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Managing Community Murals in an Urban Preservation Framework

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Abstract

Since their arrival in the 1960s, community murals have grown from grass roots efforts to beautify neighborhoods and assert community identity into artistically innovative expressions of injustices of the communities they serve. As murals increasingly appear in cities across the country, almost no guidelines exist for their management and care nor their relationship with existing cultural resource management practices. This thesis examines how community mural programs interact with other public and private entities to achieve preservation-oriented management practices. It explores the current policies and practices of three east coast community organizations, The Baltimore Mural Program, Mural Arts Philadelphia, and the Mayor's Mural Crew of Boston. This paper considers how these programs manage and access information, how they determine lifespan, how they make decisions about maintaining and removing murals, and how stakeholders participate in their process and decisions. By analyzing current practices, this paper outlines the need for best practices in mural management using a values-based collections criteria. Beyond maintenance and care practices, this paper argues that preservation offers the opportunity to evaluate murals as contemporary contributions to the urban landscape.

MANAGING COMMUNITY MURALS IN AN URBAN PRESERVATION FRAMEWORK

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1. INTRODUCTION

Community murals are proliferating in cities across the country yet almost no guidelines exist for their management and care nor their relationship with existing cultural resource management practices and policies in their host cities. Since their arrival in the 1960s neighborhoods of Chicago, Los Angeles, and Baltimore, community murals have grown from grass roots efforts to beautify neighborhoods and assert community identity into artistically innovative expressions of injustices of the under-represented communities they serve. With their position in public spaces these persuasive, and at times controversial, works are direct and often powerful. Underpinned by social programs, processes of community engagement, and physical manifestations of more complex community goals, community murals and mural programs have changed the face of cities. Because murals are increasingly regarded as contemporary reflections of cities and communities warrants serious consideration of their future. As murals increase in number and fall into disrepair, the need for systems of management and policies to respond to this unique cultural resource is apparent.

This paper examines how community mural programs interact with other public and private entities to achieve preservation-oriented management practices. It explores the current policies and practices for managing community murals by addressing how these programs manage and access information, how they determine life span, how they make decisions about maintaining and removing murals, and how stake-holders participate in their process and decisions. Further, it considers the ways in which municipal partnerships interact and impact these programs and their objectives.

In order to gain insight into these questions the author will examine the current policies and management practices of three distinctly different community mural programs: the

Baltimore Mural Program, the City of Philadelphia Mural Arts Program, and the Boston Mayor's

Mural Crew (Figure 1). Chosen for residing in complex large historic cities on the East Coast of

the United States, the programs share in common missions to affect social change through art,

despite their significant differences in scale and organization. In addition to examining the

management practices of these organizations such as inventory, systems of management,

deaccessioning and collection size, this paper will examine the different private and public

stakeholders involved over the life of a mural. It will also specifically address issues of longevity,

which are particularly important in this class of cultural resource. Documentation will be

highlighted as a method for integrating preservation practices into community mural

management. It will also examine the relationship with the historic resources of the host cities,

the policies that protect them and their governing bodies.

Stewardship of community murals invites both modification of existing practices and

innovation. Factors common to conventional public art, such as permanence, and meeting

accepted tenets of art, are replaced with intensely direct, personal expressions of underserved

populations and their advocates. Although a relatively young phenomenon in cities, community

murals are already a form of art that has colored urban centers and left a mark on recent

history. Unlike conventional public art, they are rarely governed at the level of other forms of

public art. Their existence in cities can be controversial and assumed temporary. As murals

assert their message, vanish, and regenerate outside of many forms of control, it can be difficult

to keep pace with these unique resources of urban history.

As these murals come of age in ever-changing urban landscapes and stewards

encounter questions of changing communities, resource allocation, and relevance, they look to

others for models. One particularly relevant policy framework can be found in the multi-

disciplinary field of historic preservation, which addresses urban change as one of its principal

objectives. Through proactive considerations and a commitment to the nuance of urban

identity, preservation aspires to support and protect a city's history, character, and form.

Preservation embraces changing identities by encouraging thoughtful growth within cities,

growth which acknowledges the built landscapes and communities that change over time. In

consideration of community art, preservation encompasses more than physical conservation

and maintenance practices. Rather it engages in a process, inviting issues of history,

representation, and change to remain prominent in decision-making. Like the stewards and

organizers of community murals programs, preservationists would be concerned that murals

remain relevant to their communities. Beyond maintenance and care practices, preservation

offers the opportunity to evaluate murals as contemporary contributions to the urban

landscape.

METHODOLOGY

In an effort to understand approaches to management and preservation among community-

based mural programs, the author will examine three mural programs in East Coast cities. The

programs were chosen from among many according to four principle criteria: age of the

program, the number of murals, commitment to the community, and presence in a historic city.

This last difficult-to-define criterion was evaluated based on the presence of both extensive

historic structures and active preservation organizations. All three case study cities have

moderate to large populations of black Americans, and distinctive racial segregation within

neighborhoods.[1] Each of the chosen programs was founded at least 28 years ago. The range of

the number of murals in the programs is considerable, but those chosen had to have created

more than 200 murals. The number of extant murals is not considered, as many of these

organizations do not have updated statistics on this information. Service to the community as a

primary function is evaluated by the mission statement and existence of community programs.

Through interviews, the author examines each community-based mural organization to

identify their collection practices, decision-making policies, and documentation approaches to

managing the murals in their collection. This information is then organized in a matrix of

organizational practices to examine the types of practices in use (Figure 2). Interviews are

supported with qualitative research of each organization's history, including the role of the

municipality in supporting the organization and the funding mechanisms. Three primary

preservation issues lead the examination of each organization—the life span of the collection,

an inventory and management system for the murals, and the documentation and recording of

murals. These three issues inform discussion of managing community murals and how

preservation management tools such as collections management and cultural resource

management, could be used to address the preservation of community mural collections.

Because of the considerations of local politics, resources, and demographics unique to

every city, this paper will compare how each organization functions within their respective city.

While budget, staff, and organization will be considered, these aspects of the organization will

not be the main points of comparison. Comparing practices, it is hoped, will reveal the extent to

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[1] Matthew Bloch et al., "Mapping Segregation," *The New York Times*, July 8, 2015.
https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2015/07/08/us/census-race-map.html.

which mural organizations are limited or supported by the preservation policies and the resource management practices of their cities.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The existing literature on community murals is expansive in its history and social purpose but lacks focus in issues of legacy and management practices. When management is discussed, it often falls into discussions of professional conservation, and does not address issues of inventory or data management. Preservation is often discussed in terms of restoration or historical significance, if it is considered at all. The following review of literature draws from a range of sources on subjects central to the multi-disciplinary field of historic preservation and relevant to the management and preservation of community murals, such as documentation, inventory, life span, and ephemera.[2] To achieve this goal, the bodies of literature reviewed included the history of murals and specifically community murals; planning and management of public art; modern preservation perspectives; documentation and preservation; and conservation and community murals.

HISTORY OF COMMUNITY MURALS

Many authors paint a picture of the mural movement in the United States according to the variations of style, culture, and intent across the country. Typically, these sources follow the Mexican Mural Movement and the New Deal Era through the Civil Rights and Chicano

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[2] This paper is focused on management concerns of community murals and will not discuss the process or history of mural-making or focus on the material conservation and restoration practices of preserving murals.

Movements.[3] A large body of literature also traces the evolution of graffiti in public places and

how different forms of unsanctioned street art have grown into the mural movement or exist

alongside it. Much of this literature is specific to a city or a site and summarizes their mural

organization within the broader muralism movement.[4] Some note the genres of community

murals are needlessly subdivided in scholarly literature, when in fact they represent similar

movements.[5] These sources tend to focus on murals as social reaction to politics in specific

contexts. When these sources consider the practices of mural-making, it is largely described in

terms of social process and community-building. Little to no attention is given to managing

these resources for the future.

The creation of the Community Mural Movement is well-documented, although subject

to different interpretations of how it began. In American cities, community-based public art, still

referred to at the time as street art, became popular in the 1960s.[6] Born from the political

activism of the decade such as black pride, the women's movement, and the farm worker's

revolution, it took root in major cities like Los Angeles, Chicago, and New York. The movement

quickly cultivated protest, pride and social consciousness in the populations they represented.

Scholars ascribe different influences to the East and West Coast mural movement, noting that

the movement in the West is rooted in the Mexican Mural Movement as seen in cities such as

San Francisco and Los Angeles, while cities in the Midwest and East such as New York, Detroit,

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[3] Eva Cockcroft et al., *Toward a People's Art* (New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1977), 55.
[4] Janet Braun-Reinitz and Jane Weissman, *On the Wall: Four Decades of Community Murals in New York City*, (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2009); Annice Jacoby, ed., *Street Art San Francisco – Mission Muralismo*, (New York: Abrams, 2009).
[5] Sang Weon Bae, "Balancing Past and Present: Reevaluating Community Murals and Existing Practices" (master's thesis, University of Pennsylvania, 2016), 6.
[6] Cockcroft et al., *Toward a People's Art*, 80.

and Chicago more often depicted Anglo American historical events.[7] The Community Mural

Movement is generally agreed to shift away from political subject matter towards artistically-

driven imagery by the 1980s and 1990s as the generation of activists and activism retired. Some

previously grass roots organizations transitioned to municipal agencies, and murals themselves

became increasingly created by community members rather than professional artists.[8]

PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC ART

Literature on planning and management of community-based as well as municipally-funded

mural programs sheds light on a shift in the management, content, and outputs of community

murals. Some scholars suggest that municipalities partnering with community mural

organizations demonstrates acceptance of murals and art-making as a way to combat urban

issues.[9] Others note these partnerships are motivated by oversight on issues of design and

subject matter. Funding also played a key role in why community mural organizations chose to

partner with city agencies. The National Endowment for the Arts began funding community

murals by individuals and organizations beginning in 1970. However, the public nature of the

funding led to censorship and restrictions.[10] Many community mural organizations found a

better chance for survival by partnering with city agencies who provided resources, funding, and

support for their civic-minded initiatives. Today, municipal-public mural organizations, such as

two of the case studies in this paper, rely on both private and public fund, by way of municipal

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[7] Annice Jacoby, ed., *Street Art San Francisco,* 34, and Braun-Reinitz and Weissman, *On the Wall,* 143.
[8] Alan W. Barnett, *Community Murals: The People's Art*, (University of California: Arts Alliance Press, 1984), 130.
[9] Maura E. Greaney, "The Power of the Urban Canvas: Paint, Politics, and Mural Art Policy," *New England Journal of Public Policy* (September 2002): 10.
[10] Barnett, *Community Murals*, 132.

government. This is powerful in light of the emerging "Civic Arts," with their focus on

involvement with policy.[11]

Most community mural organizations do not appear to adopt preservation-oriented

practices and protocols to manage their collections.[12] Language such as "preservation" and

"restoration" tend to apply to repainting or removing graffiti. Exceptions exist. The Social and

Public Art Resource Center (SPARC) in Los Angeles is one of the earliest community mural

organizations with a mural restoration program. Along with repainting murals, SPARC has a

Digital Mural Archive through a partnership with UCLA, which documents Los Angeles murals in

various formats.[13] Similarly, the Rescue Public Murals initiative of 2006-2015 operated by

Heritage Preservation and Dr. Timothy Drescher documented murals, assessed their condition,

and raised the necessary funds to preserve them.[14] Both of these sources used documentation

as the primary mode of preserving community murals.

Municipal "Percent for Art" programs follow more rigorous professional collections

practices. With commissions both paid for with ear-marked funding, these programs are bound

to uphold their responsibility to the public to maintain public works. Programs such as the

Miami-Dade Art in Public Places and Minneapolis Arts Commission and many others collect and

organize extensive online information regarding maintenance, inventory, funding, and decision-

making practices for their public art.[15] These municipal organizations oversee similar resources

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[11] Jon Spayde, "Public Art and Placemaking," *Public Art Review* (Fall/Winter 2012): 25.
[12] "Chicago Public Art Group," http://www.chicagopublicartgroup.org/ (accessed January 24, 2019) and "Precita Eyes Muralists," http://www.precitaeyes.org/ (accessed January 24, 2019).
[13] Social and Public Art Resource Center, "SPARC – About," http://sparcinla.org/about-sparc/ (accessed February 3, 2019).
[14] ARTSTOR, "Rescue Public Murals: (FAIC)," http://www.artstor.org/collection/rescue-public-murals (accessed January 19, 2019).
[15] City of Minneapolis, "Minneapolis Arts Commission," http://www.minneapolismn.gov/dca/mac/index.htm (accessed January 19, 2019) and Miami-Dade

as community mural organizations, but with higher professional standards, an expectation of

permanence, and at times a larger budget. Most importantly, these programs contractually

define ownership and responsibility of the art they commission in ways mural organizations do

not. Because of this, municipal arts management programs offer examples for certain mural

management practices.

MODERN PRESERVATION PERSPECTIVES

In recent decades, preservationists have advocated for expanded definitions of preservation to

include overlooked narratives. Work arising from advocacy for such narratives has focused on

expanding the interpretation of minorities' histories and improving understanding of

significance to include personal narratives within historic built environments.[16] Growing

literature on public art and preservation similarly promotes art as a method to highlight inequity

and fill in the gaps in the conventional American historical narrative, which privileges white

males. A growing body of literature encourages art, like preservation, to acknowledge how its

visual presence contributes to changes in neighborhoods, both negative and positive.[17]

Similarly, the social processes involved in mural-making are supported by a growing

body of work surrounding the role of murals in the urban landscape. While many cultural

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County, "Repair and Restoration- Art in Public Places," https://miamidadepublicart.org/#restoration (accessed April 25, 2019).

[16] National Trust for Historic Preservation, "African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund," https://savingplaces.org/african-american-cultural-heritage#.XGht_uhKiMo (accessed January 22, 2019) and The National Park Service, "LGBTQ America: A Theme Study," https://www.nps.gov/articles/series.htm?id=4DFF8155-1DD8-B71B-0B4C2713F34EA25C (accessed January 22, 2019).

[17] Priya Chhaya, "When Does Historic Preservation Become Social Justice?" Preservation Leadership Forum, entry posted July 26, 2017, https://forum.savingplaces.org/blogs/priya-chhaya/2017/07/26/when-does-historic-preservation-become-social-justice-public-art-and-cultural-heritage-preservation (accessed February 11, 2019).

theorists advance the notion of "place" as a cultural process within the landscape, there is less written on the role of community art and murals within place or as a process.[18] In his dissertation on Philadelphia community murals, Johnathan Lohman asserted that murals are neither about place or a part of place but "exist as a combination of the two."[19] In this respect, murals have only been studied as historic resources from a sociological perspective. Assumptions of ephemerality may contribute to the limited scholarship. However, efforts to retain the murals through restoration and repainting challenge these assumptions.[20] Issues of life span, care, and management are rarely considered at inception. This lack of planning reflects both the forward-looking dynamism of community mural programs but also the nature of these often-small organizations who struggle to sustain themselves.

Debates involving public space and public art are necessary to protect the public space murals occupy. Rosalyn Deutsche addresses the power of the aesthetic when combining the democratic ideals of "public space" to the universality of "art," warning of the burden of universal accessibility assumed by "public art".[21] She argues that art is used in public to re-appropriate spaces overseen by regulatory power and to repopulate spaces with democratic ideals. Similar literature on the public sphere, or the state being accountable to citizen space, defines public art as a practice, engaging people in political debate. Resulting artworks reveal the politics of public space and the potential for controversy arising from the existence,

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[18] Dolores Hayden, *The Power of Place*, (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1995).

[19] Johnathan Lohman, ""The Walls Speak": Murals and Memory in Urban Philadelphia" PhD Diss., University of Pennsylvania, 2001.

[20] Mural Arts Philadelphia, "Our Flag Unfurled (Mural Restoration)," 2016, https://www.muralarts.org/artworks/flag-unfurled-mural-restoration/ (accessed April 18, 2019) and Judy Baca, SPARC, "Great Wall Restoration," , http://sparcinla.org/great-wall-restoration/ (accessed April 18, 2019).

[21] Rosalyn Deutsche, "Art and Public Space: Questions of Democracy," (Duke University Press, 1992), 35.

removal, or restoration of murals within public spaces. Literature on the subject also questions how political or controversial murals should be in order to occupy public spaces.

DOCUMENTATION AND PRESERVATION

The literature on documentation and preservation unilaterally supports the use of recording, documentation, and information management as minimal preservation requirements. These tools serve as the foundation in preservation best practices. Literature on professional practice promotes preventative care, monitoring, and maintenance as the optimal strategies to prevent decay of monuments and sites over time.[22] Recording and documentation are considered essential activities that may contribute to conveying the significance of a site. It is emphasized that documentation should be conducted in all phases of preservation process but should not be seen as a substitute for maintenance and care. Literature on heritage documentation promotes the use of different recording methods to promote interest in a site, ensure its long-term maintenance, and create a record for future generations.[23]

Looking at the field of Cultural Resource Management, which addresses such subjects as management and decision-making of cultural resources, one sees a shift from applying conventional tools for management and record keeping to greater public accessibility. Digitized, web-based software, database tools, and open mapping technologies reveal a commitment widely adopted commitment to information equity and transparency.[24] Technology is quickly

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[22] Anouk Stulens, Veerle Meul and Neza Cebron Lipovec, "Heritage Recording and Information Management as a Tool for Preventative Conservation, Maintenance, and Monitoring", *Change Over Time (*Spring 2012): 58.
[23] Robin Letellier, *Recording, Documentation, and Information Management for the Conservation of Heritage Places*, (Los Angeles: The Getty Conservation Institute, 2007).
[24] Thomas King, *A Companion to Cultural Resource Management*, (Massachusetts: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011).

responding to the need for public access and sophisticated analysis of data. The Arches system,

a joint project through the Getty Conservation Institute and World Monuments Fund, is one of

the first open source web-based systems to inventory and manage immovable heritage.[25] It

provides the accessibility of an archive with the monitoring capabilities of a database. Arches

combines several forms of documentation, including GIS mapping, inventory, and query

mapping. These tools spatially show the distribution of resources and can reveal how the

changes in cities effect cultural resources over time. Used analytically, Arches and other open

source software can be monitored to predict future changes to or losses of heritage resources.

CONSERVATION OF COMMUNITY MURALS

Another aspect of community mural literature addresses the technical and professional practice

of mural conservation. It is widely acknowledged that contemporary murals are often created

without durable or long-lasting materials and that these murals are thought to be ephemeral.[26]

Conservation approaches, which involve highly specialized interventions guided by the goal of

protecting the authenticity of a cultural and/or historic resource, are usually not appropriate for

community murals. As conservation involves extensive documentation, materials analysis,

testing, preventive measures, and principles that do not allow for replication or repainting,

conservation is usually not a feasible or practical approach for community programs.

Conservators recognize the distinction and advocate for community involvement and, when

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[25] David Myers, Alison Dalgity and Ioannis Avramides, "Arches: An Open Source GIS for the Inventory and Management of Immovable Cultural Heritage," (Euro-Mediterranean Conference, Berlin, Germany, 2012).
[26] Tom Learner, Mercedes Sanchez-Pons and William Shank, *Conservation Issues in Modern and Contemporary Murals*, (Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2015).

executed by the artist, for repainting. In some cases, led by community activism, actual

conservation interventions do occur.[27]

While there is much existing literature on individual projects and case studies, the field

of community mural conservation still lacks a set of professional practices and decision-making

protocols. Conservators widely advocate for mural scholarship, as seen in William Shank and Tim

Drescher's efforts to encourage communication with the communities who maintain murals.[28]

They promote a community values system to select murals for restoration and to encourage

best practices for organizations and individuals without professional training to prolong the

lifespans of their murals.[29] Currently, there is little study on the possibility of communities

maintaining their own murals. Catherine Myers' research with Mural Arts Philadelphia is one of

the few examples of bridging the conservation field with collections management practices for

community mural organizations and models for stakeholder decision-making.[30]

Scholarship on community murals considers subjects such as values and stakeholders in

mural-making. It also highlights the differences in perspective, especially between those most

concerned with the historical and social process and those interested in conservation and

management. Given the primacy of social process behind community mural-making, which is

arguably more important than the physical manifestation of that process, leads one to argue

that physically retaining these murals in the first place is less important than recording their

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[27] Amanda Norbutus, "Preserving Public Murals in Philadelphia," *Voices in Contemporary Art* (March 12, 2014).

[28] William Shank and Tim Drescher, "Breaking the Rules: A new life for Rescue Public Murals," *Studies in Conservation* 61, (2016).

[29] Heritage Preservation, "Mural Creation Best Practices," http://www.conservation-us.org/docs/default-source/resource-guides/mural-creation-best-practices-full-document.pdf?sfvrsn=2 (accessed March 16, 2019) and Social and Public Art Resource Center, "Mural Rescue Program," http://sparcinla.org/mural-rescue-2/ (accessed March 16, 2019).

[30] Catherine S. Myers, "Stewardship Project: The Philadelphia Mural Arts Program," (Myers Conservation, June 30, 2014).

stories. The following cases studies shed light on the relevance of these programs in contemporary urban contexts while also demonstrating differences in organization, history and scale.

CASE STUDIES

As described above, the three case studies offer the opportunity to explore the relationship of community murals to their historic contexts and to consider how existing management and preservation standards may help with care for these resources. The first case study addresses the Baltimore Mural Program. Founded in 1975 by the City of Baltimore, it is now operated by the Baltimore Office of Promotion & The Arts (BOPA), a non-profit city advocacy and management branch of the arts. For many years Baltimore was known as the "Monumental City" for the number of civic art and monuments on public view. This association is important in how the Baltimore Mural Program manages its community murals—grouped with all forms of public art across the city. The Baltimore Mural Program receives no funding from the city to operate and relies on grants and individual funders to produce murals. This typically dictates the kinds of murals produced, as well as the level of both community and/or BOPA involvement in the creation of a mural. The Baltimore Mural Program is historically one of the oldest programs in the country.

The second case study examines the City of Philadelphia Mural Arts Program, widely considered the largest public art organization in the United States.[31] Founded in 1984 as the Philadelphia Anti-Graffiti Network, a city-sponsored anti-blight campaign, the organization quickly grew under the leadership and vision of its founder, Jane Golden. Today it exists as a

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[31] *Press Kit*, (Mural Arts Philadelphia: January 2018).

public private partnership between the City of Philadelphia and its nonprofit arm, Mural Arts Advocates. The organization embodies a powerful presence in the arts scene of the city through dozens of city-wide partnerships, combining public need for urban beautification with social justice and educational programming.[32] Mural Arts is looked to as a national leader in the contemporary mural movement, a charge they look to address themselves this coming year with the Mural Arts Institute, a consultancy branch of the program that will train and support organizations around the country and internationally in community-based public art-making.[33] With unprecedented growth and recognition, Mural Arts is likely the first community-based organization to package and distribute their process for collaborative and equitable art-making.

     The third case study will address the Mayor's Mural Crew of Boston, a youth arts organization. The program was founded in 1991 as the Boston Mural Crew under the direction of muralist Heidi Schork and a team of fourteen to seventeen-year-old Boston students. Much like Philadelphia's program, the Boston Mural Crew began as a municipally-funded initiative to wipe out graffiti but changed course to become a teen art program. For years the program only produced murals in the summer, guided by community input and with an emphasis of connecting students across neighborhoods in the city. Today, the Mayor's office embraces the program and facilitates year-round mural-making through after-school programming and the summer crew session.

     Examination of these three programs includes a review of current policies and considers future best practices. It specifically addresses their organization and oversight, management and

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[32] Mural Arts Philadelphia, "Art & Environment Capacity-Building Initiative," 2007, https://www.muralarts.org/capacitybuilding/ (accessed April 18, 2019).

[33] Samantha Melamed, "Why Philly Mural Arts is Going National," (*Philly.com*, March 9, 2018). Philadelphia has been called the "mural capital" of the United States.

maintenance practices, and forms of documentation. Further is looked at each organization's

history for insight into how it has evolved over time and at current policies and practices as a

way of understanding the programs' collection capacity.

2. CASE STUDIES

BALTIMORE MURAL PROGRAM

The Baltimore Mural Program (BMP) was created in 1975 during a period of intense population decline and civil unrest in Baltimore, a city racked with crime, poverty, and racial inequity.[34] Called the Mayor's Mural Painting Project, Mayor William Donald Schaeffer led the initiative to make community murals funded by a one year $10,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA).[35] The several purposes of the project included improving urban aesthetics and pride, combatting graffiti, and engaging youth and artists in employable work.[36] Mayor Schaeffer's project to use municipal arts to address these issues while engaging, and not alienating, black communities was viewed as an experiment. Although short lived, the project garnered attention and inspired the creation of the next phase of community mural creation— Beautiful Walls. Once more, looking to create jobs, Beautiful Walls was funded by the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA), a federal law enacted to provide public service job training. While not intended to support the arts, CETA was used by the arts community for grants to support community-based arts interventions, funding fledging arts organizations across the country.[37] CETA provided the seed money for Beautiful Walls to hire ten

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[34] Jill Jonnes, "Everybody Must Get Stoned: The Origins of Modern Drug Culture in Baltimore," *Maryland Historical Magazine* 91 (Summer 1996).

[35] Bret McCabe, ""Beautiful Walls for Baltimore"," *City Paper* (January 13, 2016). The initiative was likely part of a larger tourism and civic boosterism campaign in Baltimore at the time to brand themselves the "Charm City."

[36] Baltimore Office of Promotion and the Arts, "Baltimore Mural Program," http://www.promotionandarts.org/arts-council/baltimore-mural-program (accessed January 3, 2019).

[37] Linda Frye Burnham and Steven Durland, "Looking for CETA," *Public Art Review* 54 (2016).

artists and pair them with apprentices across Baltimore, particularly choosing those from low-

income neighborhoods.

When Beautiful Walls ended in 1979, there was a drop in mural production in Baltimore

for a number of years. This decline corresponded to national trends of the 1980s-90s, where

funding from the NEA declined for individual artists as a response to the often political and

racially-inspired art created.[38] As a city with a 65% black population since 1970 and one of the

starkest geographic racial divides in the country, many of the early murals of Baltimore

represent black histories and subjects of minority and disenfranchised groups (Figure 3). This

representation remains a priority and drives much of the production of the organization today.[39]

In the early 2000s the Baltimore Office of Promotion & The Arts (BOPA), a non-profit city

advocacy and management branch of the arts, was established as the Arts Council of Baltimore.

BOPA leads municipal art projects and oversees community projects such as the mural program.

In 2004 Mayor Martin O'Malley elevated BOPA to cabinet level, highlighting the cultural assets

of Baltimore in an attempt to promote the economy through the arts.[40]

ORGANIZATION AND OVERSIGHT

BOPA is staffed by nearly 50 full-time employees who manage several visual and performing arts

programs, entertainment districts, and yearly festivals and events. While the city pays for some

of BOPA's projects and employees, the BMP receives no city funding and relies on grants and

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[38] Ann M. Galligan and Joni Maya Cherbo, "Financial Support for Individual Artists." *Journal of Arts Management, Law, and Society* 27 (2004).

[39] Randy Yeip, "Baltimore's Demographic Divide," *The Wall Street Journal*, May 1, 2015.

[40] Americans for the Arts, "Local Arts Leadership," (2007) https://www.americansforthearts.org/by-program/promotion-and-recognition/awards-for-arts-achievement/annual-awards/public-leadership-in-the-arts/mayor-martin-omalley-d-baltimore-md (accessed February 16, 2019).

individual donations to produce murals. The role of the BMP and artist in the production of each

mural is largely determined by the funding source. Many murals are funded by Community

Development Block Grants (CDBG) administered by the Department of Housing and Urban

Development, which undergo their own review process and cannot be reviewed for content by

the BMP. Occasionally, murals are produced with city approval by visiting artists or as part of an

effort to promote a city initiative.[41] In most contexts, the role of the BMP is as project manager

charged with guiding communities and individuals with step-by-step instructions for how to

begin the mural-making process. The BMP can help communities find funding opportunities, but

do not typically offer funding themselves.

Currently, murals in Baltimore require no city approvals to be painted. When painted on

private property, murals become subject to the rights of the property owner. The only space

where ownership has been tested is within Baltimore historic districts, architecturally significant

neighborhoods designated and reviewed by the Commission for Historical and Architectural

Preservation (CHAP). Any exterior work on a building within a historic district requires design

review and approval by a CHAP staff member or full commission, including the addition of

murals.[42] These historic preservation regulations were tested in 2018 when a privately

commissioned mural of the performer Divine was painted on the wall of a brick house, listed as

a contributing historic property. The owners, aware of CHAP historic district guidelines, didn't

understand where private art fit into the regulations. It was only after the Commission sent a

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[41] In 2014, BOPA and the City of Baltimore funded New York-based artist Steve Powers to create "Love Letter to Baltimore", a city-wide project.
[42] Baltimore Heritage, "Historic Districts in Baltimore," https://baltimoreheritage.org/resources/historic-districts-in-baltimore/ (accessed April 25, 2019).

city representative to the house that the owners filed a retroactive authorization to sanction the mural, which passed commission vote with public support.[43]

The BMP is not the only advocate of mural-making in the City of Baltimore. The city is home to an active network of individual muralists, private companies and rising arts districts keen to use art as a tool for urban beautification (Figure 4). In 2014 and 2016, street art project Open Walls hosted artists from across the country in a series of outdoor mural campaigns designed to enhance economic growth in the Station North Arts & Entertainment District. Open Walls was organized by Baltimore street artist Gaia and promoted by the Station North District. Organizations like the Healthy Harbor Initiative and Jubilee Arts also sponsor murals, while companies like Bozzuto and Sagamore Development have commissioned outdoor artwork to promote developments.[44] These pieces are privately funded and thus not a part of the BMP collection or information management structure. And because of the lack of funding by the BMP and ease of city regulations restricting the placement of murals, there is no incentive to use the BMP structure to produce murals. Multiple private mural projects contribute to Baltimore's rich collection of public art but the city as a whole lack defined structures of oversight and management.

Apart from its partnership with the City, the BMP has entered into a new partnership with CHAP and Baltimore Heritage, Baltimore's nonprofit historic and architectural preservation organization. This partnership is largely in the planning phases but plans to integrate all resources in the city into a database system. This collaboration is meant to integrate private and government art into one viewable system but is still in the planning stages. The opportunities for

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[43] Brittany Britto, "Divine Mural Defies City's Conventions," *The Baltimore Sun*, October 28, 2018.
[44] Tkacik, "Off the walls".

integrated resources, including information management and criteria of resource designation,

offers great potential to elevate murals into realms of managed public art.

MANAGEMENT

As "The Monumental City", the City of Baltimore is responsive to new arts initiatives and

programs, particularly those which offer economic incentive. BOPA oversight allows the city to

be flexible in terms of content and production, particularly regarding murals. While BOPA

manages city-funded programs such as the Percent-for-Art program, other programs such as the

BMP are community-led and funded, meaning the city has no oversight over the content or

placement of these works. While the process of public art creation differs widely under BOPA

programs, the management of this art does not. All art, be it sculpture or mural, is managed

under the same cloud-based inventory system, AirTable. AirTable is a table software not

designed for collections management work. The BOPA staff populate the table using criteria that

defines the type of art, location, and identifiers such as artist, year, or removal date. Most

entries include photographs, though not all. The system is managed by the full-time Public Art

Administrator, although the program is publicly accessible.

The staff acknowledge that AirTable is a less than perfect system for BOPA but chose it

as a cheaper and more flexible data management option than other collection management

software. Before AirTable, the BMP was using a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet to keep track of

simple locational mural data, such as address, date of painting, and artist. AirTable not only

allows for this kind of tabled information management but also generates "views" by stringing

together subject queries. For example, the system allows a user to view all murals painted in

1987, or all murals with photographs. These generated views can then be shared on social

media and other platforms. While the system lacks many useful functions such as updated data and conditions assessment, the flexibility and ease of AirTable ensures that the staff will use the system.

The number of staffs involved with the BMP fluctuates. The program employs one key staff person, the Community Arts Specialist in addition to part time staff who contribute to the program through blog posts or updates to AirTable. Projects related to the mural program seem to vary with staff input and compliance. An initiative to create a mural artist registry—a list of organizations, business owners, and city residents interested in hiring a mural artist for private commissions—was tabled after the staff member who proposed the project left BOPA. An oral history project about community members and muralists, begun in 2016, has similarly vanished when that staff member left the organization.[45] Employees acknowledge that project success depends largely on staff capacity.

Because of the partnership with the city, BOPA releases much of their public art and community mural data to Open Baltimore, the city's open data website. This data is in the form of Excel and CSV files of all known murals and public art, including locations and year, free for download. BOPA has used this data to create an interactive mural map powered by Google Maps, which is accessible through its webpage. Members of the public have also used this data to create their own responsive maps.[46]

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[45] McCabe, "Beautiful Walls," 2016.
[46] Johann Liang, "Map of Baltimore City's Public Art & Murals," 2019, https://www.empiricalanalysis.net/sd_projects/publicArtAndMurals.html, (accessed March 2, 2019).

MAINTENANCE

The number of murals BMP has produced is not clearly known. Some employees estimate that they have produced around 300 funded projects, while others suggest the number is over 400.[47] AirTable lists the number of currently documented murals at 394. Regardless, the number is difficult to manage as BOPA only conducts small inventories at a time of their collection. These inventories are typically undertaken only for publicly funded art and have never been extensive. Inventories have not included a consistent checklist of criteria and have not been completed for conditions assessment purposes. It is unclear if any inventories in the past have been completed expressly for the community mural collection.

How decisions are made at the BMP is not well defined. Because of the community-process and mural funding sources, BOPA does not have protocols in place for managing community art in the way it does for publicly funded art. As a result, decisions about restorations and wall selection, which occasionally include community input, appear to be "arbitrary".[48] While there is a public art commission and artist registry for city-funded projects at BOPA, these resources do not extend to the mural program. Restorations are typically done "as needed." According to current staff members, no murals have been decommissioned or purposely painted out. Murals disappear largely from demolitions and sometimes from new construction.

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[47] Maggie Villegas quoted in Christina Tkacik, "Off the walls," *The Baltimore Sun*, August 31, 2017, and Ryan Patterson, interview by author, Philadelphia, PA, January 24, 2019.
[48] Ryan Patterson, interview, 2019.

CITY OF PHILADELPHIA MURAL ARTS PROGRAM

Mural Arts Philadelphia (MAP) is the largest mural organization in the United States in number

of produced artworks (Figure 5). Regarded as a national leader in public arts project

implementation, it's mission that "art ignites change" makes clear the social focus of their

work.[49] For Mural Arts, mural-making strives to change communities by transforming public

spaces, eliminating urban stigmas, and building resilient neighborhoods. Centered on three

distinct outreach programs, Public Art and Art Education, Restorative Justice, and Porch Light,

Mural Arts is committed to its-community-based model of collaboration and programs focused

on challenging assumptions and shining light on and elevating underrepresented communities.

MAP achieves these objectives through its hybrid structure—partially funded through the City

for its social services, and partially a nonprofit with its own revenue and fundraising streams.

MAP considers art a transformative power, and themselves a catalyst for communities and

individuals "to seize their own future."[50] With a current collection of over 1000 extant murals in

addition to other public arts projects, MAP produces approximately 100 new mural projects per

year.[51] Since their inception, MAP has evolved beyond their original mission of arts education for

at-risk youth into a mission that addresses social justice and arts empowerment. In recent

years, they have expanded their creative medium beyond only murals to include temporary

installations, interactive art, and social programming (Figure 6). Building on their leadership in

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[49] "Press Kit," 2016. This is stated by Mural Arts itself, with most estimates ranging around 4,000 murals produced.

[50] Mural Arts Philadelphia, "Our Mission," https://www.muralarts.org/about/ (accessed on March 15, 2019).

[51] These numbers change according to source—there is no exact number. *Mural Arts @ 30* lists the total collection as 3,800, while the Mural Arts city government page lists this number as "over 4,000." The statistics of extant murals comes from an extensive inventory conducted in 2015 by Catherine Myers and a team of interns.

the contemporary mural movement, MAP recently formed the Mural Arts Institute, a

consultancy branch of the program that will train and support organizations internationally in

community-based public art-making.[52]

Philadelphia has a long history of being home to a rich and diverse number of public and

private arts organizations and initiatives to involve underserved communities in art.[53] The

Association for Public Art (aPA), founded in 1872 as the Fairmount Park Art Association, was the

first private nonprofit dedicated to the commission and promotion of public art.[54] Beginning in

parks and spreading throughout Philadelphia, the aPA used sculpture and monumental forms to

beautify public spaces and memorialize public figures. In 1959 the City wrote the first Percent

for Art ordinance in the country, initiating a strong municipal support for public arts in the City.[55]

The percent program expanded opportunities for public art and brought attention to the works

commissioned to be permanent city additions. However, many of these works excluded public

input in the design, and so the Percent for Art Program identified the need for pieces of art

planned through a community process.[56]

The social climate of the sixties and seventies led some artists to reject the idea of

permanent public art and seek more experimental opportunities to put their art before the

public.[57] Private arts organizations blossomed in this time, creating additional outlets of

experimentation outside of museums and galleries. One of these leaders was the Philadelphia

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[52] Melamed, "Why Philly Mural Arts is going national," 2018.

[53] This history begins with intentionally civic-minded projects and organizations in the City who tasked themselves to create publicly inclusive art, acknowledging there were many other artistic practices before 1872.

[54] Association for Public Art, "Timeline," https://www.associationforpublicart.org/timeline/ (accessed March 14, 2019).

[55] Office of Arts, Culture, and the Creative Economy, City of Philadelphia, "Percent for Art Program," http://creativephl.org/percentforart/ (accessed March 2, 2019).

[56] Penny Bach, *Public Art in Philadelphia*, (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1992), 140.

[57] Ibid, 146.

Museum of Art, who initiated the Urban Outreach Department, later the Department of

Community Programs, in 1970, the first true community-led public art collaborative in the City.[58]

This program and others produced art during a period of population decline and disinvestment

in Philadelphia. While Philadelphia was gaining notoriety as the American city with the most

public art, it was also facing neighborhoods damaged by employment loss, rapid

suburbanization, and drug use.[59]

ORGANIZATION AND OVERSIGHT

Mayor Wilson Goode's office facilitated the creation of The Philadelphia Anti-Graffiti Network in

1984 during a wave of public optimism of the transformational potential of the arts. Graffiti

covered the walls of Philadelphia, revealing the anxieties of communities harmed by decades of

public and private disinvestment. The Network was formed as an affordable way to beautify

urban centers and curb unwanted street art. PAGN worked as an incentive for graffiti writers by

offering amnesty from past infractions if writers agreed to not again deface property.[60] It even

provided jobs to writers to paint murals as an alternative. The program owes much of its success

to its leader, Jane Golden. Golden, a professional artist, was trained in the Los Angeles mural

scene, and as artistic director of PAGN excelled in recruiting graffiti writers and teaching youth

about muralism.[61] Under Golden's leadership, PAGN worked within Philadelphia communities

earning trust, depicting history, and inspiring possibilities beyond art. By the early 1990s it was

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[58] Robin Rice, *Philadelphia Murals: 1970-2000*, (Philadelphia: Samuel S. Fleisher Art Memorial Fund, 2000), 6.
[59] Stephen McGovern, "The Neighborhood Transformation Initiative," *Housing Policy Debate* 17 (2006).
[60] Ibid, 25.
[61] Jane Golden and David Updike, *Mural Arts @ 30*, (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2014), 17.

clear the program was less about combatting graffiti and more about engaging endangered

youth in art-making.

In 1996, the administration of newly elected Mayor Ed Rendell restructured PAGN. They

moved the anti-graffiti functions to other departments and refocused its priorities. The primary

mission of the program, renamed the Philadelphia Mural Arts Program, was to create

community murals. MAP advanced this work by entering into a public/private partnership. It

created the nonprofit Mural Arts Advocates to grow the organization towards addressing urban

issues beyond the arts. MAP is unique in many ways for a city-sponsored program. Its

programmatic oversight is provided by the Office of Arts, Culture, and Creative Economy

(OACCE) and the budget comes from the City's Managing Director's Office. The organization

receives ongoing support of approximately 1.7 million from the City of Philadelphia each year,

alongside financial resources from private donors and its nonprofit advocacy arm, which can

raise additional funds freely.[62] Since MAP's inception, the City has continually supported the

organization despite the election of new mayors and budget changes. While other public art

programs in the City have struggled from budget cuts and MAP has managed to thrive.

MAP's largest organizational shift over the years has involved a transition from working

on individual projects to developing programmatically. The Program sees its role as transforming

cities as much as transforming individual lives, limited not only to aesthetic art but to social

justice interventions. Today, MAP centers its art-making around three programs: youth

education, restorative justice, and mental and behavioral health and wellness. However, MAP's

work has also faced criticism for the lack of integrating its murals with the goals of city planning,

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[62] City of Philadelphia, "Mural Arts: Fiscal Year 2018 Budget Testimony," (April 11, 2017). The proposed
funding request from the City for 2018 was $1,824,602.

particularly as the program expands its creative outputs beyond community-based mural

work.[63] Given its divided oversight by both the City and communities it serves, MAP does not fit

clearly into the City's defined vision for public art.[64] This becomes problematic given the

increasing municipal funding allocations for MAP through the years. It has even been suggested

the organization split into two programs—one addressing social services and another a public

art program focused on community-building.[65]

MANAGEMENT

MAP is driven by its mission that "art ignites change." Promoting positive social change fuels the

program's organization, initiatives, and practices. When the organization was founded in 1984,

the staff was small, had few resources, and focused on earning a presence in communities and

sense of shared trust. As MAP was reshuffled through the years to different city departments, its

mission and goals to be a catalyst of change has been carried through by Jane Golden. MAP is

now organized under the recently-created Office of Arts, Culture, and the Creative Economy,

which works to ensure culture and the arts are central components of community and

educational outcomes. MAP employs 54 full-time workers and many part-time or project-based

artists.[66] Eleven of the staff are city employees, including Golden and most upper-level

management, while the remaining staff are employed and paid through the Mural Arts

Advocates.

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[63] Philadelphia Public Art, (*PennPraxis*, Executive Report, 2009), 16.
[64] Philadelphia Public Art, 17.
[65] Ibid, 20.
[66] "Mural Arts: Fiscal Year 2018 Budget Testimony."

The staff includes several project managers involved with the management of individual murals, but few who oversee the collection as a whole. Mural Arts lacks any comprehensive record of murals they have created over their 35-year history. The known number of murals during the lifetime of MAP thus tends to fluctuate on who is reporting, often stated to be between 3,800-4,000 murals and projects.[67] Mural Arts reports creating around 100 projects and public art programs per year, which can include more than one mural per project.[68] These projects are each recorded by the financial department, who maintain an Excel spreadsheet for each project highlighting the name, location, artists, and funders of the work. Each project is numbered and recorded in a digital project folder. The folders are stored on an internal server at Mural Arts, accessible by all staff members.

While the finance department provides a record of many mural projects, the record does not include all projects. The project spreadsheets were created for projects with more complex sets of funders, artists, and partnerships—they are primarily tools to ensure payment and processing, as opposed to archives. There is no checklist or established format for managers or the finance department to use to record this work, so each project spreadsheet may include different information. While the spreadsheets work as individual records of a single project, they are not integrated or managed in any way. The usefulness of each spreadsheet relies on the efficiency of each project manager while entering project data.

For years Mural Arts has been concerned with preservation policies, in part due to public criticism.[69] Funding for preserving Philadelphia's public art was addressed in a 2009

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[67] See footnote 18.

[68] Mural Arts Philadelphia, "About," and Emily Cooper Moore, interview by author, Philadelphia, PA, January 17, 2019.

[69] Interview with Catherine Myers who recounted conversations with Mural Arts staff, particularly former Mural Arts staff member, Seth Turner.

assessment of the city's public art, which included MAP murals.[70] The city website for MAP

includes "public art and its preservation" as one of the program's focus areas, but does not

explain how this is accomplished.[71] While they have gradually taken measures to address

concerns of longevity, removal, and documentation, intensified efforts in the past decade have

led to progress in developing preservation policies.[72] Demonstrating their commitment to

preservation, they hired conservator and historic preservation professional, Catherine Myers to

study the stewardship of the MAP collection and recommend preservation policies as part of

their 2014 Strategic Plan.

MAP followed through on many of the resulting recommendations. The first of these, to

conduct an inventory and conditions assessment, was realized in 2015 when MAP again hired

Myers, this time to lead a team of interns to inventory and assess the conditions of the entire

collection. Working with a temporary database in close collaboration with Mural Arts, the

seven-person team inventoried and assessed the condition of more than 80% of the collection.[73]

All extant murals were assigned an accession number, examined for conditions ranging from

new construction that obscured it to faded paint. Each mural was photographed, given

geocoordinates, and mapped. The inventory was carried out using a field database system with

entries recorded into FileMaker Pro software, selected as an easy system to launch and transfer.

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[70] Philadelphia Public Art, 20.

[71] City of Philadelphia, "What We Do," Mural Arts Philadelphia,
https://www.phila.gov/departments/mural-arts-philadelphia/ (accessed March 16, 2019).

[72] Samantha Melamed, "Can Philly afford to maintain its huge, aging mural collection?" *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, October 27, 2017, and Claire Sasko, "Chunk of Seven-Story Center City Mural Falls," *Philadelphia Magazine*, January 23, 2017, and Inga Saffron, "Changing Skyline: A mural for PSFS? No need to cover up a classic," *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, October 19, 2012.

[73] Mural Arts and Myers worked with software consultants Soliant to design a Filemaker Pro/ Filemaker Go database and series of questionnaires that could be filled in on iPad tablets in the field and then synched to the server at the end of the day. Fields were identified to be queried. Filemaker Pro was chosen because it can be easily transferred. The system was intended to be temporary and a place to hold information while a state-of-the-art system was put in place.

Since the time of this inventory, the information has remained in the database unused.[74] This is in part because of lack of follow through by Mural Arts. Impediments such as-difficulty using the software, which requires manual entries, the need for learning adjustment by staff, and a lack commitment to investing in a state-of-the-art system that would allow for data analysis stalled progress for more than a year. The current Manager of Development Operations, who is fluent on issues of collections management and database integration, is currently leading efforts to integrate the different information management systems used by MAP. Currently, this work is completed "as able" and infrequently.

MAP is currently following through on the 2014 recommendation to create a state-of-the-art information management system to hold this data and to allow for subject querying and collection analysis. Recommendations to test materials issues, including removal of murals from walls and questions of vapor permeability, have been shelved indefinitely as were recommendations to reduce the size of the collection over time so as to better maintain the existing murals.[75]

MAP formed a Preservation Advisory Committee in 2017, initially coordinated by Myers and, since 2019, coordinated internally.[76] The group is made up of a wide range of stakeholders including community leaders, preservationists, conservators, historians, collections managers, public artists, and city planners. The members are currently crafting policy to address how decisions are made to retain murals or respond to controversial cases.

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[74] Cooper Moore, interview with author.

[75] Myers, "Stewardship Project," 51. In addition to these recommendations, many were supplied addressing the materiality of the murals and potential removal issues.

[76] At the time of this paper, the advisory committee is a new body and has only met several times. The recommendations or insights gained through this group cannot yet be assessed.

MAINTENANCE

Mural Arts states it "maintains its growing collection through a restoration initiative," with 10-20 mural restorations per year.[77] The Project Manager of "Community Murals and Preservation" primarily oversees the work of restorations or the need for immediate interventions on murals. This maintenance work tends to address immediate needs such as removal of graffiti, repainting faded or flaking paint, applying coatings to murals, or correcting problems with water infiltration. All restoration work is paid for using city funds and typically costs between $150,000-$200,000 per year.[78] Decision-making for which murals receive maintenance lacks clarity. The community is not involved in these decisions except when a community members approach MAP for the work to be done. These interventions are not recorded, and there is no update to the FileMaker Pro or project spreadsheets to document the work.[79]

Murals are expected to last 15 years, but staff members are aware this number fluctuates depending on many factors.[80] Whereas a Design Review Board meets twice a week to approve the design of new murals, decision-making concerning the removal of murals has only recently been addressed with the same level of attention by the Preservation Advisory Committee. MAP estimates 6-10 murals are removed per year, either by demolition, development, or deliberately "painted out" by the program.[81] When painted on private property, MAP requires the property owner to sign a contract outlining each party's responsibilities for maintenance, including the right to notice if either decide to paint out the mural. These contracts survive the tenure of the owner and are not transferred to the building.

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[77] Mural Arts Philadelphia, "About."
[78] Melamed, 2016.
[79] Cooper Moore.
[80] Melamed, 2016.
[81] Ibid.

MAP is currently in the process of expanding their preservation policies based in part on

the recommendations of the Preservation Advisory Group. Additionally, they are exploring new

information management systems which can meet the needs of their various programs, art-

making, and operational style. Vital in this examination is a system which can include multiple

typologies or values to inform decision-making about issues of enduring community relevance

and alliance with the organization's values. At the same time that MAP is updating the

management of their existing collection, they are more cognizant of the longevity of future

works produced. In the past few years MAP has produced a number of temporary works, many

of which were tied to programs.[82]

MAYOR'S MURAL CREW

The Mayor's Mural Crew is a youth-based summer workshop founded in 1991 in Boston, MA

(Figure 7). The organization began as a one-year summer initiative through the Boston Youth

Clean-Up Corps, a program organized under the Department of Youth Engagement and

Employment (DYEE). Created in the 1980s to provide employment and resources for teens ages

15-18, DYEE encompasses a variety of projects across the city. The Corps primarily clean up litter

and work on civic infrastructure projects. Pushed to address the rampant graffiti in low-income

neighborhoods of Boston, the Corps were inspired to use art as a tool for reactivating urban

centers. Municipal art programs such as MAP inspired and supported the creation of the project.

The program began with eight students under the direction of Heidi Schork, an untrained artist

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[82] The Spring Arts District in Callowhill featured MAP's first rotating outdoor gallery in 2016. In 2017 the Mind Over Media projects, completed by students, included a number of temporary works. The 2018 "Portraits of Justice" in the Municipal Services Building as part of the Restorative Justice program is also temporary.

and now director of the program for nearly three decades. Schork worked in a travel agency,

designing the artwork to attract customers, when one client, a muralist, asked her to become

involved with the new mural project under the city. The success of Schork's first paint project in

Dorcester in the summer of 1991 led to the creation of the Boston Mural Crew, a city-

sanctioned approach to curbing graffiti and providing jobs to youth.

Although the Boston Art Commission, founded in 1890, is one of the oldest arts

commissions in the country, public art in Boston has operated conservatively in the minds of

many of its residents.[83] The Commission is responsible for approving and maintaining the public

art of the city, which for many decades comprised primarily statues and memorials. Today, the

Commission has widened their scope of work to be advocates for public art, however their role

remains largely as public art curators.[84] Critics argue the City has done little to promote the arts

in Boston for the last 30 years, leaning heavily on private arts programs.[85] This may be in part to

a series of government funding recessions in the 1970s and 80s from stalled infrastructure and

urban renewal projects, slowed by neighborhoods protesting the subsequent destruction to

historic communities.[86] One of Boston's unintentional responses to urban renewal was a

contract between City transit system MBTA and arts nonprofit UrbanArts, Inc. in the 1980s.

UrbanArts was hired by the MBTA to create aesthetic pieces of art to placate communities

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[83] Sebastian Smee, "Moving Beyond the Bronze Age," *The Boston Globe*, October 6, 2013.
[84] Mayor's Office of Arts and Culture, City of Boston, "What is the Boston Art Commission?" https://www.boston.gov/departments/arts-and-culture/boston-art-commission/what-boston-art-commission (accessed March 16, 2019).
[85] Max Grinnell, "Public Art in Boston? Nothing to See Here," *Boston Magazine*, September 25, 2012, https://www.bostonmagazine.com/2012/09/25/boston-public-art/ (accessed February 17, 2019) and Greg Cook, "Arts And The Next Mayor: What Boston Wants And What It May Get," *WBUR*, November 2, 2013, https://www.wbur.org/artery/2013/11/02/boston-mayor-campaign-arts-culture (accessed February 17, 2019).
[86] Myrna Magulies Breithart and Pamela Worden, "Creating a Sense of Purpose: Public Art and Boston's Orange Line," *Places* 9, (1994), 80.

harmed by construction. UrbanArts initiated one of the first community art projects for this

contract, conducting interviews and discussion groups for the kind of art the neighborhoods

were interested in seeing.[87] Despite the strides towards community-led art projects, under the

administration of Mayor Menino, Boston's longest-serving mayor from 1993-2014, critics argued

that arts and culture initiatives were limited to theatre and ignored public arts and expanding

viable funding sources.[88]

When five-term Mayor Menino chose not to run again for office in 2013, the arts were

poised as a central target for cultural rebirth in Boston. Despite Greater Boston having more arts

and cultural organizations per capita than any other U.S. metro area, Boston consistently ranks

among the bottom five of the 30 largest U.S. cities in annual arts spending.[89] Both 2014 mayoral

candidates ran on platforms of a cabinet-level position for arts and culture, more arts funding,

and easier permitting processes for public art.[90] When current Mayor Walsh was elected in

2014, his administration began the process of "Boston Creates," a 10-year cultural plan for the

City that calls for a reprioritization of how the City and private arts organizations approach and

fund arts and culture projects.[91] Currently in year three, the program is incentivizing the creation

of Arts Innovation Districts, creating a Percent for Art Program, and directly supporting artists

through a City-sponsored Artist in Residence program.[92] Paralleling these current artistic trends

is the Mural Crew, which operates within City oversight but largely outside of current practices.

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[87] Myrna Margulies Breitbart and Pamela Worden, *Beyond A "Sense of Place": New Roles for the Arts and Humanities in Urban Revitalization* (Boston: UrbanArts, Inc, 1993), 19.
[88] Cook, 2013.
[89] The Arts Factor, 5, and Cook.
[90] Cook.
[91] City of Boston, Boston Creates, "The Plan," 2016, http://plan.bostoncreates.org/ (accessed March 6, 2019).
[92] City of Boston, Mayor's Office, "Imagine Boston 2030," https://www.boston.gov/sites/default/files/imce-uploads/2018-06/imagine20boston202030_pages2.pdf, 388.

ORGANIZATION AND OVERSIGHT

Oversight for the program has fluctuated through the years, dependent on mayoral

administrations, oversight and organization of the program, and student artist involvement

levels. In the 1990s the program resided in the Department of Parks and Recreation, but in the

early 2000s was moved to the Office of Arts and Culture, a city department which has existed

under several names throughout the years. The program has always partnered with DYEE to

provide the student artists and pay their salaries. Oversight of the program directly affects the

work that is produced—smaller budgets create a smaller staff and thus fewer murals are made.

Today, the budget for the program covers staff salaries and some materials for painting. Outside

of the city budget, the program rarely applies for grants or additional forms of funding. Some

money is made from commissioned murals, and this amount is based on what Schork believes is

the worth of the mural.[93]

In 2018 the program was moved from the Office of Arts and Culture back to the

Department of Parks and Recreation. Schork noted this shift will allow the Mural Crew freer

rein. Under Arts and Culture Schork felt pressure to conform to the initiatives of the department

as a whole, calling the Mural Crew a "token" program in the Arts and Culture department.[94]

Mural Crew was the only arts-producing arm of the office, which otherwise functioned to

inform, partner, and support artistic initiatives in the City.[95] With the Department of Parks and

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[93] Schork noted charging only $2,500 for a mural in a low-income neighborhood, which covered the paint costs. She charged a commission for a mural at a Whole Foods much more, as she felt this mural was "selling out."
[94] Schork, interview.
[95] The Office of Arts and Culture website only includes programs which directly hire artists, provide information on the arts, or directly oversee project proposals. The Mural Crew was thus the only program which actively created works of art in the Department.

Recreation, the Mural Crew is open to more experimentation and less artistic oversight on issues of mural design and placement. This umbrella allows the Mural Crew opportunities to explore forms of art beyond murals, such as events and capital projects, but will also physically confine much of their future work to Boston parks. This shift could also reflect personal differences between Schork's vision and the current trend of Boston cultural policies. The Mayor's Mural Crew is not directly involved in decisions or planning.[96]

Another form of mural oversight is the Boston Public Art Commission, a municipal advocate for public art with the authority to create and situate new public art on public property in the City of Boston.[97] The Commission reviews maintenance and care practices for public art commissioned by the city, both permanent and temporary.[98] Although the Mural Crew is a city program which falls under the jurisdiction of the Commission, the Commission does not currently take care of the murals painted on public buildings. As a result, the murals are often/sometimes in a state disrepair. In Schork's opinion, the city defines public art narrowly and does not include the murals in it, particularly those murals created by the Mural Crew. The murals are on their roster of protected art.[99] Although Schork directs all aspects of the program, it is difficult to say if it is she or the city who ultimately make programmatic decisions.

There is no ordinance in the City of Boston restricting the painting of murals except within historic districts. Within these nine historic districts murals are considered projects

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[96] "The Plan," (2016).

[97] Boston Senate and House of Representatives, An Act Further Regulating the Boston Art Commission, (December 20, 2012), https://malegislature.gov/Laws/SessionLaws/Acts/2012/Chapter362.

[98] Karin Goodfellow, Director of the Boston Art Commission, e-mail message to author, February 27, 2019.

[99] Schork.

subject to review. The Mural Crew has never painted within these districts because of the

review process involved, which limits the spaces in the city they can choose.[100]

MANAGEMENT

The Mural Crew is largely the work of Heidi Schork, who directly oversees and envisions the

majority of projects. Schork's primary duties include the design and implementation of the

murals as well as recruiting the student artists each summer. One other full-time staff member,

who has a background in city government, is the program coordinator. They provide the

resources and troubleshooting necessary to implement the program. The coordinator also

functions as the liaison between the Mural Crew and city government. The staff also includes

two part-time project managers who work year-round to manage supplies, execute murals, and

paint with the students. All of the staff are artists except for the project coordinator. Staff size

depends on budget, which changes by year and mayoral administrations. At its largest, the staff

included six full-time artists, mainly recent art school graduate students.[101]

Essential to the program is the summer employment of 15 student artists. The only

qualifications for the students are they must be Boston residents between the ages of 15-18.

Some students have art experience and others none at all. There is a small recruitment process

each year led by DYEE, but most recruitment is carried out by Schork, who retains a list of vetted

art instructors on whom she relies to recommended students. Schork has enjoyed a high rate of

success in working with these students. The students work for eight weeks, five hours a day, in

various neighborhoods throughout the city. For many of the students, the Mural Crew is their

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[100] Schork mentioned painted a landmark-designated lightbox in a historic district, which did go before the review board. Shork sees this process as arduous and unrewarding.
[101] Heidi Schork, interview by author, phone, February 22, 2019.

first job. Schork aims to encourage fun on site, as well as to teach students the artistic process of a multi-day project. Regardless of the final product, the process of creating the mural is essential to the program.

MAINTENANCE

Mural subject matter, placement, and decisions regarding removal are under the discretion of Schork. She feels strongly that murals are an ephemeral art form and is uncertain if preservation should play a role in muralism. She describes herself as "zen" over the final outcome of a murals life, be it two years or twenty. This is in large part due to the rapid development of the city of Boston since the initiation of the Mural Crew. Since the 1990s, the city has seen a hollowing out of the middle class and a growth in wealth disparities between white and black and Hispanic households.[102] The number of construction permits issued has nearly doubled in the last ten years, and development is beginning to cause visible changes to most city neighborhoods.[103] This development has not only impacted the number of murals demolished or covered by new construction, but also the availability of open walls for new murals.

Currently, the Mural Crew keeps no inventory of murals completed over the program's history, although Schork estimates this number is between 300-400. The only documentation of past murals exists in photographs, which are mainly digital images from cell-phone cameras. The office has a few physical slide-decks of older murals. In the past, some interns have taken on the task of documenting murals, but these efforts are largely lost. However, some citizen

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[102] Peter Ciurczak and Luc Schuster, "Boston's Booming…But For Whom?" (Boston Indicators, October 2018).
[103] Chris Bentley, "How will Boston handle its largest wave of development to date*?" The Architect's Newspaper*, February 2, 2018.

documentation efforts have contributed to recording the location and imagery of Boston's

murals. Christine Verret, a Boston mural enthusiast, collected and compiled images of all known

murals in Boston between 2012-2016 into a self-published book. Verret included some 290

remaining murals in Boston, the majority of which were completed by the Mural Crew (Figure

8).[104] The largest repository of the Mural Crew's works is through their public Facebook page.

This site includes a handful of images, both during and post-production, of the different sites

worked on in the last few years. If something needs to be known about a mural, the "inner

recesses of (Heidi's) mind" is the best archive for information.[105]

      Schork herself sees little reason to record murals because they are so ephemeral. She

expects most works by the Mural Crew last for about 8-10 years, if they are not first destroyed

by demolition or new construction. Schork does not recall any murals being painted out by

owners intentionally, although the program itself has covered over murals through the years

when in poor condition. There are no specific steps in this decision-making process, but is done

when a mural receives complaints or Schork decides it should be removed. In general, the Mural

Crew does not conduct restorations because the community who the mural originally served are

no longer represented. Schork attributed these changes to gentrification and a wave of younger

residents to areas previously home to diverse residents. Schork worries that repainting a mural

image again could upset or even disinterest current residents. The Mural Crew general practice

with "restorations" is to repaint the same wall with an entirely new image. Due in part from

Schork's recalcitrance towards government oversight in her projects and a lack of strong public

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[104] Christine and Adrien Verret, *Urban Panoramic Photography: Boston Murals*, (Self Published, 2017).
[105] Schork, interview.

arts programming city-wide, there has never been a published report on the impact of the Mural

Crew. Finding outside material on the Mural Crew is equally unfruitful.[106]

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[106] The 2014 *The Arts Factor* report by ArtsBoston uses data to demonstrate the positive impact that arts and culture have on Greater Boston. Murals were not included in this report.

3. CASE STUDY ANALYSIS

EPHEMERALITY AND OWNERSHIP

Community murals have long been considered ephemeral additions to urban space.[107] Often painted over the scars of half-demolished buildings or adorning the otherwise characterless facades of civic buildings, murals provide immediate energy to their surroundings and neighborhoods. However, their locations make them vulnerable. They are often destroyed by demolition, new construction, or careless exterior additions. Loss and neglect have led mural painters to consider longevity in the use of materials such as anti-graffiti top coats and mural placement. They attempt to promote longevity by not selecting walls prone to moisture or those lacking flashing or made of materials such as brick. These and other practices, including material and wall selection, have been highlighted by muralists as well as the conservation profession as an alternative to spending financial resources on conservation.[108]

It is generally regarded by mural programs and mural artists that outdoor murals have a lifespan of some 15 years before maintenance is required.[109] Beyond acknowledging this lifespan, few programs manage their collections in the same way. All three case studies reveal that changes in urban fabric—demolitions, new construction, and paint outs—counted for the highest number of murals removed from their collections. This number is higher than those removed through internal decision making, or in collaboration with community members.

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[107] Braun-Reinitz and Weissman, *On the Wall*, 3.

[108] David Bradley and Michael Brown, "Mural Production: A Resource Handbook," Ontario: Mural Routes, Inc., (2004), and "Rescue Public Murals," and Timothy Drescher, "Priorities in Conserving Community Murals," The Getty Conservation Institute, (2004), and Rescue Public Murals, *Mural Creation Best Practices*, (Los Angeles: Heritage Preservation, 2014).

[109] This was stated in all case study interviews as an approximate age for murals.

Because of the ephemeral nature of murals, the question of ownership is often

overlooked. When issues of copyright or demolition arise, "ownership" or even stewardship is

called into question yet not always straight forward. As a case in point, Mercedes is filing

lawsuits against four Detroit-based muralists who threatened to press charges against the

company for using an ad featuring their artwork.[110] The photographs, featuring a Mercedes

driving past several walls in Detroit's muraled Eastern Market district, were published without

permission or compensation by the artists. Mercedes, assuming the works accessible because of

their location in a public right of way, does not believe compensation is due. If Mercedes wins

this case, it would set a precedent for all public muralists to have their work used in

advertisement campaigns without needed approval or compensation.

Alternatively, some murals belong, seemingly, to no one. Faded, damaged, or obscured

they have lost their meaning and, apparently, their advocates. The absence of a clear definition

of responsible ownership and a good understanding of the ownership, responsibility, and

lifespan of murals often leads to neglect, which in turn send a message that tired and

abandoned murals are insignificant.[111] Currently, loose contractual agreements that do not

ensure care and responsibility nor address the difficult questions of lifespan detract from the

power of community murals being truly "community" art. That decisions are left to anyone but

the community contradicts and is inconsistent with the mission behind these murals.

Concern for mural ownership begins where the mural is painted. Additions to public or

civic buildings often have to undergo a review by municipalities, particularly if the building has

been designated historic or is within a historic district. Because of the potential review

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[110] James David Dickson, "Mercedes sues artists over Eastern Market murals," *The Detroit News*, April 1, 2019.
[111] John Lewis, "A Love Letter to Baltimore," *Baltimore Magazine*, June 10, 2014.

processes, more murals are painted on private than public property. Property owners must

consent to the addition of a mural.[112] This agreement is a crucial step for mural organizations to

consider the longevity of their works. It is essential in these agreements that the lifespan,

maintenance, and property owner's rights are clearly outlined. Otherwise, mural organizations

have no rights if a property owner were to alter, cover, or entirely remove a mural. Mural Arts

Philadelphia currently does have contracts signed between the organization, the artist(s), and

the property owner. However, these agreements cover little regarding maintenance. The

Baltimore Mural Program has a contract signed between the mural artist(s) and property owner,

but this contract gives no rights to the BMP in regard to ownership or ongoing management of

the piece. The Mayor's Mural Crew does not use contracts between property owners and the

organization.

Over time, protocols to address the practicalities of ownership and responsibility for

mural creation have developed. Nonprofit arts organization Mural Routes in Ontario, Canada,

has promoted a mural resource manual since 2014, outlining the process of community mural

making with an emphasis on promotion, fundraising, and community input. Mural Routes

emphasizes that contracts are an important step in the mural process, posting sample contracts

and agreements on their website.[113] These contracts stipulate the property owners are

responsible for informing the mural organization of any alterations or changes to the mural. The

owners are allowed to cover or remove the mural themselves but are required to tell the mural

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[112] This data was found through BOPA's AirTable database and discussion with Heid Schork of the Mural Crew. Mural Arts paints on many public buildings, particularly schools, as part of its private/public partnership, but also a large number of private properties.
[113] Contracts and Copyrights, Mural Routes, Ontario, "Sample Contract," https://muralroutes.ca/resources/contracts-and-copyrights/ (accessed April 2, 2019).

organization first.[114] It also allows the mural organization to make any number of maintenance

or inventory assessments of the mural, as long as the property owner is notified. Rescue Public

Murals encourages these practices. They go further to address the details of how ownership will

pass from one owner to another.[115]

Another consideration in the subject of wall "ownership" is the mural artist(s). Mural

painters have a legal stake in their work through protected copyright under the Visual Artist

Rights Act (VARA) of 1990.[116] Created as an extension of the 1976 Copyright Act, VARA grants

statutory moral rights to artists over their work.[117] Moral rights include the artist's control over

the integrity of her work, such as alteration or destruction.[118] Unless VARA rights are waived, as

is done by several mural organizations, artists have the right to be involved with any alteration

to their work, including demolitions.[119] Because VARA's application is limited to visual works that

fall within a narrowly defined category, VARA imposes substantial restrictions on any

modification or removal of those works.[120]

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[114] Contracts and Copyrights, Mural Routes, Ontario, "Sample Agreement,"
https://www.muralroutes.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/sample_agreement.pdf (accessed April 2, 2019).
[115] Rescue Public Murals, Mural Creation Best Practices, "Planning,"
https://www.culturalheritage.org/docs/default-source/resources/mural-creation-best-practices-full-document.pdf?sfvrsn=4 (accessed April 2, 2019).
[116] VARA was instituted following the controversial 1989 Federal lawsuit of the public sculpture "Tilted Arc" by Richard Serra. The piece was commissioned by the General Services Administration but faced intense public backlash. Against Serra's wishes, the work was removed from the Foley Federal Plaza in Manhattan.
[117] Nicole Martinez, "Can Street Artists Protect Their Work?" *Art Law Journal*, April 16, 2018.
[118] U.S. Code of Law, *17 U.S. Code 106A: Rights of certain authors to attribution and integrity*, Legal Information Institute: Cornell Law School. Specifically, VARA grants copyright holders in artworks the "right to prevent distortion, mutilation, or modification that would prejudice the author's honor or reputation."
[119] Mural Arts waives VARA rights in contractual agreements with artists. These rights are not waived during some larger installation pieces, often with international artists. Mural Routes contracts allow for copyright by the mural artist, but do not allow the artists to have say over removal of the artwork.
[120] Martinez, 2018. Protections are only given to paintings, sculptures, drawings, prints, and still photographic images produced for exhibition.

VARA has been employed successfully, but with great effort, to compensate artists for public works lost without their permissions.[121] In fact, the largest retribution under VARA to date was to artist Kent Twitchell for a Los Angeles mural painted out without his approval.[122] Twitchell argued for his moral rights to the work as an artist and won. However, the court made clear that moral rights are separate from physical rights, implying in the future the protection of a painted work would not outlast the right of the property's owner. VARA's application to protect artworks is selective yet largely untested. A 2006 Court of Appeals case ruled that VARA does not protect location—VARA covered works can be moved as long as this move does not constitute "destruction, distortion, or mutilation."[123] This implies that murals, inextricably tied to their location, should be protected in place. It may also imply that walls on which murals are painted could become protected as an essential component to the protected piece itself.

VARA has Only recently been used to protect community murals from destruction. In Detroit, artist Katherine Craig sued a development company who purchased the building on which her mural "The Illuminated Mural" was painted. Having heard that the developer planned to build in front of the mural with an addition to the existing structure, Craig invoked VARA and sued the owner for infringing on her rights as the artist.[124] The case was settled when the investor who bought the building from the developer decided to include the mural in the building's renovation.[125] The case is a recent example of the conflicting struggle of mural

[121] In 2014 a jury ruled in favor of street artists whose works had been painted out by the building's owner, Gerald Wolkoff, in Long Island City. The verdict stated that VARA rights were broken because Wolkoff did not inform the artists in advance he was going to paint out the murals. Martinez, 2018.
[122] Deborah Vankin, "Kent Twitchell to Revive Famed "Ed Ruscha Monument" Mural Downtown*," Los Angeles Times*, June 12, 2015.
[123] Martinez, 2018.
[124] Kirk Pinho, "Artists' Rights Concerns Could Hinder Investors in Real Estate, Attorneys Say," *Crain's Detroit Business*, January 10, 2016.
[125] Lee DeVito, "Detroit's 'rainbow' Mural Will Survive as Part of Co-working Space and Food Hall at Chroma," *Detroit Metro Times*, January 22, 2019.

ownership and rights to public work, but also reveals complications developers could face if more artists, or mural organizations with the backing of artists, used VARA rights to halt construction.

The above cases highlight the unexplored realms of ownership of community murals. Murals assume a level of community ownership by their placement in public space but yet the absence of responsible ownership creates conflict when real estate, demolition, or alteration requests arise. Assuming murals are temporary without a plan for handling their end of life is an irresponsible way to avoid the legal implications of ownership, such as artist and property rights. And although not legally binding, the careless removal of murals from public spaces also restricts the right of public access to a mural. As these examples illustrate current means for protecting community-based murals are inadequate, effective overarching policies that can be invoked for all murals are needed. Instead of thinking retroactively and individually, community mural organizations have the opportunity to protect murals with proper planning and contractual agreements in place.

MUNICIPAL OVERSIGHT

Having originated as mayoral anti-graffiti initiatives with associated city funding, community mural programs today continue to rely such municipal funds only or in combination with private funding, as illustrated by the case studies. All three programs were reliant on municipal funding for a large part of their existence, particularly the Mural Crew which still relies almost entirely on City funds. While MAP and the BMP early years depended upon support from the City and NEA grants, they have grown to survive through public and private funds. All began painting in low-income and racially segregated neighborhoods, and to some degree continue to do so

today. These characteristics not only define the three programs examined here but the traits of

many community mural programs in the United States, including the Chicago Public Art Group,

Mural Conservancy of Los Angeles, Cityarts Workshop in New York, and Precita Eyes Muralists in

San Francisco, among others.[126]

It is questionable if MAP or the BMP would have survived more than a few years

without these funding streams, or if either program could exist entirely independent from

municipal funds today. While both programs operate as city programs, their visibility extends

well beyond other municipal initiatives into neighborhoods. There is still a large gap between

public belief in the social good murals create and the evidence to support or detract from these

claims.[127] The continued existence of all three programs likely relies on their success at

partnering with other organizations, ability to remain relevant to their communities, and in their

influence towards the current municipal administration. As such the programs and their

direction and output are subject to political influence.

Examining the relationship of these programs to the policies and governing bodies that

protect historic resources in their historic host cities invites the opportunity to study their

respective underlying values. Aesthetic and historical value has been the principle criterions

behind the protection of public resources as described in historic registers of protected sites and

landmarks, historic districts, design guidelines, and well-regulated public art programs. For the

most part, community mural programs, even those in public/private partnerships, have been

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[126] Chicago Public Art Group, "History," http://www.chicagopublicartgroup.org/history-of-cpag (accessed January 16, 2019), Mural Conservancy of Los Angeles, "About Us," http://www.muralconservancy.org/ (accessed February 22, 2019), and Precita Eyes Muralists, "About Precita Eyes," http://www.precitaeyes.org/about.html (accessed January 31, 2019).
[127] Mark Stern and Susan C. Seifert, *An Assessment of Community Impact of the Philadelphia Department of Recreation Mural Arts Program*, (University of Pennsylvania, 2003).

slow to articulate underlying values or to institute criteria for retaining murals in their

collections. An exception is found in the Philadelphia Mural Arts Program who, in conjunction

with its Preservation Advisory Group, formed in 2017, is currently identifying the values that

underpin their organization and the criteria to be used in making decisions about restoration

and removal.[128] Most programs have not advocated for their municipalities to provide

aesthetic protections for murals, such as those existing for buildings, sites, and some forms of

public art, although they are subject to similar forms of review for the design and placement of

murals on public property as would a private organization or individual applying for a mural.

Few, if any, municipal art management practices and protocols have been adopted for the

protection of community murals.

One realm in which community mural programs and municipal oversight clash are in

historic districts. Preservationists utilize the restrictions in locally designated historic districts to

protect historic buildings, sites, and properties. Similar to historic districts designated by the

National Register of Historic Places, local historic districts possess interrelated resources which

together convey a visual sense of an historic environment. Districts typically are identified for

possessing resources of historical, architectural, archaeological, engineering, or cultural value.[129]

Alterations or additions to these properties require review by a municipal oversight committee

to approve changes to historic fabric, led by design guidelines or standards, which, together with

committee member preferences, determine the level of change in each district.

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[128] Catherine Myers, Conversation with member of the Preservation Advisory Group, Philadelphia, April 27, 2019.
[129] National Park Service, National Register Bulletin, *How to Define Categories of Historic Properties*, https://www.nps.gov/nr/publications/bulletins/nrb15/nrb15_4.htm#district (accessed April 4, 2019).

The historic cities in which the three case studies are located, each of which contains local districts, are all subject to applicable protections to contributing architectural and character-defining features. In each city, changes proposed to the exterior of any historically listed or contributing building must go before a historical committee for approval.[130] Despite the sizable scope of potential projects that go before the committees, murals are not included in any historic guidelines or design conditions in any of these three cities. Therefore, mural designs must apply through a design review or building permit if they are to be painted on a designated or contributing historic property, even with owner consent. This process can range from days to months long and requires an application fee in Baltimore and Boston.[131] It is for this reason that there are few murals in downtown urban neighborhoods.

The lack of clear policies to allow for murals within historic districts in each of these cities has led to confusion. Examples of murals painted in historic districts without prior application and approval from historic commissions reveals either a misunderstanding or defiance of policy. In November 2018, in Philadelphia, a mural was painted on a non-contributing building in the Rittenhouse-Fitler historic district. It is unclear if the mural, painted by artist Steve Powers, was commissioned by Mural Arts or not, but it eventually came under Mural Art's care in a December 10th Instagram post, where Mural Arts mentioned the mural

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[130] In Philadelphia, the Historical Commission reviews changes to the exterior of all Significant and Contributing buildings, structures, sites and objects. When reviewing non-Contributing properties the Commission seeks to ensure the historic district is protected, but not necessarily the non-Contributing property. In Boston, each designated historic district has its own design standards and guidelines which must be considered when applying for exterior changes to a landmarked historic property. These changes are then brought before the Landmarks Commission for approval. In Baltimore, the Commission for Historical and Architectural Preservation reviews applications for alterations to the exteriors of designated historic buildings and sites.

[131] City of Boston, Boston Landmarks Commission, "How to Apply for Landmarks Design Review," Boston design review fees run from $25-$250 and City of Baltimore, Historical and Architectural Preservation, "What is a Historic District?" https://chap.baltimorecity.gov/historic-districts, (accessed March 19, 2019) in Baltimore these fees run from $15-$50.

"may only be temporary."[132] Several months later, the mural is still in place.[133] In Baltimore, a

mural depicting actor Divine was commissioned by a private couple on their three-story house.

The mural, completed by street artist Gaia, was not approved by the city's Commission for

Historical and Architectural Preservation (CHAP). Owners of the property said they had read

CHAPs architectural design guidelines but felt uncertain where art fit into the regulation. The

property owners applied retroactively to authorize the mural. It was approved several months

later.[134] As mentioned above, Heidi Schork designed a painting for a lightbox in a downtown

historic district of Boston. After going through the necessary approvals, Schork changed an

element of the design following its approval by the Landmarks Commission. While the

Commission was unhappy with her unregulated change, they did not press her to resubmit a

design application.[135]

 In all cases, there was an understanding of the municipal approval required of changes

to the fabric of historic neighborhoods, but a larger sense of confusion around applying the

practices to community-based art. In general, these examples of commissioned art demonstrate

confusion by the artist and client about what constitutes art worthy of Commission approval. In

Philadelphia, for example, murals do not go before the Arts Commission for review because they

are 2-D works of art which do not "encroach in the public right of way."[136] In Boston, murals fall

under the jurisdiction of Arts Commission review, but this process does not seem to happen.[137]

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[132] Instagram Post, (muralarts, December 10, 2018).
[133] As of May 3rd, 2019, the mural is still present, according to visits by the author.
[134] Brittany Britto, "Divine mural defies city's conventions", *The Baltimore Sun*, October 28, 2018.
[135] Schork, interview.
[136] City of Philadelphia, Philadelphia Home Rule Charter, "Section 5-903: Philadelphia Art Commission," https://www.phila.gov/departments/philadelphia-art-commission/regulations/ (accessed March 30, 2019).
[137] Goodfellow, interview. While murals on public property must technically be reviewed by the Art Commission, this has not happened.

Without clear rules about how to commission murals or public art in historic districts, many artists do not consider approvals necessary for works which they themselves see as temporary. These examples also reveal that once painted, murals are not likely to be removed, even if their applications lack approval.

Given the lack of open "canvases" or blank walls in downtown neighborhoods and most Historic Commissions' desire to avoid painting on historic materials such as brick, murals in historic neighborhoods at the center of Philadelphia, Boston, and Baltimore are rare.[138] However, applications for any major visual changes in these districts must go before the discussion and voting of the full Historic Commission. As in the case of the MAP mural in Rittenhouse-Fitler historic district and the Divine mural in Baltimore, public support for murals plays a role in successfully securing approval.

WORKING TOWARD DECISION-MAKING: ASSIGNING VALUES TO COMMUNITY MURALS

Successful community ownership depends upon clear understanding of responsibilities. Who is responsible and for what? Managing urban resources involves not only caring for artworks in the public domain but managing the number of artworks created. In the case of community murals, mural-making has been purported to build social capital and to be important in fostering healthy relationships with communities, municipalities, and property owners.[139] However, this capital is not tied to the continued existence of artistic resources but the community process of

[138] This is an informed assumption by the author, corroborated by *Boston Murals*, 2017.
[139] Stern and Seifert, *An Assessment of Community Impact*, 23.

creating the artwork. Therefore, the process of mural-making could be more impactful to communities than the necessity to have a large collection.

Community mural programs must acknowledge when their collection has grown beyond a manageable size. Without monitoring the size of a collection, issues of ownership, care, and quality will become the prime problems of these programs. Murals in poor condition convey a lack of ownership or authority, as well as reflect negatively on their organization. Maintaining a balanced collection size also allows for fresh ideas and reduces the demands of stewardship. However, how these decisions are made is largely undefined by community mural programs. Without decision-making processes in place, the decisions which are made lack transparency and often occur without community input. These decisions can be made under pressure for quick solutions, and not by thorough discussion. Understanding what influences current community mural program decision-making is crucial to reframing informed and inclusive decision-making in the future.

The ways communities and mural programs attribute significance to murals is complex and varied. Considerations often include the age of the mural, condition, artistic quality, location and visibility, subject matter, how its content relates or is in conversation with contemporary issues, and its appreciation by a community.[140] The significance of community murals cannot have quantifiable strengths or weaknesses because what one community values in a mural another community could find insignificant. Each mural possesses its own characteristics and

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[140] While described in different ways, all case study interviewees discussed how factors such as age, location, and appreciation by communities contributed to decision-making practices around murals. These conditions are not always definable or quantifiable, yet they contribute to the overall valuation of a mural.

stakeholders, making a blanket decision-making process for managing murals inappropriate and unlikely to succeed.

One-way preservationists and cultural resource managers have applied significance to works that embody many tiers of importance is through the use of values. Values in preservation and planning contexts have evolved from Alois Riegl's 1903 essay "The Modern Cult of Monuments," which defined five values in managing objects of antiquity, to the 1998 Burra Charter, which reassessed and widened the number of possible typologies for values.[141] Today, the value perspective in cultural heritage is a common method to help heritage stewards understand the full range of values—actual and potential—connected to the significance of a site or work of art.[142] Instead of privileging certain values over others such as artistic merit or age, a value assessment seeks to process the full range of values inherent to a work. Value-based assessments can be used to make management and planning decisions more effective, as works can be prioritized by addressing specific values.

Values-based assessments could be a useful tool in prioritizing decision-making for mural collections because values, like murals themselves, are produced from interactions. Values exist based on an understanding of the social and cultural contexts around them, including who is defining the value, and why. Murals, similarly, may appear powerful alone, but it is their spatial context, community history, and story behind their creation which often makes

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[141] Michele Lamprakos, "Riegl's "Modern Cult of Monuments" and the Problem of Value," *Change Over Time* 4, Fall 2014. Reigl offered five values: Age, Historical, Commemorative, Use, and Newness. The Burra Charter included four values: Aesthetic, Historic, Scientific, and Social (which includes a variety of potential values).

[142] Randall Mason, "Assessing Values in Conservation Planning: Methodological Issues and Choices," (*Assessing the Values of Cultural Heritage*, The Getty Conservation Institute: 2002), 7.

them appreciated by communities. Because of the different contexts originating from every

mural, assigning values to murals involves input from a variety of stakeholders and disciplines.

As decision-making has not been well addressed by the three case studies,

understanding how values currently relate to the practices of each program is vital to how these

values could be used in the future. The Baltimore Mural Program assigns no values in AirTable,

although the system is designed to allow for such additions as new criteria. While AirTable is

currently used to update records for maintenance and collection changes, no values are

assigned to works. While BOPA has detailed practices in place to manage publicly-funded art,

the BMP does not receive these funds and are not subject to the same levels of discussion or

review in decision-making practices. The Mayor's Mural Crew, by executing all decision-making

through one party, does not use a values-based approach to manage their collection.

However, it would be wrong to assume these programs do not consider values in

making decisions. While the existing practices may include talking to community members,

assessing condition and understanding context, most final decisions are made internally, and

not by community members. None of these decision-making systems are codified.

Assigning values to murals is an approach currently being considered by Mural Arts

Philadelphia as the program works to define their decision-making practices. Mural Arts has

been concerned with the management, access and documentation of their collection for the

past decade and, over time, have taken measures to address these needs. Guided in part by the

results of an inventory of the collection, a Preservation Advisory Group of a diverse group of

public art administrators, museum collection managers, artists, academics, conservators, city

planners and community members was formed in 2017. In 2017 MAP also assigned a well-

qualified staff member to take on responsibility as part of their job for sorting the existing

database of murals and determining next steps of how to manage and prioritize maintenance

based on a set of criteria. Beginning in 2019, this staff member took over leadership of the

Advisory Group to bridge staff with outside participation and to continue efforts to address how

preservation could guide the future momentum of the organization and to specifically provide

recommendations towards managing the life span of murals, size of the collection, and policies

to guide the decision-making of these practices.[143]

The Advisory Group is currently assessing what values could be applied to the collection

and how to formulate these typologies. One approach the group is considering is to apply the

Americans for the Arts (AFA) Aesthetic Perspectives framework, a set of 11 Aesthetic Attributes

which consider the qualities both visible in and underlying socially engaged public art of all

disciplines.[144] The 11 Attributes, defined by artists, seek to address the efficacy of creative

expression while encouraging dialogue between artistic stakeholders—namely the artists,

funders, students, educators, critics, curators, and audiences.[145] The attributes include

considerations of commitment, communal meaning, and integrity, which address the feeling

and potency of the arts but not the specifics of an artistic product such as a works artistic

quality, age, or meaning. To avoid the complications of quantifiable significance, the AFA

attributes consider experience as central sensations, allowing the viewer to include a level of

emotional response to applying an attribute towards a work or art.[146] Additional criteria, such as

condition, location and others will be added to the criteria considered.

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[143] Cooper Moore, interview.

[144] Americans for the Arts, Aesthetic Attributes in Arts for Change, "A Condensed View," http://www.animatingdemocracy.org/sites/default/files/pictures/AestPersp/Aesthetics%20Condensed%20Attributes.pdf (accessed April 27, 2019).

[145] Ibid, 2.

[146] Ibid, 4. The Aesthetic Perspectives include the sensory experience and emotional experience of a piece of art, which ask viewers to consider their own sensory and emotional responses to works. These

Apart from a commitment to community input characteristic of public art projects today, the attributes question the physical mark artworks leave in a community and city. *Stickiness,* or the achievement of sustained resonance or impact, suggests a works physical mark should leave a resonant chord in a community to drive future social engagement.[147] *Disruption*, or the challenge created by the work to expose what was hidden and model new forms of action, considers works which exist in "dysfunctional conditions" and offer alternatives to these conditions.[148] These attributes reveal a contemporary stance of public art outlets to offer creative solutions to artistic "norms." To consider a public work of art disruptive is to argue its presence in a neighborhood is not only needed but enhanced and challenged the perception of dominant stories and power structures in these areas. On the other hand, *Stickiness* suggests that the art itself is only a catalyst to the ideas which stem from the presence of the artwork.

The 11 AFA attributes are intriguing models for enlarging values-based decision-making discussion. If community mural organizations were to debate the merits of their current collections by these aesthetic attributes, many organizations would need to grapple with the level of risk, coherence, and meaning that exist in works both 20 years old and two months old. While the AFA attributes present an interesting litmus test for current or future artistic outputs, their aesthetics are limited to change in a future tense. These attributes neglect the strong enduring aesthetic power of community murals to speak to audiences of the past and present. Assigning value to community murals must include typologies of historical context and communal meaning—values which fuel the social meaning of community murals. Thus, while

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attributes are expected to guide discussions of how emotions contribute to the overall social intent of the work.

147 Ibid, 5.

148 Ibid, 2.

MAP and other mural organizations strive to include values of future change, preserving

attributes which highlight the past will foster a diverse collection.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BEST PRACTICES

Community mural organizations manage diverse urban public art collections for both intimately specific community needs and city-wide public art celebrations. Reflecting this diversity of subject matter and location, these programs often use language which convey a museum-like association of their works as a collection, such as the "museum of walls" or "city as gallery."[149] However, unlike municipal public art collections which are catalogued and maintained by public funds, many community mural programs do not inventory, catalogue, or document their works as is typical of museum best practices. Considering the issues of ownership, artist rights, and maintenance discussed here, the lack of documentation and information management practices cause disorder in the operations of these programs.

Models and tools for managing public heritage objects and sites have long been debated and continue to evolve as practices and attitudes shift towards cities, public art, and preservation. Historically, the most carefully drafted models for decision-making and management of public art has come from publicly funded programs, which require a level of accountability towards the general public.[150] Some nonprofit community-based programs also have developed management practices that involve a level of public participation, such as Precita Eyes in San Francisco, and Mural Routes in Toronto, Canada.[151] These programs invite stakeholders to request murals and be involved in a collaborative process of fundraising,

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[149] Heather Becker, *Art for the People*, (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2002).

[150] The General Services Administration offers a model of decision-making for the over 15,000 works they manage throughout the country. Municipal programs such as the Minneapolis Art in Public Places Program and the Miami-Dade Arts in Public Places Program.

[151] Bradley, Brown, et al., "Mural Production," 22, and Olivia Gude, Chicago Public Art Group, "Community Public Art Guide," http://cpag.net/guide/index.htm.

selecting an artist, and painting. Practices such as these illustrate how community mural

organizations are only beginning to consider how to organize and manage the involvement of

many stakeholders, values, and needs for a mural. Community mural organizations, which have

long operated outside of established norms of arts and cultural resource management, tend to

manage their collections idiosyncratically by way of longstanding practices or no practices at all.

CURRENT MURAL DOCUMENTATION EFFORTS

Documentation for community murals began informally as a way to commemorate celebrated

works. Books about community murals and their organizations include documentation efforts

but have not highlighted how these efforts began.[152] A public sense of documenting public art

grew in the 1960s and 70s out of the Percent for Art Programs in the United States.[153] It was

during this period that public art and its influence on shaping public space came to be

commemorated. Murals, however, were largely excluded from documented forms of public art

because many did not receive public funds. Early mural documentation began by enthusiasts,

which remains true today.[154] These individual efforts at documentation demonstrate public

desire to remember the murals and their context. It also points to a lack of in-house

documentation and dissemination to the public.

Several public non-profit organizations have successfully documented community

murals in the last twenty years. The Social and Public Art Resource Center (SPARC) in Los

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[152] Cockcroft et al., *Toward a People's Art*.
[153] Douglas C. McGill, "How Public Art is Changing New York City," *The New York Times*, January 23, 1988.
[154] The Getty Conservation Institute houses the Ernest A. Long Outdoor Mural Image Archive, featuring over 500 images taken in the 1970s and 1980s by Ernest Long in Southern California, http://www.getty.edu/conservation/publications_resources/newsletters/27_1/gcinews7.html. Today, private projects such as the Detroit Museum of Public Art continue citizen documentation efforts, https://detroitmopa.org/ (accessed April 15, 2019).

Angeles created the Digital Mural Lab in partnership with UCLA in 1996.[155] The Lab is a research

and production facility working to both digitally archive community murals (primarily those of

Los Angeles) and create large-scale digitally generated murals. Rescue Public Murals, launched

in 2006 from the non-profit *Heritage Preservation,* was an advocacy project supported by a

national committee of art advisors and public art professionals.[156] The organization initiated a

best practices program for community murals, as well as a documentation partnership with the

ARTstor Digital Library to archive digital images and information about murals. The Rescue

Public Mural program ended when Heritage Preservation dissolved in 2015. The Public Art

Archive (PAA) is a free online and mobile database of public art in a central repository.[157] PAA

works to standardize best practices in cataloging public art, as well as uniting records from many

arts organizations into one comprehensive public resource. PAA works have to be approved by

the artist and cannot infringe on copyright. Because of this, few of the murals in the case studies

above are included.

Although these organizations have documented murals to different ends, they share in

common the intent to create a publicly accessible repository of community murals. Most of

them record only the image of the mural and the artist and location. Many of these

organizations have used "archive" as the term for their documentation practices, but these

records are not archived using current digital or physical standards. Many allow for public input

and collaboration, either through comments or open-source data. All of these documentation

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[155] Social and Public Art Resource Center, "Key Accomplishments of SPARC," http://sparcinla.org/about-sparc/ (accessed March 28, 2019).
[156] American Institute for Conservation, "Rescue Public Murals," https://www.culturalheritage.org/about-us/foundation/programs/heritage-preservation/rescue-public-murals (accessed March 28, 2019).
[157] Public Art Archive, "About" https://www.publicartarchive.org/content/about-public-art-archive (accessed March 28, 2019).

efforts are located on different websites although there is no clear mission statement

connecting the need for documentation practices. Some, like ARTstor, require a paid

subscription to access the collection. Others, such as the PAA, are outdated ad display dead

links. The need for collaborative, dynamic, and updated recording practices for community

mural collections could not be more evident when accessing these collections.

APPLYING VALUES: INVENTORY BEST PRACTICES

One of the most straightforward ways to assess the size and scope of a collection is to inventory

a program's entire collection on a regular basis. For mural programs, inventories offer the

opportunity to determine the condition and context of murals in their neighborhoods.

Inventories of mural collections are also important for determining the values or attributes of

individual murals, and then use these values to understand the collection as a whole and make

decisions.

As discussed above, values and attributes are produced through interaction and

revaluation. The values created through the mural-making process can alter, be added to, or be

lost over time, subject to changes in the neighborhood, site context, or politics. Because of this,

values and attributes of murals must be added to and reconsidered on a regular basis. Has the

Stickiness of a mural faded? Does the mural still cause *Disruption* in its neighborhood and city? Is

the *Cultural Integrity* of its subject matter still felt, or felt differently? These reconsiderations

can be made more clearly through fieldwork and consistent visits to murals. If mural

organizations wish to continue their self-evaluation as the "outdoor galleries" of urban cities,

their management practices should reflect equally diverse and active inventories.[158]

By understanding current collections management practices in the field of cultural

resource management, community mural programs can continue to expand upon their

collection maintenance and recording strategies. Many of these strategies have to begin by

understanding the current collection—its size, contents, and condition. To organize this large

amount of data, information management systems have long been used by practitioners in

museums, cultural heritage sites, landscape management, and public art management. Putting

in place systems and protocols to manage community murals as a collection will strengthen

internal management practices while gaining greater public confidence.

MUSEUM COLLECTIONS MANAGEMENT BEST PRACTICES

In the realm of museum management, objects are held in trust to the museum for the benefit of

the public. The care of these objects is the primary responsibility and core foundation of the

museum. This task is generally carried out by a detailed collections management plan, a written

document which sets forth the purpose and goals of a museum while detailing how these goals

are interpreted in its collections management.[159] The collections management policy is

important not only as a professional standard of the museum to manage objects in its care but

also to guide collection decision-making. Collections management policies address acquisitions

of objects, deaccessioning procedures, care of collections, record-keeping, insurance, and

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[158] Mural Arts Philadelphia, "Spring Arts District," https://www.muralarts.org/artworks/spring-arts-district/spring-arts-district-temporary-projects/.

[159] Gary Edson and David Dean, *The Handbook for Museums,* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 67.

inventory procedures.[160] Each collections management policy is crafted to fit the needs of its

institution, including defining collection objects and adding policies for their care as needed.

Protection of collections is paramount to museum best practices. Museums assert that

the loss of a collection item is not only the loss of an asset but the loss of cultural or scientific

human heritage.[161] Conservation is key to avoiding this loss, ideally by way of preventative care.

Methods for protecting objects do not directly relate to mural best practices, as they involve

managing interior collections, which can be housed and moved. MAP and BMP have both

applied some museum management strategies to their own collections, including the use of

accession numbers, database information management systems, and inventories. MAP has also

made strides towards housing conditions information in this system, based on conditions

determined through fieldwork inventories.[162]

Not unlike museums, community mural programs could consider their role as stewards

of their collections—murals as held in trust for the public for a period of time. While under this

public trust, mural programs could follow similar steps to create written, detailed policies for

managing the accession and deaccession of murals in order to control the size of the collection

and monitor their maintenance investments. Professional museum collections management

policies function to avoid decision-making conflict and to clarify why collections deserve care.

Mural programs could benefit from similar policies which not only routinely highlight what

objects are in the collection and their condition, but why caring for the collection is their

responsibility.

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[160] Ibid, 70.
[161] Ibid, 92.
[162] These condition assessments are from a 2015 inventory of the collection and are housed in
FileMakerPro.

There are many practices of museum collections which would not suit dynamic mural

collections. For instance, museum objects are handled with the intention of perpetuity. Their

best practices encourage limited public interaction with objects and require time and resources

to extend an object's longevity. Community murals deserve a level of detailed care and

documentation but should not be managed for perpetuity. Not only would this treatment be

unmanageable by most mural programs but would detract from the ephemeral qualities of a

mural.

LANDSCAPE PRESERVATION BEST PRACTICES

Urban community murals share many attributes with cultural landscapes. The always shifting

nature of landscapes influences the sense of place and memories made through a continuing

process of inhabiting and changing the setting around us.[163] Similar to murals, additions to that

landscape, such as buildings, patterns of land use, and public art are considered in the context of

location and creator.[164] In urban areas, the preservation of landscapes has been threatened by

radical shifts from gentrification and growing work sectors. Demolition, new construction, and

redefined uses of public space impact public murals. Urban landscape preservation, like other

forms of cultural resource management, has reached a paradox of how to redefine urban

conservation while continuing to preserve historic values in the face of rapid change.[165]

Like public art management, urban landscape management encounters complexities in

interpreting urban change. Those shaping principles and practices of landscape preservation

have been slow to define the extent of change in a landscape allowed before a reassessment of

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[163] Ken Taylor and Jane L. Lennon, *Managing Cultural Landscapes*, (New York: Routledge, 2012), 1.
[164] Ibid, 2.
[165] Francesco Bandarin, "From Paradox to Paradigm?" in *Managing Cultural Landscapes*, 215.

values is needed.[166] There has yet to be a specific approach to address the presence of contemporary architecture and art in historic urban settings. A process for linking the different yet interwoven areas of architecture, infrastructure, public space and public art management is still needed.[167]

A leader in cultural landscape stewardship in the United States is the National Park Service, who implement Cultural Landscape Inventory's (CLI) for properties of historic significance in the National Park System.[168] Serving as evaluated inventories, CLI's provide baseline documentation for cultural landscapes. Documentation accounts for the physical development and historical significance of the landscape, and also records its physical characteristics, including natural systems, spatial organization, land use, vegetation, structures, and views. The inventory is automated and updated through the Cultural Landscapes Automated Inventory Management System (CLAIMS).[169] The CLI is a building process that includes two stages of research and survey, an analysis and evaluation period, a feature inventory and assessment, and often a preservation approach and treatment plan. These steps may result in a Cultural Landscape Report (CLR), which serves as a management guide for maintenance, interpretation, and record keeping for the cultural landscape.[170]

Cultural landscapes and their inventories offer a useful comparison to managing community murals because their processes analyze change over time. Landscapes are understood as a continuum through history, comprising many sets of values. Like murals,

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[166] Ibid, 225.
[167] Ibid.
[168] Charles A. Birnbaum, "Protecting Cultural Landscapes," Preservation Brief 36 (The National Park Service, September 1994), https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/36-cultural-landscapes.htm.
[169] Nancy Brown, "More Than a Database," (Proceedings of the 11th Conference on Research and Resource Management in Parks and on Public Lands, 2001).
[170] Ibid.

context is valued and directly relates to the integrity of the landscape and its enduring historical

significance. Integrity as defined by the Park Service includes qualities of location, setting,

feeling, association, design, workmanship and materials. The Park Service then uses these

qualities of integrity alongside evaluations of significance to influence later treatment and

interpretation decisions. These same qualities of integrity are relevant to community murals and

could be integrated into a set of criteria when making decisions to retain and invest in individual

murals.

CULTURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT: SOFTWARE AND SYSTEMS

To strengthen decision-making practices, mural organizations will need to document their

collections beyond photography or social media. Software systems allow for dynamic arts

management—recording images, locations, and multiple criteria and typologies. Information

management systems allow collections to be grouped, searched, and mapped for multiple levels

of interpretable data. Considering the multiple stakeholders, artists, and communities involved

in mural-making, adaptable information management systems are most likely to be utilized. The

BMP has turned to adaptable systems such as AirTable as a way to manage their collections,

assigning qualities such as year, artist, and materials as searchable criteria. MAP is searching for

a new database system to organize and update the condition of their collection, one that allows

for assignable values or attributes. The Mural Crew considers information management systems

time-consuming and without payoff.

Systems for managing information and documentation may need to allow for multiple

fields and typologies to include the different values, attributes, and condition assessments

discussed in this paper. Community mural programs may consider their audience and goal when

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choosing an information management system: are systems purely back of house or for public interaction? Is the system designed to allow for decision-making? Can queries and typologies be redefined or updated? Below are different software systems intended for dynamic collections management practices:

MIMSY XG AND EMU

Mimsy is a collections management software primarily used by art museums. Mimsy users also include a number of exterior sculpture museums, including Grounds for Sculpture and the deCordova Sculpture Park and Museum.[171] Mimsy allows for two different record types: activities and authorities.[172] "Activities" manage the day to day operations, including acquisitions, damages, location, and condition assessments. "Authorities" are the objects, people, events, publications, and media of the organization. "Form views" capture information to create a new record, which contain a large number of criteria to be edited and arranged according to what is needed by the institution. Users can sort through the system in basic or advance searches, which allow users to string together queries. Mimsy also allows for objects to be grouped and searched that way, ideal for exhibitions or a mural series. One control to this multi-criteria process is a set vocabulary, which can be used to restrict key words to identify entries. Artists can be recorded in the system, as can addresses or building owner, which can be ideal for follow-up information. These contacts can be activated and deactivated based on their role in the program. All data in Mimsy can be exported for the web. Images and chosen

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[171] Axiell, "Customer List," https://alm.axiell.com/customers/customer-list/ (accessed April 2, 2019).
[172] Axiell, "Mimsy XG," https://alm.axiell.com/collections-management-solutions/technology/mimsy-xg/#video (accessed April 2, 2019).

published aspects can be published to a website using "M-Web," their proprietary software. This allows for public interaction with collections and ease of staff-led support.

EMu is managed by the same parent institution, Axiell, but is designed for more comprehensive collections. Its main user base is Natural History collections because of its longer list of taxonomies, catalogue to international standards, multilingual options, and treatments and condition scheduling. Some of these complex collections management options would be useful to the management of community mural collections and a wide extension of typologies. Because of the location of murals and vulnerability to changing conditions, a wide range of values is necessary to note the potential attributes, physical or values-based, which affect a mural.

ARCHES

Arches is an open-source geospatial software system for cultural heritage inventory and management. Developed jointly by the Getty Conservation Institute and World Monuments Fund from 2011 through 2018, Arches was built for easy access of heritage inventory systems. Designed to facilitate inventorying and documenting buildings, landscapes, districts, and archaeological sites, Arches is a flexible software for cultural resource management that incorporates international standards for information management. As an open-source software, Arches is free to use and allows for free data exchange.

Arches is designed to support many activities within heritage management, including inventory, research and analysis, impact and risk assessments, emergency preparedness, planning for conservation, and providing information to the public and other agents outside the

organization.[173] Information can be managed for six resource types: heritage resources, heritage

resource groups, actors, historical events, activities, and information resources. Networks can

be created between two of these groups, allowing for tracking multiple themes, players, or

resources involved in various heritage sites across time. A reference data manager (RDM)

module manages the terminology used in the system and can be imported for each

organization's need. In the case of murals, this would allow an entry to connect its work to other

works by the same artist, made in the same year or neighborhood, as well as attach social

movements or key activists to certain works. Arches allows for easily viewable cultural and

spatial context to each entry.

Arches can be used by administrators privately or allow specific data fields to be viewed

by the public or selected groups. Changes to the system are preserved so the system can record

when works are restored, updated, or otherwise altered. Because Arches is free and self-

describing, the software will not become obsolescent. As a result, it is an ideal software for

budget-tight community mural programs. Its ease of use and adaptability to many types of

cultural resources it is well suited for to the values and the range of stakeholders involved in

community murals. A problematic aspect of Arches is its lack of archiving past works. While it

functions well as an active inventory, it does not effectively function to record deaccessioned

works.

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[173] David Myers, Alison Dalgity, and Ioannis Avramides, "The Arches Heritage Inventory and Management System," *Journal of Cultural Heritage Management and Sustainable Development* 6, 2016).

ARTWORK ARCHIVE

A more complex software for managing collection inventory, condition assessments, and treatments is the cloud-based software Artwork Archive. Primarily used by private art collections, Artwork Archive is a management software that tracks a collections inventory, location, and appraisals. While not intended for an outdoor mural collection, the software is useful for logging insurance records, maintenance reports, contacts related to each work, and image logging of restoration work.[174] The software could be helpful for a mural organization focused on conditions management recording such as restoration work, pricing for conservation and materials, and managing artist contacts.

CITIZEN DOCUMENTATION

Community mural organizations already use phone tip-lines and community reports to be aware of the conditions of their murals.[175] Additionally, many city residents record murals themselves as part of photography series, blogs, and books. Citizen documentation efforts to record murals extends the possibility of supported open-source inventory networks in addition to information management systems. While not a replacement to professional systems intended to serve the public with records of mural collections and conditions, citizen documentation efforts could be used alongside community mural programs to encourage public interaction and a neighborhood sense of ownership.

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[174] Artwork Archive, "Organizations," https://www.artworkarchive.com/organizations (accessed April 4, 2019).
[175] Cooper Moore, interview, and Mural Arts Philadelphia, "Report It," https://map.muralarts.org/ (accessed April 5, 2019).

In Detroit, where individual murals have become a form of revitalization in near-empty neighborhoods, local enthusiast Viranel Clerard began documenting all known murals.[176] His website, the Detroit Museum of Public Art, tracks and records every known mural in the City of Detroit based on citizen reconnaissance.[177] Clerard photographs every mural and includes all available information about its origin: date, location, artist, and commissioner. A similar project, Mural Durham, began in 2016 in Durham, NC by local artists wanting to record the growing number of murals in the city has resulted in an archive. The project works through local crowdsourcing of mural locations and stories, with a focus on creating a "living" archive of murals, their stories, and artists.[178] Citizen documentation projects have also been successful for established mural programs. In Baltimore, the BMP publishes its mural data to the City of Baltimore Open Source Data website, allowing for public use and transformation of the data.[179] This has led to citizen documentation and mapping projects, saving BMP both the time and resources to do so themselves.[180]

Like the Public Art Archive, the possibilities of further citizen documentation efforts and collaborative models of growing a community mural database are wide. While not substantive as inventories or assessments, these forms of documentation can provide valuable public interaction with murals and further support mural programs understanding of the importance of regular maintenance. While citizen involvement with mural documentation should be

[176] Victor Luckerson, "The Rise and Risk of the Mural Economy," *The Ringer*, October 18, 2018.
[177] "The Detroit Museum of Public Art," https://detroitmopa.org/archives (accessed April 5, 2019).
[178] Mural Durham, "The Archive," http://www.muraldurham.com/ (accessed April 5, 2019).
[179] City of Baltimore, Open Data, "Baltimore City Murals Project," https://data.baltimorecity.gov/dataset/Baltimore-City-Murals-Project-1987-to-Present-Map/7riw-dcxk (accessed April 5, 2019).
[180] Johann Liang, "Map of Baltimore City's Public Art & Murals," https://www.empiricalanalysis.net/sd_projects/publicArtAndMurals.html (accessed April 5, 2019).

encouraged, these types of recording practices cannot be substituted for comprehensive

inventories, condition assessments, or accurate location details. Citizen documentation efforts

are most useful because they remind community mural programs that their works are

interacted with daily and require maintenance to continue to contribute to their neighborhoods.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS AND ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

STEWARDSHIP: IS THIS WHAT MURAL PROGRAMS DO?

Originating as activist arts organizations with agendas of social justice, community mural

programs today have expanded their output to include new artistic media. Collaboration

remains a common value across community mural organizations, who cite the importance of

community buy-in to the success of projects.[181] Another commonality of these programs is their

forward-looking drive to create. Many mural organizations are guided by an aspirational mission

to work with communities to create art that instills pride; and, by transforming communities, to

improve the urban context at large. While this forward-orienting perspective infuses these

mural organizations with energy and drive, it risks neglecting obligations for management and

care held to the public.

    If mural programs are responsible for the art they create, must they also address

preservation? Currently, no mural organization this author researched includes "preservation"

or "management" in their mission or values statements.[182] While mural organizations are proud

of their collections, few organizations manage or are fully aware of the state of their collection.

If these programs are to continue, community mural organizations must also take on the role of

stewardship.

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[181] Mural Arts Philadelphia, "Our Mission," https://www.muralarts.org/about/ and Mural Routes, "Mural Production."
[182] This includes the mission and value statements of Mural Arts Philadelphia, Baltimore Mural Program, Mayor's Mural Crew, Chicago Public Art Group, Juxtaposition Arts, Precita Eyes Muralists, Mural Conservancy of Los Angeles, and many more.

Mural organizations' goals to represent communities and their times for the benefit of the future are well aligned with the aims of historic preservation. While mural organizations and historic preservation forms of expression are different, the objectives to benefit society are similar. While community murals programs tend to be concerned with the present and aspire to a better future, preservationists view the future as developing from a well-understood and represented past. Where preservation places emphasis on the methods of maintenance and recording, mural programs are only now reflecting on their legacies and need for similar processes. With murals primarily valued for the programs that they represent and for the collaborative processes and impactive work they produce, there has been little thought of the future. Until leaders of these programs acknowledge that their old and often forgotten projects impact urban neighborhoods, it is unlikely that their missions will be achieved.

HOW CAN COMMUNITY MURAL PROGRAMS ADDRESS PRESERVATION?

Community mural programs can begin to address preservation by demonstrating responsibility to the public in their mission statement. Including preservation as a statement of purpose will reflect the organization's intention to manage its care and priorities such as inventories, recording, and documentation. Defining preservation, restoration, or conservation here will distinguish the type of approach they intend to adopt in managing the future of its collection. Having "preservation" in the organizations mission statement ensures documentation will be conducted or organized by the program itself and not rely upon citizen documenters. Because future projects must fit the goals of the mission statement, the presence of preservation language here assumes that preservation will be considered in every project going forward.

The cause of preservation would be further advanced through encouragement by each organization's Board of Directors. Currently, few of the 40 MAP board members include preservationists, historians, or professionals in similar fields of cultural resource management.[183] None of the 11 BOPA members include professionals in these fields. This reflects a struggle for cultural resource management perspectives to be heard in these organizations, and the likelihood of only arts management practices being applied to mural collections. Continuing to encourage multiple backgrounds and professional inputs would benefit diverse decision-making for mural programs.

Within the community mural organization itself, qualified staff need to be given the role and time to oversee collections and information management. This role should not be filled by a temporary employee or an intern, but by a qualified full-time staff member to ensure organizational retention. This staff person can play a vital role linking different maintenance services and preservation initiatives for murals, as well as offering input on discussions of deaccessioning. This staff member should remain responsible for back-of-house data management, and not website design or public interaction with this information.

Community mural programs would also benefit from choosing documentation systems that fit the mission and collections management goals of their organization. If an organization such as MAP is prioritizing managing a large number of extant murals, a collections management software, which prioritizes multiple values criteria and updated maintenance records would be ideal. For organizations such as the Mural Crew, which often repaint older murals with new designs, a system focused on cataloguing past works would be more useful than one

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[183] Mural Arts Philadelphia, "Board of Directors," https://www.muralarts.org/about/board-of-directors/ and Baltimore Office of Promotion and the Arts, "BOPA Board of Directors," http://www.promotionandarts.org/about-us/bopa-board-directors (accessed April 6, 2019).

documenting maintenance needs. Arches offers an ideal management software for large mural

collections, but it may work best for organizations who have an established collection, such as

the BMP, rather than an organization who has never completed an inventory.

CONTRACTS

Another way community mural programs can fortify their stewardship role is through stricter

contracts with property owners and artists. That murals tend to be painted on private rather

than public properties opens more avenues for ownership conflicts of maintenance and care in

the future. Contracts between mural programs and property owners might consider murals as

permanent fixtures to a property, in that murals require maintenance and approval for

alterations. Each mural organization might consider the time required for reviewing these

changes—does the artist need to be involved, and in what capacity? Should a community

meeting be called? Here the values and attributes of murals may be considered in these

decisions, but so should the contracts of each mural, including if VARA rights are to be waived.

Similarly, mural organizations might require ownership of the mural to pass between property

owners.

Who owns a mural should be clarified in a contract. Lifespan and maintenance should be

clearly defined in the contract. Having written forms outlining contractual responsibility would

not only alleviate concerns of mural ownership and responsibilities, but could expand the rights

of the artist, community, or other pertinent stakeholder. Whether it be the property owner or

the mural organization, the mural organization should retain control of maintaining the mural so

as to prevent conflicts regarding the life of the mural in the face of demolition, copyright, and

lifespan.

Defined, short lifespans reduce maintenance costs over the life of a mural but allow for realistic planning to resource it while also allowing the space for new work. The suggested lifespan of a mural and associated responsibilities and costs should be evaluated and made clear at the time of its conception in conjunction with the artist, community, and mural organization. To help anticipate for these expenses, deferred maintenance costs should be included in fundraising proposals. As many public arts programs have done, funds should be set aside as a percentage of original commissions or associate program funding for yearly maintenance and care, data management, and associated staffing.

While more stringent contracts should function to make ownership and maintenance responsibilities clear, contracts should not overly restrict the placement of murals in the ways of historic landmarked properties. The purpose of well-defined contracts is to make the process of alterations easier and the understanding of ownership and responsibility clear. Contracts should not exist to place more restrictions on property owners. For example, it would be difficult to convince a property owner to accept a mural on their property if it came with the restriction of no demolition. Contracts should not restrict property owners but make it easier for them to hold mural programs accountable for maintenance. Likewise, contracts will equally ensure mural programs are not at risk of lawsuits or complications from ownership issues in the future.

CONSIDERING OTHER MUNICIPAL TOOLS TO GROW SIGNIFICANCE FOR MURALS AS URBAN RESOURCES

While contracts offer a form of protection between the property owner and mural organization, other measures could be applied to highlight the value of community murals and raise awareness for their significance on a larger scale. In many cities, outside of restrictive historic

districts, is the rise of arts and culture districts. These zones offer honorary significance applied

to resources in a geographic area. Typically applied as overlays or within unofficial boundaries,

the impetus of these districts is often to shine light on artistic and creative assets with the

intention of energizing business and tourism. Districts are created through a combination of

bottom up and top down forces over time, related to both issues of heritage protection and

commercial revitalization.[184] Often, these stakeholders include municipal governments and

community development corporations. Common to tourist sites worldwide, a combination of

cultural resource and commercialism exist side by side. Public art, corner stores, and even

transit stops are juxtaposed with monumental buildings and sites of civic gathering. Every

district is unique in its listed resources, but there are definable trends in these areas including

the presence of galleries, markets, and performing arts venues. These districts do not provide

any protections to the sites and structures but group the resources as "assets" made stronger by

their collective presence. What arts and culture districts do provide is an open approach to

urban resource management not seen by historic districts.

In Boston, four Cultural Districts have been created since the initiative began in 2011.[185]

These Cultural Districts exist to attract artists and economic activity while enhancing cultural

development. In historic Boston, these districts encourage retaining existing buildings and using

districts as a tourist destination. The four districts offer vastly different approaches to what are

considered resources. The Roxbury Cultural District has six distinct categories for sites,

businesses, and arts, including several murals as resources.[186] While the sites within these

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[184] Tom Borrup, "Cultural Districts: Bottom-Up and Top-Down Drivers," *Americans for the Arts*, 2014.
[185] City of Boston, Office of Arts and Culture, "About the Cultural Districts,"
https://www.boston.gov/departments/arts-and-culture/cultural-districts (accessed February 5, 2019).
[186] "Roxbury Cultural District," http://roxburyculturaldistrict.org/maps-1/. The Latin Quarter Cultural
District also include a mural as a resource.

districts include no protections or best practices for documentation, the inclusion of murals as contributing resources show their value as a contemporary asset in communities as a marketable draw. The other two districts, both located downtown, primarily center on historic public sites and institutions, but do not also involve businesses or public art.[187]

Since 2002, Baltimore has served as a national model for cultural districts.[188] Its three Arts and Entertainment Districts (A&E) that arose from development and revitalization efforts by way of tax incentives, were designed to attract artists and arts organizations.[189] A&E Districts distinguish themselves by their "arts assets"—sites and venues, which embody existing artistic communities or present opportunities for new growth.[190] While no district assets include murals, they have used mural-making to boost investment in their districts. As an example, the Station North Arts and Entertainment District in Baltimore created a popular street art production, Open Walls Baltimore, in the spring of 2012.[191] Featuring 23 murals and nearly 30 artists, the "exhibition" brought tourism and a wave of new construction to the district and was repeated in 2014.[192]

Cultural districts aim to preserve affordable living and employment while envisioning creative economies. By designating areas in cities as "creative" and "arts" districts, they protect a new form of urban resource. While the resources in these districts—arts organizations,

[187] "About the Cultural Districts."
[188] Borrup, "Cultural Districts," 4.
[189] Casey Brent and Laura Larson, "Baltimore Arts & Entertainment Districts Working Group Report", City of Baltimore, (2015), 6.
[190] Baltimore Office of Promotion and the Arts, Arts Council, "Baltimore Arts & Entertainment Districts," http://www.promotionandarts.org/arts-council/baltimore-arts-entertainment-districts (accessed April 7, 2019).
[191] Station North Arts and Entertainment District, Projects, "Open Walls Baltimore," http://www.stationnorth.org/projects/open-walls-baltimore (accessed April 7, 2019).
[192] Open Walls Baltimore, "2014 Artists," https://openwallsbaltimore.com/2014-Artists (accessed April 7, 2019).

venues, and parks—would struggle to be individually assigned significance and protections,

together these resources and assets provide a cohesive urban fabric, a defined place.

Particularly in arts districts where cycles of abandonment and disinvestment are countered with

attracting and retaining creative people, the physical face of these districts will soon change

from new building investment.

Urban district planning in arts districts is an alternative way to assign significance to

public art in a substantive way. Even though only a handful of districts include murals among

their resources, their inclusion points to a growing trend of increased visual art in urban

contexts. These cultural districts manage resources with flexibility and dynamism. Where an

individual resource is not essential to the district as a whole, it may be replaced with a new one.

If arts and cultural districts are to become more widespread in cities, then some public art will

be regarded on more equal footing with other urban resources. Arts and culture districts are

useful in that they assign values to resources but do not diminish one over another. Every

resource is as valuable as it is useful by their community.

Few urban district planning tools help to elevate the value of community murals. And, while arts

and culture districts present a flexible approach to valuing public art for the strengths it lends to

its contemporary neighborhood, they only include murals within their boundaries. Furthermore,

they do not consider how stewards care for or manage new these new forms of public art.

Murals within historic districts or on walls with no urban designations lack protection as well as

methods of recording or memorializing them in the urban landscape today.

Introducing new murals while maintaining older murals offers the opportunity for

community mural programs to consider the relationship between murals and historic and

contemporary urban resources. BMP is considering this relationship, creating a shared resource

database for all public art and historical resources. Partnerships with other cultural resource organizations in host cities could not only enhance the public perception of murals but could also support networks of public resource management. Including community murals in more resource databases would expand understanding and influence of their values and attributes and would contribute to elevating them from outliers to art within the public art realm.

USING VALUES TO EVALUATE COLLECTIONS

New approaches to assigning significance to community murals through cultural districts and values allows community mural programs the opportunity to reconsider their mural commissions and guiding artistic missions. The discussion of values and community murals is timely as it occurs during a period of reassessment of public art, particularly public monuments in the United States. Following the destruction and subsequent removal of American Civil War era monuments in 2017 in Charlottesville, VA, cities across the country began reconsidering the historic contexts of public statues and the appropriateness of their representation today.[193] These reflections have caused cities to reimagine monuments to be more inclusive, more representative, and more meaningful to all. Organizations such as Philadelphia-based Monument Lab project to explore the future of public art through public conversations about representation and how to address unresolved monuments from the past.[194] Through interviews with thousands of Philadelphians in 2015, Monument Lab found that not only do residents seek more inclusive and diverse representations of communities, figures, and social movements, but

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[193] Nicole Chavez, "These Are the Monuments Vandalized After Charlottesville," *CNN*, August 22, 2017.
[194] Monument Lab, "About," http://monumentlab.com/about-monument-lab (accessed April 20, 2019).

also believe the form of these projects should be equally diverse.[195] Perhaps the future of

murals could be similarly questioned.

The case studies discussed above prompts one to consider their success in delivering on

the intended social goods. While positive impact is assumed, it has not been well measured. In

fact, correlating the social benefits of the murals with their underlying programs is not straight-

forward. A 2003 study on MAP shed light on the complexity of measuring impact of murals in

urban neighborhoods.[196] The study concluded that murals in Philadelphia do not have a

measurable impact on social capital but may promote the growth of cultural participation and

diversity. The study asserted that murals have a measurable influence on neighborhood well-

being but could not define exactly how or to what extent.[197] Considering that the impact of

murals on their communities is not well understood provokes the question of whether the social

good produced from these programs could be channeled in new artistic directions. Why should

the manifestation of these organizations be limited to visual arts? Are there other, perhaps

programmatic, ways to reach their audiences? The Mural Crew is beginning to expand their

reach to event-based projects in partnership with the Department of Parks and Recreation.[198]

The BMP has focused more recent projects on limited-production festivals and exhibitions.[199]

While these organizations have honed and limited their production, MAP has only grown in the

number of produced works and programmatic goals.[200] With the largest collection of murals in

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[195] "Report to the City," (Monument Lab, October 2018).

[196] Stern and Seifert, "An Assessment of Community Impact," 22.

[197] Ibid, 20.

[198] Cristela Guerra, "Marigolds to Decorate Altar for Boston's First Official Day of the Dead Observance," *The Boston Globe*, October 31, 2018.

[199] McCabe, "Beautiful Walls."

[200] Since 2001, MAP has increased the number of yearly projects, but has largely maintained the number of yearly restorations, Stern and Seifert, and Cooper Moore, interview.

the United States located in Philadelphia, it has been suggested that MAP divide their work into a public art branch and social outreach and programming branch.[201]

Community murals as an urban artform have changed dramatically since their beginnings in the 1960s. While still serving as outcries against injustice and as bright gateways to neighborhoods, murals are sometimes left faded and abandoned. Subject matter is sometimes unclear and relevance to their communities lost. Sustaining the original aspirational intentions behind these murals – to disrupt, to instill pride, to respond directly to their communities—is questionable given the increased financial support from municipalities and donors, institutions which expect measurable success. Along with considering how their artistic production could expand beyond mural making, community mural programs would benefit from exploring how their practices have distanced them from integrating with other urban resource management practices. For example, while being conscious of impact, they have tended to eschew professional collections management practices, such as keeping records current, adopting cultural resource management tools, and have resisted hiring appropriate professionals to help manage their maintenance and collections. Without updated documentation and tools for analyzing them, mural organizations are unlikely to be aware of the full content of their collections or their potential for further impact. Likewise, without benefiting from the knowledge of cultural resource specialists and preservationists, they are missing the opportunity to apply well established professional practices to their programs and collections.

A reassessment of their programs through the lens of preservation will offer mural programs' leadership the opportunity to examine their capacity to manage their collection and to make more informed decisions. An analysis of costs and time required for adopting

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[201] Philadelphia Public Art, 16.

professional practices and making decisions by way of committees of stakeholders must be

factored into operating costs. The lack of clear contractual agreements detracts from the power

of community murals being truly "community" art as their decisions are left to anyone but the

community. Without defining values-based criteria for making decisions, many of the changing,

powerful attributes of murals may be overlooked. Exploring the potential of cultural districts to

heighten the social impact of murals is also needed.

Applying a preservation perspective to managing murals will align these programs more

closely with professional practices for public art and cultural resources management. Adopting

the associated tools, expertise and resources will lead to acquiring accurate data and analyzing

impact. Furthermore, professional practices of cultural resource management will garner

greater respect from associated professions while also further qualifying these organizations for

funding. Preservation practices such as controlling the size and age of the collection will also

promote balanced collections where informed decision-making can determine when murals

should be restored, altered, or removed. This will ensure existing murals and new art

installations are not in conflict for needed maintenance and care. Maintaining a manageable

collection size will also reflect a mural program's commitment to art of high quality. Beyond

decision-making practices, applying the lens of preservation to mural management shows a

mural program's long-term commitment to its community beyond the lifespan of a mural.

Proper practices in recording, documentation, and care preserve not only the stories of vibrant

communities otherwise unseen, but how these many stories add depth to their city.

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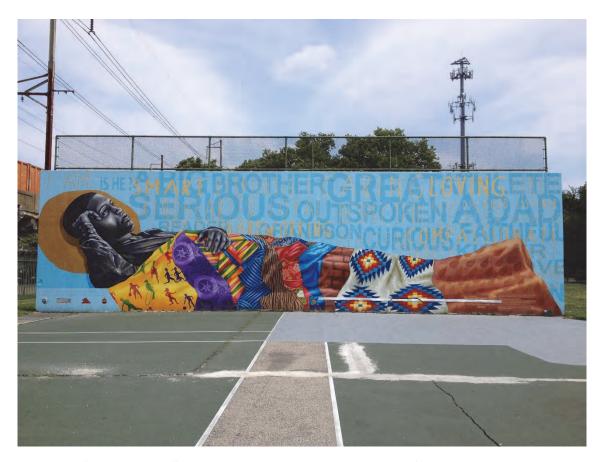
APPENDIX

Figure 1. "Heavy Blanket" mural in South Philadelphia. Produced for Mural Arts Philadelphia.
Photo by the author, July, 2015.

		Organizational Overview			
	Year Formed	Management	Staff Size	Overview and Mission	Collection Size
Baltimore Mural Program	1975	Public/Private Partnership with the Baltimore Office of Promotion and the Arts (BOPA)	2, supported by an office of 76	The Baltimore Mural Program was created in 1975 to make Baltimore neighborhoods more attractive, instill a sense of pride, provide employment for local artists in their own field, combat graffiti in neighborhoods, and engage young people in the beautification of their own communities. Working with the artists, neighborhood groups/associations and funding sources, the Baltimore Office of Promotion and The Arts (BOPA) coordinates and directs this ongoing program. The Baltimore Mural Program has produced more than 250 murals across the city, creating an outdoor public museum for the enjoyment of the people of Baltimore.	300-400, ~107 extant
Mural Arts Philadelphia	1984	Public/Private Partnership with the City of Philadelphia Office of Arts, Culture, and the Creative Economy (OACCE) and the nonprofit Mural Arts Advocates	54	We believe that art ignites change. We create art with others to transform places, individuals, communities and institutions. Through this work, we establish new standards of excellence in the practice of public and contemporary art. Our process empowers artists to be change agents, stimulates dialogue about critical issues, and builds bridges of connection and understanding. Our work is created in service of a larger movement that values equity, fairness, and progress across all of society. We listen with empathetic ears to understand the aspirations of our partners and participants. And through beautiful collaborative art, we provide people with the inspiration and tools to seize their own future.	3,000-4,000, ~700 extant
Mayor's Mural Crew	1991	Public: Part of the City of Boston Department of Parks and Recreation	2 part-time 2 full-time, 15 seasonal student artist employees	Over the years, the Mayor's Mural Crew has given hundreds of Boston youth the chance to take part in creating public art. The crew helps these apprentices improve their skills and gain professional experience. Their work also contributes to the vitality of the City. The crew serves as a model for innovative and creative youth development. By working in the community, we incorporate art into the fabric of our City.	300-400, ~200 extant

Collection				
Murals Produced/Year	Inventory	Maintenance and Care Policies	Restorations	Funding for Maintenance and Care
~10	Inventory taken of public art, which included some murals. Inventory has been taken in sections, and never as a complete collection. The collection size is determined by these inventories, though not updated yearly. Inventory included location, photograph, artist(s), materials, year of completion, and restoration year.	Murals will be restored as is requested by the community or artist, and where funds can be found or applied for. Have no clearly defined policies for maintaining murals on a regular basis- this work is done as needed or not at all.	Yes, completed as needed. No policy for this work to be completed.	Most murals are paid for through Community Development Block Grants, which determine largely the mural subject matter and placement.
~100	Spotty inventory of the collection has existed since onset of the program. In 2003 mural data was consolidated, revealing the collection had completed 2,000 projects. 2015 comprehensive inventory completed of approximately 80% of the collection. Inventory included many data points, including location with geospatial coordinates, materials, artist(s), year of completion, photographs and context images, as well as a detailed conditions assessment.	Have no clearly defined policies but do restore and care for murals as needed. Most maintenance involves cleaning graffiti, touch ups, or ensuring murals are not hazardous for pedestrians. Current murals are installed with heavier top coats to prevent many of these maintenance issues and to prolong life. Other murals are intended to be temporary and are not maintained.	Yes, completed as needed or requested. Internal discussions determine this process. Approximately 10 restorations/year. Funds for restorations come directly from the City of Philadelphia.	The City of Philadelphia supports MAP with over $1.8 million/year. Restorations are paid for through the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts funds.
~6	No inventory of the collection has been completed. Information on murals and their locations exist through institutional knowledge. An inventory of the collection was taken by citizen documenters in 2016, who looked at all murals in Boston, including those of MMC.	Have no maintenance policies- will occasionally repaint or touch up a work if requested. Believe murals are ephemeral and should not be restored. Once painted, have no practices in place to manage murals. Do not consider murals to be a collection.	Rarely. Prefer to repaint mural with new imagery rather than restore existing image.	All murals are paid for by the Boston Department for Parks and Recreation. Additional grants are not pursued.

Deaccession and Disposal Policy	Decision-Making Oversight	Community Engagement in Collection Decision-Making	Data Management	Online Collections Presence
Deaccession works which have been demolished or destroyed, but do not paint out murals.	Decisions made by mural staff, with recommendations by BOPA staff.	Yes, in mural-making process, not in maintenance decision-making. Includes artist in restoration decision-making.	AirTable. House all public art collections here, including murals. Allows for queries and public access of data.	All mural data is uploaded to the City of Baltimore Open Data portal for free download. This is updated infrequently. Google-based maps of mural locations available through BMP website.
Currently do not have a static collection, so murals are not technically deaccessioned. Internal decisions are made to remove murals infrequently, usually if the mural is beyond repair or is politically insensitive.	Most decisions are made in-house. A management and care team determine restoration costs for murals as needed or requested. There is no clear process for these decisions.	Community is involved when there is public outcry over the removal of a work, or a work receives wide-spread attention. Community is always included in the process of making a new mural. Otherwise, most decisions are made internally.	Most recent inventory is housed in FileMakerPro. Other mural projects are recorded in Mural Project sheets, which follow no clear recording standards. There is no list of all murals in the collection.	Yes, MAP has created a Google-based map of many extant murals in Philadelphia neighborhoods. This map is accessible via their website.
None	All decisions about mural subject matter and removal are made by one person. The City is not contacted for decision-making.	Community is involved with the mural-making process at times.	There are no records kept about the murals except for updates on the MMC Facebook account.	None

Figure 2. Comparison matrix of the three case study programs, considering issues of organization, size, and collection.
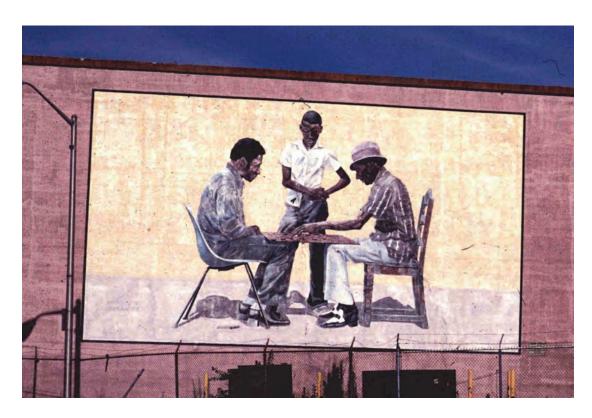
Figure 3. "Men Playing Checkers" by James Voshell, 1975. This mural in Baltimore, MD, has since been demolished. Image by BOPA, accessed from AirTable on May 3, 2019.

Figure 4. Mural by Michelle Santos, 2011, in the Druid Heights neighborhood of Baltimore, MD. Image by BOPA, accessed from AirTable on May 3, 2019.

Figure 5. "Tribute to Harriet Tubman" by Sam Donovan. Produced for Mural Arts Philadelphia. Mural located in the Fairhill neighborhood of Philadelphia. Photo by author, July, 2015.

Figure 6. "The Battle is Joined" monument by Karyn Olivier in Vernon Park in the Germantown neighborhood of Philadelphia. Part of the 2017 Monument Lab co-hosted by Mural Arts Philadelphia. Image by *StreetsDept*.

Figure 7. "Immigrant Mothers" by Heidi Schork and the Mayor's Mural Crew, 2018, in East Boston. Image by Phaedra Scott for *WBUR.*

Figure 8. "Allston Residents" by the Mayor's Mural Crew, 2007. Image from *Boston Murals* by Christine Verret (2017).

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