

MASTER'S THESIS

The production of differential spaces through participatory art in Hong Kong 2000-2019

Liu, Mankun

Date of Award:
2020

[Link to publication](#)

General rights

Copyright and intellectual property rights for the publications made accessible in HKBU Scholars are retained by the authors and/or other copyright owners. In addition to the restrictions prescribed by the Copyright Ordinance of Hong Kong, all users and readers must also observe the following terms of use:

- Users may download and print one copy of any publication from HKBU Scholars for the purpose of private study or research
- Users cannot further distribute the material or use it for any profit-making activity or commercial gain
- To share publications in HKBU Scholars with others, users are welcome to freely distribute the permanent URL assigned to the publication

Abstract

Since the preservation campaigns at Lee Tung Street, the Star Ferry Pier and the Queen's Pier that erupted in early to mid-2000s, Hong Kong participatory art has undertaken an increasingly proactive role in local spatial movements, which marks the organizational and strategical evolvments of this artistic category that differentiate it from earlier public and community art. While research initiatives after 2010 have identified regional geospatial politics as one major concern for local participatory art today, existing studies tend to take a contextual approach with main emphases on why art becomes involved in urban spatial struggles while rarely proceeding to investigate what strategies or modes of spatial practices have emerged from relevant projects and what implications they have on the material-social spaces of the city. This hesitation to forward an interpretive evaluation of the focused phenomenon stems from the absence of epistemological concreteness in participatory art theories and criticisms, which necessitates the introduction of new analytical tools in research on the subject. To answer the pending questions, this research employs Henry Lefebvre's theories of the social production of space to examine three representative projects selected from a preliminary survey of local participatory art programs/groups which involve spatial practices. In exploring the contents, strategies, and socio-spatial implications of these cases, it presents three models of spatially oriented participatory art. On this basis, a cross-case analysis is conducted to explore how participatory art in general offers counterforces against the neoliberalist social-material and aesthetic reprogramming of the city while laying the social foundation for the anticipated production of differential spaces. As more urban renewal and land resumption plans are anticipated to storm through the city in the coming decades,

this research hopes to provide for practitioners, researchers, and local communities the discursive and conceptual tools to understand the role of art in preceding and future spatial contestations.

Table of Contents

DECLARATION	i
Abstract.....	ii
Acknowledgements.....	iv
Table of Contents	vi
List of Figures.....	vii
List of Diagrams	x
List of Abbreviations	xi
Introduction.....	1
Chapter 1: Research methods and rationale.....	17
Purposeful sampling of the cases.....	17
Curating the sources	19
The role of theory	21
Analytical methods	22
Chapter 2: Literature review	26
Overview	26
The indeterminacy of the concept of participatory art in local research.....	28
A historical-spatial review of Hong Kong participatory art.....	33
The spatial politics of participatory art.....	44
How to understand the spatial implications of participatory art? – On the insufficiency of art criticism strategies	53
Chapter 3: Forming the theoretical framework.....	57
Overview	57
Constructing a spatial ontology of multiplicity	60
Problematizing the modern space of abstraction	69
Searching for the paths to differential spaces	73
The situated contradictions of Hong Kong space	79
Chapter 4: Case studies.....	95
Woofers Ten	95
Festival among the ruins: the arts festival at Choi Yuen Village	132
v-artist.....	165
Chapter 5: Further discussions and conclusion.....	200
Spatial practices in participatory art explored through three models.....	201
Participation towards Autogestion.....	209
Conclusion.....	217
Bibliography	224
Appendix I: A preliminary mapping of spatially-oriented participatory art programs/groups in Hong Kong (2000-2019)	240
Appendix II : Summary of the major findings	247
CURRICULUM VITAE	251