

## Artscaping in public places: Jeddah, the city of urban art

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### Abstract

This paper argues that urban art is an inclusive conception to contemporary placemaking, which has contributed significantly to (re)shaping the notion of public places in unprecedented dimension, perception, and scale. The concept of urban art implies an inclusive approach to public art, urban life and the public realm. Following the notion “the whole is greater than the sum of the parts”, the emerging design trends attempt to (re)present public places as a comprehensive synthesis and interactive form of urban art combining elements of temporary and permanent, form and space, static and dynamic, active and passive, effects and impressions. This process has greatly transformed not only the way of making and/or remaking places, but it also extends to new horizons of perceiving, and interacting of both public space and the public arts by users in their tangible and intangible terms. The paper examines the case of Jeddah, the city of Arts; a case that has transformed the city into an extensive outdoor art museum, through a broad range of urban artworks, including works of many international artists and sculptors. The paper explores the (re)making process of Jeddah’s public places under modern interpretations of aesthetical artistic values, where qualities of excitement, livability, vibrancy, and spectacularism are manifested in the city’s placemaking process. The paper attempts to build on some future directions for urban artscaping as a new perspective for understanding, interpreting and (re) making city spaces.

### 1. Introduction: Artscaping, urban art and placemaking

#### 1.1. Artscaping

Artscaping of public places has become a spatial placemaking strategy that relies on artistic practices and creative placemaking in response to the processes of social and cultural changes in urban landscapes. In that conceptual context, public places are representative spaces reflecting place identities. Living spaces that allow interaction and self-expression are identity representative sites. Hence, they are obviously localities for the development of stimulating processes of urban art, which can be labelled as “artscaping” of public place.

The term “artscaping” is subject to a variety of interpretations according to the cultural context where it is dealt with, the nature disciplines that it related and types of artworks addressed. Conceptualizing the artscaping of public places originates with concepts developed by Becker (1982), Crane (1992), Guerra and Costa (2016), where the ideas of

public place as a scenic space of specific artistic, spatial and formal qualities have been addressed and promoted. According to them, the idea of cultural scene that was developed from the concept of artscaping, can articulate the extents of and/or type of artistic production. An example of this could be the interaction of public art with public places, which transcends artistic and cultural messages to create or to endorse identity of a place (Straw, 2004). Many propositions on the contemporary public art/public place were argued by scholars, such as Scott (2000), Costa (2008); Costa and Lopes (2013), who support the idea that urban art has become gradually associated with a set of specific characteristics of urban situations, challenging urban interventions in those places.

#### 1.2. Urban art

The term “urban art” can be described in many ways and in relation to several cultural contexts, denoting that public art in urban settings are placed in specific sites with meaning and intent. Urban art is often used to summarize all visual

art practices that relate to cities and city life. Often, the relationship between content and audience, what the art is saying and to whom, is just as important if not more important than its physical location (Knight 2008). Historically, the notion of “urban art” has been developed from street art and graffiti culture. Today, the term “urban art” is applied to creative artistic/design works ranging from monumental installations, landmark sculptures, to graffiti and murals. As such, it includes an entire spectrum of artistic and visual interventions connected to outdoor spaces. Urban art often exists in a setting defined by positioning artworks in physical spaces that accommodate them, and it generally has several interfaces with its location, besides its visual and aesthetical characteristics. Urban artworks hold strong connection to their urban and social contexts, as one of the most used approaches that brings public art into people’s lives through interaction and participation, rather than focusing only on conventional urban beautification. In contrast to “public art”, urban art is very inclusive, in which it is both part of and reflective of current processes of global urbanization. Following the current forms of urbanism, the transitions between art, architecture, urban design, city planning, and social cultural characteristics are in continuous process of change, interaction and transformation.

Urban art should be valued by the community. However, in Jeddah, understanding artworks among residents is not up to standard. This is due to inadequate knowledge of art, misplacement of the artefacts, and the lack of community participation. In most cases, conventional planning deals with urban art in a way that is limited to just filling-in, decorating, or beautifying a space, and this is done in ways that do not provide a “sense” of place or display thoughtful ideas.

### **1.3. Urban art and placemaking**

Over the past few decades, the relationship between urban art and public places has been manifested in rapidly growing and diverse trends in various public realms. These trends include mainly creative initiatives: for example, the emergence of new sorts of urban art and the change of artistic modes of production. Moreover, they include new experiments in the interaction of architecture, such as some visionary interventions in city spaces. It is argued that the current changes in urban landscape in many cities are direct results of the fact that traditional boundaries between time and

space, real and virtual, tangible and intangible, physical and spiritual, inside and outside, and ephemeral and temporal, are being blurred by contemporary urban transformations. In that respect, Soja (1989) suggests that a “spatial turn” of art phenomena configures a new interpretation of the relation between the social and the spatial patterns, which renders a wide diversity of urban interventions in public places. These artistic interventions have been introducing a new perception on how placemaking and urban life are shaped through innovative interactions with their specific social and cultural processes.

Hence, encompassing various media and techniques used by the urban art practitioners, like advertisements, graffiti and street artworks as well as entire installations and art performances, urban art has inevitably become an important part in the evolution process of placemaking. In addition, it is becoming extensively involved within fields such as urban regeneration and re-interpretation of urban landscapes, as well as commoditization such as advertising and city marketing.

## **2. The need for a new paradigm**

Literature on aesthetic aspects of public artworks in urban and cultural contexts has rarely debated the characteristics and the associated features of urban art in public places of contemporary Arab cities. On a theoretical level, there is a lack of research on the relationship between public art and public space, although, a theoretical discourse on planning for public art is an inseparable aspect from the essence of “public” arts. As Hunting (2005) points out, “the established institutions in the art and art history world have failed to realize that when art moves into the public sphere, different standards and objectives must be applied if that art is to be successful, or even coherent”. Moreover, Hunting claims that this lack of research on the planning for public art is due to “the interdisciplinary nature of public art, combining the disparate fields of fine art, museum management, art history and public administration, complicates discussions about exactly what public art is and where it should be going”. In this context, Philips (1999) states lacking “the creation of the kind of sustained theoretical or critical framework required to transform ideas and impressions into meaningful relationships and connections”. However, this lack of research can be attributed to the absence of a clear understanding of a theoretical framework and sound

practical guidelines for the complex relationship between urban art and public place, as well as the interaction of the characteristics of both in the contemporary Arab city.

Urban art can be a catalyst for achieving distinctive urban aesthetics and a vibrant civic life. Phillips (2003) has questioned that urban art is situated at “the congested crossroads of aesthetics, public life, cultural ideas, and political issues. It is an art which is absolutely engaged with the world and this engagement often invokes spirited disagreement.” He asserts that it is an “art when it encourages and expedites connections between the private and public, the intimate place and the municipal space, the body and the community. There are moments of reflection when an image, or sound, or space allows individuals to embody, in a unique and often specific way, the vast and various issues of public life” (Phillips, 2003).

In this context, Miwon Kwon (2002) introduces a contemporary understanding of “site specific art”, stressing the concept of “site specificity” and the significance of public art’s relationship to place. She addresses the dimensions of site specificity through three main paradigms:

1. The “phenomenological” paradigm, in which the “site” is the “starting point and reason for being of the artwork. This paradigm strongly links the physical place with the artwork.
2. The “social” or “institutional” paradigm, in which the “site” is formed by “a much broader framework, with the focus on the social, economic and cultural political conditions, in which art is produced and presented.”
3. The “discursive” paradigm, where “the dematerialization of the ‘site’ and of the artwork are summed up” and artists expand their field of operation, in the sense of location, form, content and function, far beyond the context of art.

Hence, there is a need for a new paradigm of public places, addressing urban art and urban intervention as an innovative city development strategy towards successful placemaking, with particular reference to regeneration and revitalization initiatives. It is assumed that the new paradigm will focus on the main patterns, approaches, and trends to the (re)making process of city squares under alternative interpretations of the relevant urban aesthetical artistic values, where qualities

of excitement, livability, and vibrancy, among other qualities, are manifested in placemaking.

Places of urban art challenge common ways of thinking about the urban visual arts and their role in everyday life. This unique urban intervention pattern will necessitate a careful investigation of the relationship between the urban artworks and the appropriate spatial context, distance, movement, visibility as well as the townscape elements that should be considered for a successful setting of public art in public space (Helmy, 2005). The planning for urban art will dictate an essential layer for the city master planning on different scale levels, from the overall strategic urban art planning to the individual site planning of public place. The task of such planning is to organize and define urban art selection and its setting (Helmy, 2008).

### 3. Jeddah

Jeddah is a principle Red Sea port, a leading commercial city in Saudi Arabia and a main access point for visitors to the holy Muslim city of Makkah. The city has nearly 40 kilometers of coastline, providing a road, walkways and attractions along the coast. It has a multifaceted history associated with travelling and tourism. In the 1970s the city initiated a long term urban art program called *Jeddah, the City of Art*. The initiative illustrates the role that can be played by art in shaping the urban environment and how built spaces and public artworks do interact with one another or converge within a culturally rich context. It implies a citywide and large-scale urban project that manifests how urban art contributes to the formation and transformation of public places. In addition, the Jeddah Art Initiative demonstrates the way people conceive the aesthetic dimension of urban design (from architecture and landscape design, to spatial networks, placemaking, and city planning).

#### 3.1 Jeddah city form

The city has been greatly influenced by its original functions: its port, historic core surrounded by the Central Business District (CBD), vast residential areas, shopping centers and services, a creek, and several recreation areas. Administrative services, commerce, and shopping facilities shaped the land use of the old core, and extended beyond it along with the north-south axes dated back to the 1970s and 1980s. Residential neighborhoods were developed along these axes, where some cross connections constitute a large-scale

orthogonal grid, following a dominant physical planning model of that time. The cosmopolitan character of the city and its residents, historical and commercial characteristics to goods and pilgrims have had a great impact on its form and structure.

Generally, the city's urban patterns are characterized by intensified development, where several urban archetypes and large subdivisions dominate the city spatial structure. As Helmy (2008) points out, four main patterns can be identified:

Grid Patterns: the iron-grid networks, as the large-scale mixed-use developments along major axes.

Radial Patterns: traditional forms that radiate from the historical core.

Organic Patterns: as in the complex historical fabric, i.e. traditional buildings, markets and streets.

Linear Patterns: fabrics defining the edges of the waterfront, i.e. tall buildings along the Corniche.

The visual identity of Jeddah is summarized through the representative aesthetics of its skyline, traditional buildings, modern squares and vistas, where a mix of traditional Hijazi architecture (local vernacular architecture of the region), modern international styles (of European/American references), and authentic and innovative forms, are juxtaposed with great variations. Major landmarks in the city include numerous mosques, which act as icons along the Corniche strip and vistas along main roads in the city. Moreover, the mixed-use complexes centered in the core of the city, the Municipality Headquarters building, the airport terminals, the sea port and the port observation tower are the most identifiable landmarks of the city. In addition, the large number of super scale sculptures and works of art situated in traffic roundabouts act as strong vistas. The urban iconic artworks of Jeddah are visible from many vantage points around the city. They mark the city's major locations, helping visitors and residents to navigate its zones and spaces. Numerous of the landmarks of Jeddah frame well its public spaces.

### 3.2 Jeddah public places

With few exceptions, the harsh humid hot weather of Jeddah most of the year does not enable outdoor public gathering in a comfortable atmosphere, except for a few limited locations. Outdoor public places are to be found in the old traditional markets as well as along the Corniche strip, where recreational and special outdoor seating facilities

are available. Indoor gathering spaces, found in mixed-use development and in numerous shopping malls of different scales and areas all over the city, are dominant public space patterns. The major outdoor places can be categorized as: Green Parks and areas, including some green stretches along main roads and urban parks.

Traditional spaces found in historical markets and plazas.

Urban squares, large-scale traffic roundabouts resulting from the major roads intersecting, devoted to the organization of traffic around them. They cannot be considered as public gathering places.

The Red Sea Corniche long strip, including promenades, gathering areas, pedestrian zones.

### 3.3 Jeddah's urban art scape

In the 1970s, Jeddah's mayor Mohammed Said Farsi envisioned Jeddah City as a global cultural art hub. Consequently, the Jeddah Beautification Project was established to realize such a vision. Contrary to European and American public art culture, public art in Jeddah's cultural and urban contexts, was seen as the major part of the city beautification program, disregarding community involvement or citizens artistic understanding and acceptance. Hence, the main role of the Jeddah art initiative was to make a visual statement. About 526 public artworks were scattered in the city's landscape with an array of visual sculptural elements of many sorts (Susie of Arabia, 2012), such as murals, installations of various scales, fountains, and architectural miniatures.

The main themes of Jeddah public artworks include religious, historical, geometrical and science subjects, traditional and everyday objects, such as Arabian coffee pots, and water vessels, Quranic verses using Arabic calligraphy, abstract and monumental as well as many whimsical art works by internationally renowned artists, assuring the international nature of the envisioned city. One may drive or walk by the public works, or specifically visit it as a destination. The sculptures are fashioned out of everything from bronze, steel, marble, concrete, local stone, and even scrap iron and recycled machinery. A number of the sculptures are made of recycled aircraft and boats. The art works are mostly abstract, avoiding the use of human form in order to sidestep religious conflicts. Some of the local artists and the world's most distinguished masters participated in the creation of Jeddah's art works.

Acting as landmarks for the city and reflecting the projected identity of the 1980s, *Jeddah, the City of Arts*, is the art initiative that seems to capture mostly the eyes of today's residents and visitors. The urban artworks have transformed the city into an extensive outdoor museum, although there is no tradition of sculpture in Saudi Arabia. They are much more significant than the space surrounding them. The artworks represent a broad range of styles including works of many renowned international artists and sculptors, such as the Spaniard Julio Lafuente, the Italians Arnaldo Pomodoro, Pietro Cascella and Di Giovanni, the American Robert Cook and some of the "giants": Henry Moore, Joan Miró and Jacques Lipchitz, and the Hungarian Victor Vasarely. Many of the artworks are abstract and deviate sharply from topics such as science, technology, nature, especially the sea, which link the other artworks with the city's heritage. (Susie of Arabia, 2012).

### 3.3.1. Locations of artworks in Jeddah

Locations of artworks in Jeddah vary from locations along major roads, along the Corniche strips and the sculpture museum, to positions in the middle of road crossings (traffic roundabout islands) to urban parks and green zones. Fig. 1 shows a summary of the typology of locations for Jeddah's public artworks.

#### Art in roadways

The islands dividing/or along the roadways are becoming common settings for artworks of different scales, sizes and forms. Notable examples for artworks are the *Four Lanterns* by Julio Lafuente, and *Tahlia Fountain* by Mustafa Senbel, which are both located at Tahlia street, and the *Fish* by Al Hindi and Banjabi in Corniche Obhur.

#### Urban parks

Urban parks and green zones have also become common settings for unique artworks. Major examples are found in the *Rotating First Section* by Arnaldo Pomodoro (1975); the *Large Spindle Piece* by Henry Moore (1968); and the *Antagonistic Contacts* and *Sun and Beam* by Giò Pomodoro, which are all located in Jeddah Sculpture Museum.

#### Traffic circles (roundabouts)

The huge scale of the major road crossings resulted in the creation of monumental scale traffic roundabouts. Instead of creating a vast lost space within those crossings, it

was considered an appropriate ground for super scale artworks. Examples include: *The Acciden'!* (*Crazy Speed*) by Julio Lafuente, at the Northern Corniche road; *The Globe Roundabout* by Julio Lafuente; and the *Seagull Roundabout* by Mustafa Senbel, located at Northern Corniche.

#### The Corniche strip

The "Corniche", adorned with sculptural elements, became synonymous with beautification along Jeddah's seacoast strip. It denotes the creation of all kinds of sculptures, plastics, art objects and installations that adorn the Corniche area. The Corniche delineates several sorts of public places, green areas and parks for leisure and entertainment.

### 3.3.2. Types of major urban artworks

Urban artworks in Jeddah include all kinds of sculptures, murals, small-scale architectural elements, art objects and installations. Artworks are all abstract in form and their types can be summarized as follows:

#### Architectural icons

Architectural icons play an interesting role in the Jeddah Art Initiative. Architecture is represented through fine ensembles and award-winning Mosques, some landmark buildings, or a miniature for full-scale traditional buildings and old city gates in some locations. Illustrative examples include the Commercial Bank in Jeddah, by Kin Jordon Bunshaft in the Historic Jeddah (1988); the Floating Rahma Mosque Corniche Jeddah (2005); the Camel Roundabout by Rabi Al Akhras, Obhur Jeddah, and the Historic Jeddah Gate, in Albalad.

#### Sculptures and murals

There are no clear specific criteria for sculpture and murals. They can be of any size, form, shape, style, material or theme. This in turn makes it difficult to integrate the urban artwork within particular settings. For example, the works of Henry Moore or Victor Vasarely are not exposed enough and do not fit visually nor physically, in terms of scale, theme and proportions. Moreover, little is known about the significance of those works for the public. Examples include: *The Changing Positions* by Victor Vasarely in the Jeddah Sculpture Museum (1981); the *Eye* by César Baldaccini, Jeddah Sculpture Museum, the *Fisherman's Net* by Mustafa Senbel, Jeddah Corniche; and the *Verse Boat* by Julio

# Typology of Urban Art in Jeddah: Location

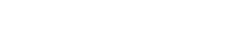
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);"><b>Art in Road Ways</b></p>				
	<p><b>Lanterns and Tap</b> By Ali Bayoumi and Mohamed Farsi Prince Faisal bin Fahd Street Source: <a href="http://www.sculpturesofjeddah.com/sculptures/detail/lanterns-and-tap">http://www.sculpturesofjeddah.com/sculptures/detail/lanterns-and-tap</a></p>	<p><b>The Four Lanterns</b> By Julio Lafuente Al-Tahliah Street. Source: <a href="http://www.sculpturesofjeddah.com/sculptures/detail/the-four-lanterns">http://www.sculpturesofjeddah.com/sculptures/detail/the-four-lanterns</a></p>	<p><b>Tahlia Fountain</b> By Mustafa Senbel Tahlia, Jeddah Source: <a href="http://www.sculpturesofjeddah.com/sculptures/detail/tahliah-fountain">http://www.sculpturesofjeddah.com/sculptures/detail/tahliah-fountain</a></p>	<p><b>Fish</b> By Al Hindi and Hesham Benjabi Jeddah Corniche Obhur Source: <a href="http://www.sculpturesofjeddah.com/sculptures/detail/fish">http://www.sculpturesofjeddah.com/sculptures/detail/fish</a></p>
				
	<p><b>Rotating First Section No. 3</b> By Arnaldo Pomodoro The Jeddah Sculpture Museum 1975 Source: <a href="http://www.sculpturesofjeddah.com/sculptures/detail/rotating-first-section-no-3">http://www.sculpturesofjeddah.com/sculptures/detail/rotating-first-section-no-3</a></p>	<p><b>Large Spindle Piece</b> By Henry Moore The Jeddah Sculpture Museum. 1968 Source: <a href="http://www.sculpturesofjeddah.com/sculptures/detail/large-spindle-piece">http://www.sculpturesofjeddah.com/sculptures/detail/large-spindle-piece</a></p>	<p><b>Antagonistic Contacts and Sun and Beam</b> By Giò Pomodoro The Jeddah Sculpture Museum Source: <a href="http://www.sculpturesofjeddah.com/sculptures/detail/antagonistic-contacts-and-sun-and-beam">http://www.sculpturesofjeddah.com/sculptures/detail/antagonistic-contacts-and-sun-and-beam</a></p>	<p><b>Large Ball Bearing</b> By Ottmar Hollmann The Jeddah Sculpture Museum Source: <a href="http://www.sculpturesofjeddah.com/sculptures/detail/large-ball-bearing">http://www.sculpturesofjeddah.com/sculptures/detail/large-ball-bearing</a></p>
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);"><b>Roundabouts</b></p>				
	<p><b>Accident! Crazy Speed</b> By Julio Lafuente Jeddah Northern Corniche Source: <a href="http://www.sculpturesofjeddah.com/sculptures/detail/accident-crazy-speed">http://www.sculpturesofjeddah.com/sculptures/detail/accident-crazy-speed</a></p>	<p><b>The Globe Roundabout</b> By Julio Lafuente Northern Jeddah. 1970 Source: <a href="http://www.sculpturesofjeddah.com/sculptures/detail/the-globe">http://www.sculpturesofjeddah.com/sculptures/detail/the-globe</a></p>	<p><b>Engineers' Tools</b> By Hisham Benjabi and Ali Amin Engineering Roundabout Source: <a href="http://www.sculpturesofjeddah.com/sculptures/detail/engineers-tools">http://www.sculpturesofjeddah.com/sculptures/detail/engineers-tools</a></p>	<p><b>The Seagull Roundabout</b> By Mustafa Senbel Jeddah Northern Corniche Source: <a href="http://www.sculpturesofjeddah.com/sculptures/detail/the-seagull">http://www.sculpturesofjeddah.com/sculptures/detail/the-seagull</a></p>
				
<p><b>Sunrise</b> By Mustafa Senbel Jeddah Corniche Source: <a href="http://www.sculpturesofjeddah.com/sculptures/detail/sunrise">http://www.sculpturesofjeddah.com/sculptures/detail/sunrise</a></p>	<p><b>Sunflower Field Fountain</b> By Eila Hiltunen Jeddah Corniche. 1980 Source: <a href="http://www.sculpturesofjeddah.com/sculptures/detail/sunflower-field-fountain">http://www.sculpturesofjeddah.com/sculptures/detail/sunflower-field-fountain</a></p>	<p><b>Peace</b> By Leonardo Nierman Jeddah Corniche. 1984 Source: <a href="http://www.sculpturesofjeddah.com/sculptures/detail/peace">http://www.sculpturesofjeddah.com/sculptures/detail/peace</a></p>	<p><b>The Island Mosque</b> By Abdel Wahed El-Wakil Jeddah Corniche. Source: <a href="http://www.sculpturesofjeddah.com/sculptures/detail/the-island-mosque">http://www.sculpturesofjeddah.com/sculptures/detail/the-island-mosque</a></p>	

Fig. 1. Typology of Urban Art in Jeddah according to their location

Lafuente, North Jeddah (1981).

### Landscape art

Mixing artworks with the hard and soft scape are often successful within the Jeddah Art Initiative. Green areas and lavish parks contribute significantly to the overall social interaction with the artworks. Examples include: The Jeddah Sculpture Museum on the Corniche by Abdul Latif Jameel Community Initiatives (ALJCI), and the *Seagull Roundabout* by Mustafa Senbel, Jeddah Northern Corniche.

### Seascape art

There are many artworks located within or along the seacoast. Water adds unique value to the overall scenography of the artworks. Sometimes waterscape is part of the artwork itself. Notable examples include: the *King Fahad's Fountain* donated by King Fahad at the Corniche; the *Fish* by Al Hindi and Hesham Banjabi, Obhur Corniche; and the *Sunflower Field Fountain* by Eila Hiltunen at Jeddah Corniche (1980).

### Lightscape art

Lighting has an important role in the presentation of urban art works in Jeddah. Some significant artworks are based on their night-lighting images, particularly on the roundabouts. Examples include: the *Four Lanterns* by Julio Lafuente at Al-Tahliah Street; the *King Fahad's Fountain* donated by King Fahad, *Jeddah Corniche*; and the *Globe Roundabout* by Julio Lafuente at the Northern Jeddah (1970).

## 4. Current issues of artscaping Jeddah

After almost three decades of realization, the Jeddah Art Initiative proved considerable success in developing a strong visual identity that helped shape the image of the city, especially with the development of particular areas such as the Corniche or some major roads. It has successfully contributed to identifying and naming new urban areas and large-scale neighborhoods. However, some sculptures and installations of monumental scale are simplistic in their form and superficial in expressions, such as *Al-Darraga/ the Bicycle* (located in Al-Darraga roundabout, designed by Julio Lafuente), *Al-Handdassa / Geometry*, installation (located in Al-Handdassa roundabout and designed by Hisham Benjabi and Ali Amin), and *Al-Falak/ the Cosmos* (located in a Al-Falak roundabout, designed by Ottoar Hollmann) (fig. 3).

Although the Jeddah Art Initiative enhanced the city's identity, it revealed a number of shortcomings that could be improved and addressed in the future. This is important because the initiative was not well integrated with city development and masterplans at that time. It was laid out to deal with the gaps in city-planning and the issues resulting from those gaps. More importantly, in many locations, artworks are not integrated with their relevant urban setting or social context. Major shortcomings can be summarized as follows:

- Some artworks are not conveying a meaningful message.
- Some artworks reflect a direct meaning that should be considered out of urban and/or cultural context.
- Some artworks are not seen as vital elements in the public sphere; they are not centered within public activities, which could encourage people to appreciate their value and beauty. The scale of some of the public places is exceptionally huge, which makes them difficult to perceive, especially in the city squares; this turns them more into picturesque elements than active ones for the urban sphere.

## 5. Concluding remarks

The experience of Jeddah, City of Art, illustrates how public art can enhance the character and identity of a city, which is very important for the improvement of its living quality. The analysis has shed light on the significance of the quality of spatial and visual environments within the public sphere. Public artworks should be treated as landmarks for social interaction and cultural awareness, which reflect livability and identity. Consequently, public art can add value to places in Jeddah that attract social interaction and tourism.

Urban art in public places should be integrated into the planning framework of the city or the place. Placing artworks in urban settings is, therefore, a planning process that should bring together relevant input from city development departments, partner agencies, collaborating developers, architects and designers, artists and the local community. Setting of artworks in public places in terms of form, function and content is an important element in the process of successful place making. The process should identify the opportunities that are possible in a specific area, such as a particular street or square. It can be an important factor in the social integration of urban art with the local community and the way of building up the identity of a public domain.



Major design principles for planning public art in Jeddah should be considered as follows:

A public art master plan should be an essential layer of the city's overall planning, and it should organize the selection and setting of artworks.

A public art master plan should respond to the main city axis in order to emphasize the city's identity as well as acting as landmarks.

Public art placement should be based on certain criteria like integration with the adjacent surrounding built environment, and applicable public art perspective views

Public art should complement public buildings

A careful investigation of the relationship between the artworks and the urban context, distance, movement and visibility as well as the townscape elements should be considered.

Public art placement should be integrated in the surrounding landscape as well as in relation to existing amenities.

Public art placement should be studied in relation to the surrounding roads with its different categories, e.g.

pedestrian or vehicles roads, in order to satisfy different forms of perceptions.

Public art should be constructed with an appropriate scale in light of surrounding buildings.

Public art and public spaces need to engage with, and cater for, people in all their diversity of needs, aspirations, and resources, encouraging users to create activities for themselves.



Fig. 3. Public artworks as urban landmarks in Jeddah. Above right: Al-Handdassa roundabout, above left Al-Darraga roundabout, Below: Al-Falak, roundabout

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