

Planting Commons through Art? Aesthetics of Commons and Commodification in Two Community Gardens in Berlin and Dakar

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Abstract

This paper analyses the intersection of urban art and community gardens to explore whether commons can emerge from this collaboration. Through a comparative study of two community garden projects in Berlin and Dakar, the research examines the impact of funding structures, accessibility, artistic concepts and design on commoning. It is motivated by the popular use of the term 'commons' in contemporary art discourse that raises concerns of potential 'commons-washing.' The findings reveal that the two projects differ significantly in their development context and underlying structures, which affects their ability to function as commons. While central Berlin lacks non-consumer, ecological spaces for inclusive interactions due to its gentrification, Dakar's open spaces neglected by the city are in need of being reclaimed by the local community. The analysis highlights the challenges of limited accessibility connected to such city contexts. Furthermore, the paper argues, that the dependency of artistic involvement on third-party funding contradicts the principles of commoning. The two projects share a common goal of unlearning exploitative practices and promoting eco-socially cohesive communities. For the artistic forms, materials, and strategies employed in both projects contribute to intercultural dialogue and conflict negotiation at eye level within the communal setting. The paper concludes by emphasizing the need to explore alternative funding models and question traditional processes of art to ensure the genuine realization of urban commons. The integration of artistic imagination with the collective mentality of community gardens holds promise for the emergence of future commons that prioritize shared resources and equal participation.

Keywords

Urban Commons; Public Art; Community Garden; Commoning, Participation, Commodification

1. Introduction

The capitalist exploitation of nature and people, the de-democratisation through the rise of authoritarian regimes, the increasing division in the face of wealth inequality and identity politics: In the face of these challenges to society as a whole, forward-looking alternatives for a comprehensive social, ecological and economic transformation of cities are needed. One of the widely discussed approaches for this is the idea of the commons. In the past decade, the idea of the commons in particular has become a leitmotif in urbanist discourses. Commons are framed as a concept of thought and action for a solidary and emancipatory being-together.

For example, in the exhibition, *An Atlas of Commoning*, co-hosted in 2018 by the German Ifa Institute together with the architecture magazine *Arch+* (Ngo and Gruber 2018) or in the latest edition of the Vienna *Urbanize!* festival under the motto *Reality check: Urban Commons* (Rauth and Laimer 2023). Contemporary art and exhibition practice is also increasingly devoted to questions of commoning—and not only since the controversially discussed public exhibition *documenta15* curated by the artist collective Ruangrupa. After all, self-organized creation by artistic collectives outside the commercial and governmental dynamics already existed far before, starting with the Dadaists in the 1920s

to the misappropriation of public space by the Situationists (*détournement*) of the 1970s. Furthermore, institutions and cultural politics switched from representative to participatory practices (Bishop 2012).

This motivates a close reading of the specificities of current art practices with a strong claim of establishing a commons. Consequently, this exploratory article focuses on two such public art projects in Berlin and Dakar, namely the *Prinzessinnengarten* (PG) in Berlin (2009–2020/ongoing) and the *Jardin Jet d'Eau* (JJ) in Dakar (2014–ongoing). A particular emphasis lays on the artistic practices with plants by contemporary artist Åsa Sonjasdotter in the PG and the involvement of the French artist Emmanuel Louisgrand commissioned for JJ by the cultural centre *Kër Thiossane* (KT) in Dakar. Both were urban community gardens with public art as inherent part.¹ The two projects embedded in non-governmental structures offered a wide set of pedagogical activities in the course of so-called commons schools. The striking characteristic of this choice of case studies is, that they resemble each other a lot in their conceptualization, yet their geopolitical context could hardly be more different. While central Berlin lacks non-consumer, ecological spaces for inclusive interactions due to its density, gentrification processes and residential segregation (Bartoli, Linden, and Wüst 2020), Dakar's open spaces neglected by the city are in need to be reclaimed by the local community (Diallo 2017). The geopolitical difference of the two case studies is thereby used as a means of insight.

The guiding research interest lies in the relationship between the commons and art using the example of the PG and the JJ. In particular, the contribution of the artistic elements to commoning will be examined. This is motivated by the question, if commoning is possible within the institutional-economic boundaries of contemporary art production? Thus, the analysis also takes a closer look at the alignments with the communal qualities of collective gardening and community work. For this purpose, I will

first of all explain the theoretical and methodical approach briefly. Next, both case studies are described historically and visually. This is followed by a comparative analysis of the structures, funding, concepts as well as aesthetics. I conclude with thoughts and questions on the intersection of art, gardening and commoning motivated by PG and JJ.

2. Theoretical and methodological setting

Commons have existed for hundreds of years and still do. They exist in small rural communities just as much as in complex, digitalized cyberspace groups (Rauth and Laimer 2023). Thus, they can be thought of as omnipresent social structures or an alternative culture of social togetherness. The concept defies binary categories of global South/North or private/public and is located not outside, but beyond market and government. In those heterarchical structures oriented towards the common good decisions are taken democratically and resources are shared collectively. The underlying process is called 'Commoning'. In this paper commoning—meaning the micropolitical practices of a self-organized group of commoners to find new rules of living together—is focused rather than commons as the actual state of being (Dellenbaugh-Losse et al. 2015; Sollfrank, Stalder, and Niederberger 2021; Stauridēs 2016).

The research field itself originates from economic theory, for which Elinor Ostrom received the Nobel Prize in Economics in 2009. Ostrom's achievement was to refute the so-called "tragedy of the commons" by demonstrating the lack of a causal connection between collective resource consumption and overexploitation based on global case studies in 1990. Since then, the field of research has been expanded interdisciplinary and goes far beyond economic notions of commons (Ostrom 1990). Contemporary research focuses more on social relations between commoners and less on goods as in Ostrom's work. The potential of commons are seen in an anti-capitalist and eco-social future (De Angelis 2009; Dengler and Lang 2022; Helfrich and Bollier 2019). The research field was given a feminist perspective by Silvia Federici, who emphasizes women's reproductive

1 - According to the definition by Cameron Cartiere and Martin Zebracki (Cartiere and Zebracki 2016) public art is either freely accessible (in public), located in public space, addresses thematically or affectively parts of the population (public interest) or is publicly paid for (public funding).

care work as crucial to both our economic survival and heterarchical commoning process (Federici 2018). By this, she defines commons as autonomous spaces to challenge the existing capitalist separation of life and labor. Moreover, an examination of community gardens by Efrat Eizenberg (2012) showed, that community gardens produce commons within contemporary neoliberal cities like New York by three interconnected elements: Firstly, the material space of commons is collectively produced and maintained by its users, Secondly, practical knowledge secures the ongoing production of commons and makes up their discursive frameworks. Thirdly, meaning develops through cultural initiatives, which can enhance place attachment. Above all, two recent publications appeared at the interface of art and commons. Both *Commoning Art* (Hofmann et al. 2022) as well as the anthology *Aesthetics of the Commons* (Sollfrank et al. 2021) form important theoretical foundations.

In examining the commoning aspects of the two case studies, I draw on both art historical and social science methods. The analysis of the development processes, power structures and commons concepts is based on secondary literature as well as semi-structured interviews via e-mail, telephone or in real life with central actors in the projects. The emphasis was placed on the characteristics of the gardens as a commons, i.e. how is the power of action and decision-

making distributed, how does the group organise itself, who uses the space and in what way. Central to the research were above all the site visits. Research at place in Berlin was undertaken in April 2021 and one year later in Dakar in May 2022. This allowed me to form my own impression of the access possibilities on site and the aesthetic design. Furthermore, I examined the artistic elements of both gardens regarding their visual elements including material, shapes and design. These findings are then interpreted iconographically. In order to minimise misinterpretation as a white, European researcher and non-resident of both cities, I had many informal conversations with local residents to gather their views. This enabled me to compare my self-perception with the perception of others by local residents and to integrate situated knowledge into my research.

3. Prinzessinnengarten Berlin: Nomadic nature and its contestations

The PG is located at Moritzplatz in Prinzenstreet of Berlin's culturally diverse inner-city district Kreuzberg. The 6000 square metres large site had been littered wasteland up until the early 2000s. After periods of squatting a group of local residents, artists and activists organised themselves to transform the area into a public garden in 2009 (Clausen et al. 2018). On an organisational level, two persons founded the non-profit limited company called *Nomadisch Grün*, that

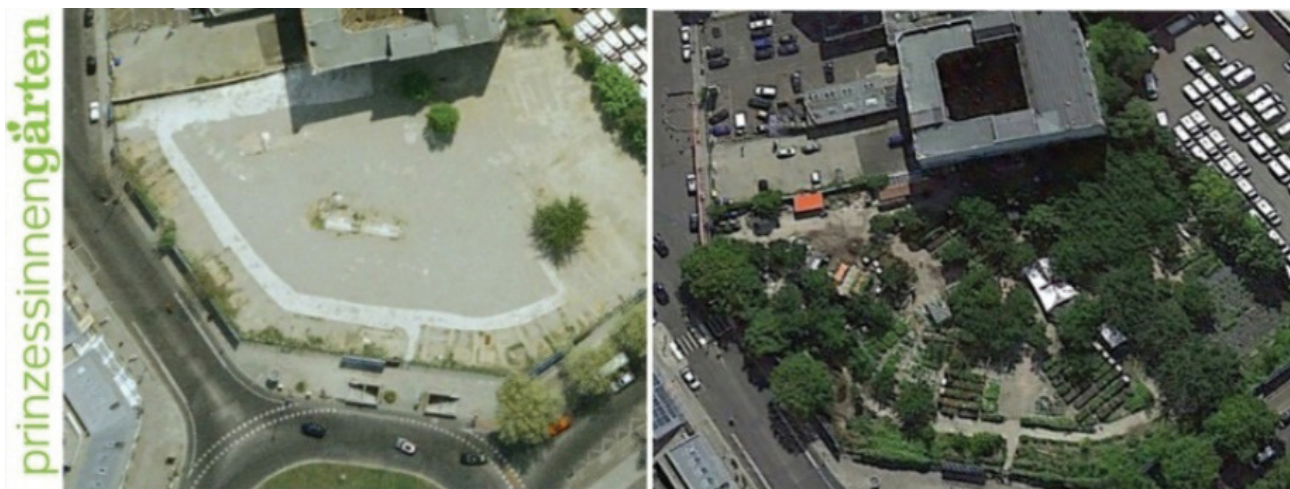


Figure 1. Google Earth views Moritzplatz, Berlin 2006. Source: (Prinzessinnengarten 2013)



Figure 2. Potato breeding in PG, Berlin 2013,

rented the space from the City of Berlin (Interview Meyer/Schwarz 2023). The self-sustained project did and does not receive direct funding by the city. Little by little, DIY raised plant beds and greenhouses were added to produce ecological groceries. All of these gardening facilities were designed to be mobile. Furthermore, people within the garden collective initiated various plant-related training sessions, a public café as well as artistic workshops (Herbst and Teran 2020; Prinzessinnengarten 2013).

Amongst the artists of PG was the Berlin-based, Swedish visual artist **Åsa Sonjasdotter**. Her artistic gardening workshops aimed not only at teaching the interested publics

to grow more resistant plants, but also conveyed forgotten botanical knowledge. To quote the artist: “Plant breeding is a practice that is not purely art, neither purely science, horticulture, or pedagogy. It is however a practice that always has aesthetic and also ethical dimensions” (Interview Sonjasdotter/Schwarz 2021). Into the collaborative actions flows the artistic research on the cultural epistemologies of plants, that despite all national regulation have always been hybrid, migratory forms (Gray and Sheikh 2018). Hereby it is important to note, that the artistic projects were bound to external, financial support, mostly funded decentrally (Interview Sonjasdotter/Schwarz 2021).



Figure 3. Farm-bred potato varieties, Berlin 2009. Source: (Sonjasdotter 2018)

Up until now, the PG has undergone numerous structural changes. With Berlin's increasing gentrification, the contestation of the place grew. In 2012, thanks to thousands of votes by residents, privatisation by an investor was averted (Prinzessinnengarten 2019). In the aftermath, the garden community focused on the goal of permanently securing the PG as a commons. For this purpose, the education platform *Nachbarschaftsakademie* [Neighbourhood Academy] was founded in 2015. Driving forces for this initiative were the promotion of cooperative forms of self-managed resources, knowledge formation and sharing economy as well as the testing of commoning practices. This commitment was accompanied by the political education work on commoning, the *Commons Abendschule* [Commons Evening-School]. The versatile participatory and artistic forms are well demonstrated by

the Neighbourhood Academy in 2019, which was funded by the German Federal Cultural Foundation as part of the 100 years of Bauhaus anniversary programme. Under the heading of "Growing from the Ruins of Modernity" the garden team, especially the artists Marco Clausen and Åsa Sonjasdotter, organised a broad range of cultural and pedagogical events (Clausen et al. 2018). Due to internal conflicts between the two initial founders, the garden community split up into the two groups *Nomadisch Grün* and *Common Grounds* at the end of 2019.² *Nomadisch Grün* moved to an open space in a nearby district, which they rent long-term from the church. They follow a more commercial, slightly touristic approach offering gastronomy and agriculture. *Common Grounds* remained at Moritzplatz (Herbst and Teran 2020, p.15) setting up the garden from scratch, as all the raised plant beds had moved.

2 - Website: <https://common-grounds.net/uber-uns/>, Accessed 10.05.21.



Figure 4-5. Views from the outside and inside of PG, 11.04.2021, Berlin (Photos: Mareike Schwarz).

During my site visit in early 2021, the gardens could be seen from afar due to large-format banners with slogans such as 'Soilidarity' (a combination of soil and solidarity). The plants grew mostly wild. Its access was mostly barrier-free. Next to a circus-like tent, stood the main meeting space called 'Laube' [arbour] designed by Quest architects Florian Köhl and Christian Burkhard. As depicted in the axonometric view, model and photograph, it is an open, modular architecture for workshops and spontaneous gatherings (Clausen et al. 2018). The community-built structure is modular in order to be moved in case the short-term tenancy agreements will not be prolonged. As such, it is an architectural expression of the balancing act that is necessary in grassroots, informal initiatives.

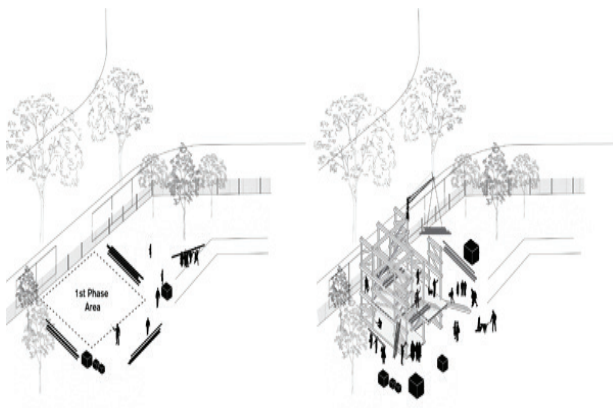


Figure 6. Axonometric view of the Laube. Source: (Clausen et al. 2018) © Quest/fatköhlarchitekten

By now, the garden was renamed *Offener Garten Moritzplatz* [Open Garden Moritzplatz]. Sonjasdotter and Clausen are no longer engaged. Pedagogical and theoretical projects like the Commons Evening School ended. According to a current member of the garden team this practising rather than discussing commons is the final development stage in real life commoning. In their opinion larger artistic projects depended too much on third-party funding and commercial offers created hierarchy levels, as only specific people then signed contracts. After cancellation of electricity and larger artistic outreach programs, the garden is now self-sustained. The rootedness in the neighbourhood and democracy behind decision grew with every team member coming to the weekly plenary (Interview Meyer/Schwarz 2023).

4. Jardin *Jet d'Eau* Dakar: Participatory Planting and its Pitfalls

The second artistic community garden *Jardin Jet d'Eau* [Water fountain garden] is located in the district Sicap-Liberté in central Dakar. Within the context of Senegal's cultural policies after its independence in 1960, Sicap-Liberté with its famous Jet d'Eau roundabout, green spaces, and play areas used to be a symbol of modernity and quality life in Dakar. However, the public spaces were deteriorating due to the lack of public investment in the 2000s (Kër Thioussane 2020).



Figure 1-8. Historic photo of roundabout Jet d'Eau, Dakar, 1960 (© Société immobilière du Cap-Vert) and Sicap-Liberté in the 2000s (Photos: © Boubacar Touré Mandemory). Source: (Kër Thiossane 2020)



Figure 9-12. The development of the Jet d'Eau Garden: cleaning, structuring, constructing, Louisgrand ordering the plant bed, Dakar, 2014-2015. Source: (Kër Thiossane 2020)

Therefore, the Sicap-based independent art and media association *Kër Thiossane* [Wolof for House of Welcome/ KT]³ initiated the improvement of environmental and cultural facilities in the neighbourhood. One of these urban development projects was an approximately 1.500 square meter garden in close proximity to the roundabout and the association itself. KT commissioned the French artist Emmanuel Louisgrand, thus considered first and foremost as artwork. It was built in collaboration with local

craftspeople and gardeners. Officially, a cleaner is supposed to open the large gates until the garden is locked up again by an employee of KT living close by (Interview Marion Louisgrand/Schwarz 2023).

The aesthetics of the garden resonate with Louisgrand's earlier artistic gardens. The artist usually transforms abandoned spaces into living sculptures. Further informal reason for his selection can be assumed being the brother KT's founder Marion Louisgrand Sylla. According to

3 Kër Thiosanne was founded by cultural worker Marion Louisgrand Sylla and musician Momar François Sylla in 2002 (Mbaye and Iossifidis 2020). KT is in their own words "a cultural space for artistic and social experimentation in Senegal, a place of sharing rooted within its own territory and present on the international scene, and a hub of resources for digital creation in Africa" (Diallo 2017, p. 2).



Figure 13. The development of the Jet d'Eau Garden: cleaning, structuring, constructing, Louisgrand ordering the plant bed, Dakar, 2014-2015 as well as a current image, 2023. Source: Private Archive Kër Thioassane

the artist “inspired by the French gardens of the 17th century revisited by a contemporary and African vision” (Documents d’artistes 2017). In its centre is an open, circular pavilion as meeting space. The light architecture resembles the formal structure of the roundabout, but also the orange architectures of earlier garden projects by the French artist. It was inaugurated in the context of KT’s ongoing multimedia arts festival *AfroPixel* Festival in 2014. Louisgrand thinks of them as resistance against the urban degradation. Therefore, the open space is also known under the name *Garden of Resistance* (Documents d’artistes 2017).

The project has evolved out of the *École des Commons* [School of the Commons] by KT, which aims to enable

artists to experiment with new ways of engaging with communities around the concept of commoning. This is based on the idea that citizens can reclaim their city through a creative approach and therefore make it more hospitable, sociable and secure. This engagement for the commons can be traced back to various reasons. First of all, the construction and daily maintenance of the *Jardin Jet d'Eau* was funded by the Stichting DOEN foundation. The Dutch donor is also the main funding body of the translocal network Arts Collaboratory, which dedicated itself to art practices and social change as well as the idea of “Commons of the South” (Chérel 2016). The Arts Collaboratory is also deeply involved in large-scale art events, as their group members such as ruangrupa curated the 2022 edition of

documenta (Arts Collaboratory 2021). Not least because of these affiliations, the context of KT and the JJ are more glocal than the PG—meaning global and local at the same time. Interestingly enough, the JJ was also invited to the aforementioned Neighbourhood Academy of the PG in 2019. In addition, KT has contributed actively enriched the discussions in the course of *Remix the Commons* by the Arts Collaboratory with African perspectives. As described in a report by the municipality of Dakar for an international city award, the focus on commoning is also connected to the Creative Cities Network of the UNESCO, that Dakar joined because of their agenda 21 for culture.

In the framework of the school of commons neighbours and the town hall representatives were enquired about the district's needs. Following up on a social engagement process, where some female residents requested to learn more about micro-gardening, another garden right next to JJ was created under the name *Jardin Solidaire* [Solidarity Garden]. Alongside the gardenwork, a one-year training programme in permaculture was developed specifically for women." (Kër Thiossane 2021). It was financially supported by the Dutch Embassy and implemented in collaboration with the Department of Plant Biology of *Cheikh Anta Diop University* (Kër Thiossane 2021). Since its inauguration the maintenance of JJ faced a broad range of challenges. As KT's founder Marion Louisgrand states in an email interview with the author, the contestation of place is due to Dakar's cultural politics and lack of public funds.

5. Do commons grow out of the intersection of urban art and community garden?

Commoning as a transformative power is connected to certain inner processes and external settings. Structurally PG and JJ set off from highly different preconditions, which impacts their possibility to function as a commons. PG has a self-sustaining structure and especially its initial appropriation of the abandoned space in Berlin was bottom-up. The artistic elements gradually developed due to the artists in the community and were according to Sonjasdotter carried out "on the initiative of people in the garden" (Interview Sonjasdotter/Schwarz 2021). Yet, the increasing popularity and media outreach of PG slowly commodified the former grassroot-initiative. Furthermore,

current garden members report about de-hierarchisation in line with commoning principles since the engagement of professional artists in the garden stopped. In contrast, JJ was born out of an artistic context and had a more institutionalized character from the start. Even though urban commons such as *l'asilo* in Naples also emerged partly out of the initiatives of artists, the entanglement of KT with the city of Dakar and international organizations such as UNESCO and Arts Collaboratory seems less emancipatory.

This is in parts due to the diverging notions of public/private space in Senegal, where open spaces to linger around mostly belong to private owners – may it be institutions or persons. As a result, the inhabitants of Dakar might be less prone to subversively demand their right to the city as in the Berlin case. The diverging notions of public space also impact the gardens' accessibility. The garden team of PG tries to keep the garden open as much as possible depending on the time capacities of the voluntary members: not merely physically, but also socially (Interview Meyer/Schwarz 2023). However, reports of tourist overuse of the PG before 2019 suggest that exclusions of marginalized groups such as disabled or homeless people were also commonplace here. At least from my experiences during the site visits, access to PG was possible at all times during the opening hours indicated on the website, whereas JJ was always closed in May 2022. Nearby residents had told me that entering would be only possible during certain events or as a member of the garden community, which would diminish its status as a common space for all. Marion Louisgrand, on the other hand, reports the wish of some garden users to keep the JJ more closed to avoid homeless people or to reduce wear and tear on site. Nevertheless, in line with its commoning agenda, KT supports the gradual takeover of the space by the inhabitants and at the same time tries to inform about the guidelines of community-supported infrastructures as a counter-reaction to individual appropriations (Email Interview Louisgrand/ Schwarz 2023).

The analysis of the funding structures revealed a noteworthy relationship between artistic involvement and third-party funding in both cases. Sonjasdotter affirmed, that her art in the PG was bound to receive financial support from connected art institutions. Due to the lack

of public funding in Dakar, JJ would not have been feasible without European donors, who might also exert some thematic influence. In recent years both projects have undertaken efforts to crowd-fund their projects, thus sharing decision and action power equally among the ones affected by or interested in the project. Apart from such commons-orientated commissioning models, which remind us of formalized collective citizen funding of public art like the French *Nouveau Commanditaires* (Hers 2023), the art increases the dependency on third-party funding. In that respect integrating art in community gardens is contrary to the commoning process, where commoners set the rules of being together.

Reflecting on the artistic forms, materials and strategies relating to commons, both gardens have gathering spaces with signature architecture such as the Laube in PG and the central pavilion in JJ. Their permeability allows visitors to have a literal insight into happenings in the garden. Especially in the beginnings of commoning projects such built structures can express openness to others and facilitate plenaries at eye level. Apart from that, the workshops on the forgotten plant diversity by Sonjasdotter or the manifestation of resistance in the design of Louisgrand, articulate knowledge on communal heritage and notions of shared space. Participants engage on a visual or tactical rather than verbal level, which enables intercultural dialogue beyond national languages. Those artistic projects negotiate conflict as something inherent in communal projects, contributing to realistic processes of consensus-finding. It remains questionable if those art practices contribute differently to the commoning process than simple gardening would have done.

On a conceptual level, the two gardens resemble each other in their self-descriptions as commons and their pedagogical efforts. Both schools dedicated to commoning were directed at finding creative ways to unlearn exploitative capitalist and environmentally harmful habits such as hierarchical decision-making or extractive gardening. While PG bases its commons claim in particular on freely accessible uses of space and self-organized political education work, JJ offers a publicly usable space as inspiration for further creative appropriation as well as agricultural education

as an emancipation tool for female residents. The current omnipresence of the term in the art context, however, gives rise to fears of a so-called 'commons-washing', where attention economies are more important than the actual sharing of resources (Dellenbaugh-Losse 2015, 66).

In the case of JJ is it questionable, whether commons as a buzzword in the European art world were transferred? Even though the reference to 17th century gardens in France of Louisgrand, bears a Eurocentric tendency, this objection is based on my research unfounded. In general, self-organised commons-like structures are not new to Senegalese people (Chérel 2016). Following Silvia Federici, I evaluate the care of KT for JJ as well as their community work with female residents as an essential commoning contribution. The permaculture workshops raised the ecological knowledge of the fifty women living in the surrounding buildings and contributed to the social cohesion in the neighborhood – even if this only applied to a limited number of participants. The goals of KT as well as the artist Emanuelle Louisgrand follow a commoning approach: to empower the local residents to share the garden facilities and to co-own a common space. The artistic actions provided a point of connection and a framework in which new relationships were developed on a value-driven, not purely utilitarian level. Nevertheless, for the JJ to exist as an autonomous common, KT at a certain point will need to let loose from being in charge of opening hours, use, and financial future. Timeliness is also at the core of commoning obstacles in the PG. The continuous news coverage of PG as a role model of urban commons eroded its subversive spirit, while the intense cultural orchestration of space before 2019 brought capitalist dynamics of competition for the use of space and financial imbalances. Analysing those challenges shows the necessity of change for commoning ranging from decision and funding processes to the role of art itself. All in all, my own experience, the interviews as well as media reports speak for commoning effects on the community's daily life.

6. Conclusion

This paper explored two durational projects at the intersection of public art, urban gardening and community work in Dakar and Berlin, that claim to be commons. I

attempted to analyze the relations between artistic and commoning practices. As 'commons' is recently at risk of becoming a mere buzzword in urbanist and artistic discourse, I critically questioned the role of art in such socio-ecological transformations. Conceptualized as gardening, meeting, and learning places for more sustainability and social togetherness, the activities in both projects focus on plant cultivation as well as the collective sharing of goods, skills and knowledge. This is in line with the overarching goal of the commons to achieve a socio-ecological transformation of living and working together. At the environmental level, both cases show the transformation from uncanny spaces to liveable green, (mostly) publicly accessible gardens. While the conceptual and aesthetic characteristics had remarkable similarities, their development context and underlying structures of both community gardens differed greatly. I showed that both artistic designs included structures of permeability to open up the communal debate for a wider public, thus strengthening collective decision-making. In line with Eizenberg's (2012) definition of shared knowledge as one of three decisive elements of urban commons, the artistic production of knowledge about commoning as a practice further strengthens the commoning of both projects. The integrated schools for commons in the two gardens offered discursive frameworks for the self-design of spaces and their future. Especially in the beginnings of both projects, the activities at the intersection of art and pedagogy enabled local communities to imagine new ways of togetherness: from unlearning hegemonic decision practices to learning innovative forms of participation.

But these positive contributions of art to commoning are also accompanied by hierarchical, sometimes even divisive tendencies. Given the funding constellations elaborated earlier, I argue that art's dependence on third-party funding runs counter to the process of commoning. Furthermore, unlike what happened during my site visit to Dakar in 2022, self-determined access to shared spaces is central beyond individual artists or specific institutions. To avoid a superficial reification of the concept of urban commons, which would be little more than neoliberal marketing-speak, alternative structures and processes of art need to be explored in the future. Given the different

financial resources of the commons in both cities, I suggest crowdfunding as an alternative funding model to be used where possible. Above all, common dispositives of art such as originality, authorship and ownership over time need to be questioned if the guiding principle of shared resources and equal participation is taken seriously. Concluding the relation of art, gardening and commoning the great opportunity grows out of context-specific unification of the respective strengths. Ideally, the artistic imagination of alternative realities combines with the collective hands-on mentality of urban community gardens. This may include the commissioning of an artist collective or time-based approaches to art works and space appropriation. Future commons may then arise from joint alignments of human and nature in diversity.

List of abbreviations (in order of appearance)

PG: Prinzessinnengarten

JJ: Jardin Jet d'Eau

KT: Kër Thiossane

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