

**XLVII International Colloquium on Art History**  
**Instituto de Investigaciones Estéticas, UNAM**  
**PUBLIC SPACES: FORMS, MEDIA, USES AND RE-USES**  
**October 10 to 13, 2023 (face-to-face)**  
**Oaxaca de Juárez, Oaxaca, México**

The concept of public space has been attaining more and more relevance in art history, from the time when it only referred to the physical features of the street and the square until today when it reaches the analysis of the press, magazines, cinema, television, and digital media, all understood as areas for the diffusion and confrontation of ideas. In this colloquium we aim to rethink the meanings of places of transit, temporary permanence, and confluence of needs and cultural forms linked to inhabiting.

From a diachronic vision, the appearance of public space is inherent to the transition from villages to cities provoked, to a large extent, by the emergence of state organizations that required specific urban layouts to develop rituals and exercise power. Consequently, the square and the roads leading to the temple or palace are the product of thought, politics, and technology. It is possible to undertake a history of the city from its public spaces and electronic resources.

Public life is evoked and expressed in a variety of media: in carved stone, as in Antiquity, on canvas and walls, in the sensitive film of photography, in cinematographic sequences belonging to the 20th century and in the 21st-century digital universe. From the present, the approach to the areas of encounter and/or exclusion in yesterday becomes possible thanks to experience, chronicles, and images. There is a multiplicity of sources that recreate the permanent and the ephemeral inherent to life on the street or in the square. On the other hand, the limits of what is private do not remain fixed, they advance or retract, constituting another aspect on which it is possible to reflect. The arts rework the uses of public spaces: to walk, participate in a procession, demonstrate, occupy, abandon, intervene, evoke, or destroy.

The street has been populating with characters, own and foreign to the neighborhood; of messages and physical elements: trees, plants, plaques, lighting devices, bridges, advertising, and machines. Some disappear, others remain, and others are given new meaning

through artistic gestures to be assimilated to the new ways of life and social searches. While the image of the public space changes and is modified, it becomes necessary to stop to identify and explain these processes.

**Five tables are proposed:**

**1. Definitions:** this table will discuss how the concept of public space has been built, at different times and under contrasting academic perspectives; highlighting the relationship with the history of the city and the media; understanding it as a represented space, and as a space of representation and action.

**2. The public sphere, processes of creation and redefinition:** this set of actions will be reviewed at this table in different temporalities and media; highlighting the ideological searches, the presence of specialists through their projects and works, the modification and appropriation of built environments from sensory experience and by social movements.

**3. The inhabitants, actions, and representations:** The transit through the avenue or the alley, the permanence in the square or in the green area, reveal the presence of regular or sporadic visitors that are related in multiple ways with the public spaces. Artists/agents record this experience, recreating it, modifying it, and fixing it in different media that return or place us in a non-existent, utopian, dystopian or imaginary city-form-set of images.

**4. Monuments/anti-monuments:** This table will focus on the way in which the landmark and the ritual are created and recreated, in the religious, the social and the political. The processes of boom, abandonment, destruction, and redefinition of the commemorative structures will be identified, as well as the critical interventions of conflicting memories. In addition, the meanings of the constituent materials and the repertoire of symbols will be discussed.

**5. The destruction of public space:** This roundtable aims to identify the practices of description, recording and recreation of sudden alterations in public spaces due to natural (earthquakes) or political (wars or social movements) phenomena. The reflection will also

include public infrastructure works that produced radical alterations in the natural and historical areas.

### **Guidelines**

**1.** Proposals must be unpublished, submitted in Spanish or English, must have a tentative title and also include a summary, not exceeding 500 words, of the presentation to be carried out. Only one proposal per person or per group—in the case of collective proposals—will be received. You must explicitly indicate which of the subject(s) suggested above you will be addressing. Please attach a résumé of not more than 150 words, highlighting your main academic works, as well as your institutional affiliation.

**2.** The deadline for receiving proposals will be **May 4, 2023**, and can be registered as of February 23, 2023, at **[www.esteticas.unam.mx](http://www.esteticas.unam.mx)**. The Scientific Committee composed of specialists from IIE-UNAM and other institutions will examine the proposals and select them based on quality criteria and thematic relevance.

**3.** The decision of the Committee will be announced on **June 6, 2023**, and will be final. The selected speakers will not pay registration fee.

**4.** Once the papers are accepted, the text's requirements are: 2,500 words or 10 double-spaced pages to be read in a maximum of 20 minutes.

**5.** The accepted speakers agree to present their paper on the day and time assigned during the XLVII International Art History Colloquium to be held in person in the City of Oaxaca from October 10 to 13, 2023.

**6.** The Instituto de Investigaciones Estéticas will cover the lodging expenses in a double room for the selected speakers and will have a bus to travel to the host city from Mexico City.

7. Speakers must complete a form regarding the copyrights of the paper and its images, as well as on the webcast on the date of their intervention.

8. The paper to be presented should be delivered before **September 11, 2023**, in order for the commentators to prepare their interventions.

9. Any matter not foreseen in this call will be solved by the Scientific Committee with the support of the Directorate of the Institute.

Ciudad Universitaria, Mexico City, February 23, 2022.

## Scientific Committee

*Instituto de Investigaciones Estéticas, UNAM*

Dr. Hugo Arciniega Ávila

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