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## Art on the walls of the city: interview with the artist Kristin Jones

Street art is an artistic phenomenon that has grown into a multifaceted and lively artistic phenomenon happening in many different situations including the spontaneous and illegal appropriation of walls and surfaces. In recent years, thanks to the affirmation of this powerful and fertile artistic phenomenon in public spaces, there is new interest in works created for urban territory. Although it is important to point out the differences between public art and street art, it is important to emphasize how the context of city itself influences the phenomena of hybridization and fruitful exchange of themes in a given work. Disciplinary fields and artistic practices now trigger exchange and mutations with a continuous transformation of artistic expressions. Public art, like street art, provides artists, critics and spectators with opportunities to observe contemporary culture, using places that are more or less neglected in the city as a space for questioning

and exchange. Among the many artists working today on urban projects, Kristin Jones occupies a strong position for her sensitive site specific works that interpret and bringing out the artistic and poetic potential of an urban space. Her collaborative approach involves multidisciplinary teams of individual specialists and scholars as well as internationally renowned artists. The following interview here is a rare opportunity to reflect on the challenges and difficult path that led to the creation of the project with William Kentridge whom Jones had invited to collaborate in 2002.

**Keywords:**

Kristin Jones; public art; site specific; Rome; reverse graffiti

The city has always been a stage for the creation and enjoyment of public works of art. In recent years, thanks to the affirmation of a powerful and fertile artistic phenomenon in public spaces, there is new interest in works created for urban spaces. I am referring to what is popularly called 'street art', an artistic phenomenon that has grown into a multifaceted and lively artistic phenomenon happening in many different situations including the spontaneous and illegal appropriation of walls and surfaces. Authors Dal Lago and Giordano discuss the muralism and graffiti as a key component to hip hop culture in their 2016 *Graffiti. Arte e ordine pubblico*. Although it is important to point out the differences between public art and street art, (as can be seen in the important work on the different semantic aspects related to the use of the term "street art" by Ulrich Blanché (2015) which emphasizes the distinction already present in the seminal essay by Jean Baudrillard (1979), I want to emphasize how the context of city itself influences the phenomena of hybridization and fruitful exchange of themes in a given work.

Disciplinary fields and artistic practices now trigger exchange and mutations with a continuous transformation of artistic expressions. Public art, like street art, provides artists, critics and spectators with opportunities to observe and question contemporary culture and society, using places that are more or less neglected in the contemporary city as a space for questioning and exchange. If on the one hand street art is becoming more accepted through increasing dedicated exhibitions and sales (ex: Riva 2007; Lewisom 2008; Marziani 2008; Deitch 2011; Ciancabilla & Omodeo 2016), on the other hand public art is becoming closer through medium and visual language that is happening on the street such as reverse graffiti (Manco 2002).

Among the many artists working today on urban projects, Kristin Jones occupies a strong position for her sensitive site specific works that interpret and bring out the artistic and poetic potential of an urban space. Her collaborative approach involves multidisciplinary teams of individual specialists and scholars as well as internationally renowned artists.



Fig. 1 - View of the river Tevere looking to Ponte Mazzini (Photo G. Marino).

The American artist (BFA in Sculpture at the Rhode Island School of Design, MFA at the Yale School of Art and Architecture, winner of three Fulbright Fellowships and member of the American Academy in Rome) currently works in New York City where she deals with site-specific projects that question the dynamics between natural phenomena and the built environment. Jones came to Rome in 2000 where she founded and directed the Tevereterno project aimed at the adoption and revitalization a section of the Tiber between Ponte Sisto and Ponte Mazzini (fig. 1).

The choice of this stretch of the Tiber river is dictated by the fact that it is the only straight section

of the river within the city that surprisingly has the same proportions as the nearby Circus Maximus: the site is both natural and part of the historic city. Here the artist has identified in this place the possibility to reread and discover the identity and memory of the city otherwise ignored in daily life. The project, from which the non-profit association of the same name was born, becomes a space for ephemeral site-specific performances, a place of culture, an open-air museum of contemporary art and itself a work of public art. The artistic installations that have been created on the Tiber site are not ends in themselves but become an active part of a new dialogue between the city and art. The



Fig. 2 - Kristin Jones, *She Wolves on the Tiber*. Photo by Dylan Hazelhurst, 2005. Courtesy Kristin Jones (<http://www.eternaltiber.net/>).

Fig. 3, next page - Kristin Jones, *Wild Graces*, photo by T. Charles Erickson, 2006. Courtesy Kristin Jones (<http://www.eternaltiber.net/>).

very idea of the project is for citizens to regain possession of the river through artistic programming. Among the various initiatives that have happened across more than 16 years on the site that Kristin Jones calls "Piazza Tevere", we remember *She Wolves* (2005), a sequence of wolves taken from the Roman iconographic tradition and made on the walls of the Tiber with the technique of reverse graffiti (fig. 2); *Wild Graces* (2006), in which the hand-drawn animation of the wolves is then projected along the walls (fig. 3); *Wolflight* (2009), in which a series of silhouettes of she-wolves are made of thin aluminum foil adhered to the walls to dialogue with the tags and graffiti present (fig. 4). Among the initiatives of which Kristin Jones directed and organized, we remember: *Ombre dal Lupercale* (2006) (fig. 5); *Jenny Holzer - For the Academy* (2007) (fig. 6); *Flussi correnti* (2007) (fig. 7); *Chance Encounter* (2010) (fig. 8) until the last famous *Triumphs and Laments* (2016) by South African artist William Kentridge (fig. 9).

The following interview here is a rare opportunity to reflect on the challenges and difficult path that led to the creation of the project with William Kentridge whom Jones had invited to collaborate in

2002. After twelve years of sowing seeds and laying groundwork for the complex and delicate work within of the context of center of the historic city, the resulting work took more than four years to finally realize.

Although many Romans had encouraged Jones to forgo the challenging permitting process and create the work street art / guerrilla style, Jones was committed to involve the multiple public agencies who manage the Tiber so as to engage them in her optimistic vision for a future Tiber River Park that could host an ever evolving program of public art sanctioned by the public authorities.

#### THE INTERVIEW (2020-05-06)

GC: You've always dealt with art in public spaces, tell us how this passion of yours was born and, above all, why public spaces and the city?

KJ: Primarily, I've always lived in major cities, and so cities are my reference point. I also believe that art should be for everybody and I think that when a work is in the public one can be part of a real life experience of the work, the experience of a work

on a wall in a gallery is somehow less engaging. For me, a vital living city should have active public spaces where there's programming and interaction with people sharing experiences. Experiences must be shared, and they are augmented by sharing them. It is like love.

GC: When you design an art project, do you have in mind people and the way they are going to interact with the place?

KJ: Any given work that I have created evolves from the site and the people of the place. Nothing I have ever done it is like anything else, because no place or community is the same.

The work doesn't exist until I do a lot of research and begin to understand the place. The ultimate goal is always to awaken the sense of the place itself, the work is always about the identity of the place.

My work is never about me; it has to do with attempting to intuit what could not only belong and come from the place but really celebrate and magnify the place itself. It is not meant to be an imposition; it is meant to deal with context and raw materials that are there, expanding or exposing or magnifying what IS.



The question is always: What is this place? And could be there something that could awaken the place? So, the work that I do is a question of intuition.

GC: Let's talk about *Piazza Tevere*, how did the idea come about and how did it evolve across the time?

KJ: Rome is the greatest stage for the public, Rome is my greatest teacher. All of my work is in some way inspired by Rome, by the fantastic opportunity to come to Rome early on.

I've always been interested in public space. In 1983 I had just graduated from the school of Art and Architecture in Yale and won a Fulbright Fellowship to Rome. When I arrived, I started working for an architectural model maker, Lorenzo Salemmi, who had worked with his father and a whole team of people on the *Plastico di Roma Antica*, which is at the EUR. I would walk across Ponte Sisto every day, with the model of ancient Rome in my mind.

I noticed the grand open air site – a perfect rectangle, between Ponte Sisto and Ponte Mazzini, and started asking myself what the place could have been in antiquity. I noticed the forms of Teatro Marcello and roots of the ancient city of Rome evident in the contemporary city. The section of the Tiber that is absolutely straight, stirred my imagination, I was reminded of Piazza Navona.

I had a copy of Nolli map on the wall in my kitchen and one night, with a kitchen knife, I went to measure Piazza Navona and the location that I now call Piazza Tevere and then I went to Circus Maximus and was surprised!

I had access to the maps at the America Academy library in Rome and I was able to get a scale map from Lanciani plan to the *fotopiano di Roma* and I put them on top of each other and they matched perfectly! (fig. 10)

Later I learned that when embankment walls were built the site was so close to straight that the engineers decided to make it straight. It was a pure coincidence that the site was the same size as Circus Maximus. I imagined a grand scale open air water theater in antiquity, something like Piazza Navona, which they flooded with 10 cm of water, or like the Colosseum where there were also mock sea battles.

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Fig. 4 - Kristin Jones, *Wolflight*, photo by Marcello Melis, 2009. Courtesy Kristin Jones (<http://www.kristinandreaajones.com>).



Fig. 5 – Kiki Smith, *Wolf's Dream*, 2006. *Ombre dal Lupercale*. Courtesy Kristin Jones ([www.eternaltiber.net](http://www.eternaltiber.net)). Seven artist-composer pairs, curated and invited by Kristin Jones, worked independently, knowing the visual and sound works would be combined for the evening program on the Solstice. Artists: Kiki Smith, Kristin Jones, Francesca Fini, Roberto Catani, Maureen Selwood, Andrea Biagioni and Gabriele Manecchi, Daniel K. Brown and Erika Kruger. Composers: Eugenio Giordani, Roberto Laneri, David Monacchi, Nico Muhly, Alvin Curran, Walter Branchi.







The site fascinates me and made me see how neglected the river was, and how the site could become a wonderful open-air theatre in the very heart of the city. It could be a place for an ever-changing variety of ephemeral artistic projects as well as multiple recreational events.

GC: So, you were absolutely fascinated by this place but why did you decide to do something in this place? Did you want Romans to understand how wonderful the place they have?

KJ: I do not have to teach Romans anything, I am learning from Rome every day. I just felt so sad that there were so little opportunities for contem-

porary art in Rome. Rome is such a magnificent inspiration to the world, there are 29 foreign Academies, more than 50 American university programs; there are millions and millions of tourists coming to Rome for the beauty and inspiration and yet, there are very few opportunities for contemporary artists. Thanks to dear friend and urbanist, Rosario Pavia and others scholars at the University of La Sapienza I began to understand the scale of the opportunity and the problem that the Tiber is in the center of Rome. It actually does not have the history of the surrounding historic city because it was removed when the walls and the roadways were built. So, the Tiber scape is not a historic site to be preserved, it was all changed at the turn of the century.

Fig. 6, previous page - *Jenny Holzer - For the Academy*, photo by Attilio Maranzano, 2007. Courtesy Kristin Jones ([www.eternaltiber.net](http://www.eternaltiber.net)). The artist Jenny Holzer was invited by Jones and the American Academy in Rome to perform a one-night event at the river site. Scrolling projections of texts by international poets and writers, in both English and Italian, were cast along the Piazza Tevere's right bank.

Fig. 7 - Kristin Jones and Daniel K. Brown, *Flussi Correnti*, photo by Giacomo Fortunato, 2007. Courtesy Kristin Jones ([www.eternaltiber.net](http://www.eternaltiber.net)). Composition by Steve Reich, Nicola Sani, David Monacchi, Corrado Fantoni performed by Roman percussion ensemble Ars Ludi.

Within Rome it is the only major grand-scale opportunity to do something dramatic that could really be a resource that reconnects Rome to itself. I am not speaking only of having a bicycle path, I am speaking of actually creating events that are destinations that bring people together on the river. The opportunity of the Tiber within Rome seemed so daunting so enormous, that it seemed better to concentrate to just one section and slowly create free public events that draw people to the site at no cost.

The Tiber is such a great opportunity I imagined a collective work with the multiple foreign academies and institutions banding together to work on this fantastic urban project, the very spine of Rome!



Fig. 8 - *Chance Encounter*, Piazza Tevere, photo by Marco Martinelli, 2010. Courtesy Kristin Jones ([www.eternaltiber.net](http://www.eternaltiber.net)). After multiple conversations with Jones, Robert Hammond, co-founder of Friends of the High Line, placed 100 movable park chairs on Piazza Tevere documenting through time-lapse photography and video how people interacted with and used the chairs. Hammond later invited composer Lisa Bielawa to collaborate by transposing her musical composition *Chance Encounter* to the Piazza Tevere site, a work written expressly for performance in transient public spaces.

GC: The first work that you made on Piazza Tevere was *She-Wolves*, and it was incredible to see all these huge wolves on the walls of the banks. In this case, you used a particular kind of technique called 'reverse graffiti'. Can you talk about it?

KJ: I had never heard about 'reverse graffiti', for me, it was desperation!

By 2004 I was just beginning to understand the Tiber, the river, the politics, the complexity, the fact that there are 18 different agencies that paralyze the river, that there is even no support for contemporary art. I talked to Italia Nostra, to Mare Vivo, to FAI, to WWF, and Legambiente to try to convince them that art can be such an important mechanism for non-profit culture group to energize things. I sought out organizations that could support artists and backing public art projects at no cost to the citizens, but did not succeed.

At that time, I was energized by the figures of Christo and Jeanne-Claude. I had met Christo in 1979, when he came to talk in my university, the Rhode Island School of Design. I love the work Christo and Jeanne Claude do and the fact that they make their work as a gift. They raise the money themselves; he makes the drawings; she sells the drawings; what a fantastic team!

I had talked to Christo and Jean-Claude across the years. They encouraged me and always supported a number of projects I made in New York City.

In February 2004, I was in Rome, their project, *The Gates*, opened in Central Park and I went back to New York to see it. They had been working for 35 years to get the necessary permits! I was so energized by the phenomenon of the project, of the people walking in Central Park and of the millions of people coming to the city. It was an incredible cultural and social phenomenon. The project had a major impact on the city.

At the end of February, I returned to Rome and the river had flooded over the banks, it was a mess. I was walking along the Tiber and there were these guys from "Nettezza Urbana" with a huge hose and a generator. They were just hosing the water and the mud, back off of the walkways in to the Tiber. I looked up and saw Ponte Mazzini made of





Fig. 9 - William Kentridge, *Triumphs and Laments*, Rome 2016. Photo by G. Marino. The Triumphs and Laments frieze, a monumental 560 meter-long frieze depicting a silhouetted procession on Piazza Tevere, was inaugurated on April 21 with a public theatrical performance choreographed by William on original music by composers Philip Miller and Thuthuka Sibisi.

Fig. 10 - Circus Maximus - Piazza Tevere relation, photo composition by Giuseppe Marino, 2014. Courtesy Kristin Jones (www.eternaltiber.net).

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Fig. 11- First wolf figure test, 2005. Courtesy Kristin Jones (www.eternaltiber.net).

Fig. 12 - Different steps of the making of the she-wolves figures through masking and powerwashing, 2005. Courtesy Kristin Jones (www.eternaltiber.net).



white travertine and the wall in front of us that was black and I asked them: "If you turn that hose toward the wall, will it wash the wall?" And they turned the hose around facing the wall and all of a sudden, after a while, this little luminous sun appeared, and it was incredible! I talked to different conservators about how to clean travertine and I knew there were many different methods and materials. One day the restorer Will Shank met me on Ponte Sisto to talk about how to clean large figures on the walls with a very accurate image and, while we were talking, a team of workers for the city sanita-

tion department, AMA showed up on the bridge, a truck, generator and hose. They painted some product on the wall and washed away the graffiti. I said, "I think this is the answer, isn't it?" Shank agreed. I tried it myself, I cut out a piece of plastic with scissors, very quickly, making something that looked like a wolf, and I took an abrasive scrub pad and made my first image by cleaning! (fig. 11) I thought I invented reverse graffiti, for me it was a mix of desperation combined with the energy that I got from *The Gates* project that I brought to Rome. It was the perfect solution since there was no hope of finding any money, the water is there and free (fig. 12).

Fig. 13 - Kristin Jones, *She Wolves*, Rome 2005. Photo by Mimmo Capone. Courtesy of Kristin Jones (www.eternaltiber.net).



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Art on the walls of the city: interview with the artist Kristin Jones

GC: The images you did were temporary, in fact, after some years they slowly disappeared. The impermanence of the art work was part of your design idea?

KJ: I had no idea for how long the images would last. It seemed to be the perfect solution. Just like the water in the river is always different you could invite a different artist every five years to create a new work of art by simply cleaning!

What I love is also the fact that some people have called it "la tecnica michelangeloesca di Kristin Jones", because, in the truth of the matter, the she-wolves drawn on the walls are still there. They are ingrained in Rome (fig. 13).

GC: Why did you chose just the she-wolves to be drawn on the walls?

KJ: I was fascinated by the fact that the mythology begins on the river, of course, where the history tells that the she-wolf rescues the twin brothers and nurses them into boys. I understood wolves would be a beautiful beginning, a tribute, a response, a thank you, for the inspiration that Rome is for the world. The wolf as the perfect symbolic beginning of the city and of a contemporary art project on the Tiber.

GC: After *She-Wolves* there were other art projects, like *Wild Graces*, where multiple artists were invited to create moving figures - projected animations.

KJ: I am fascinated by how things change in time. I had this idea that it would be fantastic to see all the mythological she-wolves drawn by artists across history. I imagined an animated historical parade of figures projected on the walls of the site.

So, I sought out to find a talented Roman animator, who could work with me to translate the historic figures into stylized drawings. With the essential help of Francesca Fini, a Roman artist from IED, we worked for more than a year to draw 90 of the she-wolves from an archive of more than 300 coins, sculptures large and small, frescos and prints ect. I also sought out an animator, and talked to people at the Accademia di Belle Arti, IED as well as pro-



Fig. 14 - William Kentridge, *Triumphs and Laments*, opening performance. Photo by Marcello Leotta, 2016. Courtesy of Kristin Jones ([www.eternaltiber.net](http://www.eternaltiber.net)).

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professional animators through Cinecittà, but I failed to find the right collaborator.

When I traveled to the major international exhibition in Germany called Documenta, I discovered a South African artist, I've never heard of before, who did very raw and beautiful animations. In one of the films that I saw there was this black panther circling and circling in a cage of the zoo. I thought that I could invite him to work with me on the Tiber. Years later it just so happened this same artist from South African came to Rome to perform his work and he gave a talk at Maxxi. It was then that I discovered that the name of the artist whose work I had seen in Germany many years before was William Kentridge. The following evening a performance by Kentridge and a group of puppeteer/animators was happening at the Teatro Valle. I was so enthralled by the performance that same night after the performance I dreamed that Kentridge agreed to create an animation with the still she-wolf images I had drawn. So, I wrote a letter asking Kentridge to make the animation for the City of Rome on the Tiber. Chance would have it that I was able to meet Kentridge and he spontaneously agreed to visit the site. Although we have never met I was so enthused by his work that I had seen on stage the night before that I insisted: "You have to do the animation for this incredible site in Rome that nobody sees". And he said "Let's go and see it".

So, we walked to Piazza Tevere and, while standing in the middle of Ponte Sisto, I said "I need an animation from bridge to bridge and that are a lot of frames to draw, but you could do three minutes' animation and we can make a loop..." And he said "It depends on how big the wolves are." Our conversation inspired me to create the enormous wolves that were easily transformed from my vectorial drawings into colossal figures.

GC: Was this the beginning of what happened in 2016 with his *Triumphs and Laments*?

KJ: Yes, it all started in 2001. This is why the project is called *Eternal Tiber*...It is the Tiber that is Eternal in Rome and I am invested in the long term project!

GC: I remember what an incredible and unforgettable night it was, the opening of *Triumphs and Laments*, when we witnessed the procession with the band and the choirs in front of the frieze on the wall – the dramatic shadows and sound system! (Fig. 14) Yet before the frieze was realized there was a huge opposition to the work and you had a terrible time to get the necessary permits from multiple authorities because the work was thought of as graffiti, something related to a form of vandalism not suitable for the center of Rome.

KJ: It took an army of believers and four years to finally be granted permission to powerwash at zero cost for the City, the Region or the National Ministry.

GC: Was it something political, cultural or simply inability to comprehend the artistic project?

KJ: All three. Resistance to contemporary art and inability to comprehend that the art was inspired by the city of Rome and its history; inability to imagine that a living artist could do something of historic value; or that an artist could work with a team of scholars who would contribute their knowledge to the work. The project is both the work of an inspired and brilliant artist's work, but it is also the result of nearly half a million hours of my own time and personal resources, matched with the time of many collaborators as well as literally hundreds of volunteers and keen believers who contributed their time – because they understood the scale of the work, the monumental and ephemeral nature of the work, and the enormous challenges of working on public scale in Rome with no public support. You, with Giuseppe Marino together with Rosario Pavia and David Monacchi, were part of the initial core project who to this very day inspire and have encouraged to do what so many Romans understand has been essentially impossible task by maintaining a rigorous idealism and never taking no for an answer.

GC: Your work is always respectful of the site. You used powerwashing and, in the other occasions, projec-

tions, or natural and ephemeral forces like torches or fires. Is it something that you choose deliberately?

KJ: I think you should be able to make art out that raw materials at hand. Just like you can make electricity from the sun and the wind and out of wave motion. Also, I'm not interested in egotistical work nor in a homocentric world. I am interested in working with the ecology of the planet, in understanding that the energy of the planet is not only just hidden in the electrical outlet in our homes. I really feel that we need to arrive at greater understanding of how to work harmoniously with the resources that are here.

The work is not political in a real way but I am definitely a strong advocate for awakening ourselves to how to work collectively with what we have. I really believe that not only humans but also rivers have rights, and trees have rights, the planet has rights.

GC: In *Wolflight* (2009) you experimented with the cut-and-paste technique, using a really poor material like aluminum foil and vinavil, working with a system very similar to the not-commissioned art made by street artists. Why did you choose this kind of action?

KJ: My choices have to do with the site itself. The left bank of the river is a kind of no-man's land. The left bank of the river is not maintained, there is no vehicular access and no a bicycle path. There are a lot of trees growing and there is lot of moss and mud. So, it is like the wild side, the left bank is much more like a natural place and it just seemed like a good place for a luminous parade of she-wolves.

One of the great gifts that the left bank of river gave me was reflected light. Because the walls are at an angle, if you put a mirror on that side of the wall, it reflects the afternoon sunlight. So, the sun in the late afternoon, the aluminum foil wolves appear as if they are on fire. That was such a beautiful surprise, – a gift (fig. 15).

In 2009 Rome elected a new mayor, Alemanno. So, I decided that it was time to go home. I could

not start with an all-new city administration and I didn't think that Alemanno's team would be sensitive to contemporary art. Thinking that a work for 2009 would be my last project on *Piazza Tevere* I chose Rome's birthday. Due to 'tempi burocratici' the proposed event opened on 21th of June, and included all the wolves that I had drawn and that had not been used in 2005.

GC: Which are the problems of making public art, and specifically in a city like Rome?

KJ: It depends on whether the work is commissioned or not. Most of the work that I have done is commissioned, I rarely do "gorilla work". I am extremely grateful to William Kentridge for joining me in this insane idealistic project where because of the sheer impossibility of getting public permits there is absolutely no hope of asking support from sponsors. That is the big problem. It took us four years to get the permits for *Triumphs and Laments*.

GC: Have you ever thought that it would be much better to do your work without asking permissions?

KJ: Yes, many people suggested that. They said "Just do it!" The problem is that we needed to occupy the public space with trucks. We needed to have generator, water, access... I did not want to do just one figure, I wanted to do a "whole parade of figures" to create a work on the scale of the site itself. I also wanted the city, and the region, and all of the different agencies to wake up to the wake up to the great potential of the river as a resource to the City of Rome. You could not do anything of that scale without permission. Getting the permission was the most difficult aspect of the project - we lost so much time and so many resources on working on changing minds to get the permits.

GC: What are the projects you're working now? Do you want to talk about it?

KJ: I am working on multiple projects. I am working on an elaborate web site called Eternal Tiber

(<https://eternaltiber.net>). I have not given up on inspiring, proposing and leading the next major artist on Piazza Tevere, who I am not naming yet. For New York City, I am working on several large scale public projects one is called *Behold* (<http://www.kristinandreajones.com/project/ behold>). The project is a collaboration with scientists to understand the intelligence of living forms. I have always been interested in live branching forms. Yes, the Tiber is a branching form, but the tree is the ultimate branching living form, they give us shade and cool our cities. *Behold* started when I came back to New York in 2009 and, through a series of encounters, I learned that the oldest tree in Manhattan - 360 years old - is five minutes' walk from where I have been living from 1983. I had never seen it; we are so blind to trees. The project involves creating a very high resolution digital model from an 80-million-point laser scanner, along with hundreds of photos of the exterior of the tree.

We are also trying to model the roots, so I am exploring how archeologists and geologists and also arborists study the health of the root. The idea is to turn this tree into a weather station so we can actually listen to the sounds that the tree makes; we can measure the transpiration of water through the leaves; we can measure the shade and the temperature that it makes; we can also measure the carbon that the tree contains. We intend to make an augmented reality App where you can have the tree in your classroom or you can go out to the tree and this model would be absolutely and precisely GPS projected on the tree in your smartphone or iPad. It is a scalable experience of the living network of the tree.

GC: One last question. Unfortunately, we are experiencing the coronavirus problem all over the world, a drama that has forced us to remain closed in our homes and avoid public spaces. Once this critical phase is over, how do you think it will change the way we do public art and how can it help us to face or reflect on our future?

KJ: I think people will definitely appreciate to gather more. I hope that public spaces have more

public funding for programming. Daylight is the most important aspect of a public space, also seating, and programming and maintenance. I hope that in cities around the world there will be more open spaces without cars and more opportunities to stage events and more support for artists. I don't think that anything should be permanent, my hope is that we all value public space much more. We know that the statistics say that in the future more people will live in cities than in other places and so I think we really need to make our cities more livable, and Rome does really need a river park.



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Fig. 15 - Kristin Jones, *Wolflight*. Photo by Marcello Melis, 2009. Courtesy of Kristin Jones (<http://www.kristinandreajones.com/project/wolflight/>).