THE LOVE TACTIC

AN URBAN DISPLAY OF AFFECTION

72 Hour Urban Action
Gilly Karjevsky, Kerem Halbrecht

"Things are changing, ways of thinking are changing, why does architecture have to be so static?"
Lukasz Lendzinski, umschichten, 2010, Bat Yam

"It's a book about love"
Markus Niessner, niessnerdesign, 2020, Zoom

A good story hits you in the gut. You feel it immediately; it's a physical reaction that comes over you. Then your gut sends a message to your brain to listen carefully to the moral of the story, to learn from and contemplate on its broader message. This is because humans understand messages emotionally, and messages of emotional value stick with us longer.

When trying to inspire action, activation, or participation in the making of cities, we first must convey the right feeling to inspire action. What does taking urban transformation into your own hands feel like? When we tell the story of urban transformation in the age of climate breakdown, what feelings does this story employ, inspire, evoke? The quotes at the start of this essay represent two of the feelings pulsating at the core of the 72 Hour Urban Action project (72HUA): the entangled forces of transformation and love. The latter bears the first. Spoken by two of our beloved long-term project partners, these simple statements together embrace the message 72HUA tries to bring. The stories we tell with 72HUA are those of possibility, potential, immersive action, rapid change, and shared living learning. But our main and central story is that action is an emotional process. To act, take action, act up, actioning, actualizing—are fueled by all kinds of emotions—the primary and most precious of which is love.

◀ 72HUA participant touring the contested site of Stuttgart 21

REAL-TIME ARCHITECTURE

72 Hour Urban Action is the world's pioneer real-time architecture festival. International teams arrive on site and have only three days and nights to design and build installations in public space in response to local needs. The locations we find for 72HUA tend to be underrepresented in the local urban discourse, in a state of transition, perhaps marked by complex sociopolitical situations. The festival works in a central production camp, and five to ten intervention sites that we like to call microsites. These are spaces too small or problematic to merit the attention of a developer or a public agency, but big enough for a community to make use of and enjoy together. These microsites, as a network of microactions, make a neighborhood-wide action possible, with much of the dynamics happening in movement, from one site to the other, transforming our brightly orange-uniformed participants into living, walking invitations for neighbors and onlookers to engage with.

Participating team members are recruited through an open call. We accept applications from individuals and groups up to six people, and we compile teams of around twelve participants, matching those that have never met or worked together before, according to complementing skills, backgrounds, interests, and vibe. Half of the spots on the teams are reserved for local applications—either from the city or region or country where the festival is taking place. With this we mark an intention to bridge the local-global divide that is so crucial to any urban action these days, invoking questions of authenticity, situated knowledge, and exchange.

Every edition has one team that absolutely and utterly falls in love, and at least one team that doesn't, that really suffers through. The rest of the teams act on a spectrum of negotiation, on-the-go decision-making, and activation. In other words, a mode of compromise and collaboration. For most participants this experience is positively unforgettable. For some it's a collision. A small fraction leaves halfway into the process. Whatever the team dynamic, it remains a learning experience set in a live, high-pressure environment, which leaves a long-lasting mark on professional attitudes.

At liftoff, the fabricated emergency of the ticking clock takes hold and participants enter the bubble of 72HUA. This bubble is different from reality in every possible way. Teams sleep, eat, work, and party on a temporary site. They wear high-visibility uniforms that draw attention from a distance. They work in a new language with new people in a new place, under time, budget, and space constraints. The permit they work under makes no guarantee that their intervention will last more than the 72 hours it takes to design and build it. It is a parallel reality, designed with the intention of experimentation, pushing boundaries, and bonding.

At tools-down, the countdown stops, the action is over, the bubble bursts, and reality sets in. Within less than a night, user reactions to the installations are clear: immediate adoption or immediate rejection. Few are the installations that get no public attention. Users—the local residents—know intuitively how to take over the newly designed spaces. In some cases they take ownership of something they helped to build, watering plants until a water system can be installed, cleaning the area, supporting the building team. In some cases they adopt it for their needs as they see fit. Sometimes they wish for it to be removed quickly. In some cases they take it apart under the cover of night to leave no trace of the action by morning. We've had it all—from absolute gratitude and support to an installation set on fire in protest. That's the way it should be. When you create something in public space it is not yours. It belongs to the neighborhood, it is communal.

72HUA is a proof of concept that public space can be co-created by all people for all people, and that municipalities can possess the tools to empower residents to intervene in the design of their surroundings, supported by the passion of outside experts. The aim is to transform the public realm and to raise ambitions among residents and the municipality for higher quality public space, while demonstrating that this need not be costly, nor take a very long time. In the process

WE KNOW TODAY, AFTER A DECADE OF PRACTICE, THAT THESE ENTANGLED MODES OF WORKING— COLLECTIVITY, CRITIQUE, INCLUSIVITY, EMANCIPATION— OFTEN REQUIRE THE KIND OF NEGOTIATION OF CONTRADICTIONS, ONLY NAVIGABLE THROUGH THE EMOTIONAL FORCE OF LOVE.

▼ Stills from the documentary on the first edition of 72HUA;
Yael Moria, co-curator of the Bat Yam Biennale of Landscape Urbanism

of prototyping what works for local spaces, you set up working networks, new relationships, highlight challenges, and address discrepancies in access. These mutual learning processes, forged between the festival team, public officials, local organizers, and neighbors, will outlast the festival and leave an invisible legacy beyond the installations that might remain. The energy of action, of festivity, of the possible, of 120 people diving into the joyous making of various public spaces, will hopefully trigger the imagination long after the festival is gone.

Over the years we have set different intentions for each edition, together with our local partners. Sometimes these intentions are met, sometimes they meet more hurdles than open doors. Sometimes, such as with the 2012 Stuttgart edition, the impact of the festival exceeds all expectations, and 72HUA is recognized as a compelling tool for gaining social and political capital. Beyond the nuts and bolts of how the festival is delivered, there are many lenses through which to read 72HUA as a spatial project. It can be read in terms of context and situation, civic outreach and organizing, learning, cultural diplomacy, and political positions.

SITUATING I: 2010–2020

This book summarizes almost a decade of 72HUA projects, starting in Bat Yam, Israel, in 2010 and ending with Jena, Germany, in 2019. This book, and the reflection on the project, has been our main work during 2020 while staying indoors during a global lockdown in response to the Coronavirus pandemic.

When looking at this decade, a storyline of crisis emerges clearly. It was a decade of breakdowns: financial, ecological, social, political. The context for the first edition of 72HUA was marked by the consequences of the global financial crisis originating in the US housing bubble and spilling into the EU debt crisis. That global financial event had many detrimental implications for cities at large. By the year of the Bat Yam edition in 2010, the global economic breakdown was reaching every market in every country and its consequences were felt hard within the architectural and cultural sectors. Resilience and resourcefulness became a lens through which to understand the impact of our actions on public space, and working in urban communities meant harnessing a sense of emotional durability.

At the other end of the decade, the global acceptance of the Anthropocene as the geological age of humans impacting the environment in irreversible ways[1] was met with a shred of hope in the shape of global climate movements such as Extinction Rebellion (XR) and Fridays for Future. 2019 was the year when the Anthropocene and its subsequent climate breakdown finally made it to mainstream media through the emergence of these global citizen movements calling governments to take real action and meet the goals set in climate summits such as the Paris accord. ICCP[2] report reading became a regular living-room social activity as citizens everywhere became more informed and involved about the dire state of the natural environment, and the increasingly multiple climate events we have witnessed worldwide were put into a context that demanded political action.

One short year after publics around the world clamored for profound systemic changes, this energetic momentum seemed to come to an abrupt halt. 2020 was spent away from people and the liberating potential of public space, as we are all forced to find landscapes indoors and refuge in isolation. More than a year of on-and-off lockdowns has dramatically changed the way humans interact with and within cities.

Alongside these global systemic changes, basic assumptions and ideas that perhaps dominated the urbanist discourse in 2010 were not only no longer relevant by 2020, but some were completely negated. Debates on participation have turned into emotional and ethical quagmires. The meaning of resilience has changed radically. Smart cities are political wormholes for big data corporations to mine and extract from. Hopeful ambitions for the Green New Deal have been overshadowed by the threat of a dystopian

[1] See Elke Krasny's text, 53.

[2] The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) is the United Nations body for assessing the science related to climate change.

"Screen New Deal."[3] The impacts of #metoo and Black Lives Matter have added new layers to urban discourses around access, inclusion, diversity, and democratic design. Like many of our colleagues these days, we are in need of other vocabularies to describe what we do. The way we talk about the 72HUA project has changed parallel to changes in how we talk to each other. Many of the challenges we chose to address with our work have shifted, intensified, fluctuated.

These changes in thinking and speaking come without ever having nailed it down to begin with, as urban practice such as that of 72HUA is layered, complex, and often opaque. This mode of constant flux is at the heart of the project and is the main methodology we have put forward. Rapid prototyping, collaborative modes of thinking, hackable permits, porous site boundaries, participative social research, and communal living are all experienced on micro levels within the festival time. We acknowledge cultural production is often about marking, signifying—pointing to a possibility, asking the right question at the right time, in the right place. 72HUA acknowledges that "Space is a condition. A condition that is not stable."[4] Our aim is to point toward possible alternatives to the current state of affairs. To point toward the alternative that is right for this moment, in our time.

SITUATING II: CRITICAL SPATIAL PRACTICE

In 2006, Jane Rendell coined the term "critical spatial practice," positioning it in a space between art and architecture, as a practice that assumes functions and methodologies from both disciplines. According to Rendell, "This type of public art practice is critically engaged; it works in relation to dominant ideologies yet at the same time questions them; and it explores the operations of particular disciplinary procedures —art and architecture—while also drawing attention to wider social and political problems. It might best be called critical spatial practice."[5]

This dual nature of acting in the world, of practicing both together with given systems and orders, while working to address and change inherent systemic flaws, is at the heart of 72HUA. Many of the preliminary processes we undertake in advance of the festival days, sometimes as long as 18 months of research and production, address these flaws and problems through the promise of the prototype. We promise that solutions will be sought and tested out, even when we don't know how, as we will only find out when participants start designing. This is a complex promise. On the one hand, we wish to address on-ground conflicts, as they are registered in public space. On the other hand, we leave the question of how to address them open until the festival starts, when teams get their missions at the liftoff ceremony.

This is because we are banking on a particularly universal aspect of being critical. In her micro-text *Spatial Poets*, Patricia Reed expands on the notion of practicing in criticality: "Critical spatial practices must first overcome the normalization of "being critical." Reed calls for critical spatial practitioners to take the extra step from the diagnostic, i.e. the survey of current conditions and their failures, by emphasizing that "the art of critique is equal to the creation of conditions for other life practices to emerge."[6] In contrast to merely complaining and thus negating, practicing critically is therefore an affirmative practice, which holds potential for actualized change.

SITUATING III: COLLECTIVENESS, COLLECTIVITY, COLLECTIVELY

This affirmative notion of critical spatial practice is recognizable through the work of 72HUA's long-term collaborators. We share and exchange visions of potential alternate realities with umschichten from Stuttgart, the Bellastock collective from Paris, as well as others far and wide. We have visited, worked for, discussed, and exchanged practices with each other. We all expand lexicons of urban design and vocabularies of elements in public space; operate on alternative protocols for acting, collaborating, and participating; and

[3] Naomi Klein, "Screen New Deal," *The Intercept,* May 8, 2020, accessed April 1, 2021, theintercept.com/2020/05/08/andrew-cuomo-eric-schmidt-coronavirus-tech-shock-doctrine/.

[4] Nikolaus Hirsch, Marcus Miessen eds., foreword to *What is Critical Spatial Practice?* (Berlin: Sternberg Press: 2012), 1.

[5] Jane Rendell, *Art and Architecture: A Place Between*, (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2006), 16.

[6] Patricia Reed, "Spatial Poets," in Nikolaus Hirsch and Markus Miessen eds., *What is Critical Spatial Practice?* (Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2012), 111.

promote visions for different futures. We exercise different modes of collectiveness.

No urban project happens in a vacuum. There is no urban white cube. No design or festival format, no site, no structure, happens by the vision of one person alone. The manifestation of ideas into reality in the urban context is always a common project delivered by a group. This group is the author of the project together. Claiming authorship in critical spatial practice is like pouring water on the fire of collectivity. This fire is needed for those engaged in the imagination of possible futures, of which the collective is the engine and the laboratory.

The core team of 72HUA was always very small. Every edition of the festival begins with a local partnership—an invitation is usually extended from either bottom-up initiative or a top-down municipal department. Over the years we have had both, but never together. When we arrive on a site it is part of our job to find the balance through complementary partners from the other side of the sociopolitical divide. Why we wish to balance these positions is part of how we understand our work, as an intentional entanglement of political collaboration, compromise, and critique. To harness other forms of artistic negotiations of the hegemony, we follow Brecht in believing that "Critique as a condition of emancipation from the supposedly cultural and social givens can thus not limit itself to the analytical gap between 'us' and 'them' but needs to acknowledge and activate the multiplicity of new connections, embrace empathy at an intellectual, aesthetic and political level."[7]

We know today, after a decade of practice, that these entangled modes of working—collectivity, critique, inclusivity, emancipation—often require the kind of negotiation of contradictions, only navigable through the emotional force of love.

But first we need to shift from situating to reflecting.

REFLECTING I: REHEARSALS, PREENACTMENTS, PROTOTYPES

In 2012, Creative Time, a New York-based public arts organization, staged an exhibition/online archive/book called *Living as Form: Socially Engaged Art from 1991–2011*.[8] According to Anne Pasternak, its artistic director at the time, "In recent years, there has been a rapidly growing movement of artists choosing to engage with timely issues by expanding their practice beyond the safe confines of the studio and right into the complexity of the unpredictable public sphere. This work has many names: 'relational aesthetics,' 'social justice art,' 'social practice,' and 'community art,' among others."[9] *Living as Form* identified the many projects at the cusp of the millennium that blurred the boundaries between the art object and life itself as an art form. Curator Nato Thompson placed the projects in this survey not into a new art movement but identified them as "a new social order—ways of life that emphasize participation, challenge power, and span disciplines."[10]

Often, we are asked to encapsulate or measure the impact of the 72HUA project. We try to resist one single meaning or goals for the project, but that is hard to do when you apply for public money. The financial model of our practice, underscored by the frighteningly outdated definitions behind public funding of culture, is in direct collision with its blurred nature. How should we allude to "new social orders" when our funders understand the project as "Art" with a capital A, which is by their definition outside of "Life" with a capital L?

The hack most of us find in this backward logic is to declare our work as symbolic. By turning to the symbolic, the distinction between the object of representation and the life it represents remains safely clear. A sculpture is a sculpture is a sculpture. We make claims like, "Symbolic gestures can be powerful and effective methods for change,"[11] and we let our funders exhale in

[7] Julia Moritz and Lisa Mazza, *Kritische Komplizenschaft/Critical Complicity* (Vienna: Schlebrügge, 2010), 13.

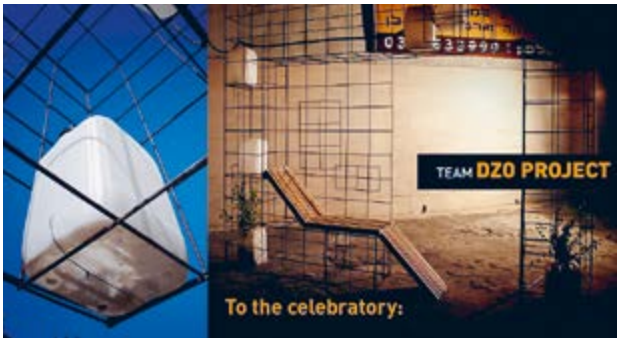
[8] Nato Thompson ed., *Living as Form: Socially Engaged Art from 1991–2011* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press), 2012.

[9] Anne Pasternak, foreword to *Living as Form*, 7.

[10] Nato Thompson, "Living as Form," in *Living as Form*, 19.

[11] Nato Thompson, *Living as Form*, 18.

▲ Stills from the documentary on the first edition of 72HUA: Jury member Glenn Weiss reflects on the built installations



the comfort of allowing for sociopolitical-urgently-needed-change to be pointed at, but not actually dealt with.

On top, alongside, and together with the installations that 72HUA puts on the ground (the aspects of the project that physically interfere with the built environment and the object-based creation of new spaces for social interaction), there is a largely invisible side to the project of 72HUA. Most exchanges before, during, and after the festival are not documented and cannot be seen, sometimes they are even non-verbal, and absolutely cannot be measured or quantified. This is the work of changing mindsets on change itself. It is the spectacle of art impregnated with the intention of living otherwise. It is articulated in new working relations and embodied in new knowledge that is different for everyone that comes across the path of 72HUA.

But how is a rehearsal distinguished from the "actual" play? By the mere presence of an audience? Isn't a preenactment the testimony, the promise of an act to come? Doesn't a prefiguration determine the form of the figure? What can ever be produced without first having a sketch or a prototype? What we are questioning here, beyond the distinction between practice and life, is the distinction between process and outcome, challenging an understanding of outcome as the linear end point of the process.

REFLECTING II: LIVING LEARNING

"Democracy … is a matter of praxis. Perhaps the same can be assumed to apply to civil behaviour. Theoretical lectures on civil spirit, *Bildung*, civil responsibility, et cetera can only make themselves felt while actively engaging with it."[12]

One of the ways we have talked about 72HUA is as a means to bridge the gap between urban design and its users, being a source of learning for both participants and resident onlookers. The open production camp, together with the public microsites, are places of exhibition of design, construction, and built work.

[12] Pascal Gielen, "Let's Bet on the Gap: Some Thoughts on Art, Education and Civil Space," in *The Politics of Affinity: Experiments in Art, Education and The Social Sphere*, ed. Silvia Franceschini (Biella: Cittadellarte, 2018), 9–21.

Passersby can approach the microsite and find a participant ready to explain what they see, what they can't see, and what they don't see yet. Building on tacit and embodied forms of knowledge production, participants do not verbalize their learnings or report their findings back to us. All of their learning of the place they operate in is put into the short-term action, and all of their learning from the short-term action travels back with them to where they came from, hopefully informing their future work. We, like most of our like-minded collaborators, believe that "bringing together of the social, spatial and the political is a pedagogical strategy to mobilise resources, shift meanings and values, and to actively change spaces, relations and desires."[13]

In 2019, we staged the most recent edition of 72HUA in Lobeda-West (also called Neulobeda), an off-center district of Jena, Germany. The production camp was situated outside of a local youth organization and occupied a grassy field nestled between a highly frequented tram station and the way to the riverside park behind the neighborhood of mainly prefab high-rise apartment blocks built during the GDR-era. The grassy patch had deep desire lines marking the residents' daily route. As the festival camp, the site also harbored participants' power tools, personal items, and a group kitchen. The discussion of fencing the parameter was a central one for us. Umschichten—Lukasz, Peter, and Alper—designed the camp and were avidly against a fence, which would interrupt regular pedestrian traffic. After a very short discussion, the general consensus was to leave the area unfenced, despite the possible risk of theft. This decision resisted anecdotes of Lobeda being a criminal and dangerous place, and also changed them, because by the time the festival edition was over, nothing of the sort had happened at the camp, and we were able to argue against former perceptions with that example as proof.

Living is learning and learning is living. Like many of the binaries we try to resist in this introduction, and with the way we reflect on 72HUA processes, actions, and outputs, the boundary between the two doesn't really exist and thus cannot be traced. For us, the mesh of living and learning is the source of a democratic culture that sees its participants as humans in the process of entangled applied evolution. 72HUA points to the democratic potential design has for shaping us as well as our environment. But democracy … is a matter of praxis," as Pascal Gielen points out. "Precisely because the artistic does not focus exclusively on content but also on form, it co-defines the conditions of a civil process. … participants can personally experience what it feels like to be democratically positioned or not."[14] Living learning, which places learning everywhere, and looks at any process as a process of learning, is about living in democracy.

REFLECTING III: CRITICAL COMPLICITY

Ever since its first edition, 72HUA has worked in partnership with many different types of institutions: municipalities, artist-run organizations, nonprofits, museums and biennials, independent design studios, and design/build collectives. These partnerships always pose an original constellation of resources, accesses, contacts, and agendas. While the format of the festival is set from the get-go, its delivery is always localized. We spend on average 18 months to deliver each edition of 72HUA, building a local team, a network of partners, mapping resources, and researching sociospatial needs. In these long months we establish a value-based position: a mission statement that identifies our localized contribution towards expanding the vocabulary of the possible on a specific site, in a specific context. But across these various localizations of the festival format, there is a specific kind of contradictory collaboration that needs to unfold. This contradiction, resulting from working in existing conditions in order to project other possible realities, is nothing new or essentially 72HUA. Every practitioner in our field has to mitigate this in every project anew.[15] We learn from a long

[13] Sam Vardy, Julia Udall, "How Do We Know? Who Knows? A History of Enacting Spaces of Learning," in *Explorations in Urban Practice: Urban School Ruhr Series*, ed Katja Aßmann, et al. (Barcelona: Dpr-barcelona, 2016), 50.

[14] Pascal Gielen, "Artistic Constitutions of the Civil Domain," accessed March 26, 2021, www.eurozine.com/artistic-constitutions-of-the-civil-domain/#.

[15] See Liza Fior's text, 69, and Fabienne Hoelzel's text, 115.

Stills from the documentary ▶ on 72HUA in Stuttgart; participants reflecting

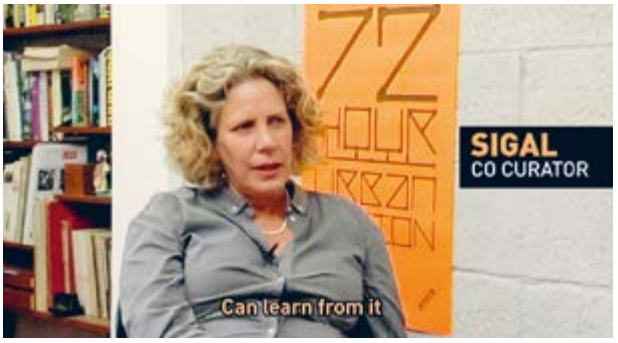

One of our goals was:


GILLY
CO DIRECTOR
Quick Action,
Lasting Impression


KEREM
FOUNDER
It was a
controlled experiment


In losing control


SIGAL
CO CURATOR
This city and
other municipalities


SIGAL
CO CURATOR
Can learn from it


And it can grow
into a new insight.


It is clear today, that


SHLOMI
MAYOR
that Every street, every building,
every site


SHLOMI
MAYOR
Can change in 72 Hours

tradition of navigating criticality and complicity, how to unfold and map these contradictions, how and where and what to compromise.

In 2010, Julia Moritz and Lisa Mazzo proposed and explored the concept of "critical complicity in a three-location exhibition and program, taking place in South Tyrol, Vienna, and Ljubljana. The concept built on Brecht's ideas of complicity as well as the legacies of institutional critique: "From this point of view of micro-politics and counter-hegemony it is possible to articulate a critical potential of complicity that does not depend on a rhetoric of 'choosing sides' on the one hand and cynical opportunism on the other. The critical potential of complicity lies exactly in the condition of inextricable entanglement of a person with the context of a situation or action."[16]

Yes, we are critical of the planning system, of the counter-creative and inflexible manner in which cities are planned, designed, built, and regenerated. Yes, we believe municipal institutions are hefty, convoluted systems that make the use of cities rigid and homogenic, serving the interest of corporations over the needs of citizens.[17] But we also believe these institutions are made of people who don't necessarily prescribe to the same politics as their politician bosses, who are professionals trained and educated wanting to deliver the best public space possible, and looking for ways to hack the very system they work for. Over the years we have met many such partners, and the eye-to-eye alliances we've established are among the main pedagogic legacies of the project, beyond the participating teams.

At the same time, we are painfully aware of how easily complicity can slip into legitimization and we tread that line very carefully. We rely on our position as outsiders working with insiders to find and navigate those lines. We align ourselves with Mazzo and Moritz: "Reluctant to the clear-cut distinction between realist claims of transparency and surrealist trajectory of opacity, we suggest a cultural practice based on complex alliances rather than the logics of enclosure. The concept of complicity posits these varying coalitions at a micro-political level; the critical agency that results is to be located at the very edges of hegemonic systems of order."[18]

Walking the edges of institutional logic opens the possibility of their subversion, but the mechanics and means for this subversion needs to be articulated in advance to avoid the risk of falling into the very norms we wish to question. We need to plan what we want to get out of every meeting, what we give up and what we insist on. Sometimes we need to plan a fight or stage an escalation. Sometimes, most of the time, we smile ear to ear throughout and play the charm card until our faces hurt, no matter if it seems "professional" or not. We know very well that critique requires repetition, if it is to gain any potential of change. And if we want our critique to take effect, to influence or inspire a different way to make public space, we cannot be confused with or look like any other urban planner. This is why 72HUA is not the kind of urban planning you are used to seeing. It is a performative districtwide action, time-based, colorful, loud, fun, and temporary. It is precisely not the norm.

CONCLUDING (FOR NOW): THE POLITICAL TACTIC OF LOVE

Our means of avoiding reinforcement and applying critical complicity lies in the political potential of love and the way we sprinkle it on everything that we do with 72HUA. Rusty Lamer, participant of the first 72HUA festival in Bat Yam in 2010, described his experience: "Somewhere around hour 59, I paused and looked up at the morning sun striking the side of the building. There were streams of fabric stretching out from the third-floor windows, reflecting color against the sheen of the facade. It was 5 a.m., and I felt a rare sense of happiness, or satisfaction, like one might have after rescuing a stranded dog from a tree. It was a sensation of belonging. Around the same time that I was admiring the early morning sun, I sat next to a teammate from Germany, who was also in a

◀ **Stills from the documentary on the first edition of 72HUA**

[16] Julia Moritz and Lisa Mazza, *Critical Complicity* (Vienna: Schlebrügge, 2010), 14.

[17] See Oli Mould's text, 83.

[18] Julia Moritz and Lisa Mazza, *Critical Complicity* (see note 16), 14.

state of weary bliss. He whispered, "It's a beautiful guesture." The mispronunciation of 'gesture' made me smile all the more, but later I adopted the word 'guesture' as fitting to the experience and defining an essential aspect of the 72HUA phenomenon: we were guests who showed their appreciation for inclusion through gestures."[19]

It may sound vain to outsiders when we say that participants have repeatedly named 72HUA "the best experience of their life," but we take well-deserved pride in this, and will repeat this true story where needed. The spice that makes the experience so unforgettable has always been intentional, deliberate, unabashed, cheesy, cliché, tacky, campy, LOVE. We spread it on everything we do, and we encourage its display in every moment of the project. We put love in the way we talk and how we write mission briefs and orientation emails. In how we know the names of the participants before they arrive in the camp for the first time. In how we dance during cooking shifts. It's what makes the festival take over a neighborhood with immense energy, and it's the memory of this energy that lives on, long after the teams are gone, the camp is dismantled, and the installations have been rethought.

Many Black feminist writers, such as Audre Lorde and bell hooks, have addressed love as part of the political sphere, reclaiming its transformative power since the 1970s. In spite of the profound theoretical work around political readings and applications of love, joy, empathy, care, and emotional labor, talking about love as a professional of any discipline is, to this day, not commonly acceptable. Love is relegated to the realms of the intimate, the domestic, which are still denied their political essence. But the applied practices of love towards publics, audiences and in organizing groups and movements, has a longstanding tradition and is recognized as a productive and mobilizing force by many activists, politicians, and theoreticians, even if not admitted explicitly.

In 2000, bell hooks published *All about Love: New Visions*, the first book of a now famous trilogy on the subject. hooks bravely turns directly to the romantic and private realm to chart how current political canons, such as the "imperialist white supremacist capitalist patriarchy,"[20] manifest themselves in the home and dominate romantic relationships as well as all other human relationships. "Living as we do in a culture of domination, to truly choose to love is heroic."[21] The kind of love hooks talks about is separate from care, and makes a crucial distinction between the labor of care—parenting, nursing, teaching, maintaining, restoring—and what love truly means. For hooks, among the many social aspects that make up love, a central one is community. "Communities sustain life—not nuclear families, or the 'couple,' and certainly not the rugged individualist. There is no better place to learn the art of loving than in community."[22] In a much later lecture, hooks fortifies the enmeshment of the two by stating that "If you have love, you have a community of belonging."[23]

The same year hooks published her first book of the love trilogy, Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri published *Empire* as the first book of their own trilogy, charting a political vision for a global governance led by the multitude—those traditionally excluded from the governance of the means of production and from wealth.[24] This political project, Hardt and Negri imagine, will be a joyous one, and will include a re-learning of the political aspects of love.

It is interesting to see someone like post-Marxist political philosopher Michael Hardt turn his sights on love. Hardt's extensive work on the political concept of love positions it as a means for collective self-transformation, for society to transform itself so that people can rule themselves democratically, while maintaining their singularities and even producing them.[25] For Hardt, love is different from friendship or solidarity precisely because it involves a concept

[19] Rusty Lamer, "Gesture, Guestures and Jesters," 2011. Not published.

[20] bell hooks uses this term in every book and every lecture she has ever given, and to try and track the source of this definition of our condition would be futile. Just read your hooks.

[21] "Speaking Freely: Bell Hooks," March 29, 2016, accessed April 1, 2021, www.youtube.com/watch?v=g2bmnwehlpA.

[22] bell hooks, *All About Love: New Visions* (New York: HarperCollins, 2000), 129.

[23] bell hooks & John A. Powell, "Belonging Through Connection" Othering & Belonging Conference 2015, accessed April 1, 2021, www.youtube.com/watch?v=0sX7fqIU4gQ.youtube.com/watch?v=0sX7fqIU4gQ

[24] Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001).

of self-transformation, which the former do not. It is the potential of transformation that makes love a radical force. Love, when applied correctly, is the dark matter, the alchemy, that manifests political change.

Hardt explains the unexplainable: "In part it starts with a recognition that in certain political actions, in certain political demonstrations—the really good ones—you do have a feeling of something really like love. And so, it's partly a way of trying to theorize that recognition of this feeling of... let's call it a 'collective transformation' that one experiences in certain kinds of political action. And therefore, to think about love, love which I do understand to be precisely a transformative power, something in which we come out different."[26]

With 72HUA, by instinct more than by design, internally rather than explicitly, we have always applied a political notion of love to the way we run the festival. We use love without shame. We employ it without cynicism. We kind of flaunt it around in jest. We manifest and harness love to actualize small-scale change, and to point towards bigger, more systemic changes we wish to be part of.[27] In other words, we use love as a tactic. This public urban display of affection—between the participating teams, staff, neighbors, and volunteers—is at the heart of the story of 72HUA. And so, this book is a story about love. What force is more important, for any city, any community, any place, than the love its citizens, residents, and users share? Love of cities, love of humanity, love for the futures that we need to build, and for the planet that we need to repair.

72 Hour Urban Action is the world's pioneer real-time architecture festival. 72HUA was founded in 2010 at the Bat Yam Biennale of Landscape Urbanism by Kerem Halbrecht and is co-directed by Gilly Karjevsky. Drawing on both curating (Karjevsky) and architecture (Halbrecht), 72HUA negotiates socio-spatial conditions in the lead toward inclusive intervention. 72HUA challenges programming in public space by adopting useful approaches to art and speculative and critical approaches to design. Above all, 72HUA employs its own brand of love tactics—a playful and fun approach to how we live and make together.

[25] Michael Hardt "About Love," *European Graduate School*, accessed June 27, 2016, www.youtube.com/watch?v=ioopkoppabI.

[26] Leonard Schwartz, "A Conversation with Michael Hardt on the Politics of Love," *Interval(le)s* II.2-III.1 (Fall 2008/Winter 2009), 812.

[27] See Sumayya Vally's text, 101.

Participating Teams

Participants in 72HUA have come from 47 countries (see orange dots on map). We extend an open call and group people together in teams designed for diversity of perspectives and skills.

PUBLIC

Cultural Diplomacy

A soft power that utilizes experiences and everyday encounters between people to foster mutual understanding and dissemination of ideas and mindsets.

Landscape Urbanism

A systems-thinking view of cities as interconnected ecologies rather than an arrangement of buildings. It was the theoretical setting for the Bat Yam Biennale of Landscape Urbanism where 72HUA was born.

Bat Yam

Microsites

The site of the missions (or installations) are small patches of land that are too small to be handled by a masterplan yet big enough for a meaningful contribution.

Real-Time Architecture

72 Hour Urban Action is the world's first real-time architecture competition. The term makes reference to the usual gap in time, space, and agency between planning and execution. Designs are made on site, and tested and adapted in a rapid iterative process.

Temporary Autonomous Zone

A tactic to create temporary spaces that evade hegemonic control structures, described in an anarchist essay by Hakim Bey, which seeded ideas such as *fabricated emergency* that 72HUA employs in the festival.

Stuttgart

Roskilde

Istanbul

Fabricated Emergency

Relying on the affordances and mindset of a "state of exception," 72HUA creates a sense of urgency and need limited in time and space and driven by competition. It facilitates the solidarity and hope that often arise in crisis, within a constructive context.

Written

Terni

Critical Spatial Practice

A term coined by Jane Rendell in 2006 to describe works at the intersection of theory and practice, public and private, and art and architecture. Rendell stresses three qualities of those works: the critical, the spatial, and the interdisciplinary.

Zachi Razel

How to Do Too

72HUA experimented at the Istanbul Design Biennale with an instructional format, where interventions were designed to be copied.

Love Tactic

After a decade of practice we know today that these entangled modes of working—collectivity, critique, inclusivity, emancipation—often require the kind of negotiation of contradictions that are only navigable through the emotional force of love.

Karen Halbrecht

Gilly Karjevsky

SCALE

Cyclone Nargis
Sichuan earthquake
Global financial crisis
Sri Lankan Civil War ends
Haiti earthquake
Crisis in Venezuela begins
Arab Spring
Tōhoku earthquake and tsunami
Syrian Civil War begins
Occupy Wall Street
Hurricane Sandy
Typhoon Bopha hits the Philippines
Arab Winter
#BlackLivesMatter movement begins
Typhoon Haiyan hits the Philippines
Euromaidan in Ukraine
Second Libyan Civil War
Yemeni Civil War begins

2008 2009 2010 2011 2012 2013 2014

POLITICS

UMSCHICHTEN

umschichten is a Stuttgart-based creative practice that participated in the inaugural festival in 2010, invited 72HUA to Stuttgart in 2012, and was responsible for the festival's material culture at Jena-Lobeda. They also come up with the "salami tactic."

Missions

At launch, the participating teams get their mission briefs in a lottery. They contain descriptions, data, contacts, and a mission statement. These briefs are a result of a rigorous research process where a long list of potential microsites is distilled into a list of sites with the most potential for meaningful change and greatest impact on planning processes.

Kulturschutzgebiet

German for *cultural protection area*. A strategic and legal approach by Kunstverein Wagenhallen cultural association to create a cultural reserve that protects artists and cultural work in the face of accelerated development.

Salami Tactic

A methodical, patient approach to changing urban administrative culture in small steps. For example, 72HUA as a step to achieve recognition as a *Kulturschtzgebiet*.

invisible playground

Invisible Playground is a network of reflective practitioners working at the intersection of play and urban society. 72HUA partnered with Invisible Playground for the World Championship of Gameful Architecture in Witten and the development of the instant social architecture game *Just Add People*.

Gameful Architecture

A term to define an architectural approach to space creation that employs game design ideas such as playtesting, fictions, and game mechanics. It aspires to open up users' interaction with spaces, as well as with one another.

72 HOUR URBAN ACTION

72HUA employs its own brand of love tactics—a playful and fun approach to how we live and make together.

BELLASTOCK

A French architecture collective that promotes the appreciation of places and their resources through alternative building methods. Long-time collaborators with the 72HUA network.

Bureaucratic Hack

Starting in 2010, 72HUA used a loophole in the permit system to allow for unknown and unplanned interventions to be designed and built within the framework of the festival. This loophole allowed for complex partnerships to come together against financial risk logics and promote radical creative freedom in public space. The festival format itself hacks through this bureaucracy for a short period of time. When the dust settles, reality sinks in.

Legend

- Editions
- Participants
- Ab Concepts
- Ab Collaborations
- **Ab Staff**

Just Add People

Together with Invisible Playground, 72HUA developed an instant social architecture game with wooden sticks and connector balls, which simulates a quick urban action at true-to-life scale.

Mor Arkadir

Zahi Asa

Birzebbuga

Jena-Lobeda

Fun as a Resource

120 people working for 72 hours = one person working full time for 4,5 years. How can fun be harnessed as an act of collective solidarity instead of a guise for free labor?

FUN

Tactical Urbanism

Also called guerilla urbanism, fast-forward urbanism, temporary urbanism, pop-up urbanism, DIY urbanism, bottom-up urbanism, self-help urbanism, user-generated urbanism, ad-hoc urbanism, experimental urbanism, improvisational urbanism, unplanned urbanism, participatory urbanism, prototype urbanism, grassroots urbanism, open-source urbanism, informal urbanism, urban bricolage, urban acupuncture, and urban first aid.

jena KULTUR

VALLETTA DESIGN CLUSTER

European migrant crisis
Nepal earthquake
Same-sex marriage legalized in the U.S.
Paris Agreement on Climate Change
Ecuador earthquake
Brexit referendum
Hurricane Harvey
Hurricane Maria
#metoo
Second Arab Spring
Sulawesi earthquake and tsunami
Yellow Vests
Hong Kong protests begin
Extinction Rebellion
Sudan begins transition to democracy
Bushfires in Australia
Estallido Social in Chile
COVID-19 identified in Wuhan China
Coronavirus global pandemic
#BlackLivesMatter protests
Indian farmer protests
California wildfires

2015 2016 2017 2018 2019 2020 2021