

Waalpaintings

A case study of creative placemaking in the city centre of Nijmegen



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Image front page: Princess Theophanu, depicted in the Waalpainting 'Princess from the East' on the side of the Holland Casino building in Nijmegen. Own photo.

Summary

The following thesis aims to research how creative placemaking can contribute to sense of place. This is done through a case study in the city of Nijmegen. The Waalpaintings project, which makes murals that depict the history of this city, is the central case that is researched. By looking at how history-depicting murals are a creative placemaking practice, and combining this with the literature on sense of place, an answer can be found to the following question:

How does creative placemaking in the form of history-depicting murals contribute to sense of place in the city of Nijmegen?

The literature review provides the definitions for the central concepts in this research. First, the distinction between space and place is made. By comparing thinkers Lefebvre and De Certeau, we can see the distinctions between space and place. Space is seen in this thesis as the more static, unchanging world around us, which can turn into a place when we attach meaning to it. Place then can be defined as the lived in, meaningful and affective space (Duff, 2010).

After this, we can look at the concept of 'sense of place'. This term is used to describe aspects of the relationship between humans and their surroundings (Covery, Corsane & Davis, 2012). This can either be by describing what defines the character of a specific place, or by looking at the way in which people attribute meaning to it. Sense of place has been made measurable by using the variables of Jorgensen and Stedman (2001), who divide sense of place into three variables. These are having place identity, place attachment and place dependence. These three factors constitute sense of place and are further explored through the lens of placemaking.

Placemaking aims to create a place that people want to be in. This term has been around since the second half of the 20th century and is used to describe the process of creating a place that is tied to the community around it. In recent years, this has evolved into the concept of 'creative placemaking', which aims to do this through art and creativity. The term creative placemaking was coined by Markusen and Gadwa (2010) in an attempt to describe the power of arts and culture in improving and rejuvenating places.

Creative placemaking is then connected with the making of murals and history-depicting murals specifically. By showing the history of a city in public art, the collective cultural history of a place can take a more prominent place (Upalevski, 2017). In the Waalpaintings project this is done by depicting 15 events from the historical canon of Nijmegen, near the places where this event took place. Murals such as these not only have a purpose in showing history to the spectators, but they are also able to brighten up a city, and generate social, economic and environmental value (Vaughan et al., 2021).

The literature review is combined with interviews, observations of the murals in Nijmegen, and online research of the project. This is done in a phenomenological approach, where depth is provided about a specific subject, together with room for the perspective of the participants in the study.

The interviews were held in May and June 2022 with two of the artists while creating their mural, and with one of the two initiators of the project. This led to more knowledge on the subject and provided the actual experiences of these interviewees. These interviews, combined with the online research resulted in a clear overview of the origins and ongoing process of the project.

The Waalpaintings project started in January 2020, when initiators Erika Manders and Dennis Jussen were thinking of a way to show the knowledge of the history department at Radboud University to a broader audience. By chance, Erika Manders was inspired by the Muurformules project in Utrecht, which shows murals of scientists and their discoveries done in Utrecht. This then led to them choosing this artform for their project. They chose fifteen historical timeframes from the canon of Nijmegen, and began looking for local artists, locations, and the funding to create murals with this. So far, eight of those are finished, with seven more expected in the next few years.

These murals will in the future be connected with a walking trail, and signs are already in place that provide information about the visible history, the project, and a link to the website with even more information. This means that people can appreciate the artwork on various levels. They can see the mural as just that, and appreciate the art. Next, they can read the sign attached, and learn more about the history of the city, and the reason this was depicted. If this proves interesting, they can even look up more information online, and potentially decide to visit the rest of the Waalpaintings as well.

Asides from the murals showing the history of the city, they have an effect as murals as well. Sander Dolstra, who was one of the interviewed artists, mentioned how his mural in the Hendrikhof managed to brighten up the alley. Previously visible tags have disappeared, and the alley becomes a place to look at, instead of a space to pass through. This means people can have a new association with a certain place, which is key in establishing a sense of place in Nijmegen through this project.

In the conclusion, the case of the Waalpaintings project is aligned with the framework that was found through the literature study. The aim here is to show the effects of showing history in this way, then proving this to be a practice of creative placemaking, and finally linking this to creating a sense of place in Nijmegen.

The first factor is describing the effects of the history-depicting murals. The showing of history can be said to have an effect on the spectator by providing a shared narrative of the city. This can then reflect the local identity of a city outwards and increase social cohesion and quality of life for inhabitants inwards (McCarthy, 2016). The murals also have value as art, where they brighten up certain spaces and generally create a more pleasant space to be.

This creation of a more pleasant space is central to the practice of creative placemaking. This is done in the Waalpaintings project. Creative placemaking aims to support communities in turning their spaces into places they wish to be in. The initiators of the project realize these murals with local artists, fundraising from local organisations and people, and with local history in mind. This means they aim to create places that are fitting to this local community, and to which people can build an attachment.

The building of attachment to a previously unimaginative space is key in this project. This can be seen with the Jorgensen and Stedman variables on what constitutes sense of place. These are place attachment, place identity and place dependence. While the latter is least affected by the Waalpaintings project, it can still be said to overall contribute to sense of place in Nijmegen. The murals have the ability to increasing the affective or emotional response we have in a place, and by learning more about the history of the city, we can create an attachment and sense of place in this city.

This thesis shows how the creative placemaking practice of the Waalpaintings project with its' history-depicting murals, contributes to a sense of place in Nijmegen. This can now be used as a starting point for further research into this topic, or as a means for policy makers and the initiators of this project and similar others to see what the effects of a project such as this can be.

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1. Introduction

1.1 The project & the problem

The city of Nijmegen is the oldest in the Netherlands and has a rich history. When you walk around the centre this is visible in things such as the Valkhof park, with its ruins and old chapel, or even when you take a look at the street names. The Keizer Karel (or Charles the Great) roundabout for example is named after one of the greatest emperors in the middle-ages, who visited Nijmegen several times during his rule (Huis van de Nijmeegse Geschiedenis, n.d.) As of 2020, this history is being shown in a new way, in murals.

The Waalpaintings project started in January 2020 and was founded by historians Erika Manders and Dennis Jussen, who met each other through work connected to the Radboud Institute for Culture and History (RICH). Both wished that the historical knowledge at Radboud University would reach a larger audience. After seeing similar mural projects in Utrecht and Leiden, they decided that murals would be the right medium for this project as well (interview Erika Manders, 09/06/22). In total, the project will encompass fifteen murals, which will show chosen elements from the historical canon of Nijmegen. Eight of those are already in place and can be seen in various locations in the city centre. There is a QR code attached that will tell you more about the project and the history depicted when scanned, and there are plans for a walking route that will stop by all fifteen murals when finished (Waalpaintings, n.d.-i).

These new murals are expected to have multiple different effects on the city. They do not only show the history of Nijmegen to people that might not know about it but have an effect as artwork too. Murals can be said to make a place nicer to be in and create new perspectives (He & Gyergyak, 2021). They can influence the community and brighten up a city. In this thesis, the focus will be on how the Waalpaintings project can be seen as a creative placemaking project in the city of Nijmegen, with attention to how this might affect the sense of place for the city and its inhabitants.

Creative placemaking is a relatively new term but can be seen as the more arts and culture focussed branch of placemaking (Zitcer, 2020.). The concept of placemaking itself has grown in several ways since the 1960s and can very roughly be defined as creating (public) places that are good and pleasant for people to stay in. A lot of different things contribute to how a place is experienced. This ranges from the people that are in it and the activities that are taking place, to the access to the space and the actual physical place itself (Project for Public Spaces, 2007). Art and murals specifically can be seen as influencing all of these aspects. It changes the people that are in the space, as they might have come there just to see the art. It also changes what they do, if they stop and look, instead of just quickly passing a boring wall. When a walking tour is organised to pass by the art, it even changes how and why people access a space. Finally, it changes the space itself, and might make it more interesting and more colourful than before.

1.2 Research Objective & Questions

There is a lot to gain when we decide to include more art in our cities, and the Waalpaintings project can most likely be found to have a beneficial influence on Nijmegen. This project can have a positive influence by showing the history of Nijmegen. Learning more about the history of the city can inform its citizens and create a stronger shared narrative and sense of place.

Secondly, there will be a walking trail created past the fifteen finished murals. This can lead to exploring places that first had fewer visitors and have people explore their city more.

Urban places can be seen in a new way, and even small side-alleys can become part of the urban place, instead of being just empty spaces.

Lastly, the project has been created by people connected to the city of Nijmegen through the university and with the donations from local businesses and people. This can be a type of community engagement. The exact influence on the city of Nijmegen has not been researched yet, so it can be interesting to see how this project will turn out. It can lead to more knowledge about similar projects and might motivate others to also create something that is beneficial to their city in a similar way. From an academic perspective, there is still room for more knowledge about how murals specifically showing the history of a city can be part of creative placemaking.

The main goal of this research is to answer the following question:

How does creative placemaking in the form of history-depicting murals contribute to sense of place in the city of Nijmegen?

To do so, further questions are asked to gain knowledge about the concepts that are central to the research. These are the connections between murals and showing history, murals and creative placemaking, and creative placemaking and a sense of place. This results in the following sub-questions:

How does creative placemaking contribute to creating a sense of place?

In what way can murals tell the history of a place?

How can murals be seen as a practice of creative placemaking?

To answer these questions, information is needed about how exactly a sense of place is created. This will be researched in a literature study. A similar approach will be taken to understanding murals showing history as a part of creative placemaking. Finally, this knowledge will be combined and applied to the city of Nijmegen, where the case-study of the Waalpaintings project will be analysed. Through seeing the information gathered from previous research and applying it to a local case, more insight is gathered about a sense of place in the city of Nijmegen and how this project contributes to it. This knowledge can then be used at a local level to improve action taken to create a sense of place in Nijmegen by local initiatives and government. At an academic level, more is learned about the applicability of the concepts of sense of place and creative placemaking at a smaller scale, and the specifics of using murals that show history to do so.

1.3. Relevance

1.3.1 Societal Relevance

Placemaking is a process with a lot of different actors involved. This ranges from the initiators of the project to local government and to the people who live in the area. This is also the case with the Waalpaintings murals. There are not just the initiators and artists of the project, but also the municipality of Nijmegen, both the private and public owners of the buildings that will be painted on, and the people who pass by the murals who are involved. It is interesting to produce more knowledge on the project to see how these actors all interact, and what potential benefits are. It

can be an example for citizens or municipalities of other cities who might look to do something similar.

Secondly, there is a societal benefit to researching sense of place in a specific city and being able to apply this knowledge. By researching how a project can contribute to a sense of place, there might be the additional benefit of gaining knowledge about how the place is already experienced. Because creative placemaking and creating a sense of place are both centred around how a city or area can improve, the goal will be to see how the people in it can increase their wellbeing. This research will therefore hopefully be able to show how people in Nijmegen can live or visit a city that is better than it was before the project. The goal of the project is to inform the audience of the murals about the history of the city and brighten up certain areas, which is expected to have a positive influence on Nijmegen and its' people.

Thirdly, Nijmegen as a city specifically focuses their marketing on the combination of the old city centre, with more new and modern initiatives and activities as well. This is reflected in their slogan 'old city, young vibe' (Into Nijmegen, n.d.). The Waalpaintings project can very well contribute to this with their exact project. By showing the history of Nijmegen in a modern, colourful and artistic way in their murals, they can contribute to the narrative that has already been established in the place branding of Nijmegen.

1.3.2 Scientific Relevance

While the scientific community has been familiar with the term 'placemaking' since the 1970s, 'creative placemaking' is relatively new. This has only been around for about a decade and is slowly becoming more common in policies, mainly in the United States (Zitcer, 2020). This means that there is still a lot of research to be done on the subject. Questions to be answered focus both on what creative placemaking actually is (and how it is distinct from 'regular' placemaking) and on the implementation of this concept in communities. This research can give a face to a creative placemaking project in the Netherlands, as application to the situation here is bound to be different from that in other places.

This is especially due to the inherently spatial nature of creative placemaking. As these projects vary wildly, the definition of creative placemaking varies with it. Every city or community takes a different approach and might highlight various aspects of this concept that apply to their specific case. Rembeza (2016) has done research on murals as a type of creative placemaking in the city of Philadelphia and writes about Miwon Kwon's three types of art: art in a public space, art as public space and art in the public interest.

The first type focusses on art that does not necessarily have a connection with the space around it, and the third type on how art can be used in for example youth programs or government programs. The second type, art as a public space, is at the core of creative placemaking in the case of the Waalpaintings project. This art is placed in a specific community and is very site-specific. Additionally, these murals have a power in creating a way of seeing the city that was not there before, for example by making a guided tour past all the artworks, or by learning about the history of the city through art. This art as specifically tied to a geographic location means that there is always more research to be done on this subject.

Lastly, this research is scientifically relevant because it specifically at history-depicting murals, and the potential tie to creative placemaking. This is something that has not been researched often, and not in the Netherlands. The specifics of the Waalpaintings project can show

new ways of improving places. The best way to improve a place or city never is a single answer and remains up for debate. This is inherent to people and communities changing, and each generation has different preferences and contexts to the one before it. The concept of placemaking is therefore one that is in continuous need of exploration as needs change.

1.4 Reading Guide

The thesis will first provide the theoretical background of the main concepts used. These are sense of place, placemaking and showing history through murals. The academic debate surrounding these topics will be discussed, and the definitions used in this thesis are explained and clarified. This is done in chapter two, theory. This chapter starts out with the literature review, before providing the conceptual model and operationalisation of the key concepts. Chapter three then discusses the methodology used to answer the research questions stated in the introduction. This chapter also describes how the research was carried out and how the interviews for the case study were conducted. The results of the case study are then provided in chapter four, research and analysis. This is separated into two parts, where first all information about the organisation of the Waalpaintingsproject is given, before looking at the information that the interviews provided on sense of place, placemaking and history-depicting murals. In chapter five, these results are then contrasted with the theoretical framework developed in chapter two. This provides the conclusion, where the research questions are answered. Finally, in chapter six, the research done in this thesis is discussed. The main limitations are reflected upon and recommendations for future research are made.

2. Theory

2.1 Literature Review

There are several concepts to elaborate on to be able to analyse the effect of the Waalpaintings project on sense of place in the city of Nijmegen. First, we need to know about what a sense of place is, and how this can be created. It is important for this research to delineate the concepts of space and place and why they are different. This can then be used to gain an understanding of creative placemaking. To explore this concept, a historic background of placemaking will first be laid out, before looking at what creative placemaking is. The third concept in the literature review is that of murals, specifically as a creative placemaking practice. First, the literature about murals is explored, before looking at history-depicting murals and finally seeing how this can be seen as a creative placemaking practice.

2.1.1 What is sense of place?

2.1.1.1 *Space and Place*

The distinction between space and place is one that is central in the field of human geography. Space can be seen as the static, unchanging world of physics around us, that does not inherently have meaning. Creating a place is what happens when we socially attribute meaning to a certain space (Koops & Galič, 2017). Placemaking, or the social act of turning a space into a lively place, is therefore a very central human action. An example can be of buying a house and turning it into a home. While a new home at first might not yet feel 'ours', when we start to place our own things in it and create memories there, it slowly becomes a home. There might be a feeling of safety and stability that comes with the place and we start to believe that there truly is no place like home.

Space and place are very much interrelated. The space in a certain area determines the limits of what can be done to create a place. A small room will never be a stage for big concerts for example. When we want to create places in the process of placemaking, we need to be aware of the limits that the space provides. From here, we can start to attribute meaning and add layers to create a place we want to be in.

Michel de Certeau has been an important thinker in this field and related place and space in his work 'The Practice of Everyday Life' (1984). He described the act of walking through a city and the way in which we attribute meaning to the spaces in our environment (Duff, 2010). We make sense of what is around us in our own narratives of places, which is different for everyone. A space can therefore become a place to us when we do or make something in this space. De Certeau tells us that a place is a 'practiced space', where we remember certain places, but not others (Vermeulen, 2015). Duff (2010) describes how the work of Edward Casey has elaborated on this. Casey not only notes the practical (doing and making) process in creating a place, but an affective process as well. Through a combination of habit, affect and meaning, we have different experience in places. The difference between space and place is therefore not only seen in how we act, or what we do, but also in how a place can make us feel and the meaning we attribute to it (Duff, 2010).

In the introduction of 'The Practice of Everyday Life', De Certeau mentions the work of Henri Lefebvre as a 'fundamental source' for his exploration (Ertürk, 2022). Both have developed their work in 20th century France, and are concerned with how we experience everyday life. Lefebvre however has a different distinction of spatial attributes. He distinguishes conceived space, perceived space and lived space. This can be seen as the Lefebvrian 'trilectic' and helps to understand space as being a continuous product and producer of our social reality (Lennon &

Moore, 2019). The conceived space is that of the planning reality, where we create rational and 'official' conceptions of space. This is the space in which for example a government or scientist creates their plans, in abstract maps and documents representing a space. The term conceived space therefore refers to the conception of space that is linked with knowledge about this space. Perceived space is the space that we can detect with our senses. It is our way of interacting with the space around us by hearing, seeing, smelling, touching, and tasting it. When we combine this with the conceived space, we see the space of our everyday experience, or the lived space. This is the space where we have social interactions and go about our lives (Lennon & Moore, 2019).

If we were to apply this framework to the same walk through a city that de Certeau made, we could create a simplified illustration of Lefebvre's model. The conceived space here could be the park that a planner at the municipality designed, and the map that we see at the entrance. The perceived space is that of us walking around, hearing the people around us and smelling the flowers. When we discuss our surroundings with the person we are walking with, and reflect on what flowers we see, or what the people around us are saying, this can be seen as the lived space.

Lefebvre and de Certeau have a different conception of how place finally links to space. De Certeau sees place as the activated and practiced space. A space becomes a place when we use it. Lefebvre sees place as a moment in the flow of space. Space in his view is continuous, and when we stop to reflect on a certain moment in this space, we can see a place (Vermeulen, 2015). Both however agree that there are multiple dimensions to how we can experience spaces and places.

When we wish to create a place, there are multiple aspects to take into account. From the theory of de Certeau and Duff, we see that the core lays in creating a practiced place. This is a place where we have memories, feelings, and act in a certain way. By changing the space around us, we can change what happens in this space, and make it a place through a change in our physical acts and mental states. For a place to exist, it needs to exist in our own narrative of the space around us and be memorable in this way. For Lefebvre, a place is created by reflecting on the continuous flow of space and attempting to see a certain still moment within this (Vermeulen, 2015).

To research sense of place in this thesis, the notion of de Certeau and Duff of place as a practiced and lived in space will be used. The ideas of Lefebvre and his dimensions of the continuous space are helpful to provide background information on what has shaped the theory of space through understanding what ontological elements constitute the space around us, and how conceived, perceived and lived space can be used to view the world. Having contrasted the theories of Lefebvre and de Certeau however, seeing place as an activated and practiced space, instead of a reflection on a moment in time, is easier to align with the further theories of sense of place in this thesis. In placemaking, the goal is to create places, so while a certain amount of reflection is needed, we need action and practices to do so.

2.1.1.2 Sense of Place

When we look at the distinction between place and space, we can ask the question of why we prefer one over the other. If a place is defined as being the *lived in, meaningful and affective space*, why do humans choose or prefer a specific space to create a place? To determine this, we can look at the notion of sense of place. What exactly constitutes a sense of place is difficult to define. It is a concept that is used in multiple disciplines, which each put their emphasis on different aspects of sense of place. Convery, Corsane and Davis (2012) have created a book that

features writers from these different disciplines and their notions of sense of place. Here they argue there are two different uses of this term. The first is that of a sense of place used to analyse what defines the character of a specific place. The second use is that of how people experience and attribute meaning to a specific place. The difference here is in the main focal point of the research, which is either the place itself, or the people in it. The common aspect between these uses is sense of place as the relationship humans have with their spatial surroundings. Covery, Corsane & Davis (2012) describe sense of place as 'multitheoretical, complex and contested.' but also as 'a very powerful medium for framing the relationship between people, places and events' (p.6).

There have been multiple attempts to measure sense of place quantitatively. For example, by Shamai and Ilatov (2005), who measured differences in positive and negative feelings of attachment to a place between immigrants and Israeli-born groups. A similar study had already been carried out earlier by Shamai (1991) when researching sense of place of Jewish students in Toronto. Both studies asked about attachment to the local place, region, and finally the country. The goal here was to show that it was not impossible to measure sense of place, and that quantitative research could be done in the subject. Shamai developed a scale to determine the level of sense of place, ranging from 0-7, from not having any sense of place, to knowledge of being located in a place, belonging in a place, attachment to a place, identifying with place goals, involvement in a place and finally sacrifice for a place (Shamai, 1991). He himself already mentioned that this scale is most likely not applicable to all other places and studies but wished to 'fill the void' in researching this subject and create a first attempt to measure sense of place.

This struggle of Shamai to create a universal scale to measure sense of place on, has not been solved yet. A different attempt to measure sense of place has been made by Jorgensen and Stedman (2001). Their article has been cited over 2000 times according to Google Scholar, which suggest that their scale is more widely applicable and central in the literature surrounding sense of place. Jorgensen and Stedman divide sense of place into three different variables, namely place identity, place attachment and place dependence. These are then all researched by asking participants in their study to rank their place identity, attachment, and dependence on a scale of four, from low to high. They found that they could in this way measure the sense of place of the inhabitants of a certain area. Inhabitants' thoughts, feelings, and behavioural commitments, which according to them constitute sense of place, were reflected in this place identity, attachment and dependence.

For the goal of this thesis, I will also divide sense of place into these three variables. They will be defined here as in the Jorgensen and Stedman study. They define these three variables as follows: *"Place identity can be regarded as an individual's cognitions, beliefs, perceptions or thoughts that the self is invested in a particular spatial setting. Place attachment can be defined in terms of an individual's affective or emotional connection to a spatial setting, and place dependence can be considered as the perceived behavioural advantage of a spatial setting relative to other settings."* (Jorgensen & Stedman, 2001, p.238)

If we combine this notion of sense of place as place identity, place attachment, and place dependence with the definition of place following from de Certeau and Duff, we see that both are compatible. The definition of place as the lived in, meaningful and affective space, is reflected in the three factors constituting sense of place. The lived-in space can be measured through place dependence, the meaningful space through place identity, and finally the affective space can be measured as place attachment.

We can now see what the distinction between space and place is, and know which variables constitute sense of place. The next step is to look at how we can create a (sense of) place. De Certeau tells us that a space is a 'practiced place', and the variables of Jorgensen and Stedman show us that we need to create place attachment, identity and dependence. This will be explored through the concept of placemaking, which is the practice that aims to turn spaces into places.

2.1.2 Placemaking

2.1.2.1 A History of Placemaking

Creating a place that people want to be in is central to the thought of placemaking. This thought originated, or rather resurfaced, in the middle of the 20th century. Jane Jacobs (1962), in her book 'The Death and Life of Great American Cities', described how modernist architecture and thought at the start of the 20th century were detrimental to the city. These modernist thinkers and architects had lost the human at the centre of their work and began planning and designing areas that people did not want to be in (Project for Public Spaces, 2010). Jacobs focused her work and activism on community-based cities and neighbourhoods, and believed more in grassroots movements than top-down planning. Together with William Whyte, they laid down the philosophy that is central to the thought of placemaking now. Namely, one where the focus is on the city as an organic whole, which should be built on the human scale. Not a city that is supposed to be only functional or only beautiful. The more organically grown city of the past, where people mingled and buildings were more mixed-use, is according to them one that is better in a myriad of ways.

William Whyte strongly protested urban sprawl in the 1970s and argued for city planning that enabled human interaction. His ideas then influenced Fred Kent, who founded the non-profit organisation 'Project for Public Spaces' (PPS) in 1975. PPS proceeded to successfully turn public spaces into places where people wanted to be, all throughout the United States. Finally, around 1997, the actual term 'placemaking' came into existence to describe their approach (Kent, 2019). PPS defines placemaking as "both an overarching idea and a hands-on approach for improving a neighbourhood, city, or region, placemaking inspires people to collectively reimagine and reinvent public spaces as the heart of every community. Strengthening the connection between people and the places they share, placemaking refers to a collaborative process by which we can shape our public realm in order to maximize shared value." (Project for Public Spaces, 2007).

Central are the place that is being created and the community that does this. There needs to be a link between these two, so that people will want to be in the newly created or changed place and have a sense of place here. There is little room in this movement for top-down planners that think they know what people want. The focus needs to be on what people *actually* want for their community and their shared place. The Project for Public Spaces has created the following 'Place Diagram' (Figure 1) to show which factors are important in establishing a great place (Project for Public Spaces, n.d.). Through their experience in a lot of public spaces, they have found that accessibility, activity, comfort and sociability are qualities that successful public spaces share. This provides a guideline to judge a place by. If people feel comfortable in it, have social interactions, the place is actively used, and well-connected, it is probably a good place to be.

What Makes a Great Place?

**Project
for Public
Spaces**

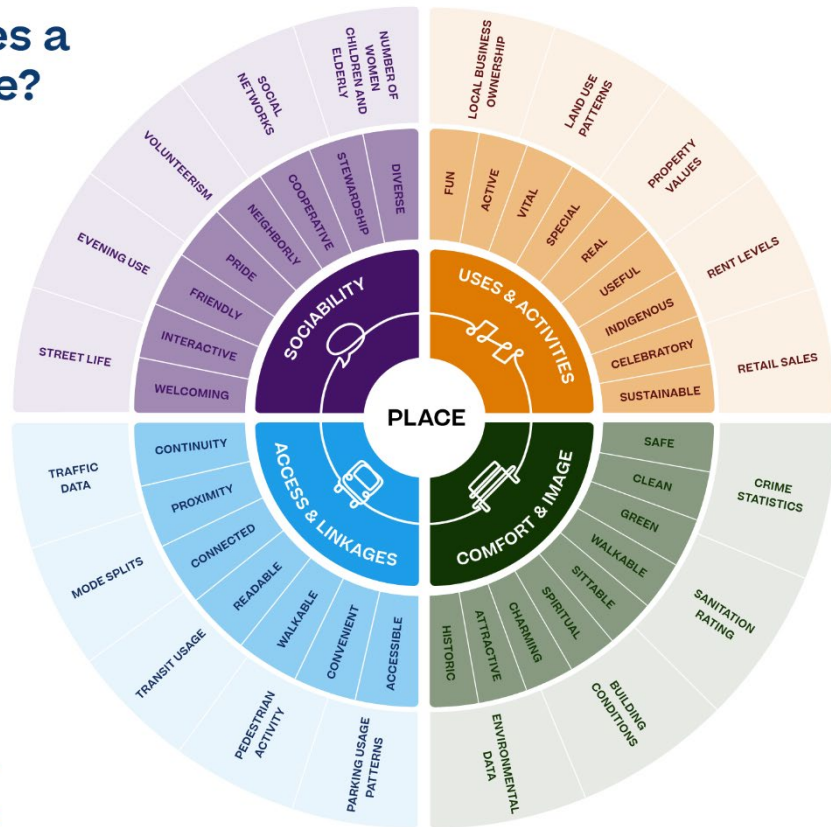


Figure 1: From *What Makes a Successful Place?* Project for Public Spaces (n.d.) Retrieved from, <https://www.pps.org/article/grplacefeat>. Copyright 1975-2020 by Project for Public Spaces. Reprinted with permission.

2.1.2.2 Creative Placemaking

The idea of placemaking has been able to transform many spaces over the decades. People take charge of their environment and try to change it for the better. As increasing amounts of people begin living in urban areas, it becomes more and more important that there are quality urban spaces for the people who live there. Art can be a key factor in establishing this quality. It can create new perspectives on the city and is capable of showing how creativity can change a space (Rembeza, 2016).

Markusen and Gadwa (2010) have coined the term creative placemaking and describe it as follows: “In creative placemaking, partners from public, private, non-profit, and community sectors strategically shape the physical and social character of a neighbourhood, town, city, or region around arts and cultural activities. Creative placemaking animates public and private spaces, rejuvenates structures and streetscapes, improves local business viability and public safety, and brings diverse people together to celebrate, inspire, and be inspired.” (Markusen and Gadwa, 2010, p.3).

They have written this in their white paper on creative placemaking, right after the economic crisis of 2008. In an attempt to revitalize American cities and communities, they believed change could come not from only investing in new infrastructure or buildings, but by funding arts and culture. Making creative places should be a higher priority for planners, as this has the potential to create economic growth and create a new cultural industry where it was previously very small or did not exist. This can encourage community building, bring people

together and increase the quality of life for people in a certain area. In this white paper they lay out how arts and culture can be placemakers, describe challenges and share success stories, and finally focus on what changes in policy can be made.

This is also highlighted by Ramli & Ujang (2020) who see creative placemaking as a key to urban regeneration. By seeing places that already exist in a new and creative way, we can create places where communities can grow and evolve. It is however essential to look out for the dangers of gentrification. The neighbourhoods or cities that are changed should continue to be accessible and open to those who already lived there, and they should not feel that new creative placemaking projects do not fit them. This is why working with the community, instead of top-down planning, is necessary. If this is taken into account, we can see creative placemaking as signifying social sustainability. It can lead to stronger communities who now live in a place with a higher quality of life.

A more recent and extensive dive into placemaking has been done by the authors of 'The Routledge handbook of Placemaking' in 2020. It describes the current state of the field of placemaking and provides possible future aims for this field. The handbook is meant for both scholars and practitioners and includes chapters from all sorts of different people associated with the field (Courage et. al., 2020). In chapter four out of forty-five, the book delves deeper into the future of creative placemaking. Authors Sarah Calderon and Erik Takeshita describe the goal of creative placemaking as "unleashing the unlimited power of arts and culture to advance community well-being" (Calderon & Takeshita, 2020, p.39).

This goal of creative placemaking leads according to them to the following aspects that constitute good creative placemaking. These are aims to support communities to: "(1) imagine the future and remember the past; (2) advance equity; (3) help people build stronger relationships; and (4) support cross-sector collaboration and impact." (Calderon & Takeshita, 2020, p.39). They describe how society will face increasingly 'wicked' problems, which are not easily solvable and have changing and sometimes contradictory solutions. Examples are climate change, growing reliability on a global supply change, and social issues such as housing disparities and poverty. To solve these problems, creativity is needed at all possible levels. Through creative placemaking, people are given ownership again of the area they are in and feel that they can imagine better futures. It can be a first step for a community to share a common narrative, encourage equity, have more mutual relationships, and work together.

We now know the distinction between space and place, how we constitute sense of place, and the history and future goals of creative placemaking. The final step is to show murals as a creative placemaking practice.

2.1.3 Murals as a creative placemaking practice

2.1.3.1 *Murals, street art and public art*

There are a lot of different types of art around in public spaces, and the definition of what art is can always change based on the creativity of the artist. Art in public spaces can range from performances to statues, from temporary to permanent and from very small to very large. This is why it is important to delineate the type of art researched in this thesis. Firstly, there is a distinction to be made between street art and public art. Blanché (2015) defines street art as consisting of “self-authorized pictures, characters, and forms created in or applied to surfaces in the urban space that intentionally seek communication with a larger circle of people. Street Art is done in a performative and often site-specific, ephemeral, and participatory way.” (Blanché, 2015, p.33)

This however, by using the word ‘self-authorized’, immediately implies an illegality that is not applicable to the case of the Waalpaintings project in Nijmegen. During the project, there was always contact with the municipality to ensure the murals were allowed, and permission was asked of the owners of the buildings they are on. The other aspects of his definition, namely seeking communication with people, being site-specific and participatory however do apply. The murals in the Waalpaintings can therefore be said to be public art, as a subclass of all street art.

The art of making murals falls under the broader definition of street-art, and generally means artwork that is applied to the wall in urban spaces. This can be done by painting or graffiti, such as the case with the Waalpaintings, or by using other materials. Because the project has been sanctioned by the local government, we can see it also as public art, that is allowed to remain in a certain public space.

Mendelson-Shwartz and Mualam (2020) have written about the challenges surrounding mural policies. Murals can be seen as both a private and public phenomenon. They are intrinsically on a certain wall, meaning there are always ownership rights and rules tied to this wall. On the other hand, they are also public, as they are meant to be exposed to a certain audience. Thirdly, there is the role of the artist, who might not see the wall as part of living space, but as a canvas. The many stakeholders involved can complicate the question of who owns the mural (Mendelson-Shwartz & Mualam, 2020).

This has often led to local governments deciding to install mural policies. This can vary from deciding to remove unwanted murals, to actively sanctioning or even deciding the design of new murals. This then raises questions of who decided what is permitted or not, and can change the mural landscape in a city. If a mural has been commissioned by the municipality, but the owner of the building wishes to see it removed later on, who gets to decide? On the other end of the spectrum, what happens if the municipality decides to remove a mural that was loved by the local community? This has led to legal implications in different instances, with both the municipality, the owner of the building, and the local community proven right depending on the circumstances (Mendelson-Shwartz & Mualam, 2020).

2.1.3.2 *Depicting history in murals*

Murals can depict whatever is in the scope of imagination of the artist. This research however will focus specifically on murals depicting history. In the case of the Waalpaintings project, fifteen historical events in the canon of Nijmegen were chosen to reflect the history of the city (Waalpaintings, n.d.-i). This can have an influence on the narrative that represents the city. By

choosing to also depict lesser-known history, such as the story of Princess Theophanu on the side of the Holland Casino, the audience might learn new things that they did not previously connect to their idea of Nijmegen.

Nijmegen is not the first city that has murals showing the city's history. Upalevski (2017) has done research on how murals in Warsaw can contribute to the narrative of the shared history of the city. He uses the concept of cultural memory to show how history that is captured in art or other media can transcend the history that remains when only relying on recollection and interpersonal communication. He then goes on to explain how murals can be used to identify with and represent a local community. Certain historical events become visible and can become more central in our collective cultural memory. These representations of the past then become more prominent in our narrative of history.

The Waalpaintings project can also do this, and shape the narrative that we have of Nijmegen by using art. The initiators of the project have chosen fifteen historical events, which are spread throughout the long history of Nijmegen and that represent both men and women (Waalpaintings, n.d.-i). Van der Sanden (2009) shows that the historical canon used in the Netherlands is still overrepresenting males, instead of choosing for an alternative way of representing history that is more gender equal. This overrepresentation can also be seen in the historical canon of Nijmegen, where fifty historical events in the city have been highlighted. While most of the stories are about a general theme, the one that are about individuals in history are mainly about men (MijnGelderland, n.d.). The Waalpaintings project, by making the choice to represent both men and women equally, could therefore play a role in ensuring fair representation.

Fair representation is one of the aspects that is important when choosing what or whom to use as subject for a mural. McCarthy (2006) has researched another aspect, namely the linkage between public art and local identity or image. With examples of public art in Manchester and Belfast, he shows how depicting local history in art can have the aim of both promoting a certain place (out of the city) and reflect an image internally (in the city). By researching the usage of art as a strategy for regeneration in these areas, McCarthy has found that historical associations can be valuable in linking public art and local identity. Important in this regeneration of an area is that there is an overarching strategy or a plan. Secondly, local communities need to be involved to ensure a fitting imagery is reflected. Art showing the history of a city can therefore be a factor in promoting the city externally. This can be done through accurately reflecting the local identity, which in turn can be a basis for social cohesion and quality of life of local inhabitants.

2.1.3.3 Murals and Creative Placemaking

He & Gyergyak (2021) describe how street art can increase the quality and vitality of a space and help make it fit to people's needs. Everyone is allowed to be in public space and the interaction between people can shape this space. Street art can be a method of cultural expression and show the audience new ways of interacting with this space. This can be a factor in urban renewal by changing the experience we have in urban places.

The act of creating a mural in a public place does not immediately make it part of creative placemaking. Vaughan et al. (2021) define three sets of values that make a successful placemaking project. These are social, economic, and environmental. While they do note a lot of factors that are related to these, they also note that it is hard to exactly measure how successful a creative

placemaking project is, as some of these factors are intangible. Social value is generated through the community and local participation in the project. The economic value can be generated by creating a better space for new shops or other businesses, or even by raised real estate prices. The environmental value is raised by creating a more pleasant environment to be in.

To say that the Waalpaintings project can be named as successful in creative placemaking, these three factors need to be looked at. As the project is still ongoing however, it will be difficult to see what the exact future results can be. This means that only whether or not the Waalpaintings project can be regarded as creative placemaking can be taken into account. The potential value of the entire project is a future step. Factors in creating this value are the creation of the mural trail, which can increase activity in certain areas, the improving of the physical space as an environmental factor and the engagement of community both by the stakeholders involved and by showing a shared narrative for the history of Nijmegen.

2.2 Conceptual Model and operationalisation

The following conceptual model describes the key concepts researched in this thesis and their relations:

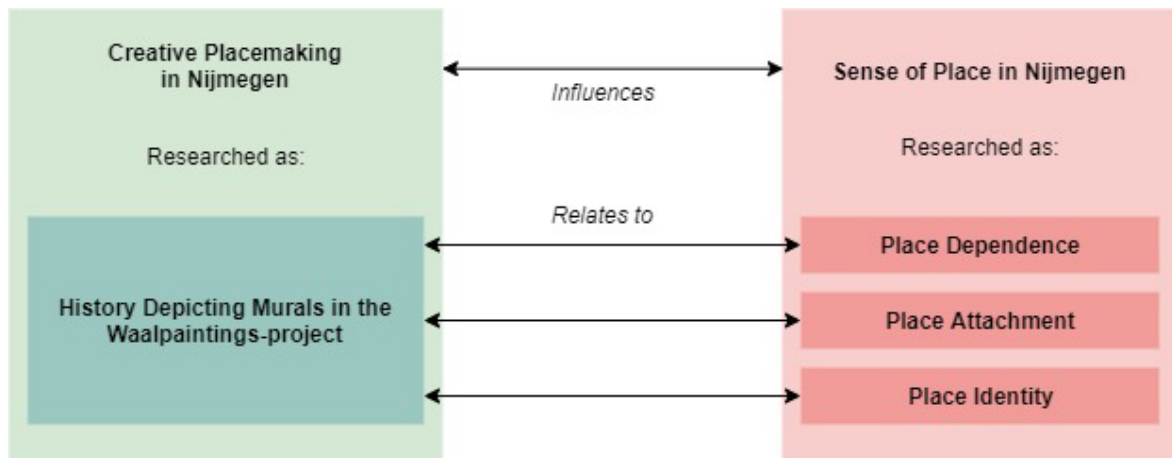


Figure 2: Conceptual model showing the relations between creative placemaking and sense of place in Nijmegen. Own work.

The conceptual model shows how creative placemaking will be researched as seen in the Waalpaintings project in Nijmegen. The model also shows the expected relation between this case and the aspects that make up sense of place. It shows the expected interrelation of the key concepts of this thesis, which are present in the main research question: *How does creative placemaking in the form of history-depicting murals contribute to sense of place in the city of Nijmegen?*

While the main goal of this thesis is to describe how creative placemaking in the Waalpaintings project influences sense of place in Nijmegen, it is expected that the current sense of place, understood as place dependence, attachment and identity, also shapes the possibilities of placemaking. This is what the double headed arrow ‘influences’ between ‘Creative Placemaking in Nijmegen’ and ‘Sense of Place in Nijmegen’ signifies. The placemaking practice that is central to this thesis, does not exist in a vacuum. There is already a sense of place that is present in Nijmegen, and inhabitants and visitors already experience varying degrees of place dependence, attachment and identity when in this city. This sense of place then also shapes the possibilities of creative placemaking. Depending on the degree of sense of place that locals in Nijmegen have and depending on what they see as part of their local identity for example, different placemaking projects can be started.

This is the ‘background’ influence of the creative placemaking and sense of place factors in this research, which is also why they are represented as the background for the other variables in this conceptual model. The research done in this thesis mainly applies to the relation between the ‘History Depicting Murals in the Waalpaintings-project’, ‘Place Attachment’ and ‘Place Identity’ and ‘Place Dependence’ variables. The place dependence, place attachment and place identity variables from Jorgensen and Stedman (2001) are used to operationalize sense of place.

When we look at the provided definition for these variables that constitute sense of place: “Place identity can be regarded as an individual’s cognitions, beliefs, perceptions or thoughts that the self is invested in a particular spatial setting. Place attachment can be defined in

terms of an individual's affective or emotional connection to a spatial setting, and place dependence can be considered as the perceived behavioural advantage of a spatial setting relative to other settings." (Jorgensen & Stedman, 2001, p.238), we can use these variables to analyse the result of the research. The murals in the Waalpaintings project are aimed to show the history of Nijmegen and bring us a sense of wonder or curiosity about the history depicted. The question to then be answered is how this project can affect our sense of place.

In the next chapter the methodology of this research will be discussed. Chapter four then shows the results that have emerged from the case study. After this follows the conclusion, where these results will be analysed, using the conceptual framework given in this chapter. The conclusion provides answers to the research questions, and the hypotheses made here are examined. This will then determine the validity of this conceptual framework, which will be discussed in chapter six, the discussion.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Plan and Data-collection

This thesis has taken a case-study approach to learn more about the Waalpaintings project in Nijmegen. Literature on the concepts of creative placemaking, sense of place and murals has been described in chapter two and is used to create a framework and a conceptual model. The data gathered on the case of the Waalpaintings project in Nijmegen is then analysed using the framework created. This means that this thesis follows a qualitative approach. Because the aim is to provide depth on a single case, it was deemed more appropriate to use qualitative instead of quantitative methods. By intensively studying a single case, more information can be discovered about the process in this creative placemaking project. As the project is still ongoing, a case-study will hopefully provide information about not just the effects of the project, but the process of creating it.

The goal of the thesis is to answer the following question: *How does creative placemaking in the form of history-depicting murals contribute to sense of place in the city of Nijmegen?*

This goal is achieved by first researching existing literature on the subject. This was done by reading more about the subjects of sense of place, creative placemaking and murals. Literature was found on Google Scholar, through the (online) library of Radboud University, and by suggested articles from my thesis supervisor. When researching sense of place, the first question to be answered was what exactly the difference is between space and place. To be able to provide a definition for this thesis, the works of De Certeau and Lefebvre, who are both key thinkers in this field, were researched and described. Finally, the choice was made to follow De Certeau's definition of place. This then could be tied into finding a definition for sense of place.

Sense of place was also researched through analysing literature. For this subject, it was important to find a definition of sense of place, and a way to measure it. The definition of sense of place is complex and is often bound by different geographical or temporal factors. This is why it was chosen to look into which variables constitute sense of place, instead of attempting to find a universal definition. This led to finding the variables of place dependence, place identity and place attachment, which also tied in with de Certeau's factors constituting place, as the lived-in, meaningful and affective space. These factors are also now used in the conceptual model for this thesis.

The second key concept of this thesis is creative placemaking. First, the origin of the concept of placemaking was researched and a history of this subject is provided. After this, the more modern subject of *creative* placemaking is described. This term is also used in the conceptual model and main research question of the thesis. Because the thesis aims to understand murals depicting history as a type of creative placemaking, the goal was then to show how these two factors interlinked. This was done by first providing an overview of which types of street art exist, then specifying this to murals depicting history, and finally showing how this can be seen as creative placemaking.

This research into the literature of the subject then provided the theoretical foundation to create a conceptual model of the thesis, and to decide which of these could be underpinned through the research of the thesis. The conceptual model and framework created could then be applied to the case-study. First, the case-study is described, and the information gathered on the project is shown in chapter 4.1. This information was gathered by the interviews and through online research of the project, mainly on the website www.waalpaintings.nl, and their associated

Social Media. Another factor in the research was my own observation of the murals, and some research on the historical events they depict.

After this follows the conclusion, where the information gathered on the case-study is compared with the data gathered about sense of place, creative placemaking and murals depicting history. The conclusion provides the answers to the research questions asked. It also shows the analysis of the case-study, which is the result of comparing the theoretical foundation with the found information about the Waalpaintings project. The final chapter is the discussion of the thesis, which provided the limitations of this research and recommendations for further research.

By using a case-study, a phenomenological approach into researching this case is taken. This provides depth about the specific subject and will leave room for the perspective of the participants. While the phenomenological approach is mainly used as a method for generating descriptive knowledge, this is combined with a literature study to be able to analyse the situation and provide new knowledge (Lester, 1999). To research the phenomenon itself, interviews were held with one of the initiators of the project and two mural artists. This was combined with observation of the murals and information found online and on social media about the reception of the project in the media and information from the website of the project. The interviews have been transcribed and then coded using Atlas.ti, to find common themes and links to the process of creative placemaking and sense of place. Data-collection has taken place during the end of May and the beginning of June 2022.

3.2. Interviews

Three different interviews were conducted to gain knowledge about the organisation and creation of the historical murals for the Waalpaintings project. After these three interviews, I felt that my research was mostly saturated. As this is not a very large case-study, there weren't very many stakeholders involved to interview. Combined with the research done through the website, observations and social media, three interviews was found to provide enough information. While there were questions prepared for each interview, the interviews themselves were more like conversations. I used to interview guides to make sure all questions I wanted to ask were asked but did not adhere to them very strictly. Here I will provide a brief summary of these interviews, and the way they were conducted.

Interview with Remco Visser (May 11th, 2022)

After looking at a social media account from the Waalpaintingsproject, I found out a new mural was being painted nearby. To find out more, I walked to the site of the project just as they were doing some finishing touches and dismantling the scaffolding. This was on the Nieuwe Markstraat, where the mural now shows the Roman history of Nijmegen. Remco Visser was here, with some other members of the Verfaar artists collective, and was willing to do a short twenty-minute interview. He is a local artist, who went to art school in the early 2000s and has done multiple murals in the region since The artist collective has been active since 2013 and has also done other projects in the city. I prepared some questions regarding the organisational process, the creative process and the goals of the project. I was also shown the sketch for the artwork and told about the elements visible in the painting. Because the interview was conducted spontaneously, no recording was made. Remco Visser consented to using the data collected in this thesis, and I used

a notebook to record his answers. These notes were used to write a summary, which was then coded in Atlas.ti.

Interview with Sander Dolstra (June 8th, 2022)

After again seeing on social media that a new artwork was being made, I sent an e-mail to Sander Dolstra to ask for an interview. This was then conducted on the morning of the 8th of June, at the site of the new mural. This was at the Hendrikhof, an alley next to Plein 1944, where murals depicting King Hendrik the 7th and duke Otto the 2nd are now on walls opposite each other. The artist, who was born in Nijmegen, has been active since 2012. After finishing art school, he decided to fully commit to making murals, and has done multiple projects locally.

I prepared an interview guide, with questions regarding the artist, the process of creating the murals, creative freedom, the murals themselves, and the connection between these murals and the city of Nijmegen. After the interview was finished, the artist showed me the historical elements that were represented in the art. Sander Dolstra consented to being recorded during the twenty-minute interview, and to use the information provided in my thesis. I used the recording to transcribe the interview and used this transcript to code in Atlas.ti.

Interview with Erika Manders (June 9th, 2022)

I reached out to Erika Manders on e-mail to schedule an interview. She is one of the initiators of the Waalpaintings project and works at the Radboud University as a historian. We met on June 9th at the university and talked about the project for circa 45 minutes. I prepared an interview guide, with questions about the origins of the project, the process of creating the artworks, receiving funding, organisation of the project, and the goals for the city of Nijmegen. The interview was loosely structured around this interview guide and provided a lot of information about the ideas and goals behind the project. She consented to being recorded, and I used this recording to transcribe the interview. This transcript was then coded using Atlas.ti.

4. Research & Analysis

4.1 Case-study: Waalpaintingsproject

This chapter goes into depth on the case-study. The information here was gathered from the interviews that were done and online research. The set-up of the project will first be explained from start to (future) finish, after which the effect of the project on Nijmegen and the viewing audience is discussed.

The three interviews that were done for this thesis were summarized or transcribed and then coded using Atlas.ti. This has provided an overview of the most important responses and makes it easier to compare the results. Most of the interview data is described in chapter 4.1.1 'The Project', which tells the story of the organisation of the project and the actors/people involved. The results that were more focussed on the effects of the project on the city and inhabitants of Nijmegen and the surroundings will be discussed in chapter 4.2.2. A list of the codes used is given in the following table, with the code groups that they were later added to.

Codes	Code Groups
Artists	Actors
Financing	Actors; Organisation of project
Municipality of Nijmegen	Actors; City of Nijmegen
Reactions	Actors; Effect on people
Radboud University	Actors; Organisation of project
Goal of the project	Effect on people
Target Audience	Effect on people
Tour of the murals	Effect on people
History of Nijmegen	City of Nijmegen
Feeling in Nijmegen	City of Nijmegen
Design of project	Organisation of project
Future of the project	Organisation of project
Inspiration for project	Organisation of project

4.1.1 The project

4.1.1.1 Initiative

The Waalpaintingsproject was set up by Erika Manders and Dennis Jussen, in January 2020. They were both active at the history department of Radboud University in Nijmegen and wished for a way to show the research and knowledge about the history of Nijmegen to a broader audience. This can be seen as a type of research valorisation, or using research to make an impact outside of the academic environment. During the interview with Erika Manders, she spoke of how the Waalpaintings project then came to be. With the goal of getting historical knowledge to a broader audience in mind, she was inspired by a similar project in Utrecht (Interview Erika Manders, 09/06/22). This is the Utrechtse Muurformules project, which shows murals of scientists and their discoveries done in Utrecht (Universiteit Utrecht, n.d.). This was in turn inspired by the Muurformules project in Leiden, which is also a university city. Here, the murals show historical scientific formulas and laws (van der Molen, van Vulpen & Stichting Tegenbeeld, n.d.).

After by chance seeing the murals in Utrecht, Erika Manders realised this would be a great way to show the history of Nijmegen in the city centre. She contacted Dennis Jussen again, and

they began looking into what had to be done. There were multiple things to first organise, before the first mural could be made. First, they had to choose which historical moments from the city of Nijmegen to depict, and what location would tie into this. After this, the right wall had to be found, with permission granted from the owner of that wall to paint on it (Interview Manders, 09/06/22). Next come the funding for the project and finding the right artist to create the art itself. This process and the artistic process itself will be explained in the following paragraphs.

4.1.1.2 Depicting history

To choose which themes in history to represent, the initiators looked at the historical canon of Nijmegen. This canon is made similarly to the canon of the Netherlands as a whole and shows the fifty most important historical stories about events, people, or developments in Nijmegen (MijnGelderland, n.d.). This canon was developed and published at the Radboud University in 2009. From these fifty topics, the initiators chose fifteen that would be adopted into murals. Because the city of Nijmegen is the oldest in the Netherlands, the timeframe ranges from the Roman settlement here 2000 years ago all the way to now. To choose which topics would be most suitable, they made a spreadsheet and looked at which historical events could be combined in a mural. An overview of the completed and known future paintings can be found in Appendix 1. The following map, made in My Maps from Google with data from the Waalpaintings website, shows the location of the currently finished paintings.

Location Waalpaintings

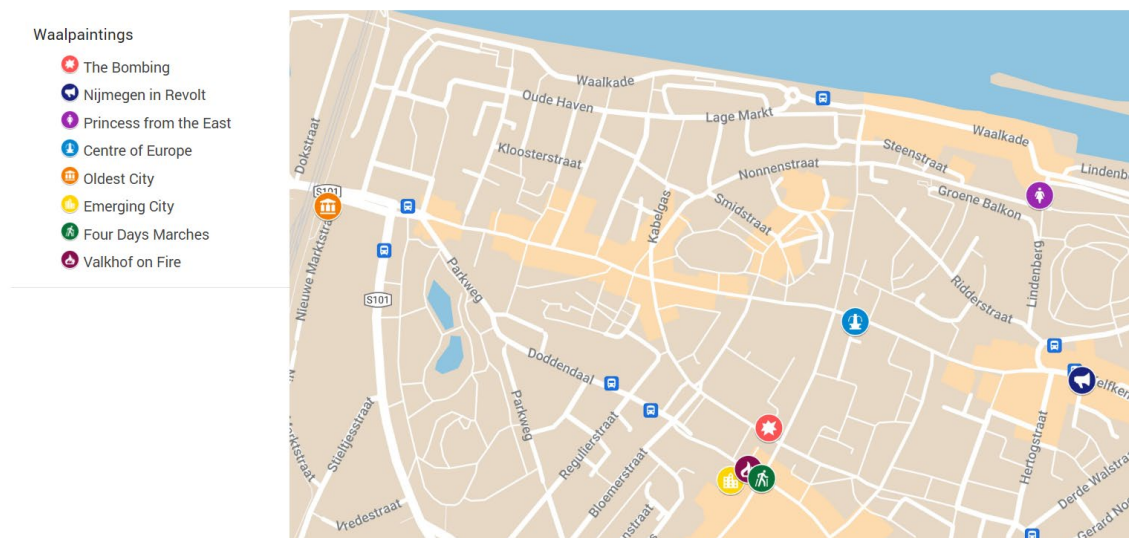


Figure 3: A map showing the locations of the currently finished Waalpaintings. Own work. Made using Google My Maps.

Another important factor in choosing which history to depict was a balanced male to female ratio. As Erika Manders mentioned during the interview, history is predominantly told through the eyes of white men. This was something they wished to avoid in the Waalpaintingsproject to ensure a fair representation. This was also one of the reasons that they chose to start the project with depicting princess Theophanu. She was a Byzantine princess, who lived from 962 to 991, and was regent of the Holy Roman Empire after the death of her husband,

Otto II. She was depicted in the 'Princess from the East'-mural on the side of the Holland Casino building, near her summer residency at the Valkhof in Nijmegen. After her death in 991 in Nijmegen, her son built the chapel that can still be visited in the park (Waalpaintings, n.d.-b).

The reason to depict this mural here is therefore not accidental. All of the fifteen murals will be painted on a location that is directly tied to the historical event that is depicted. This is also the case for the eight artworks that are already finished. The first two murals were already in place before the project started and were 'adopted' into the project. One of these murals is on the opposite walls of the Scheidemakershof, that depict the bombing of Nijmegen on February 22nd, 1944.

They were made by artist Combolution in 2019. The location was chosen because the square that the alley leads to, Plein 1944, was given the name of the year of the bombing and because it is close to most of the bombed area. (Waalpaintings, n.d.-c).



Figure 4: Photo of the 'Princess from the East Mural'. Own work



Figure 5: Photos of the mural the 'Bombing'. Own work



The second mural that was adopted, was made by artists Remco Visser and Naamloozz, and depicts the Revolt of the Batavi in 69 and 70 AD on one side, and the Pierson Riots in 1981 on the other side. The mural, named *Nijmegen in revolt*, was painted close to the found remains of *Oppidum Batavorum*, which is the settlement the Romans built for the Batavi. The Batavi rose to fight their oppressor, the Romans, but were finally defeated after two years. This is contrasted with the Pierson Riots, which are a lot more recent. During these squatter riots, a group protested the new plan of a parking garage being built on the current location of a housing block. They occupied fourteen homes in the Piersonstreet, in the centre of Nijmegen in August 1980. On February 23rd, 1981, this had escalated to a full-blown riot. Over two hundred mobile police unit vans, five tanks, a helicopter and nearly two thousand men were deployed to clear out the squatted houses and suppress other protests around the city (Waalpaintings, n.d.-d; IsGeschiedenis, 2015).

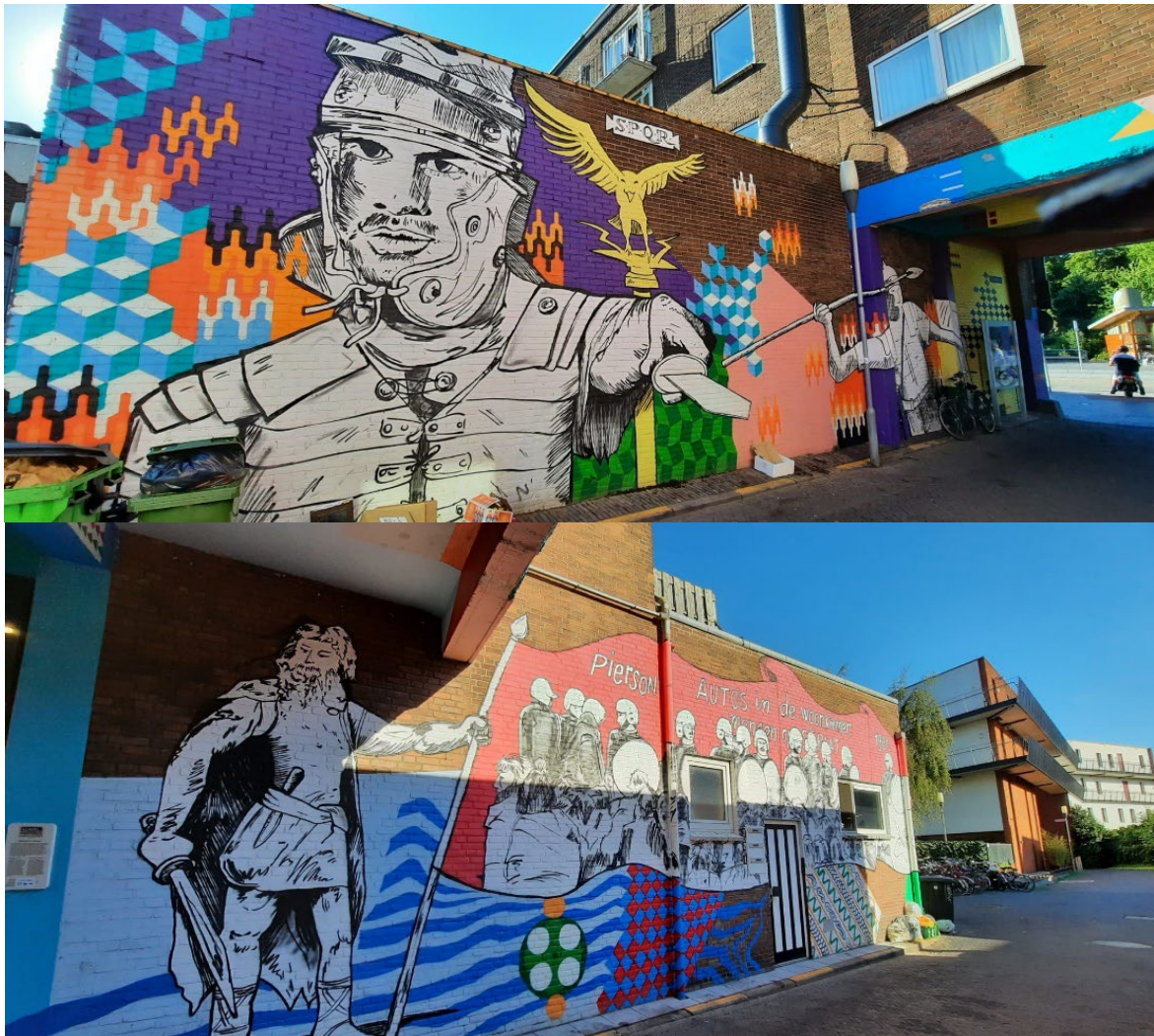


Figure 6: Photos of the 'Nijmegen in Revolt' mural. Own work.

A less violent event is depicted in the next Waalpainting that was finished. This mural, named 'Centre of Europe' shows the activities surrounding the signing of the Treaty of Peace of Nijmegen. Multiple European representatives came to Nijmegen for peace negotiations in the years 1678 and 1679. The most important treaty signed was that between the Dutch Republic and the French, although several other interconnected wars were also settled during this time. The painting in the Kerkegasje alley was made by RoosArt and Combolution, and depicts this signing of the treaty on one side. The opposite wall shows the festivities in the city, complete with wine fountain on the Grote Markt (market square), and coins being thrown around. This is close to the location of the mural, which shows several elements of the 17th century city (Waalpaintings, n.d.-a).



Figure 7: Photos of the 'Centre of Europe' mural. Own work.

The fifth mural to be finished is the one called 'Oldest city in the Netherlands'. This was made by artists collective Verfbaar, of which Remco Visser is a part. He is one of the interviewees for this thesis and after painting the Nijmegen in Revolt mural, was asked to also paint the Roman history of Nijmegen here.



Figure 8: Photo of the 'Oldest City in the Netherlands' mural. Own work.

After the Batavi Revolt, a new town was built in what is now the west of Nijmegen. This was called Noviomagus, or new market in Latin. The mural is also in the street called the Nieuwe Markstraat, meaning new market in Dutch. Several Roman elements and objects found in the city were incorporated into the mural, including 'The Face of Nijmegen', a rider's mask found in the Waal River (Waalpaintings, n.d.-e).

In June '22, the mural in the Hendrikhof alley was made, on the opposite side of the bombing mural also next to Plein 1944. This mural, named 'Emerging City' was made by Sander Dolstra and artist Combolution, who depicted two of Nijmegen's rulers during the Middle Ages. These are Hendrik VII and Otto II, a German king, and a duke of Gelre. Hendrik VII is shown as he falls of his horse, which is how he died after several years of imprisonment. He is the one who gave Nijmegen its' city rights in 1230 and is also the one who the alley is named after. The original name of Plein 1944 was the Hendrikplein, which also references him. Duke Otto II is remembered for starting the building on the earliest city walls and the Saint Stevenschurch in the centre. He received the city of Nijmegen in 1247, as a collateral for a loan to one of the successors of the German king. This loan was never paid off and is the reason that the city of Nijmegen is still in Dutch hands (Waalpaintings, n.d.-f).



Figure 9: Photos of the 'Emerging City' mural. Own work.

During the Four Days Marches in Nijmegen, a Waalpainting about this theme was finished. This mural was made on the junction of the Molenstraat and Plein 1944, by artists Moris & Santo. It depicts a pair of army boots, on top of a globe, signifying the early military origin of the Four Days Marches in Nijmegen, and the global event it is now. These marches have been held in Nijmegen for over a hundred years and are now accompanied by the largest festival in the Netherlands, all throughout the city (Waalpaintings, n.d.-g). Over 40,000 people, from more than 70 countries now walk for four days in the middle of July and are rewarded with a gladiolus and a medal upon finishing the 120, 160 or 200 kilometres. The mural was sponsored through crowdfunding and by the organisation of the marches, Stichting DE 4DAAGSE, signifying how the people of Nijmegen wish to see this event permanently visible in a mural.



Figure 10: Photo of the 'Walk of the World' mural. Own work.

The most recent painting to be finished is very close to the previous two, and also next to plein 1944. It depicts a playing card with the portraits of emperor Charles the Great (747-814) and German emperor Frederik Barbarossa (1122-1190). On the wall below this artwork, a few Viking ships are shown. This depicts the story of the palace and castle on the Valkhof. King Charles the Great had a small palace built here in 777, which was then set on fire by Viking Godfried in 882. It is also what is meant by the name 'Valkhof on Fire' that was given to this Waalpainting. Later, in 1155, emperor Barbarossa rebuilt the palace and added on to it. The still existing Nicholas Chapel, built by the son of Theophanu who is depicted in the first Waalpainting, was incorporated into this. Most of the buildings on the Valkhof have now disappeared, and only the chapel and the so-called 'Barbarossa-ruin' remain (Waalpaintings, n.d.-h).



Figure 11: Photos of the 'Valkhof on Fire' mural. Own work.

4.1.1.3 Funding

The funding of the project has been done in several different ways. Erika Manders described the funding as the hardest part of getting a mural on the wall. The money is raised painting by painting, and different

actors are involved in each one. The first painting made by the Waalpaintingsproject (not adopted), was that on the side of the Holland Casino building. This painting was mainly sponsored by the Brediusstichting, who is involved in conserving Byzantine Heritage. It was also sponsored by several other organizations, who donated money, paint, and the scaffolding. According to Erika Manders, the first painting was the hardest to receive funding for. As a new organisation, it is easier to be able to refer to earlier paintings, instead of starting from zero. This way, people know what to expect and are easier to convince to donate.

With the painting of Theophanu finished, it was easier to show what the goals and ideas of the organisation were. This made it possible to set up a crowdfunding for the next painting, the Centre of Europe. This raised a total of 12.280 euros, from all sorts of different groups and people. The fundraising website shows donations from local citizens, including people living in the street itself, other people attached to the city, local history organisations, Radboud Alumni, and local companies (Radboud Fonds, n.d.). The valorisation officer of the Radboud University, Marijn Gielen, is also involved in the project, mainly to keep track of these finances and to give financial advice about the project.

Both the Oldest City in the Netherlands and the Emerging City mural were sponsored by the municipality. The Municipality paid for all of the former, and a part of the latter mural. Municipal funding can come from multiple budgets within the municipality. These can for example be allocated to art subsidies, to raising historical awareness or to making the city centre better. Because the Waalpaintingsproject does a bit of all, there is always contact with the municipality about potential sources of funding. There is also always contact with the municipality to ensure it is allowed to paint on the building or wall chosen for a new mural. This can usually be settled with just the approval of the private owner of the building, but not, for example, in the case of the Oldest City in the Netherlands painting. This was done on the side of the rail bridge, on the Nieuwe Markstraat, which is owned by the municipality (Interview Manders, 09/06/22).

4.1.1.4 Finding the right artist

A goal of the project has been from the start to feature different artists, who are from Nijmegen or otherwise connected to the city. This is to ensure that local artists also get their chance to show their art, instead of only approaching artists that are known nationwide. While the larger names are sure to make a beautiful piece of art, there is a lot of local talent as well. Erika Manders described this as being able to give a stage to newer and upcoming artists. This is of course more of a risk, as there is less known about the artist at the start, but the initiators have been proud of everything that has been made so far.

A second goal is to find artists with different styles of art. Whereas the Muurformules' projects in Leiden and Utrecht all have the same artist for all the paintings in the city, the Waalpaintingsproject features a different artist, or different combination of artists, for each painting. By doing so, more regional talent can be displayed, and a larger network of artists can be involved in the project. Because not all paintings are obviously the same, they are all linked together by displaying the Waalpaintings logo on the information sign. By doing so, the murals can be distinguished from other murals already in Nijmegen.

As Erika Manders put it, she and Dennis Jussen are not exactly involved in the street art scene. To get their foot in the door and get to know more artists, they first contacted Combolution. He was the artist that made the original mural 'The Bombing', that was later

adopted into the Waalpaintingsproject. He has acted as a link to other artists, and also worked on the 'Centre of Europe' and second part of the 'Emerging City' murals. He is familiar with other artists art styles and therefore able to advise on which artist is suitable for which topic. The only artists not approached through him were the two artists from Studio Hartebeest. This is originally a graphic design studio, which did the 'Princess from the East' mural.

4.1.1.5 Artistic process

To gain more insight into the artistic process and the ideas behind each painting, two artists were interviewed for this thesis. These are Remco Visser, who made the (adopted) 'Nijmegen in Revolt' and the 'Oldest city in the Netherlands' murals, and Sander Dolstra, who recently completed the first part of the 'Emerging City' murals. Both were approached to make the murals through artist Combolution, who recommended their work. When first pitched the idea of the mural, the artists are told about the history that the initiators wish to see represented in the mural.

To make sure the historical theme depicted is accurate, the initiators, who are both historians, do research into each topic. This results in information about the historical context, the story they wish to see represented and, if possible, source material about the topic. This is then presented during a first meeting between the initiators and the artist. After this, the artist responds with their initial ideas and some early sketches. In case of the 'Oldest city in the Netherlands' mural, the artists even visited the Valkhof museum and were given a tour. This museum is concerned with the history of Nijmegen and has a lot of the Roman artifacts found here on display. Some of these artifacts have made it directly into the mural, such as the statue of Fortuna and the inscriptions found on a tomb here. These were photographed during the museum tour and then incorporated into the mural.

After this inspiration session, the first sketches are drawn up. These sketches are then presented a second time to the initiators and the main sponsor, if applicable. In case of the 'Princess from the East' mural, this was the Brediusstichting. For the 'Oldest City in the Netherlands' mural, it was the municipality of Nijmegen. Because they paid a lot to sponsor the project, it is only fair that they get a say in what will be painted. Of course, the contact between the artists, the initiators and the sponsors is not just limited to these two moments and differs per mural. There is more communication back-and-forth throughout the project, when for example some historical facts are not entirely clear yet, or if other questions come up (Interview Remco Visser, 11/05/22; Interview Sander Dolstra, 08/06/22).

When the final sketch is approved, it is time to start painting. This is generally done over the course of a few days or weeks, depending on for example the size of the mural and the number of artists working on it. Seeing the artists at work generally gains a lot of attention from passers-by, and instantly provides some positive feedback on the project. Many people are interested in what is happening in their street, or city, and what exactly will be painted. This is a first way of interacting with the art, when it is not even finished yet. After the mural is then finished, this usually generates some local attention. Or as Erika Manders put it: "Whenever a new painting is finished, media-attention is definitely not something to complain about" (Interview Erika Manders, 09/06/2022). After this, the final thing to add is the sign.

4.1.1.6 Signs and walking tour

The signs that are placed on the wall of the mural show a few things. These are the logo of the project, a text description of what can be seen on the mural in Dutch, English and German, the artist of the mural and the main sponsors, and a QR-code that links to the website with more information. On the website you can then find more about the historical theme that is depicted, the artistic process behind it, videos and photo's showing this, and some news articles about it. The website also shows the location of all the other murals, so it is possible to visit these as well. In the future, a walking trail will be posted, so you can visit all the murals in a tour.

Erika Manders described this as there being multiple layers of depth to seeing the mural. The first layer is simply seeing the mural, appreciating the artwork and being curious about what is depicted. A second layer is added when you decide to read the sign. You then know more about the history of Nijmegen as well and learn about what can be seen in the mural. The third layer is scanning the QR-code and learning even more. This means that you learn about the murals as a project and know more about who made it and have even more knowledge about the history of Nijmegen (Interview Erika Manders, 09/06/22).



Figure 12: Photo of the sign near the 'Centre of Europe' mural. Own work.

4.1.1.7 Future

For the future, seven more murals are planned. The exact details on which murals and what they will depict are not available yet.

The first timeframe for finishing the project was a bit too optimistic, when the initiators thought in January 2020 that the project could be finished in three years. Of course, COVID-19 happened, which resulted in some delays, but the process of organising a mural also took more time than expected. As Erika Manders said during the interview, three murals in a year is already quite a lot. With around eight murals finished in 2022, this means the project will probably be finished in 2024 (Interview Manders, 09/06/22).

Another future possibility she mentioned is to incorporate more of a learning and educational goal into the project. This could for example mean having history students do a project on the background research for a new painting or using a tour of the artworks to show younger children and teenagers more about their city.

The longevity of the murals has not currently been discussed yet. As the project is still ongoing, touch-ups and potentially renewing the artwork is an issue for a later time.

4.1.2 Effects of the Waalpaintingsproject

The main goal of the Waalpaintings project is to make the history of the city of Nijmegen visible again to those who are in this city. This has been the reason to start the project in the first place and has always been the objective. There are however several other effects that can be attributed to this project. These partly depend on the target audience, which will be discussed first. After this, the effects on the city of Nijmegen and the effects on the people in Nijmegen are laid out.

4.1.2.1 Target Audience

In the words of Remco Visser, the target audience of the project and his art specifically is 'everyone and everything'. As is inherent with murals in a public area, the art is visible to anyone who passes by. This can then lead to different types of engagement with the work, as described in paragraph 4.1.1.6. There is however not really a designated audience to these murals. Anyone who is interested can either just appreciate the art or find out more information through the sign.

All of the respondents however did remark on the relation specifically between younger people and seeing the history of the city in murals. Younger people might not visit a museum as often, or be very interested in art. Because murals are very easily accessible and often not even seen on purpose, but just by unintentionally walking by, new things are added to the historical knowledge of young people especially. People who don't take a specific interest in art or history can still see these murals, appreciate them, and might learn something from them on the side (Interview Remco Visser, 11/05/22; Interview Sander Dolstra, 08/06/22; Interview Erika Manders, 09/06/22).

4.1.2.2 Effects on the city of Nijmegen

The effects of murals are not only the appreciation of the art and the learning about history. There is also something to gain when repurposing previously unused walls and making something nice instead. Erika Manders and Sander Dolstra described this effect in relation to the 'Emerging City' mural on the Hendrikhof. This was previously a bit of a dark alley on the side of a square. The walls were filled with tags, and there was often trash and paper lying around. This doesn't help people to feel safe and nice in this area.

By using the walls in this alley to paint a mural, the tags have disappeared and there is a brighter and colourful mural, instead of a grim and dark wall. This changes how people view this alley and suddenly gives it a purpose. Sander Dolstra also mentioned that he specifically chose lighter colours because of this. These help to brighten up the space and make it feel more welcoming. Residents who lived around this alley have also remarked to him that they are grateful for this remaking of the space. By giving it a purpose and making it look better, a blank wall can be turned into something nice (Interview Sander Dolstra, 08/06/22).

There are multiple of these alleys around the city, and the murals that are now on the Sint Thomashof, Scheidemakershof and Kerkegasje have had similar reactions. People actually want to be in these places now, instead of just quickly walking through or past them. This also means that there is more area with a purpose in the city as a whole. By turning blank walls into murals, there are things to remember about it and more good feelings associated with these places. This can be illustrated by what Erika Manders said during the interview about the upcoming murals. Whereas first it was a task to find owners willing to let their walls be used for the project, she has now already had multiple people asking: "Could you do a Waalpainting on my wall as well?". This shows that the people in the city can see the benefit of these murals and are excited about giving their walls a purpose in this way (Interview Erika Manders, 09/06/22).

4.1.2.3 Effects on the people in Nijmegen

The people of Nijmegen now have a new way of viewing the history in their city. Erika Manders described the goal of the project as hoping people would feel a type of historical sensation. This is why it was chosen for all the murals to be placed as close as possible to the location of the actual event or story depicted. She hoped people would see a mural and think ‘Wow! This happened right here!’. This leaves an impression on the audience viewing a mural, and makes you associate different things with a location than you did before (Interview Erika Manders, 09/06/22).

This historical sensation also stems from the murals depicting some of the lesser-known history of Nijmegen. While more citizens and visitors will know about the Roman history of the city, or the bombing of Nijmegen in the Second World War, very few have probably heard of Princess Theophanu, who is not visible in the city anywhere else. The same goes for the depiction of the Peace Treaty of Nijmegen. The painting shows a fountain with wine, right on the main square of the city. This can stimulate your imagination and tell you more about the people who lived here before, and what they did to celebrate.

The creation of new associations with a place was also mentioned by Remco Visser and Sander Dolstra. By being able to share a common history with those around you also in the city, you create a shared narrative. It can also be a way to stimulate more interest in these stories depicted and leave you wanting to learn more. I have noticed this myself during the writing of this thesis. By learning more about the city I live in, I view Nijmegen in a different way than before. Certain street names or other things visible in public space suddenly make sense. An example is the street name ‘Achter de Wiemelpoort’, which sounds a bit funny, until you learn that it references the old city walls, that are not visible anymore now. By learning more about our surroundings, we can appreciate and understand them better (Interview Remco Visser, 11/05/22; Interview Sander Dolstra, 08/06/22).

Another effect is achieved when reading the signs of the mural, or maybe when reading an interview about it. The murals are all made by local artists and mostly funded by actors in the local community. Giving these people a stage can help to get them more attention, which is especially relevant for artists wanting more work, or local communities who would like more interested members.

5. Conclusion

This conclusion will answer the research questions asked in chapter one. First the sub-questions are answered, before using this information to answer the main research question. These sub-questions are:

In what way can murals tell the history of a place?

How can murals be seen as a practice of creative placemaking?

How does creative placemaking contribute to creating a sense of place?

These questions will be answered by using the Waalpaintings project as a case-study. Here we can see how murals play a role in depicting the history of the city of Nijmegen. Through depicting a history, a shared narrative of the city can be found. This narrative is also found in museums, or history books, when you specifically decide to research it. By using murals, history is shown in a different way than before, even when just taking a walk around the city centre. As McCarthy (2006) has shown, this can then provide a basis for reflecting the local identity of a city outwards, and a basis for increasing social cohesion and quality of life for inhabitants inwards.

These murals do not only have a power through their depiction of history. There is a second inherent quality as well, namely that of the art. By showing how spaces can be transformed, when a blank wall is turned into a mural, the visitors of this space have a different experience. They now have a memory attached to this place and have different feelings and emotions that would not be there if it were just a blank wall. This is then an example of creative placemaking.

The aim of placemaking is to create a place that people want to be in. The definition of place used here is that of De Certeau, who shows us that a place is a practiced space (Duff, 2010). This means that a place is lived-in, meaningful and affective. These three identifiers then correspond with the variables that constitute sense of place, as defined by Jorgensen and Stedman (2001). A sense of place is therefore created when we have place attachment, place identity and place dependence. When practicing creative placemaking, the aim is to support communities to turn their spaces into places. The four aims here are provided by Calderon and Takeshita and are to “(1) imagine the future and remember the past; (2) advance equity; (3) help people build stronger relationships; and (4) support cross-sector collaboration and impact (Calderon & Takeshita, 2020).

When combining this theoretical knowledge with the results of the case-study, the main research question can be answered:

How does creative placemaking in the form of history-depicting murals contribute to sense of place in the city of Nijmegen?

The Waalpaintingsproject is not only aimed at making pretty murals for an audience to look at. It also works with local artists and sponsors to create these murals and uses the history of the city to change our ideas about the city of Nijmegen. By seeing this history in a new way and in new locations, our views of the city can change. An example is the story of princess Theophanu. While

some inhabitants of Nijmegen who are very interested in history might have known about her before, she now presides on a twelve by seven meters large mural on a prominent location in the city. This sparks an interest in why this painting is here, and what this might have to do with the city. If you then decide to read the sign attached, you can find out that the chapel in the park behind you was dedicated to this princess. Now, every time you walk past it, you can associate different things with your city then before.

This can be seen as creating a sense of place. A previously unremarkable space is turned into a place that you want to look at and can be curious about. This means that a space has turned into a practiced space, or one that is lived-in, meaningful and affective. It is lived-in when you decide to discuss the painting with someone near you. It is affective when you have certain feelings about the mural, whether you find it beautiful or not. Finally, it is meaningful when you decide to do some more research about the mural and maybe read the sign or the website about it.

Turning a blank wall into a mural therefore can contribute to gaining a sense of place. Out of the three constituents of sense of place, place attachment and place identity are most prevalent. The factor of place dependence, while important in understanding sense of place, remains largely unchanged when considering the Waalpaintingsproject. By doing a tour past the different murals, we might visit places we otherwise would not, but a mural is not very likely to change our behaviour otherwise. We can however gain place attachment, because we now have an affective or emotional response to a certain space. Place identity is also gained when we change our beliefs and perceptions about his space. By seeing the mural of princess Theophanu, we now know more about the city of Nijmegen than we did before. The city is perceived slightly different and our thoughts and feelings about it are now also different.

This is the entire aim of creative placemaking as Markusen and Gadwa first put it: *"In creative placemaking, partners from public, private, non-profit, and community sectors strategically shape the physical and social character of a neighbourhood, town, city, or region around arts and cultural activities. Creative placemaking animates public and private spaces, rejuvenates structures and streetscapes, improves local business viability and public safety, and brings diverse people together to celebrate, inspire, and be inspired."* (Markusen and Gadwa, 2010, p.3).

By this definition, the Waalpaintings project is a local community initiative that changes the way in which we see the places around us. Alleys such as the Hendrikhof, with the Valkhof on Fire and Emerging City murals, that were previously not very nice to be in and a bit grim, are now rejuvenated and turned into a positive place. By showing our local history, the city of Nijmegen and stories from the past are celebrated in the case of the 'Centre of Europe' mural, or remembered and dwelled upon in the case of 'The Bombing' mural.

While not all of the variables are equally represented, the Waalpaintings project can still be seen as a part of creative placemaking. It might not have a large impact on the local economy or change the entire feeling and character of the city, but that is also not the point of the project. Creative placemaking and sense of place are not one-size-fits-all concepts and are manifested differently in each city or town. This also means that a wide range of initiatives can be analysed using these terms. Whenever and wherever people decide to collaborate with their local community to creatively turn their spaces into places they want to be in, we can see a bit of creative placemaking. The Waalpaintingsproject has done this in Nijmegen and uses their murals of the history of the city to create an even better city for all of us.

6. Discussion

This chapter contains a critical analysis of the limitations of the research and presents recommendations for future research.

6.1 Limitations of research

This thesis has shown how the Waalpaintings project can be seen as improving sense of place in Nijmegen, as a creative placemaking project. This expands on the currently available research, as no study has been done into this in Nijmegen before. There are however some limitations that will now be discussed, which in turn provide potential starting points for new research.

While the research question was able to be answered, there are some gaps in the thesis that could have been filled better. These exist due to the project not being finished yet, or practical complications. Firstly, no research could be done into what feedback the project as a whole has had. Because the project is still ongoing, conclusions can only be drawn from the eight currently finished murals. This also meant that the scope of the research changed throughout. When starting this thesis, only four murals were finished, now there are eight. This does allow to go more into the process of creating, and actually interviewing the artists on site while working. It however prevents from reflecting on the process as a whole, and the potential future impact remains uncertain.

Another factor had to do with the limited amount of interviews held. After two with different artists, and one with initiator Erika Manders, I felt as if I had understood the project. When combined with researching the project online, on the website and social media, the story felt complete. Additional interviews might however have helped to cross-compare answers, and provide a more solid scientific basis for claims, instead of basing them on a single interview. The potential range of people to be interviewed was however very small, and it did not seem like more interviews would provide new information. This also meant that the coding the interviews in Atlas.ti did not feel very useful, as this is probably more suitable to a larger dataset.

A third limitation lies in the core concept of creative placemaking. As this is still a relatively new term, there are varying definitions. This also has to do with the inherently spatial nature, no creative placemaking project is exactly the same, as all are in different locations. This means that the concept is a bit vague, and there will never be a clear delineation of what 'counts' or 'does not count' as a creative placemaking practice. I realized this when researching existing literature to apply to this specific case. Very little research has been done on history-depicting murals combined with creative placemaking in particular. This does mean that this thesis can provide new information, but also that finding existing literature to provide a framework was harder.

Finally, the process of writing the thesis itself was not very linear. After deciding to not finish the thesis during the initial timeframe and taking a break from studying entirely, it was difficult to get back into the writing. This has not helped the process, as it meant changing parts few and far in-between, with less of an overview of the entire project than I had at the beginning. I have tried to edit this out as much as possible in the final project, but can be difficult to see in your own work.

6.2 Future research

Potential future research can be done into a few different directions. With the project finished in the future, further research could focus more on the reception of the project as a whole. When a walking tour is connected to the murals, this might have implications for tourism in Nijmegen and ways of viewing the city. Other relevant future questions are of the preservation of the murals, or what happens when one has to be removed. This could be an interesting insight into the policies and legislation surrounding these murals in Nijmegen.

A second subject for further research can be found when expanding the scope. The Waalpaintings project was inspired by similar project in Utrecht and Leiden, which also aim to show science in murals. Both cities are also home to universities, and focusing on how this science can be shown to a general project could provide interesting data to other universities as well. By comparing these three projects, insight could be gained into what works, or doesn't work when the aim is to bring the universities' knowledge to others in the city.

Thirdly, more research can be done into what the viewer thinks about the murals of the Waalpaintings project. By interviewing spectators for example and comparing their views to each other. This could be a more quantitative research on what specific spectators look at and find important. Or it could be used to generate data on how familiar they already are with the history of Nijmegen, and if this for example differs based on age, or time spent in Nijmegen.

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Appendix

Appendix 1: Overview of the murals in the Waalpaintings project

Name of the mural	Artists	Location	Historical timeframe	Depictions	Sponsors
Finished murals					
The Bombing / Het Bombardement	Combolution	Scheidemakershof, next to Plein 1944	February 22 nd , 1944	Skyline of Nijmegen, and the city centre after the American bombing in 1944	Initiative of citizens, adopted by Waalpaintings
Nijmegen in Revolt / Nijmegen in Opstand	Remco Visser and Naamlouzz	Sint Thomashof	1 st century, and February 1981	The Batavi Revolt against the Romans on one side, and the squatters Riots, or Piersonriots on the other side	Initiative of citizens, adopted by Waalpaintings
Princess from the East / De Prinses uit het Oosten	Studio Hartebeest	Side of Holland Casino building, Veerpoorttrappen	10 th century	The life story of Byzantine princess Theophanu	Brediusstichting, Woodfield Nijmegen, Paintingcompany Maria Engels, Scaffolding Raymann, Holland Casino Nijmegen, Nedstede Group, Interscreen Advertising
Centre of Europe / Centrum van Europa	RoosArt and Combolution	Kerkegasje	17 th century	The signing of the Treaty of Nijmegen, and the following celebrations in the city	Crowdfunding
Oldest city in the Netherlands /	Collectief Verfbaar	Nieuwe Markstraat	1 st – 3 rd century	The Roman history of Nijmegen, including local	Municipality of Nijmegen

Oudste Stad van Nederland				archaeological artifacts	
Emerging City / Stad in Opkomst	Sander Dolstra and Combolution	Hendrikhof	13 th century	Henry the 7 th and Otto the 2nd, who ruled in the Middel Ages and gave Nijmegen city rights, the Saint Stevenschurch and the first city walls	Historical Association Numaga; Huis voor de Binnenstad; Municipality of Nijmegen
Walk of the World	Moris & Santo	Corner of Plein 1944 and Molenstraat	20 th and 21 st century	Army boots, symbolizing the Nijmegen Four Days Marches	Crowdfunding, Stichting DE 4DAAGSE
Valkhof on Fire / Valkhof in vuur en vlam	Sander Dolstra and Combolution	On the corner of Plein 1944 and Hendrikhof	9 th and 12 th century	Karel de Grote and Frederik Barbarossa, and a viking ship on a seperate wall	Historical Association Numaga; Huis voor de Binnenstad; Municipality of Nijmegen
Future murals					
Market Garden	?	Near information centre World War II	September 1944	Operation Market Garden	Municipality, ?
Six more future paintings	-	-	-	-	-