

**Public Art and the Construction of Community:
The Making of Meanings**

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by
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Abstract

This study explores the ways in which public art contributes to the creation of (geographical) community identity. More specifically, it investigates the meanings people assign to works of public art and the origins of those meanings. This is achieved through the medium of semi-structured interviews with people involved in either the production or consumption of three works of public art based in the Merseyside area: *Superlambanana* (Liverpool), *Another Place* (Crosby / Sefton) and *Dream* (St Helens).

The findings from the study are three-fold. Firstly, they reveal the structural power disparities between the various parties involved in the creation of the artworks, particularly between the aesthetically influential members of the artistic network and members of the public. Secondly, they illustrate the importance of place in the interpretation of the meaning of the artworks and, thirdly, the findings show that members of the public interact with and experience the artworks in a variety of ways which, in turn, shape the ways in which they relate to the artwork.

Overall, the results of the research illustrate the three-way interrelationship between (i) the artwork, (ii) the place in which the artwork is located, and (iii) the people who live in the place in which the artwork is located. All three should therefore be taken into account when considering a work of public art, particularly in the context of a work of public art that is intended to symbolise a geographical community. From a theoretical point of view, this means exploring the different ways in which people interact with and give meaning to a work of public art; from a social policy point of view, this means downplaying the prospective economic outcomes of a work of public art in favour of integrating the artwork into people's everyday lives.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Chapter 1

Introduction

Specifically commissioned pieces of art can contribute to local distinctiveness and help create a sense of place. (DCMS, 2004: 24)

1.1 Background to the Study, Theoretical Concerns and My Approach

From the late Nineteenth century to the early Twentieth century, public art in the form of statues and memorials proliferated in cities throughout Europe and North America (Osborne, 2001: 12; Cherry, 2006: 683; Miles, 2011: 348). Such bronze and marble artefacts not only commemorated specific people (usually men of distinction) or specific events (such as wars); they also served to symbolise a collective identity and set of values for the people of the nation states in which they are situated (Osborne, 2001: 40; Miles, 2011: 352). However, over time, the people and events represented by such statuary have largely been forgotten, whilst the symbolic use of public art itself has changed. Rather than being utilized to represent an entire nation, public art has in latter years become a means of symbolising a more localised, smaller-scale identity.

This shift in the symbolic focus of public art has occurred with the change in the prevailing Western socio-economic climate, which has seen the decline in the industrial and manufacturing sectors. In order to 'plug the gap', therefore, public art – and culture generally – has become a means of contributing to urban regeneration (Hall and Robertson, 2001: 5) in terms of helping to fashion a city's identity (Pollock and Sharp, 2007: 1061). On an economic level such "local distinctiveness" (see above quote) can be marketed as a 'brand' (Newbigin, 2011: 232), which therefore ensures one city's competitiveness in relation to others (Pollock and Sharp, 2007: 1061) in terms of attracting tourists, external investment and so forth. On a social level, the shared identity and history established by a work of public art can enable social cohesion and inclusion in areas which are seen to lack such qualities (Hall and Robertson, 2001: 10). Alternatively, the participation of local people in cultural or 'creative' activity is also seen as a means by which greater social cohesion and inclusion can be established (Connolly, 2013: 168).

The overarching subject of this thesis, therefore, is public art and the role of public art in the shaping of community identity. More specifically, the meanings people give to public art are under scrutiny, starting from the meanings assigned to a work of public art during its creation to those meanings the same artwork assumes once it is situated in public space. In order to examine these meanings, the following research questions were formulated:

- What are the meanings that are assigned to a work of public art and who assigns them?
- What is the role of 'the public' in influencing the meaning(s) associated with a work of public art?

In order to answer the above questions, I selected three large-scale public artworks in the Merseyside area (*Superlambanana*, *Another Place* and *Dream*) and conducted a number of semi-structured interviews with participants who (i) were involved in the creation processes of each artwork or (ii) lived locally to each of the artworks. I subsequently transcribed the interviews and coded them using NVivo software, employing a grounded theory approach (Glaser and Strauss, 1968; Corbin and Strauss, 2008, et al) to analyse the data into three main themes, which themselves constitute the three data analysis chapters.

By undertaking a comparative study of three works of public art and the meaning-making processes surrounding their creation and installation in their respective locations, my research contributes to prevailing socio-cultural knowledge concerning public art in particular and culture generally. Furthermore, in tracing the symbolic evolution of the above works of art, my study unites the two main theoretical aspects of art and culture: i.e. that of social structure and that of meaning (Blau, 1988: 286) and examines how the former influences the latter. Those theories that can be classified as being in the 'social structure' category include those of Becker, whose theory pertaining to 'art worlds' (2008, 1982) discusses the collective nature of artistic production. Similarly, Bourdieu (1993) argues that culture is a collective concern. However, unlike Becker, who concentrates more on the physical production of an artwork, Bourdieu's focus is

on the ideological production of culture and those people / organisations who are the custodians, so to speak, of artistic taste. The ideological aspect of cultural production is also the subject of Wolff (1993), who argues that the production of an artwork is the result of the ideological conditions in which the artist lives and works. In contrast, the meaning side of the cultural equation includes the discipline of Semiotics, which concerns the way a 'sign' may be interpreted by its viewer. In particular, Barthes (2009 / 1957) discusses the nature of myth, which he explains is the meaning of a sign / number of signs that have been naturalised over time. Eco (1989) on the other hand, argues that, as a sign, an artwork is able to be interpreted in a number of ways. An alternative theory to Semiotics comes in the form of the 'New Sociology of Art' (De La Fuente, 2007, 2010a, 2010b), which emphasises the agency of the object in the artistic network. Strandvad (2012) also argues for the agency of the object, whereas Knorr Cetina (1997) discusses the concept of 'objectualization' – i.e. the identification of the human subject with the inanimate object and vice versa.

The theories outlined above pertain to art and culture generally. However, there are certain concerns that are specific to public art. In particular, the 'public' of public art is a contentious term. On the one hand, 'public' can mean 'place'; on the other hand, the same word can mean 'people'. Regarding the former meaning, an artwork may be created for a specific location, thereby assuming the moniker of 'site-specific' (Miles, 1997: 5; Kwon, 2002: 3). Regarding the latter, the public of a work of public art may mean any number of publics (Phillips 1989a: 195). My study, therefore, also explores the 'publicness' of public art.

1.2 The Case Studies

As the overall aim of my research is to explore the sociological processes by which public art shapes community identity, I focused on those works of public art which had been deliberately created / commissioned to symbolise a particular geographical area (along with other purposes, such as encouraging tourism and economic investment). For the purpose of my research, therefore, and as discussed in the Introduction, I have defined 'community' in geographical terms, and specifically along local political boundary lines. Practical constraints on potential case studies included time and distance concerns as well related cost

issues to me as a researcher. Taking these factors into consideration, therefore, I opted to undertake a comparative study of three large-scale public artworks located in the Merseyside area, namely *Superlambanana*, *Another Place* and *Dream* and their respective communities: Liverpool, Crosby and St Helens. These artworks are also sufficiently different in form and location to enable a more rounded picture of public art as whole to emerge. Unless otherwise specified, the information for the case study descriptions below has been derived from my interview data.

1.2.1 Case Study 1: *Superlambanana*

Superlambanana is a bright yellow sculpture which, as the name implies, is half lamb (the front half) and half banana (the rear half) (see picture below). It was commissioned by the Tate Liverpool for the Artranspeninne 98 Festival – an exhibition of public art that encompassed an area bounded by Liverpool and Hull and which “aimed to foster a new sense of pride in this territory” (Arts Transpennine, 2003)), after which it was installed outside the appropriately-named ships’s chandlers, Joseph P Lamb and Sons, in Wapping, Liverpool. The sculpture was designed by Japanese-born artist, Taro Chiezo, who has exhibited his work in, amongst other places, New York, Toronto and Berlin (Chiezo, 2014). The design was subsequently worked up into its 18ft height in the former Bryant & May matchworks in Garston by a small group of local artists using concrete, steel wire and mesh. The sculpture cost in the region of £35,000 to construct and was funded by the National Lottery. After the exhibition, responsibility for the upkeep of the sculpture passed to the Liverpool Art and Design Trust (LADT), and then to Liverpool City Council upon the Trust’s cessation. The sculpture was subsequently moved to a number of other locations in Liverpool city centre, including Williamson Square and outside a Liverpool John Moores University building on Tithebarn Street, where it is presently situated.

In June 2003 the title of European Capital of Culture was bestowed upon Liverpool. The city had been chosen ahead of its five other shortlisted rivals – including the bookies’ favourite, Newcastle and Gateshead – due, in no small part, to the apparent presence of a unified and supportive community. As Sir Jeremy Isaacs, the leader of the deciding ECOC 2008 panel, commented, “If one had to

say one thing that swung it for Liverpool, it would have to be there was a greater sense that the whole city is involved in the bid and behind it" (The Guardian, 2003). Earlier the same year, Liverpool's waterfront, including the William Brown Street area, had been the UK's only nomination as a UNESCO world heritage site, and, indeed, it was this 'global' view of the city, highlighting Liverpool's heritage as a major port, which was foregrounded for the ECOC 2008 campaign and its overarching theme of 'The World in One City' (Liverpool Culture Company, 2002).

The perceived economic benefits of the ECOC to Liverpool were substantial. It was projected that it would attract a further 1.7 million visitors and a total £2 billion of investment to the area, creating 14,000 jobs (Woodhead, 2003: 2). There was plenty of potential, therefore, for the 'Glasgow effect' – i.e. the transformation of external perceptions of the city from negative to positive via its culturally-driven economic regeneration – to take place. The marketing of Liverpool as a global city as well as "a premier European city" (Liverpool Culture Company, 2002: 301) could be construed as the means of achieving this.

Liverpool Culture Company was set up and tasked with the city's initial bid for the title of ECOC 2008 and, subsequently, the delivery of the various activities and events that were to take place during this year and the years prior to it (Liverpool Culture Company, 2005). Leading up to the main 2008 theme were a number of other-themed years, including the Year of Faith in 2004, the Year of the Sea in 2005 and Liverpool's 800th birthday year (i.e. 800 years after King John granted Liverpool its charter) in 2007. Events held during the ECOC year included the Tall Ships Race, La Princesse (A 50ft working model of a spider which 'crawled' its way through the centre of Liverpool), an exhibition of Klimt paintings at Tate Liverpool, and the Go *Superlambananas* trail, which saw 120 smaller replicas of the original sculpture dotted about the city. These 'mini' versions were sponsored by local businesses and a variety of artists, a number of whom worked alongside local schools and charities, helped design them. The majority of the smaller *Superlambananas* were subsequently auctioned off at an event staged at St George's Hall to raise money for the Lord Mayor's charities. Overall, the Liverpool's Capital of Culture Year was deemed a great success, having "had an

economic impact on the Liverpool City Region in excess of £800 million” (Liverpool Culture Company, 2009: 6).

The original large-scale *Superlambanana* was on loan to Liverpool for a 10-year period, at the end of which ownership would revert back to the artist. As this was due to happen during Liverpool’s ECOC year, there was consternation that the sculpture would be sold on elsewhere – particularly to a buyer in Manchester (Daily Post, 2008). This instigated a campaign to ‘save the *Superlambanana*’ by a local newspaper, the Daily Post, during February and March 2008. The dispute in ownership between the artist and Liverpool City Council was eventually concluded in February 2009 by the signing of a new deal costing £125, 000 and which saw *Superlambanana* remaining in Liverpool for at least 80 years. Included in the terms of this deal was the construction of a new, more resilient *Superlambanana* for Liverpool and the handing back of the original *Superlambanana* to the artist (Bartlett, 2009). To date (late 2015), however, this has yet to be achieved.

Picture 1: *Superlambanana*



1.2.2 Case Study 2: *Another Place*

Another Place (see Picture 2) is an artwork by Antony Gormley and consists of a series of 100 statues that was installed across a 3 km stretch of the beach at Crosby, near Liverpool. The statues, colloquially known as ‘the iron men’, are life-sized replicas of the artist’s own body and stand facing out towards the Irish sea, with some becoming wholly or partially submerged with the incoming tide. The artwork, which had previously been installed at locations in Belgium, Norway and Germany before going to Crosby, was commissioned by the South Sefton Development Trust on advice by the Liverpool Biennial and the cost of installation was funded by the Mersey Waterfront programme, Mersey Docks and Harbour Company, the Arts Council and the South Sefton Development Trust. Projected benefits of installing the statues included the economic, cultural and social – i.e. to help regenerate Crosby / Sefton by attracting tourism and investment to the area, to enhance the cultural image of Crosby / Sefton both nationally and internationally, and to give local people a greater sense of pride in their area.

Already a ‘famous name’ in the art world and beyond, Gormley’s most high-profile artwork to date had been – and, arguably, still is - the Angel of the North, a 20 metres high steel figure with wings overlooking the A1 motorway in Gateshead in the North East of England (Gateshead Council, 2015). Prior to that, in 1994, he had won the Turner Prize for Field, a collection of 40,000 small terracotta figures (The Guardian, 2008), and in 2009 he would win the competition to decide what to do with the ‘fourth plinth’ in Trafalgar Square, London, devising One and Other – giving ‘ordinary people’ the opportunity to be living works of art for an hour each (The Telegraph, 2011). Ahead of the installation of *Another Place*, Gormley visited Crosby beach and gave the site his stamp of approval.

Despite some opposition to the artwork from local residents, Sefton Council’s planning committee gave the go-ahead for *Another Place* to be installed on a temporary basis, and work to achieve this this was duly undertaken in June 2005 (Ward, 2005). The sculpture was to remain at Crosby until November 2006, when it would be removed in order to go to New York. However, the perceived popularity of the artwork saw a growing support to retain it on a permanent basis. In order to lobby for its permanent installation and to raise sufficient funds to

enable this, a charitable trust, *Another Place* Ltd, was set up. Support for the Crosby's retention of the statues also came from the artist himself. Despite this, Sefton Council's planning committee rejected an extension to the original planning permission on Health and Safety grounds. In response, local newspaper, the Daily Post, instigated a 'Save Our Statues' campaign, which involved "recruiting 100 people to support [the campaign] – that's one person for every statue" (the Daily Post, 2006). This saw high-profile figures – such as Cherie Booth (herself raised in Crosby), Lloyd Grosman and Lord Derby – pledging their support to the campaign. *Another Place* Ltd subsequently appealed the decision to remove the statues after securing almost half of the projected £2.2 million cost of retaining and maintaining the artwork, and in March 2007 Sefton Council's Planning Committee approved this new application to keep *Another Place* permanently at Crosby (Weston, 2007), where it now resides.

Picture 2: *Another Place*



1.2.3 Case Study 3: *Dream*

Dream (Picture 3) is a 20 metre high, 320 tonne sculpture of a girl's head with eyes closed – i.e. in a *Dream*-like state – which was constructed from 54 individual

blocks of pre-cast concrete and coated in Spanish dolomite & titanium oxide to give it a white glow. It is situated in St Helens, on the site of the former Sutton Manor colliery and overlooking the M62 motorway. Construction of the sculpture began in October 2008 and it was officially unveiled in the presence of the artist on May 31st 2009. Its commission was instigated as part of 'The Big Art Project' by Channel 4: a scheme to encourage the creation of works of public art. A variety of parties was involved in its commission and funding, including St Helens Council, Liverpool Biennial, Arts Council England, the Art Fund and the Northwest Development Agency, while a group of Sutton Manor colliery ex-miners was involved in both the selection of the artist and the design process of the sculpture. The construction of the sculpture was project-managed by Arup engineers, with Derby-based pre-cast concrete firm, Evans, charged with making the material substance of the artwork and Cheetham Hill Construction acting as site managers. The site on which *Dream* stands is leased to and maintained by the Forestry Commission.

Dream was designed by Jaume Plensa, an artist who hails from Barcelona. He is responsible for the Crown Fountain in Chicago's Millennium Park (2000), which consists of two 50ft high glass towers which have cascades of water running down them. Huge LED screens display the faces of various people, who intermittently spout jets of water (Sheets, 2010). He has also designed an installation on the roof of BBC Broadcasting House in London. Entitled Breathing, the artwork is a huge glass cone, opening towards the sky, and from which a light beams at 9.30pm every evening (Sheets, 2010). Echo, a sculpture similar to *Dream* and named after the tragic Greek nymph, was installed in Madison Square Park in New York in 2011 (Kino, 2011). When undertaking a new public art project, Plensa makes a point of visiting the site so that he can understand the ways in which the artwork can function with the site (Sheets, 2010). Thus Plensa visited Sutton Manor to learn more about that particular site.

The commissioning and construction of *Dream* coincided with the implementation of the City Growth Strategy for St Helens, which had been originally launched in 2003 as part of a wider UK pilot project by the then New Labour Government. The main premise of the Strategy is the achievement of urban regeneration via the

intervention of the private rather than the public sector, while focusing on the competitive strengths of the area rather than its weaknesses (St Helens Council, 2008; ICIC, 2003). In 2008 a revised version of St Helen's CGS was produced, taking into account the strategic and economic changes nationally and internationally, including the ongoing economic recession and the reduction in EU funding for Merseyside (St Helens Council, 2008). It is in this revised CGS that *Dream* is discussed primarily in terms of the Strategy's fourth broad theme of 'Transforming Perceptions', the objective of which is "to increase recognition of St Helens as a regional location of choice for residents, businesses and visitors" (St Helens Council, 2008: 25). Thus one of the main functions of *Dream* is to assist in the creation of "a visually exciting St Helens" (St Helens Council: 2008: 46), which will make people from outside the area want to visit as well as giving St Helens its own distinctiveness.

Since its installation, however, there has been some concern that the trees surrounding the sculpture are obscuring its visibility from the motorway, restricting the ability of *Dream* to attract visitors to the site and the wider St Helens area. Furthermore, a light that was to shine out of the top of the artwork into the sky was vetoed by the Highways Agency on health and safety grounds (i.e. as it may cause a distraction to passing motorists), while lights that were installed around its base in order to illuminate the sculpture at night have been, on occasion, smashed.

Picture 3: *Dream*



1.3 Main Argument and Structure of Thesis

In the following chapters I explore the meanings given to three works of public art by various parties involved in both the production and consumption of the artworks. By doing so, I demonstrate that ‘public participation’ in the creation / commissioning processes of the artworks is tightly regulated by the aesthetically influential members of the art world. Consequently, as in the case of *Dream*, the form and meaning of an artwork that is ostensibly the choice of members of the local community is, in actuality, the choice of the aesthetically influential members of the art world. In this way, therefore, the version of ‘the local community’ which the public artwork initially represents is the version originated from the aesthetically influential members of the art world. Once the artworks are in the public realm, however, they acquire other meanings, including those which are autobiographical. However, the majority of meanings originate from place – in particular, the geographical and / or historical associations of the areas in which the artworks are located – or not located, as in the case of *Another Place*.

Furthermore, the physical locations of the artworks play a large part in the ways in which local people experience the artworks. In particular, the integration of the artwork into the main urban fabric of an area enables local people to experience the artwork in a more direct and day-to-day way. This phenomenon is more conducive in establishing a three-way interrelationship between the artwork, the place and the people, which allows for a greater identification of one with the other, as in the case of *Superlambanana*.

The thesis is divided into the following sections: the Literature Review (Chapters 2 and 3) discusses the pertinent sociological theories and political background to art and culture; the Methodology (Chapter 4) outlines the methods used both to acquire and analyse the research data. Following on from that, the three Data Analysis chapters (Chapters 5, 6 and 7) examine the research data in detail and elucidates upon the data's relevance to the study, whilst the Discussion chapter (Chapter 8) brings together the key points that have arisen from the Data Analysis chapters. Finally, the Conclusion (Chapter 9) summarises the overall argument of my study. The following provides a breakdown of the thesis chapter by chapter:

Chapter 2 examines the sociological theory of art and culture in depth. It discusses the theories pertaining to meaning (e.g. Semiotics, the 'new sociology of art') and to social structure (i.e. Becker, Bourdieu and related theorists) in greater detail. Furthermore, it also explores the prevailing sociological arguments as to the factors that make public art 'public' – namely arguments pertaining to the public as meaning 'place' and those meaning 'people'.

Following on from the above examination of sociological theory, Chapter Three outlines the political attitude in Britain towards art and culture from 1979 (the introduction of the Thatcher government with its greater emphasis on the free market economy) to the present day. It will establish how the arts have been increasingly utilised to fulfil other political agendas other than the purely artistic. In particular, the arts have become integral to urban regeneration, in both economic terms (i.e. by attracting tourists, jobs and external investment) and social terms (i.e. by fostering social cohesion and inclusion). Furthermore, the concept of 'culture' has broadened out over the same timescale from a 'high arts'

definition to a concept that encompasses 'creativity' and 'the creative industries' – this latter emphasising the more commercial aspects of culture.

In the fourth Chapter, I consider the methods which were used to undertake the research. I discuss the grounded theory approach in detail and the reasons why I chose it as a suitable method for my research. I then relate my experiences of undertaking a number of semi-structured interviews with participants in various social settings before explaining how I analysed the interview data into codes and the three main themes that constitute the following data analysis chapters.

The following three chapters constitute the data analysis chapters. The first of these chapters, Chapter Five, discusses the first main theme that emerged from my interview data. It concentrates on the actions of and interactions between the various parties of the artistic network as well as its relationship with the public. The chapter will show that there are power imbalances between the different parties of the art world, with some parties being more aesthetically influential than others. These parties – which I call the aesthetic elite – have greater involvement in deciding the form and meaning of a public artwork than those parties which are less aesthetically influential. Furthermore, I argue that the participation of members of the public in the creation of the three artworks is tightly regulated, if it is allowed at all, by the aesthetic elite of the art world.

Chapter Six, the second of the three data analysis chapters, discusses the second main theme which emerged from my interview data. It concentrates on the meanings given to each artwork by both (i) members of the artistic network, and (ii) members of the geographical community in which each artwork is located. In this chapter I will describe these meanings and explore the processes by which the meanings are assigned. In particular, I will demonstrate that there are three layers of meaning pertinent to a work of public art: namely, the supra-meaning, the coded meaning and the decoded meaning. I will also illustrate that place, via relevant geographical and historical associations, is integral to the interpretation of meaning of a public artwork.

Chapter Seven, the third of the three data analysis chapters, discusses the third main theme which emerged from my interview data. It concentrates on the factors that constitute the 'public' nature of each public artwork. In particular, I will explore the relationship between the artwork and the place in which it is located and the ways in which people resident in each location interact with the artwork. In doing so, I will show that a public artwork can be perceived as 'the other' by members of the local community. Alternatively, a public artwork can achieve a greater resonance with community members via its integration into the urban fabric of its location, thereby creating a three-way relationship between the artwork, the location and the people.

In Chapter Eight, I discuss the key points that have arisen from the previous data analysis chapters. In particular, this chapter draws together the three factors that are pertinent to answering the research questions as outlined above. These factors are: (i) The Importance of Place, (ii) The Role of the Public and Public Participation, and (iii) Public Art as 'the Other'. I will also show how the three key findings are interlinked and that the 'publicness' of public art involves the interrelationship between place, people and the artwork.

Finally, in the Conclusion (Chapter Nine), I return to answer the research questions as outlined above. I will also discuss the ways in which my research makes a contribution to the knowledge of art and culture in relation to both sociological theory and social policy. Following that, I will discuss the limitations of the study and also reflect on my experiences of researching in the field and, lastly, I will make recommendations for those areas which I consider require further research.

Literature Review

Chapter 2: Sociological Theory of Art, Culture and Public Art

Chapter 3: British Cultural Policy: An Overview

Chapter 2

Sociological Theory of Art, Culture and Public Art

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is two-fold. Firstly, it is to provide an overview of the various sociological theories pertaining to art and culture which are more generalised in their approach to their subject matter. Secondly, it is to discuss those theories peculiar to the concept of 'public art' – in particular, those theories that attempt to address the question of what exactly is the 'public' of public art and why such art is distinct from its institutionalised (i.e. museum and gallery-based) counterpart. It will be shown that, in the first instance, there are two main theoretical branches in the form of (i) social structure and (ii) meaning. In the second instance it will become apparent that the concept of the 'public' is not as straightforward as it at first appears and that conflict and controversy regarding the nature of the public and its relationship with an artwork often bubble close to the surface. I will conclude the chapter by discussing the points raised that may be of particular relevance to the direction of this study.

2.1 Sociological Theories of Art and Culture

From a theoretical standpoint, it can be said that there are two main strands of thought operating in the discipline of the sociology of art and culture. As Blau succinctly puts it:

More than most fields in sociology, culture has one strong dragline in the realm of social structure (that is, for example, institutional arrangements, the class structure, commerce and production) and another dragline in the realm of meaning (for example, communication, symbols, values). This makes it possible to develop a clearer understanding of the relations among meaning, structure and culture. (Blau, 1988: 286)

Taking Blau's observation as a theoretical starting point, it is my contention that the physical construction of a work of public art is influenced by and at the same time influences its symbolic construction. To elaborate: those individuals and

institutions who are responsible for the 'hands-on' creation of an artwork (be they members of Becker's 'art world', Bourdieu's 'field of cultural production' and so forth), have their own – collective – rationale for the symbolic content of that artwork; and that once in the public realm, the physical manifestation of the artwork influences the meaningful responses of the members of the public in which it is located. It is therefore my intention to unite the two strands as defined by Blau – i.e. that of social structure and that of meaning – to form the basis of my study into the production of the meanings assigned to works of public art. To this end, this chapter examines the various theories that are relevant to the study at hand, taking as its basis the (apparent) division between social structure and object meaning. In the former category are the cultural theories of Becker and Bourdieu and their followers, whilst the latter category includes the discipline of Semiotics (which itself includes the theories of de Saussure, Peirce, Barthes and Eco) and the 'New Sociology of Art' as advocated by De La Fuente. I shall conclude by discussing the direction of the study and those theories that are particularly relevant to it.

2.1.1 Theories of Social Structure

In the most straightforward sense, the physical creation of a work of art can be seen to depend upon, not just one person, but a number of people. In other words, although the artist may be responsible for the original idea behind the artwork (what it looks like and what it means), the actual fabrication of the artwork in its final, finished state may require the assistance of a variety of individuals employed in a variety of occupations, such as engineers, welders, carpenters and so forth. Even those involved in less 'hands-on' roles, such as funders and commissioning agents, have a direct impact upon the artwork's creation as, without their input, the artwork would not be able to be produced. This focus on the collective nature of art is explored at length by Howard S. Becker in *Art Worlds* (2008, first published in 1982).

For Becker, the artist sits in the centre of a co-operative network, whose members not only assist in the production of the work of art, but who also share the belief that the work of art is worth producing. It is this belief that informs the aesthetic

rationale for the production of the artwork: i.e. that what is being done is indeed 'art'. It also helps to engender the general view that the artist is the truly 'gifted' member of the network and of wider society, and consequently is somehow 'above' society. Saying this, the artist is nevertheless constrained by a number of conventions which, although enable a work of art to be produced with the minimum of pre-negotiations, may disable the artist from doing exactly what he / she wants to do. In this case, the artist can choose to ignore those conventions and may even succeed in producing the artwork in the desired way if he / she is able to mobilise the required resources or adapt the artwork to be produced without those resources unavailable to it. Artists who are able to reject certain conventions are thus 'mavericks'.

Although the artistic producer is of particular pertinence to Becker, whose focus in *Art Worlds* – as discussed above – is the network of individuals and institutions that assist in the physical creation of an artwork, the artistic consumer is also included within the network as "someone must respond to the work once it is done, have an emotional or intellectual reaction to it" (2008: 4). Indeed, the consumers of an artwork can themselves be differentiated according to their levels of knowledge of the artistic conventions used in the art world. Those who only know the more generalised, 'catch-all' conventions (e.g. slow tempo music as 'sad', quick tempo music as 'happy') are considered to lie on the periphery of the art world, whereas those whose knowledge of artistic conventions is more specialised are "more or less permanent parties to the cooperative activity that make it up" (2008: 48).

Although Becker's theory has been commended for offering a coherent framework for studying the production of art in a sociological context (Blau, 1988: 281; Cluley, 2012: 213), it has been criticised for ignoring the 'specialness' of art and thus treating artistic production in the same way as any other form of production (Zangwill, 2002: 208). Furthermore, Rubio (2012) argues that the emphasis on the more generalised social aspects of artistic production in the art world overlooks the individual factors that are involved in the production of a particular artwork, including its site-specificity and the materials used in its creation and proposes that "a truly comprehensive sociological understanding of

cultural production must also include a study of culture in the making, that is, a study of the practices and materials through which specific cultural forms are contingently produced in particular sites” (2012: 146-147). Meanwhile, in their article, ‘The Production of Culture Perspective’ (2004), Anand and Peterson expand upon Becker by outlining a number of factors which they suggest can be applied to the research of cultural production. These factors are (i) technology, “with which people and institutions augment their abilities to communicate” (2004: 314); (ii) law and regulation, which “create the groundrules that shape how creative fields develop” (2004: 315); (iii) industry structure, which “tend to coalesce around new technologies, evolving legal arrangements, and newly conceptualized markets” (2004: 315); (iv) organizational structure, of which the cultural industry has three forms: the bureaucratic form, the entrepreneurial form, and the variegated form (2004: 316); (v) occupational careers, which constitute “the networks of working relationships” (2004: 317); and (vi) the market, which producers in effect create in order to sell their goods (2004: 317). Peterson and Anand acknowledge that the production of culture perspective has been criticised for overlooking the meaning of cultural artefacts; nevertheless, they propose that the perspective is still a useful tool for meaning interpretation, as “it alerts the analyst to differences between symbols produced under differing conditions” (2004: 327).

The collective belief in the production of art which is an integral part of an art world is also central to Bourdieu’s concept of the field of cultural production (1993), in which the participating groups collectively determine the artistic value of an art work. As with Becker and contrary to the ‘romantic’ perception of the artistic genius operating in splendid isolation, Bourdieu argues that a work of art is created within a social structure that is specific to culture – i.e. the field of cultural production. Although possessing its own internal structure, this field is contained within a larger ‘field of power’, which is fundamentally driven by economic principles. It is the tension between the two different fields and the desire for autonomy of the former from the latter that endows the field of cultural production with its particular properties. As the field of cultural production attempts to define itself in a way other than that which defines the field of power, economic values are downplayed and the ‘artistic’ value – or, to use Bourdieu’s

phrase, symbolic capital – of a work of art becomes the main focus. However, a work of art does not possess artistic value inherently; rather its artistic value is determined by the various parties and institutions which operate within the field of cultural production, such as art critics, art dealers, art galleries, universities and other artists. It is these collectively who decide which work of art indeed possesses artistic worth and which work of art does not and is therefore not a legitimate 'work of art'. As Bourdieu writes, "The work of art is an object which exists as such only by virtue of the (collective) belief which knows and acknowledges it as a work of art" (1993: 35). Consequently, it is by not producing art work purely for the market and thereby consumption by the masses that an artist is perceived as truly an artist and his / her art as true works of art. Furthermore, because true art is that which occupies the most autonomous field, such art is more open to experimentation; art that is produced for mass consumption can only aim to be a paler imitation of its more 'well-bred' relation. For Bourdieu, the components of the field of cultural production are the ultimate arbiters of artistic validity and therefore constitute the more powerful side by far of the cultural equation. The cultural consumer, in comparison, appears to be the more passive party – simply a captive audience for the middle-class ideology behind the artistic façade.

The ideological processes that underpin artistic creation are also discussed in detail by Wolff in her study, *The Social Production of Art* (1993). In this, and using Marxist theory, Wolff argues that both art-work and non-art-work are – or, rather were – in essence, exactly the same. Both were born under the same social conditions and both were affected, albeit in different ways, by the advent of capitalism. Consequently, art is not inherently the value-free, supra-existent entity that it is often supposed to be. Rather, art – like all other forms of work – is very much grounded in the society in which it is produced, and as such is influenced by those particular social circumstances in which the artist operates. The artist him / herself cannot help but be influenced by those ideas and beliefs of the particular social group in which he / she belongs. Thus art is not the product simply of an individual artist: it is the product of a particular social group realised through the individual artist. As Wolff herself puts it, "art is clearly an ideological activity and an ideological product" (1993: 55). Furthermore, the particular methods used by

an artist to produce a work of art have themselves been influenced by certain social conditions, while aesthetic conventions enable the ideology of the art work to be manifested in an indirect way:

Ideology is not expressed in its pure form in the work, the latter acting as a passive carrier. Rather, the work of art itself re-works the ideology in aesthetic form, in accordance with the rules and conventions of contemporary artistic production (1993: 65)

Similarly to Bourdieu, therefore, Wolff, who argues that the artist, being part of a particular social group, cannot help but be ideologically influenced by that group and consequently portray this influence, if in an indirect way, through his / her artwork.

A dissenting voice regarding the ideological nature of culture is provided by Zangwill (2002). He disagrees with the premise that art is inherently ideological, arguing that ideological intentions are 'piggybacked' onto art's aesthetic qualities because, contrary to Bourdieu's and – to an extent – Wolff's assertions that aesthetics is simply the outward manifestation of ideology, it is ideology itself that needs aesthetics in order to be disseminated. An artwork is simply an aesthetic creation in its own right. Another critic of Bourdieu, although not in such stringent terms, is Georgina Born (2010), who argues for an alternative approach to analysing the social nature of culture, an approach which includes a more integrated form of aesthetics. She praises the 'achievement' of Bourdieu's concept of the field of cultural production in terms of its analytical value but highlights what she considers to be several main weaknesses of his theories. Firstly, working class culture is defined in largely negative terms in comparison to middle class culture. Secondly, there is a lack of an historical dimension to the creation of particular aesthetic dispositions, with "a synchronic focus on the agonistics of position-taking" (2010; 179) within the field. In particular there is a failure to acknowledge the role both artists and cultural institutions play in the creation, perpetuation and cessation of different cultural trends and, thirdly, there is little room in Bourdieu's account for originality and innovation over repetition of cultural forms. However, she also criticises much current sociological

thinking as deficient in the place of aesthetics in culture. As an alternative to both this stance and to Bourdieu, therefore, she advocates an interdisciplinary approach to the study of culture, including such disciplines as anthropology and ethnography, as a means of exploring the nature of the aesthetic, which itself includes the role played by cultural institutions over time within the field of cultural production in which they operate. Furthermore, the internal structures of those institutions can be examined in all their complexity. For, as Born states, “if there is an overriding dimension of creative practice that has been lamentably neglected – by Bourdieu, production of culture and cultural studies alike – and that demands to be studied, it is the insistent, existential reality of the historical orientation of producers by reference to the aesthetic and ethical trajectories or coordinates of the genres in which they work, an orientation that enables or affords agency” (2010: 192).

2.1.2 Theories of Meaning

The production of art, however, is simply one side of the cultural equation. In order for art to fulfil its function as art, it must undergo consumption by an audience that is actively involved in the interpretation of its meaning. This aspect of consumption is not completely overlooked in Becker’s theory, although the focus of the ‘art world’ is very much the relationship between the various parties that combine to produce a work of art. Regarding consumption, Becker makes a point of explaining that the artwork can be subject to ‘editing’ by both artistic producers and consumers in both physical and symbolic senses:

If the choices of audiences and support personnel can remake works so drastically, we can reasonably think of art works as not having a stable character. Even when they are physically stable, retaining those characteristics the artist chose, they differ in the way they appear in people’s experience. It is not just that they are differentially evaluated. Different qualities actually come and go as people attend to them differently. (2008: 217)

In this way, the artwork can be seen to have an affective quality – i.e. it affects the viewer in such a way that his / her experiences are projected onto it and thus the

art work is thus perceived differently by different people. During the 'editing' process of an artwork, artists may take into account the anticipated thoughts and feelings of other people to the artwork, although this is not always the case and "they learn to ignore them at times" (2008: 204). In particular, artists will especially ignore the thoughts and feelings of those people who are not part of the art world (Becker, 2008).

For Bourdieu, however, what is enshrined in a work of art is the ideology of the cultural elite – i.e. those people / institutions that inhabit the field of cultural production. It is, after all, the cultural elite that establish the aesthetic criteria by which all art is measured. This in turn means that, in order for his / her work to be accepted as 'art', an artist is required to conform to the appropriate aesthetic criteria. The resultant works of art are consequently inaccessible to the masses, who lack the relevant knowledge in order to interpret them. Only those individuals whose social circumstances have endowed them with such knowledge are able to do this. In his study *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* (1986), Bourdieu investigates this in greater detail, arguing that the formulation of aesthetic criteria is very much the outcome of social influences. For Bourdieu 'cultural competence' – i.e. the ability to appreciate a work of art with the appropriate aesthetic criteria – is based on the educational and social circumstances of the viewer. To be seen as a work of art, an object requires its form to take precedence over its function. This, in turn, requires the viewer to be in possession of an aesthetic disposition. The aesthetic disposition is particularly demanded in an artistic institution such as an art gallery where any object has the potential to be a work of art. This aesthetically-specific way of viewing objects – the 'aesthetic gaze' – is, however, a learned human attribute rather than a spontaneously-occurring one. It is thereby socially divisive, setting apart the chosen few (i.e. those educated in the aesthetic gaze) from the masses (i.e. those who lack such education). Furthermore, the aesthetic gaze requires the viewer to distance him / herself from the artwork being viewed and in doing so reject those feelings and emotions people otherwise confer on their everyday lives. The aesthetic gaze thus becomes the 'pure gaze': a way of seeing not only art but also the world. A conclusion that can therefore be drawn from Bourdieu's analysis is Oscar Wilde's maxim that life does indeed imitate art, although only for the

socially and culturally elite. Those who do not quite make the grade on both counts operate on a more ethical and less aesthetical basis; in other words, they allow their artistic judgements to be 'coloured' by the feelings and emotions of everyday life and thus make their decisions accordingly. Culture, therefore, has an ideological function behind its aesthetic facade in its latent endorsement of the values and way of life of the social elite.

A particular theory – or, rather, series of theories – is the discipline of Semiotics, which is defined as 'the study of signs' and which originated from the theories of linguistics as outlined by Ferdinand de Saussure in the early 20th century and which were brought together posthumously in the *Cours de Linguistique Generale* in 1916 (Howells, 2003: 95). Although initially a language-based theory, semiotics – or semiology (the nomenclature proposed by Saussure) – was intended both as a study in its own right and one that could be generalised into other areas of enquiry as well that of linguistics (Culler, 1985: 103). For Saussure, the sign itself is composed of two necessary elements, i.e. the signified and the signifier, the former being the concept which is represented by the form of the latter (Culler, 1985: 19; Howells, 2003: 95; Chandler 2007: 15). A sign must consist of both elements, or else it is not a sign (Chandler, 2007: 15-16). Furthermore, signs do not exist in a vacuum as discrete units of meaning. Rather, a sign exists in relation to other signs within a system of signs and derives its meaning from this relationship (Culler, 1985: 24; Chandler, 2007: 18-22; Crow, 2003: 17). A third quality of the sign emphasised by Saussure is its arbitrary nature – i.e. that there is no fundamental or inherent motivation for a certain concept to be signified by a certain form – and, indeed, it is only socio-cultural conventions that hold the relationship between the two parts of the sign in place (Chandler, 2007: 22-28; Crow: 2003: 18-22).

Although Saussure's semiotic model was and continues to be influential (to be discussed below), another model of semiotics that arose around the same time was that proposed by Charles Sanders Peirce (Chandler, 2007: 29). Contrasting with Saussure's 'double' sign, Peirce's sign consists of three elements: the representamen (the sign's form), the interpretant (the sign's concept) and the object being referred to (Chandler, 2007: 29). The interpretant is itself a sign that

is conjured up in the mind of the individual upon comprehending the original sign's form (representamen) (Chandler, 2007: 29). In this way, therefore, there is no direct, 'fixed' interpretation of a sign, as the way in which the sign is interpreted depends on the individual's experience of the sign, which itself depends on his / her personal experiences (Crow, 2003: 25). For Peirce, therefore, the meaningful content of the sign is not found within the sign itself, but in its interpretation. The action of 'decoding' the sign and the resulting transference of meaning between representamen, interpretant and object is known as semiosis, whilst unlimited semiosis is the multiplicity of meanings that may be generated by this act of transference (Chandler, 2007: 31; Crow, 2010: 36). Continuing with the 'three' theme, Peirce then proposes three types of sign: (i) an icon is a sign in which there is a direct relationship between the object represented and the form of its sign (e.g. a photograph of someone, an onomatopoeic word); an index is a sign which has a direct, albeit partial, relationship with the object to which it refers (e.g., smoke for fire, footprints for a person / animal); a symbol is a sign in which there is no direct relationship between the object and the form taken by its sign (e.g. the alphabet, numbers, most words) (Chandler, 2007: 36-37).

As indicated above, Saussure's brand of semiotic theory proved influential and was taken up by advocates of other disciplines, amongst them anthropology and sociology (Culler, 1985), where anything visual (e.g. a flag, a photograph, a bowl of fruit) can be a sign and where the arbitrary nature of the sign plays a central part. As there is no meaningful relationship between the signifier and the signified other than that of social convention, it is the role of the anthropologist / sociologist to reveal the particular convention behind a particular sign. One particular theorist who was influenced by Saussure is Roland Barthes, who expanded on the former's theories and outlined his own semiotic principles in a series of writings, amongst them *Mythologies* (2009, first published 1957), in which he discusses such socially-endowed conventions of the sign at length. In these, Barthes accepts Saussure's division of the sign into signifier and signified, but then takes this a step further by arguing that a sign can itself become the signifier of a further concept (signified). Thus the combination d-o-g signifies the concept 'dog', both of which combine to form the sign. This is the first level of meaning. The second level of meaning takes that sign dog and subsequently uses

it to signify a further concept, such as loyalty (Howells, 2003: 101). In this way the sign of the first order becomes a signifier of the second. Barthes calls the signifier of the second order form and its signified concept, with the union of the two the signification. This second order of meaning forms what Barthes calls myth, which he defines as “a type of speech” (2009:131). However, the units of this speech need not be linguistic. Rather, they can be “any significant unit or synthesis, whether verbal or visual” (2009: 133). Indeed, for Barthes, anything has the potential to be a sign and thus part of a myth if it is endowed with meaning.

Barthes (2009) asserts that myth is a middle-class construct, although in this case it is not as socially divisive in its ideological manifestation as Bourdieu’s interpretation of ideological forces. Barthes argues that the social conventions which lie behind the relationship between the signifier and its signified are the product of historical forces: i.e. a particular word or thing has a particular meaning because, at some point in time, society has agreed it shall be so. However, myth, argues Barthes, “transforms history into nature” (2009: 154). In other words, the aim of myth is to take these historically and socially produced meanings and render them perfectly natural, as though they have always been the way they are; or, to use Barthes’ words, they are what-goes-without-saying (2009: xxix). Furthermore, it is not society as a whole that originally designated such meanings to their forms. Rather, they were designated by the dominant group in society – which, according to Barthes, is the bourgeoisie. Myth, therefore, disseminates the ideas and values of the middle-classes, but does so in a way that appears simply as ‘reality’. Everyone, in effect, goes along with it. Consequently, the process of myth is ideological. Myth, therefore, is not just the study of signs per se, but is also the study of the ideological processes which inform the construction of reality. It is therefore the role of the sociologist to expose those ideologies and show that the accepted reality is the product of a particular social group.

As can be seen by the exposition on semiotics so far, therefore, the individual – be he / she the reader, viewer, listener and so forth – plays an integral role in the interpretation of the meaning of a sign. Indeed, it could be said that, without an individual to interpret it, the sign is, in effect, meaningless. This prominence given to the sign’s interpreter is the subject of Barthes’ study, *The Death of the Author*

(1977). Instead of the author of a work being the key to the work's meaning, the balance of power is seen to shift to the reader, who is capable of interpreting the work independently of the producer. For Barthes, therefore, everything is in the interpretation and in *The Death of the Author* he goes further and argues that a work's creator is an unnecessary component in the meaning-making of his / her work. In fact, the creator can be dismissed altogether, as the work stands alone as a fully-formed meaning-making entity in its own right, i.e. as "a tissue of signs" (1977: 147). What has been historically missing – ignored even – is the opposite side of the creative equation: the reader. It is in fact the reader who is the indispensable part of the equation, for it is the reader who ultimately makes sense of the work, not the author. It is the reader who is able to synthesise the tissue of signs into a coherent whole, hence "a text's unity lies not in its origin but in its destination" (1977: 148). As is evident by its title, in *The Death of the Author*, Barthes was largely discussing works of creative literature. However, in the context of art, the substitution of artist for 'author', artwork for 'text' and viewer for 'reader' can readily be made.

As with Barthes, the role of the interpreter is the focus of Umberto Eco's study, *The Open Work* (1989), a collection of writings which examines the ways in which the greater the extent of the 'openness' of a cultural work, the greater the number of meanings that may be interpreted. For Eco, the 'open' quality of a work of art lies in the nature the interaction between the creative intentions of the artist and the responses of the reader / viewer etc., who brings to the artwork his / her own socio-cultural experiences, expectations and biases. Certain works of art, explains Eco, are less open than others. A work of Mediaeval art, for instance, could only be interpreted in a set number of ways – i.e. the particular ways in which the artist intended the viewer to interpret it, which itself reflected the rigid, God-centred and hierarchical nature of society at that time. A work like *Finnegans Wake* by James Joyce, on the other hand, is far more ambiguous in its structure and thus there is far more scope for the reader to decide how to interpret it. In this way, *Finnegans Wake* – like Mediaeval art – is simply a product of the society in which it is created: "In every century, the way the artistic forms are structured reflects the way in which science or contemporary culture views reality" (1989: 13).

This is not to say that the work of art can be interpreted any old way, however. The artist is still responsible for the organisation of the meaning(s) encoded within the artwork and, in this sense, gives clues to the interpreter as to what to interpret. Consequently, it is the interpreter who 'finishes off' the artwork: "the author offers the interpreter, the performer, the addressee a work to be completed" (1989: 19). Nevertheless, it is the ambiguity of form of an artwork and the violation of the traditional codes of meaning organisation which endow a work of art with 'openness'. Again, explains Eco, classical art operated within the boundaries of tradition, whereas contemporary art deliberately transgresses such boundaries. The 'open' object form thus gives rise to the range of possible meanings the interpreter can choose from in a way a form with a 'fixed' meaning (such as a traffic sign) cannot. The aesthetic quality of the artwork is consequently an outcome of the range of possible meanings generated by the artwork: "The "reader" who, at the very moment in which he abandons himself to the free play of reactions that the work provokes in him, goes back to the work to seek in it the origin of the suggestion and the virtuosity behind the stimulus, is not only enjoying his own personal experience but also appreciating the value of the work itself, its aesthetic quality" (1989: 103).

Switching from Semiotics, Wolff (1993) argues that the way in which a work of art is interpreted by an audience depends upon the ideological background of that audience. In this way, therefore, the artist is not solely responsible for their own artistic output. Rather, artistic production and artistic consumption go hand in hand in the meaningful construction of art. However, that is not to say that there are unlimited ways a particular work of art can be interpreted. Discussing literature specifically, Wolff (1993) argues that the structure of a text directs the reader to a range of possible meanings which, combined with the possible meanings the audience itself brings to the text, generates a choice of meanings that is nevertheless limited. Applying this theory to visual art, the structure of the art work – i.e. its composition – would act in the same way to produce a restricted range of possible meanings for the viewer.

As has therefore been shown (above), for both Barthes and Eco (and to an extent, Wolff), the interpreter plays an integral role in the formation of the meaning of an artwork. The object is also a vital ingredient in meaning-formation, in that, for both theorists, the object is the medium by which meanings are encoded to be decoded at a later date by the interpreter. The theories of meaning thus bring the object to more prominence and it is seen more as an entity in its own right. It is this 'independent' view of the art object that is elaborated on by De La Fuente, who proposes a 'new sociology of art' (2007, 2010a, 2010b) in which the art object itself, rather than being a peripheral player in the cultural sphere and something that is largely acted upon, assumes a more central role and is something that is able to effect action towards. In other words, the artwork has an agency of its own. Such an outlook is evocative of that of Bruno Latour, whose exposition of Actor-Network-Theory (2007) includes objects as having agency in their own right and, being in possession of such, are able to effect a transformation in a given situation. Indeed, it is only through effecting a transformation that any actor – be it animate or inanimate – possesses agency. For his part, De La Fuente discusses the work of Gell (1998) and the theory of art-as-agency, in which an art object has the ability to affect people on an emotional / psychological level due to the associations that object conjures up in the thoughts and feelings of the spectator. In effect, the art object makes the observer think and feel these things, thus "art is a type of causality. In the case of art-objects, we have a type of causality that involves the displacement of intention from subject to object" (2010a: 222).

The concept of the object as having an agency of its own is also central to the argument put forward by Strandvad (2012). Taking Becker's view of art as the product of collective action, she aims to expand on it, whereby all entities included in the network – people and objects – are accorded agency. In this way, her thinking aligns with that of Latour (see above). In her examination of the evolution (and ultimate failure) of a film project, Strandvad argues that the film's script acts as the means by which the various human actors attach and detach themselves to the project. The script is the object that is experienced by all (through reading, writing and re-writing). In a similar way, Knorr Cetina (1997) argues that the rise of science and technology in society has engendered 'objects

of knowledge', the unstable nature of which enables the human observer to endow them with his / her own meanings and / or experiences, which itself leads to 'objectualization', which she defines as "an increased orientation towards objects as sources of the self, of relational intimacy, of shared subjectivity and social integration" (1997: 23).

In a similar vein, more recent theorists have tended to reverse the 'distancing' view of aesthetics as discussed in the cultural theories of Bourdieu, arguing that, far from acting in an emotionally neutralising manner, the aesthetic appearance of an object engenders a combination of feelings and meanings in the viewer, which has the effect of bringing the viewer and object closer together, even to the extent that the one 'becomes' the other and vice versa. In his article, *Iconic Experience in Art and Life: Surface/Depth Beginning with Giacometti's Standing Woman* (2008), Alexander argues that the artist uses the surface form of the artwork as a device to draw the observer into the 'iconic meaning' of the artwork. According to Alexander, the iconic meaning occurs when "the aesthetic object becomes a symbol, not a specific referent for some specific thing but a signifier that points to all 'such things'" (2008: 6). Furthermore, far from distancing the viewer, as Bourdieu claims, the aesthetic quality of the art object actually leads to an immersion of the viewer into the object and vice versa. By this process, the object becomes an icon: "In contrast to the quintessential modern conditions of impersonality and withdrawal, this movement from surface to depth represents immersion in the materiality of social life. It is immersion into an aesthetic object that makes it an icon" (2008: 6).

The concept of the aesthetic nature of the icon is further developed in Alexander's later article, *Iconic Consciousness: The Material Feeling of Meaning* (2010). Here, Alexander defines the icon as something that inspires a combination of meaning and feeling:

With icons, the signifier (an idea) is made material (a thing). The signified is no longer only in the mind, something thought of, but something experienced, something felt, in the heart and body. The idea becomes an object in time and space, a thing. More precisely, it seems to be a thing.

For, as aesthetic shapes, things are the middles of semiotic processes.
(2010: 11)

This ability to make people think and feel things is not confined to art objects, however. For De La Fuente, society as a whole is undergoing a process of aestheticization. In order to illustrate this, he discusses the work of several other theorists, including Simmel (in the article *Sociology and Aesthetics*, 2000) and Molotch. In the latter's study of consumer goods, *Where Stuff Comes From* (2005), an object's qualities of form and function are inextricably bound up with one another. From this, De La Fuente concludes that "I would claim that the most compelling message of *Where Stuff Comes From*, for sociologists of the arts, is that objects are both aesthetic and social" (2007: 420). For De La Fuente, therefore, the aesthetic quality of things is not simply confined to the artistic sphere. In the same way, art objects are not simply confined to the artistic sphere. Rather, as noted above, "art is now embedded in a range of socialities" (2010a: 224). Therefore, De La Fuente concludes that the sociology of art "needs to show that it can demonstrate that [it] is much more than the study of things that are socially valued as art" (2010a: 225) and suggests that "if...we are prepared to undertake the laborious and painstaking job of following art-objects through society, we have lots of different kinds of aesthetic objects and experiences to study" (2010a: 225).

The view that aesthetics acts to create a sense of proximity rather than distance is also shared by Bourriaud (1998, in Bishop, 2006). In his theory of Relational Aesthetics, Bourriaud defines the art works following these principles as "an art that takes as its theoretical horizon the sphere of human interactions and its social context, rather than the assertion of an autonomous and private symbolic space" (Bourriaud, 1998 in Bishop, 2006:160). In this way, he argues, such 'relational art' is, in effect, a communal experience – i.e. not so much something that people simply view, but more something in which people are collectively involved. The artwork thus acts as a conduit through which individuals create social relationships – and therefore a shared meaning – with one another:

Their [i.e. Relational Artists'] works bring into play modes of social exchange, interaction with the viewer inside the aesthetic experience he or she is offered, and processes of communication in their concrete dimensions as tools that can be used to bring together individuals and human groups. (Bourriaud, 1998 in Bishop, 2006:165)

According to Bourriaud, Relational Aesthetics was born out of the increasing urbanization of society in the latter half of the Twentieth Century, which saw growing numbers of people occupying diminishing areas of landscape as well as encouraging greater modes of mobility for people to travel from one place to another. Furthermore, as opposed to producing the more revolutionary "social utopian" art of the 1960s, the *modus operandi* of Relational Artists is to incorporate the more small-scale and day-to-day elements of society into their artwork, creating "relational space-times, interhuman experiences that try to shake off the constraints of the ideology of mass communications" (Bourriaud, 1998 in Bishop, 2006:166).

However, with its emphasis on the collaborative nature of art, Relational Aesthetics can itself be interpreted as a socially utopian – and it is this aspect of Bourriaud's theory which Bishop (2004) takes to task. In her article, *Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics* (2004), she argues that Bourriaud assumes that Relational Aesthetics is a democratic force for producing social harmony. Taking an opposing viewpoint, she claims that true democracy lies in a society that, rather than being a harmonious whole, is fragmented and conflicted:

...a democratic society is one in which relations of conflict are sustained, not erased. Without antagonism there is only the imposed consensus of authoritarian order – a total suppression of debate and discussion, which is inimical to democracy. (Bishop, 2004:66)

Rather than attempting to create what is, in effect, an artificial – and ideological – harmonious entity, art should reflect the disparate viewpoints that are already present in society, "exposing that which is repressed in sustaining the semblance of this harmony" (Bishop, 2004:79). In this way, Bishop's concept of the

“relational antagonism” (Bishop, 2004) of aesthetics is akin to Eco’s *The Open Work* (1989), which is itself a theory which argues for the multi-faceted nature of the interpretation of an artwork (see earlier in this chapter).

2.2 The Specifics of Public Art

Introduction

The previous section explored the various sociological theories pertaining to art and culture in general. However, as different forces and expectations are placed on public art (Senie, 1989: 301; Phillips, 1989b: 332) as opposed to art that is found in a gallery, it will be of particular significance to discuss the idea of public art specifically. The purpose of this section, therefore, is to examine the nature of the ‘public’ of public art, whereupon it will be shown that ‘public’ in this context is an ambiguous concept, whilst the art that comes under this concept is often subject to a high degree of controversy.

2.2.1 The ‘Publicness’ of Public Art

The ‘public’ of public art is often assumed to refer to its location (Phillips, 1989b: 192), which are sites that are openly accessible to the public rather than those which are specifically designed for viewing art (Miles, 1997:5). Such artwork can also be called ‘site-specific’ (Miles, 1997:5) as it is influenced primarily by the physical aspects of the site, such as its topography and the features of its surrounding architecture (Kwon, 2002:3). Furthermore, the particular environmental aspects of a site – along with their associations – can influence the ways in which an artwork is interpreted. In particular, sites that are already sites of commemoration can transfer certain aspects of meaning / interpretation onto newer commemorative objects – a phenomenon known as symbolic accretion (Dwyer, 2006: 420).

For example, symbolic accretion has been apparent over the previous 15-20 years in Trafalgar Square in London, a location which is automatically associated with British national identity, particularly that which refers to its imperialistic past as represented by the statues of ‘military men on horseback’ that inhabit three of the four plinths on the site and by Nelson stood atop his column. In the late

1990s, the Royal Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce (the RSA) commissioned three artworks to inhabit temporarily the fourth (empty) plinth (Cherry, 2006: 689; Sumartojo, 2012: 71). The selected artworks, which were installed during 1999-2001, were *Ecce Homo* by Mark Wallinger, *Regardless of History* by Bill Woodrow and *Monument* by Rachel Whiteread (Cherry, 2006: 689). A Fourth Plinth Commissioning Group was subsequently set up by the then Mayor of London, Ken Livingstone, to select a further round of artworks for the plinth, the first of which was *Alison Lapper Pregnant* by Marc Quinn (2005). Succeeding artworks include *One & Other* by Antony Gormley (2009), *Nelson's Ship in a Bottle* by Yinka Shonibare (2010) and *Powerless Structures* by Elmgreen and Dragset (2012).

Far from being seen as completely disassociated from their surroundings, these contemporary artworks were interpreted – by their creators and others alike – via their relation to their environment (Cherry, 2006: 689; Sumartojo, 2012: 72-77). In particular, Quinn's sculpture of a heavily pregnant Alison Lapper, who was born with no arms and shortened legs, caused a great amount of controversy when its presence on the plinth was first revealed. Those objecting to the sculpture criticised it on the grounds of its apparent lack of relevance to the perceived historic use of the site, which is to celebrate personal achievements of national importance, as Julie Kirkbride, then Tory spokesperson for Culture, Media and Sport, made clear: "The politically correct lobby has prevailed. Whilst childbirth is a great thing to celebrate, I still think we should have focused on individuals of great achievement the nation ought to commemorate" (Daily Mail, 2004). Supporters of the sculpture, however, interpreted Alison Lapper's achievements in overcoming her disabilities as being completely within keeping of the 'heroic' nature of the Square:

This square celebrates the courage of men in battle. Alison's life is a struggle to overcome much greater difficulties than many of the men we celebrate and commemorate here. (Ken Livingstone, the then Mayor of London, quoted by Reynolds, 2005)

Another alternative interpretation of the 'heroic' aspect of the site – one that has a more mundane meaning – is a particular feature of Elmgreen and Dragset's *Powerless Structures* – a statue depicting a young boy on a rocking-horse – as this excerpt from a news item by the Arts Council attests:

The child is elevated to the status of a historical hero in line with the existing iconography of the other statues in the square. Instead of acknowledging the heroism of the powerful, however, the work celebrates the heroism of growing up. The image of a young boy astride his rocking horse encourages viewers to consider the less spectacular events in their lives, which are often the most important. The sculpture invokes life's everyday activities and questions the tradition of monuments predicated on military victory or defeat. – (The Arts Council, 20 February 2012)

As can be seen from the above, symbolic accretion can be a negative as well as a positive phenomenon, in that it "is not limited to the appending of commemorative elements that are sympathetically reciprocal. In some instances, the accretion can be antagonistic and insurgent, rubbing against the grain of the common or dominant interpretation of the memorial" (Dwyer, 2006: 421). Thus Alison Lapper Pregnant, although interpreted by some as complementing the 'heroic' associations of its location, was viewed by others as offending the same associations. The 'heroic' and overwhelmingly masculine monuments of Trafalgar Square, therefore, are in essence symbols of a particular representation of national identity, and consequently acted as a unifying social force. As Osborne (2001: 50) writes:

In an age of increased loss of identity in a rapidly changing world, monuments anchored "collective remembering" in material sites that served as rallying points for a shared common memory and identity. They were the material signifiers of ideas that were intended to be immortalized. Perhaps more importantly, however, they represented the personification of the nation or nationalizing state, the transmission of

mythic histories, a material and visual connection with the past, and the legitimization of authority.

For Osborne, heritage contributes to a “geography of identity” (2001: 39), which he defines as “the nurturing of a collective memory and putative social cohesion through landscapes and inscapes, myths and memories, monuments and commemorations, quotidian practices and public ritual” (2001: 39). Consequently, public art, by assimilating the history of a place and becoming part of a place’s heritage, ultimately becomes part of the “geography of identity” by which people identify with specific places.

Although here it is discussed in terms of memorials and works of commemoration on a national level, more general versions of symbolic accretion and geography of identity can apply to public artworks in particular (non-national) locations that have particular associations. In 1981 *Tilted Arc*, a sculpture by Richard Serra, was installed on Federal Plaza in Manhattan, New York. Consisting of huge steel curved structure, Serra argued that it was an artwork that was site-specific and to remove it from the Plaza would be, in effect, a destruction of the artwork itself (Kelly, 1996: 16; Horowitz, 1996: 8; Kwon, 2002: 73). Despite this, *Tilted Arc* was removed from the Plaza eight years later after opposition to its presence grew. Much of the opposition to the sculpture resided in the artist’s own purpose for his artwork - i.e. rather than as an attempt to enhance the site, which was ugly in appearance (Horowitz, 1996: 11), *Tilted Arc* was to act a means of confronting the corporate and governmental ideologies of the Plaza (Kwon, 2002: 75). Furthermore, Serra’s supporters argued that, by antagonising rather than enhancing, *Tilted Arc* highlighted the already dysfunctional nature of the site (Kelly, 1996: 17; Horowitz, 1996: 11; Kwon, 2002: 75). However, what Serra failed to take into account was the symbolic nature of the Plaza – i.e. that the Plaza was perceived to be beautiful by many people who worked / lived in its vicinity in order to counteract its ugliness in reality (Horowitz, 1996: 11). Similarly, Serra’s artwork was seen to disrupt the symbolic uses of the Plaza rather than its actual uses (Horowitz, 1996: 13). Thus *Tilted Arc* was seen as a hostile object rather than as a complementary work of art for the site.

By not taking into account the ways in which the Plaza was viewed by those who lived and worked nearby, it could be argued that Serra privileged the aesthetic concerns of his artwork over the people and, as a result, *Tilted Arc* was not a 'public' work of art at all. For Kelly (1996) it is this oversight on the part of Serra that was ultimately at fault for the failure of the sculpture to be accepted. He criticises Serra for concentrating more on the physical aspects of the site, seeing the Plaza as nothing more than a space that complemented the artwork rather than the other way round. Furthermore, the public in the form of the actual people who lived and worked near the Plaza were viewed in terms of "“traffic”, as anonymous people who were taken into consideration only insofar as they could be expected to have peripatetic perceptual experiences of his sculpture in a behavioural space of his design" (Kelly, 1996: 17). Far from being Serra's individual foible, however, his attitude towards his artwork may have been indicative of the wider art world's 'outgrowth' into the public realm (Miles, 1995:249) which, in the form of Modernist art, sees public space as little more than an extension of the art gallery, in which any environmental features are used to enhance the aesthetic qualities of the artwork (Kwon, 2002: 63). Thus the concerns of the artwork always take precedence over the public.

In contrast to Serra's much criticised sculpture, an artwork that became a model of the 'right' way of doing public art appeared in 1982 in Washington D.C. in the form of the *Vietnam Veterans Memorial* by Maya Lin. Her sculpture is praised for incorporating a version of site-specificity that takes its public – or, rather, publics – into account in the way Serra's artwork did not. From a locational point of view, the Memorial is site-specific in that the polished surface of its black granite reflects its surrounding environment, which includes the Lincoln Memorial and the Washington Monument (Kelly, 1996: 19). Similarly, the Memorial's polished surface reflects the individual viewer, which creates a more intimate encounter, with people able to experience the artwork on their own terms rather than those of the artist (Miles, 1995: 251; Kelly, 1996: 19). Thus, far from being a means in which to challenge and antagonise people in the way *Tilted Arc* was designed to do, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial creates a space for personal contemplation while not attempting to impose a generalised consensus or unity (Kelly, 1996: 19; Heine 1996: 4; Holman, 1997: 128). Consequently, the sculpture is able to

accommodate multiple meanings without conflict and does not “force the viewer to choose” (Holman, 1997: 129) one meaning over the other.

The subsequent acceptance and praise of the *Vietnam Veterans Memorial* does not mean, however, that the original inception and creation of the artwork was not without difficulty and controversy. As Wagner-Pacifi and Schwartz (1991) point out, the memorial differed from other war memorials in that it was designed to commemorate a war that ultimately ended in an American defeat, not a victory, whilst the war was itself seen as “morally questionable” (1991:380). This therefore meant that the more traditional forms associated with war memorials – such as “realistic statues of fighting men, obelisks, arches, granite monoliths” (1991:382) and so forth – were less appropriate symbols to commemorate such a war. The quandary thus lay in how to commemorate the war at all. According to Wagner-Pacifi and Schwartz, the initial attempts at this were understated, with at first a plaque that was “inconspicuously placed, whose inscription was, itself, indirect and muted” (1991:386). Next came the idea for a “Vietnam Veterans Week”, which honoured the war’s living rather than its dead. However, it was an army veteran, Jan Scruggs, who decided he would commemorate the Vietnam war dead in a memorial upon which all 58,000 names would be inscribed. For Wagner-Pacifi and Schwartz, Scruggs came to represent both the veterans as a whole and the memorial itself as, being an ex-army man, he was seen as a legitimate authority on both. Furthermore, the fact that he had been wounded in the line of duty cast a positive light on the otherwise questionable war as “Wounds here are legitimating marks. The body of the veteran is, itself, the proof of intimate experience with war, of courage and manhood” (1991: 390). That Scruggs wanted to honour the individuals who died rather than commemorate the war as a whole also appealed more widely.

Lin’s design, therefore, with its long black walls of polished granite, aligned itself to this non-celebratory brief. However, as Wagner-Pacifi and Schwartz explain, the memorial was not without its critics, who objected on the grounds of its non-traditional appearance, seeing it as an unfit representation of the war and those who fought in it (1991: 394-395). Owing to such criticisms, a compromise was reached in the form of a more straightforwardly heroic and patriotic portrayal of

the war, which was comprised of a statue of three soldiers next to an American flag (1991: 395). The main part of the sculpture, however, with its emphasis on the horizontal rather than on the vertical and its lack of domination of the landscape, was explained in terms of possessing a more female sensibility by the designer herself; and it is this main part of the sculpture that provokes the most emotional reactions from visitors (1991: 397). For Wagner-Pacifi and Schwartz, such reactions are kindled by the wall and list of names of the war dead inscribed upon it. In particular, it is the interaction of the visitor with the wall and its names that accounts for the visitor's emotional reactions. As they explain, "The names are caressed. The names are reproduced on paper by pencil rubbing and taken home. And something is left from home itself – a material object bearing special significance to the deceased or a written statement by the visitor or mourner" (1991: 403). Furthermore, the items left at the memorial reflect the various viewpoints of visitors regarding the war – positive, negative or uncertain. The memorial thus becomes a space for private reflection: a quality, Wagner-Pacifi and Schwartz point out, that is not inherent in the more traditional form of war memorial (1991:405).

The *Vietnam Veteran's Memorial* thus illustrates the shift in the perception of the 'public' - and therefore the expectations of public art – over the years since the latter decades of the 20th century. Far from being a largely locational entity, the 'public' is seen more in terms of "a network of social relations" (Kwon, 2002: 6) and that, rather than being unified, is divergent in its nature, as Phillips (1989a, 1989b) argues when describing the historical uses of the common – an area of open public space in American towns which "was not a place of absolute conformity, predictability or acquiescence, but of spirited disagreement, of conflict, of only modest compromises – and of controversy" (Phillips, 1989a: 195). Public art, therefore, need not attempt to act as a socially unifying force. On the contrary, it can allow for the public's ambiguities and diversity and general lack of consensus. In this way, a more democratic form of public art can be achieved. Furthermore, such an allowance for the viewer's more personalised experience with the artwork may be seen as being more in keeping with modern aesthetics in which "art is taken to be product of an individual and autonomous act of

expression, and its appreciation is, likewise, a private act of contemplation” (Heine, 1996: 1).

Because of the diversity of ‘publics’, it befalls the artist to be aware of the ways his / her artwork may be interpreted and that meanings may be generated that are originally unintended (Holman, 1997: 129), as in the case of *Tilted Arc* (above). Indeed, even an artist who takes into account a particular public that is seen to have a common identity – a ‘community’ – can fail in this regard, as in the case of John Ahearn, whose sculptures of three residents of the South Bronx, New York, created local controversy when they were installed in 1991. According to Kwon (2002: 83-94), through his artwork, Ahearn attempted to create a more positive representation of the community than that which was disseminated by the police and the media. However, upon their installation the sculptures were seen by some residents as “an insult to the community in that they depicted people most neighbors found menacing, fearsome, and threatening” (Kwon, 2002: 92). In other words, the sculptures were seen to reinforce the negative stereotypes of the community the artist was trying to counter. Such was the antipathy towards the sculptures that Ahearn removed them within a week of their installation. Failure by the artist to take potential meanings into account, therefore, may result in the non-acceptance of the artwork by those very people the artwork was purported to represent.

As well as being a cautionary tale against the generation of unintended meanings, the controversy surrounding Ahearn’s artwork also illustrates another public art conundrum – i.e. that of the ‘community’ that is involved in some way in the artwork. In particular, who is responsible for identifying the community which is to participate in the creation of a work of public art? (Kwon, 2002: 116-117). In Ahearn’s case, it was the artist himself who was responsible, being a resident of the area himself. However, such identification may be too simplistic a task, as Phillips (1989a) argues when discussing the various communities which could claim greater ownership of the *Vietnam Veterans Memorial*. Simply living in and around a particular space, she claims, does not give that community / those communities a superior claim on a potential work of public art. “For public space is either communal – a part of the collective citizenry – or it is not” (Phillips,

1989a: 194). Public art belongs to all the public, not just to certain 'publics'. Alongside this difficulty, there is also the danger that the 'community' may be imposed upon a group of diverse individuals (whether by the artist or significant other) according to a very generalised shared quality, such as gender, thus glossing over the differences and divisions within this 'mythic' community and creating a false sense of unity (Kwon, 2002).

Once the community has been identified – however that has been decided – the next question concerns the actual form of participation the community should undertake. In the case of Ahearn's artwork, certain community members were models for his sculptures. In the case of both Serra (*Tilted Arc*) and Lin (*Vietnam Veterans Memorial*) no members of the public were involved in the actual creation of the artworks, although a small group of people selected the artworks on behalf of the public (Kelly, 1996: 16). However, where the two differed was in the composition of the respective selection committees, with *Tilted Arc* having no public input whatsoever, being a government approved initiative (Senie, 1989: 298; Kwon, 2002). The selection process for Lin's memorial, on the other hand, included veterans themselves – i.e. "members of the using public" (Kelly, 1996: 18). This initial public involvement, therefore, was deemed to have proved beneficial to the acceptance of the sculpture and, indeed, could have been similarly beneficial to Serra's artwork (Senie, 1989: 299). However, including members of the community in the selection / creation process of a work of public art may be a means of 'softening them up' them up to accepting the artwork and to "educate them in its proper interpretation and appreciation (not unlike the way audience groups are commonly treated in museums)" (Kwon, 2002: 81). This community education process could also continue once the artwork is in situ in order to help the acceptance of the artwork along as "over and over again, we see the public rendered helpless and hostile by art they don't or can't understand" (Senie, 1989: 299).

Thus simply placing an artwork in a public space does not necessarily make it public art, nor is it public art if it fails to engage the public (Heine, 1996). In which ways, therefore, can a work of public art engage its public? One obvious solution is for the artist to attempt to create an artwork that incorporates a generalised

meaning and thus has the widest public appeal. However, such mass appeal contradicts the aesthetic nature of art itself and may consequently produce an inferior artwork (Phillips, 1989a: 191). Another solution is to create an 'open-ended' artwork in the manner of Lin's *Vietnam Veterans Memorial* (see above). A further means of engaging the public is to create a variety of temporary artworks, which reflects the more diverse and contentious nature of the public (Phillips, 1989a: 195). Such art can therefore be more diverse and experimental in nature (Phillips, 1989b: 335; Wilsher, 2009: 331). The various artworks that have occupied the fourth plinth in Trafalgar Square over the past 15-20 years may be seen in this context.

Whatever form the public artwork takes, it should seek to connect with its urban fabric rather than aim to be "timeless and placeless" in the nature of Modernist (gallery) art (Miles, 1995: 243). Miles (1995, 1997) suggests that art used in terms of creating a 'convivial city' – i.e. a city designed primarily for the use of people – is an appropriate means of achieving this. Public art in this context may be integrated into the environment as in, for example, paving or street furniture. Alternatively, public art may be interventionist in nature and thus act as "a form of continuing social criticism" (Miles, 1997: 205) which attempts to transform the experiences of people in its vicinity. This three-way connection between art, the city and the people is echoed by Whybrow (2011) who asserts that "the experience of art, like the experience of the city, is embodied. It is dependent on participating entities who engage or interact with art, with the enviroing field of the city and with one another, and who are, therefore, as much producers as consumers and recipients" (Whybrow, 2011: 15). He considers the ways in which public art can act as a means of discovering a city, such as his experience of Münster's 2007 *Skulptur Projekte*, an art event which sees various sculptures dotted about the aforementioned city. In particular, he discusses the artwork *Path* by Pawel Althamer, which consists of a rough footpath fashioned into the grass of a stretch of parkland. By following the route of the artwork, Whybrow argues that he experiences his environment in a different way than if he had simply been an 'ordinary' pedestrian walking down the road:

In that respect Path counters precisely the banal instinct of the city centre pedestrian, either go from A to B – usually for pragmatic reasons, and as speedily and efficiently as possible – or, conversely, to drift aimlessly in a form of consumer delirium. Here a route is offered away from such ‘entrapped’ states, ultimately into an intensely pure ‘communion with nature’: a ‘being-in-the-landscape’. (Whybrow, 2011: 91).

This sense of personal urban discovery is reminiscent of the concept of the *dérive*, which first made its appearance in the Situationist writings of Guy Debord. The practitioner of the *dérive* is the urban pedestrian:

In a *dérive* one or more persons during a certain period drop their relations, their work and leisure activities, and all their other usual motives for movement and action, and let themselves be drawn by the attractions of the terrain and the encounters they find there (Debord, 1956 (online)).

For Debord and his fellow Situationists, the *dérive* was part of the practice of psychogeography, which concerns studying the effects of the urban environment on human behaviour and emotions. Far from being a mere academic exercise, however, psychogeography was seen a means of reclaiming the city from the grasp of dominant social forces, transforming the urban experience into something far more personal and exploratory, with the emphasis placed on chance, play and the exploration of the urban landscape rather than on following pre-ordained routes (Pinder, 2005; Smith, 2010: 17; Souzis, 2014: 2). Since Debord’s time of writing, the concept of psychogeography has had its original political quality somewhat diluted (Smith, 2010: 17), with the notion of personal urban discovery coming more to the fore. As Hart (2004: online) explains, psychogeography is “a slightly stuffy term that’s been applied to a whole toy box of playful inventive strategies for exploring cities. Psychogeography includes just about anything that takes pedestrians off their predictable paths and jolts them into a new awareness of the urban landscape.” Public art can therefore act as a means of enabling such exploration and awareness. Thus the three-way

relationship between art, the city and the people is also integral to this particular idea of psychogeography.

Discussion and Conclusion

As discussed in the first section of this chapter above, there are two main foci in the sociology of art and culture. The first focus is on the collective nature of its production, as exemplified by the theories of Becker (2008, 1982), Bourdieu (1986, 1993) and Wolff (1993). Born (2010: 195-200), although supportive of much of Bourdieu's thinking, argues for the need to introduce a temporal element into the study of cultural production, whereas Peterson and Anand (2004) expand upon Becker's range of producers and Rubio (2012: 146-147) proposes that the materials used in the creation of an artwork along with its site-specificity should also be part of the production mix.

The second focus of the sociology of art and culture lies in an artwork's potential for meaning-making, which itself emphasises the role of (i) the interpreter and (ii) the object. The discipline of Semiotics has a significant part to play in the understanding of both elements, as it is the former party that is able to decode, as it were, the meaning of the latter out of a range of possible meanings under guidance of the artist (Eco, 1989) or, alternatively, completely independently of the artist (Barthes, 1977). What is signified by an artwork, therefore, is a mental construct, or a number of mental constructs from which the interpreter can choose – a choice which can itself be influenced by the personal experiences of the interpreter (Peirce, in Crow, 2003). Thus the potential is for one piece of artwork to be interpreted in a number of different ways by a number of different people. It is this role of the object in the meaning-making process that is also the focus of 'the New Sociology of Art' (De La Fuente, 2007, 2010a, 2010b) in as much as, as well as human actors, the object is also an actor in that it affects the viewer in both an emotional and a conceptual way. These emotion and concepts are subsequently projected on to the object by the viewer. The relationship between the object and the interpreter, therefore, is two-way. It is not simply a case that the object is a passive vessel to be 'filled' by the viewer's concepts and emotions. Rather, such is the closeness of the relationship between the two parties, it is possible that the viewer and the object become 'one and the same' (Knorr Cetina,

1997; Alexander, 2008: 7). Thus rather than acting to distance the viewer from the object, as proposed by Bourdieu (1986), the aesthetic nature of the artwork brings both the object and the viewer closer to one another. This 'bringing together' quality of aesthetics is also argued by Bourriaud (1998, in Bishop 2006), whose Relational Aesthetics sees the artwork as a means for allowing people to create meaningful social relationships with each other, although his theory is criticised by Bishop (2004) as being a false reflection of society and a misinterpretation of the concept of democracy.

This second section of this chapter has been concerned with examining the 'public' quality of public art, with the most straightforward definition being art which is situated in a site open to all members of the public as opposed to being housed in a dedicated artistic institution (Miles, 1997:5). Such artwork may also be described as 'site-specific', especially if it is created taking into account the physical qualities of its location (Kwon, 2002:3). The more symbolic qualities of its location may also play a substantial part in the way in which the artwork is interpreted due to symbolic accretion, which may itself be positive or negative (Dwyer, 2006:420).

This locational definition of 'public', however, can be criticized as being too simplistic in its approach, particularly in its apparent marginalization of the people who actually live and work in and around the site of the artwork. In particular, the Modernist approach, which treats the site as complementing the artwork rather than the other way round, is seen to be at fault. Thus there has been a change in the perception of the 'public' from largely being the geographical location of the artwork (the site) to being seen in more abstract terms as the group of individuals who inhabit a particular location and whose opinions and / or behaviours should be taken into account when creating a work of art for the site. However, even this concept of the 'public' is debatable as, rather than being composed of one coherent mass, the public is itself diverse in its views, opinions, behaviours and lifestyles (Phillips, 1989a: 195, 1989b: 335). Consequently, a work of public art should cater for this diversity rather than attempt to impose a monolithic meaning onto the area's inhabitants. Such a public artwork can be 'open-ended' in its design, in which there is space for personal reflection and the opportunity

for a number of equally valid meanings to be generated, as in the case of the *Vietnam Veterans Memorial*. Alternatively, there may be a variety of temporary artworks which reflects the continuously changing nature of the public. Whichever form of public art is decided upon, however, its creation is often accompanied by high levels of controversy and conflict within the wider social domain, which itself echoes the diverse nature of the 'public'. An obvious case in point is the reaction to Serra's *Tilted Arc* (see above), although Lin's *Vietnam Veterans Memorial* also generated a large degree of criticism at its non-traditional appearance before its subsequent acceptance. Finally, the artwork's relationship with the wider urban environment must also be considered. This may be achieved by using public art to create a convivial city – i.e. a city that is designed to be 'human friendly' (Miles, 1997). Furthermore, public art may be used as a means of encouraging the personal exploration of a city (Whybrow, 2011), as in the concept of the *dérive* (Debord, 1956). In these ways, a three-way relationship between the artwork, the place and the people is fostered.

Taking into account the theory as discussed above in the context of my research, it is the trajectory in the meaning-making process from cultural producer to cultural consumer that is the overall object of study. I will therefore begin with the supposition that the cultural producers are the originators of the 'original' (intended) meaning(s) of a work of public art. These meaning(s) consequently influence(s) the physical form of the artwork. Once in the public sphere, however, the artwork is subject to the interpretation of members of the public, who vary in their socio-cultural backgrounds and experiences. The location of the artwork – e.g. via symbolic accretion or its contribution in creating a convivial city – may also play a part in its subsequent meaning(s). The artwork, therefore, may be open to a number of interpretations, which may be intended – but may also be unintended – by the cultural producers. Bearing the previous sentence in mind, however, it would be inaccurate for me to define 'cultural producers' as those people we automatically think of as such – i.e. artists, art commissioners, curators, funders – and 'cultural consumers' as simply members of the public, particularly as, over the past 15-20 years, British cultural policy has advocated the desirability of 'public / community participation' in the creation of art. In this sense, therefore, 'the public' (or certain members of 'the public') may themselves

become part of the original artistic network of cultural producers – at least, in theory. It is therefore this participatory role of ‘the public’ and the political encouragement of this role that is the focus of the following chapter.

Chapter 3

British Cultural Policy: An Overview

Introduction

Access to the arts has been increasingly democratised in recent years and the notion that arts organisations exist for the benefit of an elite few soundly discredited. The National Lottery, whatever you may think of it, has broadened access to the arts. The Disability Discrimination Act had written strands of access into law. The principle of inclusion has affected how we build audiences, train artists, cast plays, make art and creatively describe 21st century Britain. And behind all this sits an understanding that personal creativity is an asset to us as individuals, to our families and neighbourhoods and in the workplace. Creativity has value – for the economy, for our well-being and for civil society. (Arts Council England, 2010a:6)

In this chapter I will trace the evolution of British Cultural policy from the election of the Conservative government in 1979, from which time significant changes to the status of culture in society began to take place, through to the advent of the New Labour administration in 1997 with its increased emphasis on the wider benefits of culture, and finally to the Conservative- Liberal Coalition of the present time of writing (late 2014). In doing so, I will demonstrate that the concept of ‘culture’ has broadened considerably at the same time as its role in the socio-economic sphere. The above quote exemplifies both of these aspects. I will then conclude by discussing the points raised in terms of their relevance to this thesis, with particular reference to the subject of ‘the public’.

3.1 British Cultural Policy 1979-1997

When the Conservative Party came to power in 1979 the cultural sector – as well as a number of other public sectors (e.g. health, the welfare system) – underwent a radical change. No longer was it able to rely as heavily as it had done on the munificence of the State. Rather, the arts world was expected to adapt itself to the market economy and adopt the appropriate means of attracting more in the

way of private sector sponsorship (Quinn, 1997: 140-141; Wu, 2003: 247-48;). Further to this, the decline in Britain's postwar manufacturing industry meant a new industry needed to be found to plug the economic gap, thus the cultural sector was seen in this light (Pollock and Sharp, 2006: 1061; Garnham, 2005: 23). Gray (2007: 210) explains this in terms of the commodification thesis – i.e. that there was an ideological shift in the government's perception of culture from its use-value to its exchange-value. Consequently, the economic benefits of culture accrued more importance, as underlined by John Myerscough's report, *The Economic Importance of the Arts in Britain* (1988), which discusses in detail the amount of money and jobs potentially generated by the arts, which have an "annual turnover of £10 billion" (p.148).

In Myerscough's definition of 'the arts', the more traditional or 'high culture' sectors are included (e.g. museums and galleries, the theatre, orchestral performances) alongside the more non-traditional or 'low culture' sectors (e.g. popular music recordings and performances, television and film production and broadcasting). Consequently, the arts sector began to become more 'business-like' as well as more all-embracing in its vocabulary and outlook (Belfiore, 2004: 188-189; Galloway & Dunlop, 2007: 18) and the benefits to the private sector in terms of arts sponsorship – such as helping to attract target customers, boosting the public profile of companies and increasing the value of property (Griffiths, 1993) – assumed a greater importance. This change in the political requirements of culture also affected the Arts Council of Great Britain (as it was then) which, although ostensibly an 'arm's-length' organisation (Quinn, 1997: 128; Hughson and Inglis, 2001: 460), found itself affected by the decrease in public funding while at the same time growing ever more closer to the Conservative government with the installation of private sponsorship supporters in certain key positions of the Council's board: i.e. Lords Rees-Mogg and Palumbo as chairmen, 1982 and 1989 respectively, and Luke Rittner – former director of the Association of Business Sponsorship of the Arts (ABSA) – as secretary general (Quinn, 1997: 142-143; Wu, 2002: 65-66).

The appointment of such influential figures signalled that business interests were beginning to outweigh the interests of the arts sector and that the latter had to

increasingly justify itself to the former. Indeed, culture was no longer seen to possess its innate value of old – its ability to bestow “sweetness and light” upon the mind and spirit of an individual (Matthew Arnold, 2001: 52 originally published 1859) – which justified its state-funded status. It was this rather nebulous, ‘spiritual’ aspect that, for a hundred years or so, had endowed culture with its apparent value, as Pearson (1982) elucidates:

The power and force of ‘art’ as a respected, valued and elevated social phenomenon flows from and is intimately bound up with the very ‘general’, ‘vague’, human and non-utilitarian values ascribed to it. It is its very lack of an obvious (utilitarian) function that is held to demonstrate its importance. (p.5)

Under the new political and economic agenda, however, culture was perceived as innately worthless and therefore needed to find an alternative means of acquiring ‘added value’. Stressing its potential economic benefits was such a means. In doing so, culture, rather than being seen in its own terms, assumed an instrumental role in the political sphere, becoming a means to achieve an end other than the purely cultural (Belfiore, 2002, 2004: 200; Gray, 2002: 86-88; 2007: 21;). Alongside this was the domination of postmodernist theories of relativism which questioned the very legitimacy of art’s status, in particular the legitimacy of elitist ‘high art’, which was the form of art favoured by the Arts Council (Gray, 2002: 80; Belfiore, 2002: 94) and which could be perceived as being a source of oppression of the working classes (Mirza, 2005: 266-267). A broadening of the criteria in which ‘culture’ is defined can be seen as a response to this – as demonstrated in Myerscough’s report.

In 1992 the Department of National Heritage was set up to oversee cultural affairs, which resulted in an even closer relationship between the government and the Arts Council (Quinn, 1997: 146-147) and in 1994 the National Lottery was introduced, the proceeds from which were distributed to ‘good causes’, of which the arts was such a cause. However, such monies were initially largely allocated to contribute towards capital costs, particularly in the form of constructing new or refurbishing old buildings (Quinn, 1997: 148; Wu, 2003). The introduction of the

National Lottery saw the government's role shift even further away from its previous role of main funder to its newer role of 'co-ordinator' of the various parties who shared equal responsibility for financing the arts (Quinn, 1997: 149).

While the Conservative party monopolised the position of power throughout the 1980s and into the 1990s, its main opposition, the Labour Party, awaited its turn to take charge of the country. The radical changes Tory dominance had made to all spheres of the social and political landscape - including the cultural sphere – could not be ignored, however, and a change Labour's fundamental ideology was appearing to be required. In 1986, Mulgan and Worpole produced their proposal for Labour's new approach to cultural policy in *Saturday Night or Sunday Morning?* In this suggested 'manifesto' they criticised the Labour Party's attitude to culture, describing it as "lukewarm" (p.10), while the Labour Party itself "often seems to have more in common with a poor and puritanical sect than a modernising popular movement" (p.11) – a symptom of its now anachronistic perception of the working-class upon which it was founded. They accused Labour of reacting to cultural and technological changes rather than anticipating and embracing them, something which the Conservative Party was successful at doing. To illustrate an alternative attitude to culture, Mulgan and Worpole discuss the community arts policy of the Labour-controlled Greater London Council (GLC) which used cultural activities as a means of reaching certain excluded groups, such as the unemployed, the elderly and young people, and funded activities involving not only the visual and performing arts but also film and video. Amongst the authors' ultimate recommendations were the creation of a Ministry of Arts and Communications and the winding down of the Arts Council, the former being responsible for the direct funding of national arts organisations with local funding the responsibility of regional bodies. They also proposed a more 'bottom-up' approach to cultural policy.

3.2 British Cultural Policy 1997-2010

When, after 18 years of a Conservative government, the Labour party finally came to power it had undergone a major transformation in its basic political ideology. 'New Labour' as it was now called no longer eschewed the free market values of its predecessor; nevertheless, it still positioned itself as a social democratic party.

In other words, the Labour Party had taken on board the 'Third Way' principles as espoused by sociologist, Anthony Giddens. In his book of the same name (1998), Giddens outlines why old-school socialism is no longer an adequate means of addressing present-day socio-economic problems. As Mulgan and Worpole (1986) argue (see above), the changes in the nature and aspirations of the British public mean that the working-class ideology upon which the party was founded fail to resonate with its potential supporters. The capitalist emphasis on the individual as opposed to the collective and the related advent of globalization have been the catalysts for such changes. It is therefore inappropriate for Labour to attempt to turn the clock back. However, that is not to say that capitalism in its unadulterated form is wholly a good thing; rather, it is responsible for creating a range of inequalities in society. The Third Way thus aims to address such inequalities by a different means to the top-down, interventionist policies of 'old' Labour. The onus in this new approach is on the individual to become an active and constructive participant in society, although it is the government's responsibility to create the circumstances in which this may be achieved. A bottom-up approach to governing is therefore advocated:

Conventional poverty programmes need to be replaced with community-focused approaches, which permit more democratic participation as well as being more effective. Community building emphasises support networks, self-help and the cultivation of social capital as means to generate economic renewal in low-income neighbourhoods. (1998: 110)

Influenced by the Third Way, therefore, the concept of 'community' took on a different and more integral role in the policies of New Labour. Levitas (2000) argues that under New Labour the concept of community became "simultaneously utopian and ideological" (2000: 118). It is utopian in the sense that it denotes a sense of something that has been lost (2000: 189) and it is ideological in that it is used by New Labour instead of 'society' to signify a change in direction from the previous Thatcher government and, at the same time, distancing the party from 'old' Labour and its social interventionist values (2000: 191). Central to the concept of 'community' is a moral discourse in which each individual has 'responsibilities' or 'duties' to the wider community (Lund, 1999:

451; Fairclough, 2000: 38; Clarke, 2005: 451) which includes making the 'right' choices, such as eating healthily, controlling one's children and refraining from anti-social behaviour (Clarke, 2005: 451). Furthermore, the breakdown of 'community' results in criminality (Levitas, 2000: 193). This rhetoric of the 'community' and the individual's responsibilities towards it absolves the state of its own responsibilities towards its people (Levitas, 2000: 194; Clarke, 2005: 453), but does so in a soft, fuzzy way.

The general ideology of the Third Way inevitably permeated New Labour's cultural policy. From an economic perspective, the encouragement of private sector sponsorship which was introduced under the Conservative government continued, although public funding also increased and free admission to museums and galleries was introduced (DCMS, 2007). The Department of National Heritage was abolished and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport was established in its wake, which indicated a deliberate attempt by New Labour to distance itself from the previous government's cultural policy, which was felt to be too limited in scope and which was a deliberate attempt by New Labour "to place culture and creativity firmly centre stage, with its own place around the Cabinet table and with a clear mission to provide access to high quality arts and culture for everyone" (Burnham, 2009: 249). Unlike in the previous administration, the social benefits of culture now began to be endorsed in earnest – a state of affairs that is discussed in *Creative Britain* (1998), the collected speeches and writings of Chris Smith, the minister for the newly-created DCMS. Although the economic value of culture is emphasised, with various employment and monetary figures quoted for the various cultural sectors (e.g. between 90,000 and 110,000 people employed on a full-time basis in the music industry in 1995; £512 million in box-office takings in British cinemas in 1997), the social value of culture is also stressed, particularly its apparent ability to bridge the gap between the individual and community / society:

One of the reasons for New Labour's election victory on 1 May 1997 was surely a very simple realization by the British people, after eighteen years of a contrary doctrine, that there is such a thing as society... A realization that we are not isolated individuals but that we achieve our own best

fulfilment in the interrelationship between the individual and the community of which we are a part... a realization that we have our own sense of identity as individual people, but that we also share identities in our local and national communities, and that these various senses of identity are shaped and linked by cultural impulses and activity. Culture and the creative activity that gives it expression both play an essential role here. They help to define those links between the individual and society that form such a crucial part of the new understanding of politics. Without culture, there can be ultimately no society and no sense of shared identity or worth. (1998: 15-16)

Under New Labour, the new political bogeyman was 'social exclusion' and tackling it was therefore significant (Belfiore, 2002: 97). However, the concept of social exclusion involved a reconfiguration of the 'old' Labour philosophy regarding the ills of society. No longer were poverty, unemployment and so forth the symptoms of a far-reaching structural malaise, in which inequalities of power and resources between social groups required an interventionist government and a redistribution of resources (Stevenson: 126, 2004; Connolly, 2013: 165); rather, it was the lack of participation by the individual in the economy and thus in society that was ultimately responsible (Stevenson, 2004: 126-127). Further to this, as Fairclough (2000: 54) points out, under New Labour social exclusion "is a condition people are in, not something that is done to them". In this way, the responsibility for the individual's ability to be socially included lies with the individual him/herself. It lies with the individual making the 'right choice'. Cultural engagement was thus seen as the means by which social engagement could be encouraged (Connolly, 2013: 167). New Labour's outlook thus differed from the previous government's view that culture was something one did 'on the side' (Selwood, 2006: 37).

This change in the social importance of culture was facilitated by the continued broadening out of the term and concept of 'culture', which began with Myerscough's economic interpretation (see above). Under New Labour, this economic interpretation remained and expanded further to incorporate the technological industries of the late 20th / early 21st centuries (Hughson and Inglis, 2001; Garnham, 2005; Galloway and Dunlop, 2007: 18-19; Connolly, 2013: 164-

165). By uniting the ICT sector with the cultural, the sector overall was given more of an economic 'oomph' (Newbigin, 2011: 233) and acquired the ability to attract the widest market possible (Garnham, 2005: 28), something that the traditional 'high' arts on their own could not do. This 'broadening out' of culture coincides with the introduction of the term 'creative industries', a much wider umbrella under which a greater number of sectors could shelter, including those which have a greater commercial appeal and / or technological basis. Indeed, the creative industries are described as consisting of "advertising, architecture, the art and antiques market, crafts, design, designer fashion, film, interactive leisure software, music, the performing arts, publishing, software and computer services, television and radio" (DCMS, 2008: 6). Pratt (2005: 32) argues that another factor in the shift from 'cultural' to 'creative' lay in New Labour's desire to distance itself from its previous incarnation, and especially the use of 'cultural industries' by the GLC.

Due to its all-inclusive nature, the 'creative industries' can therefore be seen to have an all-embracing, democratic quality as opposed to 'culture', which smacks of the old elitist approach to the arts. Everyone, it seems, is capable of being 'creative' in one way or another. Mirza (2005, 2009) suggests that this egalitarian approach to the arts grew out of the community arts movement of the 1970s and 1980s, the primary aim of which was to encourage practitioner empowerment and self-expression rather than emphasise the need for aesthetic excellence. In other words, the process of creating art took precedence over the quality of the final product. In this way – i.e. by assisting an individual's psychological and emotional self-development – culture offers a form of 'therapy'. It is such an approach that has apparently been taken on board by both the New Labour government and Arts Council England, with participation in the arts being a major theme running throughout much of the DCMS and Arts Council documentation – *Arts Policies: Developing Arts Practice and Engagement* (Arts Council, 2006a), *Visual Arts Policy* (Arts Council 2006b), *Culture and Creativity in 2007* (DCMS, 2007) and *Government's Response to Paul Roberts' Report on Nurturing Creativity in Young People* (DCMS, 2006) – and this from *Lifting People, Lifting Places* (DCMS, 2009) – being amongst them:

When people face job insecurity and increased stress levels, culture and sporting activities offer opportunities to relieve stress and improve well-being. People need access to activities which strengthen identity and provide meaning; which inspire interest and enthuse. Evidence shows that engaging with the arts leads to a growth in confidence, on an individual basis as well as in relation to the wider community. (DCMS, 2009: 10)

However, as Mirza (2005: 270) warns, such a therapeutic approach does little to improve the actual social circumstances in which people live; rather, it simply provides a means to improve their ability to cope with those same circumstances.

Another way in which the concept of 'culture' has broadened over recent years is its use in the anthropological sense (Stevenson, 2004: 123; Connolly, 2013: 166). In other words, rather than being confined to the artistic sphere, culture is defined more as a 'way of life'. Such a definition is also wide-ranging and able to encompass many 'ways-of-life', thereby embracing cultural diversity (Stevenson, 2004) and, in this way, social inclusion is also achieved. However, despite the surface good intentions behind the democratisation of the arts along the lines of 'creativity' and the anthropological interpretation of 'culture', such an open category can mean that the actual purpose of culture in practice can be shrouded in confusion and contradiction, as Mirza (2009) found in her study of a community arts centre in east London. Whereas some community centre board members supported the more participatory nature of the arts, others maintained that artistic 'excellence' should be the primary focus. The conflict was thus between the artistic process (the community focus) and the artistic product (the desire for 'excellence'). How to reconcile the two is a conundrum that will not – perhaps, cannot – go away:

At a time when the dizzying potential of digital technology is transforming the way we make, distribute, receive and exchange art it would be absurd to define excellence in the language of the conventional art forms. Art forms are morphing and combining. To be relevant in the 21st century, any definition of excellence has to find room for participation in art, as well as the classical notion of creation.

But we are not in the business of 'anything goes'. There is a difference between the profound and the trivial, the visionary and the routine, the ground breaking and the repetitive. It is just getting harder and harder to be sure where the boundaries are if we are to keep our aesthetic faculties open to the unfamiliar and the puzzling. (Arts Council England, 2010b)

Despite the Government's insistence, not everyone is convinced of the effectiveness of culture's ability to heal social wounds. Belfiore (2004: 196-197) argues that there is very little evidence – especially that of a qualitative nature – regarding the social benefits of the arts and that research in this area has been lacking. Mirza (2009) questions the validity of attempts to represent cultural / community diversity in the form an institution (such as a community arts centre), arguing that such an institution relies on the notion of universal cultural values – an obvious contradiction to the concept of 'diversity'. Furthermore, the inclusion of certain social groups may result in the exclusion of others, which could then lead to resentment of the former by the latter – an unintentional and undesirable outcome, and one which conflicts with New Labour's aspiration for community cohesion. In the same way, the emphasis placed on cultural difference may exacerbate rather than diminish community tensions. Allard (2007) discusses similar problems with the diversity-unity tension in the national context. In her study of the Welsh National Assembly's attempts to promote Wales as a being composed of a 'diverse' population, it nevertheless contradicts itself by claiming that the Welsh language signifies this diversity (p.81).

Under New Labour, therefore, the cultural sector expanded its remit to such an extent that it became the means by which both economic and social goals could be achieved. Indeed, these two areas could be conflated into one overall goal in the form of the use of culture in the regeneration of an area (Evans, 2005: 967). Indeed, the ability of culture to act in this way is advocated in the DCMS document *Culture at the Heart of Regeneration* (2004). This political outlook was complemented – and even influenced – by the theories of two urban commentators: Charles Landry (2000) and Richard Florida (2002). Both men see culture – or, more accurately, creativity – as a means of urban regeneration.

However, where there appears to be room in Landry's 'creative city' for the native population of an area and thereby working with the tools already at hand, there seems to be less opportunity for participation in Florida's urban scene for the locals, particularly those who are not part of the 'creative class' (Peck, 2005: 756-757). Furthermore, the preservation of local heritage is of less concern to Florida (McGuigan, 2009: 295) than it is to Landry, who states that "Historic cities have inbuilt advantages, they have textured layers of history and built remains to work with in projecting their uniqueness and specialness. This is more difficult for newer cities, unless they can create other forms of buzz" (2000: 118). There is a danger, given Florida's one-size-fits-all approach to urban regeneration, that any distinctiveness between cities is destroyed.

Consequently, culture as a means of regenerating an area has become almost a 'given', with all local governments in the United Kingdom expected to have cultural planning strategies (Stevenson, 2004: 122). The main responsibility for the development and implementation of a place's cultural policy lies with that particular local authority. In the DCMS document *Local Cultural Strategies: Draft Guidance for Local Authorities in England* (1999), the Government outlines the benefits of having a local cultural strategy and the "good practice" (p.4) expected. Regarding cultural strategy, Evans (2005) distinguishes three ways in which culture can be used in this context. 'Culture-led regeneration' sees cultural activity as the primary catalyst for further regeneration and often takes the form of something high-profile, such as a building or an event. This is different from 'cultural regeneration', in which culture plays an integral – but not the main – part in an area's regeneration strategy. Finally, 'culture and regeneration' sees culture as something that is less integrated in the strategic planning stage and often takes the form of small-scale projects. Connolly (2013) discusses such a 'culture-led' event in his article on Liverpool's bid to become European Capital of Culture in 2008. Liverpool, he says, "adopted the widest view of culture possible" (2013: 169), subsuming both the anthropological and creative industries meanings, although the city's slogan for the bid – 'The World in One City' – prioritises the former meaning over the latter. Such a wide-reaching view of culture, however, and the expectations placed upon it to achieve so much meant that Liverpool's

cultural strategy for 2008 – and the one that won it the status of European Capital of Culture – was unworkable in practice and was subsequently scaled down.

In the official discourse, the Liverpool European Capital of Culture 2008 was an overwhelming success. Impacts 08 – a five-year research study commissioned by Liverpool City Council and jointly undertaken by the University of Liverpool and Liverpool John Moores University – found that, from a tourism point of view, “In total, 9.7m visits to Liverpool were motivated by the Liverpool ECoC in 2008. This generated an economic impact of £753.8m (based on estimated direct spend) attributable directly to the Liverpool ECoC title and events programme” (2010: 25). Furthermore, cultural participation by local people was seen to have been of a high level, in that “there is evidence that there was good engagement in Liverpool ECoC across the city: 66% of residents stated that they had taken part in at least one ECoC event during 2008, and 14% agreed that they had done something new, such as visiting a cultural venue they had never been to before or attending a different type of event” (2010: 23). However, it is questionable as to just how much of the “economic impact of £753.8m” made its way into the pockets and generally improved the lives of local people, whilst being an audience member at a one-off mass event such as ‘La Princesse’ (a huge mechanical spider that appeared in Liverpool for a few weeks during 2008) or attending an exhibition at an art gallery can ultimately impact the long-term social and economic well-being of the individual. Furthermore, as Campbell (2011) points out, although Liverpool City Council made much of the importance of the city’s creative industries in its bid for Liverpool to become the ECoC 2008, the reality ultimately did not match the hype. Overall, the impact of the Liverpool ECoC on indigenous creative industries was negligible as “the five years of gradual build-up, culminating in a year-long city-wide cultural festival had largely operated in a separate field to the one occupied by many creative industry practitioners within that city” (Campbell, 2011: 515).

As part of culture-led regeneration, public art is seen politically as integral to the development of a sense of place and the creation of a civic identity (Hall and Robinson, 2002: 12-14): qualities which, as well as being a force for community cohesion, can also contribute to “local distinctiveness” (DCMS, 2004: 24) and

thereby increase the social and economic competitiveness of a city in relation to other cities (Pollock and Sharp, 2007: 1067). Such a distinctive identity can be marketed as a 'brand', which is of particular importance in the global economy in which we now operate (Newbigin, 2011: 232). An account of the role of public art in culture-led regeneration is given by Bailey, Miles and Stark (2004) in their study of NewcastleGateshead Quayside. In these, they argue that it is possible for culture-led regeneration to revitalise a sense of place and identity in local people, particularly when it allows for local people taking ownership of the regeneration developments themselves. In this way, culture's symbolic imperatives behind the developments rather than their economic imperatives become the focus. In discussing the same project, Miles (2005: 923) argues that the cultural identity of a place evolves over time; consequently, those "textured layers of history" (Landry, 2008: 118 see above) need to be taken into account in such projects. This view of the nature of cultural identity chimes in with that of McCarthy (2006), who studied the use of public art in the cultural quarters of Belfast and Manchester. In both cases, public art was related to the quarters' history and heritage, reinforcing local identity. He also agrees that local identities "evolve and adapt over time" and are "socially constructed" (2006: 246). However, because of this, he warns, local identities should not be taken for granted and even within localities there may be multiple identities.

The use of public art in creating the unique identity of a place, therefore, involves the assimilation of the place's history. (Pollock and Sharp, 2007: 1061). In this way, public art can be a part of the wider utilisation of a place's heritage in urban regeneration alongside other "heritage facilities", such as bars, specialist shops and cafés. (Graham, 2002: 1014). However, as both an economic and cultural resource, heritage is something that is far from value-neutral, in that certain aspects of the past are seen as being more 'resourceful' than others. As Graham (2002: 1004) writes: "...heritage does not engage directly with the study of the past. Instead, it is concerned with the ways in which very selective material artefacts, mythologies, memories and traditions become resources for the present. The contents, interpretations and representations of the resource are selected according to the demands of the present."

3.3 British Cultural Policy 2010-2014

Although New Labour was ousted as the party in power in May 2010, its approach to culture was seamlessly taken up by the Conservative-Liberal coalition government. Indeed, in his speech of the 19th of that month, the Culture Secretary, Jeremy Hunt, stated that “we should credit the last government with the way in which arts policy has become a much more mainstream part of government policy as a whole”. The Department of Culture, Media and Sport remained intact as “It was felt that sports and the arts, on their own, were not significant enough areas of Government spending to maintain a place at the Cabinet table, but that both could be properly represented at the Cabinet table as part of a combined Department” (Vaizey, 2009: 255). Furthermore, as Hancock, Mooney and Neal (2012: 347) point out, similar to New Labour’s use of ‘community’, Prime Minister David Cameron’s deployment of the term differentiates his version of the Conservative party from its Thatcher-led predecessor of the 1980s, whilst at the same time exhibiting a moral undertone as “community becomes the descriptor of a geographically located, collective deviant poor created by and/or exacerbated by the welfare state” (Hancock, Mooney and Neal, 2012: 351). Thus both the New Labour and Coalition governments are responsible for promoting a single uniform version of ‘community’ – i.e. one that is in need of moral ‘improvement’ via political and social means.

The further loosening of the ties between the state and social funding continued with the encouragement of private investment in voluntary and charitable organisations: this extended to the cultural sector in the form of philanthropic giving. In a speech of December 18th 2010, Jeremy Hunt put forward the Coalition’s proposals on philanthropy in the arts, declaring that “overall the arts receive less than 3% of all charitable giving” and that match-funding between the public and private sectors “will unlock at least £160 million for cultural organisations over the next four years.” Despite this apparent good news, the arts sector – along with other sectors, such as the social welfare sector – has suffered a series of spending cuts since the then. These include cuts to the budget of the Arts Council England by almost 30% and another cut of £11.6 million by 2015 (BBC News, 10 December 2012), whilst “A total of 31% of museums have had their

budgets cut two years in a row” (Brown, 2 July 2012) and reductions to Local Authority budgets have resulted in the closure, or potential closure, of local libraries. Meanwhile, the government’s agenda of philanthropic giving to the arts has been patchy at best, with a disparity between London, which received 81% of private sector investment in 2011, and the rest of the country (Brown, 28th February 2012). Furthermore, this disparity of funding between London and the rest of the country is also echoed in the Arts Council’s financial provision. In their report ‘Hard Facts to Swallow’ (2014), Stark, Gordon, Powell et al, maintain that between 2015-2018 the Arts Council’s funding of the Arts in London will amount to £81.87 per head of the population as opposed to £19.80 per head for the rest of the country (2014: 3). They also criticise the Arts Council’s lack of transparency, stating that “too often there appear disguised agendas that benefit a small minority of established, and most commonly London based, arts organisations and a privileged section of the population as a whole” (2014: 5). The increasing instrumentalism of the arts over the years has also been subject to interrogation, as with Gilmore (2014) when she argues that the importance of the arts in raising one’s ‘quality of life’ is a primary incentive for investment in art and culture. The arts and culture in this context are seen as being more small-scale, localised and personal to each participating individual:

Arts and culture provide value to people in their everyday lives, in complex ways, which cut across public and private, popular and high, subsidised and commercial, exceptional and mundane ways of creative and cultural expression. It is through everyday cultural participation where social bonds and ties are formed, and where tastes, associations and identities are made...Too great a focus on the extrinsic impacts of the arts – the wider economic effects rather than the routine opportunities for accessing and experiencing arts and culture – is a distraction, and hides the ways that people value the role of these activities in their everyday lives. (Gilmore, 2014: 23)

Conclusion

From the above account, it can be seen that the status of culture has changed considerably from 1979 to the present day. Before Margaret Thatcher came to

power, culture was largely regarded as having intrinsic value and was thus deserving of state funding. However, with the Conservative government's deliberate loosening of its supportive ties and the related growth of private sponsorship, culture could no longer justify its existence based purely upon 'humanitarian' or 'altruistic' principles. Instead, the requirements that had to be met became increasingly those of an economic variety – how many jobs could be created, how much profit could be generated, and so forth. Sociological changes in the perception of the arts – in particular, the 'high arts' and their 'elitist' function – also contributed to the reconfiguration of culture as a more variable, less uniform entity. The election of the New Labour government in 1997 saw, not a reversal of this policy as may have been expected, but a continuation and expansion of the capitalist principles of its Conservative predecessor under the auspices of 'the Third Way'. Although state funding of the arts increased under New Labour, private sponsorship was still encouraged, and 'culture' further extended its definition to include the 'creative industries', which themselves included – not only the traditional 'high arts' – but also the newer, more technology-based and / or commercial businesses.

The focus on 'community', with its moral undertones, and the problem of 'social exclusion' became integral to New Labour's philosophy, and culture or, rather, 'creativity' was seen as an appropriate remedy by generating opportunities for people to participate in society, by facilitating community cohesion and identity, or simply by making people feel better about the circumstances in which they live. As New Labour followed the previous administration's lead regarding cultural policy, so the Conservative-led Coalition government took up where its predecessor left off in terms of both social policy: i.e. by focusing on the concept of 'community' in its political agenda, and – in terms of cultural policy – by placing even more emphasis on the role of the private sponsor in the guise of 'philanthropic giving'. From its small, almost irrelevant, beginnings, therefore, culture's role in British government policy has developed to such an extent that it now permeates through a range of agendas other than the purely aesthetic and, in doing so, culture's instrumental function has become the priority.

In the terms of the direction of this thesis, there are two main points that are of particular relevance from the above political account. These involve, firstly, the view of 'community' by both New Labour and the Conservatives as a monolithic entity in need of moral and social improvement and, secondly, the use of culture to remedy social evils such as 'social exclusion' by creating a sense of community cohesion and place identity and generating opportunities by which an individual may participate in a cultural event and thus, by extension, in society. It is a particular aim of this thesis, therefore, to explore the nature of such 'community participation' in the creation of the three case studies, paying particular attention to the symbolic content of each artwork. In other words, I aim to investigate the role of 'the public' in the creation of public art.

Chapter 4

Methodology

Chapter 4

Methodology

Introduction

In Chapters 2 and 3, I discussed the sociological and political background to my research and the three areas of concern that is its focus: the artistic network, the object and the public. I therefore aim to explore the relationship between the three entities under scrutiny and investigate the ways in which they are interrelated and influence each other in the symbolic creation of a work of public art. In essence, this means exploring the power dynamics between the animate parties (i.e. the members of the artistic network and members of the public) – paying particular attention as to who is more influential in the symbolic creation of an artwork and why – and the role of the non-animate party (i.e. the artwork) within these dynamics – i.e. exploring the ways in which it influences and is influenced by the people around it. The purpose of this chapter, therefore, is to discuss in detail the methods I have chosen to examine the above concerns. However, such methods can be subsumed in the more general methodological approach of grounded theory, which I have employed, considering it to be the ‘best fit’ for my research. I will explore this in depth during the course of this chapter.

4.1 The Grounded Theory Approach

After careful consideration of the different means of data analysis and theory production, I decided that the best way to undertake these aspects of my research is via grounded theory. This is an approach that was established by Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss with the publication of their book, *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: strategies for qualitative research* (1968). It is now a widely used method for qualitative data analysis across various disciplines (Thornberg, 2012: 243; Bryant & Charmaz, 2007: 1), although the term ‘grounded theory’ can also mean the end product of the methodological process as well as the process itself (Bryant and Charmaz, 2007: 2-3). The main premise of grounded theory is “the discovery of theory from data” (Glaser & Strauss, 1968: 1) which is to be achieved by “a general method of comparative analysis” (Glaser & Strauss, 1968: 1). The generation of an abstract and generalized theory from specific

empirical incidents countered the prevailing methodological procedure of the time, which, according to Glaser & Strauss, was the application of “great-man theories” (1968: 10) in a deductive fashion to small-scale events. Such research, they argued, only served to verify these ‘grand theories’ and inhibited the researcher from generating their own original theory (1968: 10-12).

For Glaser and Strauss, therefore, the fundamental role of the sociological researcher is to generate sociological theory (1968: 6). This can be achieved by ‘theoretical sampling’, which is the simultaneous collection and analysis of empirical data, with the latter guiding the direction of the former, and which will enable the researcher “to develop his theory as it emerges” (1968: 45). It is thus important that the researcher develops ‘theoretical sensitivity’ and retains a theoretical open mind during the research process in order for a theory to emerge from the data (1968: 46-47). Likewise, the researcher must not stick doggedly to a rigid, pre-established research framework as there is then the danger that the data is adapted to fit the methods rather than vice versa (1968: 46-48).

Although it quickly became established in the methodological canon, certain aspects of grounded theory were criticised over the years. Firstly, the practice of induction was seen as unrealistic and, indeed, something that does not happen in its purest form in real life as researchers already bring to the research area prior knowledge and theoretical assumptions. Consequently, it is now seen that data analysis and theoretical generation go hand-in-hand, with one informing the other and vice versa via a process of abduction (Reichert, 2007; Thornberg, 2012). Rather than a straightforwardly logical process, abduction facilitates the researcher’s creativity and can allow for imaginative and intuitive insights and interpretations of the data (Thornberg, 2012: 247; Charmaz, 2006). Aligned to the original emphasis on induction, undertaking the literature review at the start of the research project was perceived as being detrimental to the research as it ran the risk of ‘contaminating’ the data. More recently, this has also been challenged and it is more generally argued that knowledge of the literature can assist in the abduction process, thus the timing of the literature review is now more open to the researcher’s own theoretical requirements. Overall, therefore, the original grounded theory assumption of the neutral researcher has been largely

superseded by the view that the researcher is as socially located as those he / she is studying, which therefore renders it vital that the researcher practices reflexivity (see above).

The adaptations to grounded theory over the years by different practitioners has led to a number of different versions, which may be termed – according to Bryant and Charmaz (2007) – as “a family of methods” (pp. 11-13), with some members of this family more rigid in their procedures than others. The first changes to grounded theory occurred with the separation of Strauss from Glaser, with the former subsequently collaborating with Juliet Corbin to produce their own version of grounded theory as outlined in *Basics of Qualitative Research* (2008, 3rd ed). This discusses grounded theory in a more procedural way (e.g. encouraging the use of ‘axial coding’) than the original Glaser & Strauss version. Such a heavily procedural approach was criticised by Glaser (1992, cited in Melia, 1996: 374), who accused his former associate of producing a version of grounded theory that, in effect, is no longer grounded theory as it inhibits the emergence of theory from the data and, instead, forces the data into pre-existing categories. The emergence of theory from data is central to the constructivist version of grounded theory as discussed by Charmaz (2006, 2008). However, in contrast to Glaser, and rather than assuming that an objective reality simply arises out of the data, the constructivist researcher is aware that the data is mutually constructed between the researcher and participant; consequently, “both the grounded theory process and product [is located] in time, space, and social conditions” (Charmaz, 2008: 469). In these ways, the constructivist approach is more conducive to producing an “interpretive understanding” rather than the “parsimonious explanation” (Charmaz, 2008: 470) as advocated by Glaser and Strauss’ (and subsequently Glaser’s) approach to grounded theory.

The placing of the literature review in the research process is also a matter of debate for grounded theorists. The more Glaserian approach advocates leaving the literature review till near the end of the research in order that the researcher’s own data collection and analysis is not influenced by existing theories which may suppress original theories from emerging (McCallin, 2006: 15; Dunne, 2010: 114). Secondly, the novice researcher may feel somewhat intimidated by

existing knowledge to the extent that he/she may be reluctant to create knowledge of his/her own (McCallin, 2006: 15; Dunne, 2011); whilst, thirdly, undertaking such an extensive literature review at the outset of the research procedure may be largely a waste of time should the literature most pertinent to the research only become apparent in the later stages of the research (Dunne, 2011: 114). However, critics of this approach point out that undertaking an early literature review may benefit the researcher by safeguarding the originality of the research (Chiovitti and Piran, 2003: 432) as well as helping to put the study into context (McCann & Clark, 2003 in Dunne, 2011: 116) and also by providing a greater understanding of the subject to researched (McCallin, 2006: 15). Furthermore, It can ensure that the researcher does not leave him /herself open to criticism by possessing little knowledge of existing theories, leaving him/herself in danger of 'reinventing the wheel' (Coffey and Atkinson, 1996). From my own perspective: the requirements of the PhD structure made writing the literature review necessary at the initial stages of the research process. However, I found this beneficial as, from a very vague beginning, the literature review provided me with a clearer understanding of existing knowledge alongside certain 'gaps' (e.g. the role of the public within the art world) which I felt my own research could exploit. Furthermore, I agree with Coffey and Atkinson, (1996, above) that by not sufficiently arming myself with existing knowledge on the subject of (public) art, I would be in danger of merely repeating the same and thereby 'reinventing the wheel'.

A further fundamental practice of 'pure' grounded theory is the simultaneous collection and analysis of data. This was not something I could rigidly adhere to, as my ability to do both largely depended on the availability of interview participants at any one time. I would often have a glut of interviews, which would all then need transcribing (see below). This was very time-consuming and I would often not have the time to code in great depth for certain concepts before I would be off on another interview / round of interviews. However, the process of transcription enabled me to familiarise myself with the data and assist in the production of very generalized codes which I would incorporate into subsequent interviews, should it be necessary. I also found that I was 'tuning into' codes during the interviews themselves. I particularly found this the case in the

community-based interviews, where I would be interviewing a number of people at any one time (either singly or in groups). Certain participants would mention something during an interview that I would ask about in the interviews that immediately followed. For example, I found that during my community interviews for *Superlambanana*, a number of participants referred to the penguin trail that Liverpool had organised in 2009, comparing it to the *Superlambanana* trail of the previous year. I subsequently made a point of asking other Liverpool participants about their opinions of the penguins in following interviews.

In the context of my study, therefore, and in light of the above discussion, I felt that grounded theory would enable me to undertake my research in the most in-depth manner possible and assist in the production of a rigorous project, whilst also aiding in the generation of original knowledge. I believe that the stories behind each of three case studies can inform the overall theory that is extrapolated from them. In this way I am in agreement with Glaser & Strauss' (1968) original approach to grounded theory, although I disagree that 'pure' grounded theory in the form of straightforward induction is workable in practice (see discussion above). The analysis of my data using a grounded theory approach is discussed below. Before that, however, I will describe the process of data collection.

4.2 Data Collection

As my research explores the processes underpinning the construction of meaning of public art within and between various social groups, the research method I chose to use is qualitative in nature and consists of a number of semi-structured interviews.

4.2.1 Semi-structured Interviews

I decided to use semi-structured interviews as these are more flexible than their structured counterparts and can thus be modified in response to the interviewee and the particular points of interest that they raise; they also facilitate a more in-depth discussion of the specific research interests (Bryman, 2012: 470). From the outset, therefore, each interview was modified according to the individuals /

groups being interviewed at any one time and the nature of the information which was required; hence a representative of a funding organisation was asked a number of different questions compared to a council official and so forth. One question that was asked of all participants involved in the creation processes of an art work, however, encompassed his/her role (or his/her organisation's role) in those processes. Examples of the questions I asked such participants can be found in Appendix 1. Questions asked to community-based participants focused on their opinions of the particular art work under scrutiny, thus these questions tended to be of a similar nature across all three case studies than the questions asked of artistic network members. In every case, however, the questions I took with me acted more as an interview guide than an interview procedure – i.e. I did not stick rigidly to the questions if I felt that allowing the interviewee to go 'off-tangent' would result in better quality information. The semi-structured nature of the interviews also assisted in the Grounded Theory approach to the research as it enabled new information / codes to spontaneously arise out of the dialogue; these could then be incorporated into following interviews as topics of discussion. An example of this involves the topic of the penguin trail, which took place a year after the *Go Superlambananas!* Parade, and which a number of community members mentioned in response to my questions about *Superlambanana*. As I felt that this topic was significant to my research (i.e. in that the symbolic relevance of the penguins to Liverpool was compared to that of the *Superlambananas*), I made a point of asking subsequent community participants about the penguin trail. These responses then went on to become integrated into the theme *Meaning & Interpretation/Interpretations/association of artwork with the area* (see Table 2: Data Coding). Fully structured interviews, with their rigid questioning format and pre-established response coding schemes (Fontana & Frey, 2003; Gilbert, 2008) would not have enabled such innovation to occur, and thus such rich and significant data could have been lost.

Regarding the selection of interview participants: this was achieved in two ways. Firstly, those who were involved in the creation / commissioning processes of an artwork (i.e. specific council officials, curators, artists) I identified during my preliminary reading around the subject matter - i.e. from local newspaper articles and pertinent websites . I subsequently approached the participants via letter or

email. In a few instances, I telephoned the potential participant. During the course of interviewing them, however, a number of these participants would mention the names of other individuals / organisations that had also been involved, often with the advice “you should talk to him / her”. I would then contact the individual / organisation in question – hence a form of snowballing took place. I found that most people I contacted agreed to be interviewed. There were a small number who did not reply to my requests, and one who declined.

For those defined as community members, I approached via community centres in the areas each artwork is located (i.e. Liverpool, Crosby, St Helens). I found lists of such centres on the internet, including local government websites. I approached the centre managers via letter or email and asked for their permission to enter their centres to interview willing participants. I assured the centre managers that all participants would remain anonymous and will only be interviewed if having given their consent. The centre managers who responded then advised me on which groups / individuals would be best for me to interview, taking into account both their and my availability time-wise. In a few instances, schools were approached. In each case this was done via a letter to the headmaster, asking for permission to speak to either a relevant member of staff or a selection of 6th-form students. In each case, I received agreement from the headmaster and undertook the interviews. Although the exact personal details of individual participants (e.g. age, address, ethnicity etc.) were not noted down in an official capacity for the purpose of preserving the individual’s anonymity, during the interviewing process I was able to make a number of observations regarding the overall characteristics of my interviewees. Firstly, the ages of the participants ranged from 17 years of age to 80 plus. Secondly, the majority of participants were white working-class and, thirdly, there was a slight majority of female participants in relation to male. However, I found no significant differences of opinion regarding the artworks between the ages or sexes, whilst there were not enough participants of different ethnicities and / or social classes for me to make any significant comparisons.

For the interview purposes as outlined above, I aimed to be mindful of the concept of the active interview, as outlined by Holstein and Gubrium (1995). This concept counters the assumption that the interview process is ultimately a one-

sided process, in that “subjects are basically conceived as passive vessels of answers” and “repositories of facts and the related details of experience”, but are not themselves “engaged in the production of knowledge” (Holstein and Gubrium 1995:7-8). From this conventional point of view, therefore, it is assumed that there is an objective and external social reality (Fontana and Frey, 2003; Silverman, 2003) which the interviewer endeavours to discover by utilising the appropriate skills (Fontana and Frey, 2003) while endeavouring to maintain the neutrality of both him / herself and the interview context, thereby preventing any ‘contamination’ of the actual interview. (Holstein and Gubrium, 1995; Davies, 2007). The principle behind the active interview, however, acknowledges that, as the interview is itself a social event, both interviewer and interviewee are equally responsible in the meaning-making of the interview – i.e. there is no such thing as an objective and external social reality. Therefore, rather than being a one-sided process – with the interviewer steering the conversation in a particular, pre-ordained way – the interview is seen as a more egalitarian event with the interaction between both interviewer and interviewee as its basis. Because of this, it is necessary that the interviewer is aware of the way in which he / she is perceived by the interviewee and the subsequent effect upon the interview process (Davies, 2007). For example, the interviewee may project an ‘idealised’ version of him / herself, or use certain ‘pat’ phrases that are effectively meaningless (Yanos and Hopper, 2008: 232). It is therefore an essential part of the active interview process for the interviewer to employ reflexivity throughout.

Most of the interviews I undertook were with single participants. However, there were occasions when I spoke to two or more people at one time. This was especially the case when interviewing members of the public. Again, such group interviews were conducted in a semi-structured fashion as I wanted new information to spontaneously occur during the discussion. I thus attempted to act as a facilitator of the discussion between participants and keep myself in the background rather than appear as someone they had to answer to. Regarding group interviews, it was more the case of needing to undertake them in that format rather than wanting to, as access to those community members would have been difficult on an individual basis.

As well as the interview participants, the location of the interviews varied. Although it is best to undertake each interview in a quiet setting in order to (i) protect the interviewee's privacy and (ii) gather good quality data (Bryman, 2012: 473), the interviewer is not always in control of the location of the interview. I found this to be the case in most of my interviews, and particularly in community settings where I had to learn to be less 'precious' about whom I could interview and where and when I could interview them. In short, rather than the participants fitting in with my schedule, the onus was on me to fit in with theirs. Consequently, I found myself in a variety of locations. In those cases when I interviewed council officials I interviewed them at their council's premises, in a quiet office / boardroom. Other interviews were held in cafés, with the accompanying sounds of clinking cups, coffee machines and other people's conversations. One interview was held in the interviewee's kitchen, one in somebody's garden and another in the interviewees' living room. I also held interviews in a classroom in a school and in a Managing Director's office. Community-based interviews were held in community centres which were busy with the comings and goings of a large number of people. In such settings I held interviews with members of an art group, a local history group, two 60+ lunch clubs, several parent and toddler groups (the latter complete with the noise of pre-school age children enthusiastically playing), a number of community centre volunteers and staff (including a few centre managers) and a quantity of other assorted individuals. Furthermore, as well as travelling to the relevant parts of Merseyside (i.e. Liverpool, Crosby, St Helens) to undertake the interviews, I also travelled for two interviews to Derby and, for another interview, to London.

As stated above, most interviews were undertaken on a one-to-one basis. This was especially true of the 'artistic network' interviews. In community settings, however, there were more group interviews, with group numbers ranging from two interview participants at one time to a total of nine participants. Interviews with groups with a smaller number of participants (up to five participants) were more satisfactory to conduct than those with a larger number, as the larger groups would run the risk of the more vocal people dominating the proceedings. In order to rectify this, I would try to bring the 'quieter' members of the group into the discussion by asking more directed questions, or by asking such as 'what

do other people think of..?’ – to varying degrees of success. It was also the case in a few of the larger interview groups that smaller ‘splinter groups’ would arise and there would be several conversations going on at once, often not at all related to the particular artwork under scrutiny. Consequently, I would find it difficult to bring the discussion back to the central topic without sounding ‘schoolmistressy’. Overall, therefore, I found conducting group interviews less satisfactory than those with a single participant.

Regarding the community-based interviews, it was interesting to note that, when asking participants for their opinions on the different artworks, some would tell me beforehand that they did not have a positive opinion of a specific artwork and apologise for this, whereas others would tell me that they did not have an opinion when in fact they did but their opinion was negative (i.e. they did not like the artwork). I would thus reassure these participants that I was interested in both positive and negative opinions and that what they had to tell me would be relevant to my research. The participants would then be happy to be interviewed.

All interviews were recorded using a digital Dictaphone, having obtained the consent of the interviewees beforehand. The recorded interviews were then copied to a password-protected memory stick, which was kept solely in my possession. Alongside the interviews, I recorded written notes pertaining to each interview (i.e. duration of interview, how many people were involved, the environment in which the interview was undertaken, the overall tone of the interview). Those interviews which were held with participants involved in the creation / commissioning of a work of art were longer in duration (30-45 minutes), as a main part of the interview was to explore that participant’s particular role within the creation / commissioning process. The interviews held with community members were, on the whole, shorter in duration (5-30 minutes, depending on size of group) as these focused on the participants’ opinions of the work of art in question.

All recorded interviews were subsequently transcribed. Although there are software programmes that may assist in this, I was aware that their accuracy may not be wholly reliable, particularly when there are background noises prevalent

(see above). I also had a number of group interviews which consisted of many instances of overlapping voices / two or three conversations taking place at once. With this in mind, therefore, I decided that it would be better for accuracy's sake to undertake the transcription process myself. Furthermore, the transcription process would enable me to engage with the data at an earlier stage and thereby assist in the analysis and interpretation of the data (Lapadat & Lindsay, 1999). Undertaking the transcriptions during the interviewing process also assisted in the grounded theory method, as I would become aware of particular 'codes' as they arose out of the interview data (see below).

The transcribed interviews were then given codes so that the anonymity of the individual participants would be preserved. These codes are used throughout the data analysis chapters alongside quotations from their respective interviews. The codes are outlined in the following table (Table 1), which I have divided into two main categories – (i) the Public and (ii) the Art World – based on the type of interview conducted. Although most of the interviews were able to be placed in a straightforward manner in either of the two categories, four interviews proved to be slightly more problematic when assigning to the most appropriate category. These interviews are marked (*) and (**) and an explanation for their lack of straightforwardness is given below.

Table 1: Transcription Codes

| The Public | The Art World |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Community Members 1-34 | Local artist |
| Community Groups 1-3 | Arts Council |
| Crosby Sixth Form 1-3 | Engineering company |
| Liverpool Primary School | Concrete company |
| Local Sailing Club | Art Fund |
| Autism Organisation | St Helens Council 1 and 2 |

| | |
|---|---|
| Crosby Community Arts Organisation | Sefton Council |
| Mersey Maritime Agency | Liverpool Biennial 1 and 2 |
| *Ex-miners 1-3 | South Sefton Development Trust |
| | **Community Arts Organisation |

*simultaneously members of the art world and members of the public (see Chapters 5 and 8)

**not accepted by rest of art world as being a true arts organisation (see Chapter 5)

4.3 Data Analysis

4.3.1 The Grounded Theory Approach

The core analytical approach to data in grounded theory is coding (Holton, 2007), which is “categorizing segments of data with a short name that simultaneously summarizes and accounts for each piece of data” (Charmaz, 2006:43). In order to this, the researcher must scrutinize the data for all possible meanings, allowing the data to act as the guide rather than any preconceived notions (Corbin and Strauss, 2008). In the ‘original’ version of grounded theory by Glaser and Strauss (1968) the coding process involves essentially two types of analytical elements: the category, which is “a conceptual element of a theory” (1968:36) and a property, which is “a conceptual element of a category” (1968:36). A category can therefore constitute a number of properties. It is possible for the researcher to borrow pre-established categories from other theories, but such an approach may hinder the generation of new categories from the data, (Glaser and Strauss, 1968). Once coding has been undertaken and concepts have been abstracted, initially as properties and then as categories, a further stage is required to achieve theoretical integration: this involves linking the categories together into a coherent theoretical whole.

Glaser and Strauss' approach to analysis, although intended to be rigorous, leaves the notion of the 'category' and 'property' rather open-ended. When Strauss teamed up with Corbin (2008) a more detailed description of the coding process was explained. For them, there are many levels of concepts that can be extrapolated from the coding process, from lower-level to higher-level. Furthermore, they outline certain stages of coding, with the initial stage being 'open coding', which involves "breaking data apart and delineating concepts to stand for blocks of raw data" (Corbin and Strauss, 2008:198). Corbin describes how she uses natural breaks in the text as cut-off points. This 'chunk' of text is subsequently studied in-depth for potential meanings.

The next – and higher – stage in the coding process is 'axial coding', which is "the act of relating concepts/categories to each other" (Corbin and Strauss, 2008:198). However, Corbin and Strauss are at pains to point out that such a distinction between the two coding stages is "artificial" as, in practice, analysis involves the simultaneous breaking down of and making connections between data (2008:198).

Charmaz (2006) also has a two-stage approach to coding. The first stage involves analysing a chunk of text (be it word, line or segment), followed by the second stage of choosing the most significant or frequent codes to enable theoretical integration. Once the second, more focused, stage of coding has been completed, theoretical coding may then be undertaken to "specify possible relationships between categories you have developed in your focused coding" (Charmaz, 2006:63). The two-stage coding procedure continues with Holton (2007). She talks of the coding process in terms of two key stages, the first of which is called 'substantive coding'. This is where the researcher works directly with the raw data, breaking it down into concepts and is initially achieved via the practice of 'open coding', which is undertaken line-by-line as this "forces the researcher to verify and saturate categories, minimizes missing an important category, and ensures relevance by generating codes with emergent fit to the substantive area under study" (Holton, 2007:275). From this, 'selective coding' is then undertaken, which can only be embarked upon the identification of a core concept. This therefore limits data collection and analysis to the emergent core category. The

second key stage is that of 'theoretical coding', which is achieved when the researcher's attention turns to the integration of the core concepts into a coherent grounded theory. As with Glaser and Strauss (1968), Holton advocates the generation of new conceptual categories from the data rather than relying on pre-existing theoretical concepts, explaining that "The researcher who does not reach outside extant theory for theoretical coding possibilities runs the risk of producing adequate but rather mundane conceptual theory" (2007:283).

As to what the researcher should code for, this, along with the stages of coding, has also been open to interpretation. Glaser and Strauss (1968) simply allow for the data to 'speak for itself' – a view that Glaser continued to hold after his authorial break from Strauss (Melia, 1996). Strauss, however, upon teaming up with Corbin, (2008) went on to outline a few types of concepts a text can be coded for. These include context – i.e. "the set of conditions that give rise to problems or circumstances to which individuals respond by means of action/interaction/emotions" (2008:229) and process – i.e. "an ongoing flow of action/interaction/emotions in response to events, problems, or as part of reaching a goal" (2008:247). Despite these guidelines, however, adherence to such procedures should not override the 'human' element integral to grounded theory:

The actual procedures used for analysing data are not as important as the task of identifying the essence or meaning of data. Procedures, you recall from earlier chapters, are just tools. The greatest tools researchers have to work with are their minds and intuition. The best approach to coding is to relax and let your mind and intuition work for you. (Corbin and Strauss, 2008:160)

A crucial area for coding, according to Charmaz, is language, as it is the medium through which we experience the world and through which we confer meaning, whilst also reflecting our views and values (2006:46-47). Such use of language involves looking for 'in vivo codes', which are the specific words used by participants to convey their interpretations of their views and actions (Charmaz, 2006:55). Further coding frameworks are discussed by Holton (2007), including

the emphasis given to context by Clarke (1997, 2005, cited in Holton, 2007), which Holton interprets as “merely forcing a preferred theoretical framework (what Glaser, 2005, calls a ‘pet theoretical code’) on a study from the outset” (2007:270) and the various means of data analysis offered by Marshall And Rossman (1999), such as “‘analyst-constructed typologies, ‘logical reasoning’, and ‘matrix-format cross-classifications’” (Holton, 2007:270).

4.3.2 My Approach

In order to analyse my interview transcriptions, which amounted to 60 interviews ranging from a duration of 5 or so minutes to upwards of an hour, I chose to use NVivo software, which I was able to download from the university’s website. Using this software enabled me to analyse and cross-analyse my large volume of data in a more thorough and efficient way than had I undertaken the process purely by hand (i.e. marking hard copies of the transcriptions in different coloured pens for the different codes). I placed the interviews into three folders in the ‘Sources’ category of the software depending on which artwork each interview related to (a few interviews related to two or even all three of the artworks). I then coded the data in each folder, building up categories and themes as I went along. In this way, I could see what the differences were – if any – between the responses to the three artworks. I was then able to cross-match the categories / themes between the artworks and thereby generate more abstract themes.

In the first instance – and as advocated by Glaser and Strauss (1968) – I approached the data with as open a mind as possible, wanting to analyse the data into as many themes as I could find which bore directly and indirectly to people’s relationship with each other and the artwork. This resulted in a total of 57 themes, which consisted of 4 main themes which were in turn divided and sub-divided into smaller themes. I colour coded the themes as such: main themes (Red); sub-themes (Green); sub-sub-themes (Yellow) and in the case of one sub-sub-sub-theme, (Blue). This latter theme is peculiar to the case study of *Superlambanana* and consists of the comparison interviewees discussing this artwork made between the *Superlambanana* trail and the Penguin trail of the following year (see section 4.2 above). Please see Appendix 2, Node Structure, Public Art, 27/11/2014 18:22 for an exact representation of this process.

Naturally, I was aware that I had too many themes to be workable. However, as this was just the initial stage of the coding process, I was not concerned by this over-abundance and was able to pare things down in subsequent stages. The second stage in the coding process produced 44 themes, 3 of which were now main themes (Red) as I felt that the previous 4th theme (the Value of and Uses for Art) was itself a property of the art world – this latter being a sub-theme of the main theme of Power Relationships & Role Dynamics. I therefore eradicated the 4th redundant theme and placed it under Power Relationships & Role Dynamics / the art world, at the same time expanding its title to the instrumental uses and value of public art. However, by doing this, I increased the amount of sub-sub-sub-themes to 5 (colour-coded Purple), which did not concord with the grounded theory approach of working from the more specific to the more abstract. Please see Appendix 2, Node Structure, Public Art, 04/01/2015 15:14 for a representation of this stage.

In order to reduce the number of ‘mini-themes’, therefore, I then deleted altogether the theme of the instrumental uses and value of public art, which I felt was rather redundant in the face of the more abstract ‘art world’, and dispersed the various points throughout the main theme of Power Relationships & Role Dynamics and also combined similar mini-themes together. This resulted in 39 themes in total. See Appendix 2, Node Structure, Public Art, 08/01/2015 00:18 for a full representation of this stage. During the fourth stage of the process, however, I decided to re-expand the theme meaning & interpretation\interpretations\association of artwork with area, past & present into the original two separate themes which constitute (i) contemporary associations of the artwork with its location and (ii) local history interpretations of the artwork, as I felt both themes were distinctive enough from each other to warrant this separation. Please see Appendix 2, Node Structure Public Art, 20/01/2015 12:34 for a full representation of this stage. A fifth stage in the process saw the deletion of the theme meaning & interpretation\storytelling\the importance of the backstory as I felt that this was redundant and its content could be better accommodated by the theme meaning & interpretation\symbolism\symbolic origins of artwork. This therefore resulted in a total of 39 themes, 3 of which are main themes (Red) under which the other

themes are divided (Green) and sub-divided (Yellow). Please see Appendix 2, Node Structure, Public Art, 21/01/2015 19:52 for a representation of this stage. Finally, I deleted two remaining themes: meaning & interpretation\storytelling\the importance of telling a story and people & places\place\interaction of environment with artwork as being redundant to the overall subject of the research. This consequently left me a total of 3 main themes (Red), 6 sub-themes (Green) and 26 sub-themes (Yellow) Please see Appendix 2, Node Structure Public Art, 21/03/2015 18:03 for this sixth and final stage of the process.

During the coding process, it became apparent that some of the themes that emerged importance could readily be placed into pre-existing categories. In particular, a number of the various points that emerged under the overall theme of Power Relationships & Role Dynamics could be placed in the sub-theme of Becker's concept of 'The Art World'. Although some theorists (e.g. Glaser and Strauss, 1968; Holton, 2007) advocate the creation of completely new categories, in this case, as there was such a suitable category already available, for me to have attempted to create a new one would have been superfluous (and rather petty). Ultimately, I kept coding and re-coding until I felt I had the 'best fit' for every theme that had emerged and that there were no redundant themes (i.e. themes that did not have any relevance to the subject of my research). The following table (Table 2) represents how all 35 themes will be discussed during the Analysis Chapters:

Table 2: Data Coding

| Chapter Titles | Chapter Sub-Titles | Items Discussed |
|--|----------------------|--|
| Power Relationships & Role Dynamics | The Art World | aesthetic vs technical |
| | | importance of artistic expertise |
| | | importance of council support of public art |
| | | the need for quality control |

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------|---|
| | | the use of art in urban regeneration & place-making |
| | The Public | extent & type of public participation |
| | | the need for the public's artistic education |
| | | the public's exposure to and acceptance of public art |
| | | the public's preference for the mundane |
| Meaning & Interpretation | Interpretations | association of artwork with area |
| | | autobiographical interpretations of artwork |
| | | local history interpretations |
| | | other interpretations of artwork |
| | | representation of the future |
| | Symbolism | symbolic origins of artwork |
| | | the importance of symbolic ambiguity |
| People & Places | Place | accessibility of artwork |
| | | perceived benefit of artwork to location |
| | | perceived merits of location |
| | | previous uses of location |
| | People | appeal to children |

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| | | appeal to tourists |
| | | attitudes to public art |
| | | nature of interaction with artwork |
| | | ownership of or desire to own artwork |
| | | perceived artistic merit of artwork |

Conclusion

In this chapter I have discussed the main methodological approach to my research, which is grounded theory. Grounded theory was chosen as I believed it to be the most rigorous approach to the analysis of data and the most appropriate method of generating an original theory. As part of the grounded theory approach, I conducted a number (60) of semi-structured interviews with (i) people who were involved in the creation of a work of public art and (ii) people in whose community the artwork is located. In this way, I was able to encompass all three research concerns: the artistic network, the object and the public. I was not able to achieve a 'pure' grounded theory methodology in the Glaserian sense, in that a literature review was completed prior to undertaking the fieldwork and my research was guided in the general direction of the three main research concerns. Table 1 details the interviews undertaken and the codes used to identify each interview. Data coding was undertaken using NVivo software, which assisted me in analysing the large amounts of interview data. Although I attempted to allow themes to emerge naturally from the data, some data were, nevertheless, able to be placed into the appropriate, pre-existing category of 'The Art World'. Data from all three case studies – *Superlambanana*, *Another Place* and *Dream* – were analysed both separately (i.e. the data from one case study analysed in isolation from the other case studies) as well as co-referentially (i.e. the data from all three case studies analysed together) to give a complete picture of each work of art in its own right as well as under the general category of 'public art'. The themes were refined until I felt all data were suitably coded and themes could not be collapsed further. Table 2 details the themes which arose from the interview data

and the ways in which the themes will be discussed in the following data analysis chapters.

Data Analysis

Chapter 5: Theme 1: Power Relationships and Role Dynamics

Chapter 6: Theme 2: Meaning and Interpretation

Chapter 7: Theme 3: People and Places

Chapter 5

Theme 1: Power Relationships and Role Dynamics

Introduction

This chapter discusses the first theme which emerged from my data analysis and explores the various roles of the parties – be they individuals or organisations – that participate in the creation processes of the three works of public art. This includes the role played by members of the public. As Becker states, “To analyse an art world we look for its characteristic kinds of workers and the bundle of tasks each one does” (Becker, 2008: 9). However, far from this being a top-down, researcher-assigned approach to the analysis of the different roles, this exploration entails the examination of these roles in terms of the ways in which they are perceived by (i) the particular party undertaking a particular role, and (ii) the other parties within the artistic network. In this way, it will be shown that certain members of the artistic network have more influence in deciding the aesthetic qualities of the completed artwork (i.e. what the artwork looks like, what the artwork means) than others. Furthermore, it will be shown that ‘the public’ is seen by these more aesthetically influential art world members as being monolithic in its composition – i.e. as a single social group that is in need of educating into making the ‘correct’ artistic choices. Thus members of the public may be allowed to participate in the creation of a public artwork, but only if they comply with the terms and conditions stipulated by these aesthetically prominent parties. Putting it another way, the public can become part of the art world only if it assumes the artistic knowledge and beliefs of the art world.

Following the delineations of the data analysis (see Table 1: Data Coding, Chapter 4), this chapter has been sub-divided into two sections. The first section examines the role of ‘the public’ in the creation of the three works of public art – *Superlambanana*, *Another Place* and *Dream* – whereas the second section explores the responsibilities of the various members of the art world. I will then conclude by summarising the particular roles and responsibilities of each participant in the creation processes of public art and the way in which such roles and responsibilities influence the aesthetic quality of the completed artwork.

In this and the following data analysis chapters, when citing extracts of interviews, I will use the letter P for participant (P1 for participant one, P2 for participant two and so on) and the letter I for Interviewer (which, of course, is myself).

5.1 The Public

In Becker's theory, the public is absent in the actual creation process of an artwork. If it is included in the art world at all, it is there to provide an audience for that particular work of art (see Becker, 2008: 40-52). In this view of the art world, therefore, 'the public' is a largely passive entity. Likewise, for Bourdieu (1986,1993), the public is defined largely in terms of consumption. However, as much British Cultural policy of the late 20th century to the present day has advocated public participation in art and culture beyond consumption, it is now pertinent to discover where – if anywhere – this more active version of the public sits in relation to the other parties in the art world.

It seems that the 'watershed moment' regarding the importance of community participation in public art is Serra's *Tilted Arc*, which was discussed in greater detail in Chapter 1 and to which is referred by the representative from the Arts Council:

If you take, for instance, Richard Serra's huge rusty sculpture that existed in New York and the controversy around that and I think, you know, the lessons learned from that, communities weren't involved in the commissioning or the development of that work and any public artwork.
(Arts Council)

The non-acceptance of the artwork, therefore, lay in its non-participation by the people who lived and worked in its locality. Thus, logically, it will follow that community participation will lead to community acceptance. However, it is not quite that straightforward, as there is still the question as to how much of the community should be involved. All of it, some of it, or just a few individuals? For one representative of the Liverpool Biennial, the answer is 'not many'. Rather, a handful of community representatives are the preferred option – people who will be able to persuade the rest of their community to their cause:

You've got to start with individual people who have some respect in the community or something and then they have to champion what they're doing irrespective of what other people in the community think because you can't bake a cake with 300 people. (Liverpool Biennial 1)

Thus the notion of a truly democratic and therefore truly representational artwork is already in doubt, which – on the face of it – appears to contradict the principles of community participation. Furthermore, from a political point of view, the use of art as a means of alleviating social exclusion is undermined if only a few 'privileged' members of the community participate and the great majority do not. In effect, the privileging of the few over many happened in the creation of *Dream*, as a small group of ex-miners (approx. 6) were involved in the selection process of both the artist and the subsequent artwork that went on the Sutton Manor site. The selection of the participating ex-miners, however, fell to an employee of St Helens Council, himself a miner at the former Sutton Manor colliery. The people he selected, therefore, were already old friends / acquaintances. However, there was nevertheless a deliberate selection of the 'right' sort of people for the job based on the particular criteria as required by this first ex-miner – in this way echoing the 'community representative' ethos as advocated by the Liverpool Biennial (see above):

I got the people together who could really, really sell the story, so the people all worked at the pit all left school and worked at the pit and all got made redundant at the same time, so they all had mining in their hearts but they had the future in their heads and that's the sort of people I put together. (Ex-Miner 1)

It can be seen, therefore, that Ex-Miner 1 occupies a position in two worlds: (i) the art world (being an employee of the commissioning organisation of the artwork) and (ii) the public (being a former miner at the location of the artwork). Being so ambiguously but uniquely positioned, he therefore acts a 'bridge' between the two, allowing the other ex-miners involved in the project (including Ex-Miner 2 and Ex-

Miner 3) to 'cross over' from one world to the other, but on his terms as member of the art world rather than as a member of the public. In this way, Ex-Miner 1 acts as a 'gatekeeper', allowing only the 'right' sort of people in according to the criteria set down by the art world.

Once the participating ex-miners had themselves been selected, it was their responsibility to select the artist and the resultant artwork. Indeed, this was seen as the ex-miners' exclusive role – a role which was initially a surprising one, as being involved so closely in 'art' was not perceived to be the realm of ex-miners, even by one of the ex-miners himself:

Now, I expected, I fully expected that, at this point, that would be taken out of our hands. It was nothing to do with us. Selecting artists – it's not for pitmen, it's for experts. (Ex-Miner 3)

The selection of artists and artworks, therefore, involves possessing certain artistic expertise – something which, as Ex-Miner 3 indicates above – the ex-miners themselves lack. They are not in possession of such specialized knowledge, be it the knowledge of artistic conventions required to be a bona fide member of the art world (see Becker, 2008: 40-67), or the cultural capital necessary to be a fully paid-up member of the field of cultural production (Bourdieu, 1993). However, such specialized knowledge was also deemed to be lacking in the public generally by several parties more typically associated with the art world, as the following quotes from an employee of St Helens Council and a representative of the Liverpool Biennial illustrate:

Put it this way: if you ask people what they want then you're going to get what they know. You're not going to get what they don't know. (St Helens Council 2)

...but for (Liverpool Biennial 2) to ask the ex-miners in St Helens what they wanted to see without first of all taking them on a trip to educate them as to what they could possibly see is as ridiculous as housing companies asking people to fill in consultation forms. (Liverpool Biennial 1)

Thus it can be seen that the public, on the whole, cannot really be trusted to exercise the appropriate artistic discrimination and choose the 'right' sort of artwork. Therefore, as Liverpool Biennial 1 states clearly, it is necessary to educate the public in the 'right' sort of knowledge: a process that was undertaken with the ex-miners via the Liverpool Biennial when the former were taken on a 'guided tour' of art, including visits to the Yorkshire Sculpture Park and the Tate Modern. The ex-miners were also given a talk by a second Liverpool Biennial representative (Liverpool Biennial 2) on the different types of art, such as figurative art and conceptual art, thereby receiving instruction in the artistic conventions that would enable them to make a more considered choice of artist and artwork. Following on from this education, a shortlist of ten artists were presented by Liverpool Biennial 2 to the ex-miners, who then selected Jaume Plensa because of his work with light, a particular feature required by the ex-miners to be incorporated into the artwork. By educating the ex-miners in this way, the eventual physical form of the artwork and its meaningful content could be shaped into the type of form and meaning required by the art world rather than those desired by the public. Consequently, the entire educational process belies the appearance that the ex-miners were given free rein to select both the artist and artwork, despite the ex-miners own assertions that this is what happened:

They never influenced us in the slightest. Nobody influenced us in the slightest. All people did was like (Liverpool Biennial 2) was sort of say 'these things are available to you, but at the end of the day it's what you want and what the community wants; that's your choice'. (Ex-Miner 1)

Now, other people would say to us 'yeah, but you were conned. You didn't choose it. You were- it was thrust upon you', which wasn't strictly true because what was thrust upon us was a miner's oil lamp, which we didn't want. (Ex-Miner 2)

The education of the public does not begin and end with creation of the artwork, however. In order to give the artwork a better chance of being understood and

accepted by its public, the educational process must continue once the artwork is in situ. This means that a concerted effort must be made to promote the artwork to the public via various means, such as the following as suggested by the representative of the Art Fund when discussing the 'afterlife' of *Dream*:

I don't recall what was done after the opening because by that time I was on my way, but if there wasn't a serious attempt to go into schools, to go into community centres, to get the local media on board and so on, that would have been a mistake. I mean, it's obviously really important to make sure that at the very least the wider public understand what somebody has been trying to do. I mean, they may not like it, but at least there should be no doubt about the purpose and the nature of the artistic endeavour. (Art Fund)

Such public education was undertaken with *Another Place*, whereby local schools worked on their own projects involving the statues once they were installed. *Superlambanana*, however, saw no such education taking place. Indeed, this particular artwork was in situ for 10 years until it became the subject of a large-scale community cultural event in the form of the *Superlambanana* Parade (see below). The public's role, both during and after the creation of a work of public art, is to be educated into the 'right' artistic knowledge – the knowledge that will ensure that they will at least understand and – hopefully, in time – accept the artwork.

In a similar vein, the monopolization by the art world regarding the judgement on the artistic value of the artwork is observable in the commissioning process of *Another Place*. In this instance, members of the public were not as closely involved in the process as the ex-miners were in the commissioning and creation processes of *Dream*. Although a number of consultations were held that were open to members of the public, the general feeling regarding *Another Place* was that the consultations were largely a cosmetic exercise and the installation of the statues was a foregone conclusion, despite any objections local people may have had:

The people, most of the people against it who wrote to the local paper didn't really matter. Once the council decided that was it, you know.
(Community Group 1)

This feeling is not without credence, however, as a great part of the impetus to install the statues on Crosby beach came from the highest stratum of Sefton Council:

The chief exec at the time, [name], wanted it in. So when the commodore of the yacht club had a problem, me and the head of leisure services at the council got somewhere to meet with the chief exec and the commodore to thrash it out. So he was behind it, and so when, if it got to a bit of a problem – you never really went to the chief exec for operational issues around the council, but if it was a real blockage, you knew that he'd come in over the top and go "it's going to happen". Erm, he saw the potential and he was right and so he kind of pushed. Having that support at the very top level really helped. (South Sefton Development Trust)

Allied to Sefton Council's enthusiasm for the statues, was the aspiration of the South Sefton Development Agency – the predecessor of the South Sefton Development Trust – for something to improve the beach area:

...actually I don't know what South Sefton Development Agency did or didn't do but, you know, it was a top-down initiative. It was the Development Agency's desire to see something happen on the beach.
(Liverpool Biennial 1)

The role of the public, therefore, seen in the light of the above account, is of minimal importance to the overall commissioning process of *Another Place* and, although certain members of the art world ostensibly make an attempt to include the public in a number of consultations, this is only done so via the tight restrictions they put in place. In effect, the local community is reduced to being the audience, and a non-specialized one at that, so much so that – in terms of

Becker's art world – the public in this instance lies on the very periphery of the art world, if it is actually included at all.

In the case of the original large-scale *Superlambanana* actual community participation in its commissioning and creation was zero. Rather, the selection of the artist and thereby the artwork was the sole responsibility of Liverpool Biennial 1, whose choice of Taro Chiezo occurred because "I liked the artist's work and I thought he could do something interesting for Liverpool" (Liverpool Biennial 1). Out of all three case studies, the commissioning process of *Superlambanana* was a particularly personal one, with Liverpool Biennial 1 seeing himself in terms of the appropriate 'community representative' (see discussion above), although – by virtue of its artistic expertise – his organisation is an integral part of the art world. Being such an artistic authority, therefore, legitimised his right to select what he considered to be the most appropriate artwork and artist for Liverpool's representation in the Art Transpennine exhibition, thereby overriding the potential claims of the public to this role. Thus artistic expertise takes precedence over community involvement, and the public is reduced to the level of the non-specialist audience, lying on the outskirts of the art world.

Although they differ in the extent to which the public is involved in the creation process of the artworks, the above three case studies all share one thing in common: the view of 'the public' as a monolithic – and wholly un-artistic – entity. There is no allowance made for possible variations within the public, as argued by Phillips (1988, 1989) – including publics that may have greater knowledge of those artistic conventions which enable those publics to be stronger integrated into the art world. On the contrary, the public as perceived by the art world is a public that is *en masse* completely ignorant about art – or, rather, the right sort of art – and therefore the public's artistic education is necessary before members of the public are allowed to join the ranks of the art world – if they are allowed to join at all.

There is one artwork from the three, however, that eventually did allow for a number of different publics to be involved, albeit in its 'afterlife' – i.e. after it had been in the public sphere for a number of years. In 2008, as part of Liverpool's year of European Capital of Culture, a hundred or so smaller *Superlambananas* of

all different colours and designs were dotted about the city. This Go *Superlambananas!* Parade encouraged community involvement, with schools and community groups designing their own mini *Superlambananas*, while others were sponsored by and designed for local businesses. Some community groups had artists working with them to aid them in the design of their sculptures, whereas other groups preferred to 'do it themselves', such as a Liverpool primary school in which a group of schoolchildren created their own design inspired by their school's name and who were aided by several members of staff:

We just kept it as the name would suggest, you know, spring greens. There's a bit of yellow in it, erm, and we put the school badge on, went on somewhere and erm...and purples, and our school colours are green and yellow, so I think purple's obviously a good colour to go with that and that represents the heath bit. (Liverpool Primary School)

In the instance of the Go *Superlambananas!* Parade, therefore, it could be argued that the art world may have been making an honorary exception to include members of the public in retrospect, given the emphasis placed on community participation during the event. However, it is interesting to note that the organisation responsible for co-ordinating the Go *Superlambananas!* Parade was actually initially approached under a marketing query and not recognised as a cultural organisation by Liverpool City Council until the eleventh hour, when it became apparent that the event was going to be particularly popular:

P: And it was even, up until the day we launched we were never considered as a cultural project, and then of course, as you know, because the city went mad.

I: Yes.

P: And, you know, suddenly we were invited in our first meeting in culture. (laughs) (Community Arts Organisation)

Further to this, the organisation in question – at the date of the interview – has never received any Arts Council funding as it is perceived by the latter as being a more commercial concern rather than cultural, owing to its deliberate encouragement of business sponsorship. It can thus be seen that a division is opening up within the art world between what is perceived as ‘high art’ – i.e. that which is culturally and morally improving to the masses – and what is perceived as ‘low art’ – i.e. that which is commercially successful and has a wide appeal. Consequently, a community-based art event such as the *Go Superlambananas!* Parade, although very successful with community members, is not seen as being ‘proper’ art by other parties in the artistic network. Indeed, there was some criticism aimed at the Parade and the company responsible for it by one of the artists responsible for the construction of the original artwork:

...but the trail for me is the biggest act of cynicism – that company are unbelievable. They just go round, they only do that... so they latch on to the corporate side of it, doing it all over the country, having the cows and the lions. (Local Artist)

As the field of cultural production strives to define itself in symbolic rather than economic capital, (Bourdieu, 1993: 42), such ‘blatant’ commercialisation of art in the form of the *Go Superlambananas!* Parade consequently means that such art is not ‘proper’ art. The *Go Superlambananas!* Parade, therefore, is not deserving of the same artistic accolades as the original artwork, of which the Parade’s various smaller depictions are only pale imitations.

From the above discussion, it can therefore be concluded that the public’s role in the creation of public art is, on the whole, one that is tightly regulated by the more dominant members of the art world – i.e. those that perceive their own roles as being the repositories of the ‘right’ artistic knowledge, be they cultural consultants, council officials or funders. Even when members of the public are seen to be included in a very obvious and essential way – as in the case of the ex-miners and *Dream* – it is only done so under the guidance of those ‘in the know’. Such guidance may appear to be purely benevolent – i.e. undertaken in order to share this knowledge with those who do not possess it; and, indeed, this is how it

may be interpreted by those members of the public who are on the receiving end of this education. However, such a one-sided process can only help to reinforce the artistic supremacy of certain parties within the art world over others and, in particular, the public in general. The public itself is relegated to little more than an empty vessel requiring to be filled up with the right sort of artistic knowledge before its opinions on art can be trusted, if it is to be included in the creation process at all. Otherwise, such inclusion is tolerated only if the artistic quality of the end product is not at stake and the process of community participation is underlined.

5.2 The Art World

The previous section examined the role of the public in the creation of a work of public art as perceived by both members of the public and members of the art world. In this section the roles of the different parties of the art world will be explored via the perceptions of each party of both their own role in the network and each other's.

According to Becker, although the party that is central to the art world is the artist, he / she cannot produce a work of art without a team of 'support personnel' who are responsible for different tasks within the network. The composition of the support personnel varies from art world to art world, as does the size and complexity of each art world (Becker, 2008). Despite this variation, however, "the artist's involvement with and dependence on cooperative links thus constrains the kind of art he can produce" (Becker, 2008: 26). Concentrating on these cooperative links, therefore, what is at first apparent across all three case studies is the division between those members of the art world who are seen to be responsible for the more aesthetic decisions regarding the artwork (i.e. the particular form the artwork takes, its symbolic content) and those members who are considered to be responsible for the more technical judgements (i.e. the 'nuts and bolts' of physically producing the artwork). Such judgements largely involve using the skills and knowledge of the industrial world – a world which is commonly seen as the antithesis of the art world. This dissimilarity between the two worlds is itself maintained by the parties involved as, when discussing their own roles in the creation process, those industrial organisations were apt to make

the artistic / technical distinction. For instance, a representative of the engineering firm involved in the construction of *Dream* described his company's role in terms of its relationship with the artist and the different responsibilities of the two parties in the artwork's creation:

Yeah, we did have a close relationship with Jaume Plensa, but Jaume's way of working was quite, was very helpful to us really, 'cause Jaume understood that we would go to him if there were any aesthetic decisions to be made, but then we were empowered to make decisions which were not going to be seen in, so the connection detailing or the way we communicated geometry and construction information between the sub-contractors was not going to influence the outcome. We'd go to Jaume for things like jointing patterns or to ensure that he was comfortable with the way the plinth was segmented for example. (Engineering Company)

Likewise, the representative of the concrete company defined their responsibilities in the creation process purely in terms of the practical criteria required for getting the job done, rather than in having any input into the aesthetic nature of the artwork:

That was my role. Not to decide whether it was a good sculpture or bad sculpture, the position's the right place or whatever. That's really out of my remit completely. All I did I turned their *Dream* into reality. (Concrete Company)

Furthermore, although defining themselves in 'non-artistic' terms, the specific technical knowledge the firm possesses actually had the effect of enhancing its status in the art world, resulting in a heightened sense of respect from the other, non-technical parties:

The input that I gave obviously was well-received and so we ourselves were taken away from the normal contractual position. We were part of the team, a well-respected part of the team and so in some ways we

possibly put a lot more effort into it because we had that level of respect more than what we do in a normal project. (Concrete Company)

From the above, therefore, it can be seen that both the engineers and the concrete company are happy with their lot as pure technicians in the creative process. That is, after all, their usual way of doing things and of being seen by others. Being seen as pure technicians, however, is not as desirable when such work is undertaken by artists and the dynamics of the art world are brought into play, particularly the dynamics surrounding the particular requirements of being an 'artist'.— i.e. that an 'artist' is the person responsible, not for the physical construction of the artwork, but for its conceptual framework. As the artist responsible for the construction of the *Superlambanana* explains:

P: Yeah, but only because again of all those other myths of the snooty art world, if you've made or touched it, it's almost going back to almost the idea of you're an artisan, you know, they want you both ways. They want you to be this guy artist, but if you actually touch, like the technical, shown your technical ability-

I: -More the physical side of it?

P: Yeah, then you're actually a technician, you know. You're not an artist in the cerebral sense. It's just the pure idea, you know, so there's a load of bollocks going on around that and all that idea. (Local Artist)

According to Becker, the artist is a vital component of the art world as he / she is "the person who performs the core activity without which the work would not be art" (2008: 24). It is the presence of the artist alone – who possesses those specific skills only an artist can possess – who can assign an object its artistic status (2008: 16). Thus the artist is an artist because he / she is ultimately responsible for 'the idea' of the artwork – i.e. what it means, how it looks – but not for the actual physical construction of the artwork. That, as we have seen above, is the job of the technical parties: the engineers and the concrete companies and so forth. It goes without saying, therefore, that the artist is the

archetypal aesthetic decision-maker in the network. That, in Becker's terms, is his / her "core activity". The artist aside, however, there is another member of the art world that was perceived by the other parties in the network as being responsible for many of the aesthetic judgements in the network. This is the Liverpool Biennial, whose various roles involved assisting in the selection of the artwork, liaising with the artist, having established contacts in the art world and, in the case of *Dream*, educating selected members of the public into the 'right' artistic knowledge (see previous section). For the South Sefton Development Trust (*Another Place*) and for St Helens Council (*Dream*), it is this artistic expertise of the Liverpool Biennial, coupled with the particular prestige the organisation enjoys, that was invaluable to the whole commissioning and creative process:

P: As I say, without them [the Liverpool Biennial] it would not have happened at all. We might have gone the technicalities, but that liaison with Antony Gormley, the insight of who to invite in the art world and how to...it was fantastic, erm, and we didn't have anything like that.

I: You wouldn't have been able to do that at all? No?

P: It would not have worked as well. We might have, if we'd been asked to do it still, we might have been able to go through his agent, but you know what? They short-circuited it, yeah, yeah. (South Sefton Development Trust)

I mean [the] Biennial aren't really, weren't really a public art development agency and still not, but what they did have was the expertise to deliver public art projects; they had international contacts; they had a reputation of their own; they carried a momentum of their own, actually, and they also hadn't done a great deal of work outside Liverpool, necessarily, 'cause it's the Liverpool Biennial. They just had the credibility, I think, to carry forward all that artistic expertise, experience and the kudos. I think that's what they attracted to it, something that to be fair a town like St Helens might have difficulty generating that in itself. (St Helens Council 2)

In both instances, the Liverpool Biennial assumed the privileged position of constituting the people who “are more commonly seen by many or most interested parties as more entitled to speak on behalf of the art world than others” (Becker, 2008: 151). This is by virtue of the Biennial’s experience in such artistic matters, its specialist artistic knowledge and, as Becker himself states, “simply because they are, after all, the people in charge of such things and therefore ought to know” (2008: 151). In Bourdieu’s terms, the Liverpool Biennial possesses an abundance of the right ‘cultural capital’ which the remaining parties in the artistic network do not. Owing to this specialist artistic knowledge, therefore, the influence of the Liverpool Biennial on both the eventual form and meaning of *Dream* is significant, but particularly in its direct involvement in the artistic education of the ex-miners. This will be explored further in the following chapter. Regarding *Superlambanana*, it is not the Liverpool Biennial as such, but Tate Liverpool that assumes this privileged position, operating largely autonomously in selecting the artist – and thereby the artwork – to represent Liverpool as part of the Art Transpennine Exhibition. Interestingly, the Director of Tate Liverpool at the time of the commissioning of *Superlambanana* subsequently became the Director of the Liverpool Biennial, during which period both *Another Place* and *Dream* were created and / or installed. Consequently, this particular individual was involved in all three artworks to varying extents – a feat not achieved by anyone else, even the respective artists. Owing to his eminent position in both privileged organisations, therefore, this individual out of everyone is the most influential in terms of recognising the artistic validity of a work of public art and, in being so, wields a great degree of aesthetic power, in terms of both Becker’s art world and Bourdieu’s field.

Thus we have examined the aesthetic / technical division between certain parties of the artistic network, with the artist and the Liverpool Biennial (or, rather, a particular individual in the Liverpool Biennial) on one side of the spectrum and the engineering firm and concrete company on the other. What of the remaining parties in the network? They fulfil a mixture of functions, including aesthetic to varying degrees. For the representative of the South Sefton Development Trust, their role in the commissioning process of *Another Place* was largely seen in terms

of project management. Any aesthetic responsibilities remained the prerogative of the Liverpool Biennial (see above). Once guardianship of the statues had been handed over to Sefton Council, their role was also seen in project management terms as well as in terms of ongoing management concerning the maintenance of the artwork. For *Dream*, however, as well as St Helen Council's general role in the project management of the artwork's creation, one representative also perceived his particular personal role in more aesthetic terms – i.e. he felt he had a responsibility to ensure that the artwork the ex-miners ultimately selected was of a certain artistic quality:

Initially, one of my self-appointed roles was frankly to, they know this, was to make sure that [the] ex-miners didn't do something ridiculous – you know, bloody great canary or Davy lamp, ironically. (St Helens Council 1)

In effect, what this particular St Helen's Council official was doing was practicing a form of quality control for the finished artistic product: a function which the representative of the Art Fund also saw as being part of his role:

Our role, crudely speaking, was to fork out the money, though I, to be honest, part of my function also was to say whether it was good enough, 'cause we retained the right to say "no, we're not going to support this unless it looks good". (Art Fund)

Although not stated in quite as explicit a way as the St Helens Council and the Art Fund (above), the Arts Council also plays a 'quality control' role in the commissioning process of the artwork, in that it seeks to fund certain types of artwork - usually artwork that it sees as being 'less commercially viable':

I think I would say that, you know, the Arts Council wishes to promote ambitious work that wouldn't happen without support from government funding and part of that is the more controversial work. (Arts Council)

In Bourdieu's terms, these variations in the aesthetic influence of the different members of the artistic network constitute struggles within the field of cultural production to be the legitimate authority in the designation of artistic validity (Bourdieu 1993: 42). However, there may not be so much of a struggle between certain members of the network as more of a 'tacit collusion' in defining the criteria by which an artist and an artwork should be measured and thereby delineating the artistic network boundary. Not just anyone can be an artist and not just any object can be an artwork – despite, even, what the individual who claims to be an artist thinks. Membership of the artistic club depends on the approval of these powerful aesthetic elite. Contrast the Arts Council's support of *Dream* with its lack of support for the organisation responsible for the *Go Superlambananas! Parade* for reason of it being 'too commercial' (see The Public above).

Couple this deployment of quality control by St Helens Council, the Art Fund and the Arts Council with the educational programme delivered to the ex-miners by the Liverpool Biennial and it becomes apparent that the ex-miners were never going to be given a true 'free rein' in the selection of the artwork for the site of the former Sutton Manor colliery. Rather, right from the outset the ex-miners were 'guided' by these more aesthetically powerful members of the art world to choose a particular type of artwork. Defining this situation in Bourdieu's terms, the ex-miners were ideologically influenced by members of the field of cultural production in their selection of the 'right' sort of artwork. This therefore begs the question: what particular type of artwork were the ex-miners 'guided' to select? The answer to this question, dear reader, will be explored in the following chapter (Meaning and Interpretation).

Project management aside, one other function that was perceived to be the responsibility of Local Authorities generally is the support and promotion of public art. This means not just commissioning discrete artworks here and there and then neglecting them afterwards. On the contrary, this means (i) having a consistent policy of commissioning public art and (ii) the continuous promotion of a work of public art once the artwork is in situ. Local Authorities who assume these responsibilities will be more successful in persuading their public to accept public

art, both generally and specifically (i.e. certain pieces). For the representative of the Arts Council, Liverpool City Council is one such successful local authority:

I think, you know, the bravery really of Liverpool City Council and the ambition of arts organisations within Liverpool have actually kind of tipped over, I think, especially with Capital of Culture, but have tipped over in terms of people's perceptions of contemporary art, so where I think it was very controversial pre-Liverpool Biennial it's a lot less controversial now. (Arts Council)

Liverpool City Council's policy of 'ambitious' public art ventures alongside the Liverpool Biennial's own cultural programme has been seen to have effected a positive change in the public's attitude to public art in a way that St Helen's Council, with its comparatively recent foray into large-scale public art commissioning, has yet to achieve. However, this is not to say that it will never be achieved. Only that it will take time – and many more public art ventures – to achieve it. Ultimately, by consistently commissioning and promoting public art, local authorities also play a large part in educating their public into the 'right' sort of artistic knowledge required by the wider art world. In this way, local authorities, too, have an aesthetic role within the network.

Conclusion

In this chapter, the roles of the various parties in each of the three artistic networks have been examined, paying particular attention to the ways in which the individual parties themselves perceive both their own and each other's responsibilities within their networks. In this way, the power dynamics between the interconnected partners have been highlighted, with some individuals / organisations influencing the aesthetic qualities of an artwork more than others.

Taking the public's role first, it has been shown that the public may participate in the creation of an artwork, but only in accordance with the terms and conditions specified by the more aesthetically powerful members of the art world. Such terms and conditions include the selection of 'appropriate' members of the public – i.e. those members of the public who are seen to possess the most desirable

traits for the purposes of the art world and who therefore act as representatives for the rest of their community. As community representatives, the 'chosen few' are also expected to persuade the rest of their community to their artistic cause, which, ultimately, is the artistic cause of the art world itself. Thus 'community participation' in the creation of public art is far from the democratic and socially inclusive process that cultural policy would want us to believe. As in the case of *Dream*, there may be an individual who acts a form of 'bridge' between the art world and the public, whose function it is to allow selected members of the public to cross over into the art world – a process which is ultimately one-way.

Regarding the art world itself, the main differentiation that is apparent between the various parties that constitute the artistic network is that between the aesthetic and the technical. For those parties who see themselves as exclusively technical (such as the engineering firm and the concrete company), aesthetic decisions are perceived to be completely out of their remit. Such decisions are the prerogative of the artist. Indeed, the technical aspect of the project is solely concerned with the physical construction of the artwork – in 'getting the job done'. For the commissioning parties, such as the South Sefton Development Trust and St Helens Council, their responsibilities lie in the administration duties of the creation process, such as project management and the resolving of issues such as planning permission and health and safety. However, they can also influence the aesthetic outcome of the artwork by the continuous commissioning and promotion of public art generally, thereby educating the public in certain types of artwork. As in the case of *Dream*, there may even be certain individuals within these organisations who see their role partially in quality control terms – i.e. ensuring that those members of the public participating in the creation process select an 'appropriate' artist and / or artwork. Such an aesthetic quality control function is also a potential responsibility of the funding bodies of the artwork, as these may fund only certain types of artwork, such as artwork which is defined as being 'less commercial', whilst rejecting artwork that is simply 'not good enough'. Unsurprisingly, the artist is the member of the art world who is perceived by others in the network as having the ultimate responsibility for any aesthetic decisions regarding the artwork, including how the artwork looks and what the artwork means. It is the ability of the artist to generate 'the idea' of the

artwork that makes that individual an artist. Technical know-how, on the other hand, is undesirable, as this contradicts the 'real' responsibility of the artist.

From the above discussion, therefore, it would appear that the artist is the most aesthetically powerful member of the artistic network. Although this may be true in each individual case, there are nevertheless two parties that, owing to their involvement in two out of three of the artworks, possess an even greater aesthetic influence. In the first instance, and as the repository of artistic knowledge, the Liverpool Biennial was seen by others in their respective networks as the 'go to' organisation for decisions involving the selection of the 'appropriate' artist and artwork and for activities such as liaising with the artists themselves. In the case of *Superlambanana* in particular, it is the Director of Tate Liverpool who single-handedly decided on the appropriate artist and artwork. As the Director of Tate Liverpool subsequently became the Director of the Liverpool Biennial, it is this one individual – rather than each individual artist – who has the greatest power in terms of overall aesthetic influence. In the second instance, The Arts Council, which was also involved in two out of the three artworks (*Another Place* and *Dream*) can also be included in the select group of people / organisations whose aesthetic influence is more wide-ranging than the artist. This would therefore suggest that there is a hierarchical structure within the individual art world / field of cultural production itself, with the most aesthetically influential parties being these more omnipotent people / organisations, to whom even the artist is ultimately beholden in terms of being designated an 'artist' and their artwork as 'art'. Furthermore, although Bourdieu describes the field of cultural production as being an arena for 'struggles' between the different parties to be the legitimate authority in the designation of artistic validity (Bourdieu 1993: 42), there may not be so much of a struggle between certain members of the network as more of a 'tacit collusion' in defining the criteria by which an artist and an artwork should be measured and thereby delineating the artistic network boundary. Not just anyone can be an artist and not just any object can be an artwork – despite, even, what the individual who claims to be an artist thinks.

To conclude, therefore: the aesthetic quality of a public work of art is tightly controlled by a small number of influential people / organisations within each

individual art world. Such control therefore has a large influence on the meaning of the artwork as well as its form. The following chapter explores these meanings in detail as well as the meanings given to the artworks by members of their respective communities once the artworks have been installed in the public arena.

Chapter 6

Theme 2: Meaning and interpretation

Introduction

The previous chapter explored the dynamics between the various members of the art world and their roles within the network as perceived by themselves and each other. It was shown that certain members of the art world (organisations or individuals) have a greater influence over the aesthetic content of the artwork (i.e. its form and meaning) than other members of the art world during the creation process. It is thus the purpose of this chapter to examine those meanings in greater detail. It is also the purpose of this chapter to examine those meanings generated once the completed object is situated in the public sphere. In order to do this, as in the first chapter, this chapter is divided into two main sections. The first section discusses the overall symbolic qualities of an art work – i.e. the particular qualities a public artwork should represent and the way(s) in which such an artwork should be interpreted – that is, according to those aesthetically influential parties within the art world. The second section closely examines the particular meanings and interpretations which are produced (i) during the initial creation process of each art work and (ii) once the completed artwork is located in the public sphere. The chapter then concludes by discussing the differences between the aesthetically ‘approved’ ways of interpreting a public artwork and the actual ways the artwork is interpreted.

6.1 Symbolism

6.1.1 The Symbolic Qualities of Public Art

As discussed in Chapter 5, members of the public – should they be included in the creation of a work of public art at all – are ‘guided’ by those aesthetically influential members of the art world to choose a certain type of artwork. This type of artwork should possess several certain symbolic qualities for the object in question to be an effective work of public art. These symbolic qualities are general, in that they apply to all works of public art regardless of each individual artwork’s form, meaning and location. The first quality an effective public artwork should possess is to have an ‘international’ rather than a ‘local’ character. Further to this, the required artist should be an ‘international’ artist rather than a home

grown British artist because an 'international' artist is able to bring a different perspective to the area in which his / her artwork will be located, particularly if that area has a poor external image, such as Liverpool. As a representative of the Liverpool Biennial explains:

Generally, it's better to bring artists from outside the UK because they have a completely different perspective on Liverpool. For a start, they don't suffer from all the prejudices of UK artists about Liverpool and what they see is a fantastic former port which is an international city and they want to engage with it on that level. (Liverpool Biennial 1)

By bringing in an international artist to create an international work of art, the area in which the artwork is located is, by association, considered to be relevant on an international level, not just on a local basis. Consequently, there is a two-way process of symbolic assignation taking place - i.e. as well as the location assigning certain meanings to the artwork (see following section), the artwork also assigns certain meanings to the location. As the meanings assigned by the artwork to the location are those meanings deemed appropriate by the aesthetic elite of the art world, both the location as well as the artwork are subject to the symbolic requirements of the aesthetic elite. Of course, for those members of the artistic network a little further down the aesthetic hierarchy, an artwork that has an international appeal as well as a helping to create a more positive external image of an area is seen as a valuable asset in the economic regeneration of the area. Such an artwork can attract visitors to an area in a way that the artwork of a local artist would not. The following extract – from an interview with a representative of the South Sefton Development Trust – discusses this appeal of Antony Gormley who, although British-born, is internationally known:

I think there are certain artists, of you get them at the right level of, ooh, I don't want to say celebrity, but you know what I mean? They're that well-known that, people will travel to see *Another Place* 'cause it's by Antony Gormley. If it was by Steve Smith from the local college, they wouldn't. So, I think used rightly, yes, you can use it as an economic draw (South Sefton Development Trust)

Alongside the artwork's international character, the second symbolic quality an effective work of public art should possess is that of being 'contemporary', as it is the 'contemporariness' of an artwork – or even a building, for that matter – that suggests the area in which the item is located has relevance in the future, not only in the past. The following quote is from the representative of the Arts Council:

It gives that sense of, and as you know, contemporary art, there's very specific things about contemporary art that, in that, whether you like it or not, suggests a certain characteristic of a city. It suggests that it's forward thinking, future-facing, in a way that the historic buildings don't. (Arts Council)

This 'future' relevance of contemporary art is echoed by members of the group of ex-miners that were involved in the creation of *Dream*. The artist, Jaume Plensa, had originally offered the group his design for a 20 metres high miner's lamp for the Sutton Manor site. However, far from being delighted with such a straightforwardly historical representation of the site, the ex-miners rejected the idea outright and asked him to provide an alternative, which he did in the form of *Dream* as it now stands:

We wanted something that celebrated the future rather than kept us steeped in the past. Tony Wilson from Granada Reports, Manchester used to say 'the past is passed; it's the future now that counts' and that is the mantra we all went on. So what we wanted, we wanted something that reflected the past, which *Dream* does, but also projects it into the future as a contemporary piece of artwork. (Ex-Miner 1)

I think it was a general feeling that the pit had gone. But I mentioned at one of the meetings, at the one where we were selecting the artist, St Helens has two very good mining monuments. I don't think we really needed a third. That was my feeling. And they decided no, we need something a little bit more contemporary, we need something that needs a bit of thought. A lot of places have got a winding wheel, but in 20 years

that wouldn't be relevant to anybody, you know, the oil lamp, a bit like a lighthouse to an extent. (Ex-Miner 3)

Ironically, the ex-miners admitted that, before they had embarked on their educational tour of art courtesy of the Liverpool Biennial, they would have been happy with – and, indeed, would have chosen – Plensa's original idea or something similar:

When we started off on the journey we wanted a mining monument and towards the end of the journey Jaume came back and said to us 'This is my idea for the site' and it was a mining monument and we said 'We don't want it'. (Ex-Miner 1)

As I said, we were learning. First time we'd have said 'Yeah, a mining lamp. A thing like that. Brilliant.' But we'd changed our ways of thinking and, as I said, mainly through to (Liverpool Biennial 2). (Liverpool Biennial 2) opened our eyes. (Ex-Miner2)

Such a literal interpretation of the site is not seen as a desirable trait by the aesthetically powerful members of the art world as such an interpretation keeps the area in which the artwork is located stuck firmly in the past. The artistic education the ex-miners undertook ensured that this unwanted symbolism did not arise. More precisely, when it did arise – in the form of the artist's original idea for the artwork – the ex-miners' artistic education ensured that the unwanted symbolism was rejected. In this way, the role of the artist as being the party responsible for 'the idea' of the artwork (see Chapter 5) is undermined. The artist alone is not responsible. Rather, the responsibility for 'the idea' of the artwork lies to a greater extent with the aesthetic elite of the art world – i.e. those organisations and individuals who establish the criteria by which an object is deemed to be 'art'. In the case of *Dream*, the idea of the miner's lamp was not deemed to be 'art'; therefore, the idea was rejected, albeit in an oblique way via the seemingly autonomous decision of the ex-miners.

Another reason that a literal representation of the site is frowned upon by the aesthetically powerful is that such an artwork is not open to interpretation. Indeed, for these members of the art world, the meaning of an artwork is not fixed in the sense that the artwork in question has only a single, exclusive meaning. On the contrary, the hallmark of a 'good' work of art is its symbolic ambiguity. The following quotes to this effect are from both representatives of the Liverpool Biennial:

It shouldn't, it's not prescriptive, it's not dogmatic, it's not telling you to think a particular way. In fact, I think if art tries to do that it fails itself, so it's absolutely each to his own, to interpret it as they wish or not, or ignore it. (Liverpool Biennial 2)

The point is that people should find something, ninety-five per cent of art nobody looks at and nobody can find any meaning in it, either. The five per cent of art that's any good is because people can project their own meanings into it and that's what matters, yeah. (Liverpool Biennial 1)

This idea of the 'openness' to interpretation of a good work of art is echoed by the representative of the Art Fund, who elaborates on the transactional process required by such art:

...and of course great works of art, I mean their greatness, I know these are tricky words to (unintelligible) I think the more obvious the text is, as it were, the more obvious the motives of the artist are, the more obvious the interpretation of a work of art the less likely it is to be any good.

I: Mm.

P: I think it's got to be a bit of a conundrum. You've got to have to, you know, the observer, the viewer is going to have to do some work.

I: Yes, yeah.

P: If it's too obvious, then it's probably just not going to, it's not going to kind of get those juices flowing.

I: Yes, to appeal to the imagination.

P: Yes.

I: To trigger things off.

P: Exactly and crucially of course it is a transaction, you know. Sometimes people talk about art as if it's a passive thing, you know, you kind of sit back and 'oh, I don't understand it' and that kind of thing. No, of course you don't bloody understand it, you haven't gone half way. You've got to make an effort. It's that kind of meeting of the hand, you know, the artist's hand and your hand meet and they grip somehow and when that happens something magical can and sometimes does occur... (Art Fund)

The transactional nature of the symbolic process as discussed in the citation from the funder (above) sees the object act as the intermediary between the artist and the viewer. It is the object which transmits the meaningful intentions of the artist to the viewer, albeit in an ambiguous way. This understanding of the symbolic nature of an art work is thus aligned to Eco's theory of the "open work" (1989), in which the artist is responsible for encoding the art work with meaning (or, rather, a number of meanings) which are subsequently decoded by the viewer, who is thus responsible for 'completing' the art work in a meaningful sense. Such 'open works', argues Eco, have a more aesthetic quality because of their open nature and the freedom of interplay they encourage between themselves and the viewer. It is this perspective, therefore, that also appears to be held by those parties especially influential in the art world – i.e. that a work of art (public or not) should be open to a number of interpretations and, in being so, is consequently considered to possess a greater aesthetic quality than a work of art which can be interpreted in only one way. In short, the definition of 'good' art encompasses the attribute of symbolic ambiguity rather than the condition of symbolic clarity. It is this aesthetic elite definition of 'good art', therefore, that the ex-miners who were

involved in the creation process of *Dream* were in accordance with after undertaking their tour of artistic sites with the Liverpool Biennial:

She (Liverpool Biennial 2) showed us different works of art and we went to see some horrific things that I didn't like whatsoever until she explained the story behind and that is where it captured all our imagination: that sometimes it's not what you see, it's what you look beyond and see that counts. (Ex-Miner 1)

From the above discussion, therefore, the three main symbolic qualities required of a 'good' work of public art by the aesthetically powerful members of the art world are (i) its international character, (ii) its future relevance and (iii) its symbolic ambiguity: three such qualities that, in effect, contradict the requirement for the same artwork to act as a symbol for a particular geographical community and thus, conversely, render the artwork akin to a "timeless and placeless" piece of Modernist art (Miles, 1995: 243). Despite this apparent contradiction in the aesthetic criteria demanded by the aesthetic elite, a work of art that constitutes a straightforward historical interpretation of the site – which, by its very nature, is localised – is deemed to be undesirable, thus such a work of art should not be given the opportunity to be selected by those members of the public participating in its creation. The three symbolic qualities as discussed above, therefore, constitute the 'dominant' or 'preferred' meanings (Hall, 1980: 134) of the artwork and the participating ex-miners were educated to operate within the 'dominant' or 'preferred' code (Hall, 1980: 135). Consequently, by influencing the outcome of the artistic creation process in the form of the 'right' work of public art with the 'right' symbolic associations, the version of 'community' that ultimately comes to be represented in the completed artwork is that of the aesthetically powerful members of the art world, not that of the actual community itself.

As the three symbolic qualities as outlined above apply to all works of public art, it would be appropriate to label the qualities collectively as the supra-meaning of an artwork. The following section (Section 6.2) examines the three case studies in greater detail and the meanings which are given to them (i) by the various

members of the art world during the creation / commissioning process of each artwork prior to its installation in its particular location, and (ii) by members of the public after the artwork is installed in the public domain.

6.2 Meanings

6.2.1 The Art World

Although the three artworks under scrutiny can be seen to share the same main symbolic qualities of a 'good' work of public art as discussed above, they differ in the ways in which their original individual meanings are derived. This difference is itself the outcome of each artwork's relationships with its location. To begin with, out of the three, it is only *Dream* that can be said with any certainty to be site-specific. The creation of *Superlambanana* - both physical and symbolic - is, at best, ambiguous; whilst *Another Place* is not site-specific at all. Indeed, of the three artworks, *Another Place* was made to be non-site-specific, as it was originally intended to be a peripatetic sculpture – which indeed it was before it took up permanent residence in Crosby. It is to the non-site-specific *Another Place* to which we shall first turn.

Prior to its permanent installation on Crosby beach, *Another Place* had been a feature of coastal locations in Germany, Belgium and Norway and was designated to become a feature of New York once its (initially temporary) stay in Merseyside was over. The original meaning of *Another Place*, therefore, was not intended to be directly associated with Crosby or the wider Merseyside area. Indeed, the original meaning of *Another Place* was one that was not intended to be about anywhere specifically. Rather, it is the human relationship with the environment that the artist, Antony Gormley, foregrounds:

Here time is tested by tide, architecture by the elements and the prevalence of sky seems to question the earth's substance. In this work human life is tested against planetary time. This sculpture exposes to light and time the nakedness of a particular and peculiar body. It is no hero, no ideal, just the industrially reproduced body of a middle-aged man trying to remain standing and trying to breathe, facing a horizon busy with ships moving materials and manufactured things around the planet. (From

<http://www.visitliverpool.com/things-to-do/parks-and-countryside/crosby-beach-and-another-place>; accessed 27 April 2015)

It is this generic meaning of the artwork that is echoed by a representative of the Liverpool Biennial:

It's about that kind of stillness, erm, you know, about all the sort of human markers, if you will, being a kind of still point, a calm in a bustling universe, if you will. (Liverpool Biennial 2)

However, prior to its installation on Crosby beach, the sculpture assumed a more localised – and historical – definition. Ironically, it was not Crosby's own particular history that was assigned to *Another Place*. Rather, the artwork was considered to symbolise certain historical events experienced by its more well-known next-door neighbour, the city of Liverpool. During the nineteenth century, the port of Liverpool saw thousands of emigrants pass through en route from Britain and Ireland to America and other 'New World' countries in pursuit of a better life. This local history interpretation was consequently adopted by both Sefton Council and the South Sefton Development Trust as a major part of the meaning of the *Another Place*:

It's like, we saw it from the point of view that we've got a world-famous artist wants to put one of his creations on the beach and it's very iconic. It's Sefton. Well, let's say it's Liverpool. Lots of people pass through Liverpool on the way to America and the New World from Ireland. All the figures point in the direction of New York and in the same - I think it's New York – but the same points, so no matter where they are on the beach, they all look to the same point on the horizon. So there was lots of stuff that fitted in with the history, that represented it, and we saw it from that. (South Sefton Development Trust)

By assigning an alternative meaning to the artwork than the one originally intended by the artist, the members of the art world a little further down the aesthetic hierarchy are behaving in a way more akin to the public (see Section

6.2.2 below). Furthermore, at first glance, such a localised and historical meaning apparently contradicts the symbolic requirements of a 'good' artwork as defined by the art world's aesthetic elite. However, this local history interpretation of *Another Place* is also sympathetic to the symbolic qualities pertaining to the international character and future relevance of the artwork. During its heyday in the Nineteenth Century, the city of Liverpool was a major international port, not only in regards to the transportation of emigrants, but also in the exportation and importation of goods to and from the Americas and Africa. Furthermore, the transportation of emigrants saw the movement of people from the Old World to the New – from the past to the future. Gormley's iron men are thus seemingly gazing out into the future as well as to the wider world. Consequently, what started out as a non-site-specific artwork becomes very much rooted in the history of the local area. In this way, *Another Place* has become subject to symbolic accretion in that the historical associations of the area have become part of the artwork's overall meaning.

However, as has been discussed above, the historical associations symbolised by *Another Place* are, in the strictest sense, inaccurate, in that they are the historical associations of Crosby's next-door neighbour Liverpool, not of Crosby itself. Consequently, the artwork is not so much a symbol of Crosby as a symbol of Liverpool. Indeed, it is the complaint of the South Sefton Development Trust – the organisation responsible for commissioning the artwork – that the sculpture has been appropriated by Liverpool as such:

People go "Liverpool" and that's down to, I think, Sefton not necessarily promoting themselves as well as Liverpool. It's actually not Liverpool, but Liverpool Council claim it and they didn't pay us a penny. (South Sefton Development Trust)

This appropriation of *Another Place* by Liverpool is not necessarily a bad thing, however. From an economic point of view, Crosby's proximity to the city and its famous attractions enables the less well-known Crosby to benefit from Liverpool's established tourist industry, as the representative from Sefton Council explains:

But in Hong Kong does that really matter? Do you know what I mean? Is the guy who's planning his trip from Hong Kong to come to Merseyside because he's a massive fan of the Beatles and always has been or whatever, erm, is it a bigger issue for Sefton Council that he's not sat there in his bedroom while he's tapping away at his machine planning his itinerary that there's a boundary line between where the cathedrals are and where the Albert Dock is as opposed to where *Another Place* is? I don't think he'd be that worried if it was in Liverpool or Sefton, so it doesn't really matter, but that's a rhetorical question, obviously. (Sefton Council)

For *Another Place*, therefore, the original 'human' meaning of the artwork as explained by the artist transformed into a more localised interpretation once the artwork was commissioned to be installed on Crosby beach, albeit that the historical associations utilised to interpret the sculpture's relationship to its location are not those of Crosby itself, but of Crosby's geographical next-door neighbour. In contrast, the relationship of *Superlambanana* with the historical associations of its location is less easy to discern, despite the artwork being located in Liverpool itself. From my interviews with members of the art world surrounding *Superlambanana*, there are three different versions of its original meaning (i.e. the meaning coded into the artwork by the artist). The first version of the original meaning comes from the second representative of the Liverpool Biennial, who explains the artist's inspiration for his artwork in terms of the futuristic elements of Liverpool's architecture and industry, combined with his interest in comics and the 'newsworthy' science of genetic engineering. Liverpool's history as a major port (for imports and exports rather than for immigration and emigration) is also integral to the artwork's symbolism. As Liverpool Biennial 2 explains, it was the artist himself who, having researched the city's history, incorporated this historical meaning into *Superlambanana*'s overall symbolic content:

...but he was, erm, he was really impressed by the frieze around the St George's ventilation shaft behind the Port of Liverpool building, which is a sort of 30s bestiary, if you will, with mythological creatures morphing into

other forms and, you know, that whole kind of manga, Marvel comic magazine era of the 30s which was when, you know, sort of futuristic-stroke-utopian visions of what the future might hold were kind of a craze and he did his research on the city and found that what used to be the biggest economic driver for the city was the port and in the early 20th century round that time the biggest exports were lamb and bananas and they probably still are actually (laughs) (unintelligible) and the biggest growing industry, er, contemporary industry at that time was bio-engineering, which Daresbury and stuff, and so those three sort of elements combined to get him thinking about that kind of morphing of forms and morphing the lamb into the banana. Er, you know, it was the year, I think – 98 – I think was the year, you know, that Dolly was cloned, the sheep was cloned. (Liverpool Biennial 2)

In comparison, the second version of *Superlambanana*'s original meaning – from the first representative of the Liverpool Biennial – dispenses with any notion of historical symbolism altogether. On the contrary, only Liverpool's future was the subject for the artist and consequently the focus of the artwork's original meaning. It was only when out in the public arena that an historical interpretation was superimposed upon the artwork – and this by the public itself:

I: That (i.e. that *Superlambanana* was inspired by Liverpool's post-war imports and exports) was an urban myth that grew up?

P: That was an urban myth that may have helped. I mean, it may have helped. It may also have undermined the intention, the meaning of the work which was to do the research that Taro did undertake. He understood that Liverpool was pinning its hopes on sunrise industries to do with biotechnology and it was a warning about genetic engineering effectively. He wanted to celebrate but also to bring into question the whole question of genetic engineering. Where is genetic engineering going? He thought that's what Liverpool was about.

I: So that was very much about the future then?

P: Completely about the future. Not at all about the past. (Liverpool Biennial 1)

The third version of *Superlambanana*'s meaning comes from the artist who was responsible for the physical production of the sculpture. Similarly to the second version (above), this version explains the historical meaning as something that was retrospectively superimposed upon the artwork. However, rather than the community at large being responsible for this phenomenon, here it is suggested that certain members of the art world's aesthetic elite encouraged this to happen prior to the sculpture's appearance in public and that the artist's original meaning of *Superlambanana* involved the genetic engineering aspect only:

P: As I understood it, he'd been selected by the curators 'cause they liked his work, but the whole thing around that myth as well, you know, because his piece is supposed to be made for Liverpool, erm, Liverpool trade in bananas. Have you heard about this, like (unintelligible)? That's rubbish because it was a piece he had already made, you know, as part of a – have you seen the kind of rabbit with the, er, apple on its backside? So it's got that kind of thing going on – genetical, genetic, sorry (unintelligible). So that was just a tailored-on, you know...

I: Right. So he actually had the concept?

P: The maquette was there already.

I: It was already there?

P: Nothing to do with Liverpool, just a piece he made in his world of (unintelligible) in Tokyo and whoever, the curator liked it, so you know, I don't even know what the conversation was, but that came to Liverpool, was commissioned for Liverpool as a big piece and then next minute it's an apropos story. (Local Artist)

In this third version of *Superlambanana*'s meaning, the local history element of its interpretation is seen as a convenient backstory to exploit the connection between the artwork and its location – a connection that was not there originally. In this way the artwork is more evidently a symbol of its location and thereby its 'community'. As with *Another Place*, in this third version of *Superlambanana*'s meaning, the physical form of the artwork is interpreted in light of the historical associations of its location, despite the lack of accuracy and veracity of such an interpretation. Thus – despite the insistence of the aesthetic elite on the future relevance of the artwork – the 'default mode' of interpretation for a work of public art is the relationship of the artwork with the historical associations of its location. Should we take at face value the third version of *Superlambanana*'s meaning, and despite their own definition of a 'good' artwork focussing on the future rather than the past, it is interesting to note that certain members of the art world's aesthetic elite will not dismiss a local history interpretation of an artwork should that interpretation potentially make the artwork more relevant to its location.

From the above discussion of all three versions of *Superlambanana*'s original meaning, the relationship of the artwork with its location (Liverpool) is ambiguous at best. The same cannot be said for *Dream*, which was created specifically for the site of the former colliery at Sutton Manor. However, on a wider scale, the artwork was also intended to represent the town of St Helens, thus its installation overlooking the M62 motorway was also intended to fulfil this particular function. As discussed in the previous section, the physical form of *Dream* that was eventually chosen by the ex-miners was designed to be 'contemporary' – i.e. the artwork was designed to encapsulate not just an historical interpretation of its location but of Sutton Manor's and St Helens' hypothetical futures also. The head of a young girl with her eyes closed as though *Dreaming* of the future contrasts with the very adult and masculine historical associations of the site. However, the 'future' interpretational element of the artwork is not the only interpretational element, as also integral to the interpretation of the sculpture is the concept of 'light', which is a concept that was initially suggested by the ex-miners and which they expressly requested to be included in the overall meaning of the artwork.

Indeed, it was this concept of light which prompted their selection of Jaume Plensa as the artist for the artwork:

Now, one of the things that was said, I didn't realise until I saw the Channel 4 programme that I was the first one to mention it, 'cause we always give someone else the credit for it, but it mentioned when I was talking about mining in St Helens that St Helens' motto was 'ex terra lucem' – out of the earth, light – and it was decided that this motto would be the basis for any artistic piece that was put up and we found out that Jaume was good at presenting things using light. So from that point we unanimously chose [him]. (Ex-Miner 3)

The concept of light in regards to *Dream* is twofold. Firstly, as the town's old motto (ex terra lucem) indicates, coal that was produced from the mine went on to generate electricity which itself went on to generate light. Secondly, the luminous whiteness of the sculpture contrasts with the darkness of the coal and the underground environment in which the ex-miners worked. The completed sculpture, therefore – although site-specific – is a sculpture of opposites: adult/child, male/female, past/future, light/darkness. There is no ostensibly direct relationship between the artwork and its location. Consequently, this indirectness of the relationship between the physical form of the artwork and its location contributes to *Dream*'s symbolic ambiguity. Out of the three artworks, therefore, only *Dream* can be said to have a direct relationship with its location, although the symbolic representation of that relationship is indirect. In comparison, the physical forms of both *Another Place* and *Superlambanana* appear to have a more direct relationship with their respective locations – despite (i) the former artwork's complete lack of original site-specificity and the retrospective superimposing of the 'wrong' historical associations, and (ii) the latter artwork's ambiguous symbolic origins. Furthermore, the indirectness of this object-location relationship means that, out of the three, *Dream* comes closest to the aesthetic elite's ideal of the symbolically ambiguous artwork, which is itself the outcome of the aesthetic elite's own indirect influence (i.e. via the ex-miners) on the creation process of the artwork.

To conclude this section, therefore, the meanings of the three artworks in question differ in their genesis. In the case of *Another Place*, the artist's own generic meaning held sway until the sculpture was installed on Crosby beach and subsequently assumed the historical associations of the area – albeit strictly-speaking, the 'wrong' area. In the case of *Superlambanana*, there is disagreement in the art world that its original meaning encompassed (i) both the historical associations and the (hypothetical) future of Liverpool, or (ii) the future of Liverpool only and that the artwork assumed the city's historical associations once it was installed in the public sphere, or (iii) the artist's interest in genetic engineering only. Finally, in the case of *Dream*, the original meaning was derived from both the historical associations and the (hypothetical) future of its location and was, in effect, a joint effort between the aesthetic elite of the art world, the ex-miners and the artist.

As the meanings discussed above are those meanings which are given to each artwork during its initial creation / commissioning process, it would be appropriate to label these meanings – following the 'open work' theory of Eco (1989) – 'coded meanings'. The following section discusses the meanings given to each artwork after its installation in the public domain. It is therefore appropriate to label these meanings – again following the 'open work' theory of Eco (1989) – 'decoded meanings'.

6.2.2 The Public

The previous section examined the origins of the meanings of the three case studies during their respective creation processes. In contrast, this section explores the meanings generated once each artwork is situated in the public arena; thus it is the public's reaction to the completed object which is under scrutiny.

As discussed above, the art world's definition of a 'good' work of public art centres on its symbolic ambiguity – i.e. its ability to be open to interpretation. Of all the community-based interviews I conducted, only one respondent talked about a specific artwork in such terms: *Dream* being the artwork in question:

I think the plainness of it is a good thing as well because it isn't, it's very detached. It doesn't attach itself to any one particular group or society. Everybody could put their *Dreams* on it because it's like a white screen that you can project on to. (Community Member 23)

This particular respondent was very positive towards *Dream* and discussed it alongside her own background and experiences growing up in St Helens. It is therefore in the light of this autobiographical information that her own interpretation of the meaning of *Dream* was formed:

Well, to me it means having a *Dream* beyond your circumstances. I grew up in a relatively poor area of the town but I was lucky enough to get a scholarship and go to grammar school and I felt somebody had given me a golden ladder, you know what I mean? I wasn't going to have to stay where I was and I think it's that sort of symbolism that it has for other people as well, you know – we have *Dreams* beyond our actual circumstances. (Community Member 23)

As the above quote illustrates, this respondent's interpretation of *Dream* is positive as the artwork symbolises a particularly significant and positive period in her life. In contrast, an autobiographical interpretation of *Dream* that is more negative in tone comes from a respondent who is himself an ex-miner, but who wasn't included in the creation of *Dream*:

Yeah, I was a miner for 25 years. I was in that strike. So that's why I chuckle to myself that put a tattoo (sic) on of *Dream*, 'cause I *Dreamed* of saving my job, you know what I mean? And it gave me a bit of a chuckle when it- I didn't save my job, did I? So my *Dreams* got broke. So there you go. Put a statue there just to remind all the pitmen about what happened and *Dream* on if you think you're going to save your job. (Community member 31)

For the above respondent, therefore, although *Dream* symbolises a significant event in his life, unlike as for the previous respondent (Community Member 23),

the event symbolised is negative (the loss of his job); consequently, his interpretation of *Dream* is negative. These autobiographical interpretations of meaning can themselves be viewed in the light of Knorr Cetina's 'objectualization' (1997), in which objects take on the personal aspects of the viewer and are thereby "sources of the self" (Knorr Cetina: 1997: 23). Such interpretations can also be seen in the light of Alexander's (2008: 7) assertion that, far from distancing the viewer, an artwork has the aesthetic effect of immersing the viewer within it with the result that the object 'becomes' the subject and vice versa. Interestingly, it is this immersion of the self into the artwork that explains the reluctance of the first ex-miner to allow the formation of alternative meanings to the original meaning (see above) of *Dream* – in direct opposition to the quality of symbolic ambiguity advocated by the art world:

Oh, listen, listen, you wouldn't believe some of the interpretations I've heard about *Dream* and this is why I organised a thing last year at the Citadel so we can put it on film about how *Dream* came together and the story behind it and that's what I did. I put that together. I'm writing a book now about it. That's why I try and sell this concept so the ideas don't sort of go off on a tangent (Ex-Miner 1)

Although Ex-Miner 1 is a member of the commissioning body for *Dream* and, as such, is part of the art world, it is his emotional relationship with the artwork that is taking precedence here. As one of the ex-miners closely involved in the creation of the artwork (see Chapter 5), including the artwork's original meaning (see above), he has formed a deeply personal and emotional relationship with the sculpture based on his own experiences of working at the colliery. From this point of view, therefore, it is important that *Dream*'s original concept should be the 'correct' one and alternative interpretations should be discouraged: a stance which contradicts the art world's requirement that public art must be open to interpretation.

In the case of *Dream*, therefore, its symbolic ambiguity assists in the formation of autobiographical interpretations of the artwork. However, in contrast, the

geographical and historical associations of the sculpture are less easy to discern, as one of the participating ex-miners pointed out:

See, people say 'what's that got to do with mining, what's it got to do with the pit?' and unless you read the story, it's got nothing to do with the pit. It's just a girl's head. (Ex-Miner 3)

The following snippet of conversation is with a respondent who discussed the lack of a work of public art that commemorated another of St Helens' historical industries of glass manufacturing:

P: I don't know. Quite a lot of people in town like it, but personally, I won't say I don't like it, but personally I think we could've had, I don't know, something more than a face, a head.

I: Yeah, yeah. Any sort of ideas what you would've preferred on that site?

P: Something depicting our history.

I: And *Dream* does not do that?

P: To me, it doesn't. (Community Member 25)

In contrast, the fathers of both respondents below worked as ex-miners at Sutton Colliery. Both respondents were unable to make the link between the artwork and the site and would have preferred a more literal interpretation:

P1: They say, what do they say, it's the *Dream*... it just reminds me of that saying 'I had a *Dream*', you know, the American-

P2: They had a *Dream*, but did they *Dream* of a head?

P1: It should have been something like, don't know, something like a wheel or a miner.

P2: Something to do with the ex-miners. That's nothing to do with the ex-miners, a head. (Community Member 26)

In the following extract, one of the ex-miners (Ex-Miner 2) describes the events of a public meeting which took place in a local school concerning *Dream*. At the meeting, a small-scale model of Jaume Plensa's original idea for the sculpture (the ex-miners' lamp) was on show. Ex-Miner 2 made a point of taking a 'show of hands' as to how many of the attendant people liked what they saw in the model:

P: I said to everybody "Now then, how many people in here are happy with what you see there? You know, the lamp and the surrounding area – on a small scale, obviously: a model. Hands went up. I was probably right. It was probably about ninety per cent. I said "We think that Jaume Plensa can do better than this and basically we told him no, he's going to have to come up with something else." It wasn't that bad, you know what I mean? But it didn't go down very well, shall I say.

I: With the audience? With the other people?

P: With the people, the community, yeah. (Ex-Miner 2)

For those St Helens residents who expected a straightforward monument to the mining industry on the site of a former colliery, therefore, *Dream* is not an appropriate object. However, the lack of direct geographical and historical associations of *Dream* is not always seen in negative terms. For the members of a St Helens art group, the physical appearance of the artwork belies its mining connections, but in a way that they interpret as aesthetically pleasing:

P4: It never entered my head that it had anything to do with the miners.

P2: But that's what I've just said, you don't associate something, I'm sorry, beautiful, with – you think mining and mines as-

P4: (simultaneously with P2) But I didn't know that you lot would associate it with-

P1: - and it's dirty and cold-

P2: -yeah, you do: a mine.

P1: Yeah, well, that's why I think it's lovely, it's different. It's not something they would normally do. And I think it's-

P5: -I didn't think about the miners at all. (Community Group 2)

Other respondents, although unaware of the original concept behind the artwork, were able to draw a general inference about the 'future' aspect of *Dream*:

I: Yeah. Why do you like it? Do you know the concept behind it?

P: Er, what, *Dreaming* about the future, I suppose? What the future holds? Something to do with that? What the future holds for St Helens? I don't know. (Community Member 31)

It is, well, it is what it says, the *Dream* and it's, I suppose it's their *Dream* that something good might come out of the closure of the pit. (Community Group 2)

The presence of symbolic ambiguity, therefore, has both a positive and a negative effect on the interpretation of *Dream*. On the one hand, it fulfils the criteria of a 'good' work of public art as defined by the art world's aesthetic elite and allows the artwork to be interpreted autobiographically. On the other hand, *Dream's* symbolic ambiguity hinders its acceptance as an appropriate and recognisable symbol for both the Sutton Manor and the wider St Helens communities for those people who expected – and would have preferred – a more literal interpretation of the Sutton Manor site. The historical associations of the area therefore still have a very strong resonance within the community. Indeed, as the colliery closed

in 1991 – relatively recently in local history terms and very much within living memory – those historical associations have yet to diminish in the same way that Liverpool’s associations as a major port (the heyday of which was back in the mid-late 1800s) have done. In short – and in complete contradiction to the views of the aesthetic elite – St Helens’ past still plays an integral role in the way in which the town is perceived by many of its residents. Such a lack of straightforward time and place associations may be less significant in the interpretation of a public artwork that is intended to be used largely as a place of private reflection, as in the case of Lin’s *Vietnam Veterans Memorial* (see Chapter 2); however, when a major purpose of the artwork is to symbolise a particular geographical community – as in the case of *Dream* – the inability of members of that community to discern a direct relationship between the artwork and its location can hinder the artwork’s acceptance as an appropriate and recognisable symbol for that community:

I: What do you think it – do you think it represents anything?

P: To me it doesn’t represent the town. (Community Member 25)

I don’t think it’s, I don’t think it’s sort of put St Helens on the map.
(Community Group 2)

In the case of *Another Place*, the historical associations connected to this artwork were picked up by a small number of Crosby interviewees. However, these historical interpretations are nevertheless ‘fuzzy’, in that the respondents are far from sure that the meanings they give are the ‘correct’ ones, as the following two quotes illustrate:

Is it to do with immigration or is it to do with people who’ve died at sea?
(Crosby Sixth Form 1)

I’d assume something like Liverpool’s a port city, isn’t it? Something about greeting them when they come in. (Crosby Sixth Form 2)

The geographical misplacement of the statues (see Section 6.2.1. above) is a source of amusement in the following extract. It comes from an interview with two members of a local sailing club, which objected to the statues being on the beach:

P1: Well, it's called *Another Place* isn't it? and I think they're sort of, it looks as if they're leaving. You know, they're all facing out to sea, going-

P2: And lots of emigrants went from Liverpool and things like that, but that's ok, but none of them went from Crosby, so they should be all at the Pier Head.

P1: Queuing up. (laughs)

P2: Queuing up in a row, not spread out all over the beach. (laughs)

P1: To get on a boat.

P2: You know, they could, you could regard them as the ones that didn't get on the boat. (Local Sailing Club)

The 'fuzziness' regarding the meaning of *Another Place* extends to a complete lack of awareness of its symbolism, as the following extract – from an interview with a group of sixth-form students at a local school – illustrates:

I: So, do you have any idea what they represent, what they mean?

P1: We have been told, but can't remember.

P2: Yeah, we have been told.

P3: We have been told. They have got some meaning, but I can't remember what.

P2: Stranded at sea. That's just a guess. Stranded at sea. (Crosby Sixth Form 3)

The 'fuzziness' of the artwork's historical associations are pertinent, not only to *Another Place*, but also to *Superlambanana*. As discussed in the previous section, there are three different versions of the origins of the meaning of *Superlambanana*, with two of the three versions involving the historical associations of the area in which the artwork is located (i.e. Liverpool as major port). Despite this – and the assertion by Liverpool Biennial 1 that the imports / exports interpretation of *Superlambanana* was, in essence, an urban myth – few respondents gave assured definitions to this effect:

Well, I've read what it means. It is the bananas coming over, isn't it? The, erm, I can't remember what the lamb – I did read what it was about years ago, yeah. Erm, when it was like a busy port, things like that, yeah. (Community Member 11)

Isn't it an image of, like, the history of Liverpool, er, the slavery and the cotton or something to do with what was coming in at the docks or something along that lines, so I can get the gist of what it is. (Community Member 20)

Indeed, far from being symbolic of Liverpool's past (and, indeed, Liverpool's future), *Superlambanana* was more frequently interpreted simply as a representation of Liverpool's identity – i.e. the artwork is Liverpool – in a manner similar to other Liverpool 'icons', as outlined by the following Liverpool respondent:

Love it. I love it. So quirky and so Liverpoolly now. It's like, erm...what? It's Everton and Liverpool and *Superlambanana* and the Beatles, yeah. (Community Member 21)

Although the original large-scale *Superlambanana* has been in existence since 1998, it is the *Superlambanana* Parade of ten years later that the vast majority of

community respondents discussed during my interviews with them. The siting of the smaller versions of the sculpture throughout the city of Liverpool (and beyond) meant that large volumes of people were exposed to at least one of the original's progeny, often on a daily basis (a phenomenon which I discuss in greater detail in Chapter 7). Consequently, it is the smaller *Superlambananas* which have had the greater influence on the public's perception of the artwork as a symbol for the city:

I don't know. I just think it symbolises the city. I think they got recognised across the city. I used to travel down to London and there's one in Euston station as well – a big yellow one there. So I don't know. It's just something that belongs to us. It's ours. (Community Member 5)

It's an identity thing, isn't it? You hear lambanana and you think Liverpool, don't you? (Community Member 2)

He's like a little superhero of Liverpool (Community Member 7)

A number of respondents also compared the *Superlambanana* Parade with the penguin parade of the following year, with the general consensus being that the penguin fails to represent Liverpool as effectively as the *Superlambanana*:

I think it's become synonymous with Liverpool, these lambananas. You know, a penguin's a penguin. (Community Member 5)

P2: It [*Superlambanana*] represents something. I don't know what the penguins are supposed to represent.

P1: Exactly. You can get a penguin anywhere, can't you? (Community Member 8)

As the above quotes illustrate, the 'ordinariness' of the penguin compared to the uniqueness of *Superlambanana* counts against the former as being an appropriate

and recognisable symbol for Liverpool. In this way, *Superlambanana* has taken on mythical creature proportions in the same way as a griffin or a unicorn or, most fittingly, Liverpool's other and more long-standing mythical creatures and symbols of the city: the Liver Birds. Furthermore, in the same way that the Liver Birds are part of Liverpool's popular culture, the adoption of *Superlambanana* as part of Liverpool's popular culture has aided the artwork's acceptance as an appropriate and recognisable symbol for the city. I will discuss this 'popular culture' aspect of *Superlambanana* in greater detail in Chapter 7.

The popular culture aspect of the artwork is most evident in its form, which also gives the sculpture its 'quirkiness'. The physical appearance of *Superlambanana* – a bright yellow hybrid of an animal and a fruit – has a particular affinity with the ways in which the city sees itself – i.e. as something a little outside the norm and as somewhere that has a distinctive sense of humour. The following quote is from the local artist who was involved in the physical construction of the sculpture. Here he explains why the artwork – which was initially reviled by many Liverpool people when it first appeared – was eventually accepted as an appropriate and recognisable symbol for the city:

I think it also represented something as well about Liverpool being a bit quirky and odd, so even people who didn't like it originally like the idea of we are freaky and whacky, you know. It taps into the kind of contrary spirit of the city, if you like. You know what I mean? A bit magical. (Local Artist)

The city of Liverpool as a whole already had – and still has – a strong and long-standing identity, of which its other 'iconic' symbols, such as the Beatles, its two cathedrals and its two football clubs, help represent. Consequently, the existence of such a strong identity could have meant the outright rejection of *Superlambanana* had the artwork not been perceived as a fitting symbolic representation of the city by the people of the city itself. However – whether by accident or design – the artwork's physical form enables those pre-existing identity associations to be superimposed onto it, which the artwork, in turn, is then seen to represent. It is via this two-way process, therefore – i.e. from viewer

to object, and from object to viewer – that *Superlambanana* has become an appropriate and recognisable symbol of Liverpool. Thus the symbolic accretion (Dwyer, 2006: 420) between the artwork and its location is a perfect fit.

In contrast, it is the same two-way process that has hindered *Dream*'s suitability as a symbol of St Helens. As discussed above, and in a similar way to Liverpool, St Helens also has a strong, pre-existing identity. However, that identity is still firmly rooted in the past – in particular, the town's industrial heritage in the form of coal-mining and glass manufacturing. Consequently, the physical form of *Dream* – with its adherence to the aesthetic elite's principles of symbolic ambiguity, international character and future relevance – is less able to 'tap into' this identity and subsequently reflect it back to the local community. In the case of *Another Place*, on the other hand, both Crosby and Sefton have weak identities. Indeed, they are overshadowed to a large extent by their next-door neighbour of Liverpool, the identity of which – as discussed above – is far stronger. Owing to this lack of a strong local identity to represent, therefore, *Another Place*'s own symbolic status remains 'fuzzy' – i.e. stuck between having no symbolic representation and symbolising the 'wrong' place (Liverpool).

Conclusion

In this chapter I have examined the meanings of the three artworks and the origins of those meanings. In doing so, I have discerned that there are, in effect, three levels of meaning which a work of public art represents – or, more precisely, should represent. In the first instance, there is the 'supra-meaning' of the artwork. This is a meaning which applies to all works of public art, and which consists of the three symbolic qualities deemed to be main ingredients of a 'good' work of public art by the aesthetic elite of the art world. The first symbolic quality lies in the symbolic ambiguity of the artwork – i.e. the ability of the artwork to be open to interpretation, as discussed by Eco in *The Open Work* (1989). In this way, a 'good' work of public art should not be simply a straightforward depiction of the geographical and historical associations of its location. Rather, it should be an oblique representation. This first symbolic quality itself embraces the second symbolic quality of a 'good' work of public art – i.e. that the artwork must have an international rather than local character. As well as helping to create the symbolic

ambiguity of the artwork, such an international character means that both the artwork and its location are relevant on an international, not just on a local, level. Finally, the third symbolic quality, concerning the 'contemporariness' of the artwork, means that the artwork is seen largely in terms of future relevance and less in terms of relevance to the past: a quality which is sympathetic to the first quality of symbolic ambiguity outlined above.

In the second instance, and a level down from the 'supra-meaning', is the 'coded meaning' of the artwork. The 'coded meaning' applies to each artwork on an individual basis and consists of the meaning(s) coded into the artwork by the artist and the aesthetic elite of the art world (and – as in the case of *Dream* – selected members of the public) during the process of its creation. In the case of *Superlambanana*, the coded meaning comprises, in any combination, the artist's interests in genetic engineering, the artist's interest in Manga, Liverpool's history as a port and Liverpool's future as a biotechnical centre, depending on the viewpoint of the interviewee (see Section 6.2.1). With regards to *Another Place*, the coded meaning was originally assigned by the artist and involved a generalised 'humans versus nature' interpretation, which was transformed into a more localised meaning by the commissioning body (the South Sefton Development Trust) once the artwork was assigned to be installed on Crosby beach. In the way, the South Sefton Development Trust behaved more like a member of the public rather than the art world in allocating the artwork with a 'decoded meaning' (see below). In contrast, the coded meaning of *Dream* consisted of the mining associations of the site along with the concept of 'light' and was a combined effort between the artist, the ex-miners and the aesthetic elite of the art world, via their influence on the artistic knowledge of the ex-miners.

In the third instance, and a level down from the 'coded meaning', is the 'decoded meaning' of the artwork. As with the 'coded meaning', the 'decoded meaning' applies to each artwork on an individual basis and consists of the meanings decoded by members the public once the artwork is installed in the public sphere. The decoded meaning of *Superlambanana* consists, to a small degree, of the imports/exports interpretation that may have been part of the coded meaning of

the artwork. Overwhelmingly, however, *Superlambanana* is seen by its public as simply being a symbol of Liverpool's pre-existing identity – i.e. the city's humour and uniqueness – in the same way that other Liverpool symbols are seen. In contrast, the decoded meaning of *Another Place* – far from symbolising its location of Crosby and / or the wider Sefton area, both of which have weak local identities – is largely interpreted in terms of the geographical and historical associations of the more dominant Liverpool. Consequently, the overall decoded meaning of *Another Place* in relation to its location is 'fuzzy'. Finally, the decoded meaning of *Dream* comprises, in certain instances, autobiographical interpretations and 'future' interpretations of the artwork: both types of interpretation in keeping with the 'supra-meaning' requirements of the artwork as outlined above. However, for many in the Sutton Manor / St Helens communities, the physical appearance of the sculpture has no discernible relationship with the historical associations of its location - in particular, its mining heritage – which are very much part and parcel of the area's overall identity. Consequently, *Dream's* status as an appropriate and recognisable symbol of Sutton Manor and St Helens is compromised.

To conclude this chapter, therefore, and as has been outlined above, there are differences between the ways in which a work of public art is meant to be interpreted by the aesthetic elite of the art world and the ways in which an artwork is interpreted by the public. The 'supra-meaning' – with its adherence to the principles of symbolic ambiguity, international character and future relevance – often clashes with the symbolic demands placed on a work of public art by its public as a fitting symbol of the community. That a work of public art should not be seen to have a direct relationship with the geographical and historical associations of its location is conducive to the artwork's interpretation on a more individualistic, personal level - such as via the viewer's autobiographical interpretation. However, it is less conducive to the artwork's interpretation as a symbol for the community as a whole. This is most apparent in the case of *Dream*, the physical form of which appears to completely contradict the mining heritage of its location, even though the mining heritage formed a large part of the artwork's coded meaning. However, as this mining heritage is integral to the overall identity of Sutton Manor / St Helens, the lack of a direct relationship

between the artwork and the identity means that *Dream's* status as a fitting symbol of the Sutton Manor / St Helens communities is not seen as such by many in those communities, even though the artwork is seen as a fitting symbol for those communities by the aesthetic elite of the art world itself. In such a way, therefore, a strong pre-existing identity can count against a work of public art as a fitting symbol for that community. In contrast, a strong pre-existing identity may ultimately lead to the widespread acceptance of a work of public art as a fitting symbol for its community should a relationship between the physical appearance of the artwork and this identity be discerned by community members themselves, as in the case of *Superlambanana*. However, should an area have a weak pre-existing identity – such as Crosby / Sefton – there is little by way of historical and geographical associations for the artwork to symbolise; consequently, the artwork – in this case, *Another Place* - is likely to remain in a symbolically ambiguous state. In short, therefore, there must already be a strong local identity for the artwork to latch onto and symbolise. The artwork cannot simply create an identity 'out of thin air'.

This chapter has focused on the meanings given to the three artworks by both members of the art world and members of their respective communities. As has been demonstrated, there is conflict between the ways in which a work of public art is interpreted by the aesthetic elite of the art world and the ways in which the artwork is interpreted by its public. Furthermore, the location of an artwork is integral to the ways in which the artwork is interpreted by both parties, thereby supporting Rubio's (2012: 157) assertion that the site-specificity of an artwork is vital to the study of artistic production as well as being in agreement with the principle of 'symbolic accretion' (Dwyer, 2006: 420) in the study of artistic consumption. The next chapter will also examine the nature of location in respect to the relationship between the artwork and the public, but will do so on a behavioural level – i.e. how people interact physically with an artwork in the public domain.

Chapter 7

Theme 3: People and Places

Introduction

The previous chapter examined the meanings given to the three works of public art (*Dream*, *Another Place* and *Superlambanana*) by the various parties in the art world and members of the public during both the creation / commissioning processes of the art works and their subsequent installation in the public sphere. The conflict between the ways in which each artwork is interpreted according to the aesthetic elite of the art world and the ways in which each artwork is interpreted by their respective publics have been highlighted. It was also shown that place plays a significant part in the symbolic interpretation of each artwork, in that the particular geographical and historical associations of the place in which the artwork is situated – and even those associations of a place in which the artwork is not situated, as in the case of *Another Place* – are integral to the ways in which both members of the art world and members of the public shape the meanings of public art. In a similar vein, this chapter explores the significance of place in the meaning-making process of public art. However, rather than focussing on the geographical and historical associations of place, the emphasis of this chapter is on the ways in which people physically interact with a work of public art in the context of the location in which the artwork is installed and how this object-place-person interaction influences the meanings bestowed upon an artwork by its public. Alongside this, people's attitudes towards public art and art in general will be discussed. To this end, and following the Data Coding outline in Table 1 (see Chapter 4), this chapter is divided into two sub-sections: the first being Place, the second being People.

7.1 Place

As well as in their appearance, the three artworks differ radically in the locations in which they are sited. *Superlambanana* is city-centre based, whereas both *Dream* and *Another Place* are situated outside their respective town areas, the former on the site of a previous coal mine and the latter across a mile or so of beach. Because of the differences in their locations, the accessibility of the artworks for their publics also differs. In the following extract, the 17-18 year-old

participants from a Crosby school were primarily discussing *Another Place*. However, at one point during the interview they compared the location of the iron men to the locations of the various smaller *Superlambanana* sculptures that constituted the Go *Superlambananas!* Parade:

P3: It was in the town centre as well, so you could be doing your shopping and stuff, whereas you go the beach-

P2: You have to go to the beach.

P1: It's quite out of your way, whereas the lambanana, it felt very kind of like, it's like not forcing itself upon you, but it felt like it was coming to you as opposed to you making a trek. (Crosby Sixth Form 2)

Here, the city-based location of *Superlambanana* means that the artwork is accessible to all and could be incorporated into one's everyday life – i.e. “doing your shopping and stuff”- whereas the location of *Another Place* is seen as being ‘out of the way’ and therefore requiring you to make a special visit should you want to see it. In this way – unless you are visiting the beach for the beach rather than for the artwork – accessibility of the artwork is limited to those people who have a prior interest in seeing it, thus the potential publics for *Another Place* are more limited than the potential publics for *Superlambanana*.

Another way in which the potential publics are limited in regards to the accessibility of *Another Place* lies in the risk to personal safety in visiting the statues, especially for certain sectors of the population, as one of the members of the local sailing club pointed out.

But you look at that, you can walk up to a *Superlambanana* and touch it and everything else like that without putting yourself at risk. If they put some of the statues on the grass bank between, behind the sea wall so that people could go on the grass bank and look at some of the statues there. People who are disabled or with children. (Local Sailing Club)

The location of *Another Place*, therefore, although satisfying both Gormley's generalised humans vs the environment meaning and the localised immigration/emigration meaning, effectively excludes certain publics (the disabled, people with young children, non-art-lovers) from seeing the statues 'in the flesh', unlike the smaller versions of *Superlambanana*, the ubiquity of which meant the artwork as a whole was able to be enjoyed by a greater variety of publics (which are discussed in Section 7.2 below).

This factor of accessibility – or, rather, inaccessibility – of the artwork also arose during interviews undertaken with St Helens residents about *Dream*. A number of older participants pointed out that the sculpture was difficult to reach – if not completely out of bounds – to those unable to walk and / or using mobility scooters. The following excerpt comes from my interview with members of a St Helens art group who discuss the restrictions on access to the artwork for certain sectors of the public (the disabled, motorists):

P2: Well, to be honest, the other day I went, we couldn't find it.

P1: Well, did you park at where – what's that pub called at the bottom? - and walk through a gate and it's a path that leads you right up to it.

P2: Well, I eventually did find it. All we could see was, you know, virtually the top of it.

P1: It's right up to it.

P2: And there's no way disabled, basically, unless they're in a car. Well, you can't go in a car.

P1: You can't go in a car. No, only so far. (Community Group 2)

Similar to *Another Place*, the location of *Dream* excludes those members of the public who are physically unable to visit it, which, as mentioned in the above quote, includes people in cars, as the artwork is only accessible by walking up a

meandering pathway to the top of the (man-made) hill upon which it is situated. Ironically, this lack of access for motorists is at odds with the original purpose of siting *Dream* in that specific location – i.e. to attract motorists off the M62 to visit the artwork and St Helens town centre. Furthermore – and, again, similar to *Another Place* – *Dream*'s separation from the main St Helens area also excludes those people who have no particular interest in the artwork and therefore have no inclination of “making a trek” to see it. Although *Dream* is site-specific – i.e. in that the historical associations of the ex-colliery on which it is situated are an integral part of its overall meaning (see Chapter 6) – its physical location restricts its publics to (i) those who are able-bodied and (ii) those who have a particular interest in seeing it. Because of their respective locations, therefore, both *Another Place* and *Dream* can be seen in terms of being less democratic than *Superlambanana*, which did not require its publics to make ‘special journeys’ to see its various progeny.

Although many of the smaller *Superlambananas* were city-centre based, there was nevertheless a substantial number situated in the more outlying parts of the city and the wider Merseyside area, whilst a few were located beyond the environs of Merseyside completely - i.e. in Euston station, London and on top of Moel Famau, a hill in the country park of the same name in North Wales (see Chapter 4 for a more detailed discussion regarding the locations of the various *Superlambananas*). This diversity of location was highlighted by a participant of an interview conducted with another group of sixth-form students from the same Crosby school, again contrasting this particular aspect of *Superlambanana* with the lack of diversity of the location of *Another Place*:

The thing is, like, the *Superlambananas* are all over Liverpool, aren't they? so you can go and see them there, but in Crosby you just go to the beach and see them. There's nothing else to see, really, is there? (Crosby Sixth Form 3)

The lack of a diverse location – especially in the availability of other points of interest – is also a feature of *Dream*, despite the sculpture being sited in parkland. The following excerpt is from an interview with two St Helens participants, with

one of the participants explaining why visiting the smaller versions of *Superlambanana* is a more satisfying experience than visiting *Dream*:

But, see, that's quite nice because you're going to see the Three Graces and it's round the Pier Head so you've got the river and everything and these just kind of make it a bit more touristy. (Community Member 24)

The *Superlambananas* to which the participant refers were (and some still are) situated in an area of central Liverpool that is already a main tourist area and has various points of interest (the Pier Head, the Liver Buildings, the Albert Dock, Tate Liverpool and a number of museums), thus visitors to the area will simply have several extra points of interest to see. In contrast, visitors to *Dream* and *Another Place* have few other points of interest to see. Indeed, both artworks are the main – if not only – points of interest of their respective locations; consequently, once the artworks have been seen, there is little to keep visitors from departing soon afterwards, as one of the Crosby sixth-formers points out:

You do see coaches of people who are on some kind of, I don't know, tour of something and they just get off and look at the iron men for about an hour and then get back on the bus and leave. (Crosby Sixth Form 2)

This observation is echoed by the older participants of a Crosby community group:

P5: They come, they see the iron men, then go to Liverpool or Southport.

P1: To Southport, yeah. The train station's nearby. (Community Group 1)

The merits of the locations of *Another Place* and *Dream*, therefore, are perceived by members of their respective communities to be of a lower standard in comparison to the location(s) of *Superlambanana* as regards to the availability of other points of interest for the visitor. Indeed, whereas visitors to Liverpool have a plethora of things to see and do to the extent that seeing *Superlambanana* may be an 'optional extra', visitors to Crosby and St Helens have far fewer attractions to pique their interest. *Another Place* and *Dream* may be the only attractions of

their respective areas to pique the interest of visitors and, further, may be the only reasons why visitors would want to go to these areas in the first place. It is therefore the distinctly urban setting of *Superlambanana* which is seen by residents of both Crosby and St Helens as being superior in terms of other points of variety and interest for the visitor to a work of public art.

Such a dearth of available facilities and the accompanying lack of commercial exploitation of the artworks is a complaint particularly of the residents in Crosby. The particular concerns involve the absence of a coffee shop / visitors centre and the lack of souvenirs to buy. The first interview excerpt is from an interview conducted with the Creative Director of a Crosby-based community arts organisation, whereas the second excerpt is from the interview conducted with members of the local sailing club:

I find it odd that considering that it is quite a draw and I think a lot of people do come and look at them, we've done nothing about it. I mean, South Road there's lots of restaurants and stuff, so I suppose if you go to that bit of the statues, which is the last well-advertised bit, then there are lots of places where you could eat as well, but up at the coastguards which is the main place that's advertised, there's an ice cream van and that's it and I just think it's a bit weird. I mean, I don't understand why they haven't thought about developing a coffee shop-gift shop type place, you know, visitor centre thing there, 'cause I would've thought that there would be the custom for it. (Crosby Community Arts Organisation)

P1: I did think they'd make more of it in terms as a tourist attraction.

I: Mm, mm.

P2: They totally left out that bit.

P1: Because they could have had, you know, when you go in Paris everywhere you look, there's a miniature Eiffel Tower to buy, isn't there?

They could have had little miniature ones like you buy a small Lambanana, but I've never seen a small Gormley anywhere. Erm, I thought they would do that and sell other – you know, when you go to the Albert Dock or somewhere and you can buy a Lambanana. Well, you buy a lot of other stuff with it that is touristy flavoured. (Local Sailing Club)

For the residents of Crosby, it is the failure of Sefton Council to capitalise upon the presence of *Another Place*. In mitigation of this apparent failure, however, it is Gormley himself who retains tight control over the commercial reproduction of his artwork, allowing only certain official photographic images to be sold and disallowing the sale of all 3-dimensional replicas – hence the unavailability of smaller models of the iron men in the style of the smaller *Superlambananas* (from interview data with the South Sefton Development Trust, the original commissioners of the artwork). In this instance, therefore, it is the artist's own aesthetic requirement that his artwork is to be seen in a particular way – i.e. as a 'serious' work of art, as the commercialisation of such an artwork runs the risk of transforming it into a non-serious work of art via the decrease of its symbolic capital in relation to its economic capital (Bourdieu, 1992). By retaining such a stronghold on the way in which his artwork should be seen, therefore, Gormley also retains a stronghold on the way the location of *Another Place* should be seen: i.e. as a suitable backdrop for the artwork, rather than as a place which the artwork complements. Thus Crosby beach is, for all intents and purposes, gallery space – despite the retrospective superimposing of local geographical and historical associations onto the artwork by the commissioning party (see Chapter 6). Consequently, the more aesthetically influential member of the art world (the artist) wins out over the less aesthetically influential member (the commissioning party).

In comparison, the lack of the commercial exploitation of *Dream* is, according to Ex-Miner 1, the particular failing of local people and local businesses:

Well, you know what I said to you about people not latching onto it and people not giving ownership to it? Right, well, I'll just give you an example. When you came to see it the pub wasn't even open. You

couldn't get a cup of tea or a cup of coffee or a drink or use the toilet. Now you go into that pub: there's no picture of *Dream* up; there's no information about *Dream*; there's no leaflets, you know. Now wouldn't you think – I'm not making this up – we've had 45000 visitors between February and August this year. 45000. Imagine just capturing a part of that at that pub, you know. Why don't they call it the *Dream* Inn, you know what I mean? and signs saying 'Come in for your picnic. Before you go up, please feel free to use the toilets and get a drink from here.' (Ex-Miner 1)

In contrast to *Another Place* and *Dream*, however, *Superlambanana* enjoyed – and still enjoys – a high level of commercialisation in the form of small porcelain models and keyrings, to name but a few items for sale. Furthermore, the Go *Superlambananas!* Parade of 2008 meant that, in effect, *Superlambanana* was commercialised throughout Liverpool (and beyond). Consequently, although such commercialisation is frowned upon by the more aesthetically powerful members of the art world (see Chapter 5), the ready availability of *Superlambanana*-related souvenirs and the high visibility of the artwork meant that *Superlambanana* was strongly equipped to become part and parcel of Liverpool's popular culture – and thus part and parcel of Liverpool's identity – alongside the city's other icons of popular culture, such as the Beatles and the Liver Birds – both of which also have various souvenir offerings on sale in local shops. Furthermore – and similar to the Go *Superlambananas!* Parade – the interested party (visitor or resident) can follow a number of trails around the city (guided or self-guided) to spot the various Liver Birds and visit the various Beatles-related places. Regarding the latter, the interested party can also take a 'Magical Mystery Tour' in a coach decorated in the manner of the coach in the film of the same name. However, as well as being commercial exploits, these city-based 'tours of discovery' align themselves with the concept of the *dérive* (Debord, 1956), in which the city itself becomes a place of discovery for the urban spectator. This is discussed in greater detail in Section 6.2.

For both *Another Place* and *Dream*, however, there is confusion and conflict on the part of residents and local authorities as to the governance of the respective

artworks – i.e. who is responsible for what. Is it the ultimate responsibility of the respective local councils to exploit the presence of their artworks and provide further points of interest for visitors, or does the overall responsibility lie with the residents of these areas – including the owners of local businesses – themselves? Interestingly, and in contrast to *Superlambanana*, both artworks were installed as part of regeneration programmes; consequently, there was much expectation from the commissioning parties (South Sefton Development Trust, St Helens Council) that the artworks would attract greater revenue and facilities to their respective areas. However, when questioned about the socio-economic benefits the artworks have brought to their areas, the residents of Crosby and St Helens could not discern them. The lack of pre-existing facilities and the ‘out-of-the-wayness’ of the artworks are the reasons for this, as the following excerpts – from interviews with members from (i) a Crosby community group and (ii) a resident of St Helens – elucidate:

P6: Well, we told that (unintelligible) come in and we haven’t seen a penny of it, we haven’t seen a ha’penny of it.

I: You haven’t seen any benefits?

P6: No benefits whatsoever.

P7: We get a lot of people in, I think.

P3: How can you bring business in? But there’s no businesses in South Road for them to bring in, is there?

P6: All the businesses that are closing down. They’re all closing down.
(Community Group 1)

I: A lot of sort of political talk around artwork is that it’s economic and that it’ll bring in lots of money and tourists. That not that important?

P: I don't think that was important on that site because it's way out of town really and it's more viewing benefit if you like is for people using the motorway or – it's really not in the centre of town. It isn't going to bring any trade into the centre of town at all, as far as I can see. (Community Member 23)

For these residents of Crosby and St Helens, their artworks are not truly 'theirs' in the sense that the promised benefits to themselves and their areas have not been seen to have materialised. The sense of community ownership, therefore, to which Ex-Miner 1 refers when talking about *Dream* (above), is lacking compared to the sense that *Another Place* and *Dream* are more for the benefit of outsiders – i.e. visitors to the area that come to see the artwork and then depart soon after. In contrast, no such socio-economic expectations were placed on the original large-sized *Superlambanana* to the same extent as its Crosby and St Helens counterparts, which resulted in far less disappointment on the part of residents in the non-emergence of such benefits. Furthermore – and although the Go *Superlambananas!* Parade was part of Liverpool's 2008 European Capital of Culture programme, which itself had its own socio-economic agenda – the omnipresence of the smaller sculptures throughout Liverpool meant that the artwork as a whole was seen as beneficial to both visitors and residents. As a Crosby sixth-former pointed out, "It [*Superlambanana*] felt like it was coming to you as opposed to you making a trek" (see Crosby Sixth Form 2 above). This dual nature of the community 'ownership' of an artwork and its appeal to visitors is discussed in greater detail in Section 7.2.

Ownership of an artwork by members of its community therefore struggles to emerge from under the weight of the socio-economic expectations placed upon the artworks by members of the art world – in particular, those members of the art world a little further down the aesthetic hierarchy (in the case of *Another Place* and *Dream* these are South Sefton Development Trust and St Helens Council respectively). Allied to this is the sense of the loss of ownership of the location of the artwork after the artwork was installed. This sense of loss is particularly apparent with the installation of *Another Place*, which saw a number of beach sports enthusiasts excluded from using the beach to practice their sport. The

following excerpt is from an interview with members of the local sailing club, which itself had to alter its own sailing practices following the installation of the iron men:

The wind there is always really, really good. If you want to fly a kite go there, any day, when you can't do anything else and why I've mentioned the kite is that the statues have completely destroyed kite-surfing. Now old people used to go down, see the kite-surfing, and when the kite-surfers were there you couldn't get a space in the front row in your car.
(Local Sailing Club)

Meanwhile, for some participants of the Crosby community group, the presence of the statues has impacted on the more family-orientated activities of the beach:

Before they were there you could go down to the beach and you could have a lovely little picnic. You could spend a day on the beach.
(Community Group 1)

However, according to the interview participant of the commissioning party (the South Sefton Development Trust), such declared uses of the beach were overstated by local people:

But it wasn't used as far as we were aware. It wasn't really used by anyone apart from the ships, until we decided to put the statues in and then everybody said they used it. (South Sefton Development Trust)

There are three ways of interpreting the above comments. Firstly, the two community-based observations may be taken at face value, in that some Crosby residents feel aggrieved that the installation of *Another Place* resulted in the exclusion of certain publics (e.g. kite-surfers, picnickers) from using the beach in ways in which they had previously. The commissioning party, on the other hand, was ignorant of these previous uses and thereby underestimated the sense of resentment amongst local people that the artwork would create. Alternatively, the two community-based observations may not be taken at face value, and

rather than Crosby residents feeling aggrieved by their loss of the actual uses of the beach, it is more their loss of the symbolic uses of the beach that they resent, in a similar way to the those people who lived and worked in and around Richard Serra's *Tilted Arc* resented the loss of their symbolic uses of the Federal Plaza in New York (Horowitz, 1996: see Chapter 2). From this point of view, it does not matter how the beach was used and who by. What matters is the loss of local ownership of the beach instigated by the installation of the artwork and which the activities of kite-surfing, picnicking and so forth represent. Of course, the third way of interpreting the above comments is that they signify a combination of the two prior interpretations – i.e. that both the actual uses of the beach and the symbolic uses of the beach are as important as each other when comprehending Crosby resident's sense of loss of ownership of their beach. However, whether it is the actual or symbolic uses of the beach, or a combination of the two, that causes such feelings of loss, the outcome remains the same: the artwork becomes the repository of resentment on the part of local people for, in effect, excluding them from part of their own community. It is little wonder, therefore, that the artwork is not accepted as an appropriate symbol for that community.

As in the previous chapter, therefore, the location of an artwork is integral to the ways in which the artwork is perceived by members of the local community. However, whereas it is the historical and geographical associations of the location that are under scrutiny in the aforementioned chapter, here it is the actual physical siting of the artwork that is of particular relevance. The siting of the artwork away from the main town areas, as in the case of *Dream* and *Another Place*, can result in the artwork effectively excluding certain publics, such as the elderly and the disabled, thereby rendering the artwork as less democratic than an artwork that is situated in a more central – and thereby accessible – location, such as *Superlambanana*. Furthermore, the 'out-of-the-wayness' of *Dream* and *Another Place* suggests that these artworks are of greater benefit to visitors to the area rather than to local residents, particularly when the promised socio-economic benefits heaped onto the artworks by their commissioning parties don't materialise. Compounding this sense of lack of ownership of the artwork is the loss of ownership local residents may feel concerning the location of the artwork, such as Crosby beach. Taking all the above into account, therefore, the public

artwork can struggle to be accepted by its community as an appropriate symbol for that community.

7.2 People

The previous section explored the importance of the location of the artwork on the relationship between the three artworks and their respective publics. This second section looks closer at the publics themselves and the ways in which they react to and interact with their artworks.

As discussed above, both *Dream* and *Another Place* are perceived by St Helens and Crosby residents as being more for the benefit of visitors rather than for local people. This appeal to tourists, however, is also a quality of *Superlambanana* as perceived by Liverpool residents. The following two excerpts are from participants who are talking about the Go *Superlambananas!* Parade in particular:

It's good, 'cause at the time and that it brought a lot of tourism in, because people were like 'Oh, what are these lambananas?' and then because people were going to find them, they were going to different areas as well, so places where they wouldn't normally go people went to, so yeah. (Community Member 3)

What a shame [that the Parade ended], 'cause it was really, it was like, erm, a tourist point. You followed the lambananas everywhere. I mean, if you went to the retail in Speke up here there was one on the roundabout there and you often seen people posing, you know, 'Take a picture'. Erm, and they were different nationalities as well. I mean, you could see they were Chinese and Japanese and I said to them, erm, I was waving, you know, back to them and they said they'd been to Penny Lane and they'd had their photograph taken by Penny Lane and then they'd come and followed the lambanana trail. (Community Member 21)

The appeal of *Superlambanana* to visitors, which the two participants above have highlighted, lay in discovering the various smaller sculptures which were dotted about Liverpool, not just in the city centre, but in the outer reaches of the city as

well. Furthermore, those tourists who had come to Liverpool for another, primary, reason – such as visiting Beatles-related places – were also able to take the opportunity of following the trail of *Superlambananas* around the city, as those tourists in the second excerpt were able to do. Consequently, by becoming another tourist attraction in the manner of the Beatles, *Superlambanana* became an integral part of Liverpool's identity.

The sense of urban discovery engendered by the Go *Superlambananas*! Parade is, as stated in section 7.1, akin to Debord's concept of the *dérive* (1956). Although such a concept is appropriate for visitors to a city, as illustrated by the above quotes, the city's residents are also able to experience this urban discovery for themselves. As well as tourists, the Go *Superlambananas*! Parade appealed to children, and it was through their children that many Liverpool residents experienced both the artwork and the city:

I think it was quite a good thing. You sort of went round and searched them all, didn't you? I think it was a good thing, especially for the kids. I mean, in the car, the children all shouting when they seen one.
(Community Member 8)

The children liked it 'cause it was quite exciting and they've had competitions going 'How many have you found?' (Community Member 10)

I: Did you actually go round to see them?

P: We did. We went – I went with the kids on a *Superlambanana* hunt.
(Community Member 16)

The Go *Superlambananas*! Parade thus provided Liverpool residents with the means of exploring their own city in a way that was both enjoyable and interesting. Furthermore, as such an exploration was able to be experienced as a family, discovering both the various *Superlambananas* and the city of Liverpool became a family event, which itself was experienced by many families. Additionally, because the smaller sculptures were placed all over the city, there

were areas of Liverpool which the city's own residents had not visited until they did so via the Parade. Consequently, by playing 'spot the *Superlambanana*', Liverpool residents attained a greater sense of ownership of their own city – a phenomenon that was noticeable to the organiser of the Parade:

I mean, the word discovery comes up for me a lot in Liverpool - is, is that I think people really enjoyed reclaiming their city through that trail. I think they really, there was a lot of feedback from, anecdotally from people who had never been, you know; the Albert Dock had been in glory for years but there were a lot of families that had never been down the Dock area who were saying, 'We discovered the *Superlambanana* and oh my goodness, we've discovered this'. (Community Arts Organisation)

As the various *Superlambananas* are integrated into the fabric of Liverpool, there is a direct relationship between the artwork and the city. In effect, the artwork becomes the city and the city becomes the artwork – i.e. *Superlambanana* and Liverpool become identified with each other. In comparison, the 'out-of-the-way' nature of *Another Place* and *Dream* means that these artworks are unable to capitalise upon this one-to-one relationship and imbue local residents with a greater sense of ownership of their own community. Indeed, as is discussed in the previous section, *Another Place* in particular has the effect of imbuing local residents with a lesser sense of community ownership. Tellingly, neither *Another Place* nor *Dream* were described in terms of their appeal to children – and therefore, by extension, to families – by community participants of Crosby and St Helens. Neither artwork was perceived to be a 'family event' in a similar way to the Go *Superlambananas!* Parade.

Although 'spotting the *Superlambanana*' could be a family event experienced by parents / carers and their children together, other Liverpool residents would come across the different sculptures during their more day-to-day activities, as the following interview excerpts elucidate:

I: Did you go on the trail?

P: I didn't go on the trail, but I saw most of them in a sense. I didn't go out of my way to follow them around.

I: Was that as you were going round-

P: As I was working, 'cause at that point I was working in Liverpool, so I saw quite a lot of them and I thought they were really good. (Community Member 9)

I didn't actually go on the trail, but obviously as I was driving around the town and things you'd see them – 'Oh, there's another one; oh, there's another one' – but I didn't formally go on the trail. (Community Member 22)

The integration of the various smaller sculptures into the urban fabric meant that the artwork as a whole could be experienced even by people going about their 'ordinary' daily activities, not just by those who especially wanted to see it, as is more the case with *Dream* and *Another Place*. In this way, the Go *Superlambananas!* Parade contributed to a greater sense of artistic democracy – i.e. the sense that the artwork was available to everyone. In turn, this greater sense of democracy contributed to a greater sense of the 'convivial city' (Miles, 1997: 188-208) – i.e. a city in which one public is not preferred over another. The interactional nature of the Go *Superlambananas!* Parade can also be interpreted in terms of Relational Aesthetics (Bourriaud, 1998 in Bishop, 2006), whereby an artwork acts as a means of creating a shared and meaningful experience amongst members of its public (see Chapter 2). In the particular case of the Go *Superlambananas!* Parade, there are two distinct levels whereby the artwork was able to create a shared and meaningful experience. Firstly, the Parade was able to be enjoyed between parents / carers and children as a family event. Secondly, the Parade enabled Liverpool residents (and visitors) to encounter both the artwork and each other in a city-wide setting. Therefore, a three-way relationship between the city, the artwork and the people was created – a phenomenon which Whybrow (2011: 15) describes as "embodied" (see Chapter 2). These three individual elements consequently became interlinked and identifiable with each other. Consequently, *Superlambanana* became synonymous with both the city of Liverpool and the people of Liverpool.

Superlambanana is not the only artwork subject to a high level of interaction, however. *Another Place* inspires people to use it in a variety of imaginative ways, largely by dressing the statues up in different apparel. The iron men have, at various times, donned Liverpool and Everton FC shirts as well as capes supplied by the 'Fathers 4 Justice' campaign and an assortment of other attire, such as hard hats, knitwear, women's nighties and cheese slices positioned in strategic places. A local community drama group also staged a nativity play on the beach, complete with a real camel and transforming one of the iron men into the Angel Gabriel. Furthermore, a local organisation for autistic people incorporated *Another Place* into its activities for its service users, as the following excerpt illustrates:

P: Yeah, so what we done with the art here, we got old t-shirts and we got them to paint the George cross and that, so that would be one activity here; and then we'd go down to the beach and this would be another activity 'cause we dressed the iron men.

I: All dressed in their George crosses.

P: Yeah, yeah. You can actually see the freedom they have – you know, you can see in a lot of their faces how peaceful they are. I think this one – was this when we done the National one? (shows another photograph of an iron man dressed up in jockey shirt and cap). This one, we done this one for the National, you know, you can see. (Autism Organisation)

Similar to the Go *Superlambananas!* Parade, therefore, *Another Place* experienced a high level of interaction with members of the public. However, because the iron men are situated outside the main town area and are therefore not integrated into the urban fabric, this interaction is two-way rather than three-way – i.e. between the people and the artwork, rather than between the people, the artwork and the town. Consequently, the reciprocal relationship and identification between the two elements is essentially weaker without the 'reinforcement' of the third.

In a similar fashion to *Another Place*, the separation of *Dream* from the main town area results in the lack of three-way relationship between the artwork, the people and the urban fabric of St Helens. Unlike *Another Place*, however, *Dream* does not lend itself to a high level of artwork-person interaction. From personal experience, one is able to touch the artwork and sit near the artwork (there are picnic benches nearby). However, for some St Helens residents, rather than experiencing *Dream* close-up, the preference is to see the artwork from afar, and especially in passing from the M62, above which the artwork is situated:

P1: I've seen it from a distance as we're driving past, but we've never been.

P2: No, no.

I: Never been?

P2: No.

I: No. Do you want to go? Have you any inclination?

P2: I don't

P1: Not particularly, no. It's just never, it's not something that I thought I must go and see. (Community Member 28)

The following excerpt comes from a participant who viewed *Dream* unfavourably. Here she explains why she does not feel the need to visit the artwork and experience it close-up, unlike her sister-in-law who travelled from Liverpool to see it:

Well, I think she quite enjoyed the day going to see it, really, but fortunately 'cause we live in St Helens and we're travelling past it, to us it's just part of the environment, isn't it? So whereas if I went to see a castle, say, in Edinburgh, I'd go and I'd see that castle and I'd never see it again, probably, apart from on television till I went back to Edinburgh, but because we're passing it all the time it's part of St Helens, if you like. (Community Member 24)

Although the participant describes *Dream* as ‘part of St Helens’, her view nevertheless is that the artwork is of more appeal to visitors to the area rather than to local residents. The artwork is simply something that is ‘there’ – merely an architectural feature overlooking the M62. It has no significance beyond that. In comparison, various *Superlambananas* of the Go *Superlambananas!* Parade were able to be experienced close-up by Liverpool people – even by those people who had no particular interest in seeing the artwork. In short, the proximity of the smaller *Superlambananas* to Liverpool people meant that the artwork could not be avoided. *Dream*, on the other hand, could – and is. Consequently, there is less opportunity for the residents of St Helens to cultivate a sense of ownership towards their artwork in comparison to the residents of Liverpool towards *Superlambanana*.

Of course, another way in which a sense of ownership of a public artwork can be cultivated amongst community members is by the actual physical ownership of the artwork – or, more appropriately, by the physical ownership of smaller, ornamental models of the artwork, as in the case of *Superlambanana*. As discussed in the previous section, small ceramic models of the sculpture are for sale in many Liverpool shops (and also online), alongside other Liverpool-based merchandise. These have proved popular with local people, as the following excerpts from interviews with two different participants illustrate:

Yeah, I’ve got a *Superlambanana* in my window. My husband bought me [it] about three years ago for Christmas and so what we did we just took it to everybody’s house on Christmas and, you know, got pictures of different houses at Christmas, so you could see us all like this, then at the end of the night, you know, like this and the *Superlambanana* on the side as well. (Community Member 21)

I think they’re cool, ‘cause I know my sister as well, she’s got two, only little ones this big, little miniature ones to go with her living room. Her living room’s green, so she’s got two green ones which she absolutely loves. So I was trying to look round for a purple one, ‘cause I want a purple lambanana. (Community Member 22)

By being able to purchase and own one or more *Superlambananas* – albeit on a smaller scale – Liverpool residents are able to enjoy the artwork without even stepping outside their own front doors, thus the artwork becomes part of the domestic environment as well as the urban. Consequently, *Superlambanana* becomes further enmeshed in people’s everyday lives and, in doing so, becomes an object that is ‘of the people’ rather than just ‘for the people’. Indeed, as Gilmore (2014: 23) states, these domestic and personal ways in which *Superlambanana* is experienced by local people constitute “the routine opportunities for accessing and experiencing arts and culture”.

Liverpool residents are not the only people to have the opportunity to own a *Superlambanana*, however. The following participant, who works in a local hospital, describes how ornamental versions of the sculpture are given as leaving presents to departing colleagues:

Certainly when we’ve had people leaving from our department, you know when you want to give them a leaving present, if they’re leaving Liverpool, we buy them those little ceramic *Superlambananas* then all put our names on them and things, so it’s been quite a nice little tradition we’ve introduced. (Community Member 19)

As *Superlambanana* is a symbol of Liverpool, it is therefore appropriate that a person leaving the city should be given a ceramic version of that symbol as a souvenir of his / her time in the city.

Although ‘commercial’ art is frowned upon by the aesthetic elite of the art world (see Chapter 5), it is nevertheless the commercialisation of *Superlambanana* that has enabled the artwork to be accepted by Liverpool residents as an appropriate symbol for the city. Indeed, the popularity of both the Go *Superlambananas*! Parade and the ceramic ornaments of the sculpture has played a major part in seeing the artwork lose its sense of ‘the other’: i.e. the sense that the artwork lies outside the experiences of the ‘ordinary’ people and thus has no relevance to their lives. It is the difference between the distancing effect of the “pure gaze”

(Bourdieu, 1986: 32) – i.e. in which an artwork is viewed via the rejection of “the passions, emotions and feelings which ordinary people put into their ordinary existence” (Bourdieu, 1986: 32) – and the “naïve gaze” (Bourdieu, 1986: 32), in which an artwork is viewed via precisely those passions etc. In contrast to *Superlambanana*, both *Dream* and *Another Place* have not been exploited commercially to the same degree as their Liverpool counterpart. Consequently, both have lacked the opportunity to become as fully integrated into the lives of their residents and thus have been unable to lose their sense of otherness completely. Although many of the *Superlambananas* of the Go *Superlambananas!* Parade were eventually auctioned off to raise money for local charities (see Chapter 3), there is still a number of the sculptures dotted around Liverpool in various guises (see Pictures 4 to 11 at the end of this chapter).

In the case of *Superlambanana*, therefore, what started out as an artwork chosen by an individual who is very much part of the art world (see Chapter 5) has transformed into an object that has great relevance to and is held in great affection by many Liverpool people. In effect, the sculpture has widened in its appeal from meeting the specific criteria of the aesthetic elite of the art world (see Chapter 6) to the more general criteria of the public. In short, *Superlambanana* has become a work of ‘popular’ art as opposed to ‘high’ art. *Another Place* and *Dream*, in comparison, are still perceived by members of their respective publics in terms of their ‘otherness’ – i.e. as works of high art that they neither identify with nor even like. Not all forms of high art are perceived in this way, however. Rather, community members make a distinction between the ‘traditional’ high art that is housed in Liverpool’s Walker Art Gallery and the ‘modern’ high art which both *Dream* and *Another Place* represent. For these community members, the former type of art is very much preferred over the latter. The following two excerpts are from interviews with community participants about (i) *Another Place* and (ii) *Dream* respectively:

P2: What we’re all for, I think, at least me, is the Walker Art Gallery.

I: Right.

P2: That’s fantastic.

I: Ok.

P2: And, you know, all art should be in the Walker Art Gallery. It shouldn't be dotted round everywhere. (Community Group 1)

I mean, I don't like the Tate. I've been in there and I can't stand it, because I'm not – I can't do with that art, personally. I'm traditional art, you see. I can go to the Walker Art Gallery, but the Tate I just cannot stand it (unintelligible) because I'm not modern art and that's the difference, and that's [i.e. *Dream's*] got an element of – and not that I don't like some modern art and things like that, but, er, I don't know. It's not the beauty of the actual thing. It's just that it's there. (Community Member 28)

In both excerpts, the participants see their respective public artworks in terms of 'modern' art – i.e. art that is non-literal in appearance – which they do not like and do not identify with. Furthermore, for both participants, there is an expectation that art should be in a gallery and not in the public domain. Consequently, both *Another Place* and *Dream* are resented because – in the words of the second participant – they are "there". This particular sense of 'otherness', however, is also because 'modern' art is seen as by older participants as being more appealing to young people, as the following participants, who are discussing *Dream*, explain. Like the participants in the excerpts above, they are aged 60 plus:

P2: I think all the youngsters, all the youngsters, they don't know nothing really, do they?

P1: Well, they like modern things, though, don't they? Know what I mean?

P2: They do. We don't. We're old-fashioned, you see.

P1: Speak for yourself, missus. (laughs)

P2: Well, I'm old-fashioned. You like old things, though, don't you?

P1: I do, I do. (Community Member 26)

In regards to *Dream*, therefore, it is not so much the perceived artistic quality of the artwork that local residents object to (see Community Member 28 above); rather, it is the 'modern' style of the artwork that is seen to be unacceptable. In

contrast, as well as the modern style of the artwork, residents of Crosby also object to the perceived lack of artistic quality of *Another Place*:

I mean, it's not even art. All it is he's sat in a mould, had a mould, and all they'd done is brought out all these tin things out from the mould. It's not even art. (Community Group 1)

But the Germans put them in because they'd got the license for doing it, 'cause the statues are not really statues. They're just moulds of his body in mild steel: in scrap iron, basically, and they're quite a low quality, 'cause they're corroding like mad. (Local Sailing Club)

The above quotes are from older (50 plus) members of (i) a local community group and (ii) a local sailing club. However, their opinions of the lack of artistic quality of the iron men is shared by the younger participants (16-18 year-olds) of a Crosby school, as the following excerpts illustrate:

P2: It's a bit boring as well. It doesn't do anything.

P3: Yeah.

P2: You see it. You look at it. It's like, "Ok – next."

(laughter)

P1: I think that's why the trail of lambananas were engaging, 'cause there was always the next one to do. (Crosby Sixth Form 2)

P2: I was quite impressed when they were first put in.

P3: Yeah, but then the novelty's worn off

P2: They're just there now. (Crosby Sixth Form 3)

For residents of Crosby, and in opposition to the aesthetic principles of the art world, *Another Place* is not 'art' due to the perceived inferior quality of the material from which the artwork was made and the manner in which the artwork was made. Furthermore, the iron men are seen as lacking visual interest, particularly in comparison to the Go *Superlambananas!* Parade. The similarity of the iron men with each other does not encourage the viewer to engage with the

artwork to the same extent as the different *Superlambananas*, the variety of designs of which inspired the viewer to actively seek out the sculptures. In this way, the Go *Superlambananas!* Parade encouraged the physical movement of the viewer from one version of the artwork to the other; thus, the artwork as a whole acted as a “type of causality” (De La Fuente, 2010a: 222), in that it affected people not only on an emotional and psychological level, but also on a physical level. In other words, one version of *Superlambanana* ‘made’ the viewer find another version of *Superlambanana* and so on. In contrast, the uniformity of the iron men of *Another Place* does not encourage the physical movement of the viewer to the same extent. Consequently – in the case of *Superlambanana* – the relationship between the artwork, the people and the city was reinforced, whereas no such reinforcement was able to take place for the iron men. Additionally, although the ‘novelty’ of the statues on the beach piqued the interest of local residents initially, this novelty was not enough to sustain the attention long-term; therefore, in a way similar to *Dream*, *Another Place* has become another architectural feature that is simply ‘there’.

Overall, therefore, it is the ‘modern’ style of the public artworks which equates to the ‘contemporary’ style of art advocated by the aesthetic elite of the art world. However, it is exactly this modern / contemporary style which is disliked by local community members. The ambiguous nature of the artworks – advocated by the aesthetic elite of art world as being the hallmark of ‘good’ art – is not seen by members of the public in the same light. Indeed, the non-literal nature of a work of public art can be perceived by its public as not really ‘art’ at all. This is certainly the case with *Another Place*, the modern / contemporary style of which is perceived by local residents as something ‘other’ – i.e. as something outside the realms of their own experience and interests, and which therefore has no relevance to their lives. The same lack of engagement with and understanding of the modern / contemporary style also gives rise to the sense of the ‘otherness’ of *Dream* on the part of St Helens residents, although the sculpture’s artistic quality is largely exempt from criticism. In comparison, however, the artistic quality of the iron men comes under fire from Crosby residents, who perceive the statues as being created from inferior materials and in a non-artistic manner (i.e. from a mould). Consequently, there is a clash between the aesthetic standards and

requirements of two opposing parties, broadly speaking: those of the art world and those of the public.

In the case of *Superlambanana*, on the other hand, the sense of 'otherness' of the artwork is non-existent, although it is fashioned in the same modern / contemporary style as *Another Place* and *Dream*. Indeed, far from being seen as 'the other' and thus occupying a place beyond the reach of local people, *Superlambanana* is largely perceived by Liverpool people as being 'one of us'. The integration of the various *Superlambananas* of the Go *Superlambananas!* Parade into the fabric of the city and the commercialisation of the artwork which has given people the opportunity to physically own the artwork (albeit a smaller, ornamental copy) have helped to foster the psychological ownership of the artwork on the part of local people. Thus the three-way relationship between the artwork, the city and the people has been a great enabler in the identification of one with the other. In contrast, *Another Place* and *Dream* occupy places beyond the psychological ownership of their respective communities, which their lack of integration into the urban fabric of their respective geographical locations, in effect, represents.

Conclusion

This chapter has examined the ways in which local people physically interact with their particular work of public art. Also under inspection have been the attitudes of local people towards both their artwork and art in general. As highlighted in the previous chapter, place plays a large part in the shaping of people's meaningful relationship with their artwork. In particular, the location of the artwork can contribute to the artwork's 'otherness' – i.e. the perception that the artwork has no relevance to the life of the viewer. In the most obvious sense, this otherness can arise out of the inaccessibility of the location to certain publics (e.g. the elderly, the disabled), which effectively excludes them from seeing the artworks that are purported to be 'for' them as members of a geographical community. The separation of the artwork from the main urban area can also dissuade those community members who have no particular interest in the artwork from visiting the artwork, thereby reinforcing the impression that the artwork is for visitors to the area, not local people. Additionally, an artwork may be perceived by local

people as failing to bring the socio-economic benefits as promised by the commissioning parties of the art world, thereby resulting in the resentment of the artwork's presence rather than in its acceptance as an appropriate symbol for their community. This may itself be compounded by the loss of ownership of their community or part of their community experienced by local people by the installation of the artwork.

Alongside place, another factor that plays a central part in the perception of a work of public art as 'the other' lies in the objection of local residents to the modern /contemporary (i.e. ambiguous) style of their artwork, as it is a style with which they cannot identify, preferring instead the more 'traditional' (i.e. literal) style of art found in the likes of Liverpool's Walker Art Gallery. The perceived lack of artistic quality of the artwork may also be a further point of objection and thus a further motivation for local people's non-acceptance of the artwork. It is in these ways, therefore, that the aesthetic demands of the art world and the aesthetic demands of the public are contradictory. On the whole, these various factors – and those outlined above – contribute in different degrees to the perception Crosby and St Helens residents possess regarding the otherness of *Another Place* and *Dream*.

The modern / contemporary style of a public artwork does not necessarily mean that the artwork is rejected as an appropriate symbol for a community, however. As in the case of *Superlambanana*, an artwork may be embraced by the local community if it makes the transition from modern / contemporary 'high' art to popular art. This can be achieved via the integration of the artwork into the fabric of the main urban area, which enables all people – residents as well as visitors – to enjoy the artwork without the need to make a special journey to see it. The artwork can also act as means of urban discovery for local people, thereby strengthening the three-way relationship and identity between the artwork, the city and the people. Furthermore, the commercialisation of the artwork – which allows people to own a copy of the artwork and which helps to incorporate the artwork into the domestic as well as the urban setting – can also act as a means whereby the otherness of the artwork is diminished. By losing its sense of otherness, therefore, an artwork will be able to be transferred across – so to

speak – from its origin of creation in the art world to the public, whereupon it will have a greater opportunity of being accepted by its local community as an appropriate symbol for that community.

Pictures 4-11

Examples of various *Superlambananas*



Picture 4: *Superlambanana* on top of the Royal Court Theatre



Picture 5: Ceramic *Superlambanana* on display in the window of a local sweet shop



Picture 6: *Superlambanana* outside a city centre jewellers



Picture 7: *Superlambanana* advertising a local construction company, the Royal Court Theatre



Picture 8: *Superlambanana* in Liverpool Football Club's shop, Liverpool 1



Picture 9: *Superlambanana* outside the Museum of Liverpool, the Pier Head



Picture 10: Ceramic *Superlambanana* in a shop window alongside other Liverpool merchandise



Picture 11: *Superlambanana* overlooking the River Mersey, the Pier Head

Chapter 8

Discussion of Key Findings

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Discussion of Key Findings

Introduction

The previous three chapters discussed the three main themes that arose from my research data through the application of the grounded theory approach. The first of these data analysis chapters (Power Relationships and Role Dynamics) explored the roles of the individual parties responsible for the creation of a public work of art, including the role of the public, and examined the relationships between them. It was found that certain parties in the artistic network have a greater influence on the aesthetic content of a public artwork than other parties within the network. These more influential parties I have called the aesthetic elite. It was also found that 'the public' is perceived by the aesthetic elite as a social group that needs to be educated into making the 'right' artistic choices – i.e. the same artistic choices that the aesthetic elite would make.

The second data analysis chapter (Meaning and Interpretation) discussed the various meanings a public artwork assumes (i) during its creation process and (ii) once it is installed in the public sphere. It was found that a public artwork ought to possess several symbolic qualities (i.e. an international character, a contemporary style and symbolic ambiguity) for it to be considered as a 'good' work of art by the aesthetic elite of the art world. However, it was also found that such qualities can hinder the acceptance of the artwork *by* its community as an appropriate symbol *for* their community should no meaningful relationship between the artwork and the geographical / historical associations of its location be discerned.

Finally, the third data analysis chapter (People and Places) explored the ways in which members of the public used and experienced a work of public art in the public sphere. It was found that different publics (e.g. people with children, people who don't like 'modern' art) experience public art in different ways and that the location of the artwork in an urban setting assists in establishing a meaningful relationship of the artwork with its location via a three-way connection between the artwork, the city and the people.

Taking the findings from all three data analysis chapters into account, therefore, the purpose of this chapter is to discuss in greater detail those findings which have greater pertinence for answering the research questions as outlined in the Introduction. These key findings pertain to place, the concept of ‘the public’ and the public’s perception of public art and are discussed in turn below.

8.1 The Importance of Place

As has been shown in Chapters 6 and 7, and which has been briefly outlined *above*, place plays an integral role in the eventual acceptance of a work of public art *by* members of its community as an appropriate symbol *for* its community. There are two main ways by which this is achieved. Firstly, there must be a discernible link between the physical appearance of the artwork and the geographical / historical associations of its location. Secondly, the integration of the artwork into the urban fabric enables the artwork to be experienced by a greater number of people and assists in creating a three-way connection between the artwork, the people and the city itself so that a meaningful relationship between all three parties is established. Both of these two ways have been effective in establishing *Superlambanana* as an accepted symbol for Liverpool.

For *Superlambanana*, those geographical / historical associations by which it was able to be interpreted were already very strongly in place. Indeed, Liverpool as a city already has a strong and long-standing identity – an identity which other Liverpool ‘icons’ (e.g. the Beatles, Liverpool and Everton football clubs, the two cathedrals) all contribute to in symbolising. As a result, *Superlambanana* was able to be subsumed into this identity alongside its fellow icons, as the physical appearance of *Superlambanana* was able to allow this to happen. The peculiar shape and bright yellow colour of the original large-scale artwork resonates with the qualities of quirkiness and humour Liverpool people attribute to their city. These particular qualities are thus attributed by the people of Liverpool to *Superlambanana*, which, in turn, reflects the same qualities back to the people of Liverpool. In this way, *Superlambanana* acts as a mirror in which the city sees itself. This attribution of such ‘personal’ (albeit city-wide) qualities by Liverpool residents to *Superlambanana* can be viewed in terms of Knorr Cetina’s concept of ‘objectualization’ (1997), in which she defines as “an increased orientation

towards objects as sources of the self, of relational intimacy, of shared subjectivity and social integration” (Knorr Cetina, 1997: 23). In the case of *Superlambanana*, therefore, the strong geographical / historical associations of its location work in its favour and assist the artwork’s acceptance as an appropriate symbol for the city of Liverpool. Furthermore, by its simultaneous submersion into and reflection of Liverpool’s overall identity, *Superlambanana* has, in Osborne’s (2011) terms, become a part of local people’s ‘geography of identity’.

In contrast, the strong geographical / historical associations of its location hinder the acceptance of *Dream* as an appropriate symbol of St Helens. Although, like Liverpool, St Helens already has a strong and long-standing identity, unlike Liverpool that identity is still very firmly located in the industrial heritage of the area, in particular the mining and glass manufacturing industries, both of which are still very recent in terms of historical significance – certainly within living memory of the middle-aged to older residents of St Helens. Consequently, the inability of the physical appearance of *Dream* (a luminous, elongated girl’s head) to ostensibly symbolise these associations – in particular, the mining associations (the artwork is, after all, on the site of a former colliery) – translates in the perception of *Dream* as an inappropriate symbol of St Helens by the people of St Helens. In Osborne’s (2001) terms, *Dream* is not a recognisable part of the ‘geography of identity’ for these St Helens residents.

In the case of *Another Place*, the geographical / historical associations by which it is interpreted do not actually belong to Crosby, the area in which the artwork is located. Rather, those associations belong to Liverpool, its next-door neighbour in Merseyside. However, unlike with *Superlambanana*, the associations by which *Another Place* is interpreted consist solely of those pertaining to Liverpool’s porting heritage, particularly the city’s role in the emigration of large numbers of people to America and other New World countries during the Nineteenth Century. This application of the ‘wrong’ associations to the artwork, therefore, means that, symbolically, *Another Place* is associated with the ‘wrong’ place (i.e. Liverpool) rather than with the place in which it is actually located (i.e. Crosby). At best, the artwork’s status remains ‘fuzzy’ – i.e. it symbolises neither one place nor

the other. Consequently, the 'geography of identity' (Osborne, 2011) to which *Another Place* belongs is ambiguous.

From a symbolic point of view, therefore, place plays a vital role in the interpretation of meaning of a public artwork by the public. This is despite the opinion advocated by the aesthetic elite of the art world that a 'good' work of public art should possess the quality of symbolic ambiguity – i.e. the artwork should be open to interpretation. In theory, this could lead to any number of interpretations, depending on who was viewing the artwork at any one time – and, indeed, there are a few such autobiographical interpretations of *Dream* as discussed in Chapter 6. However, such personal interpretations are remarkably few across all three artworks studied. The overwhelming majority of interpretations involve the geographical / historical associations of the physical location of the artwork, be that location Liverpool, St Helens and (to a lesser extent) Crosby.

Furthermore, although – as stated above – the aesthetic elite's 'ideal' public artwork should be symbolically ambiguous and thus open to interpretation, place is nevertheless a vital ingredient of the meaning of a public artwork during its creation process. Of the three artworks studied, *Dream* in particular is the most 'sited' public artwork, in that the geographical / historical associations of the former colliery in which it is located are integral to its original concept. The symbolic origins of *Superlambanana* are a little more obscure, having three different versions to choose from. However, two of the three versions involve place as an integral part of the overall meaning of the artwork, with associations pertaining to Liverpool's (i) past and (ii) (hypothetical) future included respectively. Although the third version of *Superlambanana*'s meaning involves no place associations whatsoever, it was suggested by a member of the art world that place associations were retrospectively incorporated into the meaning by the artwork's commissioners, thereby rendering the artwork more relevant to Liverpool and its people. A similar place-centric 'backstory' was incorporated into the meaning of *Another Place* by that artwork's commissioners, the original concept of which as explained by the artist, Antony Gormley, consists of a generic 'mankind versus the elements' interpretation. A more localised reading of the

artwork – albeit using the geographical / historical associations of the ‘wrong’ area – potentially makes the artwork more relevant for Crosby and, therefore, more acceptable to Crosby residents.

As stated above, however, it is not only the geographical / historical associations of place that play an integral role in the eventual acceptance of a work of public art *by* its community as an appropriate symbol *for* its community. The actual physical location of the artwork and the ways in which this influences people’s experiences of the artwork also plays a major part in this acceptance. In particular, the integration of a public artwork into the urban fabric rather than beyond it enables a three-way relationship between the city (or town, in the case of St Helens), the artwork and the people to develop: a relationship in which one part of the triad eventually becomes identifiable with the other. Consequently, a shared meaning between the three is created.

It is also via this second way, therefore – i.e. the creation of a shared meaning between the artwork, the city and the people – that *Superlambanana* eventually became a recognised symbol for Liverpool. In particular, the presence of the smaller *Superlambananas* during the 2008 *Go Superlambananas! Parade* enabled both Liverpool residents to explore their city in a more interesting and enjoyable way than they would otherwise have experienced, and often encouraged a sense of urban discovery in the manner of the *dérive* and psychogeography as discussed in Chapter 2. Furthermore, that the *Go Superlambananas! Parade* could be experienced in both a family setting (i.e. parents / carers with children) and in a city-wide setting – i.e. by encouraging the interaction of individuals with each other – also enabled Liverpool residents to construct a shared and meaningful relationship between each other, akin to Bourriaud’s concept of Relational Aesthetics (1998). In this sense, therefore, The *Go Superlambananas! Parade* acted as social cement, so to speak: i.e. allowing individual people to undergo the same / a similar experience in an urban setting, thereby helping to create a three-way relationship – and ultimately a shared meaning – between the artwork, the city and the people.

In contrast, the siting of both *Another Place* and *Dream* beyond the urban fabric of Crosby and St Helens respectively does not allow for an effective three-way relationship between the artworks, the urban environment and the people to take place. Indeed, Crosby and St Helens residents who want to see their artworks must make a special journey in order to do so. For *Dream*, of course, there is also the option of seeing the artwork in the distance whilst passing by it on the M62 motorway. Neither *Another Place* nor *Dream*, therefore, encourages the exploration by the Crosby / St Helens resident of his / her respective urban area. On the contrary, both artworks, in effect, divorce the resident from his / her urban environment. Consequently, the construction of a shared meaning between all three parties – the artwork, the (urban) place and the people – is far more difficult to achieve.

As discussed above, therefore, both the symbolic and physical aspects of place are vital ingredients in the overall meaning of a public artwork. The following section explores ‘the public’ – i.e. who they are and how they are involved in the creation of a work of public art.

8.2 The Concept of ‘the Public’ and the Role of Public Participation

As the concept of ‘the public’ as ‘place’ has been discussed in the previous section, the concept of ‘the public’ as examined in this section concentrates firmly on the interpretation of ‘the public’ as ‘the people’. However, who those people actually *are* is a matter of contention.

As discussed in Chapter 5, and from the examination of Becker’s (2008, 1982) and Bourdieu’s (1984, 1993) theories in particular, the aesthetic elite of the art world has its own particular interpretation of the public. In its eyes, the public is seen as an homogenous social group – in particular, as a social group that lacks the ‘right’ artistic knowledge and which must therefore be educated into acquiring the ‘right’ artistic knowledge in order to make the ‘right’ artistic choices. Naturally, the people who possess the ‘right’ artistic knowledge and who are therefore qualified to educate the public are those people who belong to the aesthetic elite. In the case of *Dream*, therefore, although members of the public in the shape of a

small and select group of local ex-miners were very much involved in the creation of the artwork, the same members of the public were not allowed 'free rein' to choose any form of artwork they wanted. On the contrary, before the selection process was undertaken, the ex-miners were provided with an artistic education by a representative from a Liverpool-based cultural consultant. This education took the form of (i) a guided tour of various art exhibitions / institutions and (ii) a talk on the different types of art. The selection process itself consisted of the provision by the cultural consultant of a list of ten artist's names, from which the ex-miners subsequently chose the artist whom they wanted to design their artwork. Ironically, the artist whom the ex-miners chose initially designed a public artwork that was literal in its form – i.e. a 20 metres high miner's lamp. It was the ex-miners themselves who rejected this design in favour of a less matter-of-fact version – despite their acknowledgement that, prior to their involvement in the project, they would have been content with and would have chosen the artist's original design for *Dream*.

Because they required educating into the 'right' artistic knowledge, therefore, the ex-miners were acting as community representatives – i.e. they were the community members who represented *all* the people in their community for the purpose of the *Dream* project. Saying this, however, and *because* of their education into the 'right' artistic knowledge, the ex-miners became members of the art world for the duration of the creation of *Dream*. It was this dual role, therefore, which saw the ex-miners announce to other community members during a public meeting that the miner's lamp – which was popular amongst the other community members – was rejected by the ex-miners in favour of the artist's less literal interpretation of the artwork's location. In their role as community representatives, the ex-miners selected an artwork on behalf of *all* community members. However, the type of artwork they ultimately selected was influenced by their role as members of the art world – a role which they acquired through their artistic education.

In the case of *Dream*, therefore, although – on the face of it – members of the public participated in the creation of the artwork in a very important way (i.e. by the selection of the artist and the artwork), this participation was nevertheless

controlled by the aesthetic elite of the art world. In contrast, public participation in the creation of both *Another Place* and the original *Superlambanana* was non-existent. In the case of *Another Place*: the artwork was already in existence when it arrived in Crosby; thus it was the commissioning process of the artwork in which members of the public could potentially have participated. However, in practice, public participation in the commissioning process of *Another Place* was both minimal and, as with *Dream*, controlled by members of the art world in the form of the aesthetic elite (i.e. the cultural consultants), St Helens Council and by the commissioning party itself (i.e. the South Sefton Development Trust). Although a number of public consultations were held which were open to Crosby residents, there was a sense from local people that the installation of the artwork was a foregone conclusion. Indeed, this was the case, as the directive for installing the artwork came, at first, from the SSDT's predecessor, the South Sefton Partnership and, following that, from the then chief executive of Sefton Council. The artist (Antony Gormley) was also keen to see his statues installed on the beach. The public consultations, therefore, can be seen in terms of an attempt on the part of the art world both to inform the public of the installation of the artwork and to persuade the public to agree to the installation of the artwork. Any objection to the artwork on the part of the public was 'talked round', such as when the commodore of a local sailing club objected to the artwork (see Chapter 5). In this way, therefore, the art world retained complete control of the extent of public participation in the commissioning process of *Another Place*. By retaining complete control, therefore, members of the art world are making apparent their own particular perception that the public is unable to make the 'right' artistic choices without the aid of the 'right' artistic knowledge provided by the 'right' artistic education.

As with *Another Place*, there was no public participation in the creation process of *Superlambanana*. However, the commissioning process of the artwork also saw zero public participation. No attempt to even consult the public was made. Instead, a representative from the cultural consultants chose the artist – and subsequently the artwork – singlehandedly. In this way, the cultural consultant was acting as a community representative as well as acting in his role as part of the art world – i.e. he decided on the part of all members of the Liverpool public

which artist and artwork would best represent them, which his possession of the 'right' artistic knowledge made it possible for him to do so. Thus, once again, the art world in the form of the aesthetic elite retained complete control over the extent of public participation in the commissioning process of the artwork.

As demonstrated above, therefore, public participation in the creation / commissioning processes of all three public artworks was tightly controlled by the art world. This control is itself the outcome of the art world's view of the public generally as a social group that is not in possession of the 'right' artistic knowledge and therefore cannot be trusted to make the 'right' artistic decisions – even in the context of choosing an artwork that will best represent their own community. Such control of public participation in the creation / commissioning process of a public artwork by the art world consequently contradicts the idea of a 'democratised' access to the arts as heralded by the Arts Council England in publications such as *Adult Participatory Arts: Thinking it through* (Arts Council England, 2010a) and *Achieving Great Art for Everyone: A Strategic Framework for the Arts* (Arts Council England, 2010b). Public participation in the creation of public art, therefore, is – in all three instances discussed above – an ideological concept.

In contrast to the creation / commissioning process of a public artwork during which it is unable to be considered in terms other than those of the art world, the public comes into its own once the artwork is installed in the (geographical) public sphere. Indeed, not just 'the public', but a number of 'publics' are able to make themselves known, which is a phenomena dependent on the ways in which different publics experience public art. Thus, in the case of *Superlambanana*, parents / carers with young children experienced the artwork in the form of the *Go Superlambananas! Parade* in a positive way – i.e. by using the Parade as a form of game in which they could play 'spot the *Superlambanana*'. Adults without children were also able to experience the artwork in a similar fashion as they went about their 'ordinary' business, such as shopping or going to work. *Another Place* also encouraged positive experiences on the part of some Crosby publics, such as the autism organisation, which used the iron men in its various activities to help with the sensory and socialisation issues of its service users. A local community

arts organisation also made use of the statues in its various beach-based dramatic performances. In contrast, *Another Place* encouraged negative experiences on the part of other Crosby publics. Thus the members of a local sailing club considered the artwork both a hazard and an obstruction to its activities and therefore objected to its presence on the beach. Other, non-sailing residents objected to the artwork as they considered it prohibited the actual or symbolic ways (e.g. having picnics) in which they were able to use the beach before its installation, whilst local wildlife enthusiasts protested that the statues would frighten away those birds that used the beach as a feeding-ground. Furthermore, the iron men fail to meet the aesthetic standards of certain local residents, who have their own idea of what 'art' should be. *Another Place* is consequently seen as visually uninteresting, made from inferior materials and created in a 'non-artistic' way. The 'modern' style of the artwork is also disliked by Crosby residents. Similarly, the 'modern' style of *Dream* fails to fulfil the aesthetic requirements of St Helens residents, whilst publics such as the elderly and disabled are unable to experience the artwork up close. In the case of both *Another Place* and *Dream*, there is a sense on the part of local residents that their respective artworks are more appealing to – and, indeed, more for the benefit of – publics from outside the immediate geographical areas. This will be discussed in greater detail in the following section.

The ways in which people experience a public artwork, therefore, differ depending on the public to which they belong. Furthermore, a person can belong to several different publics (e.g. a parent with young children who is an art lover and who is disabled); therefore, one person can experience an artwork in several different ways. Consequently, the experience of the individual as part of a public – be it a positive or negative experience – can influence the way in which the individual perceives the artwork and ultimately his / her acceptance or non-acceptance of the artwork as an appropriate symbol for his / her community. The different ways in which different publics experience public art, therefore, are more akin to Phillips' opinions that public art – like the historical uses of the common – is "not a place of absolute conformity, predictability or acquiescence" (Phillips, 1989a: 195). Furthermore, the different ways in which different publics can and do experience public art allows for greater democracy – as opposed to

the creation of a public artwork, during which the public's participation was tightly controlled by the art world.

In contrast to the different ways in which different publics experience a work of public art, there is far more of a public consensus when it comes to the meaning of a work of public art. As discussed in the previous section, the concept of place plays an integral part in the way in which the meaning of a public artwork is interpreted by its public. Thus in the case of *Superlambanana*, Liverpool residents interpret the artwork in terms of Liverpool's pre-existing identity, which itself is comprised of certain geographical / historical associations of place. In the case of *Dream* – despite a few autobiographical interpretations – the majority of public interpretations of the meaning of the artwork concern the geographical / historical associations of the artwork's location of Sutton Manor / St Helens. Likewise, the meaning of *Another Place* is interpreted through the application of place in the form of those geographical / historical associations pertaining to Liverpool, Crosby's next-door neighbour in Merseyside. Consequently, it can be said that in all three instances there is more public collaboration – and, indeed, more public participation – in the creation of the meaning of a public artwork once the artwork has left the confines of the art world, so to speak, and has been installed in the (geographical) public sphere.

8.3 Public Art as 'The Other'

A public artwork can be viewed by members of the local community as something that is, in effect, separate from them. More specifically, a public artwork is seen as an object that has no relevance to their lives. Consequently, the artwork fails to be accepted by these community members as an appropriate symbol for their community. There are several ways in which a work of public art can be perceived as 'the other' by members of its public, with place once again playing an integral part.

As discussed in Section 8.1, place is central to the eventual acceptance of a work of public art *by* its community as a symbol *for* its community in two ways: (i) via the creation of a discernible relationship between the location of the artwork and the artwork itself by the application of relevant geographical / historical

associations, and (ii) via the integration of the artwork into the urban fabric, thereby establishing a three-way and mutually identifiable relationship between the artwork, the city (or town) and the people. Turning to the former point of the two, there is a discernible relationship between the physical form of *Superlambanana* and those Liverpool geographical / historical associations which Liverpool residents use to interpret the meaning of the artwork (see Section 7.1). Consequently, *Superlambanana* is accepted as an appropriate symbol for Liverpool and is therefore not seen as 'the other'. However, in comparison, both *Dream* and *Another Place* fail to establish such an apparent link with their respective locations: *Dream* because of its symbolic ambiguity and *Another Place* because of the application of the 'wrong' geographical / historical associations. Accordingly, both artworks fail to be accepted as appropriate symbols for their communities and, in doing so, are seen in terms of 'the other' by local residents.

With regards to the latter point of the two, the integration of the various smaller *Superlambananas* of the Go *Superlambananas!* Parade into the urban fabric of Liverpool gave residents the opportunity to share in the experience of exploring their city in an enjoyable way, thereby helping to establish a three-way relationship between the artwork, the city and the people. In comparison, the siting of both *Dream* and *Another Place* away from their respective urban areas is less able encourage such a three-way relationship to take place. Consequently, the identification of one with the other – i.e. the artwork with the people, the people with the city (town), the artwork with the city (town), and so on – is much weaker, if it is existent at all. Furthermore, the 'out-of-town' locations of *Dream* and *Another Place* encourages the view on the part of local residents that the artworks are there more for the benefit of visitors to their respective areas rather than for the residents themselves. This is compounded by the lack of any discernible socio-economic benefits to their communities by the presence of the artworks. Furthermore – and particularly in the case of *Another Place* – the presence of the artwork is seen by local residents as an impediment to the actual or symbolic ways they were able to use the location of the artwork prior to the artwork's installation, thereby resulting in a loss of ownership of that location. Taking these factors into account, therefore, both *Dream* and *Another Place* are

perceived by local residents as being of no relevance their lives. Consequently, both *Dream* and *Another Place* are seen in terms of 'the other'.

Alongside place as a factor in a public artwork's 'otherness' is the artwork itself. More specifically, it is the public artwork's qualities *as* an artwork which can influence local residents' perceptions of that artwork as an object that is relevant or irrelevant to their lives. As Bourdieu states, "When faced with legitimate works of art, people most lacking the specific competence apply to them the perceptual schemes of their own ethos, the very ones which structure their everyday perception of everyday existence" (1984: 44). Thus in both the cases of *Another Place* and *Dream*, the 'modern' (contemporary) style in which the artworks were fashioned was seen by residents of Crosby and St Helens as something they did not like and / or did not understand. Consequently, the artworks themselves were seen in these terms and *Another Place* and *Dream* were ultimately rejected as objects that possess any significance to the people they are purported to represent. In this way, therefore, the aesthetic criteria of the public differ to the aesthetic criteria of the aesthetic elite of the art world, who stress the importance of the contemporary style of a public artwork. In the language of the aesthetic elite, the 'contemporariness' of a public artwork, rather than symbolising the present, symbolises the (hypothetical) future of the area in which the artwork is situated. As the aesthetic elite of the art world possess the 'right' artistic' knowledge, therefore, symbolising the (hypothetical) future is a desirable quality for a public artwork to possess. In contrast, an *undesirable* quality for an artwork to possess is a straightforward symbolic representation of the past – and yet it is the past which members of the public 'read' into a public artwork (see Section 8.2).

The differences in the aesthetic criteria between the aesthetic elite of the art world and the public are also apparent in the criticisms of *Another Place* by Crosby residents. The artwork was seen as lacking visual interest (i.e. it was 'boring') and made out of inferior materials. Residents also criticised the manner in which the artwork was made – i.e. by the artist making a mould of his body and then by using the mould to create the statues. This method was not seen as appropriately 'artistic' by Crosby residents. Consequently, *Another Place* was not seen as a

‘proper’ work of art by the residents of Crosby, even though it is a ‘proper’ work of art according to the aesthetic elite of the art world.

Despite the differences in aesthetic criteria between the art world and the public, a public artwork will not necessarily be perceived as ‘the other’ by local residents if the artwork becomes part of the popular culture of their area and is therefore seen as part of their area’s overall identity. Thus *Superlambanana*, although it shares the same modern / contemporary style of its Crosby and St Helens counterparts, has become part of the popular culture of Liverpool and, as such, is seen as part of Liverpool’s overall identity alongside other Liverpool icons such as the Beatles and Liverpool and Everton football clubs. The discernible relationship between the physical appearance of *Superlambanana* and the qualities peculiar to Liverpool’s pre-existing identity assists in the artwork’s submersion into the city’s popular culture. Likewise, the integration of the various smaller *Superlambananas* of the Go *Superlambananas!* Parade into Liverpool’s urban fabric assisted the identification of the artwork with the city and the people (see Section 8.1). This also allowed Liverpool residents to undertake a ‘tour of discovery’ of their own city in the manner of the *dérive* (see Chapter 2) and in a similar fashion to the various ‘spot the Liver Bird’ trails on offer in the city and – for Beatles fans in particular – the Magical Mystery Tour. Furthermore, the availability of *Superlambanana*-related merchandise in Liverpool shops (e.g. ceramic ornaments, keyrings, coasters and postcards) extended the ‘ownership’ of the artwork to local people on both a personal and domestic level, thereby encouraging the submersion of *Superlambanana* even deeper into Liverpool’s popular culture. Such apparently rampant commercialisation of *Superlambanana* – although frowned upon by the art world – nevertheless assisted the overall acceptance of the artwork as an appropriate symbol of Liverpool by Liverpool residents. It is therefore this ‘ordinariness’ of *Superlambanana* – i.e. the way in which *Superlambanana* is able to be experienced on a more day-to-day basis by Liverpool community members – that facilitates its incorporation into Liverpool’s ‘geography of identity’.

In the case of *Superlambanana*, therefore, the modern / contemporary style in which it was created ceased to be an impediment to its acceptance as an

appropriate symbol for Liverpool once the artwork became an identifiable part of Liverpool's popular culture. In effect, what transpired was a transference of 'ownership' of the artwork from the art world, in which it was created, to the people of the city of Liverpool, in which it was situated. Central to this transference of ownership is the change in meaning of *Superlambanana* – i.e. from the art world-based meanings of genetic modification, Liverpool's past (imports and exports) and / or Liverpool's future (digital industries) – to the public-based and more generalised meaning of *Superlambanana* as symbol of Liverpool's overall identity, which includes the qualities of humour and 'quirkiness'. In comparison, both *Another Place* and *Dream* have yet to undergo this transference from the art world to the public in as emphatically a way. Consequently, both artworks remain 'stuck' in the art world, perceived by local people as objects which have little relevance to their lives.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have discussed the key findings which have arisen from my research. As can be seen, the findings cut across all three Data Analysis chapters (Power Relationships and Role Dynamics, Meaning and Interpretation and People and Places); thus all three themes are interlinked. The first key finding (above) explores the importance of place in the creation of the meaning of a public artwork. In the first instance, the geographical / historical associations of place are utilised by local people when interpreting the meaning of an artwork once it is located in the public sphere, and also by members of the art world during the creation process of an artwork and / or subsequent to the artwork's creation in order to make the artwork appear more relevant to its community. In the second instance, the integration of a public artwork into the urban fabric of its location enables a three-way and mutually identifiable relationship between the place, the people who live in that place and the artwork itself.

The second key finding explores the concept of 'the public' in terms of 'the people' and the role of public participation in the creation of a public artwork. It was found that public participation – although ostensibly a democratic practice – is tightly controlled by the aesthetic elite of the art world, who view the public as a single social group that requires educating into the 'right' artistic knowledge in

order to make the 'right' artistic choices. In contrast, various publics (social groups) become visible once the artwork is located in the (geographical) public sphere. Furthermore, these different publics experience public art in different ways; thus it is via these different ways of experiencing public art that assist in the acceptance or non-acceptance of a public artwork as an appropriate symbol of its community by its community. Public participation is also evident in the interpretation of meaning of a public artwork, with the geographical / historical associations of place being the 'default' interpretation for the majority of community members.

The third key finding discusses the role of the public artwork itself, particularly in the way it can be viewed as 'the other' by members of its public and therefore fail to be accepted as an appropriate symbol for their community. As discussed above, such 'otherness' can manifest itself through the artwork's lack of association with the place in which it is located and via the artwork's aesthetic qualities which can contradict the public's own aesthetic criteria. This 'otherness', however, can eventually transform into 'ownership' should the public artwork become a part of local popular culture, thereby assuming relevance to the lives of local people and, ultimately, acceptance as an appropriate symbol for their community.

However, and as is demonstrated above, the three key findings do not stand in isolation from each other. Rather, it is the interrelationship between the *place* in which the artwork is situated, the *people* who reside in the place in which the artwork is situated and the *artwork* itself which influences the overall acceptance of the artwork as an appropriate symbol for its (geographical) community. Consequently, it is the nature of this three-way relationship and which ultimately determines the publicness of public art. The following *Conclusion* discusses this quality of 'publicness' in greater detail and the ways in which the three main ingredients – i.e. the place, the people and the artwork – contribute, as well as summarising the thesis overall.

Chapter 9

Conclusion

Chapter 9

Conclusion

9.1 Findings and Overall Argument of the Research

The overarching aim of this thesis has been to examine the role which public art plays in shaping community identity. To this end, the study has explored the meanings people give to three large-scale public artworks in the Merseyside area, the artworks being *Superlambanana* (Liverpool), *Another Place* (Crosby / Sefton) and *Dream* (St Helens). I therefore undertook a total of 60 semi-structured interviews with people who were involved in the initial creation / commissioning processes of the artworks and members of the geographical communities in which the artworks are located. After transcribing the interviews, I analysed the interview data using a grounded theory approach, upon which three main themes emerged: these constitute the three data analysis chapters in which I present original data.

The first data analysis chapter discussed the relationships between the various parties involved in the creation / commissioning processes of the artworks. This showed that there are power disparities between the parties, with some parties within the three artistic networks possessing more aesthetic influence than others. I call these parties the 'aesthetic elite'. Furthermore, the aesthetic elite perceive members of the public as requiring educating into the 'right' artistic knowledge before they are able to participate in the creation / commissioning process of an artwork.

The second data analysis chapter discussed the meanings which the artworks were given during their creation / commissioning processes and once they were installed in public space. This showed that, although the aesthetic elite members of the art world stress the importance of the symbolic ambiguity of a public artwork (i.e. the 'openness' of the artwork to interpretation), it is the place which is integral to the meaning of an artwork for the great majority of my research participants. Furthermore, although 'the future' is also seen by the aesthetic elite members of the art world as being central to the symbolic content of a public artwork, it is the past in the form of the historical associations of place which is

largely utilised to interpret the meaning of the artwork, particularly when the artwork is installed in the public realm.

Finally, the third data analysis chapter examined the ways in which members of the three geographical communities experience the respective artworks, including how they interact with the artworks and their attitudes, positive and negative, towards the artworks. It showed that different publics interact in different ways with the artworks and that members of the public also have their own aesthetic requirements of public art, which contradicts the aesthetic requirements of public art on the part of the aesthetic elite members of the art world. Furthermore, this chapter also illustrates the importance of place, in that the location the art work can influence the ways in which community members experience the artwork in a more direct and day-to-day way as well as enabling local residents to (re)discover their own city.

As the Discussion chapter highlighted, the three key findings that arose from my research constitute the place in which the artwork is located, the people who live in the place and the artwork itself. Furthermore, as the Discussion chapter also demonstrates, far from being discrete and independent elements, the place, the people and the artwork have an interdependent relationship. The people living in the place in which the artwork is located imbue the artwork with the relevant geographical / historical associations of that place, which the artwork subsequently reflects back to the people as the intrinsic meaning of the artwork. Furthermore, the location of the artwork influences the ways in which local people interact with and experience the artwork. In particular, the integration of the artwork into the urban environment allows people to experience the artwork in broadly two ways: (i) by creating an opportunity for local people to (re)discover their city, thereby establishing a three-way relationship between the artwork, the people and the city and, conversely, (ii) by allowing people to experience the artwork on a more routine, day-to-day basis, thereby helping to reduce the artwork's 'otherness'. Consequently, these ways of interacting with and experiencing an artwork can reinforce – or not – the relationship between the three elements. It is this complex and nuanced relationship, therefore, between the place, the people and the artwork which comprises the 'publicness' of public

art and affects the (non)acceptance of a work of public art by members of the geographical community in which it is located. In essence, these three elements form a public art 'triad', which itself takes the form of an equilateral triangle – i.e. each side of the triangle is as important as the other. The findings from my research therefore contrast with the more generalised theories art, such as the 'New Sociology of Art' (De La Fuente, 2007, 2010a, 2010b) which emphasises the agency of the object in the meaning-making process of art. In comparison, all three components of the 'public art triad' have agency, in that all three affect each other in different, but equally significant, ways. Returning to the research questions, therefore, they can be answered in the following ways:

- What are the meanings that are assigned to a work of public art and who assigns them?

As demonstrated in previous chapters, the meanings assigned to a work of public art are three-fold. The first layer of meaning involves the 'supra-meanings' – i.e. the symbolic qualities that all 'good' works of public art should possess – which are assigned to the artworks by the aesthetic elite of the art world. The first of these supra-meanings involves the international quality of the artwork – i.e. that the artwork should possess international as well as local relevance. This includes the commissioning of international rather than local artists to create the artwork. The second supra-meaning involves the 'contemporary' nature of the artwork – i.e. that the artwork should symbolise the future of the place in which it is located, not only the past. Finally, the artwork should possess symbolic ambiguity – i.e. the ability of the meaning of the artwork to be open to interpretation. The second layer of meaning involves the 'coded meanings' – i.e. the meanings that are assigned an artwork during its creation by the artist. These meanings can involve the geographical / historical associations of the place in which the artwork is located, as with *Superlambanana* and *Dream*. However, as with *Another Place*, the artwork may initially have been created with a non-site-specific meaning, only to assume local associations once it has been commissioned to occupy a particular location. The third layer of meaning involves the 'decoded meanings' of the artwork, which are the meanings assigned to an artwork by members of the public once the artwork has been installed in public space. These meanings can include autobiographical interpretations of the artwork – i.e. meanings that are

influenced by the individual's life experiences. However, the geographical / historical associations of place are the main way of interpreting the meaning of the artwork for most participants, although this is dependent upon there being an ostensible relationship between the artwork and its location.

- What is the role of 'the public' in influencing the meaning(s) associated with a work of public art?

As discussed in Chapter 2, 'the public' of public art can be interpreted in two ways: firstly, as meaning the place in which the artwork is situated and, secondly, as meaning the people who live and work in and around the site of the artwork, as well as those people who live further afield (such as visitors to the artwork from outside the geographical area). My research has demonstrated that both interpretations of 'the public' (i.e. both the place and the people) are significant factors in the meanings which are associated with a work of public art. In the instance of 'the people' and, as demonstrated in Chapters 5 and 6, the role of the public in all three case studies is limited and regulated by certain members of the art world. Initially, the aesthetic elite of the art world (i.e. the cultural consultants, the funders, the art commissioners) attempts to retain control of the entire artistic process, including the way in which the artwork looks and the overall symbolic content of the artwork. In order to achieve this, participation by members of the public is also controlled (if members of the public are allowed to participate at all) via their education in the 'right' artistic knowledge (i.e. the knowledge of the aesthetic elite) in order for them to make the 'right' artistic choices (i.e. the choices of the aesthetic elite). However, once the artwork is situated in the geographical public sphere, public participation can no longer be controlled by the aesthetic elite. Consequently, members of the public are able to assign meanings to the artwork and experience the artwork in their own right. 'The public', therefore, is able to participate fully in the consumption of the artwork and, in doing so, it – or, rather, they – are able to participate fully in the creation of meaning of the artwork – or, alternatively, in the non-creation of the meaning of an artwork, depending on (i) the nature of the symbolic relationship between the artwork and its location, and (ii) the nature of the interactions with and experiences of the artwork by local residents, which are themselves influenced by the artwork's location. In these ways, therefore, both the 'people'

and 'place' elements of public art interconnect to influence the meanings assigned to a work of public art and, ultimately, the acceptance / non-acceptance of the artwork as an appropriate symbol of the community by community members.

9.2 Theoretical Implications of the Study

This thesis has demonstrated that there are structural influences at play in the meaning-making processes of public art, particularly during the initial creation / commissioning processes of the artworks. In this way, the theories of both Becker (1982, 2008) and Bourdieu (1993) are relevant, in that both theories examine the relationships between the various parties within the artistic network. However, whereas Becker's 'art world' (1982, 2008) concentrates on the division of labour between these parties, Bourdieu's 'field of cultural production' (1993) focuses on the ways in which the parties within the artistic network contribute to the ideological creation of an artwork – i.e. which of the parties decide that an artwork is, indeed, art. Although both independent theories, my study has shown that they are both integral to explaining the relationship between the various parties in the artistic networks of the three case studies. As has been shown in Chapter 4, the art world of each artwork consists of a hierarchy, with those parties at the top of the hierarchy constituting the aesthetic elite – i.e. those parties which have the most influence in deciding the aesthetic content of the artwork, such as the cultural consultant and certain funding bodies – and those parties towards the bottom of the hierarchy constituting those organisations which are responsible for the physical production of the artwork, such as the engineers and the concrete manufacturers. This aesthetic / non-aesthetic differentiation between the parties in the artistic network is demarcated by the parties themselves, who define their own roles in the artistic network in relation to each other. This therefore illustrates that both Becker's and Bourdieu's approaches are not incompatible with each other. On the contrary, both approaches are complementary when explaining the roles of the various parties in the artistic network and the relationships between them. My research, therefore, fills the theoretical 'gap' between Becker and Bourdieu, as it illuminates both the physical and the ideological creation of a public artwork.

A further theoretical point of interest of the study pertains to the nature of public art. As mentioned above, my study illustrates the significance of the three-way relationship between the place in which the artwork is located, the people who are resident in the place, and the artwork itself. This is in contrast to theories pertaining to art in general, such as the 'New Sociology of Art' as advocated by De La Fuente (2007, 2010a, 2010b), which emphasises the agency of the object in the meaning-making process of art, and to theories regarding the two-way relationship between people and objects, such as Knorr Cetina's concept of 'objectualization' (1997), which discusses the identification of subjects (people) with objects and vice versa. Furthermore, from the perspective of Semiotics, this also contradicts the necessity for a work of public art to possess the quality of 'openness' to interpretation (see Chapters 6 and 8 and Eco, 1989). By highlighting the significance of place in the meaning-making process of public art, therefore, my study is in agreement with Rubio (2012: 157), who accentuates the need to take site-specificity into account during the production process of a work of public art. Furthermore, by discussing the various ways in which people experience art (such as dressing the artwork up, playing 'spot the artwork' and objecting to the artwork on the grounds that it will scare away local wildlife), my study is in agreement with Phillips (1989a: 195), who argues that public art should accommodate various different publics. Consequently, by taking into account both the ways people in which people (i) give meaning to a work of public art and (ii) experience a work of public art, this study, via the primary data that has been collected, provides a more comprehensive explanation of the nature and qualities of public art.

9.3 Implications for Social Policy

As discussed in Chapter 3, over the past thirty or so years culture has become an essential part of British social policy, particularly in the context of urban regeneration. It is therefore worthwhile considering the potential implications of the findings of this study on British social policy. The following points, therefore, may be worthwhile taking into account during the process of creating / commissioning a work of public art, particularly a work of public art that is intended to symbolise a (geographical) community.

Firstly, as the geographical / historical associations of place are integral to the interpretation of meaning of a public artwork, it will be beneficial to understand how the location of the artwork relates to the artwork itself – i.e. are the geographical / historical associations of the location of the artwork reflected by the artwork in a way / ways in which local people are able to interpret? As discussed in Chapter 6, the ‘openness’ of a public artwork may be a desirable quality according to the aesthetic elite of the art world; however, an artwork that is too ‘open’ does not lend itself to the ease of interpretation of place associations on the part of local residents.

Secondly, the location of the artwork also influences the ways in which people interact with and experience the artwork. Consequently, the various potential ways an artwork can be experienced by local people must be taken into account. In this way, this study agrees with Gilmore (2014) in that, rather than emphasising the potential ‘across-the-board’ economic outcomes of a work of public art for a community (such as an increase in income and investment), it is more constructive to understand the “everyday cultural participation” (Gilmore, 2014: 23) of local people, particularly as the promised economic benefits sometimes fail to materialise (or are perceived to fail to materialise by local residents), which itself can lead to the artwork becoming the focus of resentment for community members.

Overall, therefore, the value of a work of public art in the context of a geographical community lies, not in the potential economic benefits to that community, but in the ways in which local people are able to make meaning of the artwork and interact with and experience the artwork. Because of this, rather than assuming that ‘the public’ as a social group lacks the ‘right’ artistic knowledge to make the ‘right’ artistic choices and is therefore a largely passive entity, it is more helpful to recognise ‘the public’ as constituting groups of individuals who are active in their own right in interpreting the meaning of and experiencing the artwork. The focus of ‘public participation’, therefore, lies in the consumption of a work of public art, rather than in its production, which – as has been demonstrated – is tightly regulated by the aesthetic elite (e.g. cultural consultants, funders) of the art world.

Taking into consideration the above factors and the overall findings of the research therefore, I recommend that, rather than deliberately commissioning an international artist to create an artwork for a specific geographical area, an artist local to the geographical area should be employed, as such an artist will be more likely to be conversant with the prevailing historical / geographical associations of the area to the extent that an international artist is not. Furthermore, a local artist will be able to perform a more 'hands-on' role in relation to other community members – i.e. by holding informal meetings in local schools, community centres and other such public places at which residents will be able to voice their opinions and concerns about the potential artwork, thereby allowing a greater participation on the part of local people at the initial commissioning / creation stage. Alternatively, should an international artist be the artist of choice, I propose that, as part of his / her commission, the artist should reside in the area in which the artwork is to be located at least a month before and then subsequently during the creation of the artwork as a means of (i) becoming familiar with the prevailing historical / geographical associations of the area, and (ii) allowing for the greater participation of community members at the initial commissioning / creation stage of the artwork by holding informal public meetings in the ways mentioned above.

9.4 Strengths and Limitations of the Study

This study exhibits extensive use of primary research in the form of semi-structured interviews with a number of participants from both the production and consumption sides of the public art debate. This has significance in three ways. Firstly, a broader and more inclusive data set has been produced, creating an 'all-round' picture of the meaning-making processes of the three artworks. Secondly, the data aids in illuminating the longitudinal nature of the meaning-making processes – i.e. the transformation in meanings from the initial creation of the artworks to the installation of the artworks in the public realm and subsequently to the year in which the interviews were undertaken. Thirdly, the data sets of the three individual case studies illustrate both the differences and similarities between (i) the personnel involved in the creation of each of the artworks and (ii) the meanings assigned to the artworks by all participants in the study.

There are, however, a number of limitations to the study which must be taken into consideration. Firstly, owing to time and expense constraints, research was limited to public artworks located solely in Merseyside and to three urban locations. Secondly – and again owing to time and expense constraints – the number of case studies was limited to three, whereas a larger number of case studies may have generated more diverse data. Thirdly, the number of research participants (60) is relatively small. However, as above, time and expense constraints meant that I was not able to interview a greater number of participants. Fourthly, the composition of the research participants was limited to people over the age of sixteen owing to advice received regarding the possibility of needing to comply with convoluted academic ethical procedures involving participants below that age. Fifthly, I was not able to interview any of the three artists responsible for the artworks. As two of the artists were not resident in Britain, but in Spain and Japan respectively, travelling to interview them would have been both time-consuming and expensive. Furthermore, it was very difficult to contact these artists directly to ask for their participation in the study. Although I contacted the third artist through his personal assistant, he declined to be interviewed. Consequently, I was unable to acquire first-hand accounts of both the physical and symbolic creations of the three artworks from their artists and had to rely on second-hand accounts of the artists' motivations and intentions from other research participants.

9.5 Recommendations for Further Research

As outlined above, this study has been subject to a number of limitations, therefore further research is recommended to address these limitations. In particular, research undertaken in other regions of England / Britain / the UK as well as in rural as well as in urban areas will allow for a broader, and therefore more detailed, account of the meaning-making processes of public art. Furthermore, on an even wider scale, research could be undertaken on an international basis, comparing and contrasting the meaning-making processes of public art between countries. This approach would highlight any differences and similarities in the uses of public art between different cultures, e.g. Eastern vs Western cultures. Such a large-scale study can be facilitated by the use of ICT and social media – e.g. by inviting people to contribute opinions of public artworks on

sites such as Facebook and Twitter and blogs dedicated to specific public artworks. Overall, research into the meaning-making processes of other works of public art is recommended to expose the power disparities between the various parties involved in the artistic network, in particular the power disparities between the parties which constitute the aesthetic elite on the one hand and members of the public / local community on the other.

9.6 Reflections as a Researcher in the Field

During the research process, certain expectations I had at the beginning of the process underwent a transformation. More specifically, when I initially embarked upon my research, I was solely interested in obtaining data pertaining to the meaning(s) assigned to the three artworks which constituted the case studies – hence the particular phrasing of the research questions. However, as my research progressed and the more people I interviewed, the more it became apparent that the ways in which people interacted with the artworks were also pertinent to the overall meaning-making processes surrounding the artworks. Further to this point, when asked about *Superlambanana*, the preponderance of community participants automatically referred to the Go *Superlambananas!* Parade or ‘trail’ rather than to the original sculpture. This made me realise that the Parade had been a significant event to Liverpool community members; consequently, it was my task to determine the reason(s) why. Such ‘unexpected’ findings were able to be incorporated into the study due to the grounded theory approach I took. The data obtained regarding these findings subsequently informed Theme 3 of my data analysis and thereby Chapter 7.

Regarding the participants themselves: I was pleasantly surprised by how many ‘art world’ participants I contacted agreed to be interviewed. Indeed, most were very happy to talk about their role in the creation processes of their respective artworks – so much so that, for the most part, I felt I was barely doing any work. All I was required to do was sit and listen and interject a question on those occasions when the interviewee made a particular novel and / or salient point on which I desired more information. As indicated above, the main absentees from the interviewing process were the three artists, largely due to time-distance constraints and the difficulties I had in finding appropriate contact details.

However, I was able to contact the UK based artist via the Royal Academy (of which he is a fellow) and subsequently via his personal assistant. He politely declined to be interviewed. Although a little disappointed by this, I understood that he would no doubt have many pressures on his time; therefore my attitude towards this was 'Well, at least I'd tried'.

I also found community participants very willing to talk about their opinions of their respective artworks, although – as indicated in the Methodology – some were initially apologetic about their negative opinions of the artworks. My one regret involving community participants was my deliberate omission of children as interviewees owing to advice received regarding convoluted academic ethics procedures. As well as excluding a significant part of the population from my study, I feel that I would have acquired differently 'coloured' data, as the geographical / historical associations associated with the artworks by adult participants may not have been as familiar to the under 16 year-olds – i.e. they may be able to view the artworks from different perspectives. Consequently, should I continue with further research in the same subject area in the future I will make a point of including children as research participants.

On the whole, I found my role as a researcher a very enjoyable and fulfilling one, mainly due to the variety of people I was privileged to interview. However, I feel that I was largely assisted in my role by the research subject itself – i.e. I feel that my participants found the subject matter a pleasant one to discuss, and for certain parties in the respective art worlds (e.g. the concrete company, the South Sefton Development Trust, the ex-miners), their participation in the creation / commissioning processes of their artworks was – and still is – a source of pride and they were pleased to have the opportunity to discuss their involvement. As a result, I and my research benefitted from their willingness to be interviewed.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Interview Questions

Appendix 2: Node Structures

Appendix 1

Interview Questions

Art Fund Questions

Tell me a little about how the Art Fund operates and your (previous) role in it?

How did the Art Fund get involved in the *Dream* project?

Why did the Art Fund support *Dream*? What was the appeal of the project?

How much involvement did you have personally in the project?

Only a small number of people from the local community were involved in the art process. Do you feel this was adequate?

What, in your opinion, is the appeal of *Dream* as an art object?

On the whole, do you think *Dream* is an asset for St Helens? Why / why not?

In your opinion, what should public art do? What is its purpose?

Arts Council Questions

Tell me a little about how the Arts Council operates and your previous role in it.

How did the Arts Council become involved in the *Dream* project?

What was the appeal of *Dream* to the Arts Council?

What criteria did *Dream* have to fulfil in order to be given funding?

What were the Arts Council's relationships like with the other people / organisations involved in *Dream*?

How much involvement did you personally have in the project?

How did you see your role in the project in particular?

What was your understanding of the concept behind *Dream*?

Community Arts Organisation Questions

Please describe the background of your organisation – when it was set up, why it was set up, its purpose(s)

How did your organisation become involved in the Go *Superlambananas* project?

How were participating artists recruited?

How were other participants – e.g. schools, businesses – recruited?

What were the reasons for having the Go *Superlambananas* parade?

How successful was the parade, and why?

How similar / dissimilar was the Go *Superlambanana* parade to other animal parades organised by your organisation?

Did your organisation receive feedback from the public about Go *Superlambananas*? If so, what sort of feedback did you receive?

Compared to Go *Superlambananas*, how successful was the Go Penguins parade that followed, and why?

Concrete Company Questions

How did your company become involved in *Dream*? Who approached you?

What was the appeal of the project?

Describe the role of your company in the project. What were you responsible for?

What problems, if any, did you encounter?

How much input were you able to have into *Dream*'s creation?

How long did it take to construct *Dream* from 1st being approached to its installation on the site?

What, if any, are the positives you have drawn from being involved in *Dream*

- On a business level?
- On a personal level?

Any negatives?

Liverpool Biennial 1 Questions

Please describe your role in the creation / commissioning of *Superlambanana*, *Another Place* and *Dream*.

How were the respective artists chosen and what were the reasons for choosing them?

How were community members involved in the creation / commissioning processes of the 3 artworks? Did they have much input?

What is your opinion on community participation in the creation / commissioning of public art? Do you think it's a good thing?

Another Place was originally supposed to be a temporary feature. What were the reasons for making it permanent and how much support for this was there?

From doing some background reading about *Dream*, it appears that it was important that the chosen artwork had the potential to be an icon. Do you think *Dream* has fulfilled this potential?

Why was *Superlambanana* chosen to represent Liverpool?

What was the original concept of *Superlambanana* as you understood it? Do you think that concept has changed over time or stayed the same?

Why do you think *Superlambanana* has become so popular?

In your view, what should public art do? What is its purpose?

Liverpool Biennial 2 Questions

How did the idea for a sculpture in St Helens first come about?

Describe your / the Biennial's role in the creation of *Dream*.

How were community members involved in the process? Were they able to have much input?

How was the artist chosen and what were the reasons for choosing him?

From doing some background reading about *Dream*, it appears that it was important that the chosen artwork had the potential to be an icon. Why is this?

What impact has *Dream* had on the local community? Has its reception been mainly positive or negative?

What were the reasons for situating *Another Place* in Crosby?

Describe your / the Biennial's role in the commissioning process of *Another Place*

How were community members involved in the process? Did they have much input?

Another Place was originally supposed to be a temporary feature. What were the reasons for making it permanent and how much support for this was there?

What was the original concept of *Another Place* as you understood it? Do you think that concept has changed over time or stayed the same?

What was the initial reaction to *Another Place* and how do you think this has changed, if at all?

What was the original reason for the commissioning of *Superlambanana*?

Why was *Superlambanana* chosen to represent Liverpool?

What was the original concept of *Superlambanana* as you understood it? Do you think that concept has changed over time or stayed the same?

What was the initial reaction to *Superlambanana*?

Why do you think *Superlambanana* has become so popular?

Do you think *Superlambanana* is a good thing for Liverpool and, if so, why?

In your view, what should public art do? What is its purpose?

Local Artist Questions

How did you become involved in *Superlambanana*?

Describe your role in the creation of *Superlambanana*. Who else was involved with you in the process?

What was the concept of *Superlambanana* as you understood it?

What was the initial reaction to *Superlambanana*?

Why do you think *Superlambanana* has become so popular?

Do you think *Superlambanana* is a good thing for Liverpool and, if so, why?

In your view, what should public art do? What is its purpose?

Miner 1 Questions

How did you become involved in *Dream*?

Describe your role in the creation of *Dream*. How much input did you have? Did you feel you were on an equal footing with the other three main partners (St Helens Council, The Big Art Trust and the Liverpool Biennial)? Who, in your opinion, had overall control, if anyone?

How were other community members involved in the process?

How was the artist chosen and what were the reasons for choosing him?

From reading about *Dream* and listening to your talk, it appears that it was important that the chosen artwork had the potential to be an icon. Why is this?

What impact has *Dream* had on the local community? Has its reception been mainly positive or negative?

In your view, what should public art do? What is its purpose?

Sefton Council Questions

How did Sefton Council get involved in the project?

What were the reasons for originally installing *Another Place* on Crosby Beach?

What were the reasons for choosing *Another Place* in particular?

What was the meaning of *Another Place* as the Council understood it?

I understand the Liverpool Biennial played a large part in the commissioning of *Another Place*. What was their particular role?

Who else was involved? What was their input?

What were the reasons for keeping *Another Place*?

Was there a public consultation? How did that go?

Has *Another Place* put Crosby 'on the map'? Why / why not?

What have been the benefits of *Another Place* to Crosby?

Appendix 2

Node Structures

Node Structure

Public Art

27/11/2014 18:22

| Hierarchical Name | Nickname | Aggregate | User Assigned |
|-------------------|----------|-----------|---------------|
|-------------------|----------|-----------|---------------|

Node

Nodes

| | | |
|--|----|--------|
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation | No | Red |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\interpretations | No | Green |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\interpretations\\association of artwork with area | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\interpretations\\association of artwork with area\\comparison with penguins | No | Blue |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\interpretations\\autobiographical interpretations of artwork | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\interpretations\\local history associations of artwork | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\interpretations\\negative interpretations of artwork | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\interpretations\\other interpretations of artwork | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\interpretations\\positive interpretations of artwork | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\interpretations\\representation of the future | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\storytelling | No | Green |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\storytelling\\the importance of telling a story | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\storytelling\\the importance of the backstory | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\symbolism | No | Green |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\symbolism\\symbolic origins of artwork | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\symbolism\\the importance of symbolic ambiguity | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\symbolism\\the importance of symbolic content | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\people & places | No | Red |
| Nodes\\people & places\\location | No | Green |
| Nodes\\people & places\\location\\accessibility of artwork | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\people & places\\location\\interaction of environment with artwork | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\people & places\\location\\perceived benefit of artwork to location | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\people & places\\location\\perceived merits of location | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\people & places\\location\\previous use of location | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\people & places\\location\\variety of environment of artwork | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\people & places\\people | No | Green |
| Nodes\\people & places\\people\\appeal to children | No | Yellow |

| | | |
|---|----|--------|
| Nodes\\people & places\\people\\appeal to tourists | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\people & places\\people\\attitudes to public art | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\people & places\\people\\nature of interaction with artwork | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\people & places\\people\\ownership of or desire to own artwork | No | Yellow |

Reports\\Node Structure Report

Page 1 of 3

27/11/2014 18:22

| Hierarchical Name | Nickname | Aggregate | User Assigned |
|---|----------|-----------|---------------|
| Nodes\\people & places\\people\\perceived artistic merit of artwork | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics | | No | Red |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\\the art world | | No | Green |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\\the art world\\aesthetic vs technical | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\\the art world\\importance of artistic ambition | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\\the art world\\importance of artistic expertise | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\\the art world\\importance of continuous support of public art | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\\the art world\\importance of council support of public art | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\\the art world\\support of non-commercial art | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\\the art world\\the need for quality control | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\\the public | | No | Green |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\\the public\\extent & type of public participation | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\\the public\\public exposure to public art | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\\the public\\the need for the public's artistic education | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\\the public\\the public's acceptance of public art | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\\the public\\the public's preference for the mundane | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\the value of and uses for art | | No | Red |
| Nodes\\the value of and uses for art\\art as education | | No | Green |
| Nodes\\the value of and uses for art\\art as place-making | | No | Green |
| Nodes\\the value of and uses for art\\economic value of the arts | | No | Green |
| Nodes\\the value of and uses for art\\importance of contemporary art | | No | Green |
| Nodes\\the value of and uses for art\\importance of temporary artworks | | No | Green |
| Nodes\\the value of and uses for art\\public art as a talking point | | No | Green |
| Nodes\\the value of and uses for art\\public art as political football | | No | Green |
| Nodes\\the value of and uses for art\\the iconic nature of public art | | No | Green |
| Nodes\\the value of and uses for art\\the importance of international art | | No | Green |

Relationship

Relationships

| | | |
|---|----|------|
| Relationships\\Arup (Associated) Concrete Company | No | None |
| Relationships\\Liverpool Biennial 1 (Associated) Arup | No | None |
| Relationships\\Liverpool Biennial 1 (Associated) Local Artist | No | None |
| Relationships\\Liverpool Biennial 1 (Associated) SSDT | No | None |

Reports\\Node Structure Report

Page 2 of 3

27/11/2014 18:22

| Hierarchical Name | Nickname | Aggregate | User Assigned |
|--|----------|-----------|---------------|
| Relationships\\St Helens Council 1 (Associated) Liverpool Biennial 1 | | No | None |

Node Structure

04/01/2015 15:14

| Hierarchical Name | Nickname | Aggregate | User Assigned |
|--|----------|-----------|---------------|
| Node | | | |
| Nodes | | | |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation | | No | Red |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\interpretations | | No | Green |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\interpretations\\association of artwork with area, past & present | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\interpretations\\autobiographical interpretations of artwork | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\interpretations\\other interpretations of artwork | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\interpretations\\representation of the future | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\storytelling | | No | Green |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\storytelling\\the importance of telling a story | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\storytelling\\the importance of the backstory | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\symbolism | | No | Green |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\symbolism\\symbolic origins of artwork | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\symbolism\\the importance of symbolic ambiguity | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\people & places | | No | Red |
| Nodes\\people & places\\location | | No | Green |
| Nodes\\people & places\\location\\accessibility of artwork | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\people & places\\location\\interaction of environment with artwork | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\people & places\\location\\perceived benefit of artwork to location | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\people & places\\location\\perceived merits of location | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\people & places\\location\\previous use of location | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\people & places\\location\\variety of environment of artwork | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\people & places\\people | | No | Green |
| Nodes\\people & places\\people\\appeal to children | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\people & places\\people\\appeal to tourists | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\people & places\\people\\attitudes to public art | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\people & places\\people\\nature of interaction with artwork | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\people & places\\people\\ownership of or desire to own artwork | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\people & places\\people\\perceived artistic merit of artwork | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics | | No | Red |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\\the art world | | No | Green |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\\the art world\\aesthetic vs technical | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\\the art world\\importance of artistic expertise | | No | Yellow |

04/01/2015 15:14

| Hierarchical Name | Nickname | Aggregate | User Assigned |
|---|----------|-----------|---------------|
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\\the art world\\importance of council support of public art | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\\the art world\\the instrumental uses & value of public art | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\\the art world\\the instrumental uses & value of public art\\economic value of the arts | | No | Purple |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\\the art world\\the instrumental uses & value of public art\\importance of contemporary art | | No | Purple |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\\the art world\\the instrumental uses & value of public art\\the educational value of art | | No | Purple |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\\the art world\\the instrumental uses & value of public art\\the importance of international art | | No | Purple |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\\the art world\\the instrumental uses & value of public art\\the use of art in place-making | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\\the art world\\the need for quality control | | No | Green |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\\the public | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\\the public\\extent & type of public participation | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\\the public\\the need for the public's artistic education | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\\the public\\the public's exposure to and acceptance of public art | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\\the public\\the public's preference for the mundane | | No | Yellow |

Relationship

Relationships

| | | |
|--|----|------|
| Relationships\\Arts Council (Associated) Liverpool Biennial 1 | No | None |
| Relationships\\Arup (Associated) Concrete Company | No | None |
| Relationships\\Liverpool Biennial 1 (Associated) Arup | No | None |
| Relationships\\Liverpool Biennial 1 (Associated) Local Artist | No | None |
| Relationships\\Liverpool Biennial 1 (Associated) SSDT | No | None |
| Relationships\\St Helens Council 1 (Associated) Liverpool Biennial 1 | No | None |

Node Structure

Public Art

08/01/2015 00:18

| Hierarchical Name | Nickname | Aggregate | User Assigned |
|--|----------|-----------|---------------|
| Node | | | |
| Nodes | | | |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation | | No | Red |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\interpretations | | No | Green |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\interpretations\\association of artwork with area, past & present | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\interpretations\\autobiographical interpretations of artwork | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\interpretations\\other interpretations of artwork | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\interpretations\\representation of the future | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\storytelling | | No | Green |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\storytelling\\the importance of telling a story | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\storytelling\\the importance of the backstory | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\symbolism | | No | Green |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\symbolism\\symbolic origins of artwork | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\symbolism\\the importance of symbolic ambiguity | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\people & places | | No | Red |
| Nodes\\people & places\\location | | No | Green |
| Nodes\\people & places\\location\\accessibility of artwork | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\people & places\\location\\interaction of environment with artwork | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\people & places\\location\\perceived benefit of artwork to location | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\people & places\\location\\perceived merits of location | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\people & places\\location\\previous uses of location | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\people & places\\people | | No | Green |
| Nodes\\people & places\\people\\appeal to children | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\people & places\\people\\appeal to tourists | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\people & places\\people\\attitudes to public art | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\people & places\\people\\nature of interaction with artwork | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\people & places\\people\\ownership of or desire to own artwork | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\people & places\\people\\perceived artistic merit of artwork | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics | | No | Red |

| | | |
|---|----|--------|
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\the art world | No | Green |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\the art world\esthetic vs technical | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\the art world\importance of artistic expertise | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\the art world\importance of contemporary & international art | No | Purple |

Reports\\Node Structure Report

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08/01/2015 00:18

| Hierarchical Name | Nickname | Aggregate | User Assigned |
|--|----------|-----------|---------------|
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\the art world\importance of council support of public art | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\the art world\the need for quality control | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\the art world\the use of art in urban regeneration & place making | | No | Purple |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\the public | | No | Green |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\the public\extent & type of public participation | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\the public\the need for the public's artistic education | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\the public\the public's exposure to and acceptance of public art | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\the public\the public's preference for the mundane | | No | Yellow |

Relationship

Relationships

| | | |
|--|----|------|
| Relationships\\Arts Council (Associated) Liverpool Biennial 1 | No | None |
| Relationships\\Arup (Associated) Concrete Company | No | None |
| Relationships\\Liverpool Biennial 1 (Associated) Arup | No | None |
| Relationships\\Liverpool Biennial 1 (Associated) Local Artist | No | None |
| Relationships\\Liverpool Biennial 1 (Associated) SSDT | No | None |
| Relationships\\St Helens Council 1 (Associated) Liverpool Biennial 1 | No | None |

Node Structure

Public Art

20/01/2015 12:34

| Hierarchical Name | Nickname | Aggregate | User Assigned |
|-------------------|----------|-----------|---------------|
|-------------------|----------|-----------|---------------|

Node

Nodes

| | | |
|---|----|--------|
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation | No | Red |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\interpretations | No | Green |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\interpretations\\association of artwork with area | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\interpretations\\autobiographical interpretations of artwork | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\interpretations\\local history interpretations | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\interpretations\\other interpretations of artwork | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\interpretations\\representation of the future | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\storytelling | No | Green |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\storytelling\\the importance of telling a story | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\storytelling\\the importance of the backstory | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\symbolism | No | Green |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\symbolism\\symbolic origins of artwork | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\symbolism\\the importance of symbolic ambiguity | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\people & places | No | Red |
| Nodes\\people & places\\location | No | Green |
| Nodes\\people & places\\location\\accessibility of artwork | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\people & places\\location\\interaction of environment with artwork | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\people & places\\location\\perceived benefit of artwork to location | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\people & places\\location\\perceived merits of location | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\people & places\\location\\previous uses of location | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\people & places\\people | No | Green |
| Nodes\\people & places\\people\\appeal to children | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\people & places\\people\\appeal to tourists | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\people & places\\people\\attitudes to public art | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\people & places\\people\\nature of interaction with artwork | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\people & places\\people\\ownership of or desire to own artwork | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\people & places\\people\\perceived artistic merit of artwork | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics | No | Red |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\\the art world | No | Green |

| | | |
|---|----|--------|
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\the art world\esthetic vs technical | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\the art world\importance of artistic expertise | No | Yellow |

Reports\\Node Structure Report

Page 1 of 2

20/01/2015 12:34

| Hierarchical Name | Nickname | Aggregate | User Assigned |
|--|----------|-----------|---------------|
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\the art world\importance of contemporary & international art | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\the art world\importance of council support of public art | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\the art world\the need for quality control | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\the art world\the use of art in urban regeneration & place making | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\the public | | No | Green |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\the public\extent & type of public participation | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\the public\the need for the public's artistic education | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\the public\the public's exposure to and acceptance of public art | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\the public\the public's preference for the mundane | | No | Yellow |

Relationship

Relationships

| | | |
|--|----|------|
| Relationships\\Arts Council (Associated) Liverpool Biennial 1 | No | None |
| Relationships\\Arup (Associated) Concrete Company | No | None |
| Relationships\\Liverpool Biennial 1 (Associated) Arup | No | None |
| Relationships\\Liverpool Biennial 1 (Associated) Local Artist | No | None |
| Relationships\\Liverpool Biennial 1 (Associated) SSDT | No | None |
| Relationships\\St Helens Council 1 (Associated) Liverpool Biennial 1 | No | None |

Node Structure

Public Art

21/01/2015 19:52

| Hierarchical Name | Nickname | Aggregate | User Assigned |
|-------------------|----------|-----------|---------------|
|-------------------|----------|-----------|---------------|

Node

Nodes

| | | | |
|---|--|----|--------|
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation | | No | Red |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\interpretations | | No | Green |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\interpretations\\association of artwork with area | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\interpretations\\autobiographical interpretations of artwork | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\interpretations\\local history interpretations | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\interpretations\\other interpretations of artwork | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\interpretations\\representation of the future | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\storytelling | | No | Green |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\storytelling\\the importance of telling a story | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\symbolism | | No | Green |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\symbolism\\symbolic origins of artwork | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\symbolism\\the importance of symbolic ambiguity | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\people & places | | No | Red |
| Nodes\\people & places\\location | | No | Green |
| Nodes\\people & places\\location\\accessibility of artwork | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\people & places\\location\\interaction of environment with artwork | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\people & places\\location\\perceived benefit of artwork to location | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\people & places\\location\\perceived merits of location | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\people & places\\location\\previous uses of location | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\people & places\\people | | No | Green |
| Nodes\\people & places\\people\\appeal to children | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\people & places\\people\\appeal to tourists | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\people & places\\people\\attitudes to public art | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\people & places\\people\\nature of interaction with artwork | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\people & places\\people\\ownership of or desire to own artwork | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\people & places\\people\\perceived artistic merit of artwork | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics | | No | Red |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\\the art world | | No | Green |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\\the art world\\aesthetic vs technical | | No | Yellow |

| | | |
|---|----|--------|
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\the art world\importance of artistic expertise | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\the art world\importance of contemporary & international art | No | Yellow |

Reports\\Node Structure Report

Page 1 of 2

21/01/2015 19:52

| Hierarchical Name | Nickname | Aggregate | User Assigned |
|--|----------|-----------|---------------|
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\the art world\importance of council support of public art | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\the art world\the need for quality control | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\the art world\the use of art in urban regeneration & place-making | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\the public | | No | Green |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\the public\extent & type of public participation | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\the public\the need for the public's artistic education | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\the public\the public's exposure to and acceptance of public art | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\the public\the public's preference for the mundane | | No | Yellow |

Relationship

Relationships

| | | |
|--|----|------|
| Relationships\\Arts Council (Associated) Liverpool Biennial 1 | No | None |
| Relationships\\Arup (Associated) Concrete Company | No | None |
| Relationships\\Liverpool Biennial 1 (Associated) Arup | No | None |
| Relationships\\Liverpool Biennial 1 (Associated) Local Artist | No | None |
| Relationships\\Liverpool Biennial 1 (Associated) SSDT | No | None |
| Relationships\\St Helens Council 1 (Associated) Liverpool Biennial 1 | No | None |

Node Structure

Public Art

21/03/2015 18:03

| Hierarchical Name | Nickname | Aggregate | User Assigned |
|-------------------|----------|-----------|---------------|
|-------------------|----------|-----------|---------------|

Node

Nodes

| | | |
|---|----|--------|
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation | No | Red |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\interpretations | No | Green |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\interpretations\\association of artwork with area | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\interpretations\\autobiographical interpretations of artwork | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\interpretations\\local history interpretations | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\interpretations\\other interpretations of artwork | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\symbolism | No | Green |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\symbolism\\importance of contemporary & international art | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\symbolism\\symbolic origins of artwork | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\symbolism\\the importance of symbolic ambiguity | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\meaning & interpretation\\symbolism\\the use of art in urban regeneration & place-making | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\people & places | No | Red |
| Nodes\\people & places\\location | No | Green |
| Nodes\\people & places\\location\\accessibility of artwork | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\people & places\\location\\perceived benefit of artwork to location | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\people & places\\location\\perceived merits of location | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\people & places\\location\\previous uses of location | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\people & places\\people | No | Green |
| Nodes\\people & places\\people\\appeal to children | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\people & places\\people\\appeal to tourists | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\people & places\\people\\attitudes to public art | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\people & places\\people\\nature of interaction with artwork | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\people & places\\people\\ownership of or desire to own artwork | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\people & places\\people\\perceived artistic merit of artwork | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics | No | Red |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\\the art world | No | Green |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\\the art world\\aesthetic vs technical | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\\the art world\\importance of artistic expertise | No | Yellow |

21/03/2015 18:03

| Hierarchical Name | Nickname | Aggregate | User Assigned |
|---|----------|-----------|---------------|
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\\the art world\\importance of council support of public art | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\\the art world\\the need for quality control | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\\the public | | No | Green |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\\the public\\extent & type of public participation | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\\the public\\the need for the public's artistic education | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\\the public\\the public's exposure to and acceptance of public art | | No | Yellow |
| Nodes\\power relationships & role dynamics\\the public\\the public's preference for the mundane | | No | Yellow |

Relationship

Relationships

| | | |
|--|----|------|
| Relationships\\Arts Council (Associated) Liverpool Biennial 1 | No | None |
| Relationships\\Arup (Associated) Concrete Company | No | None |
| Relationships\\Liverpool Biennial 1 (Associated) Arup | No | None |
| Relationships\\Liverpool Biennial 1 (Associated) Local Artist | No | None |
| Relationships\\Liverpool Biennial 1 (Associated) SSDT | No | None |
| Relationships\\St Helens Council 1 (Associated) Liverpool Biennial 1 | No | None |

