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Abstract (Master Thesis)

As popularly mentioned, the successful practice of urban design and planning is limited when only designers and local business or governmental institutions participate in the design and implementation of public infrastructure, placemaking and policy development. Public design cannot be a one-time event nor permanently static because civic engagement ought to be a recurrent and consistent activity, in fostering the growth and sustainability of the community. Since the 1960s, there have been initiatives to democratize urban planning practices, and more recently, these initiatives have continued in this modality of citizen designer and empowerment through the implementation of media architecture, spatial blogging, and co-creation through crowdsourcing. As a conceptual framework and platform, the *Public Gratification Palace* suggests a co-creative design methodology to increase agency in the average person. Through cybernetic principles, this framework utilizes gratification methods akin to the ones used in social media to enhance user experience and continued participation. Geo-located instant gratification, as the process of attaching geographical metadata to digital media, will provide all stakeholders (e.g., local communities, spatial planners and designers, and city governments) with feedback, crowd approval/disapproval, and/or proposals for the design and implementation of public infrastructure as well as policies. Consequently, location-based social interactions and information exchange will increase in-situ civic engagement and community building through the networks of geo-tagging.

Preface (Master Thesis)

If the Fun Palace (1960-1976) –initiated by British theater director, Joan Littlewood (1914-2002), designed by British architect Cedric Price (1934-2003) and British cybernetician Gordon Pask (1928-1996) [1] –is understood as a muse for physical public infrastructure through Cybernetic System thinking, then the parameters of this cybernetic system could undoubtedly be incorporated in your smartphone today, such that the *Palace* would be the intersection between your smartphone and the neighborhood park, that unshaded plaza a few blocks away, or that train stop with a single bench. The *Palace* is the public at play; it is the natural derivative between *Public Space* and *Instant Gratification* methods used in social media platforms. The *Public Gratification Palace* can be wherever one may seek an instant gratifying, dopamine filled improvement on the public environment with their ever-engaging local community!