

**VALUE AND POTENTIAL OF STREET PERFORMANCE INSIDE  
URBAN DEVELOPMENT: THE CASE OF PORTUGAL AND THE  
CITY OF PORTO**

**VALOR E POTENCIAL DA ARTE DE RUA NO  
DESENVOLVIMENTO URBANO: O CASO DE PORTUGAL E A  
CIDADE DO PORTO**

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**ABSTRACT:** Street Performance is an every-day activity developed by several artists, mostly in big cities around the world. In Portugal, specifically, this kind of activity is regarded with low value and interest, even though, in recent years, some events concerning street performance have arisen. In fact, street performance activity represents a great potential contributing to the development and growth of cities. Nowadays, cities are promoting themselves through culture, art and the creative industries, developing new innovative urban spaces and business. Street performance appears as an art demonstration, part of a city's culture, bearing in it creativity and attractiveness.

**KEY WORDS:** street performance, culture, art, urban space, business creation, tourism, communication, Porto.

**RESUMO:** A arte de rua é uma atividade diariamente desenvolvida por diversos artistas, maioritariamente nas grandes cidades do mundo. Em Portugal, especificamente, este tipo

de atividade é vista de forma depreciativa e com pouco interesse, apesar de, recentemente, terem vindo a surgir alguns eventos relacionados com arte de rua. De facto, a arte de rua representa um grande potencial contribuindo para o desenvolvimento e crescimento das cidades. Hoje em dia, as cidades promovem-se através da cultura, arte e indústrias criativas, desenvolvendo novos e inovadores espaços urbanos e negócios. A arte de rua surge como uma demonstração de arte, parte da cultura de uma cidade, englobando em si criatividade e atratividade.

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** arte de rua, cultura, arte, espaço urbano, criação de negócio, turismo, comunicação, Porto.

## **Introduction**

Street performance, “as a practice whereby various musical and nonmusical performances are undertaken in pursuit of donations from passersby” (Simpson, 2011, p. 416), has been present in Porto city for over thirty years and, in recent years, there has been an exponential growth in the number of performers, such as musicians, dancers, magicians, living statues, clowns and others. One can no longer walk down the street of Santa Catarina without meeting an artist entertaining whoever passes by. As part of the different expressions of a culture, art should be understood as a cultural manifestation wherever its presentation takes place. Undertaken by most as a beggar’s work, street performers can be seen through another perspective when considered part of the creative industries as a form of making art at people’s disposal.

The art of performing in the street bears in it different value perspectives when looking closely. As an act which promotes interaction between the artist who performs and the people who spectate, and also between artists sharing the same urban space, street performance is an activity working with intercultural communication constantly. The city of Porto is known by the diversity of cultures present in its territory, mostly because of the high number of tourists coming to the city. In this way, street performers are confronted with a multicultural public they interact with. Also, the artists performing in the streets of Porto are not all Portuguese. In fact, a great number of street performers come from different countries and even continents, bringing intercultural communication to the interaction between artists in the city.

Street performance is a form of art expression and, as every art work or demonstration, uses the power of creativity, delivered by each artist in the creation of his performance. Creativity appears, in the actual days, as a key tool in urban regeneration and city's innovation. It helps cities to exceed themselves, evolving and becoming more competitive through the investment of creative activities. Acknowledging street performance as a creative activity can be a step towards a new conceptualization, use and valorisation of this performing art.

Contradicting again the typical perspective over street performers and their work, street performance represents a type of art expression and, simultaneously, a culture expression. Art is assumed as being part of culture, an expression of the culture it is inserted in, and so it can also understand its value through an entrepreneurial perspective. Entrepreneurship appears has a process of identifying and developing business ideas, leading to the creation of city's wealth and international competitiveness. The entrepreneurial activity has been working in recent years in contact with culture, finding new shades inside the business creation and leading the big cities to the top of urban, economic, social development. Different expressions of culture can be worked with entrepreneurship and art is one of these components, promoting innovative ideas to the evolution and differentiation of cities activity. Culture and its art expression can be successful tools in the development of business ideas and products.

The presence of street performers in cities' urban space creates a new atmosphere, filled with vivacity and dynamism, breaks into people's routines changing the usual panorama, and fosters interactions between those who spectate and share the performance's moment.

Street performers intervene positively in the touristic experience of those exploring the cultural assets of a new place. Functioning as a form of entertaining to the touristic public but also as a cultural attraction for those interested in an art cultural expression, street performance brings value to the touristic experience.

In Portugal, street performance activity is regarded less positively when comparing to other big cities in Europe, but it has been receiving more attention through the organization of directed events, organized in different cities in the country. In Porto, the presence of street performers is acquired in streets like Santa Catarina, Flores and Ribeira.

## **Creativity and innovation in urban spaces**

Graham Wallas proposed in 1926 a five-stage model of the creative process, giving life to the creativity field of study. Nevertheless, the first definition of creativity has its roots in 1953, when scientist Morris Stein stated that creativity is "*that process which results in a novel work that is accepted as tenable or useful or satisfying by a group at some point in time.*" However, today we define creativity as "the use of imagination or original ideas to create something", according to the Oxford dictionary.

The creative process connected with the urban spaces has been studied by authors like Ebert et al. (1994), Hall (2000) and Landry (2012), reaching the concept of 'creative city' which takes us to the reinvention of the urban space with creativity as a fundamental tool. Silicon Valley, Los Angeles, Barcelona, the Third Italy around Emilia Romagna, Tokyo or Bangalore are examples of creative cities known worldwide for their creativity in the creation of new business and services and for the extinction of old industries that gives place to the production using intellectual capital, rising the value of the city (Landry, 2012). Particular attention has been given to the relation between urban space and cultural and creative activities in recent years, mostly because of their potential in urban revitalization and strategies of regeneration, but also considering the role of creative classes and creative activities in enhancing urban competitiveness and development (Costa et al., 2011).

The design of desirable public spaces is an essential characteristic of creative cities and a fundamental step into creating a creative city. Particular strengths such as attraction, liveliness, identification, diversity, economic value, partnership and public spaces are what brings creativity and drives the formation of a creative city (Kalantari et al., 2012)

Here are innovative ways of creating employment or applying technology and unleashing the skill of the young or the elderly. There is inspiring architecture that speaks to a city's soul and identity, and there are clever energy-saving devices or public transport that is a joy to use. There are retail environments that merge entertainment and learning, and public spaces that encourage urban buzz and celebrations that capture the unusual, the uplifting and the creative. (Landry, 2012, p. xi)

We forget that the wealth creators are cities – over 80 per cent for developed countries – and that they have the power of prosperity generation for these countries. Instead we see them as places where crime and fear are a reality, combined with degradation and pollution. We also forget their potential to “provide opportunities and interactions which can solve their own problems and improve the quality of life of whole regions” (Landry, 2012, p. xii). Living in a city can be led by desire and not only by need. When talking about desire, according to a regular UK survey, over 80 per cent of people would prefer to live in a small village compared to 4 per cent who do. Unfortunately, people sometimes cannot afford to live in a village, because of labour or resources reasons, and there aren’t enough villages to meet this will. The solution resides in making cities desirable to live in, turning them into valued spaces with a sense of safety, where people feel welcomed and comfortable, and which have a variety of stimulating urban activities (Landry, 2012).

Creativity changes the image and dynamism of a city, welcoming people to discover new and innovative environments with better and personalized facilities and services. When the qualitative impact a city has on its citizens and visitors increases, the recognition and awareness of that city also rises in simultaneous with its attractiveness and economic power. The promotion of a city and its branding enhances the potential of a place, attracting tourism and popularity but also more creative and smart people searching for living places (Bašová & Bustin, 2017).

Landry (2012) defends the idea that creativity is not exclusive for artists and that technology does not possess innovation. The political and social spheres can also work with creativity and innovation, adding value to the urban life and space.

The right blend makes a city attractive and desirable, with different aspects tempting different audiences: power brokers, investors, industrialists, shoppers, tourists, property developers, thought leaders. Overall, this creates the resonance of a city. The consequence of achieving drawing power shows itself in economic, political and cultural power – the ability to shape things – and, thus, performance and wealth (Landry, 2012, p. xviii).

To address sustainability is a key action for cities to become competitive and stable, as protecting the environment overrules the actual ethical agenda in an era strongly

marked by society's will to stop harmful behaviour for the planet. They are demanding greater sense of responsibility towards the environmental health regarding how urban spaces respond to this problematic. Creative cities feel the need to act eco-friendlier and adapt measures of reducing harmful habits (Landry, 2012).

Sustainable economic growth patterns can be accomplished with strategies offered by creativity, which also contribute to a more inclusive dynamic of the city. With knowledge and innovation as weapons, the creative sector in post-industrial situations fosters new economic ecosystems, creating jobs focused in the local economy, promoting social inclusion and protecting workers from relocation in a global context. There are numerous examples of deprived urban areas where creative hubs function supporting their most vulnerable communities and regenerating these areas. The city of Santos, in Brazil, suffered from high unemployment and social inequality. Investing in creativity to address these issues, Santos was able to support people from the most vulnerable communities and to revitalize one of the most marginalized districts in the city, through the initiative Creative Ecofactory. This school directly supports youth employability, training students in making urban furniture or decorative objects with recycled wood, collected in the surrounding area by municipal services (UNESCO, 2019).

Contemporary visions of growth and work are reflected in the creative sector's extensive improvement. Placing people at the centre of development, we can rethink our strategies of economic growth and address new patterns of consumption and production, reaching a more environmental concerned way of life, bringing people together in the search for these objectives.

The process of being creative, though, does even more. It can, in principle, help to solve any problem and can grasp potential. It has many expressions, such as physical things like great design or architecture or transport systems. It is invisible, too, as the ability to express oneself can provide motivation or engender confidence. Creativity also helps to develop culture and identity because the innovations that it generates shape what a place becomes (Landry, 2012, p. xxv)

The creative sector bears in itself dynamism and growth potential, together with the generation of positive externalities in the areas the creative activities are located. It

also interacts with other activities, leading to cluster effects, and add great value to the locality (OMC,2012).

In order to a city to reinvent itself creatively, habits of creative thinking have to be introduced into the society. It all begins with education, then reaching the private and community spheres, enhancing the use of imagination to solve problems, the creation of opportunities, and the development of the minds that will not keep our urban space in the past. Future profits can be safeguarded with the encouragement of innovative experimentation, decentralizing the focus of cities from inputs/outputs or codes and rules. As Landry (2012, p. xxv) states, “in a society where ideas are increasingly the key currency, the ability to create ideas drives both social well-being and prosperity, provided the culture is willing to change, and fosters the infrastructure to turn concepts into innovations”. Its people resources with their skills, talent and creativity, working and running the urban space, towards a successful future, construct the competitiveness of a city. Florida (2002, p. 68) also defends that in order to achieve regional economic dynamism, it is fundamental to attract and retain a ‘creative class’, defined by him as “people who add economic value through their creativity”. The presence of a creative class in any region has positive effects on economic growth in the form of advanced innovation and expansion of technology sectors. Florida (2004) implies that the presence of creative people in a society, interacting with others inside the community, spreads creative thinking.

The key actors in those places which have exhibited growth share certain qualities: open-mindedness and a willingness to take risks; a clear focus on long-term aims with an understanding of strategy; a capacity to work with local distinctiveness and to find a strength in apparent weakness; and a willingness to listen and learn. These are some of the characteristics that make people, projects, organizations and, ultimately, cities creative (Landry, 2012, p. 4)

In her debate on creativity as something natural and creativity as an acquired skill, Ruth Towse (2004) highlights uniqueness of individuals capable of being creative in the artistic field. The investment on the enhancement of individuals’ creative abilities fosters the production of more creative and innovative products and even more valuable products (Costa et al., 2011).

Creativity brings a new point of view with imaginative thinking and inspiration to reach the cities of tomorrow, helping cities to come up with new solutions to social issues such as house, transport, feeding and education, while keeping in mind the reduction of its ecological footprint. Restoring existing buildings to meet contemporary demands, designing public spaces reflecting cultural diversity and promoting social interaction, conjugating cultural practices and well-being in urban services, all of this can be accomplished with creativity. “Creativity also fundamentally transforms our interactions with the urban environment – notably through design or media arts – prompting the transformation of urban uses, facilitating new forms of social interactions and experience sharing and forging new urban narratives” (UNESCO, 2019, p. 9).

Bringing innovation to the urban space starts with paying attention to people’s desires, what will make a space attractive, meeting their necessities. Renovating public spaces where people can meet, exchange ideas and network, fostering a social space through modern urban design, paying attention to aesthetics, manages to bring out an atmosphere that will attract people. Transforming these spaces into wireless zones, technologically advanced, which give people the possibility to work and communicate, is a key characteristic for levelling up a city (Landry, 2012). Clark et al. (2002) claim that urban attractions, such as parks, museums, art galleries, orchestras and signature buildings, propel urban growth. Transforming our urban space into an ‘entertainment machine’, in an era where the driver of social and urban change is the consumerism of the individual, with the conversion of the city into a leisure place with the reinvention of our infrastructures and services, the affluence of people is enhanced and the economic growth is boosted.

Mommaas (2009) observes the creation of creative clusters as a strategy for the planning of urban spaces at a cultural and economic level. These clusters focus on cultural aspects like the arts, visual and performing, leisure activities, design and multi-media, bringing new ideas to the new innovative spaces of the city. They help developing new strategies, with a focus on culture together with lifestyle factors and consumption activities, changing the city’s image and attracting tourism and income (Flew, 2009).

Keeping in mind a place’s characteristics, creative dynamics related to them can be created, highlighting the important role of the urban milieu (Costa et al., 2011). Understanding the value of cities’ urban characteristics, place promotion is identified as a strategy to enhance the innovative image of a city and its competitiveness. Jayne (2017, p. 1) also comments on this strategy, observing that “in recognition of the complex



plurality of the contemporary urban villages, more prosaic ‘low’ and street culture, working-class traditions and ethnicity, sex and sexuality are also increasingly commodified in narratives of place”. Place-promotion campaigns and projects have also been produced with help from local authorities and private companies who invested in business, retail or cultural environments for them, reinforcing the city’s cultural lives (Jayne, 2017).

Culture, therefore, should shape the technicalities of urban planning rather than be seen as a marginal add-on to be considered once the important planning questions like housing, transport and land use have been dealt with. By contrast a culturally informed perspective should condition how planning as well as economic development or social affairs should be addressed. (Landry, 2012, p. 7)

Creativity based on culture stimulates social innovation, strengthens bonds between people and offers new approaches on how to deal with communitarian problems. Culture has proved to be helpful in regenerating urban areas with social issues, promoting social cohesion, preventing crime and fighting pollution (OMC, 2012).

Creativity reveals itself as a strong weapon for the restructuring of cities, constructing a path to problem solving solutions, generation of new ideas and reconceptualization of spaces. With creativity, the innovation of the urban space opens new horizons, aiming for a higher level of competitiveness with other evolved and modern cities, the enhancement of the attractiveness of new public spaces, where people feel comfortable and embraced, and the influx of tourists and investors. Acknowledging creativity as a fuel for the strengthen of society’s mind, will highlight the potential of educating people bearing in mind the use of imagination in their daily tasks, building citizens who bring innovation to whatever role they play in our community. Culture pops out in the discussion of creating innovative urban spaces as a key ingredient in fostering the development of a city’s image, reputation and interest.

Street performance, as an art demonstration, bears in it creativity in each performance an artist creates. In the artistic and cultural sphere, creativity is a key ingredient in the artistic creation, bringing it value and meaning (Costa, 2003). Its presence also brings innovation to the urban space, providing a new experience of the city and filling the streets with colour, music and vivacity. In this way, street performance can

be involved in the creative strategy for enhancing the competitiveness of a city and its promotion, reconceptualizing the urban space and attracting people.

### **Entrepreneurship in Culture**

The concept of entrepreneurship is characterized as a process and act by which societies, organizations, regions or individuals identify and follow business opportunities in order to achieve wealth creation. Culture is defined as the everlasting value set of a region, nation, or an organization (George & Zhara, 2002).

Entrepreneurship can be understood as the art of making it happen with creativity and motivation. It consists in the pleasure of realizing with synergism and innovation any personal or organizational project, in permanent challenge to the opportunities and risks. It is to take on proactive behaviour in the face of issues that need to be resolved (Baggio, 2015).

In fact, entrepreneurship can create a major contribution to the economy of a nation, providing its growth through the dissemination and commercialization of knowledge and ideas, bringing innovation to the city. These ideas and knowledge are the entrepreneur's weapon for spawning new services, products, jobs, the reinvention of society (Karlsson et al., 2010). Thus, the entrepreneur has a lead role in the transformation of the creative city, possessing the skills and the right perspective to identify opportunities of urban exploitation for the generation of a new city's image, business and social environments.

A further route to the creative city came from an interest in culture. Two significant connections were how cultural evolution shapes urban development and the intrinsic link between creativity and the development of culture. With the decline of existing resource and manufacturing industry, culture was seen as a saviour for many cities in Europe and increasingly elsewhere (Landry, 2012, p. 6)

Leadbeater and Oakley (1999) draw attention to the fact that creativity is what makes cities modern, calling big and diverse audiences who consume culture in different forms of artistic expression but also culture as the traditions and background of the city. These cities are themselves clusters of cultural business, mixing ideas from the people they attract, generating ideas, knowledge sharing and dissemination.

Culture opens space for perception and impact as the lens through which we should understand urban development, regarding the beliefs, traditions and heritage of a society. According to Landry (2012, p. 9), “the cultural industries, hotbeds of creativity, are significant economic sectors in their own right and employ 3–5 per cent of the workforce in world cities such as London and New York or Milan and Berlin”. Culture attracts tourism, focused on a restricted side of culture expressed through the arts – museums, galleries, theatre and shopping. International companies are also drawn by a rousing cultural life for employees, after an inward investment on the cultural sector and institutions (Landry, 2012).

Language, food and cooking, leisure activities, clothing and subcultures, or intellectual traditions are resources that can be reconsidered to develop new services or products as they convey the personality of a region. These are cultural resources for the creative industries as well as the visual arts. They are, as Landry (2012, p. xxxi) describes, “the raw materials of the city and its value base, and they replace our traditional assets”. Cultural resources identify its city, what it has to offer, its essence and potential. The city can through them show its uniqueness and what differentiates it, drawing attention and curiosity (Landry, 2012). Leadbeater and Oakley (1999) also highlight the role of culture, in all its different manifestations, empowering the city and the entrepreneurial work:

Culture is increasingly central to how cities ‘brand’ them-selves to attract students, inward investment and tourists. One of the most outstanding recent examples of this strategy is the transformation of Bilbao’s international reputation with the building of Frank Gehry’s Guggenheim Museum. Cultural entrepreneurship at the civic level will be critical to instil a renewed a sense of purpose, especially in cities that have been hollowed out by job losses and economic decline. To be effective, however, this demand-side approach to ‘rebranding’ a city with a new cultural image has to be matched by investment in indigenous production and business creation. (Leadbeater & Oakley, 1999, p. 17)

The cultural depth of a place can also derive from history, understanding the culture of a region as its ancient traditions, background and foundation. The city’s identity can have its routes in history. Civic pride and homeland confidence can be intensified by the

enforcement of historical identity aspects, bringing credibility and authority to institutions, such as the Harvard–MIT, educational cluster around Boston (Landry, 2012).

“Creativity is not only about a continuous invention of the new, but also how to deal appropriately with the old” (Landry, 2012, p. 7). Senses of patriotism can be addressed and increased by the reinvention of historical marks that strengthen the city’s personality and highlight. The history of a city can be promoted through a refreshing and creative channel, conveying it as a factor of interest and attraction to the city. The affirmation of a region’s routes enhances people’s pride for their homeland and sense of belonging.

Community cohesion is reinforced by culture, binding people with their shared traditions and values of the same place of birth, as well as personal confidence and people’s mental and physical well-being. A democratic lead matches people’s ability as citizens, and employment and training strategies are evolved and reconceptualized (Landry, 2012).

The entrepreneur, being a professional business creator through ideas and knowledge, sees in the varied aspects and expressions of a city’s culture numerous products to be explored and used for the creation of new business and the affirmation of a city’s personality, raising the city’s level of competitiveness. Leadbeater and Oakley (1999) use as an example the creation of the European City of Culture Year in 1990 and the 1999 Year of Design and Architecture in Glasgow, an initiative delivered and implemented by the local authority who used culture to revive the city’s reputation, reinforcing the city’s ability to engage in these industries, also representing it through artistic works.

Urban spaces are being reinvented with basis on wealth creation, in association with an increase of demand and consumption, and attention to visual factors of attraction, delivered by the cultural and service industries, which influence people on spending money also in consumption spaces like restaurants, museums, casinos, sports stadiums. The economy is then focused on the generation of economic and cultural symbols and the places of creation and consumption of these symbols. As Zukin (1998, p. 830) observes, “sociability, urban lifestyles and social identities are not only the result, but also the raw materials of the growth of the symbolic economy”.

Entrepreneurship pops out as an innovative way to take action and help with the development of these new economic and cultural plans, assuming the creation of ideas for new employment, events, urban planning and attractions, leading the city to the new

level of development where cultural symbols and spaces are the face of business. Freytag and Thurik (2010, p. 4) concluded that “differences in growth are partly due to differences in regional innovativeness, which can be explained by differences in entrepreneurial culture. Therefore, culture affects growth through the intermediating mechanism of innovativeness”. Culture, as the set of values, beliefs, traditions, history and symbols of a community, and innovativeness are the pair of raw material entrepreneurs’ work with, seeking to achieve this regional recreation and development.

Cultural industries and entrepreneurs will play a critical role in reviving large cities that have suffered economic decline and dislocation over the past two decades. Culture is not just a source of jobs and income but also a sense of confidence and belonging. Cities that have invested successfully in cultural renewal do so to generate not just economic growth but also a renewed sense of civic pride and purpose (Leadbeater & Oakley, 1999, p. 16)

However, according to Davidsson (1995), the region’s culture, regarding its values and beliefs, also affects the entrepreneurial action. McClelland (1961) defends that a supportive environment for entrepreneurship, achieved through an upholding culture of entrepreneurial values, sparks an entrepreneurial performance among its citizens. In contrast, Etzioni (1987) believes that the entrepreneurial behaviour can have a higher or lower degree of social legitimation depending on the prevalent and stipulated beliefs and values of a society, in despite of the firms’ founding values. Either way, both authors recognize the values and beliefs of the culture as fundamental in fostering entrepreneurial behaviour. Leadbeater & Oakley (1999, p. 31) argue that the entrepreneur’s “skills and talents usually emerge from a creative community and they are sustained by a shared milieu”. They also defend the promotion of a creative environment within cities in order to have successful cultural entrepreneurs.

A measure of ‘entrepreneurial culture’ is developed using individual value patterns of entrepreneurs and non-entrepreneurs. Extensive robustness analysis suggests that differences in economic growth in Europe can indeed be explained using this newly developed variable, albeit in an indirect way. Differences in growth are partly due to differences in regional innovativeness, which can be explained by

disparities in entrepreneurial culture. Therefore, culture affects growth through the intermediating mechanism of innovativeness. (Freitag & Thurik, 2010, p. 4)

The implementation of an entrepreneurial mindset and course of action in a society proves to be the first step towards the creative city. In this way, citizens will be more willing to support entrepreneurial action or even to embody entrepreneurial behaviour. More professional entrepreneurs will rise, working for an innovative, developed and engaging city. Using cultural heritage to strengthen and highlight the city's identity and image can be the focus of entrepreneurial work, creating new subjects of foreign interest and attraction, elevating the city's cultural offer and competitiveness worldwide, and building new jobs and business which press forward to economic growth.

Street performers have been present in the streets of Porto's downtown for several years now. They are part of what makes the city itself, as an element of its culture and can be of entrepreneurial use in the development of new business ideas for the city's growth. Entrepreneurial activity regarding street performance in Porto can contribute to the reinforcement of the city's identity and attractiveness. As a form of art expression and part of the city's culture, street performance can be a tool for entrepreneurial work, showing that the arts and culture can be a means to the creation of business.

### **The arts and culture as a means to create business**

The cultural industries in the actual society are gathering continuously more importance for the economic growth and the creation of new employment. On the basis of the estimates from the Creative Industries Task Force report, Leadbeater and Oakley (1999, p. 13) observe that "4 to 5 per cent growth in these industries, twice the rate of the economy as a whole, they could employ 1.5 million and generate revenues of £80 billion, worth 6 per cent of gross domestic product, by the end the next decade".

This economic growth delivered by cultural industries has part of its fundamentals in the work of the cultural entrepreneurs who intensively connect with each other and other professionals and industries, within a city. In the process of developing their projects, entrepreneurs work in collaboration with, for example, graphic designers and video makers. The high level of internal trade, within the cultural industries, reflects itself in the need for more workers, generating more jobs, upgrading the quality of life and

opportunities and proving cultural industries to be a profitable investment (Leadbeater & Oakley, 1999).

Inside the cultural industries activity, an investment in art creates meeting places where distinct people from a society gather and share the same environment, promoting a sense of belonging and social cohesion. Supporting the development of these art meeting places makes space for more work posts and business opportunities. Leadbeater and Oakley (1999) support the importance of art and culture with two concrete examples:

Art and culture play a central role in some of the most impressive examples of social entrepreneurship, such as the Bromley-by-Bow project in the London's East End. Culture provided a central focus for the debate over Scottish identity in the run up to devolution, for example, through the opening of the National Museum of Scotland. (Leadbeater & Oakley 1999, p. 17)

The Bromley-by-Bow project portrays the history of a Church congregation going through a phase of a low members number who wanted the community to be able to use the Church's buildings. The project began when a group of local artists, a sculpture, childcare pioneers and an entrepreneur decided to transform these buildings into a pioneering charity, which provides a medical practice and a community research project, helping people with their health needs. The Bromley-by-Bow centre gives answer to society's needs, conducting different projects and services created with a basis on entrepreneurship and innovation.

Leadbeater and Oakley (1999) perceive the consumption of culture as a public, collective and shared action, granting the common experience of sharing language, images and whatever aspect of culture. They support their idea giving as an example the influence of black music from which modern fashion, pop music, language and style connected to it spread, especially in Britain where black people have influenced culture through pop music being this the strongest channel of influence they used.

Several authors have analysed how art spaces contribute for the development of economy and community. They identified art spaces as local revival places that lift tourism and consumption and improve life's quality in certain regions, being recognized widely as neighbourhood conveniences. They boost the neighbourhood revitalization creating opportunities for marginalized groups, such as homeless people or mentally ill,

and providing access to artistic activities for those who want to participate or even try to start a business project, this way achieving community engagement. Art spaces are also distinguished as incubators for creativity stimulation and new talents, adding the space, work and equipment needed, as well as artistic and business programs for the development of skills. These spaces may offer other new opportunities for artists, arranging space for work exhibition and an environment where they can discuss with other artists, search for opinions and encourage each other. Finally, by implementing a collective sense of identity, mutual trust and understanding, art spaces foster the feeling of belonging to a specific place and culture, building social capital (Grodach, 2011).

Mommaas (2009) regards the consumption of art as the focus of art spaces undertook by local governments who prefer to use the arts as an object for the generation of tourism and place promotion, instead of a hatchery of cultural economy and art. By creating spaces for exhibitions or for the use of artists, local governments are creating cultural centres of attraction which tourists might be interested in visit as part of their cultural meeting of the city, and which might be used for the promotion of the city's cultural offer and events.

The investment in cultural and arts industries works as a strategy for the creation of new innovative business, enhancing the creative and modern image of the city and improving the quality of life for citizens as well as their satisfaction and sense of belonging and support from their homeland. It expands the cultural offer of the city for foreign visitors and its citizens, and the valorisation and input of the city's personality, heritage and artistic talent. Investing in these industries gives power to the creation of new spaces in the city, which generates the attraction of other business to the space, contributing to its economic development and growth. In this way, street performance can be part of this strategy for creating business as an art expression and a cultural phenomenon in the city of Porto, which changes the urban space and generates economic capital.

### **Street performance and tourism**

Urban centres are currently attracting increasingly more tourists, a cause deriving from a 'cultural revival' in tourism. The cultural component of the tourist market is a sector that has been growing steadily. The tourism industry and the governmental



agencies receive new management considerations and approach methods, brought by the expanding interest in a city's diverse cultural agenda, cultural heritage and historical places.

The type of tourism which highlights its' cultural dimension is denominated cultural tourism, defined by the Association for Tourism and Leisure Education (ATLAS), as "The movement of persons to cultural attractions away from their normal place of residence, with the intention to gather new information and experiences to satisfy their cultural needs" (Richards and Bonink, 1995, p. 174). This term identifies specific tourism experiences based on culture and combines different tourism aspects related with culture (Craik, 2002).

According to the World Tourism Organisation, cultural tourism accounts for 37% of global tourism. A recent study regarding the Europeans' habits of cultural consumption (European Commission 2002) showed that people visited museums and galleries in a foreign country almost as often as they did at their hometown. This emphasizes the cultural tourism consumption of culture and its growing importance (Richards, 2016).

The growth of cultural tourism provides cities with the opportunity to foster new attractions and cultural experiences, capturing more tourists. The demographic characteristics of cultural tourists display consumers of art and culture (Craik, 2002), showing that the number of tourists interested in different art demonstrations is also growing and calling the attention to the importance of arts investment for cities.

Tourism is a tool for the economic development strategies and is argued as a solution to economic decline, fostering the development of cultural industries. As Craik (2002, p. 113) affirms, "the role of culture in this process is multi-faceted: culture is simultaneously a resource, a product, an experience and an outcome".

Cities find a new economic activity strategy in the production of tourist products based on historical and contemporary cultural assets. A relation of cooperation between tourism and culture, regarding these economic targets, shows evidence of a bright future.

Cultural and landscape tourism allows the demonstration of creativity through imagining, through the 'production' of artefacts to reproduce experience in tangible form (in the case of tourism, frequently through photographs and videos) and in the collation of artefacts associated with the activity (in this case, souvenirs) (Prentice 1997, p. 211)

In his study of cultural and landscape tourism, Prentice (1997) identifies artefacts like souvenirs as a creative way to develop a product representing the lived cultural experience. In fact, these small products such as souvenirs offer the tourist a physical memory and representation of a cultural feature of the city and are largely sold in big cities centres also as an artistic product. Craik (2002) also observes the pertinence of souvenirs:

Most important is the ability to translate the site, historical figure, remembered activity, or experience into physical, durable and portable mementos which can serve as tangible reminders of the visit, through T Shirts, key rings, fridge magnets, posters, figurines, reproductions or art/ craftwork. (Craik, 2002, p. 122)

Graburn (1976) has observed the transformation occurred in the style and form of the arts and crafts of many indigenous people in consequence of tourism, changing the purpose of its production. Artefacts that once had only a cultural use, for example ceremonial and religious, become an object of production for sale. A more recent analysis from Wall & Mathieson (2006, p. 272) states that “the collection of anthropological writings on changes in Fourth World arts, emerging ethnicities, changing identities and the commercialization of cultural traditions is the earliest comprehensive statement on this type of tourist impact”.

Tourism has speeded up the advancement and improvement of traditional art, but it has also influenced the renewal of certain forms of art and craft. It also has implemented a new relationship between tourism and art, becoming the tourist an art consumer himself, since the arts are being produced for external consumption. Hence, tourism affects the traditional art and craft forms, propelling its renaissance and preservation. A new market is developed, changing the art form and its quality, and the tourism artefacts trade emerges, expanding the artists’ presence in a city, whether they are of host origin or not (Wall & Mathieson, 2006).

As cities began to understand art as a consumable cultural product of touristic attraction, different initiatives and events took place with the objective of expanding this field of culture and promoting the city’s artists and art works. In London, ‘open studios’ were born in 1994, unlocking the gates of the workspaces of artists and designers to the public, disseminating the work of more than 40 artists. After 10 years, this small event

was transformed into an extensive network, linking the industries of creativity and manufacturing, with over 1,800 artists supported and promoted. These events spread across London as big dimension cultural events - Designer's Block, 100% Design, Art shows – and even events including music gigs and publishers appeared. Artistic and creative production events spread worldwide, bringing a new exposition and value to these cultural industries (Evans, 2007).

Beyond all these art events and shows, independent street performers also perform as an attraction, amusing and entertaining the tourist's city visit. Simpson (2011) defines street performers as the individuals who present artistic performances in the urban space, with the purpose to receive donations from passersby. Lemay et al. (2013, p. 580) consider that street performers “entertain pedestrians as they walk down the streets of cities in hopes of receiving reimbursement for their time and energy”. In Bath (England), with its 3.8 million-day visitors on an annual basis, one touristic attraction are the street performers, located throughout the city's centre. These street performers are considered part of the atmosphere created in Bath, bringing people joy and the experience of a more energetic city (Simpson, 2011). The art of these performers remarks and fills the city's identity and vivacity, making the touristic experience more interesting and fuller. They bring joy and colour to the streets, awakening the city with their performances and works.

We could add that street arts deal with the preservation and renewal of the popular cultural heritage. They keep the traditions linked to fêtes and certain popular know-how alive. Furthermore, street arts decompartmentalise the academic codes of the fine arts by creating bridges between the different disciplines, and therefore very produce innovative creation forms. Street arts help broaden access of the populations to culture by positioning themselves in the public space, open to circulation, and by setting up in isolated or poorly equipped areas. Street arts mobilise the social fabric of the city and help forge or strengthen a sense of belonging among the city's inhabitants. Street arts are a communication vector for the cities and help dynamise the local economy (Floch 2007, p. 3)

Street arts like street performance represent a vehicle of dissemination of culture, bringing it closer to people without limiting the access to anyone, and improving the relationship and sense of belonging between citizens. In fact, street performance changes

the way we look at a street which is no longer just the way to get to our destination but a world full of life.

This way, apart from bringing animation to the tourists' journey, visiting and walking by the streets, street performance opens to the tourist community displaying the cultural and urban life of the city, as well as creating an environment, which fosters the involvement and interaction between people, giving them an enjoyable and interesting moment lived in our city.

### **The performing art in the urban space**

According to the Oxford Dictionaries, “a person who performs music or other entertainment in the street or another public place for monetary donations” is called a busker. The artist's performance on the public space is commonly designated as ‘busking’ or ‘street performance’.

Forgoing the sanctity of a walled theatre space, with darkened auditorium, fixed seating, prepared audiences, and reassuring reviews, the street performer instead engages and manipulates the urban environment, using its traffic, noise, and passersby as props for his [sic] show. Buses rumble by; helicopters hover overhead; heckles interrupt the rhythm of the performance; rain, cold, or police can defeat the performer entirely. The audience surrounds the street performer, restless, waiting, impatient. Yet the street performer succeeds in transforming urban space into theatre place (Harrison-Pepper 1990, p. 140)

Mostly in the biggest cities, there are artists who make a living by performing in the streets. Cities nowadays are incrementally predicted to be creative, inventive and innovative, to have a ‘buzz’ in which street performers can fit into but not necessarily do (Thrift, 2004). Street performers enter the urban space, changing its patterns of use, affecting routines and offering the opportunity for different events to occur (Simpson, 2011).

As Harrison-Pepper (1990) describes the New York's street performers, they turn the urban environment into their own stage and perform or develop their art works

surrounded, eventually, by tourists and citizens. While working on the streets, they intervene significantly in the everyday city life and its atmosphere, holding the capacity to create cultural spaces inside the limits of the street (Simpson, 2011).

Public spaces are characterized by Ehrenfeucht and Loukaitou-Sideris (2007) as the spaces where the interaction between people from different private circles occurs, where people don't need an authorization to enter, and in which people's behaviour and conduct is their own decision to make. However, since "[a]ll places have restrictions – physical, legal, social – on their access and use" (Ehrenfeucht and Loukaitou-Sideris 2007: 106-107), a space that is absolutely public is unlikely to exist.

The performance of the artists affects the organization of the street at a space and temporal level, with the dynamic and drifting characteristics of the performance bringing density, rise and flow to the space (Harrison-Pepper, 1990). Tanenbaum (1995) argues that street performances create spontaneous encounters, bringing people closer in a democratic way, changing the way we perceive the urban space and breaking with the everyday individual routine. In fact, the space between the performer and the audience is reduced in a street performance event where the environment is more familiar and relaxed, and easier to involve and interact with the spectator (Mason, 1992). Pinder (2005) defends that the presence of this performing art can also foster the cities' geographies to be regarded through a critical point of view, concerning the formulation of the urban space and how to develop new possibilities.

Apart from the proximity of the performance, street performers are also confronted with the challenge to improvise, keeping their performance as a natural fluid act since there is no script (Tanenbaum, 1995). These are some of the characteristics which differentiate street performers from artists performing on a stage. The mixed crowd formed in a street performance situation also breaks with the conventional audience in a theatre, separated through classes and showing off the economic power of people (Auslander, 1999). In the urban space, the artist work is more democratic for its audience as everyone can watch, without the existence of a separation, and regardless of their economic power, race or age (Tanenbaum, 1995).

Citizens, tourists, anyone from any socioeconomic level become spectators, sharing the moment and even laughing with each other. Street performance fosters the contact among strangers, transforming the public urban space in a place of conviviality (Tanenbaum, 1995).

Street performance influences social relationships and the way we live with each other in a community, but it also transforms in a symbolic form our urban space, creating a stronger connection between people and the environment they live in or visit. The work of street performers can change our perception of the city space and even the way we think and act about it and the people and environment around us (Duxbury, 2013).

According to Duxbury (2013), to address sustainability, regarding our urban space, is possible with the intervention of artistic practises in the public space. Street performance captures public involvement, gaining the power to influence positive cultural changes and to stimulate public participation in the transformation of the city and communities into more sustainable places.

### **Street performance in Portugal**

In Portugal, street performers are a constant presence in big cities like Lisbon and Porto but also in other urban centres. Although the street performance world still has a low recognition level and acceptance, some street events related to the performing arts started to appear, promoting this type of art demonstration and encouraging people to discover it. The first major event of street performance, organized in Portugal since 2001, is Imaginarius, an international reference happening annually, with a two-day duration, in Santa Maria da Feira. Here, street performers are given the space to present their creations and perform for the public. Imaginarius is now part of the European route of street arts festivals, with a distinction made with the EFFE label, and collaborations with other projects. Santa Maria da Feira is denominated as the Portuguese capital of street arts with its strategic investment on artistic creation as a means to achieve economic development. This event opens and extends the cultural offer of the city, bringing closer different communities and cultures, involving its habitants and local traditions (Costa, 2016).

Crato, a village in Portalegre, developed in 2016 the first Busker Festival – International Festival of street artists – building several stages in the historic and interest zones of the villages where the artists were able to perform. With this initiative, the local organization intended to reinforce the community identity, bringing different cultures closer and fostering a sustainable local economy through cultural development.

Óbidos Buskers Festival – international festival dedicated to the street arts – saw its first edition happening in 2016. The vision of this festival regarding street arts embraces

the street as a free citizen's space, where one must be able to assist to free artists performances in the open space. Óbidos Buskers Festival values street artist's performances as a work that requires respect and consideration and that one must repay for the effort and dedication put in by the artist. Supporting the development and growth of street artists, the event has occurred annually until the present year.

In the bigger cities, Lisbon and Porto, different events have been organized in the last years. In Porto, a group of students came up with a festival for all types of street art – Artua – also including an art contest between its participants. Their idea was to foster tourism in the city and to give value and attention to the Portuguese street talent. Artua also represents the break of barriers and prejudices concerning street art, as an attempt to change people's mind and their appreciation to this type of art. Porto Busker and Porto's city council arranged together the Porto Busker Fest, occupying all august weekends, a festival which united several Portuguese and international street artists who were able to perform in different stages throughout Porto's downtown. Acrobats, clowns, dancers, living-statues, magicians and musicians, all have a seat in Porto Busker Fest, bringing energy and life to the city, encountering in this month a place for self-promotion and growth (Fitas, 2018).

In Lisbon, *Chapéus na rua* – Lisbon Busking Festival third edition took place in 2018, for 3 days, in the city's centre, promoting street art as an urban artistic expression. This event organized by COR.D'AC – Corrente de Arte Association, intends to break the differences in cultural access, bringing the art closer to every citizen or tourist, regardless of their economic possibilities. The festival also wants to change the idea of street art as an art of poor people, leading people to appreciate and enjoy street performances (Morais, 2018).

Apart from street art events, there are also other initiatives taking place in Portugal with the objective to support street artists, helping them to find other works or projects. *Central de Artistas*, for example, is a free platform which exhibits and promotes Portuguese and foreign artists performing all over the country. This platform discloses the artist's work, enabling its hiring from the users of the platform.

*Portal de Artista*, a website making available the acquisition and sell of animation services, gives the artists the necessary weapons for giving access of their work to anyone who wants to hire them. To be part of this website, artists must pay a monthly value with a binding period of one year.

Another example is ‘Book a street Artist’ – a creative company empowering artistic talent and disclosing it universally. The company develops a portfolio of the artists who contact them and gives to the general public the opportunity to hire these artists. ‘Book a street Artist’ works freely and without contract and it includes graffiti, music, illustration and other performative artists.

It is evident from the preceding discussion that, while street performers intervene in the everyday life of the city and produce convivial and sociable spaces, these interventions can make their presence contentious in various ways and therefore result in measures being taken to place limits on them. This is increasingly taking the form of a strategic tightening of the controls over street performers in light of relatively static issues (noise levels, timing, and “quality” of act). (Simpson 2011, p. 427)

However, as Simpson (2011) describes, the presence of street performers in the urban space implies the establishment of certain limits or rules regarding how they use the space, the amount of time and even the noise produced by them. In some countries, legislative responses to the performance of street artists in the urban space have been developed. Local authorities introduce licenses or codes of conduct, performers have to adhere in order to work on the street (Simpson, 2011).

With the presence of street performers in the public space, different legislative responses have been developed, in some countries with more severity, in others in a more liberal way (Simpson, 2011). In Portugal, Lisbon is the only city with legislation regarding the presence of street performers in the urban space. Until 2015, street performers in Lisbon would have to pay for a license in order to be authorized to develop their activity. Since then, Lisbon council has transferred this responsibility to the local councils. They now have the power of deciding over giving the license to the performing artists requiring them. The license of occupation of the urban public space is free but of mandatory acquisition. In Porto, there is no legislation for this kind of activity. There is no license of space occupation, however, there is an informal code of conduct, leading the artists to respect each other’s space and the street.

The presence of street performers reveals itself as an energetic and relaxed environmental creation in the urban space, bringing animation and entertainment for those



walking by who, apart from being spectators, can enjoy the performance closely and even engage in it. The performances of artists in the street create proximity and interaction between its audiences, including also a strong implicit sense of democracy with the inclusion of people from any kind of social or economic level in the public.

Street performers can be met in different cities in Portugal, being Lisbon and Porto the ones with the most affluence. Although this type of art is still not given enough value and support in the country, different events concerning street performance started to appear in the last decade gathering the space and attention for these performing artists to present themselves. Online platforms have also been created with the intent to help street performers' work to be appreciated and even supported financially for personal purposes of the client.

The work conditions of artists on the street has been given little to no attention in most cities, being Lisbon the only one with a legislation and regulation concerning this type of art. This reflects the value given by local authorities to this work, leaving the performers and the community exposed to any kind of situation regarding the performance of artists in the streets.

### **Street Performance in Porto**

Porto, together with Lisbon, is one of the two cities in Portugal that represents a centre of intensive cultural demand and supply, regarding the performing arts. The reason behind this fact is not only related with the dimension of the city but also with its facilities, which exist in bigger number and are better when compared with other cities, and with the social and professional qualification of the population being more developed. This way, the demand towards the quality of activities is affected, causing a generally positive response from the cultural field to a clustering economy auto-generating synergies (Macário, 2015).

Porto concentrates a heterogeneous, young, educated and demanding audience, generating the appearance of larger and new audiences, with new practises the local cultural policies have to face. Being a city with more cultural activity, Porto represents a place with the appropriated facilities and environments to produce different genres of arts (Santos et al. 2012).

“It is clear that tourism and culture have become increasingly closely linked as their role in regional attractiveness and competitiveness has become clearer” (OECD, 2008, p. 35). Porto has been elected best European Destination in 2012, 2014 and 2017 by European Best Destinations. Also the Portuguese Smart Cities Index recognized in 2016 the city of Oporto as “the Portuguese city with better results in what concerns the main vectors of intelligence (policy, strategies and projects implemented, edification, mobility, energy and smart services)” (Guerra et al., 2017, p. 129). These acknowledgments have reinforced the reputation of the city of Porto as a tourist destination, boosting the growing number of tourists in the city and its variety (Guerra et al., 2017). “According to Porto e Norte and the Tourism Department of the Porto City Council, tourists visiting the Porto region have an above average cultural level, being demanding when evaluating the experience. They are also characterized by having a medium/high and higher educational level; they are sensitive to local cultures and seek authentic experiences; they have a medium/high purchasing power; they are concerned about preserving the environment; they evaluate tourist products in advance; they are users of new ICTs; they travel with their family; and they prefer flexible itineraries and rationalize their consumption” (Liberato et al., 2018, p. 10). The willingness of tourists visiting Porto to have a cultural experience in the environment of the city works as a motivation for street performers. The great flow of tourists through the city’s downtown area rises the attention achieved by the artists performing in the streets as well as their income. Artists reaching for international recognition see in the presence of foreign visitors a path to touch new horizons and spread their work. They plan the location for their performances based on the affluence of citizens and tourists, leading them to the city’s downtown and historic centre.

In Porto city, street performers are a permanent presence in the downtown urban space. The most crowded areas such as Ribeira, Rua de Santa Catarina and Rua das Flores are rich in melodies, paints and even magic tricks during the day. Here we can meet Portuguese artists performing every day, changing places now and then, but we also encounter foreign artists who stop by for a day or two and take advantage of the city’s movement, or who found in Porto a place where they can establish their work, performing freely for who happens to step in that street. Painters selling their drawings, musicians sharing their songs and playing their instruments, circus performers, manipulation of puppets, this is the spectrum of street art filling Porto’s downtown.

In the city of Porto, there is no legislation concerning street performance, no licenses or any kind of official regulation. There is, however, an informal conduct code

between those working on the city's streets. This informal code implies a distance that must be kept in the street space between artists, so as not to interfere with each other's work or performance. Staying in the same space more than two hours is avoidable by the artists as it is advisable to keep the distance relatively to commercial spots, in order to keep their entrance free. When the artist's performance is noisy, it is wise to make pauses and not to use an amplifier (Moreira & Pinto, 2019).

In an interview delivered by the JPN, workers from cafés and hotels in 'Rua de Santa Catarina' revealed to have witnessed situations where the presence of artists in the street disturbed their business. They described as an example, performing artists blocking the entrance of a hotel and hampering the clients' movement, entering and exiting the café. In consequence of these situations, the workers support the creation of a legislation regarding the presence of street performers or even of a payed license (Andrade & Moreira, 2016).

The artists performing in the streets feel they are looked down upon by the community who perceives them as beggars, not valuing their work. In addition, some have been part of conflicts between artists not respecting one's space or fighting for one. This and other difficulties street performers live with, have led them to think about the idea of creating a union for street performers and workers. They understand the creation of a union as a means to achieve more respect and valorisation from the community but also as a means to bring artists closer, fostering the spirit of union, team and mutual help, improving the relationship between artists (Moreira & Pinto, 2019).

Although the presence of street artists in the city of Porto is widely seen and sensed in the downtown part of the city, the absence of any kind of regulation concerning this type of work seems to affect the artists and the people working in establishments situated in the same streets. The need for the creation of rules regarding street workers comes from the will to provide a fair, equal and peaceful environment between performers and their interaction with the urban space and citizens.

## **Conclusion**

With the high speed of evolution and level of competitiveness of the big cities around the world, searching for tools which incentive urban growth and development is an actual concern. Street performance stands out for its potential as a form of art and cultural expression and as a creative and attractive activity to the public, specially a tourist public.

Street performance can represent the culture of the city it is presented in, bringing value to the urban space and city image. It can be of use in developing new business and tourist attraction points concerning its artistic and entertainment power. Opposing the devaluation of this activity, cities can find in street performance a source worthy of investment and support, which gathers talent and creativity from the artists working on it and playing an important role in the innovation of our urban space.

In Portugal, street performers can be met in different cities, being Lisbon and Porto the ones with the most affluence. Although this type of art is still not given enough value and support in the country, different events concerning street performance started to appear in the last decade gathering the space and attention for these performing artists to present themselves. Online platforms have also been created with the intent to help street performers' work to be appreciated and even supported financially for personal purposes of the client.

The work conditions of artists on the street has been given little to no attention in most cities, being Lisbon the only one with a legislation and regulation concerning this type of art. This reflects the value given by local authorities to this work, leaving the performers and the community exposed to any kind of situation regarding the performance of artists in the streets. This way, it is required that the cities acknowledge street performance as a serious and respectful art activity which deserves attention and valorisation.

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