Throughout human history art, architecture, and urban design have collaborated to emphasize and glorify the dominant power in both dictatorial and democratic regimes. For example, Egyptian pharaohs, Roman Caesars and others commissioned representations of themselves to document military victories. Berlin during the Nazism or Rome under Fascism are examples of this, as well. On the other hand, Paris, France (from George-Eugene Haussman to Françoise Mitterand) and Washington D.C. (from Pierre Charles L’Enfant to Maya Lin) offer good examples of cities modeled to celebrate democracy. This is art and architecture in support of a political agenda.

From an aesthetic point of view, cities of Renaissance Europe have been the peak of the virtuous connections between public art, urban design, and landscape. Public spaces, like streets and squares, were composed in such a way that all the urban elements: building inscriptions and facades, statues, pavement for streets and walkways, and the organization of space sequences and street patterns were inextricably linked to support the final result. In recent years there is an increasing number of examples of buildings and infrastructures that challenge the distinction between architecture, engineering and art. Designers such as Frank Gehry, Zada Hadid, Peter Eisenman, Santiago Calatrava, to name the best known, created buildings and bridges as sculptural expressions. In some circumstances artists and designers have co-designed buildings and places (Fernie, 2006). A well-know example is Bird’s Nest Stadium for the 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing, China, which is a result of collaboration between the Chinese artist Ai Weiwei and the Swiss architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre De Meuron.

Art, and artists, has often created works in public space as in landscape and open spaces. This works have started from different points: the study of the relationship between art and landscape, the increased awareness of the role of
communication in public spaces, the interpretation of a place by art and artists, the role of art installations as gatherer of interests and curiosities that have positive consequences on the places where they are located. These art activities have been labeled in various ways throughout the 20th century: Land Art, Minimal Art, Earth Art, Environmental Art, Art in Nature, Public Art, but like the works that they embrace, the terms are variable and complex, they are all “imperfect hyponym[s] for a slippery and widely interconnected brand of conceptual kinship.” (Kastner, Wallis, 1998, p.12).

For this presentation, Danilo Palazzo, Director of the School of Planning at U.C., will present some examples of productive and effective collaboration between artists and urban designers in placemaking and an interpretation of such collaborations from an urban designer point of view.

Kate Bonansinga will address five works of monumental public sculpture commissioned for the three of the largest urban environments in the U.S.: Maya Lin’s Vietnam Veterans Memorial (1982, Washington, D.C.), Richard Serra’s Tilted Arch (1981, New York), Alexander Calder’s Flamingo (1974, Chicago), Anish Kapoor’s Cloud Gate (2006, Chicago) and Mark di Suvero’s Joie de Vivre (1998, New York). For the purpose of this presentation, public sculpture is defined as art that exists outdoors or in places where one might experience it unexpectedly, rather than in a museum or gallery, where the audience enters anticipates seeing art. These five together span the spectrum of art that represents memory and acknowledgement, controversy and resistance, joy and celebration, municipal perseverance and spirit, and social protest. Each is an icon of something greater than itself, a signpost of a time and place and a reflection of the interests, tastes and aspirations of its community. But it also endures throughout the decades. All are abstract and challenge viewers to interpret them in a manner that neither representational art nor verbal narratives do. If we adopt an expansive definition of “sign in the environment,” public art is an important example, one where the impression is immediate but the message can be obscure.
Maya Lin was student of architecture at Yale University when she submitted her proposal to design the Vietnam Veteran’s Memorial for Constitution Gardens near the Lincoln Memorial, a site that had been assigned in 1980 by then-president Jimmy Carter. A committee of professional peers recommended her proposal above all others, the design and plans received Federal approval in March 1982 and by November 1982 the memorial was dedicated as both a National Memorial and listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The Vietnam Veterans’ Memorial Fund, Inc., a non-profit charitable organization founded by Vietnam veteran Jan Scruggs, launched a national campaign for funds to finance the memorial. The 58,195 names of soldiers who were either MIA or KIA were etched in the stone using photo emulsion and sandblasting processes: the simple columns of text repeat over and over and emphasize the vast number of lost lives. The Memorial hosts around 3 million visitors a year and in 2007 was ranked on the “List of America’s Favorite Architecture” by the American Institute of Architects. Because of its astute and sensitive use of text and its monumental scale, we can think of it as one of the best-known signs in the U.S and its message, that war is tragic, as one of our most important. Simultaneously meaningful, popular, compelling and beautiful, it has become one of our nation’s symbols, and a gathering place for reflection about the sacrifices of armed conflict.

One of the interesting things to note about the Vietnam Veteran’s Memorial is that although it is in our nation’s capital and is a remembrance of a national endeavor, it was not federally funded. In contrast, in 1981, just a year prior to its christening, artist Richard Serra installed his sculpture Tilted Arc, in Federal Plaza in New York City. In contrast to the Vietnam Veteran’s Memorial, Tilted Arc was federally funded. It had been commissioned by the Arts-in-Architecture program of the U.S. General Services Administration, which earmarks 0.5 percent of a federal building's cost for artwork. Tilted Arc is a curving wall of raw steel that carved the space of the Federal Plaza in half. According to Serra, “The viewer becomes aware of himself and of his movement through the plaza. As he moves, the sculpture changes. Contraction and
expansion of the sculpture result from the viewer’s movement. Step by step the perception not only of the sculpture but of the entire environment changes.”

Those working in surrounding buildings had to circumvent its enormous bulk as they go through the plaza. Whereas Lin’s work became a destination and a gathering place, *Tilted Arc* became a barrier and an annoying inconvenience to those who traversed the Federal Plaza daily.

Almost immediately *Tilted Arc* generated conflict. Judge Edward Re began a letter-writing campaign to have the $175,000 work removed. Four years later, William Diamond, regional administrator for the GSA, decided to hold a public hearing to determine whether *Tilted Arc* should be relocated. Estimates for the cost of dismantling the work were $35,000, with an additional $50,000 estimated to erect it in another location. Richard Serra testified that the sculpture is site-specific, and that to remove it from its site is to destroy it. If the sculpture is relocated, he contended, he would remove his name from it.

(http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/cultureshock/flashpoints/visualarts/tiltedarc_a.html)

The public hearing was held in March 1985. During the hearing, 122 people testify in favor of retaining the sculpture, and 58 testify in favor of removing it. The art establishment -- artists, museum curators, and art critics -- testify that *Tilted Arc* is a great work of art. Those against the sculpture, for the most part people who work at Federal Plaza, say that the sculpture interferes with public use of the plaza. They also accuse it of attracting graffiti, rats, and terrorists who might use it as a blasting wall for bombs. The jury of five, chaired by William Diamond, vote 4-1 in favor of removing the sculpture. Serra’s career continues to flourish, despite the controversy. "I don't think it is the function of art to be pleasing," he comments at the time. "Art is not democratic. It is not for the people."

(http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/cultureshock/flashpoints/visualarts/tiltedarc_a.html)

Because of this statement and attitude, *Tilted Arc* became a symbol, or a sign, of artistic arrogance. Public artists have been trying to recover ever since. Serra’s appeal of the ruling fails. On March 15, 1989, during the night, federal workers cut *Tilted Arc* into three pieces, and removed it from Federal Plaza.
This unfortunate controversy had fortunate results: the GSA Art in Architecture Program began to invite members of the community who live with the art work but who are not art professionals to participate in the art selection process. For example, the border patrol participate in deciding on art commissioned for Border Patrol stations. Federal judges are involved in the decision, and may even ultimately decide, about the art and artists for a federal courthouse. The public is the client: it is perfectly appropriate that its representatives should participate in the process of the selection of the art.

In contrast, the hugely popular Flamingo by Alexander Calder resides in another Federal Plaza, this time in Chicago. Its compilation of bright red arcs contrast pleasingly with the neutral colors and right angles of the surrounding buildings, particularly the International Style Federal Building by Mies van der Rohe. Calder had been creating public art since WWII, so he was an experienced public artist by the time he unveiled the model for Flamingo on April 23, 1973 at the Art Institute of Chicago; the sculpture was presented to the public for the first time on October 25, 1974, at the same time that Calder's Universe mobile was unveiled at what was then known as the Sears Tower (now the Willis Tower). The day was proclaimed "Alexander Calder Day" and featured a joyful parade. Flamingo was the first work of art commissioned by the General Services Administration under the federal percent for art program. It was off to a good start. Richard Serra's piece disrupted that trajectory a few years later.

Despite the large size of Flamingo, its design is such that viewers can walk underneath and around it, thus enabling one to perceive it in human scale. The shape of Flamingo alludes to the natural and animal realm, which is a stark contrast to more literal interpretations in sculpture from previous decades. It has become one of Chicago's symbols of civic pride, a destination and a meeting place.

Down the road is Millennium Park that covers 24.5 acres within the Loop community area. Its planning began in 1997 and its public opening was in 2004. It far exceeded its originally proposed budget of $150 million. The final cost of $475 million was borne by Chicago taxpayers and private donors. The city paid
$270 million; private donors paid the rest, and assumed roughly half of the financial responsibility for the cost overruns. *Cloud Gate*, a public sculpture by Indian-born British artist Anish Kapoor, is the centerpiece of the AT&T Plaza in Millennium Park, and is part of this history of cost overruns. In 1999, Millennium Park officials and a group of art collectors, curators and architects reviewed the artistic works of 30 different artists and asked two for proposals. Various experts were consulted, some of whom believed the design could not be implemented. Eventually, a feasible method was found, but the sculpture's construction fell behind schedule. The British engineering firm Atelier One and freelance engineer Chris Hornzee-Jones provided the sculpture's structural design, and Performance Structures, Inc. (PSI) in Oakland, CA was chosen to fabricate it because of their ability to produce nearly invisible welds.

While the sculpture was being constructed, public and media outlets nicknamed it "The Bean" because of its leguminous shape, a name that Kapoor described as "completely stupid". Months later, Kapoor officially named the piece "Cloud Gate". Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley declared the day of the sculpture's dedication, May 15, 2006, to be "Cloud Gate Day". Kapoor attended the celebration, while local jazz trumpeter and bandleader Orbert Davis and the Chicago Jazz Philharmonic played "Fanfare for Cloud Gate", which Davis composed, harkening back to the Calder Day and its parade in 1974.

Critical reviews describe the sculpture as a passage between realms. Three-quarters of the sculpture's external surface reflects the sky and the name refers to it acting as a type of gate that helps bridge the space between the sky and the viewer. It blurs the boundary between the limit and the limitless. It also evokes immateriality and the spiritual and explores the theme of ambiguity. Kapoor creates a tension between masculine and feminine within his art by having concave points of focus that invite the entry of visitors and multiplies their images when they are positioned correctly. The sculpture also warps viewers' perception of time by changing the speed of movements such as the passing of clouds. But most still call it “The Bean,” an act of the public taking ownership
over a beloved icon. It is in great part responsible for the success of Millennium Park as a public space, serving thousands of visitors each day.

Mark di Suvero’s *Joie de Vivre* was moved in 2005 to its current location in Zuccotti Park in Lower Manhattan, which was developed for 9 million dollars by a private developer. *Joie de Vivre* was a gift to the city of New York from Agnes Gund, president of the board of the Museum of Modern Art and her husband Daniel Schapiro. Prior to that time it had been exhibited in Paris, Storm King Art Center in Mountainville, New York, and in Tribeca at the rotary entrance to the Holland tunnel. Di Suvero is a well-respected American sculptor, born in Singapore in 1933, who has earned many awards and is included in many prestigious museum collections. He is best known for his large-scale steel sculpture.

*Joie de Vivre* may remind you of Calder’s *Flamingo* in its scale, color, urban placement and abstract form. But audience reception and interpretation of the two sculptures diverge, as does the source of their importance as a work of public art. Calder’s Flamingo has become a source of identity and pride for the city sculpture; whereas di Suvero’s *Joie de Vivre* is best known as the unacknowledged 70 ft. high sign of the gathering place for Occupy Wall Street in 2011. As many as 2,000 people attended the twice-daily general assemblies. But few looked upward: the entire protest went down under the 20-ton *Joie de Vivre*. In fact, *The Occupied Wall Street Journal* called *Joie de Vivre* “The Weird Red Thing.”

Di Suvero, while also one of the great living artists in the U.S. artists, is also outspoken about his liberal politics, is a member of the city’s crane operators’ union, and went into exile to protest the Vietnam War. In this context, *Joie de Vivre*’s color is not only red, but proletarian red. Zuccotti Park is a small public space. Di Suvero’s piece dominates it and towered over the impassioned collective action that took place beneath it in 2011. Yet the propagators of that action acknowledged neither the sculpture’s grandeur, nor its potential to cry out
for social change. *Joie de Vivre’s* simultaneous predominance and invisibility at Occupy Wall Street carried a biting irony. The fact that its magnificent presence was unacknowledged Occupy Wall Street protesters, and the fact that it is located near Wall Street, carries darker meaning: has high capitalism absorbed it in spite of its huge scale, bright color and left-leaning politics of its maker? (http://artincommon.net/mark-di-suvero-joie-de-vivre-1998)

This short presentation has reviewed a few highlights of public sculpture as memorial, imposition, celebration, icon and symbol of resistance. Nearly always it is a sign of its own time and, ideally, a signal of future potential. Like any well-considered addition to an urban environment, it energizes neighborhoods, defines public space, integrates with and complements architecture and landscape, and encourages the collective engagement of its citizenry.

These four together span the spectrum of art that represents joy and celebration, controversy, a symbol of a municipality and its perseverance and spirit, and social protest. Each became an icon of something greater than itself, a signpost of a time and place and a reflection of the interests, tastes and aspirations of its community. But it also endures throughout the decades.

In conclusion, Palazzo and Bonansinga will build upon their individual presentations to address how public art can shape and define a neighborhood, while also contributing to the national and international conversation about contemporary art. In Summer 2012 this topic became the cornerstone of the course “Creativity and Change: Building and Creating Sustainable Neighborhoods through Art,” a studio-based course that they team-taught for artists and urban planners. The presenters will share some of that emerged during the course and will also discuss how the input of community stakeholders was a paramount concern to the students and the community plans that they developed.
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http://www.law.harvard.edu/faculty/martin/art_law/tilted_arc.htm