

Art and urban space: Reading the contemporary Latin American city

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Abstract

In the XXI century, the cultural sphere of urban expressions reflects the perception of life in the city, of the routines and figurations that tend to relate to the urban environment and that come to shake or shape the conditions of urban life. The practice of urban art marks a drastic change within artistic movements and offers recognition to urban expressions in the bigger scale affecting the city, its identity, and its social interaction.

The elaboration of this project consists of the analysis of urban art throughout the understanding of the urban system and its elements. As a case study were examined the murals produced inside the metropolitan area of the city of Monterrey, N.L., Mexico.

The purpose of the documentation is to examine the relationship that each of these murals has within the urban context where they are located. This is achieving it through the reading of its adjacent urban elements, the study of the space where it resides and also by analyzing how these works of arts had influenced the citizens by their presence in the metropolitan context. In this way it can be demonstrated the impact these murals can generate, seeking the revaluation of street art within the city.

Keywords

Urban art; Urbanism; Urban analysis; Mexico; Latin America; Muralism.

1. Introduction

Nowadays, one can think of a new relationship between the man and the city. "It would no longer be a magical, legal or commercial reconciliation, but a new complex reconciliation whose name can't be defined, this relationship will allow a new balance and a new mediation" (Santos, 1996)

There is no doubt that the quote from Santos represents a guideline that allows us to introduce the meaning and purpose of this article. As expressed, we must think about a reconciliation of the city with its inhabitants, and how this challenge can be addressed and reflected through an urban art approach.

From this perspective, both man and city must be recognized through an urban lens, this can be achieved by the study of the public space.

2. City

This present approach deals with the urban nature of public space related to the existence of tangible and intangible limits, those that have an inference on the level of quality of urban life of the inhabitants of any of Mexico's metropolitan areas. "The way we see our own city, our reality, is conditioned by what we know and how we live the urban space." (Petzold, A. 2017: 15)

From this perspective, the urban shape can be defined as the spatial pattern of human activities and their manifestation in the built environment of cities. Many of the practices, projects and aspirations of its inhabitants are evident in the urban landscape, scattered through the numerous buildings and public or private spaces in sight.

However, the city is more than a container of activities, due to the agglomeration of its geographical and constructive characteristics, it exerts as an important influence which defines the structure and social interaction of its individuals and social groups.

In recent years, efforts have been made to address both the design and planning of the Latin American city starting from the realm of public space, this motivation of change is generated due to the phenomena of urbanization and privatization of cities, observed through their continuous territorial growth. Demonstrating the importance that the study of public space has acquired in the role of shaping of the city and its society.

3. Public Space

According to Aramburu (2008) the term public space is not only conceived as an urban term, but it can be also a political term, which is constantly defined as everything that isn't private, which includes streets, parks and squares. What the public space requires to be labeled as such is that no one can be able to appropriate it, and everyone has the equal right to inhabit it.

Nowadays, the problem that these types of areas are experiencing in the Mexican urban context is that they less and less fulfill their sociability functions and the users that end up using them are only the people who don't have access to private spaces.

On the other hand, Valera (2008) states that the conflict can be approached through the new definitions of the urban, by applying new structures of urban sociability and diversity.

By taking these into account, a new conception of these spaces should be considered as a pertinent change, since it will become indispensable for the formation of social

interactions. These interactions can have a large effect on society: positive social dynamics promote the regulation of social interactions, coexistence, mediation between equals, and the development of negotiated civic norms.

Additionally, Valera (2008) touches on how public spaces, if not well implemented, can lead to a negative effect on the perception that inhabitants have about their society. Thus mentioning:

"The perception of citizen insecurity and the maliciously called intercultural 'shock' can be founded on the other plate marked by fear of the unknown other, prejudice, the exclusive territorialization of public space and the tension caused by the unilateral imposition of behavioral guidelines socio-environmental." (Valera. 2008: 1)

For this reason, he states that public spaces are becoming semi-public spaces, that is, private spaces for the masses, which can give citizens a feeling of security. However, the problem is that it now privatizes on what was once public.

Under this example, it can be inferred that the concept of public space is going through a transformation, where the term has become more complex. This is due to the fact that the concept is completely linked to the development and evolution of the city and its society, stating that this typology transformation is co-related to the needs and problems of its urban context, thus causing different dimensions of this space to be created, where each of them differs both in its morphology and in its role within the metropolis.

This project seeks to reflect on the role that urban art can acquire in the new typologies of public space and how this artistic practice can serve as a tool to adapt these spaces to the changing urban context.

4. Inhabiting the urban

Despite the fact that one of the roles of public space is to promote urban life in the city, there is a necessary criterion to ensure its effectiveness: the human scale.

Through the study of diverse cities around the world, Gehl (2012) manages to connect the term urban life with the scale in which a city operates. Jan Gehl highlights the



Figure 1. Urban art in a primary path, mural by SanezcraK (2020)

various ways in which the unbridled development of cities has led to their dehumanization. The prioritization of tall skyscrapers, large real estate developments and extensive roads has given the vehicle a leading role in the design of cities and with it the loss of its human scale.

Gehl points out that the only way to stimulate a livable and readable city is by positioning the inhabitants as protagonists. "The more space is left to people, the more public life there is" (Gehl, 2012)

Once the pedestrian is given its leading place in the design and development of cities, it will be possible to obtain an effective urban reading. It's hard to understand an urban

system if it is not possible to live within it. From this perspective, by recovering the human scale it will be possible to read and interpret the city.

Kevin Lynch (1960) offers a categorization and classification of the urban elements in order to understand their function and relevance within the city; managing to demonstrate that for an accurate reading of a urban system it is crucial to understand the parts that compose it.

Lynch affirms that every city combines diverse elements that allow the elaboration of an urban image which generates a visual frame for the inhabitants of the city.



Figure 2. Urban art in a primary path, mural by Pref (2016)

Under this understanding, the city can be recognized as an urban system consisting of five urban elements: paths, nodes, landmarks, neighborhoods and edges.

This work makes use of “The image of the city” (1960) by Lynch to study and understand urban art in the city. However, to understand that the city we should not only study the physical city but also the mental image that citizens extract from it.

Thus, it is evident that each citizen views their metropolis in a different way: depending on their origin, condition, and interests; However, in this case, these individualities are put aside so the common factors that define the mental image of the city can be sought.

It is from this position that urban art must be interpreted. For this reason, a methodology is implemented, starting from recognition of the five elements that make up, according to Lynch, the urban system and the relationship that each one of them has with the Street Art, thus, recognizing this practice not only as an artistic activity but as an urban strategy since it can cause positive changes in the public space.

4.1 Paths

The first element that Lynch mentions are the ‘paths’, which serve as the arteries of the urban system. These are in charge of connecting the different parts that make up the city. This element is classified in 3 dimensions, primary, secondary, and tertiary paths. This classification is linked to its scale and flows capacity, both vehicular and pedestrian.



Figure 3. Urban art in a primary path, mural by Pref (2016)



Figure 4. Urban art in a secondary path, mural by TFK Crew (2015)

One way to distinguish this element and its category within the urban context is through its handling of the human scale, the role of the pedestrian can be related to the path dimension, the safer and more comfortable a person feels within a path it is more likely that it is a tertiary path.

To prove the connection between the paths and the urban art that inhabits them, an analysis of murals was carried out in the different dimensions of paths in the city of Monterrey.

The murals located in the primary paths lacked connection with their urban context, because these areas were dominated by the car, provoking a feeling of insecurity to the pedestrian, causing no one to stop to appreciate the murals, likewise, to assertively appreciate the works it was necessary to be in the vehicular crossing which made it impossible to fully contemplate the artwork.

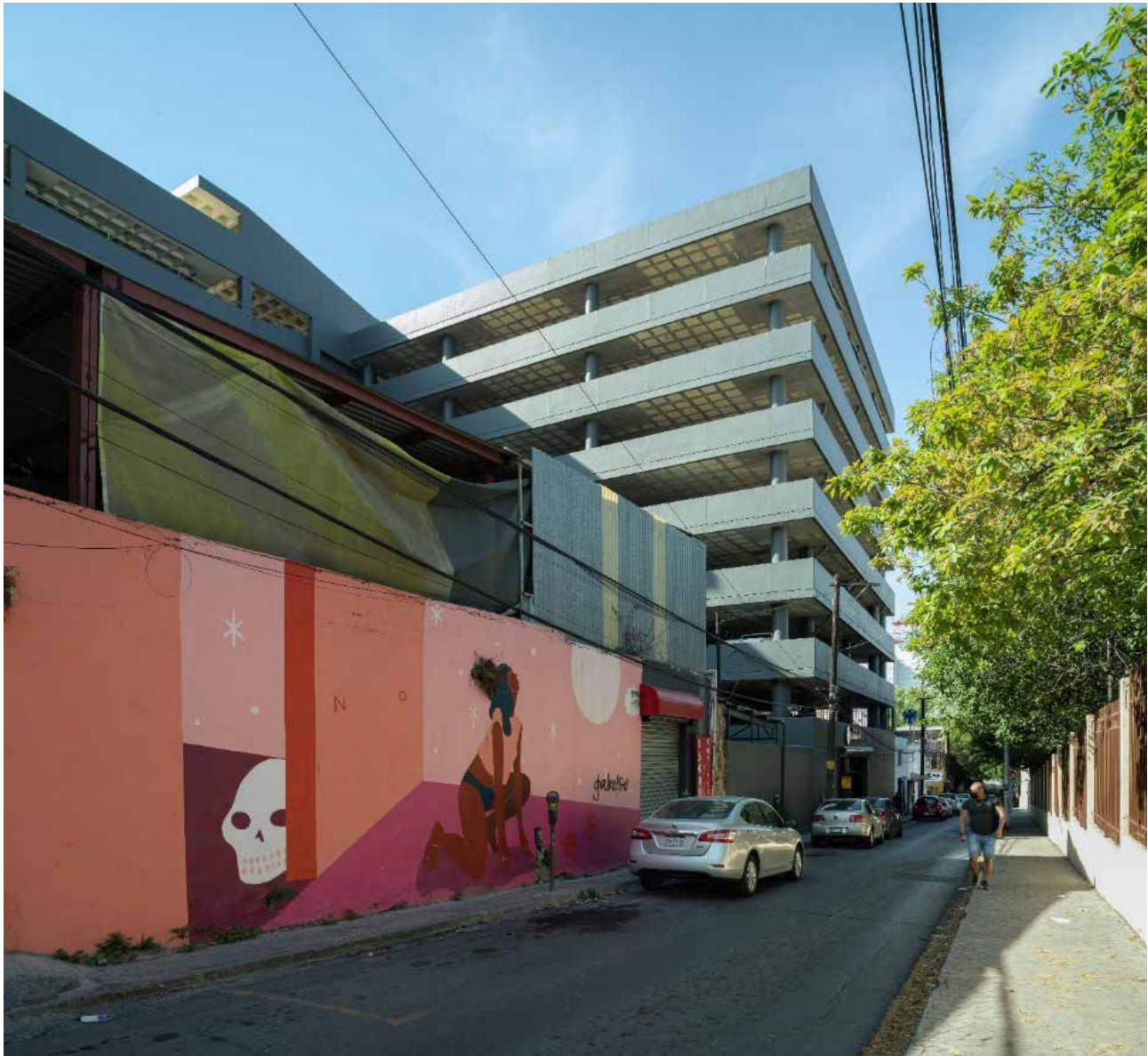


Figure 5. Urban art in a secondary path, Vera Primavera (2020)

Through the analysis of the murals on the secondary paths, it was possible to demonstrate that the more a human scale is implemented, the chances of a connection between the mural and the user increases. Since the pedestrian does not feel intimidated in the space, there is more possibility that it will stop to contemplate the artwork. However, because it

is still a secondary road, these paths have a medium vehicular flow, causing that sometimes the car to impose on these spaces making the mural-user connection more difficult.



Figure 6. Urban art in a tertiary path, mural by Saile (2015)

Out of the mural analysis in the tertiary paths, it was easy to conclude that the most optimal path to achieve a connection between the art and the user is the one in which the pedestrian has priority, this is because the user will be more willing to stay, and carry out activities, such as in this case the contemplation of street art, in the space where it feels comfortable.

In this way, from a convergence approach between urban art and the element of the paths, it is possible to understand that if Street Art is carried out within this urban element, it is necessary that it has an adequate human scale, it is easier for the viewer to contemplate art from a space where they do not feel insecure or intimidated. Therefore, if the intention of the mural is to generate a connection with the viewer, it will be necessary to study the city and its flows, in order to select the most favorable space for this interaction.



Figure 7. Urban art in a tertiary path, Carlos Robledo 2016

4.2 Edges

There is another linear element within the urban system, which unlike the paths, its purpose is to fragment; Lynch calls these 'edges'. The function of this element is to express the limits of a space within the urban context. These elements can be tangible as well as intangible and can vary in both morphology and scale.

In order to recognize these elements in the urban context, it is necessary to read the character of the city's spaces and observe at what point it is modified.

Today's cities are made up of a diverse number of borders, most of which end up alienating and fragmenting the city. It is possible to explore the possibility of using tangible borders for the practice of urban art, this with the purpose of converting blind walls that previously only limited the urban visual and transforming them into urban elements that can provide identity and personality to a certain area of the city.

From the analysis of the murals on the edges of the city, it was possible to observe how they manage to enhance the urban image of its context, giving more life and personality to the public road, by this it can be demonstrated how these urban elements should be considered as a canvas for art expression that can reflect the urban identity of the city.



Figure 8. Urban art in the edges of the city, mural by Farid Rueda (2015)



Figure 9. Urban art in the edges of the city, various artists (2020)



Figure 10. Urban art in a residential district, mural by NSU Crew (2015)

4.3 Districts

Lynch classifies the element of 'neighborhoods or districts' as urban areas of relatively large dimensions, these areas are distinguished by their character and their own identity; Due to this, it is possible to recognize these areas from the inside as well as from the outside. Thanks to their uniqueness, these areas manage to contrast and differentiate themselves from their neighboring urban context.

A good urban environment is one that allows diversity and coexistence between its neighborhoods, where the identity of each of them is valued and these differences are promoted. Due to the impact that urban art can achieve within its urban context, it is possible to use this artistic typology as a tool that encourages the personification of these areas, where through these murals the character of this element can be evoked and enhanced.

Once analyzing various murals in different districts of the city, it was observed how each one of them managed to reflect the identity of a certain district, the first (fig.10) was located in a residential district and through the mural it was possible to reflect the identity of the residents and their ancestral roots, the second (fig.11) was located in an industrial district and reflected the lifestyle and hardship of the industrial workers, finally the third (fig.12) was located in an art district and the mural managed to reflect the creativity and imagination of the artistic residents and businesses in the area. Thus, demonstrating how urban art is an assertive method to potentiate the visual identity and personality of the city's districts.



Figure 11. Urban art in an industrial district, mural by Libre Hem (2015)



Figure 12. Urban art in an art district, mural by Buytronick (2015)



Figure 13. Urban art in a metro station, mural by The Meeting of styles (2015)

4.4 Nodes

The next element Lynch mentions are 'nodes'; These are denoted as strategic spaces which function from the confluence of various paths or concentrations of vehicles or pedestrians. These elements serve as pause or meeting spaces, and it is where different types of users converge within the urban context. These spaces can vary in scale, ranging from small bus stops to large squares and blocks.

One way to identify this element in the city is from the reading of urban life, this is due to the nodes are spaces where many people converge, either by connecting paths or meeting spaces.

For the analysis of the Urban Art in this urban element, artworks within the spaces with the greatest confluence of users in the city were analyzed, these ended up being the subway stations and bus stops. These spaces handle a large number of people constantly, being important spaces for urban mobility. It was possible to observe how the more the space is visited, the art-user relationship grows.

The spaces in the city that have the greatest potential for creating urban art are the nodes. These can be considered as strategic points within the metropolis, since many people will visit it. Knowing that the objective of a work of urban art is to acquire value and relevance within the social context, it is necessary that the work will be accessible to as many people as possible.



Figure 14. Urban art in a metro station, mural by The Meeting of styles (2015)



Figure 15. Urban art in a bus station, mural by Musa 71 (2016)

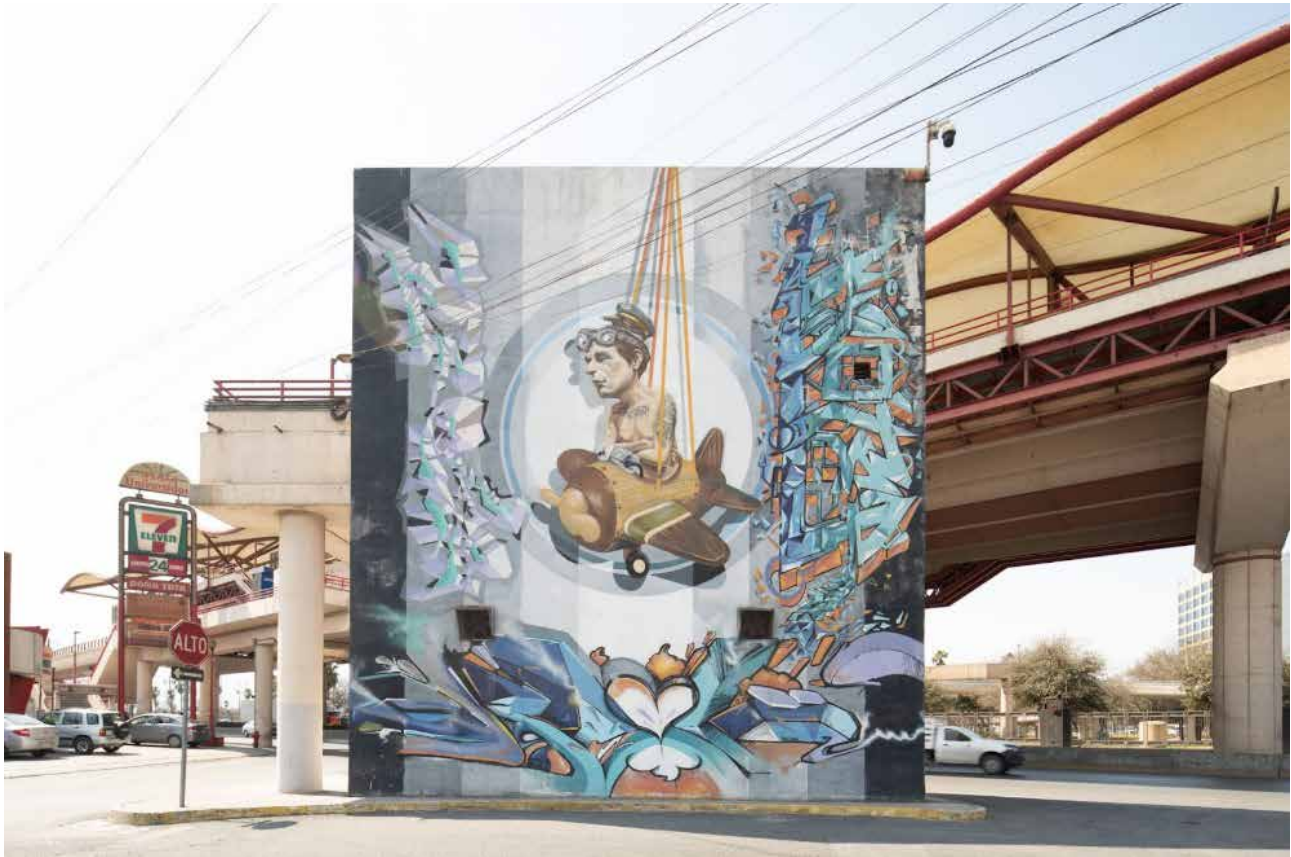


Figure 16. Urban art as a reference point within the urban context, mural by TFW Crew (2014)

4.5 Landmarks

Finally, Lynch calls the element of 'milestones or landmarks' as visual reference points which are considered external to the observer. These elements are key to facilitate the reading of cities, because they serve as remarkable visual elements, which help the user to locate and move within the urban context.

Lynch refers to the system of landmarks as a tool for easier urban reading. Where users prefer to use a system of singular and distinctive elements to understand their city more easily. There is the possibility of giving the landmark role to urban works of art, in this way not only improves urban

reading but also increases the value of these murals, because it gives the opportunity for more people to recognize and identify them. From this, it is possible to transform the concept of these murals, which, from being simple artistic elements, can become important points of reference that contribute to the reading and understanding of the city.

Through the analysis of several murals in the city, it was possible to observe how on certain occasions these works became an urban element that facilitated the urban reading of the city, either by creating a new visual reference (fig.16) Or by enhancing existing landmarks to make them more legible. (fig.17).



Figure 17. Urban art enhancing an existing node, mural by Falus Masta (2014)

Unlike other artistic typologies, urban art is made to relate to the city, and it is not possible to understand this relationship if it is not possible to read this urban context beforehand. From the understanding and recognition of these urban elements it is possible to acquire a new way of interpreting these murals. Where it is possible to understand in greater detail the role that a mural can acquire within the city based on the reading and recognition of its adjacent urban elements. In this way, it is possible to appreciate this artistic typology in a different way, where its value not only lies in its technique or plasticity, but also in the role that it may acquire within its spatial context.

5. The mural's relationship with public space

Urban art does not only belong to museums or galleries, this typology can also belong to the city and its public space. For this to be possible, the mural must coexist with its existing urban elements. This is due to the fact that this artistic typology does not inhabit the environment but rather becomes a part of it. In other words, when creating a urban art in a public space, the mural becomes part of that site.

This section of the research seeks to reveal the relationship that urban art can have with the public space. This achieved through the documentation of various works on the different dimensions of the public space within the urban context of Monterrey. Based on this, it seeks to demonstrate whether the impact of urban art is co-dependent on its spatial environment.

For this documentation, the three most predominant dimensions of public space in the city of Monterrey were taken into consideration. Each of them with its own identity and functionality. In this way, the aim is to analyze whether the way in which a public space works is linked to the possible potential and impact that a mural may acquire within it.

5.1 The semi-public space

The insecurity and crime that was generated within the city in the mid-2010's brought with it the creation of a dimension of public space in the city of Monterrey. This being the semi-public space, which consists of the combination of the

public space with the urban elements of edges and nodes.

Semi-public spaces are part of private capital, this can be observed by their fenced or walled peripheries, as well as their access fees and specific visit hours. It is easy to identify this dimension of public space because it is completely separated from its surrounding elements, so it is easy to notice when you enter or leave this space.

The semi-public space selected for the analysis was the Fundidora Park, which is located in the central area within the metropolitan area of Monterrey; This 144-hectare park has a diverse range of spaces that promote sports, recreational and cultural activities in the city. This site is considered one of the most recognized spaces in the city of Monterrey to carry out events that promote urban art.

This site has a great history and identity, because before becoming this great urban space, the foundry was one of the largest and most important iron and steel industries originally from the city of Monterrey. Currently the Fundidora Park is recognized as a Site Museum of Industrial Archeology because various industrial elements have been preserved within the facilities and now serve as part of the site's landscape, this not only makes the space much more interesting and diverse, but which also manages to show fragments of the history and origins of the ancient city.

The work 'Dismorfia' (Figure 11), made by Monica Loya in 2018, was selected as the main case study to analyze urban art through this dimension of public space.

Monica Loya, originally from Chihuahua, through her paintings, addresses contemporary problems of womanhood, this can be appreciated in her mural 'Dismorfia' which her intention is to reflect on the erroneous perceptions that a girl has of herself, and that lead to psychological disorders. "Dysmorphia consists of seeing yourself different from the way you really are, for reasons of self-esteem, or these canons of beauty that society has imposed very out of the realm. It is an important issue that is hardly talked about." (Loya, M., 2018)



Figure 18. Urban art activities performed inside the building Nave Generadores of Fundidora Park, photo taken by Omar in the festival of urban expressions (2011)

Selecting a semi-public space as the venue for the elaboration of urban art can have advantages, one of them being the importance of this space within the urban context which makes it much easier to spread the word and promote the location of the event.

Likewise, the selection of this space can have its disadvantages. Being a in high demand within the cultural and artistic field, where events, festivals and exhibitions are constantly held within it, all work that is produced within it is ephemeral and after its exposition time expires it has to be dismantled and removed. The mural of Loya being a clear

example, dismantled in 2018 after the festival ended, and currently there are no more traces of this mural other than in photographs and in the memory of the attendees.

Unlike other artistic typologies, such as performances, which are programmed to be temporary, the ephemerality of urban art is not programmed or controlled but rather time, the environment, and the city itself and its social activities consume it, this happens in a long span of time and for this phenomenon to occur the same metropolis will have already gone through different interactions with the artwork, thus becoming part of the memory of the city.



Figure 19. Urban art elaborated in a semipublic space, mural by Monica Loya (2018) Source Retrieved from the artist official page: [/https://www.facebook.com/loya.monica/photos/dismorfia-mural-terminado-gracias-a-callegenera-y-conartenl-por-la-invita%C3%B3n-a-/1053213188188278/](https://www.facebook.com/loya.monica/photos/dismorfia-mural-terminado-gracias-a-callegenera-y-conartenl-por-la-invita%C3%B3n-a-/1053213188188278/)



Figure 20. Aerial view of the entrance of Zaragoza station, photo taken by The Raws (2021)

Urban art, just because it is made in a public space, has greater potential than any other type of art, since it can become accessible to all audiences and its permanence ensures that more users have the opportunity to appreciate the work. The legacy that a mural can leave in society is linked to a collective memory, sociologist John Urry (1995) defines this term of collective memory as the main strategy to ensure that an urban element can acquire a value within its social context. Therefore, for urban art to have a true value in society, it must have passed through a large number of people, because at the end, society is the main determining factor that defines its value.

From the analysis of this case study, it is possible to conclude that the limitations in a public space directly affect the value of urban art. Because if a work of urban art, as amazing as it may be, is not connected to its adjacent urban context or its life span is truly short, the possibilities that the mural will acquire great social value are low.

5.2 The transitional public space

The development and expansion of urban transport networks brought a new dimension of public space to the city of Monterrey, this being the transitional public space. This space consists from the union of the public space and the urban elements of paths and nodes. The purpose of these public spaces is for their users to pass through them. They serve as connection points between various destinations.

Public transport is made up of an integral system of different modes of transportation for general and accessible use, this is one of the most essential parts of cities since it allows the commute of a large number of people within the urban area. Gómez (1998) makes a connection between the quality of life of users in a city and the urban mobility, where he points out the need for a good connection between the various parts of the urban context as one of the determining factors to ensure a better quality of life for its inhabitants.



Figure 21. Mural 'El amor es bailar' by Janin Nuz (2014)



Figure 22. Mural 'El amor es bailar' in Zaragoza station by Janin Nuz (2014)

For the study of this dimension of public space, the metropolitan area metro system was studied. Monterrey's metro system has three lines with a total of 38 stations in service, for this work one of the 38 stations of the Monterrey metro was selected, the Zaragoza station (Figure 12), as the type of transitional public space to study. The Zaragoza station is one of the main stations of the metro system of Monterrey because it is the terminal station of line 2 and line 3, also being located in one of the most touristic areas of Monterrey's downtown.

The work of urban art that is analyzed in this station is 'El amor es bailar' (Figure 13) made in 2014 by the artist Janin Nuz, from San Luis Potosí, who is recognized for her portraits, using the expression of the face until reaching the realism, as well as its recurring themes of the femininity of women and the innocence of childhood.

Nuz (2018) says that thanks to street art she has been able to get to know a large part of the country and considers that her greatest prize is leaving something on the street that can be seen and interpreted by all kinds of people. She achieved it in an effective way in her work 'El amor es bailar' where not only it evokes the themes of femininity, innocence and childhood of Mexican culture, but also from its elaboration in one of the busiest public spaces in the city it, managing to leave her artwork open to the interpretation of all users.

The Nuz's mural (Figure 14) is still in good condition, due to the morphology of the Zaragoza station, which is an underground station, ensuring that this work is not damaged by the weather. Likewise, this mural has gradually become part of the collective memory of the city, not only because it has been maintained over a prolonged period of years, also continuing to be relevant as it reflects current aspects of the city's culture.

Based on the findings obtained in this case study, it is very difficult to define whether the repercussions of urban art in this dimension of public space are completely positive or negative. The result ended up in a gray area due to several factors. Considering the accessibility factor, this space is very favorable, because there is a constant pedestrian flow in the site, However, on the mural-user interaction factor,

the setting is not very positive, since the space is transitional and not for permanence, very few users take their time to stop and appreciate the artwork, this is mainly due to the function of this public space, because people use it as a connection point and not as a destination, provoking the lack of awareness of the elements that are on their commute.

The team concluded that this space ends up being favorable but first it is necessary to generate proposals for the promotion of this type of works, this with the intention that users become more aware of the elements that are in their path and not only in their destination.

Finally, in terms of identity and personification, the impact that the mural has generated on the metro station was found to be very positive, because it gives life and its own identity to the place, as well as positively reflecting the cultural and social aspects from the city.

5.3 The Central Public space

The center of the urban area is the space that has the greatest potential for expressing the diversity, culture and identity of a city. Due to the fact that in the city's downtown everything converges: different cultures, different lifestyles and different users share the same space, in other words it is the place where the heterogeneity of a city emerges.

In the nucleus of the urban area is the public space with the greatest potential for artistic expression, cause is the place where all social groups can feel identified. There is a greater possibility of finding examples of urban art in the downtown of the city than in its peripheries because the user is more willing to express himself within a space where he feels invited.

For the analysis of the relationship between urban art and the central public space, the team selected a specific area of Monterrey's downtown. For this case study, the area of Isaac Garza (Figure 15) is selected. This zone is located few blocks from the Macroplaza (one of the most important public spaces in the city) and the museums of Mexican history. This area has a truly diverse urban context, and it can be observed by the contrast generated between old buildings with new businesses and residences.



Figure 23. Aerial view of Isaac Garza, photo taken by the Raws (2021)

The work of urban art selected for this case study is "El legado" (2020) by Anahid Hernandez (Figure 16), originated from Nuevo León, she originally worked on easel and in recent years has been involved in muralism. In her work "El legado" Hernandez alludes to the theme of life, one of her three most recurrent themes, the others being time and death.

Analyzing this case study, it was concluded very favorable for the artwork to be developed the central area of the city, since it is within a greater reach of the whole population, which increases the possibility to acquire greater value from the collective memory of the citizens. Likewise, its relationship with its neighboring context is positive, because the mural was located near different recognized establishments in the area (Figure 17). By this connection, the city transforms the mural into a visual node that is not only related to its adjoining urban context, but also to the social activities that take place nearby.

Based on these findings, it was possible to conclude that the central public space is the dimension that has the greatest potential for the practice of urban art, due to its strategic location, which is within the reach of all citizens, its various roles in the city, since these spaces have a leading role in the social activities of the city, and also the higher expectations of obtaining value by the collective memory of the citizens. By this it can be stated that there is a correlation between the accessibility that society has to an element in a space and the value that society can give to said element, the more interaction is promoted, the more value said mural could acquire.



Figure 24. Mural 'El legado' by Anahid Hernandez (2020)

6. The potential of urban art in public space

Once analyzing the relationship between urban art and the city, it is possible to find in the same way the benefits that the promotion and valorization of this artistic typology can bring to the city. There are diverse ways in which this artistic practice can be beneficial for the urban context.

Urban art can be considered as a tool to enrich the identity and personality of a city. This is possible cause this practice can foster a dynamic and diverse urban context, giving the possibility that previously null spaces of lacking identity, can come to stand out and distinguish themselves from their surrounding context. On a larger scale, the practice

of urban art can allow an area to distinguish itself from its peers, giving the possibility of creating spaces that are different and unrepeatable from those of other metropolises.

This practice gives the possibility of singling out spaces from their context, and consequently fosters greater urban readability, since it is easier to understand a city if it has a large number of identifiable spaces. Providing the opportunity that both a local and foreign users can more easily move within the city. This phenomenon manages to turn the murals into visual landmarks, which are emblematic, recognizable, and identifiable elements that serve as a point of reference for a greater ease of interpretation and reading of an urban context.



Figure 25 Aerial view of the mural 'El legado' by Anahid Hernandez (2020), photo taken by the Raws (2021)



Figure 26. Mural 'El legado' by Anahid Hernandez (2020)

Other authors not only refer to landmarks as urban reading tools, but also relate them to the visual diversity of a city. Jacobs (1961) denotes landmarks as an urban element that can end the monotony of cities, since by having distinctive and singular elements, it is possible that they can acquire a visual richness. In this sense, urban art can be used method to stop the monotony of new cities and turn a gray and uniform urban context into a complex interesting one.

7.Conclusions

From the findings acquired in this investigation, we were able to demonstrate that there is a big correlation between urban art and the space where it resides. This potential lies within the urban life of its surroundings, and that can be interpreted from the practice of urban reading, by doing this, an alternate way of appreciating urban art can be introduced, where its value also resides in its relationship with its spatial context.

Additionally, it was possible to conclude that the benefits are mutual. Urban art benefits from the city, since without the public realm these artworks could not achieve their full potential and relevance, just as the city benefits from urban art, because this practice encourages the singularization and personification of the city. Through this, it is possible to demonstrate from the lens of urban planning and design, the importance of this art typology and the relevance that the practice of urban art should have on the design of cities that seek to achieve an adequate human scale. Thus, confirming that urban art can be implemented as methodology to encourage the urban life in public spaces, creating a phenomenon in which the activities of artistic expression take a role in the transformation of the city and its society.

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