



## LESSON TRANSCRIPT

### *Rules and uses of public space, right down to its margins*

The notion of legal and illegal is very sensitive in public space. This ownership of public space, whether it's possible or not, by whom, how, with what kinds of lifestyles, what values... collides with what's allowed and what's not.

How does use gradually create the rule? Who decides what is and isn't allowed? How are these decisions made? And what are these decisions made with? With what arguments?

This blind spot raises questions about people's participation in this rule. There are also issues about the right to information. There are also obvious cooperation issues at stake, since the decision-making process is not always clear-cut.

Today, the search for conviviality and shared spaces is guiding many initiatives towards the organisation of festive events for eating, drinking, socialising and dancing in public spaces.

When the initiative is legitimised by the public authorities and mandates an artist or cultural institution to work in public space, the process is relatively smooth. However, when participation is emergent, self-organised and not legitimised by its recognised artistic forms, it is not always or even not often possible. What can one bring to the other?

In other words, what kind of freedom can the use and experience of these projects in public space open up with these artistic forms?

We're well aware that uses potentially considered as illegal today may well change the rules and become legal tomorrow. Today, an artist who works in public space before making an official request, without the necessary authorisations to show their performance, will experiment, survey and try out these spaces without having the possibility of making an official request. So how does public action observe the reality of what's going on? And how, instead of spending its time regulating through an administrative stringency that often infringes on people's freedom of exercise and expression, does it create more fluidity for stakeholders and facili-

tate what it is in fact trying to achieve, which is the full participation of people in society and the city?

We feel that artistic practice in these matters is an inspiring way of inventing new rules more suited to the changing lifestyles of people.

Society, living conditions, the economy and climate change are all changing significantly. There are many resources to be applied so that, perhaps, things that are illegal today become legal tomorrow. It's hard to claim that a practice is illegal and then, little by little, it becomes established.

Because in principle, you're breaking the rules, even the law, when you do this. So how can we open up spaces for debate if we're not following the rules? How can you really participate in transforming a society's rules when you're in these places?

The legal norm can potentially crush the uses of public space. So, if we manage to develop the expression of things on the fringes and uses that are further from the norm, how do we manage to move the boundaries of what is considered possible and perhaps develop more diverse practices in public space?

It's impossible to believe that a democratic society is frozen in time. A society produces standards, and this is important for structuring it. However, what makes it evolve is exploring these fringes and questioning the norm from the fringes.