The Politics of Walking Art

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What is walking art?

- Walking as an artistic practice or medium
- Began in the 1960s
- Roots in the idea of walking as “an act of resistance”
What is the political potential of walking art?
By framing the city as art or performance, these walks temporarily occupy the participant with an amplified attention to, and critical distance from, their everyday environments. They prompt the participant into interpreting the city with a similar level of critical attention as she might have towards theatre or art.
Key Scholars

My work is not intended to be political -- rather, it comes out of the certainty that the political is inevitable.
What is the political potential of walking art?

Walking art can generate new political consciousness when an artistic frame is maintained in a given walking art event that allows participants in the event to experience a new way of critically examining their surroundings.
Political Walking Art =
Artistic experience $\rightarrow$ Critical perspective

What strategies do artists use to achieve this?
What techniques do artists use to create political walking art?

1) The unconventional guidance, conducted by artists, through familiar spaces to expand participants’ understandings of the places they inhabit;

2) The blending of fiction and reality, or history and the present, to challenge participants’ perceptions of themselves and their surroundings;

3) The use of technology to allow more people to conduct and experience artistic interventions on the everyday.
1) Unconventional Guidance Through Familiar Spaces

Todd Shalom

Carmen Papalia
2) Blending Fiction and Reality

One Step At A Time Like This

Janet Cardiff
3) Use of Technology

Carrie Schneider
Thank You!

Books and Articles Cited


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