes defined by the Mayor, MOACF shall:

- Coordinate, where relevant and appropriate, staff the initiation of strategic acquisition, deaccession, maintenance, outreach and marketing projects.

- Initiate continuous evaluation efforts for MCACF and the Mayor concerning Denver’s Public Art Program.

- Identify and recommend, if necessary, modifications in the Public Art Process to assure its currency and relevance on an annual basis to MCACF and the Mayor.

Public Art Subcommittee (PAC):

The PAC shall continue to advise MCACF regarding public art as defined in Ordinance 717. Its membership shall reflect the ethnic and cultural diversity of the City and County of Denver. The PAC shall include members of MCACF. The primary responsibility of the PAC is public art. The official advisory responsibility for policy recommendation to MCACF is the PAC whose members are appointed members of MCACF. A community advisory group including community representatives, city agency representatives and art and design professionals may advise the PAC. Its membership shall reflect the ethnic and cultural diversity of the City and County of Denver.

The role of the PAC shall be defined and delegated by MCACF as defined in the Public Art Process, consistent with Ordinance 717. The PAC shall be responsible for helping MCACF develop strategic options to implement the Public Art Master Plan of the Public Art Process.

It shall focus on issues related to the commissioning and acquisition of public art with Capital Improvement Program and Bond funds as well as the Public Art Master Plan of the Public Art Process’s outreach, marketing and maintenance approaches. The PAC along with the Visual Art Subcommittee shall be responsible for reviewing proposed unsolicited donations. The PAC shall also be responsible for presenting recommendations concerning public art commissions from the Project Evaluation Panels to MCACF.6

Project Evaluation Panel (PEP):

PEPs shall perform the role of selecting artists for the Public Art Program. They shall work to assure a fair artist selection process and the selection of distinguished and relevant public art for Denver.

Potential members of each PEP shall be recommended by MOACF and the PAC for approval by MCACF. The PEPs, given their important roles, shall reflect the City’s cultural and ethnic diversity and, if public art is to be acquired for specific neighborhood locales, the diversity of the relevant neighborhood.

PEPs shall be composed of the following members:

**PROJECT EVALUATION PANEL (PEP)**

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<th>Non-Voting Advisors</th>
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<td>PAC Commissioner</td>
<td>Architect</td>
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<tr>
<td>Commissioner</td>
<td>Project Manager</td>
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<tr>
<td>Arts Professional</td>
<td>Site Agency Representative</td>
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<tr>
<td>Artist</td>
<td>Technical Expert</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community Representatives</td>
<td>MOACF Staff</td>
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The PEPs, one created for each project, shall meet with respective site project managers and...
architects at a project orientation session convened by MOACF. Voting members of PEP with
guidance from MOACF shall determine how best to assure consistency between the Public Art
Master Plan of the Public Art Process and the site, as well as related public art options. As
outlined in the Public Art Process, voting members of PEP with guidance from MOACF shall
develop specific criteria related to the public art and the precise characteristics associated with
the review process. MOACF shall coordinate the review process and upon its completion, the
voting members of the PEP shall inform the PAC of their recommendations which are
subsequently submitted to MCACF.

Public Art and Public Settings

Denver will have the opportunity to locate public art in many different kinds of public spaces.8
No easy or precise road map should or can be created now to define with certainty what types
of public art should go in still unknown public spaces. Diverse kinds of specific public spaces
will be created as the community evolves and grows over the years. Diverse art forms and
media should be encouraged as artists reach for new forms of expression.

The Public Art Master Plan of the Public Art Process shall provide a general set of principles
to guide MCACF and the community as both work to fit public art to major types of public
spaces in Denver. They are outlined below for neighborhood, city-defining, and
regional/international settings.

* Neighborhood Settings: Denver is more than "a collection of neighborhoods in search of a
city." It contains a vibrant group of diverse neighborhoods. They are committed to
developing a city able to provide residents with expanded housing, job, health, education,
recreation and cultural choices—"in a nutshell, an outstanding quality of life.

Public spaces created in neighborhood settings shall become an integral part of the
neighborhood. They should help neighborhood residents take pride in their neighborhood
identity. To the extent possible, they should also assist residents in recognizing their ties to a
maturing, beautiful, accepting and "civilized" city. Public art located in specific
neighborhoods shall add value to neighborhood life and shall help strengthen a sense of
community among neighborhood residents. Public art chosen for public spaces in specific
neighborhoods shall facilitate an awareness of relationships to other neighborhoods and the city
as a whole.

* City-Defining Settings: Many public spaces will be created in Denver that will help define
the city, its character and its characteristics. They, generally, will be larger in size than public
spaces in neighborhoods. But they need not be. For example, city-defining spaces can be a
small, well-traversed public plaza in front of a strategically located public building downtown;
a mini-park or a parkway contiguous to and visible from a highway entering the city.

Some of Denver's existing city-defining public spaces, such as the Civic Center Park, provide
a place where Denverites and visitors can pause and reflect on the city's unique past and on its
healthy economic and social future as the State of Colorado's, if not the region's, premier city.
Other spaces, like Speer Boulevard and the expanding "waterfront" along the Platte River
make it easy for present residents to thank our forefathers and foremothers for making Denver
a beautiful place to live. They remind us of our rich past and make us cognizant of the fact
that we, and our children, are now responsible for our environment and the well-being of our
city.

At times, public art shall be used to help city-defining spaces strengthen our collective
understanding of the city’s unique American West heritage. Simultaneously, or at other times, public art in city-defining spaces shall be used to capture and enhance Denver’s role as a proud 21st Century economic gateway city between east and west, north and south.

Public art in many city-defining spaces shall strengthen the value or values inherent in the term, city; that is, a place where different kinds of individuals and groups seek to develop a good and decent life for themselves, their children and their children’s children. Public art in city-defining places shall be used to lend symbol and substance to the fact that the City and County of Denver has been and remains an interesting, beautiful, growth-inducing, fun place to live, work, recreate and visit. Finally, public art in city-defining spaces shall also be used to challenge citizens to think and “feel” about the meaning of life, beauty and civilization.

*International and Regional Settings: There are several different kinds of public settings in Denver which, subsequent to the location or the strategic addition of public art, can and will help define the city’s regional or international role. For example, many kinds of public spaces exist in the new Denver International Airport. They will be continually viewed, frequented and/or traversed by many visitors, tourists, business persons and others.

Like the public spaces in the new Denver International Airport, other kinds of international and regional settings are located in Denver. They generally are the public spaces people see or have the opportunity to see when they enter or exit Denver, or they are spaces that people observe or even visit for relatively short stays while they are in Denver. They help frame or establish the image, and sometimes the reality, of Denver in people’s minds and hearts.

Public art in regional or international settings shall reflect distinctive art by outstanding artists. Selection criteria shall reflect explicit objectives related to the specific quality of the space.

**Reaching Out to Artists: Creating an Even Playing Field**

The City and County of Denver through MCACF/MOACF shall develop and continuously implement an innovative Public Art Outreach Program. Its success will assure all Denver artists expanded opportunities to effectively compete and participate in the City’s Public Art Program. As important, its success will acknowledge Denver’s ethnic and racial diversity and,
as a result, will help secure increased opportunities for artists of various ethnic and racial backgrounds to secure commissions for and/or participate in the development of the City's varied public art projects.

Denver's Outreach Program shall be premised on converting equality of opportunity for artists of various ethnic and racial backgrounds to meaningful reality. Denver's Outreach Program should illustrate a serious continuous commitment by the City's public, non-profit private sector and neighborhood leadership to understand and acknowledge and appreciate the artistic values generated by the City's population diversity and the diversity reflected among its artists. It should generate an equally serious commitment by the citizens of the City and its neighborhoods to support and encourage local artists to participate in the Public Art Program.

Denver's Public Art Outreach Program shall become a model for the nation. It shall include the following components:

1. Sensitivity at the Top: Members of MCACF, MOACF and PAC shall take part in an annual strategic meeting directed at extending their sensitivity and understanding of the different "qualities" and characteristics associated with distinguished public art. During the meeting, MCACF and MOACF should extend their knowledge about the characteristics associated with Denver's diverse arts community. They should increase their insight into the capacity of its accomplished artists to express the richness of America's and the City's cultural diversity in their work.

Issues now being debated by public art groups around the nation concerning public art shall be discussed in public by Commissioners. Amendments and/or adjustments shall be made in the Public Art Outreach Program in order to assure its maximum effectiveness in reaching artists and in creating an "even playing" field concerning public art commissions.

2. Sensitivity in the Community to Public Art: MCACF and MOACF shall convene an annual Town Hall Meeting of neighborhood organizations. The Town Hall Meeting shall be used to explore the importance of public art to the neighborhoods, to identify neighborhood-based objectives concerning public art, to involve neighborhood groups in identifying artists living in their respective neighborhoods and citizens wishing to participate on PEPs.

The annual Town Hall Meeting shall be preceded by a series of meetings in key neighborhoods concerning the role of public art in neighborhood revitalization and development and in linking the neighborhood to the larger city. Local neighborhood meetings shall also be used to encourage local neighborhood artists and interested citizens, particularly artists and citizens who have not been involved in the Public Art Program, to participate in the Public Art Program. Participants in the meetings shall provide information to artists about the availability of technical assistance to help them prepare for competitions.

3. Seeking Artist Involvement: The PAC shall assist MCACF and MOACF reach out to Denver artists. It shall develop ideas and options to encourage local artists to compete for public art projects. It, particularly, shall recommend approaches to MCACF and MOACF to assure and extend opportunities for artists of various ethnic and racial backgrounds to participate in public art competitions. It shall also play a lead role in evaluating the Public Art Program's continuous Outreach Program.

4. Developing an Inventory of Artists: MCACF and MOACF, in association with relevant public, non-profit, private sector, educational and community groups and the PAC, shall develop and maintain an inventory of local, metro area, state and national artists according to the categories of art defined in the Public Art Master Plan of the Public Art Process. The inventory shall be used primarily to establish baseline information for use in all competitions and acquisitions derived from
public art funds. It shall constitute an "evolving and hopefully growing" mailing list for broadcast mailings concerning the Public Art Program and for strategic mailings concerning individual public art projects.

Artists included in the inventory shall be either self-identified or identified by other relevant groups and individuals. Every effort shall be made to include all Denver-based artists that "fit" the categories of art defined, as appropriate, for the Public Art Program. Importantly, working through educational institutions, museums, churches, the media, advocacy, professional and neighborhood groups representative of the ethnic and cultural diversity of Denver, every effort shall be made to identify and include all artists of various ethnic and racial backgrounds.

The artist inventory shall be amended daily if necessary to assure its currency and coverage. Artists shall be asked periodically to update their materials on file. Artist data shall be solicited through formal calls related to competitions.

5 Extending Local Artist Awareness of and Willingness as Well as Ability to Compete in the Public Art Program: MCACF, MOACF and PAC, working with varied relevant local groups, shall initiate a strategic continuous information program concerning the Public Art Program aimed at securing the involvement of local Denver artists. The program shall include:

• Development and Dissemination of Varied Brochures, Newsletters and City-wide as Well as Neighborhood-Based Signage Aimed at Informing Local Artists About the Public Art Program and Anticipated Public Art Projects: Information describing the Public Art Program and the competitive process shall be distributed in places likely to be frequented by local artists or colleagues of local artists such as commercial areas, art supply stores, neighborhood or community centers, churches, professional organizations, educational institutions, museums and galleries.

• Development of Strategic Electronic and Print Media Programs Concerning the Public Art Program and Public Art Projects: Efforts shall be made to integrate city-wide media initiatives with initiatives based on community or neighborhood-based papers. The media program should not be a "one shot" project. It shall take place on a continuous basis. It shall inform the community and its artists of the importance of public art and of the ability of local artists to participate in public art projects. It shall provide descriptions of forthcoming public art projects. It shall describe the process through which artists can secure commissions and be considered for acquisitions derived from public art funds. It shall identify people and groups able to assist artists to compete for public art projects.

• Development of an Effective Technical Assistance Program: MOACF with involvement from PAC and approval of MCACF shall develop and initiate a strategic technical assistance program directed at helping artists compete effectively in public art competitions. MOACF under the direction of MCACF shall either provide or coordinate the delivery of technical assistance to artists concerning:
  * the nature of the call and the fit between the call and the characteristics of different kinds of artists;
  * the application process and the preparation of relevant materials, including slides where necessary, and,
  * varied deadlines associated with presentations and artist selection.

MCACF and MOACF should secure commitments from varied institutions and individuals to provide technical assistance concerning development of portfolios, slide shows, resumes and other requirements. Among them: University and college faculty teaching art, local architectural firms, artists who have completed public art commissions, gallery owners, staff from Denver museums and others. MCACF and MOACF shall consider development of a highly competent, relatively small, permanent staff—circuit riders—capable of visiting artists workshops and/or meeting with artists regularly.
small groups of artists in individual neighborhoods to provide technical assistance concerning
preparation of materials for competitions.

Costs for pre-competition technical assistance, to the extent possible, shall be provided free of
charge. Costs associated with technical assistance, provided after an artist has won an award or
commission, shall be included in project budgets.

Reaching out to the Public—Creating Understanding,
Support and Appreciation

Many times artists and those involved in the arts find it difficult to accept the idea that public art
programs, no matter how effective and well-conceived, have to be marketed; that is, that public
art, if it is to find a relatively large and appreciative audience, must be subject to a purposeful,
well-designed effort to convey its relevance to people’s lives. However, despite the possible
brilliance of a marketing program regarding public art, public art will only be acceptable to,
supported by and appreciated by the citizens of Denver if it adds value to the city's quality of life
and to the lives of many of its residents. Succinctly, a Public Art Program will only “sell” in
Denver if the public dollars involved are perceived by the citizens to be well spent and to
contribute to their and their neighbors’ well-being.

Clearly, the Public Art Outreach Program defined earlier, aimed at assuring the widest possible
participation in Denver’s Public Art Program by state, metro and local artists, will help increase
public understanding, support and appreciation of public art. The proposed Town Hall Meeting of
neighborhood organizations, the effort to expand media coverage of the public art competitions
and their results, the increased strategic use of public displays and signage concerning the Public
Art Program, the effort to secure citizen advice in the selection process will all facilitate the
involvement of the public in the Public Art Program and the ability of the Mayor’s Commission on
Art, Culture and Film and the Mayor’s Office of Art, Culture and Film to record public feelings
and perceptions concerning the Public Art Program.

MCACF and MOACF shall develop other approaches to involve the public in the Public Art
Program. Relatively simple phone and mail surveys shall be used to record public perceptions of
Denver’s Public Art Program. Booths at public places such as the 16th St. Mall, shopping centers,
and places where public art is located shall be established to permit capable volunteers to explain
the Public Art Program and to illustrate its importance and value to Denver. Personnel stationed
in the booths and/or in places with public art shall offer to help individuals improve their
understanding of public art. Further, they shall encourage individuals to express their opinion of
public art.

More is needed, however, if the Denver community is to provide sustained support to its
important Public Art Program. To increase public awareness and develop consensus concerning
the value of the Public Art Program, MCACF and MOACF shall:

1. Make Public Art Part and Parcel of Denver’s Continuing Lifelong Learning Programs. The
School District, Private Schools and the area’s Universities and Colleges should be asked to work
with MCACF and MOACF to create curriculum and programs whose content reflects the
importance of art and public art to a student’s education. Course and program content shall be
designed to vary over a student’s educational life and to lead a student to think, question
and, above all, understand the role of art and public art in a civil and civilized society.

2. Make the Public Art Program a Vibrant, All-Encompassing Public Partnership Between the
City, the Public Sector, the Private Sector, Non-Profit and Community Groups. Denver can and
should become literally a community of public artists and public places for arts. MCACF and
MOACF are not limited to involvement in the utilization of only the City and County of Denver's Public Art Program funds. Development of varied partnerships between and among groups interested in the arts as an investment in the community, their business and/or their neighborhoods shall be encouraged to identify public spaces such as a street corner, a public fence, an old public building, or a park for non-Public Art Program funded public art. Partnerships directed at public art not funded by the City shall be created in collaboration with MCACF and MOACF. Cost sharing to produce the art and to place it in non-traditional spaces and/or spaces not encompassed by MCACF’s formal mandate will help make Denver a place where public art is a fact of everyone’s life.

3. Develop Local Artist “On Tour” and Exhibit Programs. Numerous state, metro and Denver artists, particularly those who have been awarded public art commissions, shall be encouraged and, if necessary, assisted to speak to diverse audiences about their work and about the City’s Public Art Program. They shall be joined in their efforts by MCACF and by MOACF. Invitations to speak should be encouraged from different kinds of groups, for example, professional, churches, neighborhood, business, service clubs and others.

Additionally, MCACF and MOACF shall generate exhibits of the work of public art winners and of public arts in Denver and other communities. Photograph and slide programs shall be produced and made available to interested groups with appropriate texts. Where possible, artists involved in the Public Art Program and Commissioners as well as staff shall accompany and explain exhibits.

4. Develop an Understanding of the Economic Value of a Good Public Art Program. Support for public art will increase if the community, especially business, believes a good Public Art Program makes economic sense. Similarly, support for the Public Art Program will be extended if neighborhood groups understand how a good Public Art Program helps sustain and/or revitalizes the economic and social health and well-being of a neighborhood. MCACF and MOACF shall develop periodic summaries of the many recent essays and articles describing the positive economic and community development impacts of public art for widespread distribution among the leaders of the community.

5. Develop a Permanent Celebration of the Public Art in Denver. MCACF and MOACF, with help from the media, public and private sector leaders, neighborhood groups, educational institutions, museums and citizens shall participate in or help initiate a continuous series of celebrations and festivals concerning public art. They can take many forms and shapes including, but not limited to: use of existing arts and community fairs, establishment of community and neighborhood events to celebrate winners of public art commissions, encouraging private galleries to exhibit information concerning and pictures of public art both during competitions and after the selection of winners. Festivals and celebrations should integrate public art with other art forms and, as a result, secure larger and more diverse audiences.

6. Develop Continuous Relationships Concerning Public Art With the Media-Press Including Neighborhood Press, Commercial Television, Public Television, Cable and Community Television Stations. Numerous innovative opportunities exist to foster more strategic relationships between the arts and the media. Both electronic and printed media shall be encouraged to initiate public service programming concerned with public art. The range of possibilities is immense. They include but are not limited to: panel shows concerning public art; meet the artist shows; announcement of winners, art exhibits; portrayal of artists at human interest stories concerning artists and/or the differences art makes to viewers; interviews of observers of public art and others.
Public Art Selection Process

The Public Art Master Plan of the Public Art Process does not specify the acquisition of specific kinds of art for specific spaces. It cannot and should not. Denver's growth and development as a first class city will create many different public spaces or settings for different types of public art. Neither the dimensions, location, characteristics of the spaces nor the art can be defined at the present time. What can be defined are ground rules and procedures to assure the best fit possible between art and space and between good and expanded artistic opportunity in the Public Art Program.

Competition:
Most public art shall be selected through public competition, either open or limited. Direct calls and purchases shall be used strategically and when special circumstances warrant. Such circumstances are defined in the Public Art Process.

Open Competition: In order to secure the best art possible given resource constraints, most competitions, particularly competitions related to international/regional spaces and city-defining spaces, shall be open to all artists. Criteria related to the relationship of the contemplated art to the site and the general purposes or objectives of the art shall be defined as precisely as possible. Similarly, the requirements associated with the competition such as timing, materials required and presentations shall be public and spelled out well in advance of the competition in clear precise terms.

Limited Competition: Limited competitions shall be used when the demands of the space clearly suggest artists who illustrate excellence in a specific medium and/or artists who reflect special knowledge or familiarity with cultural or historical factors involved in the production of certain types of art.

Direct Calls: Direct Calls shall be used when appropriate. Their use shall be premised on significant program opportunities that realistically cannot be met through other methods of competitions. Their use shall also reflect emergency or atypical, "one of a kind" situations which provide significant program benefits. The rationale for direct calls shall be consistent with the Public Art Process.

Direct Purchase: Direct Purchases shall be administered in accordance with competitions outlined in the Public Art Process.

Joint Venture: Joint ventures with private individuals, businesses, foundations and grantees shall be encouraged to enable the Public Art Program to enhance its designated public funds. The private/public partnership created by the joint venture shall proceed under the same criteria and objectives as outlined in the Public Art Process.

Comprehensive Maintenance Program

Public art represents an investment by the citizens of Denver. Its value will depend on how well it is maintained by the City over the years. Initiatives shall be taken to properly respond to normal "wear and tear" associated with the aging of materials used in public art and the impact on the public art by the elements and environment. Careful efforts shall be developed that simultaneously assure access by the public to public art while protecting the art from possible abuse by irresponsible or careless individuals. Techniques used to clean public art shall be appropriate to the medium and its characteristics.

The respective agencies who develop and/or administer the facility or public improvement in which the public art is placed are responsible for its maintenance. While most agencies treat their
stewardship of public art in a serious manner, staff, budget and institutional constraints often make the task a difficult one. Sustained and strategic maintenance activities are often impossible to achieve, even with the best of intentions. Deferred maintenance of public art is sometimes the path of least resistance when an agency faces budget constraints.

Each artist commissioned through the Public Art Program is required by contract to provide to the City written recommendations for the appropriate maintenance methods and preservation of the artwork after installation. Artist recommendations shall include but not be limited to estimates of material longevity, material durability and the appropriate methods to clean and protect the materials used.

Several steps should be taken to assure proper maintenance of public art. Among them:

1. **Creation of a Permanent and Formal Interagency Task Force**: All agencies responsible for public art shall be asked to join an Interagency Public Art Maintenance Task Force. The group shall be convened by MOACF. It shall develop and implement a continuous, comprehensive monitoring and maintenance plan and program with respect to public art.

   The plan and program shall include: the allocation of relevant Agency staff to monitor the condition of public art and its surroundings, and the allocation of staff time to assure proper preservation, conservation and upkeep of public art as well as its environment. The Task Force shall develop six-year and one-year objectives, strategies and budgets for the maintenance of public art. The six-year plan shall reflect long-term agency commitments to repair and restore the City's public art collection. The annual plan shall reflect specific yearly agency commitments of resources for maintenance of the City's public art collection. The annual plan shall link resources to precise implementation strategies concerning maintenance including evaluation strategies concerning effectiveness.

2. **Development of Resources for Maintenance**: Each agency responsible for public art shall be asked to commit specific identifiable resources to maintain its public art. Other funds may be needed to supplement agency budgets. MCACF should encourage creation of private funding sources.

   Advice should be obtained from other cities concerning methods of ensuring adequate maintenance. Should the combination of Agency commitments and gifts, at any time, fail to provide sufficient funds for maintenance, MCACF shall consider possible innovations to secure additional resources including an Adopt-a-Work-of-Art Program and a supplement to current city funding.

**Deaccession of Public Art**

From time to time, the City shall review its public art assets. Art which no longer responds to City domain objectives and MCACF or that is incompatible with MCACF priorities shall be removed from the inventory. Significantly deteriorated art, whose value upon repair is less than the costs of repair, shall be candidates for "deaccession." Every effort, consistent with the city's contract with the artist and relevant city ordinances, shall be made by MCACF to facilitate the sale, auction and/or disposal of art earmarked for removal from the inventory.

The PAC in consultation with MOACF shall review the City's collection to assess possible deaccession candidates on an annual basis. Recommendations for deaccession shall be provided by the PAC and MOACF to MCACF. The precise process associated with deaccession is defined in Appendix IV.

**Visual/Public Art Subcommittee Ventures**
The unsolicited donation of distinctive public art will provide enriching experiences to Denver residents and citizens. Success related to both acquisition and placement of distinctive unsolicited donated art will help respond to the Public Art Master Plan of the Public Art Process's vision for public art.

To assure success, MCACF shall assume, develop and implement a donation process similar to the Public Art Process. It shall be consistent with City Charter and Ordinance 717. MCACF, after review of the roles of its PAC and the Visual Arts Committee shall identify an appropriate group or groups to administer the process associated with the acquisition of solicited and unsolicited donations.

Unsolicited Donations:
Art donated by individuals and groups can significantly enrich Denver's Public Art Program. Donated art should reflect the vision, objectives and criteria defined in the Public Art Master Plan of the Public Art Process. Its acceptance by the City shall be premised on an evaluation regarding its qualities, its relevance to specific places, its administration and maintenance costs and other appropriate criteria.

Budget
MOACF shall prepare an annual public art budget for review and approval by the Mayor. It is recommended that the public art budget be reviewed by MCACF. To the extent possible, efforts shall be made to link specific resources to Denver's annual public art agenda. The annual budget shall illustrate twelve-month priorities for core staff, commissions, acquisition, maintenance, outreach, marketing and other identified priorities. It should match estimated expenditures to projected revenues.

MOACF shall prepare a six-year Public Art Program document identifying projects for approval by MCACF and the Mayor. The six-year Public Art Program document shall link resource requests to the extent possible to the City's Capital Improvement Program, Bond Project Program, Public Art Master Plan of the Public Art Process, related objectives and an evaluation of the previous year's Public Art Program performance.

The six-year Public Art Program document shall be premised on long-term goals and strategies. It shall relate resource needs to a measurable set of targets concerning the evolution and development of the Public Art Program. The six-year Public Art Program document shall identify anticipated multi-year funding needs, from a variety of sources, for core staff, for acquisition and for commissions based on known public improvements, for deaccession, for outreach including technical assistance, for marketing and for maintenance.

Securing Resources:
Clearly, the objectives defined in the Public Art Master Plan of the Public Art Process, particularly those related to outreach, marketing and maintenance will require consideration of innovative options related to fund availability. Among the possibilities:

1. Seeking resources from a variety of public and private sector sources in order to accommodate planned commitments concerning outreach, maintenance and marketing.

2. Mandating specific resource allocations from Agencies responsible for public art.

3. Securing "in-kind" volunteer staff and resource contributions from interested individuals as well as public, non-profit, community and private sector groups.

MCACF shall encourage a public/private partnership utilizing the establishment of a non-profit group or a foundation. It should secure and hold gifts and grants from foundations, the private
sector and citizens for purposes related to Denver’s Art, Culture and Film Programs including the Public Art Program. Its growth and development should symbolize the partnership between the public sector and the community regarding art, culture and film inclusive of art in public places.

**Putting It All Together: The Acquisition of Distinctive Public Art**

Master Plans are only words until they are implemented by the community and its leadership. This Public Art Master Plan of the Public Art Process contains all the right words and commitments. It represents the sweat equity of many different groups, many artists and related professionals and many citizens concerned with the proper siting of distinctive art in public places in the City and County of Denver. The principle or pervasive themes of the Public Art Master Plan of the Public Art Process are necessary ones. Succinctly, Denver should secure outstanding public art that enriches public places and that enhances the quality of life of its citizens. Denver artists should have the ability to compete effectively and on an even playing field for public art projects.

Taken together, the pages of the Public Art Master Plan of the Public Art Process define a public art selection process for all kinds of public art that will assure the conversion of vision and outreach objectives to reality. It includes the following general elements:

1) The continuous initiation of effective strategies to assure that diverse Denver artists are made aware of pending public art projects and are provided sustained opportunities to compete effectively for public art commissions.

2) The periodic classification of public spaces likely to become candidates for public art according to their neighborhood, city defining, regional and international characteristics.

3) The development of strategies to fit the unique characteristics of different kinds of public spaces to the equally unique kinds of public art and artists.

4) The development and initiation of fair and strategic processes, consistent with the Public Art Master Plan of the Public Art Process as well as City Charter and related regulations, to select public artists and public art for public spaces and to place unsolicited donations of public art in appropriate public places.

5) The development and initiation of appropriate plans to maintain public art and to deaccess public art that no longer responds to the Mayor’s program for arts in Denver.

6) The initiation of an annual evaluation that measures progress in responding to Public Art Master Plan of the Public Art Process’s visions and objectives and that helps the City continuously refine and amend the Public Art Master Plan of the Public Art Process in order to assure Denver the best possible public art program.

The process of “filling in” the above general guidelines will take the wisdom and tenacity of Denver’s public sector, private sector, community-based and non-profit group leadership as well as the involvement of artists, those interested in the arts and citizens. The stakes are high. The overriding objective of the process must be to assure Denver a quality Public Art Program, one that generates the acquisition and efficient maintenance of quality public art and one that assures a good match between acquired art and public places. Our success as a community will make Denver a better place to live, work and visit.
The Public Art Master Plan of the Public Art Process administered by the Mayor's Commission on Art, Culture and Film and directed by the Mayor's Office of Art, Culture and Film is hereby approved and accepted this 9 day of September, 1993 by Wellington E. Webb, Mayor, City and County of Denver.

Appendix I

City and County of Denver
Mayor's Commission on Art, Culture and Film
Mayor's Office of Art, Culture and Film
Public Art Process

The Public Art Process is the policy document which provides for the Public Art Program in the City and County of Denver. The process, which includes the Public Art Master Plan of the Public Art Process, provides for implementation of public art as follows:

1) The Mayor's Office of Art, Culture and Film (MOACF) identifies applicable Bond and Capital Improvement Projects. When possible, projects are identified prior to the distribution of the RFQ/RFP for architects. The architect's scope of services should include the financial ability to work with the Public Art Program from inception to completion of the project.

2) The Chairperson of the Mayor's Commission on Art, Culture and Film or designee who is a member of the Mayor's Commission on Art, Culture and Film (MCACF), the Public Art Subcommittee (PAC) Commissioners and MOACF develop a Public Art Master Plan for the City and County of Denver which will be adopted by MCACF on a calendar year basis. Such Public Art Master Plan shall be reviewed on a continual basis and amendments may be proposed by the Chairperson of MCACF or designee who is a member of MCACF, PAC Commissioners, individual Commissioners and MOACF for approval by MCACF. Projects may be developed specifically to include but are not limited to factors such as historical and cultural heritage and art that is representative of or associated with the ethnic diversity of the City and County of Denver. Methods include but are not limited to direct selection, limited call, open call, direct purchase, and joint venture. The Public Art Master Plan incorporates but is not limited to the following:

Background:
History
Ordinance
Vision
Goals
Policy
At times because of the nature of the project a direct selection may become necessary due to unique circumstances. In such cases MCACF shall be presented with the project for their consideration and recommendation to the Mayor and the Director of MOACF. A decision to approve shall require a 2/3 vote of Commissioners present by MCACF provided there is a quorum.

3) MOACF identifies potential panelists from the Outreach Program. PAC recommends panelists to MCACF for their approval. MCACF selects Project Evaluation Panel (PEP). PEP must reflect the cultural and ethnic diversity of the City and County of Denver and/or the project site. The PEP will consist of the following representatives:

**PROJECT EVALUATION PANEL (PEP)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Voting Members:</th>
<th>Non-voting Advisors:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PAC Commissioner</td>
<td>Architect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commissioner</td>
<td>Project Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts Professional</td>
<td>Site Agency Representative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artist</td>
<td>Technical Experts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Community Representatives</td>
<td>MOACF Staff</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Precise written instructions are to be given to PEP by MOACF concerning protocol, conflict of interest, confidentiality and specific appropriate roles of voting members and non-voting members of PEP.

4) PEP voting members meet with the site project manager and architect at a project orientation session convened by MOACF.

5) Voting members of PEP with the assistance of MOACF research and evaluate the project:

   - How it relates to the entire Public Art Master Plan;
   - Art possibilities within the specific project;
   - Number of semi-finalists to be selected based upon the budget for the project;
   - Open or blind slide review;
   - Selection method;
   - Criteria for artwork to be included in the Call;
   - Applicable mailing list.

Artists may be asked to submit one abbreviated concept statement to be read while the artist's slides are shown and/or a longer concept statement to be read after the initial review of slides. PEP voting members document their recommendation in written form.

6) PEP informs PAC of their written recommendations.

7) PAC and PEP present the written recommendations to MCACF. MCACF reviews and approves recommendations in relation to the Public Art Master Plan created to improve the aesthetic character of Denver's public spaces and buildings and to promote and ensure equal rights and opportunity for all people of the City.

8) Call for Entries is mailed including artist technical assistance workshop scheduled for potential applicants by MOACF. MOACF will provide a general concept statement and maintain a slide registry.

9) MOACF reviews and processes applications.

10) PEP meets to review all artist applications including slides and concept statements. PEP may disqualify applications if all materials required in the Call for Entries are not submitted. PEP voting members narrow the field of applicants to not less than five (5) and not more than ten (10) semi-finalists.

11) Semi-finalists are invited for an interview with PEP and/or to prepare a site-specific design proposal for review by PEP.

12) PEP interviews semi-finalists. PEP voting members recommend to MCACF for action up to three (3) finalists in order of priority, rating and assigning one (1), two (2) or three (3) with number one (1) being the greatest and three (3) the least providing specific written reasons for the recommendations. PEP informs PAC of their written recommendations.

13) PEP Commissioners present the finalist(s) in the prioritized sequence to the Mayor and the Director of MOACF.

14) MCACF reviews the finalists' slides and the specific written recommendations provided by PEP, considers and may recommend one (1) finalist to the Mayor and the Director of MOACF, or may elect not to approve any of the finalist(s) and request new applications to be submitted for the project. A decision to recommend or not to approve shall be based on but not limited to recommendations in relation to the Public Art Master Plan created to improve the aesthetic character of Denver's public spaces and buildings and to promote and ensure the rights and
opportunity for all people of the City. If MCACF elects not to approve any of the finalists, the reasons for disapproval shall be provided in written form.

15) Mayor reviews recommendations with Director of MOACF and awards a commission for said project. If within the time between MCACF's review and awarding said commission for said project an unforeseen circumstance arises concerning said project, MCACF shall recall said project for recommendation and determination of disposition.

16) A contract will be negotiated with the artist(s) and the City and County of Denver which will outline requirements for the specific project. As outlined in the contract, if the site-specific design proposal cannot be the artwork for the site, the artist will be required to redesign for review by PEP and determination by MOACF.

Adopted and Effective 3/19/93

The Public Art Process administered by the Mayor's Commission on Art, Culture and Film and directed by the Mayor's Office of Art, Culture and Film is hereby approved and accepted this 16 day of April, 1993 by

Wellington E. Webb
Mayor
City and County of Denver
APPENDIX III

BY AUTHORITY

ORDINANCE NO. 624
SERIES OF 1996

COUNCIL BILL NO. 624
COMMITTEE OF REFERENCE:

PUBLIC AMENITIES

A BILL

FOR AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE REVISED MUNICIPAL CODE OF
THE CITY AND COUNTY OF DENVER BY AMENDING DIVISION 4 OF
ARTICLE IV OF CHAPTER 20, REGARDING PUBLIC ART

WHEREAS, it is in the best interests of the City to expand the opportunities for Denver
residents to experience art in public places, thereby creating more visually pleasing and humane
environments; and

WHEREAS, a Public Art Program reinforces and expands the City’s existing commitment
to improving the aesthetic character of its public spaces and buildings by integrating high quality
urban design into its capital projects; and

WHEREAS, a Public Art Program will be a cooperative endeavor between the private
sector and the City to enhance the built environment; and

WHEREAS, the City desires to promote through its Public Art Program the creation of a
variety of types of visual arts and crafts, enhancement of new and existing public spaces and
buildings for public enjoyment, distribution of works of art throughout the City, incorporation of art
in the design of transportation and other right-of-way improvements, including major thoroughfares,
neighborhood pedestrian malls and plazas, and provide for collaboration between artists, architects,
landscape architects, engineers, graphic artists, and other design professionals in the design and
construction and reconstruction of public places and buildings; and

WHEREAS, the City also desires to enhance the creative environment for artists in Denver
and to encourage the private sector to incorporate works of art into their buildings, plazas and other
spaces with public access; and

WHEREAS, the City seeks to acquire works of art to enhance existing sites; and

WHEREAS, it is in the best interests of the City to care for and maintain its collection of
public art; and

WHEREAS, the City has an extensive collection of public artwork for which there has
never been a repair or maintenance program to preserve these works and, as a result, significant
pieces of public artwork are now in danger of permanent loss; and

WHEREAS, the repair and maintenance of these public artworks is imperative if the City
is to preserve these cultural legacies for future generations to enjoy; and

WHEREAS, City agencies must provide for the care and maintenance of the City’s public
art projects; and

WHEREAS, the City desires to develop and implement a repair and maintenance program
which will mitigate the need for future costly restoration of deteriorated public works of art; and

WHEREAS, the City recognizes that the public artwork in its collection represents a
valuable cultural asset which requires an investment of on-going care and maintenance; and

WHEREAS, it is in the best interest of the City and would serve a public purpose to provide
for periodic assessment of all works of public art within the collection owned by the City; and
WHEREAS, the City seeks to encourage other individuals and entities (private corporations, foundations, etc.) to accept responsibility or provide support (in-kind or financial) to maintain works of public art in the City's collection.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY AND COUNTY OF DENVER:

Section 1. That from and after the date of final publication of this Ordinance, Division 4 of Article IV of Chapter 20 of the Revised Municipal Code of the City and County of Denver, be and the same is hereby amended, reading and to read as follows:

"DIVISION 4.
Public Art Program

Sec. 20-85. Purpose. The purpose of this Division 4 is to establish and implement a Public Art Program for the City. This includes the requirement that all capital improvements as defined in Section 20-86 include funding for a work or works of public art and the repair of such public art. Works of public art are to be located at a capital improvement project site or in a facility or other complex of buildings adjacent to such a project site.

Sec. 20-86. Definitions.
(a) Works of Public Art.
(1) For the purposes of the Public Art Program works of public art may include, but need not be limited to, the following examples:
(2) The following elements are not considered works of public art under the Public Art Program:

a. Directional elements such as supergraphics, signage, or color coding except where these elements are an integral part of the work of public art.

b. Objects which are mass produced in a standard design, such as playground equipment or fountains. However, prototype objects which are designed by an artist selected using the procedures of the Public Art Program may be produced in editions and such editions shall not be considered mass produced.

c. Reproductions, by mechanical or other means, of original works of art, except in cases of casting, film, video, photography, printmaking or other media arts.

d. Landscape gardening except where such elements are designed by the artist or artist/landscape architect and are an integral part of a work of environmental art.

(3) Works of public art as herein defined acquired by City-affiliated cultural institutions, including the Museum of Natural History, Art Museum, Botanic Gardens, or Zoological Gardens shall not be part of the Public Art Program.

(4) All works of public art produced hereunder shall be of a design, fabrication and material which are appropriate and durable, subject to the approval of the Director, as defined herein, in his or her sole discretion.

(b) Capital Improvement Project.

Capital improvement project means the acquisition by the City of real property or any interest therein to be used by the City in conjunction with the construction or acquisition of buildings or other structures; the improvement to, construction or acquisition of buildings or other structures; the permanent improvement or betterment (as distinguished from ordinary repair or other maintenance) of real property or any interest therein, or of any building or structure; the construction of or improvement to viaducts, roads and streets, streetscape projects, pedestrian malls and plazas; and construction of or improvements to designated parks. Such capital improvement project shall include the costs and expenses of planning, designing, or engineering or any combination thereof, and of any survey or study concerning or with reference to any such capital improvement project. Such capital improvement project may be funded by appropriated City funds, by the sale of general obligation bonds, by private grants or cooperative agreements by which private funds are made available for use by the City, and by appropriate grants or cooperative agreements with the State of Colorado, the United States government, or other governmental agencies, or by any combination of the above sources of funding.

Any acquisition, construction, or expenditure required for, or in connection with, local, special, or general public improvement districts or privately financed construction pursuant to Chapter 49 of this Code, or expenditures for leases of non-City owned property for City offices which are improved at the City's direct or indirect expense shall not be considered capital improvement projects. Except as specified in the preceding paragraph, projects which do not include finished space for human occupancy and will not be available to public view or use or which are of a mechanical or electrical nature only shall not be considered capital improvement projects.

(c) Restoration or repair.

Restoration or repair means the rectification of significant or material damage to a work of public art.
(d) Maintenance.

Maintenance means the regularly required effort to keep a work of public art in its intended condition.

Sec. 20-87. Applicability.

(a) The Public Art Program shall apply to all City capital improvement projects as defined above including multi-phase projects on a single project site whose budgeted cost of construction and design for a single project or for the total of such multi-phase projects is equal to or greater than One Million Dollars ($1,000,000.00). The public art component of a project may be directly adjacent to the project site or elsewhere in a complex of buildings in which the project is located.

An amount equal to one percent (1%) of the total budgeted construction cost of the capital improvement project or such multi-phase projects shall be included for planning, design and construction of public art, and for the repair of such public art.

(b) One percent (1%) of the gross amount designated for public art shall be placed in a separate funded project in each capital fund. Each such separate project shall be titled “Public Art Repair and Restoration”. The monies set aside in each such “Public Art Repair and Restoration” project shall be used for the repair or restoration of any work of public art funded by the applicable capital fund.

(c) Maintenance of an artwork, as distinguished from repair or restoration of such artwork, as determined in the sole discretion of the Director, as defined herein, in coordination with the heads of affected departments or agencies or their designees, shall be the responsibility of the user agency, in coordination with and with the advice of the Mayor’s Office of Art, Culture and Film. At the time of acceptance by the City of a work of public art, the Mayor’s Office of Art, Culture and Film shall provide the user agency with maintenance instruction and schedule information, including any specific directives from the artist creating the work of public art as well as directives and information from the Mayor’s Office of Art, Culture and Film. Such maintenance instruction and schedule information may be updated from year to year by the Mayor’s Office of Art, Culture and Film. Upon receipt of such instruction and schedule information the user agency shall seek the necessary appropriation of funds to carry out the prescribed maintenance activities. Direct and indirect costs of such maintenance shall be borne by the user agency from their operating budgets, subject to the appropriation of such funds. Upon request by the said Director in consultation with the heads of the affected department or agencies, the agency head will initiate or continue maintenance to a work of art, the agency head shall comply unless no such funds have been appropriated or the agency head determines that it would not be in the best interests of the City to do so.

(d) Any person, otherwise qualified, submitting proposals pursuant to the City’s public art program is eligible to do so without regard to color, religion, national origin, gender, age, military status, sexual orientation, marital status, or physical or mental disability.

Sec. 20-88. Administration. The Director of the Mayor’s Office of Art, Culture, and Film (“Director”) shall be responsible for the implementation of the Public Art Program. The Director shall consult with the Manager of Public Works, Manager of Aviation, Manager of Parks and Recreation, Director of Public Office Buildings, or heads of other departments or agencies of the City that will be using and occupying the capital improvement, in administering the Public Art Program for that capital improvement.
Sec. 20-89. Rules and Regulations. The Director of the Mayor's Office of Art, Culture, and Film shall consult with the officials described in Section 20-88 above; and shall have the power and authority to adopt rules and regulations and informal internal guidelines to effectuate the purpose and operation of this Division 4.

PASSED BY THE COUNCIL  July 29, 1996

APPROVED:  July 25, 1996

EX-ADJUDICATED CLERK OF THE CITY AND COUNTY OF DENVER

PUBLISHED IN THE DENVER POST July 24 & August 2, 1996

PREPARED BY:  - ASSISTANT CITY ATTORNEY - July 18, 1996

REVIEWED BY:  - DEPUTY CITY ATTORNEY - July 18, 1996

SPONSORED BY COUNCIL MEMBER(S)
Sec. 2-19J. Powers and duties.

The Mayor’s Office of Art, Culture, and Film shall:
(1) Work with the mayor, the city council, and all affected or interested departments, commissions, boards, officers, offices, agencies, and employees of the city in art, culture, and film development activities, and prepare a specific program of activity for each; and
(2) Coordinate the activities of the various departments, commissions, boards, officers, offices, agencies and employees of the city in the preparation of these activities; and
(3) Review and analyze provisions of ordinances, rules, executive orders, and other regulatory documents that may affect film-making or other artistic activity in the City and advise the Mayor and City Council; and
(4) Work with existing art, cultural and film organizations in the development, and foster the creation of such organizations in appropriate areas where such organizations do not exist; and
(5) Administer the City’s Public Art Program, whereby a portion of capital improvement resources is utilized for public art; and
(6) Attract the film making business and operations to Denver; and
(7) Act as liaison between the City and the Colorado Motion Picture and Television Advisory Commission or its state-authorized successor; and
(8) Encourage the utilization of local professionals and businesses in the film industry; and
(9) Coordinate efforts of the performing and creating arts in assisting increasing tourism and visitation in the City; and
(10) Perform the duties, as assigned, of cultural,
scientific or artistic councils, boards or commissions under laws of other governmental entities; and

(11) Provide technical assistance and information to arts and cultural and film groups concerning funding, grants, loans, and other forms of assistance available to them; and

(12) Promote the arts and the culture of the City to enhance its cultural environment; and

(13) Encourage the incorporation of art in privately funded activities and capital improvements.

Sec. 2-194. Rules and Regulations.

The Art, Culture, and Film Director is hereby delegated the authority to promulgate such rules and regulations and informal guidelines as may be necessary or desirable to effect the purposes of this Division of the Code.

Section 2. The Revised Municipal Code is hereby amended by amending Article II of Chapter 28, Human Rights, as follows:

a. Sec. 28-17: delete the subsection numbered "(12)" and re-number the following subsections accordingly.

b. Sec. 28-20: delete "an advisory commission on cultural affairs" in the fourth line of the section which shall read as follows:

"There are hereby created an advisory commission on people with disabilities, an advisory commission on the aging, an advisory commission on youth, and a Denver Women's Commission."

c. Sec. 28-21(a): add "and on" after "disabilities" in first line and delete "and cultural affairs" in second line of the section which shall read as follows:

"(a) The commissions on people with disabilities, and on aging shall each consist of fifteen (15) members, and the commission on youth shall consist of twenty-one (21) members. All members of all commissions shall be appointed by the mayor and confirmed by ordinance."

d. Sec. 28-22: delete the subsection lettered "(d)" and re-letter the following subsections accordingly.

Section 3. The Revised Municipal Code is hereby amended by adding thereof Division 4 to Article VIII of Chapter 2, Administration, reading and to read as follows:

DIVISION 4
COMMISSION ON ART, CULTURE, AND FILM

Sec. 2-211. Created.

A commission to be known as the Commission on Art, Culture, and Film is hereby established.

Sec. 2-212. Commission on Art, Culture, and Film - Appointments, removal, terms.

(a) The Commission on Art, Culture, and Film shall consist of eighteen (18) members. All voting members shall be appointed by the mayor and confirmed by ordinance.

(b) The members shall serve without compensation except for expenses incurred in connection with the work of the commission as approved by the director.

(c) A member may be removed by the mayor for cause. A member may also be removed by ordinance for cause, provided that the councilpersons sponsoring the bill shall notify the member in writing at least fourteen (14) days prior to the first reading of the bill. If the member opposes, he may resign before the bill is introduced. If the member does not resign, then he shall be permitted to address the council at a public meeting prior to final approval of the bill.

(d) The terms of the commissioners shall be three (3) years; the terms shall be staggered so that at least five (5) of the members shall be appointed each year. In the event of the death or resignation of any member, his successor shall be appointed in the manner provided for original appointment, to serve for the unexpired portion of the term for which such member has been appointed. The mayor shall appoint the
chairperson of such commission, who shall serve for a period of one year. No commission member appointed chairperson shall serve more than two (2) consecutive terms as chairperson.

(e) Notwithstanding the immediately foregoing subsections, upon the effective date of the establishing of the Commission on Art, Culture, and Film, those individuals who were previously appointed members of the replaced advisory commission on cultural affairs shall be and are hereby designated as being among the initial members of the new Commission on Art, Culture, and Film; their respective terms of appointment ending as previously designated, and their successors being appointed in accordance with the immediately preceding subsections of this Code.

Sec. 2-213. Commission on Art, Culture, and Film - Membership.

(a) The membership of the Commission shall reflect the ethnic, social, demographic and geographic diversity and composition of the City.

(b) The Commission shall include at least eight (8) members of acknowledged accomplishment as either amateurs or professionals in one or more of the following fields: architecture, art criticism, art education, art history, choreography, dance, communicative arts, crafts, folk and ethnic arts, literature, media arts, music, opera, painting, photography, sculpture, theatre, including community theatre, and urban design; two (2) members representative of the film industry; three (3) members representative of business and labor; four (4) members representative of the geographic and demographic diversity of the City; and, as a non-voting member, the Director of the Mayor's Office of Economic Development as an ex-officio member.

Sec. 2-214. Commission on Art, Culture, and Film - Powers and duties.

The powers and duties of the commission shall be to:

(1) Advise the Mayor and City Council on the special problems of its constituent groups; and

(2) Recommend necessary procedures, programs, legislation or administrative action and to promote and ensure equal rights and opportunity for the people of the city; and

(3) Annually recommend goals and objectives of the commission.
ARTIST MAINTENANCE RECOMMENDATIONS

INTRODUCTION:

Durability and ease of maintenance are key factors in successful public art. Please give careful consideration to the materials in your proposal and in the design stage of your work. Consultation with a professional conservator regarding your selection of materials is strongly encouraged.

Routine maintenance for the collection of the City and County of Denver is generally undertaken by non-specialists. The following form is intended as a guide for supplying the City and County of Denver with the necessary information to insure the best maintenance and preservation of your work. Additional or different information than that requested on this form may be needed for your work. Please use additional pages as needed and attach relevant technical drawings, as-builds and other documentation. You are encouraged to consult with the City Project Manager, the Public Art Coordinator and with a professional conservator in supplying this information.

GENERAL INFORMATION:

ARTIST(S): Maintenance Contact:
Agency
Address
City, State, Zip
Phone
FAX

Title of Artwork
Date of Completion
Date of Final Acceptance by the City and County of Denver
_Project Location
Agency

Please be as specific as possible in supplying all of the following information:

CONTRACTS:

Copies of the contract between the City and County of Denver and the Artist are on permanent file in the Office of the Clerk and Recorder, the Mayor's Office of Art, Culture and Film and the Host Agency. Please attach one copy each of any contracts and warranties between the Artist and subcontractors including fabricators, suppliers and installers.

ARTWORK DESCRIPTION:

Please provide the exact fabrication materials and methods.

Primary Medium:

Secondary Medium(s): Materials, Finishes and/or Colors:

When supplying this information, please provide the exact names of products used, including trade and common names, vendor name and address, product lot number, exact formula, etc. Please provide color samples.

Sizes:

Exact Dimensions: Height, Width, Depth, Weight (if applicable)

Frame or Base
H: W: D:

If a security hanger is used for mounting framed work, please provide the exact type and method of removal, including any tool required for such removal.

Briefly describe how the work was fabricated and installed on-site:

If your work was cast at a foundry or fabricated by a professional metal shop, please indicate the name and address of the foundry/shop and indicate the name of a contact.

Please provide precise drawings of mechanical connections, eg. bolts or dowels and non-mechanical connections such as welds or glued joints.
SITE:

Is the site/context/surrounding landscape an integral part of this artwork? Would the intended character and integrity of the work be altered if the work were relocated to another site?

PLAQUE:

Primary Inscription:
Secondary Inscription:

ARTIST’S INTENT:

Do you intend your artwork to age and/or deteriorate through time, given Denver’s environmental conditions?

MAINTENANCE REQUIREMENTS AND INSTRUCTIONS:

Please indicate what maintenance procedures are required for this work including but not limited to lubrication of moving parts, reapplication of surface coatings, dusting, washing, waxing, and/or regular component rotation or replacement (such as light bulbs).

MAINTENANCE SCHEDULE:

Please indicate the schedule for routine maintenance and what type of maintenance is required on a daily, weekly, monthly, bi-monthly and annual basis.

ESTIMATED COSTS:

What is the estimated cost, on an annual basis, of the routine maintenance recommended for your artwork?

ARCHIVE:

Please indicate the location of surplus materials (eg. paint, patina samples, tiles), replacement parts, and/or additional components.

A copy of the installation drawings and as-builts for the project will be kept on file with the Mayor’s Office of Art, Culture and Film and the host agency.

REPAIRS AND RESTORATION:

To the extent practical, the Artist, during the Artist’s lifetime, shall be given the opportunity to make or personally supervise significant repairs or restorations and shall be paid a reasonable fee for any such services, provided that the City and the Artist shall agree in writing, prior to the commencement of any significant repairs or restorations, upon the Artist’s fee for such services. All repairs and restorations shall be made in accordance with recognized principles of conservation.

APPROVALS:

These maintenance recommendations have been approved and accepted by the City and County of Denver.

Host Agency Date
Interagency Maintenance Task Force Date
Mayor’s Office of Art, Culture and Film Date
Artist Date
Deaccession of Public Art

The Mayor's Commission on Art, Culture and Film is committed to ensure the on-going presence and integrity of art in the City and County of Denver and the sites for which public art is created, to preserve the vision of the artists who create art and to assure continuing access to the artworks in the City's collection by the public.

On rare occasions, unusual circumstances warrant the removal of a work of art from the City's collection. The Mayor's Commission on Art, Culture and Film follows set procedures for deaccession to ensure that the integrity of the art, artists and the public is respected. Generally, artwork will not be removed from public display sooner than five years after its installation. The only exception to this is in the event a work of art presents a public safety hazard. A request for deaccession involves careful consideration of public opinion, professional judgment and legal advice.

Review of City's Collection

The collection of the City and County of Denver shall be periodically reviewed by the Mayor's Commission on Art, Culture and Film. Maintenance assessments and recommendations shall be submitted to host agencies. In the event that circumstances warrant, a written request may be submitted to the Mayor's Commission on Art, Culture and Film for review for deaccession of a work of art. A written request for review for deaccession may also be submitted in the event of adverse public reaction over an extended period of time.

Request for Review

The request for review may be submitted by the artist, a host agency, and/or an outside party with interest in the disposition of the work through the Mayor's Office of Art, Culture and Film. The Mayor's Commission on Art, Culture and Film may then request an initial recommendation.

Requirements for Review for Deaccession

A request for review for deaccession should include:

1) The reason deaccession is requested
2) The estimated current value of the work
3) The acquisition method and cost
4) Written evaluation from a disinterested and qualified professional such as an engineer, conservator, architect, safety expert, or art historian
5) Photographs indicating the status of the work
6) Contract with the artist or any other relevant agreement concerning the artist's rights
7) Written recommendations of other concerned parties including the Mayor's Office of Art, Culture and Film, the host agency, the artist and any outside party
8) Cost estimate of the deaccession and identification of the funding source

Additional support to be provided when available includes:

1) Any articles regarding the work or evidence of public debate
2) Written correspondence concerning the work
Reasons for Deaccession

The following reasons may be cause for deaccession of a work of art from the City's collection:

1) The condition or security of the artwork cannot be reasonably guaranteed.
2) The artwork requires excessive maintenance or has faults of design or workmanship and repair or remedy is impractical or unfeasible.
3) The artwork has been damaged and repair is impractical or unfeasible.
4) The artwork endangers public safety.
5) Significant changes in the use, character or design of the site have occurred, which affect the integrity of the work.
6) The quality of the artwork is called into question.
7) Written request from the artist has been received.

Review

Criteria for Review

A recommendation of reasonable measures addressing the concerns which prompted the request for deaccession shall be formulated by the Mayor's Office of Art, Culture and Film and forwarded to the Mayor's Commission on Art, Culture and Film. The request for deaccession will be made public through notice procedures approved by the City's Department of Law.

Determination

If the Mayor's Commission on Art, Culture and Film determines that reasonable efforts have been made to resolve the concerns which prompted the request for deaccession, the Mayor's Commission on Art, Culture and Film shall convene a competent independent third party to review the recommendations regarding the artwork.

The following courses of action in order of priority may be followed if a work of art must be removed from the City's collection:

1) Relocation for public display. (If the work was created for a specific site, relocation must be to a new site consistent with the artist's intention. The artist's assistance and consent will be sought to make this determination.)
2) Removal from the collection by sale, extended loan, trade or donation. Three independent professional appraisals of the fair market value of the work are received to inform further decisions at this point. If possible, the artist should be given first option on purchase.
3) If none of the preceding options are feasible, the work will be destroyed at the expense of the City.

Public Notice

Public notice shall be made prior to the implementation of any action recommended by the Mayor's Commission on Art, Culture and Film in accordance with policy established by the City Attorney.

Adopted – March 8, 1995

Relocation Policy

The Mayor's Commission on Art, Culture and Film is committed to ensure the on-going presence and integrity of art in the City and County of Denver and the sites for which public art is created, to preserve the vision of the artists who create art and to assure continuing access to the artworks in the City's collection by the public.

On rare occasions, unusual circumstances warrant the relocation of a work of art in the City's collection. The Mayor's Commission on Art, Culture and Film follows set procedures for relocation to ensure that the integrity of the art, artists and the public is respected. Generally, artwork will not be relocated from public display sooner than five years after its installation. The only exception to this is in the event a work of art presents a public safety hazard. A request for relocation involves careful consideration of public opinion, professional judgment and legal advice.

Review of City's Collection

The collection of the City and County of Denver shall be periodically reviewed by the Mayor's Commission on Art, Culture and Film. Maintenance recommendations shall be submitted by the Mayor's Office of Art, Culture and Film to host agencies. In the event that circumstances warrant, a written request may be submitted to the Mayor's Commission on Art, Culture and Film for review for relocation of a work of art. A written request for review for relocation may also be submitted in the event of adverse public reaction over an extended period of time.

Request for Review

The request for review may be submitted by the artist, a host agency, and/or an outside party with interest in the relocation of the work through the Mayor's Office of Art, Culture and Film. The Mayor's Commission on Art, Culture and Film may then request an initial recommendation.

Requirements for Review for Relocation

A request for review for relocation should include:

1) The reason relocation is requested.
2) The estimated current value of the work.
3) The acquisition method and cost.
4) Written evaluation from a disinterested and qualified professional such as an engineer, conservator, architect, safety expert, or art historian.
5) Photographs indicating the status of the artwork.
6) Contract with the artist or any other relevant agreement concerning the artist's rights.
7) Written recommendations of other concerned parties including the Mayor's Office of Art, Culture and Film, the host agency, the artist and any outside party.
8) Cost estimate of the relocation and identification of the funding source for relocation.
9) Alternate location(s) for the work.

Additional support to be provided when available includes:

1) Any articles regarding the work or evidence of public debate.
2) Written correspondence concerning the work.
Reasons for Relocation

The following reasons may be cause for relocation of a work of art in the City's collection:

1) The condition or security of the artwork cannot be reasonably guaranteed in the present location.
2) The artwork endangers public safety.
3) Significant changes in the use, character or design of the site have occurred, which affect the integrity of the work.
4) The Mayor's Commission on Art, Culture and Film wishes to replace the artwork with a more appropriate work by the same artist or another artist.
5) Written request from the artist has been received.

Review

A recommendation of reasonable measures addressing the concerns which prompted the request for relocation shall be formulated by the Mayor's Office of Art, Culture and Film and forwarded to the Mayor's Commission on Art, Culture and Film. The status of the artwork for which a request for relocation has been made shall be made public through notices procedures approved by the City's Department of Law.

Determination

If the Mayor's Commission on Art, Culture and Film determines that reasonable efforts have been made to resolve the concerns which prompted the review and that these efforts have failed to resolve the concerns, the Mayor's Commission on Art, Culture and Film shall convene a competent independent third party to review the recommendations regarding the artwork.

If the work was created for a specific site, relocation must be to a new site consistent with the artist's intentions. The artist's assistance and consent will be sought to make this determination.

Public Notice

Public notice shall be made prior to the implementation of any action recommended by the Mayor's Commission on Art, Culture and Film in accordance with policy established by the City Attorney.

REVISED APPENDIX VI

PERMANENT DONATION INFORMATION CHECKLIST

☐ Signed donation information form
☐ Photographs or precise scale drawings of the artwork
☐ Drawings (site plans, elevations, perspectives and details of structural elements, if available)
☐ Maintenance funds if required

Adopted - March 8, 1995
DONATION PROCEDURE

Time Frame
1st Tuesday of each month
2nd Wednesday of each month
Approximately twelve days
Approximately six weeks
4th Wednesday of each month
Every Tuesday: 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.
Following Thursday
Every Monday
Every Monday

Process
Present to PAC
PAC sends recommendation MOACF
MOACF issues Form 42 (request for contract) and
City Attorney’s Office writes contract and MOACF
MOACF presents to City Council - Public Amenities
MOACF presents to Mayor/Council
MOACF files for an ordinance
City Council - First Reading of ordinance
City Council - Second Reading of ordinance

The following criteria may be referenced in the review of donations:

LIABILITY
Susceptibility to wear and vandalism
Potential danger to the public
Insurance coverage and amount
Safety codes

MAINTENANCE REQUIREMENTS
Permanence of materials
Source of maintenance funds
Maintenance schedule
Environmental issues

AESTHETIC QUALITY AND ARTISTIC MERIT
Longevity
Craftsmanship
Artistic accomplishments
Creativeness
Scale
Color
Proportion
Standard of Excellence

PLACEMENT
Site location
Limitations
Restrictions
Environmental concerns
Human
Replacement/relocation
Removal of site to original condition
Appropriateness
Relationship to site

COMMUNITY
Approval
Obesity
Safety
Diversity

MEDIUM
Sculpture - in the round, low relief, mobile, fountain, kinetic, electronic
Graphic - printmaking, drawing
Painting - oil, tempera, acrylic
Mosaic
Photography
Crafts - clay, fiber, textiles, wood, metal, plastics, stained glass
Decorative, ornamental or functional elements designed by an artist
PERMANENT DONATION INFORMATION
CITY AND COUNTY OF DENVER

Thank you for your interest in donating artwork to the City and County of Denver in public locations as a vital component of Denver's quality of life. Under the City Charter, all donations of artwork must be reviewed by the Mayor's Commission on Art, Culture, and Film and City Council. Standard information is required for the review of proposed permanent donations. Please complete the following application form and include the requested information and support materials. You will be notified in writing once all the material is received and your donation is scheduled for review. Donations are reviewed monthly, although the approval process may take up to three months. All donation applications, whether accepted or declined, are on file in the Mayor's Office of Art, Culture, and Film. For further information or clarification please call (303) 640-2696.

GENERAL:
NAME OF DONOR ____________________________
ORGANIZATION ____________________________
STREET ADDRESS ____________________________
CITY __________ STATE __________ ZIP __________
DAYTIME PHONE ( ) __________________ EVENING PHONE ( )
FAX ( ) __________________
STREET ADDRESS OF PROPOSED PLACEMENT OF DONATED ARTWORK IF KNOWN ____________________________

ARTWORK:
TITLE OF ARTWORK ____________________________
ARTISTS ____________________________
YEAR OF COMPLETION ____________________________
DIMENSIONS: HEIGHT __________ WIDTH __________ DEPTH __________
APPROXIMATE WEIGHT ____________________________
MATERIALS AND/OR FINISHES (Please list the exact materials used in fabricating the artwork. Where finishes are used, please indicate the exact finish including manufacturer and product information.)

VALUE (Please enclose a letter of appraisal from a professional appraiser of artwork indicating the fair market value of the proposed donation.)

DOCUMENTATION (Please provide in separate attachment photographic documentation or precise scale drawings of the artwork.)

INSTALLATION:
METHOD OF INSTALLATION (Please indicate the proposed method of installation for the artwork. Include the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of recommended contractors to be retained for the installation.)

SOURCE OF FUNDS FOR THE INSTALLATION (Who will fund the installation of the artwork.)
DRAWINGS:

Refer to the attached samples. Please enclose drawings, if available, of:

- Site Plan
- Elevations
- Perspectives
- Details of Structural Elements

MAINTENANCE:

Maintenance Requirements (Please indicate the exact requirements for the on-going maintenance of the artwork.)

Schedule (Please provide the minimum required schedule for the on-going maintenance of the artwork.)

Maintenance Funds (Please indicate both the amount and the source of the funds required for the on-going maintenance of the artwork. Under D.R.M.C. Section 2-258, the donor must provide for the maintenance of a gift of artwork. When, in the judgment of city council, a gift to the city may require major repair or rehabilitation in the foreseeable future, the donor of the gift shall deposit with the city an amount which shall be equal to the greater of either ten (10) percent of the value of the gift, as established by the donor, or a sum judged sufficient by the city council, at the time of acceptance, to cover the cost of repair or rehabilitation.)

Guarantees:

The donor hereby agrees to provide for the maintenance of the donation, if required.

Signature: ___________________________ Date: ___________________________

You will be contacted if additional material is required to review your donation.
APPENDIX VII

Denver’s Public Art Program is nearing the end of its first decade and the urban environment has changed dramatically. Public art has been part of the major new additions to our City including the Colorado Convention Center, the Central Library, and Denver International Airport. Public art has also contributed to numerous neighborhood and community projects including libraries, recreation centers and parks. Fire stations and health centers. Public art will continue to be a part of the changing character of Denver. Major projects ahead include parks and public works projects in the South Platte River corridor, Stapleton and Lowry redevelopment, and the Gateway area.

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<tr>
<td>Theatres and Arenas</td>
<td>*Denver Performing Arts Complex Third Vault</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wastewater Management</td>
<td>*Goldsmith Gulch</td>
<td>4 and 6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Indicates carryover project from 1995.

AVIATION

The Department of Aviation has two main areas that are eligible for public art, the redevelopment of Stapleton and the completion of elements that are part of the overall design of Denver International Airport that have yet to be completed.

56th Avenue

City Council District - 11
Location - Stapleton Redevelopment

Project Description - This is a new road construction to connect Denver and Aurora through the Stapleton site.

Public Art Budget - $25,000

LANDSCAPING

City Council District - 11
Location - Denver International Airport

Project Description - Landscaping

Public Art Budget - tbd

SURFACE PARKING GARAGE

City Council District - 11
Location - Denver International Airport

Project Description - Additional construction to add surface parking along the airport parking garages.

Public Art Budget - tbd

LIGHTING IMPROVEMENTS TO PENA BLVD.

City Council District - 11
Location - Denver International Airport

Project Description - Improvements to street lighting along Pena Boulevard.

Public Art Budget - tbd

DENVER PUBLIC LIBRARY

Parking Lot/Landscaping

City Council District - 10
Location - South of the Central Library and the Denver Art Museum

Project Description - Funding is part of the completion of the parking lots that serve the Civic Center Cultural Complex. The Mayor’s Commission on Art, Culture and Film has approved the use of $12,000 of these funds for the Mark DiSuvero sculpture for Acero Plaza.

Public Art Budget - $17,000

HEALTH AND HOSPITALS

Coroner’s Office

City Council District - 9
Location - 6th and Bannock

Project Description - Health and Hospitals has acquired a building directly across Bannock from the Denver General Hospital campus to house the Coroner’s Office.

Public Art Budget - $10,000

Davis Pavilion

City Council District - 9
Location - 7th and Delaware

Project Description - Health and Hospitals has reserved the Davis Pavilion, formerly owned by the University of Colorado Health Sciences, for outpatient services. The PEP is in the final stage of recommending an artist.

Public Art Budget - $17,000

PARKS AND RECREATION

Cook Park Recreation Center Senior Addition

City Council District - 10
Location - Lowry

Project Description - Renovations to the parking garage will include the addition of new elevator and upgrading of existing elevators as well as lighting inside the structure.

Public Art Budget - $25,000

PARKING MANAGEMENT

Denver Performing Arts Complex Parking Garage

City Council District - 9
Location - 13th and Arapahoe

Project Description - Improvements to the parking garage will include the addition of new elevator and upgrading of existing elevators as well as lighting inside the structure.

Public Art Budget - $25,000

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Denver Performing Arts Complex Park
City Council District - 9
Location - Between the PLEX and Speer Boulevard
Project Description - The City is currently addressing zoning for a proposed new permanent location, to be constructed, for Social Services.

Public Art Budget - TBD

Wastewater Management
Goldsmith Gulch
City Council District - 4 and 6
Location - 1.5 mile area between Bible Park and Cook Park in southeast Denver
Project Description - This is the final phase of a major urban drainage project that impacts landscaping in two parks in two distant communities. The project prospectus will be distributed in February, 1996.

Public Art Budget - $80,000

Theatres and Arenas
Denver Performing Arts Complex Third Vault
City Council District - 9
Location - west bank of Calentra level elevators
Project Description - Funding for this project was part of the construction of the Third Vault of the glass ceiling in the PLEX and renovations to the Auditorium Theatre. Marcus Akinla was selected to create a glass mosaic for the elevator walls.

Public Art Budget - $29,000

Social Services
Social Services Building
City Council District - TBD
Location - TBD

Project Description - The City is currently addressing zoning for a proposed new permanent location, to be constructed, for Social Services.

Public Art Budget - TBD

Public Works
6th Avenue Improvements - Lowry
City Council District - 11
Location - Lowry Redevelopment District
Project Description - The City is contributing funds in phases for improvements to 6th Avenue through the site. There may be an opportunity to develop a master plan for the inclusion of public art in other aspects of the Lowry redevelopment.

Public Art Budget - $15,000

6th Avenue Viaducts
City Council District - 9
Project Description - The City will reconstruct the inbound and outbound lanes of the viaducts at 6th and Kalamath within existing boundaries with possible minor lane reconfiguration.

Public Art Budget - $30-35,000

Alameda and Federal
City Council District - 3
Location - Alameda and Federal
Project Description - The intersection at Alameda and Federal is being widened to add turning lanes. The City is at the process of acquiring properties which will be impacted. The PEP met at the site in 1995 and will proceed in 1996.

Public Art Budget - $29,000

Broadway Viaduct
City Council District - 8 and 9
Location - Broadway Viaduct from Blake
Project Description - The Broadway Viaduct will be demolished and replaced with an underpass similar to the 15th Street underpass with pedestrian, vehicle and rail bridges crossing overhead. Sidewalks will be added. T. Ellen Solod was selected by the PEP to determine ways that artwork could be best integrated into the site. The project prospectus will be distributed in February, 1996.

Public Art Budget - $200,000

Gateway Improvements - Tower Road
City Council District - 11
Location - Tower Road
Project Description - The total cost of this project is estimated at 7 million dollars and will provide expanded road access for development in the Gateway area.

Public Art Budget - $70,000

Speer Boulevard Bridge at the Platte River
City Council District - 9
Location - Speer Viaduct above the South Platte River
Project Description - A new bridge will be constructed as part of a minor reconfiguration of the Speer Viaduct.

Public Art Budget - $50,000

Speer Boulevard Sidewalks
City Council District - 9
Location - Speer Boulevard from Zoo to Wewatta
Project Description - New sidewalks and a pedestrian bridge over I-25 are being added to provide access from the north side neighborhoods to downtown. The PEP for this project recommended that funding be combined with other adjacent Speer Boulevard construction.

Public Art Budget - $15,000

Wewatta Street Construction
City Council District - 9
Location - Central Platte Valley/LaDo
Project Description - New road construction will be undertaken to complete the Wewatta roadway behind Union Station.

Public Art Budget - $22,000

Social Services
Social Services Building
City Council District - TBD
Location - TBD

Project Description - The City is currently addressing zoning for a proposed new permanent location, to be constructed, for Social Services.

Public Art Budget - TBD

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Public Art Budget - $29,000

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Public Art Budget - $29,000

Social Services
Social Services Building
City Council District - TBD
Location - TBD

Project Description - The City is currently addressing zoning for a proposed new permanent location, to be constructed, for Social Services.

Public Art Budget - TBD
1996 Projects Budget Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Proposed Budget</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>56th Avenue Lighting Improvements to Pella Blvd.</td>
<td>$25,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landscaping</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deaver Public Library Parking Lot Landscaping</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contribution to acquisition of Mark DiSuvero's Lao Tsu</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and Hospital</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coroner's Office</td>
<td>$15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parks and Recreation</td>
<td>$28,000</td>
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<td>Social Services Building</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rockmont Park</td>
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<tr>
<td>Public Works</td>
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<td>Social Services</td>
<td>$15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Addition</td>
<td>$359,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denver Performing Arts Complex</td>
<td>$439,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Public Art Program Budget for 1996</td>
<td>$773,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Public Art Program staff and City staff works closely with project sponsors to ensure projects are within budget. The Mayor's Office of Art, Culture and Film has a national artists slide registry that is used to notify artists of upcoming projects. The Public Art Program staff also provides services and consulting for projects to ensure that projects are eligible for funding. For an application to the Public Art Program, please contact:

PUBLIC ART PROGRAM
OFFICE OF ART, CULTURE AND FILM
303 W. COLFAX AVE STE 615
DENVER, CO 80204
(303) 640-2897

CITY AND COUNTY OF DENVER
MAJOR'S OFFICE OF ART, CULTURE AND FILM
303 W. COLFAX AVE STE 625
DENVER, CO 80204
(720) 923-8200

The Public Art Program is an effort to create a 1% for art policy for public projects in addition to show that art is eligible for public expenditures.

The Mayor's Office of Art, Culture and Film maintains a national artists slide registry that is used to notify artists of upcoming projects. The Public Art Program staff has also assisted in identifying partnerships between local arts organizations and public art programs. For an application to the Public Art Program, please contact:

PUBLIC ART PROGRAM
OFFICE OF ART, CULTURE AND FILM
303 W. COLFAX AVE STE 615
DENVER, CO 80204
(303) 640-2897
PERMIT APPLICATION CHECKLIST

☐ Signed application form
☐ Photographs or precise scale drawings of the artwork
☐ Drawings (site plans, elevations, perspectives and details of structural elements)
☐ Maintenance funds
☐ Proof of bond and/or insurance

The following criteria may be referenced in the review of permit applications:

LIABILITY
- Susceptibility to wear and vandalism
- Potential danger to the public
- Insurance coverage and amounts
- Safety codes

MAINTENANCE REQUIREMENTS
- Permanence of materials
- Source of maintenance funds
- Maintenance schedule
- Environmental issues

AESTHETIC QUALITY AND ARTISTIC MERIT
- Longevity
- Craftsmanship
- Artistic accomplishments
- Creativeness
- Scale
- Color
- Proportion
- Standard of Excellence

PLACEMENT
- Site location
- Limitations
- Restrictions
- Environmental concerns
- Human
- Replacement/relocation
- Restoration of site to original condition
- Appropriateness
- Relationship to site

COMMUNITY
- Approval
- Obscenity
- Safety
- Diversity

MEDIUM
- Sculpture — in the round, bas relief, mobile, fountain, kinetic, electronic
- Graphic — printmaking, drawing
- Painting — all media
- Mosaic
- Photography
- Crafts — clay, fiber, textiles, wood, metal, plastics, stained glass
- Mixed media
- Earthworks and environmental
- Descriptive, ornamental or functional elements designed by an artist
PUBLIC RIGHT-OF-WAY PERMIT APPLICATION FOR ARTWORK
CITY AND COUNTY OF DENVER

A permit is required for any privately-owned sculpture, artwork or structure placed in and/or encroaching into the public right-of-way in the City and County of Denver. Specifically, no part of such sculpture, artwork, or structure, or any appendage thereto, shall occupy space above, on or under any street, alley, sidewalk or other public way or place without such a permit. To obtain a permit, an applicant must submit this completed application form, drawings of the site and the proposed installation of artwork as detailed below and any additional materials as requested by the City for the purpose of reviewing permit requests to the Mayor’s Office of Art, Culture and Film. Once all the required materials have been submitted, permit applications will be reviewed by a committee comprised of individuals from the Public Works Transportation Engineering Division, the Mayor’s Commission on Art, Culture and Film, the Mayor’s Office of Art, Culture and Film and other appropriate agencies. This committee meets monthly to review permit applications. Review criteria include but are not limited to public safety, wind load and pedestrian access. Permit application reviews may take up to three months from the time all required materials have been submitted. Permits approved by this committee and the Public Works permit review process will then be issued by the Manager of Public Works. All permits which are granted are reviewed on an annual basis. All permits which are granted are reviewed on an annual basis. For further information or clarification please call (303) 640-2694.

GENERAL:

NAME OF APPLICANT

STREET ADDRESS

CITY STATE ZIP

DAYTIME PHONE \( ) \ \ EVENING PHONE \( )

FAX \( )

ARTWORK:

TITAtE OF ARTWORK

ARTISTS

YEAR OF COMPLETION

DIMENSIONS: HEIGHT \( ) \ \ WIDTH \( ) \ \ DEPTH \( )

APPROXIMATE WEIGHT

MATERIALS AND/OR FINISHES (Please list the exact materials used in fabricating the artwork. Where finishes are used, please indicate the exact finish including manufacturer and product information.)

DOCUMENTATION (Please provide separate attachment photographic documentation or precise scale drawings of the artwork.)

INSTALLATION:

METHOD OF INSTALLATION (Please indicate the exact method of installation of the artwork. Include the names, addresses and telephone numbers of any contractors retained for the installation.)
RESTORATION OF SITE AND PUBLIC RIGHT-OF-WAY (Please include the name, address and telephone number of any contractor(s) retained to restore site and public right-of-way to its original condition.)

DRAWINGS:

The following drawings of the artwork and proposed location must be enclosed with this application. Please refer to the attached samples.

SITE PLANS
ELEVATIONS
PERSPECTIVES
DETAILS OF STRUCTURAL ELEMENTS

MAINTENANCE:

MAINTENANCE REQUIREMENTS (Please indicate the exact requirements for the on-going maintenance of the artwork.)

SCHEDULE (Please provide the recommended schedule for the on-going maintenance of the artwork.)

MAINTENANCE FUNDS (Please indicate both the amount and the source of the funds required for the on-going maintenance of the artwork.)

INSURANCE AND BONDS

Under Denver Revised Municipal Code, Section 49-357, applicants must provide the following bond and/or insurance as directed by the Manager of Public Works:

As a condition of the issuance of any permit under this division, the Manager of Public Works shall require either the posting of a bond in a penal sum not to exceed fifty thousand dollars ($50,000.00) with sureties approved by the manager as conditioned that the person receiving a permit shall hold the city harmless from all loss or damage to persons or property on account of injury arising from the construction or maintenance of the permitted structure or appurtenance, or the filing of evidence of a policy of public liability insurance in the name of the permittee, with the city as a named insured, with the minimum limits of coverage of fifty thousand dollars/two hundred thousand dollars ($50,000.00/$100,000.00) for bodily injury and five thousand dollars ($5,000.00) for property damage, covering the location of the encroachment on the public property for which the permit is issued. (Code 1950, § 331.1-3)

GUARANTEES:

The applicant hereby agrees to assume any and all liability for the artwork, to assume the on-going maintenance of the artwork and to restore the site where the artwork is located to its original condition.

Signature  Date

You will be contacted if additional material is required to review your application.
SAMPLE: DETAIL OF STRUCTURAL ELEMENTS
APPENDIX IX

BY AUTHORITY

ORDINANCE NO. 480

COUNCIL BILL NO. 1-8

COMMITTEE OF REFERENCE:

PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

A BILL

FOR AN ORDINANCE RELATING TO ZONING, AMENDING ARTICLE IV (SIGNS) OF CHAPTER 59 (ZONING) OF THE REVISED MUNICIPAL CODE, AS AMENDED, RELATING TO SIGNS WHICH ARE WORKS OF ART.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY AND COUNTY OF DENVER:

Section 1. Article IV (Signs) of Chapter 59 (Zoning) of the Revised Municipal Code, as amended, shall be and hereby is amended and re-enacted as amended by adding thereto Section 59-537(b)(10) in the following words, figures and phrases:

59-537(b)(10) Signs which are works of art as defined by section 20-86 of the Denver Revised Municipal Code. Such signs shall be primarily artistic in nature, but up to five percent (5%) of the sign may be the name or logo of a sponsoring organization. The percentage of the sign devoted to the sponsoring organization may be increased up to ten percent (10%) of the sign if the zoning administrator, with input from the Director of the Mayor's Office of Art, Culture and Film, determines the portion of the sign devoted to the sponsor does not detract from the artistic quality of the sign.

PUBLISHED IN THE DAILY JOURNAL

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Appendix X

Amendments

1) The Mayor's Commission on Art, Culture and Film revised the Public Art Process (Appendix J). Section 3) of this document is revised to read that of the seven voting members of the Project Evaluation Panel (PEP), two members shall be Commissioners as opposed to one Commissioner and one Public Art Subcommittee Commissioner. This revision was approved and accepted by the Mayor's Commission on Art, Culture and Film on January 12, 1994.

2) The deaccession policy (Appendix V) was revised and a relocation policy was drafted. These documents were approved and accepted by the Mayor's Commission on Art, Culture and Film on March 8, 1995. These policies are hereby incorporated into this document and attached as part of this Appendix VIII.

3) Notification of artists during the selection process. Artists who are semifinalists in the selection process will not be officially notified of the results of the selection until after final approval by Mayor Wellington E. Webb. However, selection results are discussed at open public meetings of the Public Art Subcommittee and the Mayor's Commission on Art, Culture and Film. Artists may therefore become aware of the results of selection prior to official notification from the Mayor's Office of Art, Culture and Film.
Public Art Planning Document
Submitted Fall 2008

1. Introduction

The Public Art Planning Document (Planning Document) is a companion document to the Public Art Policy Document (Policy Document). The Policy Document, published in 2007 describes the basic structure of Denver's Public Art Program and is a framework document that will change little from year to year. In contrast, the Planning Document outlines short- and long-term goals for the Public Art Program that may shift based upon budgets and staffing changes, departmental priorities, guidance from the Denver Commission on Cultural Affairs (DCCA) and other factors.

The Planning Document is a tool for the DOCA public art staff to outline larger programming goals that go beyond basic project management such as outreach and education, program development, maintenance and conservation, grant-making or changes to the rules and regulations of the Public Art Program.

The Planning Document will be discussed and re-drafted every one to two years and will require input and discussion from the Public Art Committee, Denver Commission on Cultural Affairs and the public. The Denver International Airport (DIA) public art staff will draft its own Planning Document (or some substitute) to guide the airport art program goals.


A. Overview: 2006-2008

2006-2007 was a period of transition and "housekeeping." Some projects had been put on hold to accommodate staffing shortages and the departure of Public Art Program Administrator, John Grant. In January of 2008 put further stresses on the small staff. A consultant was hired in 2006 to assist with two projects, and Kendall L. Peterson was hired in July of 2006 to replace John Grant as Public Art Administrator.

Once fully staffed, the Public Art staff began chipping away at a sizeable backlog of projects—some of which were on hold since 2002, awaiting more staff. DOCA managed to proceed with artist selection for all of the backlogged projects (from the 2002 group call) and began work on a few projects that had been funded for some time but had not begun due to staffing limitations. As of 2008, all backlogged projects have been

seed or combined with new projects from the 2007 Better Denver Program.

Finally, the Public Art team made great strides in documenting the Collection and its immediate conservation needs and ongoing finance needs. The staff has completed two yearly assessments of Collection, created a catalog of the nearly 300 artworks, which did not prior this and, with the help of an intern, mapped the entire collection City’s Geographic Information System (GIS) mapping system.

On these reports, in 2007, we received a total of $100,000 and additional $150,000 in 2008 for maintenance & conservation funding. These funds enable art staff to conserve/replant several major projects, many of which were located in the downtown area in time for the cratic National Convention.

Accomplishments 2006-2008

In addition to the maintenance and art projects mentioned above, the Art staff’s 2006-2008 accomplishments included:

- Working with WESTAF to coordinate our office's first electronic juries via the Call For Entry (CFA) system, thereby cutting down on wasteful printed Requests for Qualifications (RFQs) while increasing efficiency;
- Completion of Public Art Master Plan (separated into a Policy Document and a Planning Document) – which had not been updated since 1996;
- Creation of a "Public Art FAQ" for distribution to City project managers of Capital Improvement Projects (CIPs) strengthening their knowledge of the Public Art process;
- Completion of a reprint of the Public Art Guide to Downtown Denver and creation of a new City-wide guide in 2008;
- Establishment of a Docent Program that features tours of the artwork at Denver Performing Arts Complex (DPAC), the Colorado Convention Center and Civic Center Park;
- Establishment of a Public Art phonecast system which allows callers to phone in and hear interviews with artists for specific works of art; Six phonecasts were available by the end of 2008, and we plan to roll out additional phonecasts with new installations; and
- Re-establishment of the Dell Exhibition Program which features local artists in this very public space.

rm Goals for 2009-2011
A. Preview: 2009-2011
Between 2009 and 2011 approximately 40 new public art projects will be
introduced from the Better Denver bond package passed by voters in
2007. The new bond projects will be combined with existing projects and
the overall goal is to complete most of these projects within the time-frame
of the overall bond requirements—by late 2012.

The Public Art Program will receive an additional $250,000 in mill levy and
maintenance funds for 2009. These funds must be spent by the end of
2009.

This enormous amount of work will benefit the program overall, and the
Public Art staff has established several short-term goals for the Public Art
Program for 2009-2011.

B. Short-term Goals: 2009-2011
1. Better Collection Management: Establishment of a Collection
Database and a Comprehensive Maintenance and Repair Plan
It is irresponsible to continue creating public art without a system to
better track and manage the existing collection. The goals will be
threefold: create a better, more useful database of our collection,
streamline project management to better track progress of each
artwork and establish a better maintenance plan for the existing
collection.

The following steps will be activated in order to realize these goals:

a. Action Steps
   i. Collection Database
      A database (electronic database with coordinating files) of
      artworks owned by the City and County of Denver will be
      created and maintained regularly throughout each year as
      works are added to the collection and maintenance procedures
      are completed. This database will contain the following
      information:
      - Unique accession/ID number for each artwork
      - Curatorial information: name of artwork, year
      completed/dedicated (if known), artist (if known), cost of
      commission (if known), description of artwork, location of
      artwork, current condition (if known) and other information as
      needed.
      - Conservation information: materials of artwork, fabrication
      information, installation specifications, maintenance
      handbook, professional recommendations, condition reports
      (if available), maintenance records (if available), and other
      information as needed.
      - Administrative information: copies of artists’ contracts,
      payment and budget information, permits, subcontractor
      information, insurance information, dedication materials,
      press and biographical information, and other information as
      needed.
      - Visual documentation: digital or photographic files on artist,
      fabrication, installation, beauty shots, engineering drawings,
      artists’ sketches, proposals, press shots and documentation
      for maintenance and conservation purposes.

   ii. Current Project Database
      A record/database of all current projects, including projects that
      are funded but not yet active, projects on hold, etc., will enable
      the staff and DOCA to better track projects and the length of
time it takes to fully realize their completion. This database
      should contain all pertinent information, such as project
      information sheets, key personnel involved, timelines, dates of
      completion and funding information.

   iii. Yearly Inventory and Assessment of the Collection
      Each year, in preparation for annual budget submissions, the
      Public Art staff will conduct a review of the Public Art collection
to determine the year’s maintenance priorities. A yearly
      inventory will help the Public Art staff better determine its budget
      needs for the coming year, determine which artworks have
      encountered unreported damages, and better maintain its
      collection for years to come.

   iv. Yearly Public Art Maintenance Report and Recommendations
      The Public Art staff will report its findings from the yearly
      inventory in an annual Public Art Maintenance and Repair
      Report and Recommendations to the Denver Commission on
      Cultural Affairs (DCCA). This report will update the DCCA on
      the City’s collection and provide maintenance priorities for the
      year ahead.

   v. Funding for Maintenance and Conservation
      Maintenance and conservation work is funded separately from
      the Percent for Art Public Art Program. On a yearly basis,
      DOCA will propose its desired budget for maintenance needs in
      conjunction with the Public Art Maintenance and Repair Report
      and Recommendations. This budget proposal will be funded
      each year by the Budget Management Office (BMO) according
to need and availability of funds. The funding is expected to vary from year to year according to these factors.

2. Establish Performance Plan for New Bond Projects
   a. Overview
   Denver voters passed the Better Denver Bond Program in 2007 and with its passage, approximately 40 new Public Art projects were created. The Public Art staff will make every effort to complete all these projects at the same time as the Bond projects—by 2012.
   To accomplish this enormous amount of work, the Public Art Staff will do the following:

   b. Action Steps
   i. Combine Projects
   Projects that were already on our books and bond projects that are adjacent/in the same area will be combined whenever possible to create a project with a larger impact (instead of a series of smaller works with possibly less impact) and to better take advantage of staff and funding for the projects.

   ii. Hire Support Staff
   The public art staff will hire one full-time, three-year administrative employee to assist with the bond projects. This position was approved by the bond executive committee and hiring is complete.

   In addition, the bond will also fund contract positions as needed. As we move through the projects and discover where we most need assistance, contractors will be hired accordingly.

   iii. Regular Updates
   The Bond Leadership Team, the Denver Commission on Cultural Affairs and the Public Art Committee will receive quarterly progress reports on the bond projects. These reports will be made available to the public as needed/requested.

   iv. Outreach and education
   The quantity and range of bond projects will be attractive to a variety of new artists working in all media. In order to reach this new group of artists, we hope to host two yearly Public Art Workshops, to inform artists of upcoming commissions as well as hold round-table discussions and tutorials on how to apply for the opportunities.

   In addition, we hope to better engage the community around these installations and new artworks. Through signage, better marketing and press around our activities (installations, lectures, dedications) we hope to keep all neighborhoods engaged and aware of our activities.

3. Implement an Urban Arts Program
   a. Overview
   The Urban Arts Program will be a direct offshoot of Mayor Hickenlooper’s Graffiti Summit in October of 2006 and Graffiti Task Force recommendations of 2007.

   The Graffiti Task Force Prevention Subcommittee identified several programs and initiatives to “reduce the likelihood of graffiti offenses and outline roles and responsibilities for stakeholders to prevent graffiti vandalism.” Phase I recommendations from the Prevention Subcommittee included the following mandate: “Create and increase access to alternatives for youth, including positive arts opportunities.” The intent and rationale behind this mandate was to increase youth access and exposure to “positive and monitored alternatives and support systems. Positive use of recreational and leisure time is an important skill to learn. Self-expression, whether developed through sports, writing, drawing, theatre, creation of music, is largely valued in Denver.”

   In accordance with the Phase I recommendations, the Denver Office of Cultural Affairs is dedicated to developing an Urban Arts Program to become a sustained program for future generations.

   DOCA was granted a $50,000 budget expansion request for a Pilot Urban Arts Program in 2009. During the first year funding will be dedicated to the following action steps:

   b. Action Steps
   i. Create Urban Arts Committee
   An Urban Arts Committee will be established to determine best practices and guidelines for the Urban Arts Program and review and recommend proposals for the Urban Arts Program. Each year, the committee will meet as needed to review and assess their results of projects funded by the Urban Arts Fund.

   ii. Establish Urban Arts Fund
   The Urban Arts Fund will provide funding for anti-graffiti programs and implement programs that will provide positive
creative outlets for youth in Denver. Examples could include: Mural Art Program, Artists in Residence program (for developing art classes in public schools, recreation centers and non-profit after school programs) and, possibly, the establishment of an Urban Arts Festival.

The Urban Arts Committee will meet on a regular basis to hear proposals of these kinds, select projects for funding, and establish a means of measuring and evaluating the success of these first projects for review.


A. Long-term Overview: 2008-2016

Generally, goals listed as intermediate goals will take more than a year to develop and will require additional funding and staff to accomplish. Since 2009 will be a year of budget constriction and hard work on Bond Projects, very little program development will be possible without outside funding and/or additional staff. We expect that 2009 will be a time of assessing our most pertinent needs and begin grant writing to accommodate these needs.

1. Public Art Program Website Management and Development: Overview

The Public Art Program has two incredible website resources available at little or no cost. Our program can develop and maximize these two websites to better promote our program, educate the public about public art and serve as a resource to artists seeking commissions. The www.DenverGov.org/Publicart website is an established site and provides easy-to-find information on our programs. The www.DenverCultureFeed.org site is still being developed, but will provide new, community-driven, connections with the public that the Public Art Program could use to its advantage.

Additionally, DOCA is committed to using high-quality, low-cost, expedient and eco-friendly practices for its Public Art process. Whenever possible, DOCA will employ digital and on-line tools for soliciting artists for projects, creating mailing lists, and corresponding with artists.

New Initiatives

In 2009-2015, the Public Art Program will:

- Make better use of the existing DenverGov.org website resources and provide better upkeep of the site’s information.
- Promote our Requests for Qualifications and other solicitations for entries exclusively via on-line sites such as CAFE, DenverGov.org, and Public Art Network’s listserv so that we can begin “paperless” practices for the program.
- Use our web resources to update mailing lists and solicit new artists to join the mailing list.
- Look into grants and private funding to further promote our collection via downloadable tours, podcasts, interviews with artists, videos, polls, and other outreach efforts.

2. Address “Pockets of Artwork” in Denver

The location and number of new public art projects is dictated by the location and rate of new Capital Improvement Projects (CIPs). In general, the majority of large projects (over $1 million) that qualify for the Public Art Program tend to be in the Downtown Denver area. While this is solid exposure for public art in areas that tourists frequent, it does not expose the rest of the city and its citizens to the benefits of the Public Art collection.

New Initiatives: Our office plans to spend next year developing an appropriate strategy to help spread artwork around the city, but some ideas to explore include:

- Encouraging donated artworks in outlying areas;
- Encouraging temporary and traveling exhibitions of public art in areas that do not have permanent installations (see next section);
- Encouraging private development to incorporate public art into their construction costs; and
- Looking carefully at the Public Art Ordinance to see if any rules and regulations could be developed to increase the spread of artwork into outlying neighborhoods. This could include pooling funds from projects under a certain threshold or pooling funds from certain types of projects, etc.

3. Encourage Temporary Exhibitions of Art

The temporary, installation and performance-based works that were presented to the City during the Democratic National Convention were well-received and generated a great deal of excitement in the community. Temporary art programs can be employed as a means of installing timelier, innovative works of art, the work of emerging artists and a means of creating a constantly-changing urban art landscape.

Traveling and rotating exhibitions might be another means of bringing the work of new and internationally-known artists to the City on a temporary basis, but at this time, we have no neither funding nor formal spaces or processes to encourage such exhibitions. We have seen the success of the Buell Theatre exhibition program and we hope to use this as a model for new programs in the future.
New Initiatives
In 2009-2015, the Public Art Program will:

- Encourage more temporary and performance-based art commissions, which are allowed in our Ordinance;
- Seek out new exhibition spaces in parks, recreation centers, orphan parcels of land owned by the City, and interiors of City buildings to build a temporary exhibition program and/or traveling exhibition program;
- Seek grant funding or private donations to realize more temporary projects in the City and County of Denver.

4. Generate Additional Public Art Funds Utilizing Alternative Funding and Grant Writing
The Public Art Program can grow and evolve if additional resources for funding are located. At present, the location and scope of new projects are dictated by the allotment of Capital Improvement Project funds. The art collection, maintenance and exhibition and outreach programs are dictated by the City’s ever-changing budget realities.

Currently, existing staff works very hard to manage the influx of new projects and maintenance work, but new sources of funding will help buttress our staff and help with program development, which will, in turn, help the program grow and thrive.

New Initiatives:
In the coming five years, the Public Art Program will:

- Research and pursue maintenance grants for larger repair projects through entities such as, Save Outdoor Sculpture and the NEA for projects including Burns Park and others.
- Research and develop ways to encourage more public and private collaboration.
- Research grants and grant writers for other Public Art programming (see “Program Development” below).

5. Better Collaboration with Other City Departments
This goal is a continuation of the aforementioned short-term goal. It is imperative that the Public Art Program establish clear procedures and educate other City project managers on these procedures. However, the collaboration must go further.

New Initiatives:
In five years, we would like to explore the possibility of:

- Joint grant applications for certain maintenance projects such as fountains, playgrounds and parks.
- Liaisons with City agencies that are amenable to extending the Public Art Program beyond the 1% for Art Program (i.e. a representative at Parks and Recreation has expressed an interest in including artwork in projects below the threshold of $1 million).

6. Artist Outreach and Education
The Public Art Program needs to do more to reach out to artists and help them develop and further their careers in creative fields.

New Initiatives:
The Public Art Program will look into the feasibility of programming in the following areas:

- Mentorships for emerging artists and students;
- Artist-in-residence programs at Recreation Centers and other City facilities;
- Tutorials on Public Art for new and emerging artists;
- Programs to increase participation from minority and women artists and a body of artists and artists outside of the public art realm to apply for opportunities;
- Seminars and presentations for young artists, students, and other creative individuals about Public Art, to encourage it as a viable career field.

5. Conclusion
Denver’s Public Art Program is a vibrant and thriving program within the Denver Office of Cultural Affairs, but has room for growth and improvements.
In this time of budget constraint, the program continues to install artwork throughout the City of Denver in accordance with the Public Art Ordinance. Our collection is promoted with printed materials and tours as funds will allow, but without additional funding, the program remains very limited in terms of further development, education and outreach beyond the basic Percent for Art program. Additional funds and staff will be necessary to continue expanding the Public Art Program in these directions and in order to keep our existing collection in good condition for future generations.
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Denver’s Public Art Program was established in 1988, under Mayor Federico Peña. Executive Order No. 92 established the “…policies and procedures for the funding and implementation of a public art program for the City and County of Denver.” The purpose of this new Public Art Program was to “…expand the opportunities for Denver residents to experience art in public places, thereby creating more visually pleasing and human environments.” Revised language for the Public Art Program was brought before City Council and became law in 1991.

The Public Art Ordinance directs that any Capital Improvement Project (CIP) undertaken by the City with a design and construction budget over $1 million qualifies for the Public Art Program. The law states that one percent of the construction budget be set aside for the inclusion of art in the design and construction of new projects and encourages the participation of private dollars to enhance this public commitment.

Mayor Peña’s Executive Order has served as the basis of a strong, thriving public art program for the City and County of Denver for nearly 20 years. Since the inception of the Public Art Program, the City has installed over 175 works of art and together with historic and donated artworks, the collection in 2008 totals nearly 300 works of original art.

Currently, the Denver Office of Cultural Affairs (DOCA) oversees the Public Art Program and guides its activities. DOCA also oversees the Public Art Program at Denver International Airport (DIA). The guidelines and policies set forth here in this Policy Document also apply to DIA’s Public Art Program, but DIA may supplement this Policy Document with a Public Art Master Plan or additional documents to further clarify and guide its public art procedures.
II. DENVER PUBLIC ART PROGRAM GOALS

While Denver’s Public Art Program retains the original vision of Mayor Peña’s Executive Order No. 92, two decades since its inception, the Public Art Program goals have become better defined.

I. CREATE A COLLECTION
Those involved with Denver’s Public Art Program seek to build a permanent collection of public art that will:
- demonstrate the highest levels of artistic excellence;
- enhance Denver's identity, in civic pride and broaden our citizens' understanding of and day-to-day experience with art;
- enhance and activate the public places visited by Denver’s citizens and tourists;
- feature a broad range of artists, working in a variety of media;
- celebrate Denver's history and cultural diversity; and
- be selected in a fair and transparent public process.

II. FOSTER OPPORTUNITIES FOR OUR LOCAL ARTISTS
The Denver Public Art Program aims to strengthen and build the local artist community through its commissions to thereby create a more hospitable city in which visual artists can work, live and build their reputations.

III. UNIQUE LOCATIONS REQUIRE UNIQUE ART
Denver’s Public Art Program seeks unique artwork that suits each unique project. New art projects should reflect the individual communities, audiences, time in history and parameters of the site for each project. We strive to create a unique artist selection panel for each project. This panel’s mission is to select artwork that will enhance the experience of the environment, site, or neighborhood in which the artwork is located and reflect the site, scale, dimensions, purpose and surroundings of the space in which it is sited.

D. ENCOURAGE A FAIR AND TRANSPARENT SELECTION PROCESS
The selection process for the Denver Public Art Program will be an open, fair and transparent competitive process. Limited competitions or direct selection is only possible when it is determined that a site would be best served by commissioning artist(s) with specific backgrounds or qualifications or when there is a recognized time constraint to complete the project.

E. ENSURE INCLUSIVENESS AND NON-DISCRIMINATION
Denver’s Public Art Program is open to all artists regardless of race, color, creed, gender, gender variance, national origin, age, religion, material status, political opinion or affiliation or mental or physical handicap. Beyond this, the program seeks to include artists of varying levels of experience, who work in all media, materials and other criteria.

III. DENVER PUBLIC ART PROGRAM GUIDELINES

Denver’s Public Art Program is governed by Ordinance and supplemented by two primary documents, the Public Art Policy Document and the Public Art Planning Document. Together, these documents provide the public and DOCA staff with an overview of the program and the guiding principles of the Public Art Program.

A. PUBLIC ART POLICY DOCUMENT
Denver’s Public Art Program is a fully funded “percent-for-art” program. As such, its activities are designed and funded by one percent of the construction budget of applicable Capital Improvement Projects (CIPs) and the guidelines are set forth in this Policy Document. This Public Art Policy Document describes the basic procedures that govern the program. The features of the program will change from year-to-year, budget-to-budget and administration-to-administration. This document:
- provides a brief history of the program and overall policies and goals of Denver’s Public Art Program;
- provides basic guidelines for the public art selection process;
- defines terms and groups involved in the Public Art selection process, such as the Public Art Committee, Project Selection Panel and the Denver Commission on Cultural Affairs; and
- provides an appendix with original ordinance documents.

B. PUBLIC ART PLANNING DOCUMENT
Every two to three years, a Planning Document is typically written and presented to the Denver Commission on Cultural Affairs by the Public Art staff. The Planning Document addresses broader goals and initiatives for the program that are not covered in the basic Policy Document, including:
- education and outreach;
- support for local and emerging artists;
- increasing the cultural diversity of the Public Art Programs;
- development of new programs;
- increasing the program’s capacity and scope by increasing public and private funding for public art;
- staffing issues and goals;
- maintenance and conservation issues and goals; and
- changes in existing standards and procedures.

The Public Art Planning Document will prioritize the short-term goals (one-two years) and long-term goals (five years and beyond) that the DOCA Public Art staff will set forth to implement with the input and guidance of the Public Art Committee and Denver Commission on Cultural Affairs.

C. SUPPLEMENTAL DOCUMENTS FOR DENVER INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
The Denver International Airport (DIA) Public Art Program also will be guided by this Policy Document. However, because of the separate budgets, audiences and capabilities of each program, the DIA Public Art Program may draft supplemental documents to further clarify and guide their program. Of course, our programs will share some of the same long-term and short-term goals, but separate Planning and/or Master Plan documents will enable each program to develop according to their own special circumstances.
Art enhances the City construction projects and the public's enjoyment of new City buildings and public spaces. Integrating art projects early into the planning and construction process is a benefit to everyone, allowing us to take advantage of existing resources and construction staff and create artwork that is more integrated and appropriate for the site. The following guidelines are intended to assist City Project Managers and Department Heads in complying with the Public Art Program ordinance so that the public art process can begin as soon as possible for every project, thereby providing better artwork for the citizens of Denver.

**A. GUIDELINES ON IDENTIFICATION OF ONE PERCENT FOR ART PROJECTS**

In accordance with the Public Art Ordinance or Denver Revised Municipal Code (DRMC) 20-85, et seq. (text available in Appendix), the Public Art Program applies to all City Capital Improvement Projects (CIPs) whose budgeted cost of construction and design for a single project or for the total of such multiple projects is equal to or greater than $1 million.

To calculate whether a project qualifies for inclusion in the Public Art Program, an analysis of the CIP's budget should be conducted. Items to include in the analysis are the following: costs allocated for design services (including design contingency in the budget), costs allocated for construction services (including preconstruction services, construction management services, construction supervision and administration) and all labor costs associated with construction, materials testing, inspection and construction contingency.

If the total of these combined costs is equal to or greater than $1 million, the project manager should create a separate line item (see section IV.B below) designated for public art in the project budget and notify Budget Management and the Public Art Program. It is suggested that these funds be set aside and the notification occur as soon as the budget for the CIP is set and prior to the bidding process.

**B. GUIDELINES ON IDENTIFICATION AND CREATION OF ONE PERCENT FOR ART BUDGETS**

Once a project manager or the Budget Management Office determines that a new project qualifies for inclusion in the Public Art Program, the project managers must set aside one percent of the total budgeted construction cost of the Capital Improvement Project for the planning, design and construction of public art and for the repair of public art.

The one percent calculation is based on the total costs allocated for construction services and materials plus any construction contingency within the budget.

Again, it is recommended that this one percent allocation should occur as soon as the CIP is budgeted, in order to ensure that artists and artwork can collaborate in the design and construction process. Allocation should occur no later than the time of construction contracting and, if possible, should occur earlier to take advantage of that coordination.

If a project either “materially” increases in scope, leading to an increase in the total construction budget, the one percent funding to the Public Art Program should increase proportionally. Such a situation could be seen as analogous to a “multiphased project” as described in section IV.A above.

**C. INCLUSIONS & EXCLUSIONS**

The Public Art Ordinance states that the Public Art Program must be applied to any project which meets the threshold criteria described above and also involves improvements to, or new construction of, a “building or structure, road, streetscape, pedestrian mall or plaza or park” or any other project which includes “finished space for human occupancy” and will be “available for public view.” (See DRMC 20-86 (b) in Appendix.)

The Public Art Program will not be applied to temporary improvements, ordinary repair and maintenance projects, mechanical and electrical projects and other projects not available for public view and for human occupancy.

Ultimately, if a question remains as to whether a project qualifies for inclusion in the Public Art Program, the project must be reviewed by the Denver Office of Cultural Affairs and the City Attorney’s office.

**D. PUBLIC ART SITES**

The Public Art Ordinance states that “works of public art are to be located at a Capital Improvement Project site or in a facility or other complex of buildings adjacent to such a project site.” It is important that public art be placed where it can be appreciated and experienced by the site users or residents of the neighborhood in which it is situated. If a more suitable location for artwork (e.g., a neighborhood park close to a street construction site) is located within a one-mile radius of the capital improvement site, the artwork may be installed here, if the Director of the Denver Office of Cultural Affairs deems it appropriate. Additionally, funding from smaller qualified projects within a one-mile radius can be combined in order to better take advantage of public art funds and suitable locations for public art.

**E. TIMING AND WAIVERS**

The public art process and installation of artwork can begin at any time following the allocation of funds for the project. There is no time limit for spending those funds. By ordinance, if a CIP qualifies for inclusion in the Public Art Program, those funds can not be waived for any reason.
V. PUBLIC ART SELECTION PROCESS

The Public Art is selected in a fair and transparent process. The following guidelines provide an overview of that selection process and of the groups involved.

A. IDENTIFICATION AND ROLES OF GROUPS INVOLVED

1. DENVER OFFICE OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS (DOCA)
   The mission of the Denver Office of Cultural Affairs is to advance the arts and culture in the City and County of Denver. The Public Art Program is administered by DOCA and the Public Art Program staff.

2. DENVER COMMISSION ON CULTURAL AFFAIRS (DCCA)
   The Denver Commission on Cultural Affairs acts as an advisory board to DOCA. The Commission is comprised of dynamic and accomplished Denver leaders in the areas of the arts, business, and education, all of whom are appointed by the Mayor. The Commissioners are powerful advocates for the arts and culture within the City and County of Denver and are committed to the mission and goals of DOCA.

   At least one Commissioner will be assigned to each Public Art Project as a voting member and an advisor. Their role is to be part of the selection process and to ensure that the process is being followed in a fair and competitive manner.

3. PUBLIC ART COMMITTEE
   The membership of the Public Art Committee shall reflect the cultural diversity of the city of Denver and the many disciplines that are involved in the creation of public art. The Committee is comprised of other Public Art Committee members, with assistance from DCCA and DOCA. The Public Art Committee includes members of DCCA, artists, art professionals, project managers, engineers, art installation experts, art educators and community leaders. Public Art Committee members, who also serve on the DCCA, will serve as advisors and liaisons for both groups.

   The primary responsibility of the Public Art Committee is to review and select the Public Art Projects for feasibility and other criteria that might arise as the project is realized. The membership of the Public Art Committee includes:
   - Reviewing proposals submitted by the Project Selection Panels and providing feedback regarding materials, engineering, conservation, safety and accessibility.
   - Reviewing proposals submitted by the Project Selection Panels and providing feedback regarding materials, engineering, conservation, safety and accessibility.
   - Reviewing and presenting recommendations to the DCCA.

   Public Art Committee members will:
   - Serve a term of two years, up to three terms total (with reviews after each two-year term);
   - Serve on a Project Selection Panel (artist selection panel) at any time during the first year of their first term and:
   - Attend Public Art Committee meetings, which are scheduled on a monthly basis, or as needed.

4. PROJECT SELECTION PANEL
   The Denver Public Art Program strives to select a unique Project Selection Panel for each new public art project. This panel consists of a carefully selected group of individuals who are charged with the selection of the best possible artists and artwork for each particular project. The members of the Selection Panel will create a lasting legacy that will be appreciated by the citizens of Denver long into the future.

   Each Selection Panel is comprised of a balance of community members who live or work near the project site and those experts who are more widely experienced and knowledgeable about art. Their varying viewpoints help the panels make the best possible selections of art.

   Each Selection Panel consists of at least seven people as follows:
   - Three Community Representatives: Individuals in the community or facility where the artwork will be sited.
   - One Artist: Someone who practices a particular artistic discipline, as is the case for an artist who practices that discipline. An artist does not need to earn an income solely from his or her field to be considered a professional for membership on a Project Selection Panel.
   - One Arts Professional: An individual who has expertise in or is employed in a related field who can provide additional insight into the process and outcome of the public art installations. These individuals could be involved in arts administration, arts education, advocacy, promotion, or documentation of the arts.
   - One DCCA Member: Any member of the individuals appointed by the Mayor to serve on the Denver Commission on Cultural Affairs.
   - One Public Art Committee Member: Any one of the individuals who serve on the Public Art Committee.

   Additional Selection Panel members can be included as voting members for the technical assistance they provide. These members could include project architects, city project managers, site agency representatives, technical experts, artists, advisors, and community liaisons.

5. STAFF AND OBSERVERS
   Selection Panel meetings are open to members of the public who wish to observe the proceedings. Observers are not granted voting privileges. Selection meetings are staffed and administered by employees of the Denver Office of Cultural Affairs. It is important to note that DOCA staff members do not vote.
B. CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY

During the art selection process, members of the Denver Commission on Cultural Affairs and members of subcommittees, panels or any other ad hoc groups working with DOCA, should be alert to avoid any action which could be reasonably interpreted as a use of their Commission membership or membership on any committee, panel or group to further his or her interest or the interest of any organization with which he or she is affiliated.

III. GUIDELINES

To protect against abuse of the Public Art Program, the Public Art Program has established the following guidelines for the groups specific to its operation:

A. DENVER COMMISSION ON CULTURAL AFFAIRS

Since DOCOA members have input on so many parts of the public art process, sitting members of the Denver Commission on Cultural Affairs are not eligible for any Public Art Program competition, commission or project during their tenure on the Commission. A Commissioner must withdraw from participation in, discussion on or voting on any competition, commission or project for which any family member, domestic partner, business associate or any other relationship of economic dependence has any financial interest or personal gain.

B. PUBLIC ART COMMITTEE AND SELECTION PANELS

It is expected that the Selection Panel members or Public Art Committee members may be aware of the work of some artists and arts organizations who submit their work for consideration for public art projects and grant programs. Such awareness alone does not constitute a conflict of interest, nor does owning a piece of work by a submitting artist. A conflict of interest is deemed to exist if a panelist is related to an artist, either through family, marriage or domestic partnership, and any other relationship of economic interdependence, a business relationship such as representing the work of an artist as a gallery owner, or if a panelist stands to gain direct benefit, whether financial or otherwise, from the selection of a particular artist. If a committee member or panelist is related to a particular artist under consideration in one of the ways mentioned above, he/she shall state that they have a conflict of interest and shall recuse himself/herself from voting or further discussion on the project in question.

C. ART SELECTION AND APPROVAL PROCEDURE

Denver’s Public Art Program is dedicated to selecting artwork that is unique and of the highest quality for each new project. The standard process, outlined below, allows for flexibility in the selection process. It is important to note that DOCOA reserves the right to alter this process under specified circumstances, such as a need for faster project completion during understaffed periods, etc.

6. GUIDELINES

A. PROJECT AND BUDGET DETERMINATION

The Denver Office of Cultural Affairs (DOCA) works with Budget Management and City project managers, identify applicable bond and capital improvement projects. Whenever possible, projects are identified prior to the distribution of the RFP/RFPP to architects and contractors. The architect’s and contractor’s scope of services should include the financial ability to work with the Public Art Program from inception to completion of the project.

B. SELECTION PANEL APPOINTED

DOCA identifies potential panels for each Project Selection Panel with the assistance of project and facility managers, the Denver Commission on Cultural Affairs and City Council representatives. Each Selection Panel must reflect the cultural diversity of the city of Denver and/or the project site. (See section V.A.6 for specific information about the Selection Panel.)

C. APPROVAL OF PROJECT SELECTION PANEL

The Project Selection Panel is reviewed and approved by DOCOA.

D. WRITTEN INSTRUCTIONS

Precise written instructions are given to the Selection Panel by DOCA concerning process, conflicts of interest, confidentiality and specific roles of the Selection Panel voting members.

E. SELECTION PANEL ORIENTATION

Selection Panel members meet with the site project manager, architect, project architects (where applicable) and DOCOA staff at a project orientation session. During this session, the Selection Panel is instructed on its role in the public art process and the specifics of the project.

At the orientation session, voting members of the Selection Panel, with the assistance of the DOCOA staff, will evaluate and discuss the project according to:

- art possibilities within the specific project;
- parameters and criteria of the project;
- number of semi-finalists to be selected, based upon the budget for the project;
- open or blind slide review;
- selection methods;
- criteria for artwork to be included in the Call for Entries;
- applicable mailing lists; and
- how it relates to the entire Public Art Policy and Planning Documents and the rest of the Denver Public Art Collection.

DOCA staff members document the recommendations of the Selection Panel in written form, to be incorporated into the Call for Entries.
I. WORKS OF PUBLIC ART
Types of artwork that will be considered are, but need not be limited to, the following:
- sculptures in the round, bas-relief, high relief, mobile, fountain, kinetic and electronic, in any material or combination of materials
- paintings in all media, including portable and permanently affixed works and murals
- graphic arts, printmaking and drawing
- murals
- photography
- light or kinetic art and lighting
- digital media, sound art, or films and video projects
- crafts, clay, fiber and textiles, wood, metal, plastic, glass and other materials, both functional and non-functional
- mixed media, any combination of forms or media including collage
- earth works and environmental installations
- decorative or ornamental elements designed by professional artists or other persons submitting as artists, including but not limited to design professionals who are not participating members in the City’s design team for the project
- portable art that may be displayed at locations other than its substantially permanent location at or adjacent to the project site and
- temporary performance or time-based artworks, provided that it is documented and tied to the project that provided the funding and produces a permanent record or artifact that is kept on permanent display at or near the project site.

II. NON-WORKS OF PUBLIC ART
The Denver Public Art Program does not consider the following to be works of public art or expenditures to be covered by Public Art Program funds:
- directional elements, such as supergraphics and signage
- objects that are mass-produced in a standard design, including playground equipment, benches and chairs
- reproductions of original works except in cases of casting, film, video, photography, printmaking and other media arts
- landscape gardening, except where such elements are designed by the artist and landscape architect and are an integral part of a work of environmental art
- display or exhibit cases, unless designed by an artist or are an integral part of the artist’s concept and
- administrative personnel hired directly by DOCA.

III. LANGUAGE FOR THE CALL FOR ENTRIES
DOCA staff and Selection Panel members create language for the Call for Entries. DOCA staff distributes the language to the Selection Panel and DOCA for comments.

IV. DETERMINATION OF CALL FOR ENTRIES
Call for Entries is distributed or posted according to parameters of the Call.

DOCA is committed to using high-quality, expedient and eco-friendly practices for its public art process. That said, whatever possible, DOCA will employ digital and online tools for soliciting artists for its projects, creating its mailing lists and correspondence with artists.

V. PRE-SUBMISSION MEETING
Following the posting of the Call for Entries, DOCA may hold a pre-submission meeting or workshop to provide additional technical assistance for potential applicants to the project.

VI. PROCESSING OF APPLICATIONS AND PRE-SCORES
DOCA reviews and processes applications. DOCA or the Selection Panel may disqualify applications if any material required in the Call for Entries is not submitted. At times, due to time limitations or the number of entries received, DOCA will conduct a pre-score of the artists’ submissions. Selection Panel members will be instructed on how to conduct a pre-score, and according to an agreed-upon set of parameters, the panelists’ scores will be used to determine which artists will proceed to the next round of jurying at the next selection meeting.

VII. PROJECT SELECTION PANEL REVIEW OF APPLICATIONS
The Project Selection Panel meets to review artists’ applications. Depending on the project, Selection Panel members will narrow the field of applicants to a group of semi-finalists, usually between three to 10 artists on groups of artists. Occasionally, where time or funds are limited, a single artist can be commissioned for the project at this stage. In this case, the project will then go immediately to the various committees for approval.

VIII. SEMI-FINALIST INTERVIEWS AND PROPOSALS
Semi-finalists are invited for an interview and/or to prepare a site-specific design proposal for review by the Selection Panel.

The Selection Panel continues to interview semi-finalists and/or review design proposals. Selection Panel voting members may recommend to the DOCA and Public Art Committee up to three finalists per project. The finalists are ranked in order of priority; the artist ranked first is the recommended artist for the public art commission and the other two are considered alternates. The Selection Panel is asked to provide specific written reasons for these recommendations.

IX. PUBLIC ART COMMITTEE REVIEW OF FINALISTS
DOCA staff and the Public Art Committee representative on the Selection Panel present the finalist(s) in the prioritized sequence to the Public Art Committee for approval and recommendations regarding materials, siting, engineering, conservation, safety/ADA issues, etc.

X. DOCA REVIEW OF FINALISTS
DOCA staff and the DOCA representative on the Selection Panel present the finalist(s) in the prioritized sequence to the DOCA for approval and recommendation. The DOCA may recommend one finalist to the Mayor; or may elect not to approve any of the finalists and request new applications to be submitted for the project. If the DOCA elects not to approve any of the finalists, the reasons for disapproval shall be provided to DOCA in written form.

XI. CITY REVIEW OF RECOMMENDATIONS
The Mayor reviews recommendations and awards a commission for said project. If, within the time between the DOCA’s review and awarding said commission for said project an unforeseen circumstance arises concerning said project, the DOCA shall rescind said project for recommendation and determination of disposition.

XII. CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS
Following the Mayor’s approval, a contract is negotiated with the artist(s) and the City and County of Denver. This contract outlines requirements and payment schedule for the specific project. All artist contracts are structured with project and payment milestones that must be met and approved by DOCA. These include the execution of contract, preliminary design review, final design review, hard point of fabrication, installation, post-installation, and final acceptance. At any time during the design process, an artist may be asked to re-design the artwork for review by the Selection Panel and/or DOCA. The City may terminate the contract at any time if the artist’s services become unsatisfactory or if the project is cancelled.

Once the contract phase begins, the DOCA staff manages all remaining phases of the design, construction and installation of artwork in accordance with the contract.
D. ELIGIBILITY
Denver’s Public Art Program is open to artists regardless of race, color, creed, gender, gender variance, national origin, age, religion, marital status, political opinion or affiliation, or mental or physical handicap. Artists working in any medium are eligible to apply. Artists are not required to have previous experience in public art. There are no limits to the number of commissions any one artist (or artist team) may receive from the City and County of Denver.

E. SOLICITING ARTISTS: METHODS AND DEFINITIONS
The City and County of Denver uses a variety of methods to solicit submissions from artists for its commissions.
These include:

1. CALL FOR ENTRIES (RFQ OR RFP)
   Calls to artists can be structured as a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) or a Request for Proposals (RFP):
   - If an RFQ is issued, the artists are evaluated on their qualifications and not a conceptual proposal. Artists are asked to submit slides and/or digital images of past completed artwork, a résumé, and, at times, a letter of intent and/or artist statement.
   - If a RFP is issued, artists are evaluated on a conceptual proposal created for the specific project in addition to slides of past completed artwork, a résumé, and a letter of intent and/or artist statement.

2. OPEN CALL
   The call to artists is advertised to a broad community and any artist is eligible to compete for the commission.

3. LIMITED CALL
   The call to artists is limited by location (e.g., Colorado artists only), medium (e.g., muralists, bronze or fiber artists only) or other criteria (e.g., reputation, experience with similar projects or students and emerging artists only). For certain projects, the Selection Panel may choose to create a short list for sending an RFQ or RFP.

VI. ART DONATION PROCEDURE

Denver’s Public Art Program welcomes permanent donations of artwork to the City’s collection.

Artwork in public locations is a vital component of Denver’s quality of life, and through the generosity of individuals, groups, and corporations, we are able to increase the City’s collection and install artwork in areas that might not receive it under our normal One Percent for Art procedures.

All artwork donors must submit an application to DOCA and it must be reviewed and approved by the Public Art Committee, the Denver Commission on Cultural Affairs and City Council. Once an application is submitted, the approval process can take up to six months.

A. APPLICATION AND REVIEW PROCESS
   1. DONATION APPLICATION FORM
      Potential donors must contact DOCA to request a Donation Application Form. This form requests standard information about the donated artwork, including statements from donor and recipient, transfer and ownership issues, proposed contribution to the City and community, liability, safety and maintenance issues, aesthetic quality and artistic merit, materials and media, location and placement and installation information.

2. FUNDING
   The City will request that all gifts to the art collection include a small amount of funding (up to 10%) from the donor to be designated for future conservation of the artwork. While a donation application can be accepted without this financing in place, it will be recommended in every case.

3. ORDINANCE GUIDELINES
   Applications are reviewed and approved based on Ordinance guidelines by the DOCA Public Art staff. Assistance is provided where needed.
The collection of art commissioned by and belonging to the City and County of Denver includes artwork commissioned by Public Art Program funds, donated artworks and historic works of art installed on City property. These works are considered assets of the City and County of Denver and it is the goal of the Public Art Program to ensure the care and conservation of its assets through regular maintenance, inventory, condition assessment and conservation.

3. YEARELY PUBLIC ART MAINTENANCE REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

 Depending on the findings from the yearly inventory and assessments above, the Public Art staff will present a yearly Public Art Maintenance and Repair Report and Recommendations to deliver to the DCrCA. This report will update the DCrCA on the City's collection and give maintenance priorities for the year ahead.

4. FUNDING FOR MAINTENANCE AND CONSERVATION

 Maintenance and conservation work is funded separately from the One Percent for Public Art Program. On a yearly basis, DCrCA will propose its desired budget for maintenance needs in conjunction with the Public Art Maintenance and Repair Report and Recommendations. This budget proposal will be funded every year by the Denver City and County Budget Management according to need and availability of funds. The funding is expected to vary from year to year according to these factors.

The Public Art staff works to assure the funds are spent carefully in accordance with the Maintenance and Repair Report and Recommendations, though unannounced maintenance needs might arise.

The Public Art Program is open to receive private or granted conservation and maintenance funds to supplement its yearly budget.
VIII. DEACCESSION AND RELOCATION POLICY

A. PROCESS FOR DEACCESSION AND RELOCATION POLICY

1. REVIEW OF CITY’S COLLECTION
The collection of the City and County of Denver shall be periodically reviewed by the Denver Commission on Cultural Affairs. In the event that circumstances warrant, a written request may be submitted to the DCCA for review of a work of art for deaccession or relocation or disposal of a work of art.

2. DEFINITIONS
(a) Deaccession
The removal of an artwork from the City’s collection.

(b) Relocation
The relocation of a work of art to a more suitable site because of changes to, or sale of, City property where the work is sited, or the relocation site is deemed suitable.

3. REQUEST FOR REVIEW
The request for review may be submitted by the artist, a host agency and/or an outside party with interest in the disposition of the work through DCCA. DCCA may then request an initial recommendation.

4. REQUIREMENTS FOR REVIEW FOR DEACCESSION OR RELOCATION OF ARTWORK
A request for review for deaccession or relocation should include:
- the reasons for deaccession or relocation;
- the estimated current value of the work;
- the acquisition method and cost;
- written evaluation from a distinguished and qualified professional such as an engineer, conservator, architect, safety expert or art historian;
- photographs indicating the status of the work;
- contract with the artist or other relevant agreement; and
- written recommendations of other concerned parties including, DCCA, the host agency, the artist or any outside party.

Additional information to be provided when available includes:
- any media articles regarding the work;
- evidence of public debate; and
- written correspondence concerning the work.

4.1. REASONS FOR DEACCESSION OF ARTWORK
The following reasons may be cause for deaccession of a work of art from the City’s collection:
- the condition or security of the artwork cannot be reasonably guaranteed;
- the artwork requires expensive maintenance or has faults of design or workmanship and repair or remedy is impractical or unfeasible;
- the artwork has been damaged or has deteriorated beyond the point where repair is practical or feasible;
- the artwork endangers public safety;
- significant changes in the use, character or design of the site have occurred, which affect the integrity of the work;
- the artwork is subject to public sanction over an extended period of time;
- the artwork is called into question;
- DCCA wishes to replace the artwork with a more appropriate work by the same artist, or
- the written request from the artist has been received.

4.2. REASONS FOR RELOCATION
The following reasons may be cause for relocation of a work of art from the City’s collection:
- the artwork endangers public safety in its current location;
- significant changes in the ownership, use, character or design of the site have occurred, which affect the integrity of the work;
- a written request from the artist has been received; or
- a more appropriate site for the artwork is determined.

4. REVIEW
A recommendation addressing the concerns which prompted the request for deaccession or relocation shall be formulated by DCCA and forwarded to the DCCA. The status of the artwork for which the deaccession or relocation request has been made shall be made public.

5. DETERMINATION
If DCCA determines that reasonable efforts have been made to resolve the concern which prompted the review, and that these efforts have failed to resolve the concern, DCCA shall convene a competent independent third party to review the recommendations regarding the artwork.

The following courses of action in order of priority may be followed if a work of art must be removed from the City’s collection:
- Relocation for public display: If the work was created for a specific purpose, relocation must be to a new site consistent with the artist’s intention. The artist’s assistance and consent will be required to make this determination.
- Removal from the collection by sale. Removal will be done through public auction. DCCA will work with the artist to determine an acceptable price for the sale. The artist should be given first option on purchase.
- If neither of the preceding options is feasible, the work will be removed and destroyed at the expense of the City.

6. PUBLIC NOTICE
Public notice shall be made prior to the implementation of any action recommended by DCCA in accordance with the policy established by the City Attorney.
IX. APPENDIX
DIVISION 4. PUBLIC ART PROGRAM
[As of June 2008 and may be subsequently amended.]

SEC. 20-89. PURPOSE.
The purpose of this division is to establish and implement a public art program for the city. This includes the requirement that all capital improvements as defined in section 20-46 include funding for a work or works of public art and the repair of such public art. Works of public art shall be located at a capital improvement project site or in a facility or other complex of buildings adjacent to such project site.

(Ord. No. 737-81, § 2, 10-15-91; Ord. No. 630-96, § 2, 7-29-96)

SEC. 20-86. DEFINITIONS.

(1) WORKS OF PUBLIC ART.
(a) The following elements are not considered works of public art:
   (A) Designed works of art, except for public art projects.
   (B) Displays of public art, except for public art projects.
   (C) Temporary installations of public art, except for public art projects.
   (D) Public art projects, except for public art projects.

(b) "Public art" includes but is not limited to the following:
   (A) Sculpture, in the round, bas relief, mobile, fountain, kinetic, and other public art projects.
   (B) Paintings, including murals, public art projects.
   (C) Graphic arts, including public art projects.
   (D) Photography, public art projects.
   (E) Ceramics, public art projects.
   (F) Glass, public art projects.
   (G) Mixed media, public art projects.

(2) ARTICLE 4. PUBLIC ART PROGRAM

(1) The purpose of this division is to establish and implement a public art program for the city. This includes the requirement that all capital improvements as defined in section 20-46 include funding for a work or works of public art and the repair of such public art. Works of public art shall be located at a capital improvement project site or in a facility or other complex of buildings adjacent to such project site.

(Ord. No. 737-81, § 2, 10-15-91; Ord. No. 630-96, § 2, 7-29-96)
**SEC. 26.03. APPLICABILITY.**

(a) The public art program shall apply to all city capital improvement projects as defined above including multiphase projects on a single project site whose budgeted cost of construction and design for a single project or for the total of such multiphase projects is equal to or greater than one million dollars ($1,000,000.00). The public art component of a project may be directly adjacent to the project site or elsewhere in a complex of buildings in which the project is located. An amount equal to one (1) percent of the total budgeted construction cost of the capital improvement project or such multiphase projects shall be included for the planning, design and construction of public art, and for the repair of such public art.

(b) One (1) percent of the gross amount designated for public art shall be placed in a separate funded project in each capital fund. Each such separate project shall be titled “public art repair and restoration.” The monies set aside in each such “public art repair and restoration” project shall be used for the repair or restoration of any work of public art funded by the applicable capital fund.

(c) Maintenance of an artwork, as distinguished from repair or restoration of such artwork, as determined in the sole discretion of the director, as defined herein, in coordination with the heads of affected departments or agencies or their designees, shall be the responsibility of the user agency, in coordination with and within the advice of the mayor’s office of art, culture and film. At the time of acceptance by the city of a work of public art, the mayor’s office of art, culture and film shall provide the user agency with maintenance instruction and schedule information, including any specific directions from the artist creating the work of public art as well as directives and information from the mayor’s office of art, culture and film. Such maintenance instruction and schedule information may be updated from year to year by the mayor’s office of art, culture and film. Upon receipt of such instruction and schedule information the user agency shall seek the necessary appropriation of funds to carry out the prescribed maintenance activities. Direct and indirect costs of such maintenance shall be borne by the user agency from their operating budgets, subject to the appropriation of such funds. Upon request by the director in consultation with the heads of the affected department or agencies, the agency head will initiate or continue maintenance to a work of art, the agency head shall comply unless no such funds have been appropriated or the agency head determines that it would be in the best interests of the city to do so.

(d) Any person, otherwise qualified, submitting proposals pursuant to the city’s public art program is eligible to do so without regard to color, religion, national origin, gender, age, military status, sexual orientation, marital status, or physical or mental disability.

**SEC. 26.05. ADMINISTRATION.**

The director of the mayor’s office of art, culture and film (“director”) shall be responsible for the implementation of the public art program. The director shall consult with the manager of public works, manager of aviation, manager of parks and recreation, director of public office buildings, or heads of other departments or agencies of the city that will be using and occupying the capital improvement, in administering the public art program for that capital improvement.

(Ord. No. 770-79, § 1, 10-13-19; Ord. No. 652-76, § 1, 7-19-96)

**SEC. 26.09. RULES AND REGULATIONS.**

The director of the mayor’s office of art, culture and film shall consult with the officials described in section 26.03 above, and shall have the power and authority to adopt rules and regulations and informal internal guidelines to effectuate the purpose and operation of this division.

(Ord. No. 770-79, § 1, 10-13-19; Ord. No. 652-76, § 1, 7-19-96)

Cross references: Rules and regulations, § 2.01 et seq.
Sec. 26.09. Reserved.
X. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Public Art staff would like to thank the following members of the Public Art Master Plan Steering Committee who read drafts and made suggestions for this document: Erin Trapp, Mary Valdez, Rudi Cerri, Colleen Fanning, Sheila Bisenius, Michael Miera, Maria Cole, Joseph Riche, Mark Leese, Deborah Jordy, Susan Cooper, Darrell Anderson, Jan Brennan and Anthony Radich.
APPENDIX F: City of Denver documents

City of Denver organizational chart, 2006
APPENDIX G: Additional archival materials

Art in the City (brochure)

“Happy Birthday, Mr. Starchitect”
WHAT HAS BEEN ACCOMPLISHED

This capital improvement project for Downtown Denver has been endorsed by the Mayor and City Council who unanimously voted to appropriate $25,000. Also the Federal Government has granted $24,000 via the National Endowment of the Arts. These funds were made available with the general understanding that they would be matched by the private sector. This private sector has already been at work, as a triangle at 23rd and Broadway, which has five huge billboards, has been donated to the City of Denver to become a "Mini Park." In addition to the above, The Park People organization has agreed to underwrite all organizational costs for this project and to date has spent some $3,000.

This project is $285,000 in total and when divided by the 17 triangles, the average is $15,000; thinking of a triangle as three parts of art, a unit of art is $5,000. We have committed $83,000, or approximately 1/3 of the total. That leaves 2/3 of the project, or 34 units of art to be purchased. Because The Park People are underwriting all indirect costs, any donation will be directly allocated to the cost of the art itself.

YOU TOO CAN HAVE AN IMPACT!

BUY A UNIT OF ART – HELP "ART IN THE CITY"

All contributions are tax deductible, and all checks should be made payable to the Denver Parks and Recreation Foundation, Inc.
I am indeed proud of Downtown Denver, Inc., the artists' organization, the Park People, and the Denver Art Commission for their unselfish efforts to transform some of our dismal traffic islands into oases of beauty.

I am sure all our citizens, as well as our visitors, will be pleasantly surprised and aesthetically rewarded if their plans become realities and transformations are accomplished.

I urge everyone to help in this worthy endeavor and to all who are so doing—may success be yours!

W.H. McNichols, Jr.
Mayor

“This is one of the most exciting community art projects to come along in years...sculptures, fountains and landscape designs on these desolate traffic islands could provide aesthetic relief from the asphalt and concrete that has spread over so much of the American cityscape.”

Duncan Pollock
Rocky Mountain News
HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU! HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU! HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU!

HI, I'M D.L.A. MANAGER OF AVIATION KIM DAY.

IT'S JULY 28, 2010, 5:30 PM, AND WE GATHER AT THE DENVER ART MUSEUM
SHARK AUDITORIUM TO CELEBRATE THE 59TH BIRTHDAY OF STARCHITECT
& GENIUS SANTITAGO CALATRAVA, WHOM I HAVE SELECTED TO DESIGN
THE $60 MILLION (MINUS THE USUAL 400% COST OVERBUNES)
D.L.A. COMMUTER RAIL TERMINAL.

EVERYONE IS INVITED, SPACE LIMITED. FIRST COME, FIRST SERVE. NO GUESTS, PLEASE.

I KNOW THAT WE STILL OWN $3.5 BILLION ON THE EXISTING 15-YEAR-OLD AIRPORT
STRUCTURES AND THAT WE COULD HIRE A LOCAL ARCHITECT FOR HALF THE PRICE. BUT
REMEMBER, DENVER IS A YOUNG CITY, AND JUST LIKE AN INSECURE TEEN GETTING A TATTOO,
WE NEED CALATRAVA STARCHITECTURE TO SHOW THE OTHER CITIES THAT WE ARE COOL.

AIRPORT, TRAIN & ART
WORLD TRADE CENTER N.Y.C
BILBAO, SPAIN
MILWAUKEE, WIS.
PARIS

BRIDGES:
DALLAS, TEXAS
REYKJAVIK, ICELAND
SEVILLE, SPAIN
VINCI, ITALY
JERUSALEM

PLEASE, MR. CALATRAVA, DON'T HATE US BECAUSE WE ALREADY HAVE AN ART MUSEUM
DESIGNED BY DANIEL LIBESKIND, WE WERE SO NAÎVE. HE WAS OUR FIRST STARCHITECT,
WE WERE HIS FIRST U.S. CITY COMMISSION, WE THOUGHT HE LIKED US, BUT HE WAS
ONLY USING US TO GET FAMOUS. NOW WE ARE LEFT TO RAISE RAISE HIS RUSTED BUILDING.