ART THAT INSPIRES PLACE: CREATING INVESTMENT IN THE

COMMON LANDSCAPE

by

MARGARET E. GAFFNEY

(Under the Direction of Judith Wasserman)

ABSTRACT

This research examines in what way public art can effect investment in place in Athens, Georgia. Primarily, place theory and the history of public art were studied in an effort to establish the relationship between the two. Then, three cities with similarities to Athens were investigated and critiqued as to whether their public art initiatives increased community investment in place. The study found that the use of public art in Athens would promote investment in place if it resulted from an effort established and maintained by a balanced cross section of the community. Additionally, suggestions were made regarding specific issues in this city which would be benefited by the expression and creation of dialogue that community based, public art could provide.

INDEX WORDS: Landscape Architecture, Public art, Place theory

ART THAT INSPIRES PLACE: CREATING INVESTMENT IN THE COMMON LANDSCAPE

by

MARGARET E. GAFFNEY

B.S., The University of Georgia, 1998

A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of The University of Georgia in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

MASTER OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

ATHENS, GEORGIA

2002

ART THAT INSPIRES PLACE: CREATING INVESTMENT IN THE COMMON LANDSCAPE

by

MARGARET E. GAFFNEY

Major Professor: Judith Wasserman

Committee: Marianne Cramer
Virginia Nazarea
Dennis Harper

Electronic Version Approved:

Gordhan L. Patel
Dean of the Graduate School
The University of Georgia
December 2002

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to Della Francis, Claire Francis-Siegal, and Cynthia White-Camarerri. These three women each provided a setting in which I could explore my potential and, in this way and many others, were pivotal to my growth as an individual and a professional. I am so grateful that you are all part of who I am.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank the universe for three things.

First, for the incredible education I have acquired, thus far. I have been very fortunate.

Second, for making certain that I am constantly challenged: Life; death; graduate school; and all the lovely curve balls that have kept me on my toes. I may forget at times, but I am very grateful that my existence is anything but boring.

And last but not least, for the extraordinary people closest to me: my loving parents whose encouragement helped me complete this; the constant support of my beautiful sisters; so many good friends… (especially Diane who donated her talents in helping me edit this research); and Heather –my sanity and solace through these past years. May my love and gratitude shine back on all of you.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

LIST OF TABLES

Page

LIST OF FIGURES

Page

INTRODUCTION

Athens, Georgia is one of the many small cities in this country with concern for the future of its physical character. Though the city has maintained much of its uniqueness through difficult times, now more than ever, infrastructure and commercial development and vehicle pressures are changing the landscape of this small but culturally rich southern city. The recent prosperous economic years, the proximity of Atlanta and its urban sprawl, and the growing size of the University of Georgia have led to much new construction, which threatens to overpower the flavor of diversity and creativity that abound here.

Athens already has many attractive attributes. A new dialogue within the community regarding their shared place can have a significant positive impact on those who live or visit the city. Place is defined by the layers of common culture evident everywhere –from private homes, to businesses, to public spaces –so often overlooked until they have been erased for something new often of benefit to a chosen few. In an effort to encourage community members to place a higher value on these layers, those interested in preserving place are compelled to look for innovative ways to bring attention to the everyday landscape and how it is a necessary part of us.

Art can be used to create dialogue between different groups within the community on issues that affect everyone's quality of life. In doing so relational bonds will strengthen the community as a whole. Wong (1992, p. 3) says:

> Human existence is meaningless without communication. The fragility of the human bond, the vulnerability of individual isolation can only be alleviated by communication.

In order to protect the character attributes of Athens, the community has to be engaged, to learn to notice what is around them through open communication about the landscape they have in common. One way to do this is through the medium of art.

The unique and diverse population of this small Georgia city could be the basis for creative solutions to community issues, yet a lack of communication most often produces a business-as-usual approach, and no consensus on solutions. There is an air of culture in this city, even though 28.3% of Athens residents live below the poverty level and the median income is only $28,403 (Clarke County, US Census 2000). For over a century before and after the Civil War, cotton and millworks were prosperous industries here and the city flourished.

Now, the University of Georgia is the strongest economic influence. Its dominance creates an intellectual “college town” atmosphere, attracting creative people from many fields. From the perspective of place, this dominance also fosters rampant growth of structures and amenities to meet the ever-growing needs and preferences of its student body, University visitors, and those who work within the University's environs. If the University were to create a participatory agreement with Athens' municipal leaders and/or business and community activists to work towards a coordinated and creative promotion of place, future endeavors could build on the skills and resources of all those involved.

Athens, a city with a history of community involvement, is in the position of generating public art from the grass roots up. With enough community support for public art projects, the municipal officers and the reservoir of talent and energy represented by University of Georgia faculty and students can be utilized while maintaining a community focus. In this way, the city can be part of the dialogue without dictating the topics, and the people of Athens can identify their own leaders and generate their own artistic expression -possibly garnering the collective force to identify and restore, preserve, enhance, build, and express the place they call home.

This thesis will investigate the use of public art in Athens, Georgia for the purpose of creating interaction and involvement amongst citizens regarding their common landscape. The first chapter will investigate "place" theory. The second will define how the term "public art" is defined for the purposes of this document and relay the most relevant portions of its history. The third chapter will introduce the idea of public art as a tool for investment in place through a presentation of case studies on Athens and on two other selected cities. The fourth, and final, chapter will apply the research study to Athens and will include suggestions for potential collaboration sites/issues.

CHAPTER 1

PLACE

"Few in contemporary North American society know our place. - For many, displacement is the factor that defines a colonized or expropriated place. And even if we can locate ourselves, we haven't necessarily examined our place in, or our actual relationships to, that place." (Lippard, 1997, p. 9)

Introduction

The word "place" is heavily used in the English language and most often speaks of the human perspective. Consider the phrases: "out of place;" "knowing your place;" and "placeless." Each term conjures very social or human situations, which are commonly understood, yet somehow elusive to describe. The Random House Webster's College Dictionary has some 38 definitions for place (2000, p. 1010). The meaning I will invoke has to do with the word as it might correlate with the term "site," yet in choosing "place," one implies an existing richness of human experience.

Specifically, the research in this thesis uses the term place to mean landscapes as interpreted by people. Places, as defined by Sue Clifford and Angela King (1996, p. 2) are:

> ...based in nature on the foundations of geology and climate, are diverged with the alchemy of life, the articulation of social and economic demands of successive societies, the narratives of myth and legend, and … ethical and cultural variations over time.

Their ideas and the work of many others are based on this belief that every place is unique and valuable in and of itself and that understanding places will help temper the erasure of the locally unique.

This concept of "place" has become more and more important over the last century as industrialization has sped up the rate at which growth and hence change can occur not only in our economy but also in our natural and cultural landscape. Our society's ability to drastically alter the landscape, erasing whatever layers of existing ecological systems and/or human history present, is astounding. Athens/Clarke County is a good example of a unique place in jeopardy of losing character defining features because of unobstructed development. In Athens there are no guidelines for the protection of important ecological and/or cultural areas. The county is losing both at an alarming rate while housing and industrial construction continue unchecked.

Much of the writing on the subject of the loss of place sprang from the 1970s when it became apparent that the urban renewal programs of the previous decades had destroyed neighborhoods, instead of created them. Multiple city blocks in major cities were erased so that large sleek modern buildings could replace them. People realized that the clean, unadorned ideals of modernism had failed to be a humane solution. These places felt so sterile, so empty of life and place that they were uninteresting, if not intimidating. The Urban Renewal Programs demolished poor neighborhoods in order to replace them with cookie-cutter government housing, destroying the intricate layers of history, architecture, and community that made those places function. Since then people from all sides of the issue have tried to understand how to define those layers and how they apply to all communities (Finkelpearl, 2000, p. 12).

As an artist and critic of the "new genre public art" era, Lucy R. Lippard explores our society's relationship to place and art's relationship to both. In the contemplative approach she takes in The Lure of the Local, she states:

> Each time we enter a new place, we become one of the ingredients of an existing hybridity, which is really what all "local places" consist of. By entering that hybrid, we change it: and in each situation we play a different role. (Lippard, 1997, p. 6)

There is no one solution to the issue of preserving or creating places, as no two places are the same. Yet basic guidelines have been produced to help communities influence the management of their home region. The Project for Public Spaces, based on the research done by William Whyte, currently provides educational workshops, tours, and publications to the professional and layman alike on how to preserve, enhance, and/or build common places which richly support the human experience.

Investment in Place

The impact of our history and current lifestyles has engaged people from many disciplines to investigate the idea of investment in place. These individuals have been trying to understand the deep attachments we can develop to places. Leading anthropologist Keith Basso believes that individuals' experience of place adds to their mental landscape. The mind is enriched upon experiencing a place and is never the same afterward. Basso states:

> Hence, as numerous writers have noted, places possess a marked capacity for triggering acts of self-reflection, inspiring thoughts about who

one presently is, or memories of who one used to be, or musings on who one might become. (Basso & Feld, 1996, p. 55)

The concept of being invested in place is not widely known in the United States. William Berry has said, "[Though there may have been] the tendency to stay put, to say 'No farther. This is the place.' So far this has been the weaker tendency, less glamorous, certainly less successful" (1986, p. 4). It has been the nature of the settling of this nation, as well as a necessity of the survival of its citizens, to move frequently. And, whether in the first century of this nation, or during the increasingly industrial decades of the succeeding ones, such movement meant that cultural history and identification of one's place were often left behind. For the fortunate, new traditions and new loyalties to place began.

Investment is most often thought of in financial instead of geographical terms. Within the demands of our capitalist society, our homes are forced into the servitude of our investment portfolios, as the industrial or corporation job market keeps us looking to the horizon for better jobs. The nature of these work-driven relationships encourages us to refrain from emotionally investing in the place where we live.

We as a society have been discovering that our recognition and familiarity with the place where we live can be the catalyst toward an expanding relationship that supports both entities: the person and all the elements that make up the physical site. Though there may be many theories regarding why people become invested in places, one thing is certain: if people care about a place they are more likely to protect the qualities they appreciate. Often elements of a place appreciated by more then one person

will galvanize momentum, through grassroots communication, to block or to change powerful and often destructive forces.

Without local support of local places, the protection of those elements that make them unique and the preservation of their culture and environmental history are almost impossible. Wonderfully, on the other hand, local support in the form of grassroots organization is community building in action. The process of identifying and protecting a physical reminder of local history, part of the local story, can bring people together not only in celebration of that past but in the construction of a shared future. Common issues which might inspire the emotional support necessary for consensus and action could involve the sight and sound of bulldozers poised to clear the last wooded lot in a neighborhood or the imminent threat of the wrecking ball at the home of a famous local individual.

Community interaction itself is intricately interwoven with place and place with landscape. Duncan tells us that, "Landscapes are ordered assemblages of objects which act as a signifying system through which a social system is communicated, reproduced, experienced and explored" (Anderson & Gale, 1992, p. 36). Though a physical community can consist of many combinations of people with different issues, they will always have a shared landscape. Edward Casey says, "given that culture manifestly exists, it must exist somewhere, and it exists more concretely and completely in places than in minds or signs" (Basso & Feld, 1996, p. 33). Though place as physical, tangible landscape historically defined community, more and more often it may not (e.g., cyber-communities), making the need to engage people in and on the subject of physical places ever more important.

What is it that opens people to perceiving a place? Shusterman says, "the act of perception is one that comes from any and all of our senses, very few of which we are cognitive of" (1992, p. 127). Similar to the fact that there is not one sense that perceives all elements, so too there are many ways in which to engage attention. Everyone absorbs places in different ways and each individual will bring a different understanding to each physical location whether he or she is visiting or residing there.

There are always layers of a place to which we are not attuned. From the ecological to the historical, what we perceive has to do with who we are and what we value: our "cultural filters." Young states that:

> Different cultural groups do indeed see and interpret landscape in different ways.... From childhood we are encouraged to accept those interpretations emanating from our own culture, and those belonging to others may be largely invisible to us. This obviously detracts from the richness of our understanding of the world around us. (Anderson & Gale, 1992, p. 270)

The United States has the nickname of "The Great American Melting Pot." Though we pride ourselves on our multi-cultural foundation, it keeps us from having shared stories and hence a deep understanding of places. Lucy Lippard writes, "…in the case of a restless, multitraditional people, even as the power of place is diminished and often lost, it continues—as an absence—to define culture and identity. It also continues as a presence—to change the way we live" (1997, p. 20). As stories of places go untold or are forgotten, we feel less for the location which we inhabit on a daily basis. Without ties to places, our relationships to each other and the landscape slip away faster, while restlessness and discontent spread.

Creating investment in place means getting people to experience what is around them in new ways, encouraging even the most transient among us to take a second look. We are a people who prize mobility. Because of the current hierarchy of priorities, many people from this country do not want to get attached to a location which they likely will leave. Judith Wasserman in studying the memorial landscape, states: "The rootlessness of our culture robs the landscape of its stories and us of community ties (1998, p. 43)." Investment in place is about creating ties through understanding something about a place that relates to you or your community.

Visual Identity and Art

The term "visual identity" is used to describe the information available at a glance which aids in the recognition of the natural and cultural elements of a site. Designers, artists, and activists have long studied this category of perception as they strive to capture, create, and protect particular environments. Art is an obvious contributor to visual perception and can be integral to changing the perceptions of place. Though visual recognition is only one part of experience, its importance leads us to evaluate its impact on what is or is not supporting a location's expression and how this recognition affects the community that utilizes it.

Community input is essential in utilizing art to express place. An individual's perception will not only affect his or her own future behavior, but can also impact others. "Cultural identifiers" exist within all of us. These are the elements that aid us in determining the suitability, aesthetic value, and safety inherent in a place, individual or situation. Over the last thirty or more years, many towns and municipalities have

drastically improved their communities by building on past research and examples of place-building successes, using elements identifiable through visual perception/recognition.

The organization Common Ground has promoted visual identity in their efforts to preserve local distinctiveness in the United Kingdom since the 1980's. This exemplary non-profit group facilitates the efforts of rural communities working to enhance and preserve their uniqueness. Visual identity is a key component in their program and is most often found in the creation of maps, way markers, and public art that celebrate the local environment and history. These items are produced by first creating dialogue amongst the citizens and then bringing in professionals in the fields of art and design who can produce the desired guidelines and/or additions to the town.

Elements of visual perception are almost limitless depending on an individual's perspective and vantage point. The most common limitations are the cultural and personal filters within each person. These limit what is perceived and they guide reactions. In order to address this concept in the use of art, it is necessary to have sensitivity to the people involved with the area as well as to the subject matter. Thus far, private citizen action groups like Common Ground have teamed with communities to create unique programs which suit their individual needs.

CHAPTER 2

ART IN THE PUBLIC LANDSCAPE

The assumption that art could be something separate from the life that sustains us, that art is indeed a luxury, is as false a theory as the notion that the outer terrain can undergo transformation without affecting the soul. –Estella C. Majoza.
(Lippard, 1997, p. 89)

Background

The history of humanity is written in its art. From the cave paintings in France, to the pyramids in Egypt, to the *Wall of Respect* in Chicago, we understand who we are and where we came from through art found in the landscape. Much transformation has occurred in the field of art in the last century. The evolution of art patronage, the definition of an artist, and ideas regarding what a work of art could be has gone through tremendous change and expansion. These changes provide us with an incredible palette of options in the endeavor of place expression.

The motivation for art created for the public has evolved with different societies. The earliest paintings on stone are thought to honor prey animals or tell the story of a hunt. Powerful rulers created the pyramids in Giza in an effort to defy their own mortality and fortify their subjects' belief that they were divine. Almost all cultures over time have erected images and likenesses of their deities and leaders. The most common trend in public art in Western societies over the last two centuries has been to memorialize past events and individuals.

Fig. 2.1 Pyramids at Giza (Buschen, 2002).

In the past century, career artists took on the persona of the lone genius working apart from society; public galleries and museums became the place to view art. In reaction to this development some of these artists moved into the civic and natural landscape, forging a new relationship with the public and the environment through a more interactive and collaborative process. Art works meant for the public might be inspired by a place, or its people, or could be artistic contributions from the community itself.

As there is an artist in every individual, public art projects have also developed from within individual communities. Though this chapter will mainly follow the recent history of formally documented art movements, this is not meant to diminish the role of individuals contributing to public art who are not career artists. The *Wall of Respect* in Chicago, which is considered one inspiration for the rebirth of the Murals Movement, was a work created by local non-professional artists as a way for the community to express itself. A number of public and private groups in cities throughout the United States have since developed programs which offer grants to help foster community expression through the arts.

Introduction to This Century

During the 19th century, formal public art in the United States was limited to outdoor monuments usually celebrating war victories, heroes, and other famous individuals. Statues in the likenesses of great leaders were prominent in the 19th century. This fairly ancient practice of memorializing a leader or hero (often military) inspired or subdued the general public. Berger writes, "A statue of Judith slaying Holofernes placed on the central square of a medieval city-state would serve to remind the citizens of the proud republic of the fate awaiting usurping tyrants" (2000, p. 4). Likewise, the general citizenry would honor individuals important to them by placing with grave markers in the landscape.

Fig. 2.2 Andrew Jackson Equestrian Statue (Layda, 2001).

During most of civilized history, artistic expression was freely in contact with the public. Architecture and civic landscapes were adorned with the icons, imagery, and details expressive of the times. In the 20th century the gallery became the place to view

art, increasing its elite nature by further removing it from the masses. The repercussion of the public being expected to enter a structure in order to view art was that fewer people were exposed to it. Museums and galleries were meant to liberate the arts from the pressures of practicality, but they also severed the arts from context, and hence from common understanding.

As the western world experienced great industrial changes, artistic experimentation flourished along with the sciences and literature. This dynamic cultural situation led artists to explore a wider spectrum of expression. "[W]e are living in the era that took shape decisively in the decades around 1800, the era of inexorably increasing social equality and democratization…" (Berger, 2000, p. 6). Pablo Picasso is an excellent example of the ideals that were influential in the beginning and during most of the 20th century when artists subscribed to the image of the lone genius, supposedly uninfluenced by society. Again, Berger states, "[In] Europe and its cultural extensions it has been positively expected of the artist for more than two centuries now, that he will be autonomous and original" (2000, p. 6).

As with artistic revolutions, the pendulum eventually swung away from this ideal of the solitary genius for many artists. This way of thinking has supported the notion that the gallery was the only appropriate place to view an artwork free of the distraction of the real world. During the 20th century a heightened longing to escape the gallery and interact with a greater audience created another group who turned political action into art. Eventually, the end of the century found a broad range of artists working across an incredibly diverse range of media and venues, as well as a greater appreciation for the art of non-career as well as the professional or trained artists.

A series of events in the 1930s created a political environment in which artists emerged from the studio to create public art about and for the citizens exposed to it. It was during the Great Depression, and American artists in need of jobs were ripe to create art under the optimism of the New Deal. Artwork created during this time, called American Scene Painting, resulted from pride in America. The style came from artists trying to create style and images distinct to this country as a place. The result was an incredible number of works displayed in and out of the gallery (American Scene Painting, 1999). Franklin D. Roosevelt's Federal Art Project (F.A.P.) "[created] over 5,000 jobs for artists and [produced] over 225,000 works of art for the American people" (Lorance, 2002).

Public Art from 1950

In the 1950s, following the period in which artists began to emerge from galleries and museums, there began a series of unconventional experiments where:

> [The artists] appropriated the part with the real environment and not the studio, garbage and not fine paints and marble. They incorporated the behavior, the weather, ecology, and political issues. In short, the dialogue moved from knowing more and more about what art was to wondering about what was the meaning of life. (Lacy, 1995, pp. 25-26)

In the 1960's, during the Urban Renewal Movement, public art became the arena of corporations, which commissioned large abstract pieces of sculpture. The National Endowment for the Arts created the Art in Public Places Program to "give the public access to the best art of our time outside of museum walls (Beardsley, 1981, p. 21)." This

was the first step in creating a tide of artists looking for venues for their work other than the traditional settings. They were typically placed into the large public plazas created as a component of Modernistic Architecture, which had been created through city ordinance incentives for street level public space.

Fig. 2.3 Picasso sculpture (Picasso web image, 2002).

The late 1960s saw some artists rejecting the corporate venue in favor of non-commissioned works in remote landscapes. These pieces rejected the influence of corporate dollars and signified the new relationship Western societies were trying to forge with their natural environment and/or communities.

Fig. 2.4 - Robert Smithson's *Spiral Jetty, 1970* (Beniger, 2000).

Artists like Robert Smithson began engaging in Earthworks or Land Art, as the genre was coined. This brought a new freedom to artists stifled by interior exhibit spaces and corporate oversight. John Beardsley tells us, "[These artists] chose to enter the landscape itself to use its materials and work with its salient features. They were not depicting the landscape, but engaging it; their art was not simply *of* the landscape, but *in* it" (1998, p. 7). These first Earthworks were not necessarily environmentally positive additions, as some early works, such as Michael Heizer's *Double Negative*, involved bulldozer sculpting of earth with little regard to the ecological implications.

Public Art since 1970

One of the most popularly recognized community-based public art projects was the *Wall of Respect* in Chicago, painted in 1977. "[It] revitalized the murals movement in the country and inspired other ethnic groups to erect murals for social criticism and protest, or to celebrate their cultures (Weiss, 2001, p. 2)." This project was accomplished without governmental approval or financial backing and undoubtedly inspired

marginalized communities across the country to visually express their presence and pride. It was also a catalyst for future collaborations between promoters of art and communities.

Fig. 2.5 - Artist Ron Blackburn painting an outdoor wall mural in Chicago, 1973 (National Archives Exhibit, 2002).

By the 1970s public art was on the priority list of states, municipalities and the federal government. As a result:

> The business of the public art administrator soon became infinitely more complex, wrapped up in new percent-for-art measures, urban renewals, the hopes of creating new opportunities for artists, and the idea of developing and honoring community through public art. (Weiss, 2001, p. 2)

Throughout time art has been used in the expression of descent as well as pride. Unauthorized, or guerilla, art is a very important form of community expression and many in the field of public art work diligently to provide legal forms of this expression. This can sometimes become a process of mediation, as groups in need of recognition can use art forms not readily accepted by those who control civic space. Graffiti is a perfect example of what is sometimes called “guerilla art.” Though graffiti as an art form has

been recognized, most of the genre is produced in an unauthorized setting and this creates problems which require creativity on the part of a facilitator to reconcile.

Presently, art in the public landscape often involves the collaboration of individuals from very different professions. Works are not only varied in format, but also incredibly diverse in funding, placement, and community involvement. For instance, monuments and memorials are commonly designed by building and landscape architects, as well as artists, and are found in abstract as well as figurative forms. Public art collaborations can include individuals associated with the site, as well as anthropologists, social historians, cultural geographers, historians, artists, architects, landscape architects, and engineers, to name but a few possible contributors.

In response to the current trend of mass production, which has created civic spaces with little discernible individuality from one location to the next, the varied professions mentioned work alone or with any of the countless community and municipal organizations with a desire to visually express their uniqueness. Funding may come from within these groups or from private donors and/or grant lending organizations such as the Georgia Council for the Arts. The possibilities are endless and the spectrum can include collaborations that work to creatively turn an industrial site into a regional recreation area or design a sculpture to engage commuters in a rail station (Fleming & von Tscharner, 1987).

CHAPTER 3

PUBLIC ART AS A TOOL FOR INVESTMENT IN PLACE

Introduction

The key factor that influences whether or not public art has a positive effect on investment in place is its established and/or evolving dialogue with its viewers. Art is placed in a civic landscape in order to attract the attention of the most diverse audience possible. Any suspecting or unsuspecting individual to come into contact with a piece of public art interacts with it. Patricia Phillips states:

> The point is not to produce another thing for people to admire, but to create an opportunity –a situation –that enables viewers to look back at the world with renewed perspectives and clear angles of vision. (Lacy, 1995, p. 70)

This altering of perspective is such a powerful benefit that it is no wonder public art has been on the rise in communities across the country.

The creation of this sort of interaction involves much thought and coordination. In the 1960s and 1970s, movements such as New Genre Public Art established the concept of career artists involving the community in their work. This required intense involvement between the artist and the intended or identified external audience. At the same time, the work of non-professional artists included the challenge of self-funding

their art, as well as gaining consensus amongst the community regarding content and placement. Then and now, anyone who strives for this type of one on one dialogue requires immense fortitude of vision, as positive and negative reactions are inevitable.

Art is meant to elicit a cognitive, as well as emotional, response. In using public art as a medium to create community investment in place, it must be understood that such art will not and should not please everyone. Again Phillips comments, "Public art is not the grinding arduous discovery of a common denominator that absolutely everyone will understand and endorse. It actually assists in the identification of individuals and groups and what separates them" (Lacy, 1995, p. 69). As the benefits of art in and for the community have become better understood, large and small communities alike are supporting initiatives for public art in their civic landscapes.

The first steps in creating support for public art are important for establishing community dialogue. Most often, an individual or small group interested in community art initiates the education of others, while creating their own fund-raising efforts. Athens, Georgia is just such an example. One of the only currently existing sculptures in Athens was completed through the determination of Clay Bryant, who simply felt "The Classic City" needed a classic sculpture (personal communication, January 15, 2002). Mr. Bryant created a board that chose the artist and raised funds while publicizing the endeavor.

Collaboration between professionals, as well as within the community, is another way in which public art can pull together diverse groups and create dialogue. This can occur in any of a number of forms and levels. The relationship can be as simple as the agreements between city representatives commissioning an artist or by a participatory artist integrating passersby on a city block. More often, especially in the past fifteen

years, the commissioning of public art has become an incredibly involved endeavor. Multiple professionals from varying disciplines can be found working together under a public arts administrator with more than one artist and the community itself.

There is a greater possibility of engaging and educating people through collaboration and community involvement. The initial personal investment of all those involved strengthens the dialogue that will mean more to the community in the end. Artists or designers, though trained quite differently, may have somewhat similar goals. In working together on a project, their combined contributions can be invaluable to the outcome. For example, an artist will be working to express or create a reaction, while the designer will be creating the appropriate juxtaposition of space to optimize the experience, and the professional lines will blur.

Lastly, the art itself, in whatever form it takes, will sometimes have the most apparent effect on the community it is meant to engage. This may be accomplished through teaching, evoking an emotional response, and even prompting physical interaction. Dedication celebrations, open to community participation can be wonderful ways of prompting a sense of ownership in new public work. The discourse regarding the new addition to the civic landscape can have a large impact on the creation of new ties between individuals and a shared sense of place. Tony Hiss, author of The Experience of Place, states, "Experiencing places with our senses, feeling connected to the land, to history, and to other people, is integral to the health of people and the planet" (Speckhardt, 2001, p.84).

The use of public art to create investment in shared places is an involved process. One of the best ways to ensure success in such an effort is to have the goal of a work or

project be the establishment of a line of communication with the viewer or participant. Art can provide the impetus to look at a place from a fresh perspective, whether springing from the culture of the community itself or originating from a solo artist who provides an evocative view or a cause for a celebration of space. The following section will provide examples of three cities that have a great deal of public art. Each was investigated with respect to how the community was involved in art utilization and whether or not the municipality has an organized public art endeavor.

Criteria for Case Study Site Selection

The cities of Asheville, NC, Boulder, CO, and Santa Cruz, CA were chosen for their similar attributes and reputations. All have county populations of under 300,000 (Census Bureau, 2000), and all contain state universities, as well as other institutes of higher education. Thus, all three are in the category of "college towns," with the corresponding reputation for a highly educated and somewhat liberal population residing in otherwise politically conservative states. All those interviewed were chosen for their relationship to the promotion of art in their respective locations. Note table 3.1 in comparing basic data about the three counties.

Case Studies

Asheville, North Carolina

Background

Asheville has a large number of artists and craftspeople residing in and around the city, and this group has influenced local identity for decades. This prosperous small city

of approximately 206,000 people is currently experiencing a self-proclaimed "Era of Civic Pride" during "the Age of Diversity" (Asheville Parks, Public Arts Admin, 2002). The quality of life here attracts individuals who want to pursue active lifestyles, including many retirees and entrepreneurs seeking a high quality of life. The recent economic boom, that has included downtown revitalization and overall city development, was most likely initiated due to the solid tax base generated by this recent influx of residents (Asheville Parks, 2002, p. 8).

Public Art Initiatives

In the city of Asheville, North Carolina public art has been a community interest for twenty years and in the municipal budget since 1999. This city is one of a number in the United States with a One Percent for Public Art program. This program requires that one percent of the money spent on any municipal projects must go to an art work as outlined by the city. The Percent for Public Art initiative in Asheville was begun in 1998 by a number of citizens who formed a group called the *Public Art Working Group*. Thirteen months later, after many meetings and much research, the city adopted a resolution establishing a Public Art Policy, which included a Master Plan.

The Master Plan guidelines integrate art into the city's overall planning goals by calling for the city to:

- Provide public art in buildings and public spaces.
- Promote Asheville as an "arts destination" city and use public art as a major attraction for cultural tourism and economic development.
- Provide a structured process to acquire public art through donations of money, or direct donation of artwork.

- Provide for the maintenance of public art throughout the city.
- Educate the citizens of Asheville and visitors about local culture and history through art. (Asheville Parks, 2002, p. 8)

As young as the art policy is, many of its guidelines have already been implemented in *The Asheville Urban Trail* (Asheville Parks [Brochure].n.d.). The trail provides symbolic representations (such as the giant clothes iron located next to the flat iron building) related to local culture and history up to the time of its completion in 2002. The goal of this project is to educate the citizens and visitors about events and people using sculpture and informative plaques and brochures. Most pieces are cast bronze sculptures with plaques describing their significance (see Figure 3.1). These are figurative works located in areas related to an individual or a period of historical interest. People can walk through all of the locations in a one and one half-mile pedestrian loop downtown.

Figure 3.1: Drinking Girl Sculpture, Asheville Urban Trail (photo by author).

The community at large is not fully integrated into the Asheville Percent for Public Art program. Recently local artists independently organized a street festival to promote downtown murals and the arts community. Specifically, they hoped to raise money to fund the artwork of disenfranchised individuals and communities in the city, including controversial artwork such as graffiti (Hopes, 2002). This was this not organized in affiliation with the city's percent program. Perhaps government officials do not want to support anything controversial, overlooking the potential of work from marginalized people.

The first work of art placed in the civic landscape was an abstract modern piece called the *Energy Loop*. The piece was donated by a group of local artists in the 1970s who wished to express their community in the city. The Percent program's director stated that even though the *Energy Loop* receives as much praise as criticism, it may soon be replaced with a figurative, "family-oriented," piece. This negates the fact that this sculpture constantly attracts children who slide and play on it. Even with this piece's historic significance as the first local abstract work, the city will most likely replace it with something less controversial (Irby Brenson, personal communication, Jan. 18, 2002).

Fig. 3.2: Energy Loop, Downtown Asheville (photo by author).

Conclusion

This public art endeavor in Asheville, North Carolina was set up with the purpose of promoting the city to outsiders. As evidenced by the planning goals, the program has taken no responsibility for expressing the citizenship's needs. The only completed project, the *Urban Art Trail*, required a great deal of time and money. Though it is a project expressive of place, the financial investment could have been dispersed over a larger number of diversified works.

The style and format of the *Urban Art Trail* is a popular genre mimicked often in municipal public art today. There is nothing about this series of works –except its unoriginality –that would invite criticism regarding its intent, making it a safe first venture for the fledgling program. If the project was more unique to Asheville, possibly employing local artists in the decision about format and content, it might better inspire investment in place amongst citizens and visitors alike. For the most part the pieces are whimsical and cute, making them mostly aesthetic additions to the cityscape.

Currently, the Percent for Public Art program in this city has a limited range of function in creating investment in place. The attitude of the Asheville Parks Department in managing the city's public art initiative is geared mostly toward tourism and reduced maintenance, and the community is not an integral part of the process. Though it is relatively young, Asheville government sponsorship of art installations has created stagnation in the type of art being displayed. Unless the department's attitude is shifted towards educating and including the public in the process –instead of trying to appease them with the end result –this public art will continue to be directed to the tourists more than the local citizens.

Boulder, Colorado

Background

Boulder has a reputation for attracting new settlers who seek inspiration from the dramatic landscape, as well as peaceful and physically active lifestyles. It is the largest and the most affluent of the three case-study cities, with a county population of approximately 290,000 people (Boulder County Quick Facts, US Census, 2000). Similar to Asheville, this place is attractive to those living alternative lifestyles, as well as to retirees, entrepreneurs, and second homeowners. As in all three case cities the population is highly transient and most individuals residing in the city proper are wealthy, recent transplants.

This city, also similar to Asheville, has tourism as a component of the economy. Boulder has a reputation as a friendly and walkable town with abundant shopping, street performers, summer festivals, and adjacency to the incomparable Rocky Mountains. The

Pearl Street Mall, a 25-year old pedestrian oriented shopping district, attracts visitors and residents alike. Walking and bicycling trails often follow tumbling creeks and create routes through the city and beyond.

Public Art Initiatives

There is an abundance of art to be found in the civic landscape of Boulder, Colorado. Interestingly, there is no organized public art program. Works have been acquired or commissioned on a case-by-case basis, most often through private funding. Public art located on city property is managed by the Boulder Parks and Recreation department, as is the case in most cities. Though there is no proactive stance by the city on the role of art in the community, the community itself has been and continues to be the primary source for acquisitions and installations. (Donna Gartenman, personal communication, August 20, 2002).

Public art in Boulder is very diverse. Abstract and figurative sculptures, and murals are very common in the downtown area. Most of these works relate directly to Boulder. The animals of this Rocky Mountain region are depicted in many sculptures on the Pearl Street Mall. The locally famous Chief Niwot (see Figure 3.3) can be found in the Charles Hartling Sculpture Garden, depicted in local stone. Even the numerous abstract pieces represent the people for they attest to the large population of professional artists who call this town home.

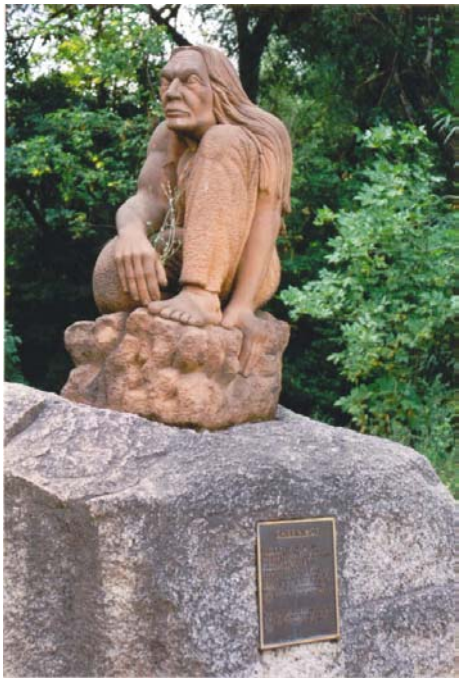

Figure 3.3: Niwot sculpture (photo by author).

Surprisingly, there are no publications or online resources directing people to outdoor civic art locations. The head of the Boulder Arts Commission, Donna Gartenman (personal communication, August 20, 2002), stated that the city has a stance of avoiding responsibility for initiating public art works. The tone may have been set in the 1980s when the city turned down a National Endowment for the Arts grant for a piece by Andrea Blum, in order to avoid public controversy. Though the Arts Commission (which oversees grants, two art facilities, the Boulder Arts web site, and any proposed installations) encourages the city to have a proactive stance, the Commission receives little reciprocal support.

Despite the city's non-participatory stance, public art is occasionally included as a suggestion in new planning proposals and actually implemented when community support is evident or when there is no fear of controversy. Individuals, either through

commissions or donations of art, remain the primary source for art in the civic landscape. At this time, any new work in the future would follow this course of implementation. Currently, there also is little community organization in support of new art, so the future evolution of public art in Boulder is difficult if not impossible to predict.

Conclusion

Though Boulder does not have an organized public art initiative, there is a great deal of public art representing the area and its people. This situation is unique to Boulder in contrast with Asheville and Santa Cruz. It is apparent that much of this success is due to the affluent nature of the area residents and visitors. On the other hand, this creates a situation in which the preferences of these two groups are better represented than are those of the people of lower socioeconomic status.

In Boulder an organized initiative could be focused on including a true cross-section of the citizenry. The use of a public art facilitator could aid in the incorporation of the expression of low income individuals in this wealthy area. Such a coordinated effort would be a benefit to furthering community involvement and thus making people more aware of the true demographics of the city. The process of creating art would increase local awareness and inspire place expression, thus enhancing investment in place.

Santa Cruz, California

Background

The coastal city of Santa Cruz, California, within Santa Cruz County, is located almost 100 miles south of San Francisco. It is the medium-sized example in the three case studies, with a population of approximately 255,000 and a median income of $47,000.

The city government here has a history of liberal/social politics. The Santa Cruz County Conference and Visitor website states, "Marching to the beat of one's own drum is the norm for Santa Cruzans. Our independent spirit is reflected in our politics, our philosophies, our art, our music, our foods, our sports, [etc.]" (Santa Cruz, 2002a). The city has long been a haven for anyone interested in living outside the straight and narrow, but in a beautiful seaside town.

Public Art Initiatives

The city of Santa Cruz has a strong proactive stance on public art, through which often engages and interacts with the community. In April of 1999, the city government implemented a Percent for Public Art program, which allows for up to two percent of public construction costs for buildings and parks to be used to place public art on the site. This policy arose during the revitalization efforts following the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake, which caused significant damage to the town.

Due to these revitalization efforts, the downtown is becoming an expensive shopping district. Consistent with this downtown economic status, the public art created under the Percent for Public Art Program is catering to the tourist population to some extent. Even so, the community input regarding city projects remains high. Tasha Loveness (personal communication, October, 2002), the staff contact for the City of Santa Cruz Public Art Committee, stated that this group is very cautious about including the community in decisions regarding public art sponsored by the city.

Fig. 3.4: Tile wall by Ruth Richards and the children of Del Mar Middle School (Santa Cruz Parks, 2002b).

This city's Percent program leans toward funding many diverse small projects that include the input of community members (see Figure 3.4). Materials, style of works, and installation sites are varied and creative. New projects follow a wide range of types and are often collaborations between non-art-related community groups and artists.

Conclusion

The Santa Cruz municipal public art program invests in place. Even though this is a government run program established during a revitalization period, creativity and community involvement are demonstrated objectives. Santa Cruz's public art initiative is successful in creating collaboration between community members and artists, as well as providing interesting art that encourages the viewer to take a second look at the landscape.

Analysis

Public art existed in the civic landscapes of all three cities studied. Though Asheville and Santa Cruz officially demonstrated support, community initiative in all three was the impetus behind most of the existing art. There is no apparent correlation between the size or economy of the municipalities and their commitment to art. In fact, the official public commitment in each city was quite different. What was consistent is a passion in some faction of the community to express a sense of place, history, and/or community in the form of public art.

Asheville, Boulder, and Santa Cruz were all compared using the outline in table 3.1 in an effort to discover if these elements related to the relative success or failure of public art as a community instigator of investment in place. Population and economic status were examined in consideration of whether a stronger tax base encouraged government funded programs (indicated with *% program*). Art community was noted in order to establish that consistency between the three cities. Then, depending on whether the city has an organized art initiative, the community input and effectiveness of the program was noted.

Table 3.1: Comparison of Municipalities.

	Asheville	Boulder	Santa Cruz
Population	206,330	291,288	255,602
Median income	$36,666	$55,861	$47,493
Pop ↓ poverty	11.4%	9.5%	14.2%
Art community	Large	Large	Large
Art initiative	Yes	No	Yes
Art funding	% program	N/A	% program
Comm. input	Low	N/A	High
Effectiveness	Low	N/A	High

One important aspect of the promotion of works is how well the city government (which usually has to consent to civic art placement and upkeep) embraces its artist population. The Asheville government publicly identifies its artist constituency in text written for tourists, yet thus far, municipal art sponsorship is not indicative of this support. Also, Asheville and Santa Cruz were including their Percent for Public Art programs in a general revitalization plan for their downtowns, during a time when the economy was good. It is unclear whether these policies will change under the current economic recession.

Asheville used its governmental clout to implement the most generic of popular public art, heavily imitated in many cities since the 1970s (Fleming & von Tscharner, 1987, p. 72). The current Urban Trail's cast figures are considered to be permanent

installations and relate to the city's history. But, where are current issues addressed? The master plan also calls for rotational art, but there is nothing currently planned in this genre (Clay Bryant, personal communication, January 15, 2002). Interviewed city officials from Asheville and Boulder stated that negative feedback from individuals in the community, even when tempered with positive reactions, caused elected officials to resist implementing public art.

What would it be like if each of these cities became a member of an independent, non-profit organization dedicated to involving the community in its own artistic expression of place? Santa Cruz does a much better job with variety and community interaction in its program, but again, municipal control seems to be keeping the art somewhat superficial. A stand-alone organization would help to encourage a truly unique approach to community expression. This could provide a counter balance to government bureaucracy, which has a tendency to water down projects and to exclude already marginalized groups.

A successful public art program uniquely suits its community. Asheville, Boulder, and Santa Cruz, chosen for their similarities, are very unique cities. These factors have defined how each has approached public art, and whether or not that effort has been effective in engaging the community. Imitating other programs can negate the effectiveness of creating community dialogue and investment in place by removing a large part of the process from local public interaction. In order to reflect the unique character of a given city it is essential that public art facilitators regardless of their affiliation diversify projects and include the community in as many ways as possible.

CHAPTER 4

ATHENS, GEORGIA

Public life can not be decreed; it has to be constantly reinvented. Meaning is not missing in action; it is made through the constructive, collaborative process called "the Public." Sometimes overlooked, often misread, public art is a sign of life. –Patricia Phillips (Lacy, 1995, p. 70)

Background

The city of Athens, situated in Clarke County, has a reputation as a creative center in the heart of North Georgia. The small size of the permanent population, juxtaposed against the large number of students and faculty of the University of Georgia, creates a dynamic if somewhat fractured community. Over the last fifteen or twenty years this place has become a renowned location for musicians and ceramicists. Recently, many in the community have been working toward promoting the rest of the significant population of artists who live and work around the county.

Art Initiatives

There are no public art initiatives in Athens/Clarke County. Besides the lack of financial resources, the municipality has had bad experiences with past efforts to utilize artwork. In one case the Parks Department attempted to put a rotating selection of sculpture in Sandy Creek Park. Damage to one piece resulted in the artist demanding significant restitution by the city (Mike Wharton, personal communication, January 8,

2002). This brought the program to a halt. With the exception of two recent sculptures, the existing art downtown consists of a few of murals adorning the exterior of businesses. These have been implemented through the efforts of individuals and property owners, such as the creative wall of a bar shown below, one of five murals downtown.

Figure 4.1: Mural off Jackson St. (photo by author).

The two downtown sculptures have an interesting story that demonstrates the county government's conservative attitude toward art. As plans for the new Athens civic center were being worked out, local attorney Clay Bryant decided it was odd that "The Classic City" had no classically motivated sculpture. He believed that the civic center was the ideal project to incorporate a statue of the goddess Athena. Failing to find support from within city departments, he personally formed a committee which raised the money and commissioned a local artist to do the project. (Clay Bryant, personal communication, January 15, 2002)

This artwork received a good deal of negative response from city officials. The majority of these reactions were in the form of concern over vandalism and disapproval over having a pagan symbol in front of the civic center (to date the piece has been

vandalized twice by individuals who spray-painted a Christian cross on the base). A group formed by individuals working for city hall then commissioned another, specifically non-pagan, statue in response to the *Athena*. This piece, called the *Athens Flame,* is decidedly angelic in presence. It was installed within a year of the *Athena* and sits a few blocks from the Civic Center on the City Hall front plaza.

Figure 4.2: *Athena*, by Jean Westmacott, 1995 (photo by author)

Figure 4.3: *Spirit of Athens*, by William J. Thompson, 1996 (photo by author)

Financial concerns may be the reason given by municipal officials for lack of interest in supporting art in the civic landscape, but Pete McCommons, Chief Editor of the Flagpole Magazine, expressed the opinion of others when he said, "Well, how many ways can you say it? Athens is an interesting and diverse town that's being held back by unimaginative leadership (2002)." Presently, the artist community is organizing grassroots support for themselves, though mainly in the form of indoor exhibits. Local art can be found in almost every restaurant and café in the city and a number of community owned art galleries have opened.

The Arrow Gallery is unusual in that it is more *of* an expression of public art than a traditional gallery. Artists and building renovation/construction experts Carl Martin and Carol John have utilized a glass garage door on their warehouse/office to create a 24-hour exhibition space. Passersby can view a constantly changing display of art. The owners intend to create signage that will be essentially a work of luminescent art. They are also planning to expand this work using a glass-boxed sign at a former church building to create a new public art space, similar to the warehouse glass door (personal communication, January 28, 2002). In this way, these two Athens citizens are breaking down the public/private interface and getting art into the landscape.

Figure 4.4: Arrow Gallery (photo by author).

The weekly arts and events publication, Flagpole Magazine, lists all art hanging in restaurants and stores as if they were exhibitions in fine galleries. They also publish the Flagpole Guide to Athens. The guide is a yearly production including everything from

restaurants to music venues. This year's cover image juxtaposes two facets of Athens culture; an antebellum mansion-turned-fraternity house, with a unique Athens *Spy Car*. Spy cars are mobile works of art by Brian Smith, hand decorated with found objects (Jordan, 2000). Inside the Flagpole Guide readers are encouraged to notice art, with the proclamation "Art is Everywhere" (McCommons, 2001, p. 14).

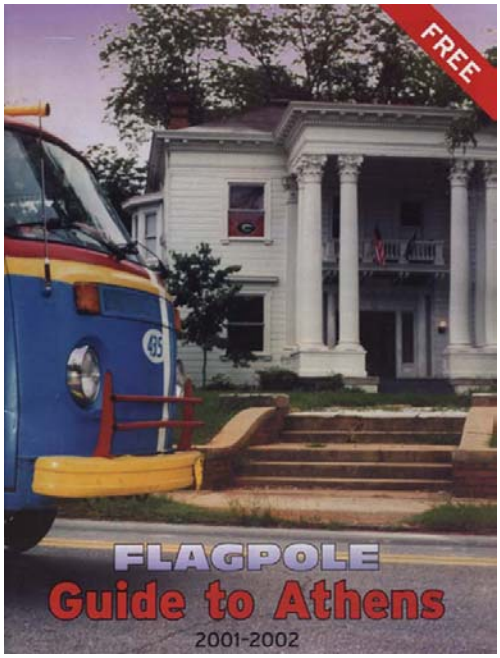

Figure 4.5: Flagpole Guide to Athens cover (McCommons, 2001).

Public art could have unlimited benefits to Athens as a place where people love to live, and visit. In discussing the benefits of a stronger role for art in the civic identity of Athens, local artist and gallery owner, Chris Wyrick pointed out that expressive and vibrant places feel great and that benefits businesses (personal communication, Feb. 5, 2002). Athens has a strong grassroots interest in art. With the community interest already prevalent in Athens, educating businesses in support of public arts could be the first step

in creating dialogue with city officials about the promotion of community-building through art.

The chart below is the same as table 3.1 from the previous chapter, with the addition of Athens' corresponding information. It is notable that if the data was examined without the economic portion, Athens would appear similar to Boulder. Yet, when one includes all of the information, it becomes apparent that the population and economics of Athens is much lower than the other city. This greatly affects the possibility of government and citizen funding of art.

Table 4.1: Comparison of Municipalities with Athens, GA.

	Asheville	**Boulder**	**Santa Cruz**	**Athens**
Population	206330	291288	255602	**101489**
Median income	$36666	$55861	$47493	**$28403**
Pop ↓ poverty	11.4%	9.5%	14.2%	**28.3%**
Art community	Large	Large	Large	**Large**
Art initiative	Yes	No	Yes	**No**
Art funding	% program	N/A	% program	**N/A**
Comm. Input	Low	N/A	High	**N/A**
Effectiveness	Low	N/A	High	**N/A**

Conclusion

Athens has a great potential to use public art as a way to create community investment in place. The citizenship is diverse and there are many individuals and groups interested in promoting art in a creative way. The fact that Athens is not a high-income area makes it all the more appropriate for an independent, non-government-run public art initiative. A non-profit, multi-faceted group could identify the needs and desires of the community, locate grants, raise funds, and act as facilitators. This could generate unique programs and art to enhance and express the essence of Athens.

Proposed Collaboration Sites

Bringing people together in dialogue regarding what works and what could be improved in their landscape can be valuable in regards to their investment in place. This section will identify issues related to spaces in Athens and the people who share them that could be used to bring the community together through the use of public art. Each case will be approached from the direction of how public art might benefit the interpretation of each described issue and how it might generate continued dialogue regarding the situation. In appropriate cases, a specific location and/or landscape will be identified.

Site One, Historic Context –Spring Street Corridor

Background

Spring Street in downtown Athens was named for a series of fresh water springs which surfaced here and were the impetus for the town being settled in its current

location. The history surrounding this source of water is extensive, and its significance is largely hidden from the community. The area has become a back-alley shortcut through to South Thomas Street, with only a few people noticing the small stream of clear water which surfaces briefly from beneath the pavement, before being culverted with the rest of the runoff from this small watershed.

Figure 4.6: Site photo looking NE from UGA parking deck (photo by author).

The available water found here was one of the reasons that the hill above the springs was recommended as the site of the first state-supported university. In describing the chosen area, the Augusta Chronicle reported on July 25, 1801:

> About two hundred yards from the site [chosen for the University of Georgia], and at least three hundred feet above the level of the river, in the midst of an

> extensive bed of rock, issues a copious spring of excellent water; and in its meanderings to the river, several others are discovered. (Adams, 2001)

Long before then, this area was a preferred location for prehistoric camps and later Indian and white settlements.

The location holds much historic significance regarding the built environment as we experience it today. The water supply which once ran from the springs has greatly diminished due to the city's development, but most of the buildings still standing in the Spring Street area played important roles in Athens' past. The upper section of Spring Street, near Broad Street, contains the block with the city's first hotel. Further south, structures date from the prosperous time period between the Civil War and the 1940's when cotton production was booming. Five rail lines serviced Athens then and all were accessible from this area full of mills, warehouses, and their support industries. Just below Thomas Street, where Spring Street is renamed Mitchell Street, there was once a passenger rail station and still standing are a number of the mill houses built by paternalistic Robert L. Bloomfield for workers he managed at the Athens Factory (Adams, 2001).

Benefits of public art

In a city such as Athens, where the population is highly transient, it is all the more important to find ways of engaging people in really looking at a place, thus seeing beyond first impressions. The development of an interpretive program in the Spring Street area, including art, would add a significant layer of context to this place, promote pride in cultural history, and assure the location's protection and wise use. When Sue

Clifford of *Common Ground* visited with a landscape architecture class at the University of Georgia, she first led the group on a walk around downtown. This was her first visit to the city and, as they walked, she pointed out obvious clues to the city's past, such as the name Spring Street. She asked if any in the group had considered its significance, and none of these fourth-year students had ever even noticed (Richard Westmacott, personal communication, December 2001). This street to them was simply a cut-through to a familiar parking area.

Conclusion

Using art to engage people in the Spring Street area could impact all the citizens of Athens. The key would be to not imitate another city, but to tap into the creativity so prevalent in the Athens community for unique possibilities. This site could pull together the Athens city government, individuals related to the University, businesses, and long-time, as well as new, Athens residents. A project such as this could create interest in how the civic landscape has evolved through its history. The process of expressing a place's history would be a source of pride for those involved in its current management and could spark the imagination of old and young alike.

Local historians, older Athens residents, and current property owners would be the ideal core group to begin compiling the stories surrounding Spring Street. The proximity of downtown businesses and the University to the area make it imperative that they are brought into the discussion as well. The creativity of students of all ages could be incorporated. In looking at the site from Broad Street, south to Baldwin Street (which includes Spring Street), students in a UGA School of the Environment and Design course

uncovered much history and had many ideas about redeveloping this area in an environmentally and historically sensitive way. This would also be an ideal project to bring into the public school system, so as to engage children and teenagers in interpreting local history. Hopefully, they could then better carry this new awareness of place with them into adulthood and transmit it to future generations.

Site Two, Ecology Context –Tanyard Branch

Background

Tanyard Branch is one of Athens' perfect examples of an abused urban stream. This waterway has been highly controlled through channeling with artificial banks and culverts. The previous lack of dialogue between University administration, their physical works department, and their educational programs becomes evident in looking at many areas on the campus, including this stream. The majority of Tanyard's length runs across University property. Sadly, UGA, who's numerous departments are nationally recognized for their work with the environment, has not applied that knowledge or the broad range of related University talent and resources to the management of the natural landscape.

Figure 4.7: Channeled Tanyard Branch near Legion Field (S.E.E.D.S, 2002).

On university maps meant to orient students and visitors, Tanyard Branch is not marked. The Students and Educators for Ecological Design and Sustainability (S.E.E.D.S.) state in their web site:

> The absence of Tanyard Branch on campus maps and plans is indicative of campus attitudes towards this stream. It is treated as a gutter that conveys storm runoff rather than an ecosystem that should support aquatic life, human interaction with the environment, and teaching/research opportunities. (S.E.E.D.S., 2002)

This creek runs adjacent to major campus landmarks, including Legion Field, the Tate Student Center, and Sanford Stadium. Tanyard Branch could be an aesthetic and educational part of campus, yet people walk and drive past it daily without noticing it.

Benefits of public art

Using art in the promotion of ecological improvements could serve a number of functions. Much of the ecological work itself could be accomplished in a creative and artistic way. Functional elements related to infrastructure and pedestrian amenities can not only incorporate art, but be expressive of the work underway. In the primary stages, new and/or revolving works could begin to attract the attention of those who had not considered the stream's condition previously. Also, when a major restoration project is begun or completed, art could be used as celebration or interpretation in the landscape.

Conclusion

The larger, more obvious Athens waterways have begun to receive the attention they deserve. Years of effort on the part of many individuals have created The Oconee Greenway, which is the first bicycle/pedestrian river greenway in Athens. Similarly, many ideas regarding the revitalization of Tanyard Branch have already been generated by the work of the S.E.E.D.S. group on the UGA campus. This organization is based on interdisciplinary collaboration among educators and students (many of whom are artists). This group is the most likely candidate to provide the impetus behind the visual interpretation of this stream's future rehabilitation.

Site Three, Social Commentary –Multiple Locations

Background

The issue of affordable housing has been a growing concern for Athens/Clarke County. Though the overall economy is slowing, the recent years of economic boom have brought a lot of development of high income subdivisions and luxury apartments and duplexes geared towards students and the middle class residents. This construction

typically displaces low-income families. With 28.3% of Athens/Clarke County residents living below the poverty level (Clarke County Quick Facts, Census 2000), it is imperative that this issue be addressed. Thus far, the city has taken no stance except to pass resolutions that only heighten the problems, such as raising the zoning densities in poor neighborhoods specifically to open the area to new development (Aaron, 2001, "Nowhere Land…").

Brad Aaron, in an article in Flagpole Magazine, stated in August of 2001 that the University had a total enrollment of approximately 32,000 students and only 6,000 beds (2001, Beds Not….). Rental housing has always been highly utilized by this population, but a growing preference among parents toward higher quality has meant more expensive, if not gated, complexes. As newly-constructed student housing sprawls in all directions, low-income housing is demolished and its former residents pushed further away from the center of town. This is a typical scenario in cities where the economy is improving and the downtown is vital, such as Athens. Although this type of problem often takes governmental action to manage, its resolution needs to begin with public support and/or understanding of the issue.

A prime example of this displacement phenomenon was the destruction of the Garden Springs mobile home community. One hundred mobile homes were located near downtown on 22 acres. In the year 2000, the County Commission passed an ordinance which stated [that any mobile home made before 1976 could not be moved. Then, this same Commission changed the property's zoning to allow for up to 24 beds per acre (Aaron, 2001, "Nowhere Land"). This is a typical designation for the upscale student

housing developments being built in the area. The property owner sold the land for that purpose, indirectly evicting the tenants.

Figure 4.8: Garden Springs residents on eviction day (Hamrick, 2002).

In the year prior to the sale of the mobile home park, the owner sold most of the aging trailers to their occupants. Even those who could legally move their homes could not afford to do so. This situation was so outrageous that it drew a strong response from the larger community. Many individuals from around the county began protests and fund-raising efforts on behalf of the residents. Local musician/artist Julie Powell created a documentary and helped organized a music benefit. Some money was generated for the people of Garden Springs, but the strongest effect of the benefit was raising awareness of the need for affordable housing throughout the city.

Benefits of public art

Engaging art in the issue of affordable housing can be a gentle or shocking, momentary or ongoing reminder of the continuing need to address this social issue. It will

be difficult to get the majority of Athens citizens to acknowledge and support the resolution of this housing problem. The Garden Springs fund-raising projects were a step in this early process of generating awareness through public events, the news media, and video documentary. A continued effort including public art can help to keep people from forgetting about this problem.

Thoughtfully created public art could attract people's attention to the issue of housing and encourage dialogue regarding this difficult topic. Currently, builders facilitated by the Athens government control housing development. If a forum for discussion is implemented, members of the community will have the option of expressing their opinion about affordable housing. It will take a huge effort on the part of the citizens to turn the politicians in City Hall away from following the developers and towards leading them. Creativity of the arts community could contribute a great deal to the discussion.

Conclusion

Art that addresses the issue of affordable housing should be informative, as well as engaging. It may be perceived as confrontational. The resulting discussions should spread to include everyone who has a vested interest in the community. The expression of this likely impassioned dialogue through public art would help to open the issue even to those who may believe it does not affect them. Through a shared and heightened awareness of sensitive issues like this one, a community like Athens may come together to consider their resolution together.

CONCLUSION

Art in the civic landscape, or public art, has inspired and educated every human society. In this century it has taken on many functions and is sometimes used to affect social issues as well as to provide emblems or add aesthetic value to our environments. Public art today has the capacity to change the way we see ourselves and our relationship to the places in which we live. It can pull together diverse people in an effort to express their commonalities, or simply provide the starting point for a needed discourse.

By opening dialogue between people, art can help us to know who we are in relation to our community and place. In learning more about each other and how we interact with the places where, we live we can better understand ourselves. Each individual is changed upon experiencing a place. Personal perception of environment has a great deal to do with the appreciation and response to that space. Similarly, art has a very personal effect on those exposed to it. That effect can help to change the perspective of the viewer in a way that can add insight and empathy.

In Athens, Georgia public art could be used in an effort to bring together diverse groups in a dialogue to define and to express a sense of place in the city landscape. While addressing issues related to the community, as individuals or as representatives of diverse urban entities, participants would be building relationships and stories about who they are and what they want their city to be. The potential for clarification of issues and

expression of new ideas related to the city is incredible when one considers the possible dynamic groups that could be produced from within this diverse citizenry.

Creating unique solutions and forming synergistic collaborations will be pivotal to the success of public art endeavors in Athens. It should not duplicate another's program, nor should any city. The size and economic status of this town make it imperative that support for public art endeavors be drawn from a broad base of citizen involvement. Developing these collaborations for public art projects generated from the talents and the dialogue of the community can engage local pride and develop interest in the common landscape. In so doing, it can increase investment in place.

The goal of creating investment in place is to increase self and community understanding of the important qualities which define that place for them. A public art initiative by the non-profit, multi-dimensional group described herein could identify issues unique to this place and address the community in ways specific to it. In this way, public art in Athens becomes a catalyst as well as a contributor in the creation of an environment where "agreement on a common purpose is an impassioned deliberation rather than a thoughtless resignation (Lacy, 1995, p. 69)."

WORKS CITED

Aaron, B. (2001a, August 22). Nowhere land: ACC Commissioners helped cause the garden springs mess. Will they try to help clean it up? [Electronic version]. Flagpole Magazine, Retrieved September 4, 2002, from http://64.192.96.73:591/flagpole/FMPro?-DB=articles&-lay=articles&-Format=magprint.htm&-RecID=33989&-Find

Aaron, B. (2001b, August 28). Beds not bimmers: UGA hopes greener campus will mean fewer student cars [Electronic version]. Flagpole Magazine. Retrieved September 4, 2002, from http://64.192.96.73:591/flagpole/FMPro?-db=articles&-format=mag2.htm&-lay=articles&-sortfield=startdate&-sortorder=descend&sub1=%3d&sub1=University%20housing&-max=20&-recid=33938&-find=

Adams, D. (2001). A brief history of the site proposed for the University of Georgia College of the Environment [Unpublished manuscript]. University of Georgia at Athens.

American Psychological Association (APA). (1994/1998). Publication Manual of the APA. (10th printing, 1998, August). Washington, DC: APA.

American Scene Painting. (1999). Artists by Movement. Artcyclopedia. Retrieved October 22, 2002, from http://www.artcyclopedia.com/history/American-scene.html

Anderson, K., & Gale, F. (Eds.). (1992). Inventing places: Studies in cultural geography. Sydney, Australia: Halsted Press.

Asheville Parks and Recreation Department, Public Arts Administration. Asheville urban trail (n.d.) [Brochure]. Asheville, NC: Author.

Asheville Parks and Recreation Department, Public Arts Administration. Public art master plan (2002, December) [Brochure]. Asheville, NC: Author.

Basso, K. H., & Feld, S., (Eds.) (1996). Senses of place. Santa Fe, NM: School of American Research Press.

Beardsley, J. (1981). Art in public places: A survey of commmunity sponsored projects supported by the National Endowment for the Arts. United States: Partners for Livable Places.

Beardsley, J. (1998). Earthworks and beyond : Contemporary Art in the Landscape (Abbeville Modern Art Movements). New York: Abbeville Press.

Beniger, J. R., Prof. (2002). Spiral jetty [Web image, with permission] Robert Smithson earthwork art, 1970. Comm 544 The Arts and New Media. [Internet course]. Retrieved September 4, 2002, from www.usc.edu/.../projects/comm544/library/images/796.html

Berger, K. (2000). A theory of art. New York: Oxford University Press.

Berry, W. (1986). The unsettling of America. San Francisco: Sierra Club Books.

Boulder County Quickfacts. US Census Bureau. Retrieved September 10, 2002, from http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/37/37021.html

Buncombe County Quickfacts. US Census Bureau. Retrieved September 10, 2002, from http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/37/37021.html

Buschen, J. (2002, September 1). Giza Pyramids: Web sites for ancient, medieval and renaissance art [Web image]. Retrieved September 4, 2002, from www.uwrf.edu/history/arthistory.html

Clarke County Quickfacts. U.S. Census Bureau. Retrieved September 10, 2002, from http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/13/13059.html

Clifford, S., & King, A. (1993, September 28). Losing your Place. In S. Clifford & A. King, (Eds.), Local distinctiveness: Place, particularity and identity [Essays for a Conference]. Retrieved September 2, 2002, from www.commonground.org.uk/Local_Distinctiveness.html

Clifford, S., & King, A. (1996). from place to Place. London: Common Ground.

Common Ground. (n.d.). Celebrating local distinctiveness [Brochure]. London: Author.

Fleming, R. L., & von Tscharner, R. (1987). Place makers: Creating public art that tells you where you are. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanich.

Finkelpearl, T. (2000). Dialogues in public art. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

Hamrick, F. (2002, March 6). Eviction day [Electronic version]. Flagpole Magazine. Retrieved September 4, 2002, from http://64.192.96.73:591/flagpole/FMPro?-db=articles&-format=mag2.htm&-lay=articles&-sortfield=startdate&-sortorder=descend&sub1=%3d&sub1=north%20avenue&-max=20&-recid=34669&-find=

Hopes, D. (2002, August 3). A street festival for street art. Asheville Citizen Times. Retrieved October 26, 2002, from http://cgi.citizen-times/cgi-bin/story/arts/18777

Jordan, J. P. (2000, July 6). Spy cars: The mission [Electronic version]. Online Athens. Retrieved August 26, 2002, from http://onlineathens.com/rockathens/spycars/ent_spycars.shtml

Lacy, S. (Ed.). (1995). Mapping the terrain: New genre public art. Seattle, WA: Bay Press.

Layda, G., Photographer (2001). Jackson Equestrian Statue [C. Mills, Sculptor, 1880]. Art in public places. 2002 Metropolitan Nashville Arts Commission, Nashville, TN. Retrieved April 3, 2002, from www.artsnashville.org/pubart/big mills jacks.html

Lippard, L. R. (1997). The Lure of the local: Senses of place in a multicentered society. New York: The New Press.

Lorance, N. (Last Updated, 2002, May 24). W.P.A.--New Deal art during the Great Depression. Retrieved June 15, 2002, from http://www.wpamurals.com/index.html

McCommons, P. (Ed.). (2001). Flagpole guide to Athens [Brochure]. Athens, GA.

McCommons, P. (2002, September 4). Why we fight. Flagpole Magazine, Pub Notes. Retrieved September 4 , 2002, from http://64.192.96.73:591(flagpole/FMPro?-DB=articles&-lay=articles&-Format=magprint.htm&…

National Archives and Records Administration, The National Archives [Photographic Exhibit]. (2002). Portrait of Black Chicago [J.H. White, Photographer, 1973]. Retrieved September 4, 2002, from www.archives.gov/exhibit_hall/portrait_of_black_Chicago/part3_page_7.html

Picasso sculpture [Web image]. (n.d.). Retrieved September 4, 2002, from http://homepage.mac.com/pauljlucas/personal/gallery/images/picasso.jpg

Random House Webster's college dictionary. (2000). (2nd ed.). New York: Random House.

Santa Cruz Department of Parks, Open Space, and Cultural Services, County of Santa Cruz. (2002a). Far Out & Funky. [Web site]. Retrieved September 4, 2002, from http://www.scccvc.org/cruzin/bejeweled_herons_farchive.html

Santa Cruz Department of Parks, Open Space, and Cultural Services, County of Santa Cruz. (2002b). [Web image, Ruth Richards and Del Mar Middle School Students, 1991]. Retrieved September 10, 2002, from http://www.scparks.com/commprog/pub_art/index.shtml

Santa Cruz Economic Information. U. S. Census Bureau. Retrieved September 9, 2002, from http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/BasicFactsTable?_lang=en&_vt_name=DEC_2000_PL_U_GCTPL_ST2&_geo_id=04000US06

Santa Cruz Population. US Census Bureau. Retrieved September 9, 2002, from http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/BasicFactsTable?_lang=en&_vt_name=DEC_2000_PL_U_GCTPL_ST2&_geo_id=04000US06

Shusterman, R. (1992). Pragmatic aesthetics: Living beauty, rethinking art. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell Publishers.

Speckhardt, L. (2001). Creating places worth experiencing. Landscape Architecture, 91 (7), 84-87.

Students and educators for ecological design and sustainability (S.E.E.D.S). retrieved August 15, 2002, from http://www.uga.edu/seeds/

Wasserman, J. (1998). To trace the shifting sands: Community, ritual, and the memorial landscape. Landscape Journal, 17, 42-61.

Weiss, A. (2001). Foreword. Public Art Review, 13, 2.

Wong, S. T. (Ed.). (1992). Person, place and thing: Interpretive and empirical essays in cultural geography. Baton Rouge, LA: Geoscience Publications.