

**Bridging Emotions and Spaces:
The Philosophical Foundations of Arts
Experiences' Impact on Adult Emotional Values**

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PhD Art and Design

Approaches to Art & Design Research and Academic Communication
(ADAD7014)

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ABSTRACT

From a philosophical perspective, this study explores how art experiences affect the emotional value of adults in shared spaces in China's first-tier cities. This study examines the intrinsic connection between art, emotion and space from a dual ontological and epistemological stance. At the ontological level, the role of art as an emotional and cognitive vehicle was investigated. The impact of different art forms on adults' spatial perception and emotional feelings is also examined. At the epistemological level, it analyses how adults understand and experience art in shared spaces through sensory interaction with art. This process contributes to a deeper understanding of emotional value.

It also looks into the context of first-tier cities in China, discussing the potential contribution art experiences may make to emotional regulation and social connection in fast-paced, high-density urban environments. In such cities, shared spaces usually carry complex social functions. Art, as an emotional empowerment tool, not only reduces the stress of urban life but also promotes community identity and emotional resonance. This study will probe into such dynamic relationships of art, emotion, and space through a literature review and construction of a theoretical framework. It exposes a complex relationship between art and emotional value based on logical reasoning and systematic analysis.

This research will theoretically support the study of art and spatial emotion and provide a philosophical basis for exploring how to enhance the emotional value of urban shared space through art. This philosophical reflection and analysis will deepen not only the understanding of the role of art in this context but also provide new perspectives and possibilities for future practice in related fields.

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

In recent years, shared spaces have received much attention depending on the geographical and cultural context and application scenarios. Initially, public spaces such as parks, squares and markets focused mainly on functionality to facilitate trade, transport or essential socialisation (Carmona, 2003). However, with the influence of urban planning and sociological and cultural studies, public spaces have gradually transformed into shared spaces focusing on social functions and resource utilisation. For example, co-working spaces are workplaces and promote socialisation and collaboration (Brown and Davis, 2020, pp. 25-36). Community-shared spaces such as gyms, meeting rooms, and cultural centres have become important platforms for promoting residents' leisure, social interaction, and cultural exchange (Jones, 2018, pp. 89-102). Places such as coffee shops and public libraries also increasingly focus on designing shared spaces to meet diverse needs (Taylor, 2021, pp. 34-46). However, shared spaces still have limitations on a psychological and emotional level. Many spaces ignore the emotional needs of users, lack humane design, and struggle to provide a relaxing or stimulating experience, making it difficult for users to establish a sense of belonging within them (Gehl, 2010). Early on, theorist Jane Jacobs emphasised public spaces' social and emotional value, advocating for humane design and promoting community interactions to enhance well-being and inclusion (Jacobs, 1961). These early ideas laid the foundation for research on shared spaces and their emotional impact.

As urbanisation accelerates, China's first-tier cities face increasingly serious social problems while pursuing economic growth. These cities have attracted many people as economic and cultural centres, yet they have also brought tremendous pressure to live. Fast-paced lifestyles and high-pressure work environments have made many adults feel emotionally exhausted, and their emotional needs have become a pressing issue. Therefore, developing shared space is becoming crucial to help adults reduce these emotions. Not only does it need to fulfil the functional needs of the city, but it also needs to be a place that enhances people's emotional value. At the same time, incorporating art can further enhance the emotional value of shared spaces by providing ways to satisfy emotional well-being, build relationships, and bring warmth and humanity to busy urban life.

Worpole (2000) argues that shared experiences in public spaces can enhance emotional value. Thus, incorporating art into shared spaces transcends its functional purpose and transforms it into an emotional platform for people to engage, interact and reflect. In the fast-paced and high-stress urban life, art experiences provide adults with opportunities to connect with others, the environment, and the art form, bringing them solace, inspiration, and emotional resonance (Wang, 2019, pp. 45–60). Through multi-sensory experiences such as visual, auditory, and tactile, art can stimulate an

emotional response. A static sculpture or a dynamic multimedia installation can evoke inner pleasure or reflection. Multiple art forms can uniquely enhance an individual's sense of connection to their surroundings. In the hectic and high-pressure atmosphere of the city, there is a growing interest in the emotional value of art's interaction with shared spaces. Despite the gradual rise of art in urban design, little is known about how these art experiences affect the emotional well-being of adults, especially in the unique cultural context of China's first-tier cities (Zhang and Liu, 2022, p. 124). Therefore, it is of great practical importance to study the impact of art experiences on adults' emotional values.

1.2 Research Question

The central question of this study is how art experiences in shared spaces influence the emotional values of adults in China's first-tier cities. This study aims to reveal the dynamic interaction between art, emotional responses, and the socio-cultural context of urban shared spaces.

The paper first discusses the emotional reactions to art experiences. The specific feelings induced in adults during their contact with art in public spaces are researched, such as delight, nostalgia, serenity, or excitement. Second, it discusses how cultural and environmental contingencies impact individuals' understanding of the art. Such contingencies that shape these emotional responses derive from personal background, collective narratives, spatial design, and social climate. This explores further how these experiences enable adult emotional fulfilment and how art creates a sense of well-being, belonging, and connection with others in shared spaces. Pressing these issues, this research will develop insights into how the arts can enhance emotional value in China's vibrant first-tier cities and contribute to understanding the arts' role in improving life in urban centres.

1.3 Research Objectives and Significance

A key objective of the research was to examine the dynamics of the relationship between individuals and the arts in shared spaces and, in particular, how these interactions shape and influence emotional experiences. Specifically, the research explores how the character, design, and accessibility of art can facilitate emotional connections. For example, participatory or interactive art installations may evoke feelings of joy, curiosity, or identification. In contrast, static artworks embedded with historical or cultural context may inspire reflection, pride or nostalgia. By analysing these dynamic elements that influence the emotional experience, it is possible to identify factors that enhance the emotional value for adults.

Another goal is to explore the mediating role of shared spaces in emotional and artistic experiences. Shared spaces provide a physically and socially intertwined environment for individuals to engage

with the arts, which helps to facilitate their emotional exchange and experience. This research focuses on how spatial design, contextual layout, and cultural narratives interact and explores how these factors work together to shape the emotional needs of different populations. Considering the unique socio-cultural context of China's first-tier cities, the study further reveals how shared spaces shape and enhance emotional experiences in a rapidly modernising urban environment.

Ultimately, the study aims to provide actionable insights into the design and implementation of shared spaces to promote adult emotional values, cultural connections, and social inclusion. Integrating constructivist ontological and experientialist epistemological perspectives provides a comprehensive framework for how art and shared spaces can enhance adult emotional values. The findings are intended to inform urban planners, artists, and policymakers about creating emotionally resonant, culturally relevant public spaces that enrich the experiences of urban residents.

1.4 Road Map

This study begins with an introduction that includes the background, research questions, objectives and significance. The following section explores the role of ontology in the project study, focusing on analysing emotional value as an evolving concept through art and shared spaces. In addition, this thesis discusses from an epistemological perspective how adults derive emotional value from perceiving art through their senses and experiences. Afterwards, the study will discuss the interplay of these philosophical foundations and how they affect shared spaces. Finally, the concluding section summarises the study's findings and suggests ways art can enhance the emotional value of shared spaces.

ONTOLOGY

Ontology, the philosophical study of reality and existence, forms the basis of this research and not only influences the understanding of phenomena but also guides the design and methodology of the study. Ontology plays a key role in defining the nature of affective value and guiding the research design around the research question, 'How do art experiences in shared spaces affect the affective value of adults in China's first-tier cities?'. As Crotty (1998) points out, ontology defines the nature of research and influences the researcher's view of the real world and its place. Constructivism views reality as a socially and relationally constructed phenomenon. From this, emotional value is not an inherent or universal property of art or space but is dynamically constructed through interactions between individuals, art and shared space. Berger and Luckmann (1966) emphasise that reality is a social construct constantly shaped by human interaction and interpretation. People's emotional responses to public art in shared spaces vary due to differences in cultural backgrounds, personal experiences and environmental factors. For example, Maya Lin designed the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, DC, USA (Figure 1). Its historical and cultural significance evokes a deep sense of mourning and respect from many Americans. In contrast, international visitors may view it as a minimalist, abstract piece of art.

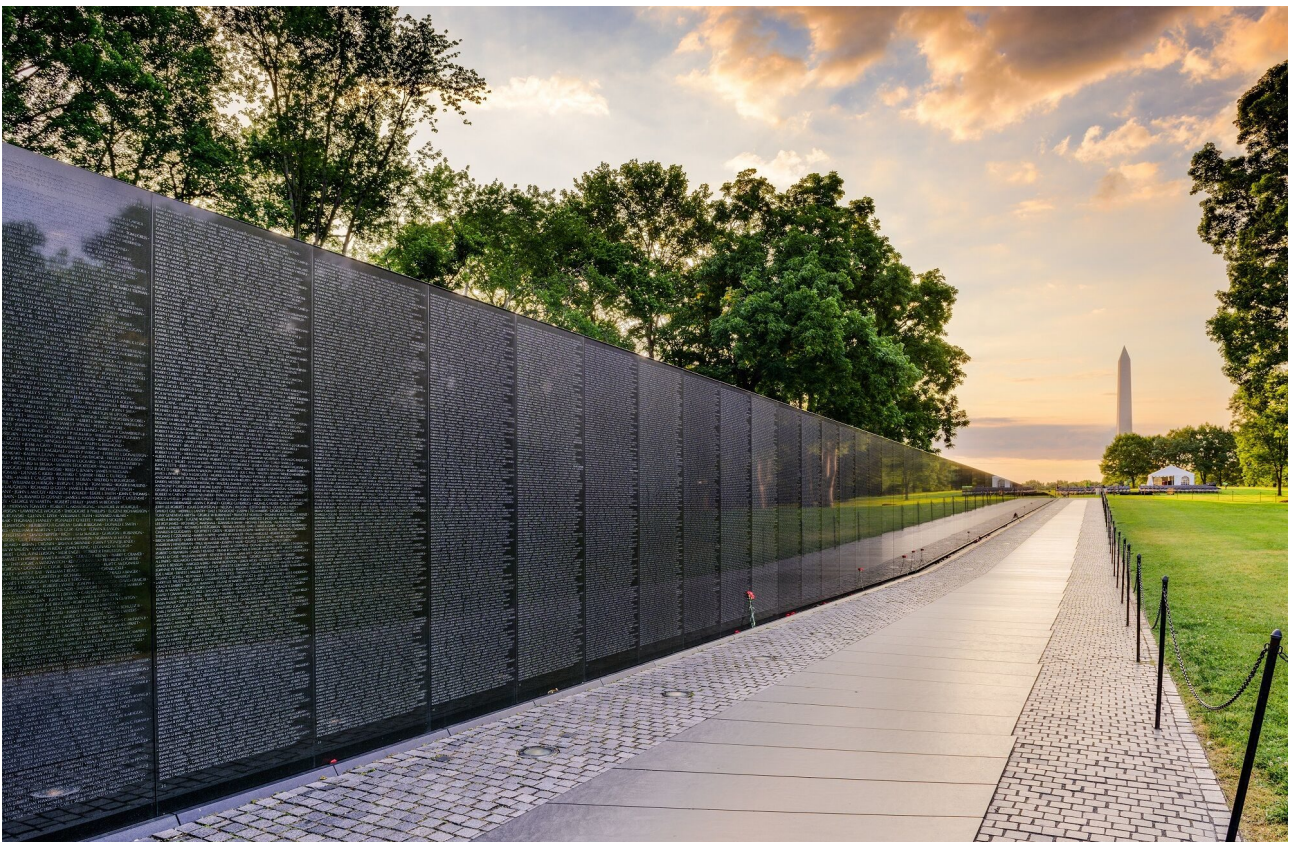


Figure 1 (Bell, 2019)

Similarly, the circular relief mural 'Ode to a Thousand Autumns in China' (Figure 2) at the China Millennium Monument in Beijing, China, features China's 5,000-year history of civilisation. It showcases the history and culture of the Chinese nation and inspires a deep resonance of national memory and cultural pride in Chinese audiences. By comparison, others may see it only as an aesthetic intervention in urban space. Thus, constructivism provides a theoretical basis for the research process and ensures that the research fully reflects the complexity of the research topic and its diverse cultural and social contexts.



Figure 2 (THE CHINA MILLENNIUM MONUMENT, 2019)

2.1 Constructivist Ontology: Emotional Value as a Dynamic Construct

This study takes a constructivist approach to the dynamic construct of affective value, explaining that the latter is produced through interactions between people, art, and shared spaces. Constructivist theorists like Vygotsky emphasise that meanings arise from social interactions and cultural contexts, locating affective value as a relational phenomenon rather than a static attribute (Vygotsky, 1978). This provides a valuable framework for considering how affective values are constructed in shared spaces. It also supports Lefebvre's assertion that space is a social creation, focusing on the active role of space in shaping human experience and interaction (Lefebvre, 1991). Here, the shared space mediates actively to enable people to interpret and co-construct emotional meanings for the art they experience.

Art is a cultural artefact and medium of emotional interaction whose impact is modified by design, placement and culture. Dewey (1934) argued that the added value of art lies in the meaningful experiences it creates by connecting personal interpretation to environmental interaction, thus making the emotional response to art an active participatory process. For instance, Anish Kapoor's 'Cloud Gate' in Chicago's Millennium Park (Figure 3) shows how spatial design and the environment can affect emotional responses. The reflective surface of the piece involves the viewer in capturing his reflection against the city skyline. The sculpture elicits wonder, awe, and joy. Visitors of all cultures can experience the interactive and changing qualities of the shared space. These responses illustrate the fluidity of emotional values, depending on personal interpretation and social dynamics. It also shows how the interplay between art design and the environment facilitates different emotional experiences.



Figure 3 (MILLENNIUM PARK FOUNDATION, 2024)

Shared spaces provide the physical and social environments for these interactions, shaping how art is experienced and amplifying or altering the emotional responses of those who experience it. Factors such as spatial design, social dynamics and cultural significance can influence the emotional impact of art. For example, the 'Red Ribbon' installation at Tanghe Park in Hebei Province, China (Figure 4), blends modern design with natural elements to create a space for visitors to interact with bright red structures amidst lush greenery. This interaction stimulates emotional responses such as serenity and harmony that co-form as visitors discuss or experience the installation together. Thrift (2004, pp. 57–78) points out the important role of spatial dynamics in shaping the emotional experience, particularly how key factors such as design, ambience and accessibility can subtly influence people's emotional values. For example, spatial design can stimulate specific emotions through colour, form and layout. Atmosphere, on the other hand, influences the overall feel of an experience through elements such as sound, light or ambient temperature. Accessibility determines how people approach and use these spaces, further shaping their emotional interactions. These dynamic elements work together to make spaces more than just physical environments; they are also important mediums for emotional and social communication. This illustrates how spatial environments and art actively mediate the co-construction of emotional values.

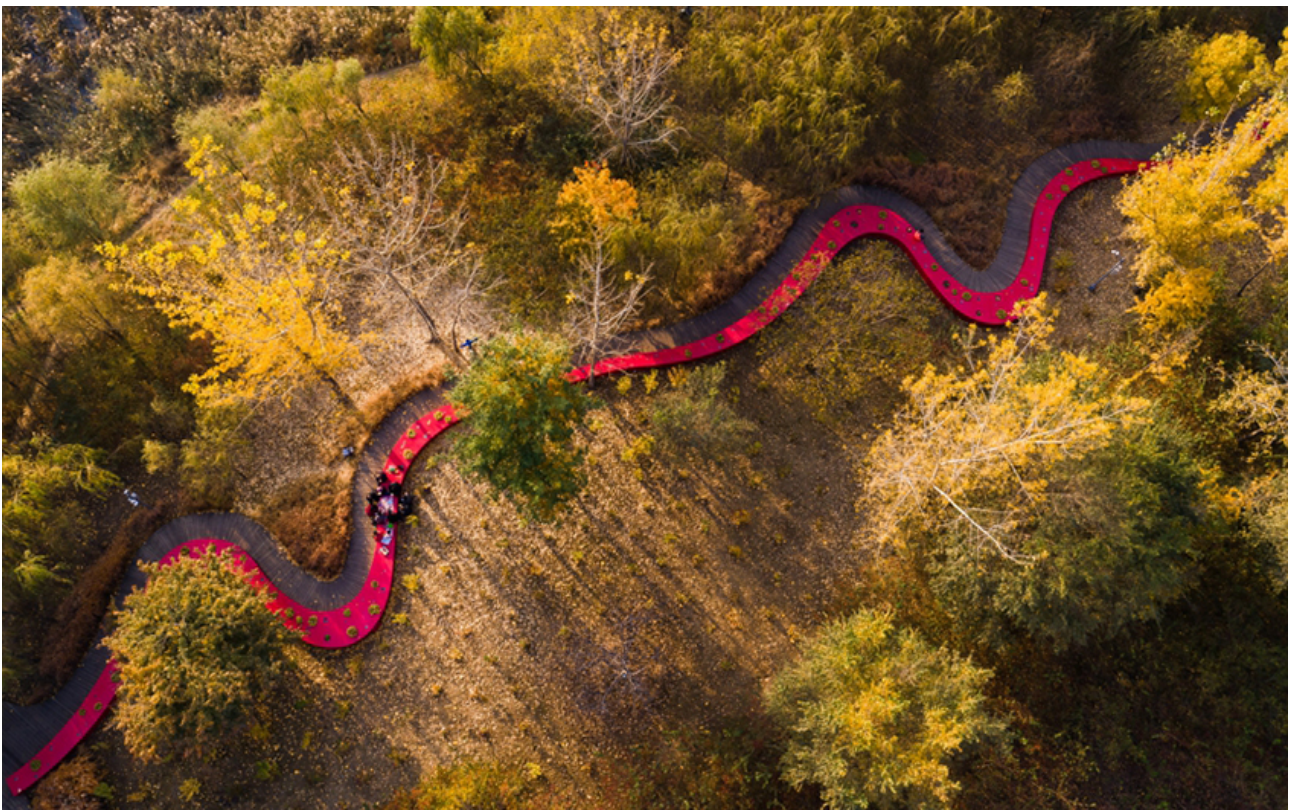


Figure 4 (TURENSCAPE, 2009)

Based on analysing emotional interactions in shared spaces, this study further explores the fluid and co-constructive nature of emotional values from a constructivist perspective. It focuses on elucidating how spatial, artistic and social dynamics intertwine to influence the generation of emotional experiences. This study fits a constructivist understanding of emotional value as a fluid and co-constructed phenomenon. This approach facilitates research at the intersection of urban design, public art, and emotional engagement while reinforcing the central role of context in understanding human experience (Gehl, 2010). Emotional value is a collaborative process shaped by art, social interaction and environmental context. Shared spaces thus become dynamic environments where individuals co-construct emotional meaning through participation in the arts. This perspective enriches this study by emphasising the interdependence between individual interpretation and collective meaning construction. It helps to reveal how adults in the socio-cultural framework of China's first-tier cities enhance emotional value through art experiences in shared spaces.

2.2 The role of Embodied Cognition Theory in art Experience: Co-Construction of Bodily and Emotional Values

To gain a deeper understanding of the process of generating emotional value, it is necessary to explore it from multiple perspectives. Under the framework of constructivism, embodied cognition theory serves as an important complement to explain how the body shapes affective values through its interaction with the environment. Moreover, it reveals the body's central role in constructing emotions. Constructivism emphasises that emotional values are generated through the interaction of individuals, art and shared spaces. However, embodied cognition theory further clarifies the role of the body and senses in this interaction. Embodied cognition theory suggests that emotions are not just a product of the brain but are shaped through the body's perceptual and motor responses in conjunction with the interaction with the environment (Johnson, 2007). This theory provides a physiological dimension to understanding the construction of emotion in art experiences, especially in shared spaces where the physical interaction between the artwork and the viewer co-generates the emotional experience.

In the art experience, bodily perception and movement are not mere reactions but are important components of emotional construction. The viewer experiences the form, colour, sound and other elements of art through the senses, and these perceptions form the basis of emotional value (Gallagher and Zahavi, 2008). For example, Yayoi Kusama's Infinity Room installation at the Louisiana Museum of Modern Art in Denmark (Figure 5) provides a thought-provoking case study. Visitors enter a mirrored space filled with light and water, where the boundaries between the individual and the environment become blurred. This sensory immersion deeply engages the body. Visitors described stronger emotions of awe, serenity, and even vulnerability as their visual and motor systems adapted to the space's altered dynamics (Munroe, 2012). The repetitive patterns and

reflective surfaces triggered a sense of infinity, creating a physical sensation of weightlessness and wonder. This interaction emphasises Lakoff and Johnson's (1999) assertion that cognition and emotion are grounded in bodily experience. The body is not only a vehicle for perceiving art. It actively generates a rich emotional experience through dynamic interaction with the artwork.



Figure 5 (Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, 2025)

Embodied cognition theory emphasises that the construction of affective experiences depends not solely on cognitive processes but is generated through bodily perception, movement, and interaction. By combining constructivism and embodied cognition theory, this study can more comprehensively describe the process of generating emotional values in art experiences. The interaction between art and space collectively shapes the fluidity and dynamics of emotional value through bodily engagement and sensory responses. This provides new perspectives and approaches to studying art design, shared space, and emotional engagement (Varela, Thompson and Rosch, 1991).

2.3 Motivation and Context of Research from a Constructivist Perspective

Based on a constructivist ontological stance that emphasises contextualisation and diversity, this study focuses on how art experiences in shared spaces construct emotional value in dynamic social and cultural contexts. As urbanisation accelerates, shared spaces for emotional well-being and community building are becoming increasingly important (Cuthbert, 2016). This study was chosen as a researcher because it fits an academic interest and responds to the pressing social issues currently facing China's first-tier cities. By exploring how art can enhance the experience of shared spaces, this research promotes the development of more inclusive and emotionally resonant urban environments on both theoretical and practical levels. For example, Beijing's 798 Art District (Figures 6 and 7) combines industrial heritage with contemporary art to create an artistically valuable shared space and promote emotional community connection (Zhao and Goh, 2018, p. 2563).



Figure 6 (Laura, 2019)



Figure 7 (Laura, 2019)

Although there have been many studies on the functionality and aesthetics of shared spaces, less attention has been paid to their emotional impact, especially in China's rapid urbanisation. Therefore, this study will focus on how art experiences can transform shared spaces into emotional cores, thus triggering emotional resonance among urban populations. It aims to fill the gaps in the existing literature by focusing specifically on China's dynamic urban environments and exploring how art can improve people's experiences in shared spaces and promote emotional connections.

EPISTEMOLOGY

Epistemology studies how people perceive, interpret and understand the world and profoundly influences the direction and approach of this study. From an epistemological perspective, the impact of art experience on emotion suggests that knowledge is not acquired in a fixed way but is subjective, changeable, and built up over time through personal feelings and experiences. As John Dewey (1934) articulated in *Art as Experience*, Experientialism argues that knowledge is produced through sensory, emotional, and participatory interactions with the world. Produced. This view sees art as a process rather than a singular event, evolving through perceptual and emotional interactions. Emotional responses evoked by works of art vary according to an individual's background, experience and emotional state. Mikhail Bakhtin's (1981) references to situatedness and dialogicity also illustrate the diversity and fluidity of knowledge and emotions. By emphasising lived experience, this study captures how people derive meaning from their interactions with art. This aligns with Fischer-Lichte's (2008) view that performance and interaction facilitate transformative understanding. This approach emphasises how perception and understanding are shaped through direct engagement, providing deeper insights into human interaction with art and shared spaces.

3.1 Experientialist Epistemology: A Foundation for Understanding Emotional Values

From an epistemological perspective, experientialism argues that knowledge is acquired from thinking, the body's senses, emotions, and direct experience. In shared spaces, this perspective emphasises the importance of direct engagement with the physical and social environment to acquire knowledge and meaning (Fischer-Lichte, 2008). Art in shared spaces is a medium through which adults can be exposed to new perspectives, confront emotional states and make meaningful connections with their surroundings. Through interactive installations, murals or performances, people can participate as passive observers and active participants. It embodies the experientialist idea that knowledge is co-created through interaction in life. For example, the immersive art installation 'Rain Room' exhibited in Shanghai (Figure 8) invites participants to walk through heavy rain without getting wet. This experience not only stimulates users' curiosity and inquisitiveness but also allows people to think deeply about issues of control and vulnerability in shared urban spaces.

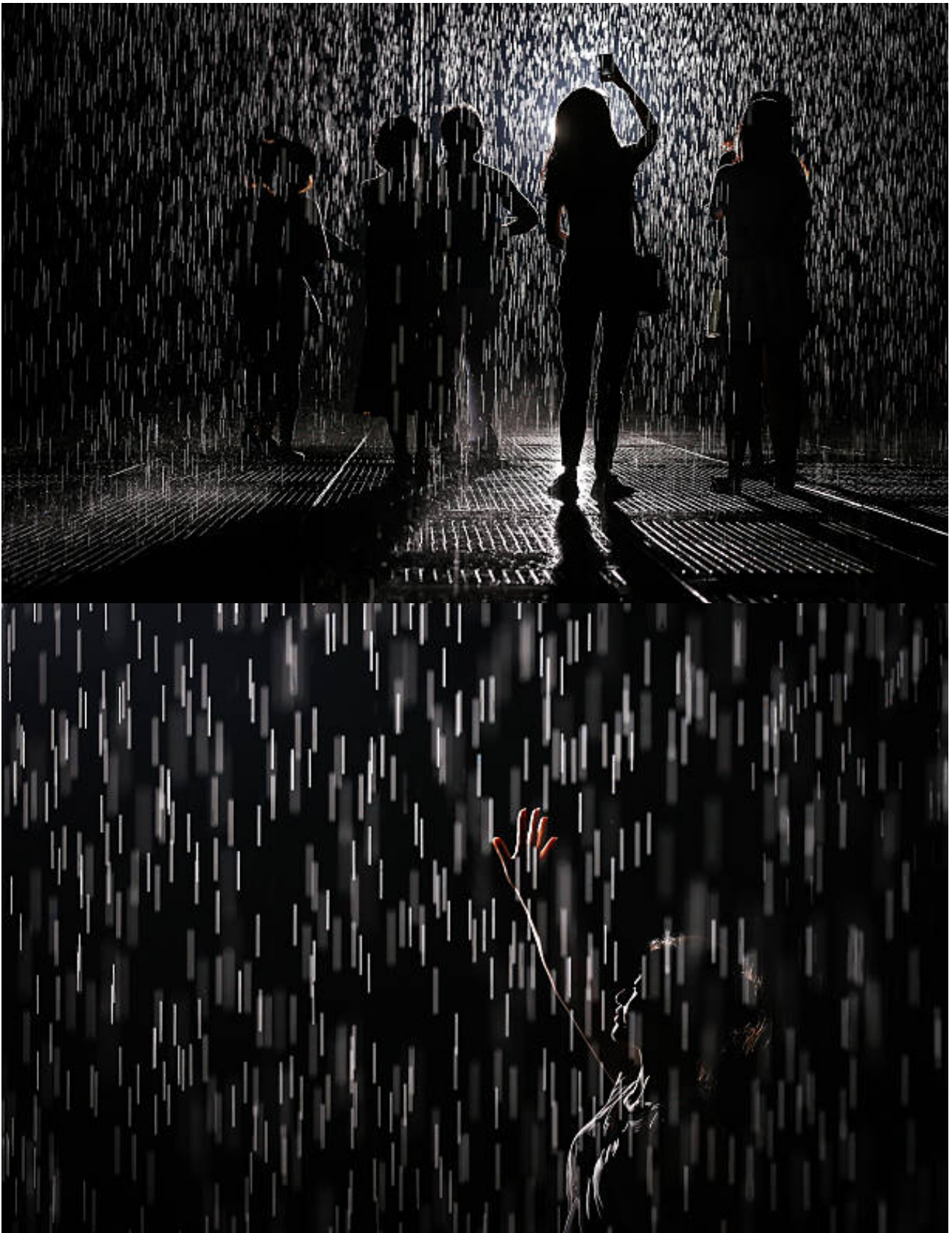


Figure 8 (VCG, 2015)

3.2 Acquiring Knowledge through Art Experiences in Shared Spaces

3.2.1 Artistic and Emotional Value in Shared Space

In shared spaces, people learn about art through experience. This type of learning can go beyond the traditional mediums of text or sound and act directly on the senses and emotions of the participants. For example, public art often uses sculpture or installation art to provide a deep emotional experience by connecting historical and social contexts through narrative elements (Miles, 1997). Such art forms are more than simple ornamental objects. They can provoke viewers to think about and empathise with social issues. As Zebracki (2017) points out, art helps to stimulate people's intrinsic motivation and gives them new cognitive perspectives by encouraging emotional engagement and active experience. Thus, experiential art education stimulates emotional and thinking activities through a multidimensional approach to perception.

3.2.2. Emotional Connection and Public Art

The user experience in a shared space depends on how people interact with the environment. When art is added thoughtfully, shared spaces can evoke an emotional connection. Art not only enhances the aesthetic quality of a space but also brings people closer to their surroundings on an emotional level. For example, the public art installation at the Guangzhou Interactive Light Festival (Figure 9) creates opportunities to share joy and build emotional connections through interactive design. This kind of art enhances the aesthetic attributes of the space and combines the artistic experience with social functions, reflecting the more profound value of public art. Through these forms, art gives shared spaces a more substantial social meaning and emotional dimension. It has become essential for deepening cultural experience (Han and Worrall, 2021). Thus, forming emotional connections relies on artistic design and direct interaction between the participants and the environment, further deepening the emotional value.



Figure 9 (GDToday, 2024)

3.2.3 Artistic Interaction and Inspiration

The dynamic nature of art provides a space of exploration for those who experience it, leading to breakthroughs in perception and cognition through the stimulation of an ever-changing environment. The digital art exhibition at TeamLab Borderless in Tokyo (Figure 10) is a case in point. Its design breaks traditional art boundaries through immersive light and shadow interactions (Fischer-Lichte, 2008). This art form inspires visitors and leads them into a state of reflection and innovation through multi-level stimulation of the senses (Anastasi, 2020). Due to this inspirational nature, art in shared spaces shows a strong potential to provide more possibilities for future social interaction and innovation.

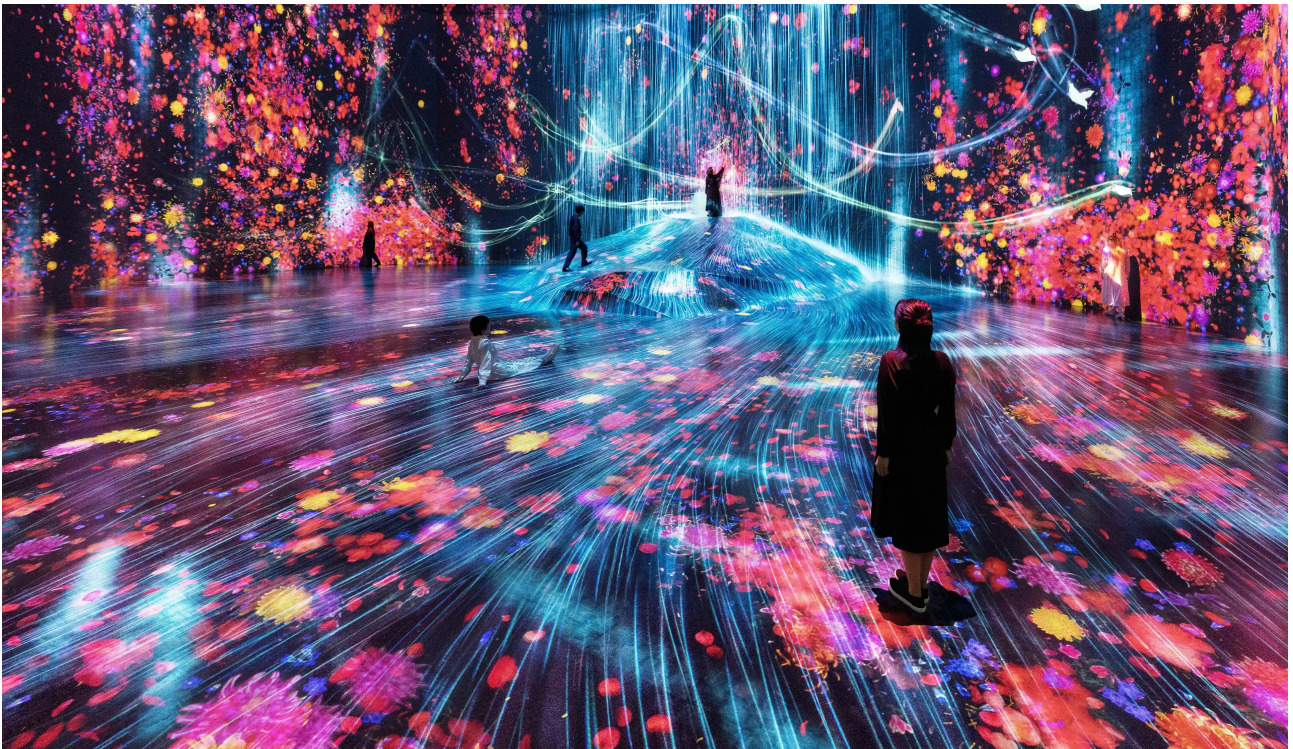


Figure 10 (TeamLab, 2023)

In short, the art experience in shared spaces enhances emotional connections and inspires people to think about issues in a new light. This experience-centred art form provides adults with multiple values, from personal to social, through multi-level sensory stimulation and interactive design. In the future, art forms in shared spaces will need further to emphasise close integration with the environment and emotions to achieve a more integrated social effect.

3.3 In the Service of Research: Linking Philosophy and Practice

Experientialist epistemology offers a perspective based on experience and perception when examining the impact of art on the emotional value of public space. According to Dewey (1934), research is not just a matter of abstraction but of lived experience and user perception. As part of the empirical world, it has significantly impacted the design and utilisation of art spaces from a practical perspective. With this knowledge, urban planners, designers and policymakers can design shared spaces that value emotional engagement and community well-being. For example, participatory art projects can be induced to enhance user agency and a sense of ownership or attachment to the space. As mentioned above, the design of Beijing's 798 Art District demonstrates the effectiveness of this approach. It combines art exhibitions, interactive workshops, installations, and other art form experiences to transform an industrial area into a vibrant centre for art and culture. These experiences witness user feedback's emotional and social value, proving that art can enrich urban life (Han and Worrall, 2021). However, not everyone can participate in the arts experience in shared spaces. Cultural relevance, income level, and personal taste affect people's perception of and participation in art. Additionally, when used commercially, art can detract from its emotional value in some urban areas (Hawkins, 2015, pp. 247–268).

This research examines how art experiences in shared spaces in first-tier cities in China influence the emotional values of adults from an experientialist epistemological perspective. It provides insight into how lived experience can inform knowledge, user experience, and inspiration. The approach is straightforward and easy to understand and enhances the emotional effect of urban shared spaces. Art is one of the most engaging ways to transform ordinary spaces into vibrant, emotionally rich communities. It connects people and to the place in general. Therefore, this research helps us understand how art impacts the emotional value of shared spaces and lays down practical guidelines for future design and urban planning.

EXPLORING THE ONTOLOGY, EPISTEMOLOGY, AND VALUES INTERPLAY IN SHARED SPACES

4.1 Shaping Values and Practice: Exploring Emotion and Inclusivity in Shared Spaces

The values of this study are rooted in a commitment to enhancing well-being in urban environments and promoting shared spaces that are inclusive and culturally relevant. Emotional well-being is prioritised as a core outcome, highlighting how art can provide moments of reflection, connection and solace in the environments of China's first-tier cities. Inclusivity is another key value ensuring shared art spaces are open to diverse populations. This research explores how art experience in shared spaces affects emotional values, making an important contribution to the academic, practical and social spheres. Regarding scholarship, the study combines constructivist ontology, embodied cognition theory ontology and experientialist epistemology. It deepens understanding of how emotions are co-constructed through interactions between individuals, art and spatial environments. By integrating sensory and social dimensions, the research provides a nuanced framework for analysing the emotional complexity of art experiences in urban environments. In practice, the research provides actionable insights for urban planners, artists and policymakers to design shared spaces that enhance emotional value. By emphasising inclusivity and cultural relevance, the research highlights strategies for creating spaces adaptable to diverse populations and reflecting local identities. These findings are crucial for fostering a sense of belonging and connection in rapidly urbanising cities. In these cities, emotional interaction with public spaces can reduce the stresses of modern life. From a societal perspective, this research responds to the growing demand for environments prioritising human connection, emotional well-being and cultural continuity. Shared art spaces can serve as platforms for reflection and engagement that strengthen community cohesion. By revealing the interplay between art, space and emotional values, this study emphasises the transformative potential of art to enrich urban life and promote inclusiveness in diverse societies (Sennett, 2018).

4.2 Interplay Between Ontology, Epistemology, and Values

This present study is grounded in the constructionist ontology and experientialist epistemology in helping to understand how art experience in shared space changes the emotional values of adults in urban environments. According to constructivism, people create their reality through interaction with others within a cultural context. It denies the existence of one objective truth. Instead,

dynamics within people's relations mould reality (Vygotsky, 1978). Experientialism corroborates this view by postulating that our reductive thoughts and emotions flow from our lived and sensory experiences (Dewey, 1934). Hence, knowledge and emotions are not abstract concepts but intrinsic parts of our everyday physical experience. Embodied cognition theory reinforces this idea by explaining how the body and senses inform and influence our artistic experiences. It will show how bodily responses to art can influence emotions, adding another layer of meaning to understanding art in shared spaces.

This study explores core values of emotional well-being, inclusivity, and cultural relevance, which are important for the theoretical ideas above. In combination, they guide how research is done. Through the aforementioned lenses, its results give a complex understanding of the nature of art experiences and their cultural significance in shared urban spaces. The research shows how it assists persons in connecting emotionally. It also demonstrates how art could make shared spaces more inclusive. This study hypothesises that arts experiences invite all people to participate through inclusive design, help different groups make emotional connections and create a sense of belonging by reflecting local history and culture. The theories and values combined in this research provide a complete framework for exploring how art can shape the emotional value of shared spaces. These perspectives highlight how art can influence emotional connections and foster a sense of inclusion and belonging in urban environments. This framework helps better understand art's role in shaping shared spaces' emotional dynamics (Kwon, 2002).

4.3 Exploring the Emotional Value of Art in Shared Spaces: The Impact of Design, Experience, and Technology on Social Connection and Well-being

Future research on the long-term emotional impact of shared art could be considered using longitudinal studies. For instance, explore longitudinally how persons' repeated contact with art in these contexts affects them emotionally and makes them feel their connectedness in the community. This research would better explain the values of shared art spaces in society. This study also could be extended to smaller-scale urban or rural settings for newer insights. It would be intriguing to see how different social, economic, and cultural factors affect people's emotional responses to art. Different patterns may emerge in different areas, thus giving a fuller picture of how context shapes emotional experiences with art. Future research might also use new technologies to explore these issues further. Digital technologies, such as AR and VR, could offer new ways to engage people emotionally with art. Such technologies create new experiences in shared spaces and can change how people interact with and feel about art. Research into these technologies will open up new ways of understanding emotional engagement in art spaces.

This research illustrates how ontology, epistemology, and values are related to help explain the way art in shared spaces influences people's emotional responses. The research process for this project drew on constructivism's notions of reality creation through social interaction and experientialism's emphasis on the role of personal experience in the constitution of knowledge and emotion. The current study also investigates embodied cognition theory, emphasising how the body and senses shape our emotional responses. These theories, taken together, accentuate how the design is emotionally valuable and inclusive, thus culturally relevant to creating art spaces. The research focus enables theorising on the emotional effects of arts. Further research, such as prospective studies following adults over time and using new digital tools in research. These will contribute to a deeper understanding of how art experiences in shared spaces affect people's emotional values and aspects of social impact.

CONCLUSION

This study investigates the emotional value of adults in first-tier cities in China, which is influenced by experiencing art in shared spaces. This research combines constructive ontology, the theory of embodied cognition, and an experientialist epistemology to gain insight into the interaction between art, space, and emotions. The study puts forward that the role of art is not restricted to aesthetic pleasure but is significant in constructing emotional responses and developing attachment to the environment.

Thus, emotional value comes into being and is constituted, from a constructivist point of view, through interaction by and between individuals, art, and the environment. Indeed, the study illustrates how cultural background, personal experiences, and the social context of the space influence the emotional reactions of subjects. This suggests that emotional value would become dynamic, changing within each context to express diversified human experience within different shared spaces. Embodied cognition theory adds even more value to the study by focusing on the importance of the body in the process of emotions. Art is not only seen or observed; instead, it is also physically engaged with. The interaction between the body and the artwork influences how emotions are felt. Emotional responses are grounded in bodily perceptions and movements, which show that emotions are not only a mental process but are shaped through sensory and physical engagement with the art and space. The experientialist epistemology approach holds that lived experiences construct emotions and knowledge. Art speaks to people's senses and emotions within shared spaces, making deeper connections and understanding possible. In this way, individuals' interaction with art enables a far richer emotional engagement and lays the basis for personal reflection and insight.

This research contributes to both theoretical and practical understanding. Theoretically, it brings together a variety of perspectives to show how emotional experiences in shared spaces are co-constructed. In practice, it guides urban planners and designers, emphasising the need for space development to be emotionally resonant and inclusive. Art can transform shared spaces, making them more interactive and emotionally relevant, which is key to improving the quality of urban life. Further research is needed to capture adults' long-term emotional responses after repeated art experiences in shared spaces. Vertical design can also be effective in modelling changes in interaction over time. Similarly, AR and VR may offer new modalities. Through these modalities, people will emotionally interact with art experiences in new ways and learn more about how these experiences affect emotional value.

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