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The Effect Street Art has on Gentrification: A case study of Miami's Wynwood Arts District

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The Effect Street Art has on Gentrification:
A case study of Miami's Wynwood Arts District

by

Bianca M. Gonzalez

A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for a
Master's Degree in Art Business
Sotheby's Institute of Art

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By: Bianca M. Gonzalez

The aim of this paper is to examine the role that street art and the artist plays in the gentrification of a city, with a specific focus on Miami's Wynwood Arts District. By doing so, the thesis will first address the artistic practice of graffiti writing as an underlying influence to artists working on the streets today. 'Post-graffiti', 'urban painting' or simply 'street art' exists as a new term in the graffiti literature to identify a renaissance of illicit, ephemeral public art productions¹. Artists play a critical role in the gentrifying process as they help revitalize areas of past stagnation. In this paper, the process relies on the establishment of an arts center; this coincides with the studies of gentrification to understand how urban cities are rebuilt. The inception of loft buildings paved the way for artists' to use loft-style accommodations for joint living and working spaces as a way to sell their art, and introduce the artists' studio to the public. This trend has revolutionized a new mode of city living that continues to thrive to this day. Today, there are several major investments taking place in constructing new cultural facilities for the arts. Miami is a center for creativity, from contemporary art and architecture, to design, fashion and the performing arts. For example, the impact of Art Basel Miami Beach, the largest art fair in the world, and the Wynwood Arts District, with the combined efforts of artists and developers, has successfully turned Miami into an epicenter for the arts. In 2002, Art Basel premiered in Miami Beach and since then, the fair has generated 15 to 20 satellite fairs that have been the primary stimulus to the revitalization of the Wynwood District.

¹ Anna Waclawek, *Graffiti and Street Art*, (London: Thames & Hudson Ltd, 2011), 20.

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Introduction

The aim of this paper is to examine the role that street art and the artist plays in the gentrification of a city, with a specific focus on Miami's Wynwood Arts District. To understand how artists' act as gentrifiers and fit into capitalist plans to raise land values, we must first establish a working definition of gentrification as, "Gentrification is the process of class transformation: it is the remaking of working-class space to serve the needs of middle and upper class people."² Sociologist Ruth Glass was the first to coin this term in 1964 to describe how gentrification was displacing working-class people in London.³ Gentrification typically occurs when wealthier people buy or rent property in low income or working-class neighborhoods, displacing its original inhabitants.⁴ There have been numerous attempts to explain why gentrification occurs, and how its process creates tension between developers and original inhabitants. While gentrification is often associated with studies of sociology, urban planning and geography, it is critical to understand its methods as development coincides with real estate and investment opportunity, and has become a valuable commodity in today's marketplace.

This paper will begin by addressing the artistic practice of graffiti writing as the underlying influence to artists working on the streets today. This includes defining the concept of graffiti and graffiti writing, based on literature found on the subject. After addressing the origins and practices of the graffiti tradition, an introduction to street art, a subcategory of graffiti, will illustrate how the art form emulates certain features from its

² Kathe Newman, "The Right to Stay Put, Revisited: Gentrification and Resistance to Displacement in New York City," *Urban Studies (Routledge)*, 43, no. 1 (2006): 23-57.

³ Rowland Atkinson, "Introduction: Misunderstood Savior or Vengeful Wrecker? The Many Meanings and Problems of Gentrification," *Urban Studies*, 40, no. 12 (2003): 1343-2350.

⁴ Diane K. Levy, Jennifer Comey, and Sandra Padilla, "In the Face of Gentrification: Case Studies of Local Efforts to Mitigate Displacement," *The Urban Institute* (2006): 1-3.

predecessor. ‘Post-graffiti’, ‘urban painting’ or simply ‘street art’ exists as a new term in the graffiti literature to identify a renaissance of illicit, ephemeral public art productions.⁵ Poised as a subculture between art and commerce, the emergent post-graffiti movement is examined here through three thematic chapters. The first considers how the art form is regarded in terms of its history, legal and illegal implications, public art controversies, and public and private sponsorship for the arts in the United States. The distinction between street art and graffiti writing in the way it is viewed by the law illustrates how law enforcement are more lenient towards an artist wheat-pasting posters and/or stickers onto a wall, then they are with an artist holding a spray can, in which they would presumably fine the perpetrator for defacing the building; this is a bizarre situation when police are acting as arbitrators of taste and distinguishing what is art from vandalism. Following is an introduction to public art and controversy, and public art funding and sponsorship in the United States. Many public art controversies occur when proper permission is not obtained. This will be addressed by specific examples as to why most public art projects are often rejected or removed. Sponsorship and funding for the arts is significant to this thesis as it provides substantial information regarding different types of funding, which is how Wynwood Arts District was initiated, through the aid of public and private contribution. Next, is an introduction to the National Endowment of the Arts, the largest annual national funder of the arts in the United States, and how most local art foundations could have not been made possible without their support, especially local art foundations like ArtPlace America and the James L. Knight Foundation, who work specifically to support the arts and economic development of Miami’s gentrified neighborhoods.

⁵ Waclawek,20.

The second chapter outlines the process of gentrification, offering explanation as to why gentrification occurs, and how art and the artist are the most important agents of the process - as they influence visual culture and promote economic growth. This involves tracing the histories and trajectories of gentrification, highlighting its long-standing presence, and later, in chapter three, focusing our attention on Miami to demonstrate the diversity and complexity of this process in just one neighborhood. Due to space limitations, the theme of gentrification will focus on two schools of thought examined by geographers Neil Smith and David Ley involving the supply (production) and demand (consumption) side of gentrification. This chapter also aims to address that not only is art and the artist a key driving force behind gentrification, it is also responsible for the support and sponsorship of public and private contributions which seeks to use positive gentrification as an engine of urban regeneration. The first step in the process consists of the artists, or urban pioneers, since they are the ones who first move into urban areas with potential for redevelopment. The urban pioneers assist the developers in renovating and producing an arts center in sync with the communities history, and by doing so, the price of real-estate goes up and the lower income families are replaced with middle and upper income families, creating a perpetuating cycle of gentrification. The inception of loft living in New York City's SoHo district in the late 1960s illustrates the arts and artists' social value in the transformation of a city. As lofts were generally used for industrial and manufacturing purposes, this quickly shifted in the late 1960s as artists' began occupying these residences as a way to sell their art and popularize a trend of joint living and working spaces. Urban studies suggest a number of paradigms demonstrating the processes of gentrification from city to city. This is

emphasized in the explanation of the different waves of gentrification. While gentrification can bring about higher tax revenues from higher property values, it also dislocates pre-gentrified residents by raising rents beyond their price range. The ethics behind gentrification are questionable as one of the leading arguments involves displaced residents, although some urban areas are left completely desolated before gentrification is planned, some wonder what happened to these people and where did they go. During my research for the case study on Miami's Wynwood Art District, I interviewed Meghan Coleman, the Artist Manager for Goldman Properties; the real estate company who privately funded the Wynwood Walls, Door, and Outside the Walls in 2009. Meghan informed me that the community in which Wynwood Walls is located was formerly home to industrial and garment factories that were left abandoned for nearly twenty years. The original inhabitants of Wynwood were Puerto Rican families who left the district long before the initial gentrification began.

The third chapter will be focusing on the gentrification of Miami's Wynwood Arts District, a former urban neighborhood turned art district, which could have not been possible without the support of ArtPlace America and the James L. Knight Foundation. These foundations awarded the city with various grants in the effort to redevelop its urban core. Major contribution from private investors and real estate developers succeeded in transforming a vision into reality when they began purchasing property and leasing them to reshape the community while simultaneously creating a safe haven for the arts. The art histories of graffiti and street art in Miami demonstrate how artists, local and international, were actively involved in the gentrification process of Wynwood. Most of the artists commissioned to work on the murals located inside the Wynwood Walls and

Doors are internationally acclaimed artists, such as Shepard Fairey, Kenny Scharf, and Retna. There are two Miami-based artists who participated in the mural project; these artists are Brandon Opalka and Santiago Rubino. The remaining walls located outside the perimeter of the Wynwood Walls and Doors, are produced by local and international artists at the discretion of the tenants leasing their space, usually to promote the business and provide the artists with public exposure, it is a win-win for both participants. The inception of Art Basel Miami Beach as the second location in the fairs expansion has tremendously effected the success of Wynwood, as each year, more and more tourist travel to Miami for the annual art spectacle. Today, there are several major investments taking place in constructing new cultural facilities for the arts. A center for contemporary art, design, architecture, and performing arts, Miami has transformed into an epicenter for the arts. The successful merger between Miami's art collectors and the directors of Art Basel has radically changed the fate of the city. The Art Basel fair has generated 15 to 20 satellite fairs that have been the primary stimulus to the revitalization of the Wynwood Arts District. This research employs a multi-methodological, case study approach to understanding the fundamental process of gentrification and its impact on the community, in both its positive and negative aspects. It is of critical importance to understand the gentrification process, and the art world's crucial role within it, as a city cannot exist without a thriving community of committed, working artists.⁶ The concluding chapter will highlight the subjects of gentrification, the artists and street art as a viable part in the reconstruction of an inner city as well as its critical role in the redevelopment of Wynwood.

⁶ Rosalyn Deutsche, and Cara Gendel Ryan, "The Fine Art of Gentrification," *The Portable Lower East Side*, 4, no. 1 (1987): 13-14.

Chapter One: The Geographies of Public Art

I. From Graffiti to Street Art

Since its explosion onto city walls and subway cars in the 1970s, the universal phenomenon known as graffiti cleared the notion that art belongs in a cultural institution. Graffiti is considered a part of man's basic creative instinct, the most primary form of art. One could argue that graffiti is as old as humanity, but one thing is for certain, the graffiti tradition has been documented throughout different centuries, around the world; from the caves of Lascaux in France, to the walls of Pompeii, and finally to New York City, where the explosion of colorful tags and pieces were subjects for subway art. (Fig. 1) Graffiti has over the past forty years become an undeniable ingredient of street cultures worldwide.⁷ It can be defined by its *Latin* definition as 'graffito', which translates to an image or text scratched onto a wall.⁸ It is generally understood as any form of unofficial, unsanctioned application of a medium onto a surface. Graffiti applies to any illegal marking on a surface, and a key part of graffiti writing has always been drawing in the blackbooks or sketchbooks of other writers, which was completely legal. A blackbook is a graffiti writers' sketchbook; often used to sketch out and plan potential pieces, and to collect tags from other writers, it is, in effect, the writers' most value property as it contains all or a majority of the writers' sketches and pieces.

These works of art, though arguably deemed vandalistic acts, generated a wide public audience and writers suddenly became overnight celebrities. Writer Taki 183 (Fig. 2) is one of the most influential graffiti writers. His "tag" was short for Demetaki, a

⁷ Waclawek, 10.

⁸ Cedar Lewisohn, *Street Art: The Graffiti Revolution*, (New York City: Abrams, 2008), 15.

Greek alternative for his birth name Demetrius, and the number 183 came from his address on 183rd street in Washington Heights.⁹ In 1971, the New York Times ran an article about him on the front page of its inside section, titled “Taki 183 Spawns Pen Pals”. (Fig. 3) Taki 183’s newspaper fame spurred competitive tagging in New York City as his tag was suddenly being mimicked by hundreds of youth across the five boroughs. Graffiti became a way for many young teens to communicate and express themselves, their writing is a vital part of the culture and without Taki 183 and his media recognition; it might have not existed today.¹⁰ Just like any other art historical movement, the graffiti movement evolved through happenings, or artistic performances that were present during their time of execution. For instance, it was the emergence of the hip-hop and dance culture that truly informed and inspired this movement of global change and rapid development. Graffiti writers’ were getting their tags up and began recognizing the success of their craft when tourists began documenting the work and taking them back to their hometown. Graffiti exploded in every metropolitan city around the world. With technology becoming more and more accessible and affordable, these once ephemeral productions were becoming subjects of photography.

In the beginning, subway pioneers such as ‘Phase 2’ would refer to their craft as "writing" and fervently reject the word "graffiti," due to the negative connotations of the latter.¹¹ During that time, the world was experiencing great turmoil following the malaise of the Vietnam War and segregation between classes. The economy was slowly declining after the crash of the stock market and the oil embargo of 1973. Writer ‘Futura 2000’, a pioneer of the New York City graffiti movement, having served during the Vietnam War

⁹ Boland Jr., Ed. “F.Y.I. Taking Taki’s Tag,” *The New York Times*, June 15, 2003.

¹⁰ Kennedy, Randy. “Celebrating Forefather of Graffiti,” *The New York Times*, July 23, 2011.

¹¹ Neelon, Caleb. “Art Crimes: Critical Terms for Graffiti Study.” 2003.

put his military skills to good use by trespassing in the yards of the Metropolitan Transport Authorities, bombing trains and city walls with other artists, such as Ali, Duro, and Dondi.¹² (Fig. 4) Graffiti ranges from simple written words to elaborate wall murals, and most commonly produced with spray paint and ink markers. These writers disseminate their signatures everywhere with no other purpose than to establish an identity for themselves.¹³ What separates graffiti writing from graffiti is its association with the hip-hop culture, whose central concern is the ‘tag’ or signature of the author.¹⁴ Graffiti is not so much about generating a public audience or interacting with the masses, its’ central purpose is connecting with different crews and labeling their own secret language. Alongside the risk of getting caught, fined or going to jail, writers are constantly dealing with competition from other crews or city officials; whose job is to buff tags and pieces off the walls. To a graffiti writer, the thrill of ‘getting up’ and tagging your name on the side of a building is the sheer reasoning behind their production.

By the 1980s, a new form of ‘street art’ was entering the world of mainstream pop culture. Art dealers recognized the success of graffiti and began showing street art in the commercial gallery; collectors and museums alike jumped on the bandwagon thereafter. The viability for artists to use outdoor surfaces’ as their own studio was (and still is) an on-going development. Street art can be easily defined as public art, typically non-graffiti, produced in the street. The artists associated with this movement create these works for the public, to satisfy an emotion or feeling that is expressed through an

¹² Sebastian Peiter, and Goetz Werner, *Guerilla Art*, (London: Laurence King Publishers, 2009), 14.

¹³ Waclawek, 12.

¹⁴ Jeffrey Deitch, Roger Gastman, and Aaron Rose, *Art in the Streets*, (New York City: Skira Rizzoli, 2011), 10.

engagement with the arts. (Fig. 5) An art form that identifies itself with inhabitants living in designated urban areas can flourish a community and thus increase its property value, and become the driving force in its redevelopment. The meaning behind street art productions derive from an artists' perspective, conveying an event or dialogue that the artist has experienced. Some street artists emulate current affairs by stenciling socially conscious themes on the wall, which is what Bristol-born Banksy uncovers in his work (Fig. 6). While others like Ukrainian-duo Interesni Kazki and American-born Kenny Scharf create fantastical productions that are purely aesthetical. (Fig. 7 and 8) As a result, street art aids in the creation of city spaces by occupying a physical location in the cityscape and by engaging people in the experience of art.¹⁵ Painting on the street is an entirely different process from painting in the studio. Though street artists today simultaneously use the studio and street as their working environment. Some people consider the art a crime; others consider it a form of art. I would argue that graffiti and street art are not crimes because it does not effectively hurt or harm anyone, though it could be represented as vandalism from the viewpoint of a property owner, who has to pay for the clean up of graffiti and/or street art.

A number of street artists began by writing graffiti and, with time, changed their practice to generate a different brand of urban expression for ideas that moved beyond the representation of their names.¹⁶ The repetitive factor of writing tags on the streets grew tiresome to some and other writers traded to integrate both styles. The differences between these two genres lays within the common practices of the trade, they differ in technique, motivation and audience, and ultimately in the way they actually look.

¹⁵ Deitch, 70.

¹⁶ Deitch, 29.

Whereas the traditional graffiti artist primarily uses spray-cans to produce their work, street art encompasses many other media and techniques, including, light-emitting diode (LED) art, mosaic tiling, stencil art, wheat-pasting, and video projections. Today's street artists are sketching and blowing their images up on copy machines; they are photographers by documenting their work, and they are sculptures as they race the city streets to determine what building is appropriate for their piece.¹⁷ Street art occupies the public sector on an international level and as early as the 1990s, these artists were known in the commercial art world, and by 2000 selling at notable auction houses like Sotheby's and Christie's. Shepard Fairey, who is known for his recognizable and iconic "Andre the Giant" stickers, and "Hope" poster he created for Barack Obama's 2008 election campaign, sold a portrait of Darby Dash, a legendary figure of the late 1970s punk scene, at Doyle New York in 2013 for \$28,125, surpassing its estimate of \$15,000-20,000.¹⁸ Fairey, who normally uses stencil or silkscreen techniques when producing his street art, executed this print in acrylic and collage on paper. (Fig. 9) Sebastian Pieter, co-author of *Guerilla Art* describes this trend, "Since 2005, a surprised underground scene has witnessed a worldwide art boom, with street art now included in contemporary art auctions on a regular basis and art institutions like Museum of Modern Art (New York) and Tate Modern (London) putting on street art exhibitions to attract a younger audience."¹⁹

All in all, the public's understanding of these two subjects is in constant flux. Street art is an effective platform for reaching the public, and adapts visual artwork into a

¹⁷ Carlo McCormick, Marc Schiller, and Sara Schiller, *Trespass: A History of Uncommissioned Urban Art*, (New York City: Taschen, 2010), 11.

¹⁸ "Doyle New York's April 8, 2013 Street Art Auction Sets World Auction Records" 2013. <http://www.doylenewyork.com/content/more.asp?id=255>

¹⁹ Pieter, 5.

format, which utilizes public space and allows artists who may otherwise feel ostracized, to reach a much broader audience than traditional artwork seen at galleries or museums.²⁰ Street art also affects the way in which cities are revitalized. The artists, or urban pioneers, as they are presented in this role, seize an opportunity to familiarize themselves with the inhabitants of urban communities to create public art projects specific to each area. The developer, or investor, plays the role of the financier, and gambits the most efficient and effective way of introducing transformative tenants, businesses, and shops, into these areas as a way of reclaiming the land for commercial investment. One could argue that instead of gentrifying a community with visual culture, it is actually displacing its inhabitants to make space for higher income families. Cedar Lewisohn, author of *The Graffiti Revolution*, states how inhabitants of urban neighborhoods, typically where most graffiti is produced, are in constant threat of migration, “graffiti and hip-hop were born in beleaguered urban communities like the South Bronx, where residents were victims of the urban renewal systems and highway buildings that took place during the middle of the last century.”²¹ Urban renewal is often justified as the desire to improve the lives of the middle and upper class, but it is mostly just a pretext for the real motive: making money.²² There was money to be made in the building and expansion of urban areas, new highways and the development of the suburbs, a process that has driven the US economy ever since.²³ This idea of gentrifying a community and its impact on residents will be addressed in the next chapter.

²⁰ "What is Street Art? Vandalism, Graffiti or Public art- Part I" January 01, 2010.

²¹ Lewisohn, 15.

²² Lewisohn, 7.

²³ Ibid.

Graffiti and street art have had a long strained relationship within the community, with illegal productions and tags considered symbols of urban decay. However that relationship has become all the more complicated as a new generation of street artists team up with developers and businesses on legally sanctioned projects to revitalize urban neighborhoods.

II. Legal vs. Illegal

A significant distinction between street art and graffiti is the way in which it is viewed in the eyes of the law²⁴, but the topic becomes all the more complex when regarding transitory, nondestructive forms of street art like yarn bombing, video projection, and street installation. It could in fact be argued that looking at art in the street, with its speed and real-life context, is a more accurate reflection of the world in terms of the way we process information today. In some places, making marks on the walls, in the street, is illegal, even if you do have the permission of the building owner. With permission or without permission, street art is technically considered public art. According to officials of the laws, painters of public and private property are committing vandalism and are, by definition, criminals. However, it still stands that most street art is unsanctioned, and many artists who have painted without permission, i.e. Banksy and Shepard Fairey, have been glorified as legitimate and socially conscious artists. Although it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to clearly define what unsanctioned art is and what it is not, the effects of such imagery can be observed and concluded on their functions in the public space.

The way in which the law reacts to graffiti and street art in different countries

²⁴ Lewisohn, 127.

around the world is also telling. Graffiti artist D*Face gives an example of dealing with the police in London and the differences between spray paint and wheat pasting in the eyes of the law, ‘If you’re carrying a can of spray paint and you’re painting a wall, then you’re not going to have any leniency with the police. Whereas, I’ve been stopped many a time from putting posters up, but they’ve been like, “Don’t do any more of this, throw away of this, throw away what you’ve got, go home”, and you’re like, “Yeah, sure”, and you carry on. Generally, with posters and stickers and things like that, they’re more lenient.’²⁵ This illustrates a strange situation where the police are acting not only as judge and jury but also as art critic and curator. They are in effect choosing what is art and what is vandalism.

III. Public Art and Controversy

Public art because it is public *and* because it is art – has a history of controversy. Public art includes sculptures, murals, memorials, monuments, civic gateways, playgrounds, and outdoor performances. It ranges from ephemeral pieces like *The Gates* by Christo and Jeanne-Claude’s project of 7,500 saffron-colored fabric gates installed in New York’s Central Park in February 2005, to permanent public fixtures like *Kinetic Light/Air Curtain*, Antonette Rosato and Bill Maxwell’s mile-long installation of 5,280 mini propellers, backlit in blue neon at Denver International Airport.²⁶ These works were commissioned by local art funding agencies and were properly vetted before the artists began their productions.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Erika Doss, "Public Art Controversy: Cultural Expression and Civic Debate," *Americans for the Arts* (2006): 2.

Harriet Seine, author of *Critical Issues in Public Art*, comments on the advantages of public art, “More than museum art, public art gathers the issues of its time and addresses a larger audience. With its built-in social focus, public art would seem to be an ideal genre for a democracy.”²⁷ She goes on to explain how since its inception, street art has faced issues of appropriate form, placement, and funding, which has created an object of controversy rather than a subject of celebration.²⁸

A reason as to why most public art projects experience controversy within a community is its failure to actively engage its residents in the decision making process of such a project. In a recently published article by Arts Atlanta, Living Walls, “a non-profit organization that brings together street artists, academics and the public at large to activate and engage communities”²⁹ was the subject of controversy after personnel failed to obtain permission from City Council to produce a large scale mural by street artist Pierre Roti, and did not follow the course of meeting with residents of the area near the mural site. The mural project was commissioned by Living Walls as an effort to revitalize the urban neighborhood of Pittsburgh in southwest Atlanta. This site-specific mural was located on a wall overlooking University Avenue between Interstate 75 and Moton Avenue. It required the owners’ permission and permits from two city departments, the Atlanta Office of Cultural Affairs, and the Urban Design Commission.³⁰ In this case, the wall belongs to the state of Atlanta, therefore the Georgia Department of Transportation has jurisdiction over the property. The large-scale mural of recognizable images that

²⁷ Harriet F. Seine, and Sally Webster, *Critical Issues in Public Art: Content, Context, and Controversy*, (New York City: Icon Editions, 1992), xi-xiii.

²⁸ *ibid.*

²⁹ “Living Walls, the City Speaks.” 2012.

³⁰ Hall, "Neighborhood vigilantes paint over Living Walls mural, raising questions of permits and public art," *Arts ATL*, 2012.

included a fish being goggled by one another and a figure that combines human and crocodile part was painted over by angry neighbors shortly after its completion. (Fig. 10 before and 11 after) The trouble began immediately upon completion of the mural during the summer of 2012, when neighbors objected to the imagery of the massive painting.³¹ Neighborhood resident and former state Legislator Douglas Dean speaks on the issue, “When you come in and do your own thing and ignore the community, you’re going to have problems.” He continues, “We spent \$200,000 on a redevelopment plan for Pittsburgh. We have art in that plan.... I want to see art in the community that depicts the struggles in this community.”³² The ways of obtaining city permission for murals is arduous and essential in the efforts of revitalizing urban neighborhoods. With the official consent and commitment of the community, art in the public space receives increasing support from businesses, banks, and corporations. Not only because an interest in art creates a favorable image for a community, it also makes a visual contribution to a community’s cultural life.³³

IV. Sponsorship and Funding for the Arts

The United States arts system has no single benefactor, no overarching arbiter or agency, and no Ministry of Culture. Instead, a variety of government subsidies compose roughly 7 percent of the nation’s total investment in non-for-profit arts groups.³⁴ These three broad categories of U.S. Arts Funding include, direct public funds awarded by the National Endowment for the Arts and by state, regional, and local agencies; funding from

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

³³ Cher Krause Knight, *Public Art: Theory, Practice and Populism*, (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2008), 85.

³⁴ *How the United States Funds the Arts*, (Washington D.C.: Art Works, 2012) <http://arts.gov>, 2-18.

federal departments and agencies other than the NEA; and private sector contributions, which make up the largest share of contributed income for arts organizations.³⁵ Direct public funding for the arts is not used to impose arts policy. Instead, government decisions on arts funding tend to be driven by experts in a given field or discipline.³⁶ As an example, the NEA requires, for most grants, that the recipient organization combine the amount awarded with an equal or great amount of other, nonfederal contributions, in order to fulfill the means for such project. In 2012, the agency's appropriation was \$146 million, of which 80 percent went toward grant making.³⁷

Currently, there exist about 5,000 local art agencies operating across the nation in cities, towns, counties, and regions. They function as councils or commissions, or as city departments, and are funded by various sources: the NEA; state arts agencies, municipal budgets, and private donations.³⁸ The importance of local arts agencies lies in their ability to adapt to changing conditions on the ground. In addition to administering grant programs, local agencies serve as advocates and help attract a wide range of community resources to support arts and culture.³⁹ An example of this type is ArtPlace America and the James L. Knight Foundation, which are two local art agencies that promote the arts and economic development of urban areas, specifically in South Florida. Apart from the NEA, there are a number of other federal agencies and programs that fund artistic and cultural programs. An example is the Arts Endowment's sister agency, the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), "which promotes and provides funding for public television, makes grants to museums for exhibits and the preservation of art and artifacts,

³⁵ Ibid., 2.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid., 3.

³⁸ Ibid., 11.

³⁹ Ibid., 10.

and supports scholarship on humanities and history.”⁴⁰ The last method of arts funding involves individual and corporate donation, and is often in the form of two distinct acts of charity. The first, and most obvious, is the donor’s financial gift contribution. The second benefit is realized as a tax deduction for the donor, “and, along with the yearly tax payments waived for the not-for-profits themselves, it represents the most significant form of arts support in the United States.”⁴¹ As a term, “tax incentive” ‘is a singular appropriate; for every dollar the U.S. Treasury foregoes per tax deduction, donors are motivated to give private non-profits an additional donation in the range of 80 cents to \$1.30, according to recent estimates.’⁴² As the most recent data suggests, Americans donated \$13 billion to the category “Arts, Culture, and the Humanities” in 2011.⁴³

Federal patronage of public art on a national level began in the 1930s during the Great Depression with its attendant relief programs.⁴⁴ The WPA/FAP (Works Progress Administration/Federal Art Project), partly influenced by the populist content of the Mexican mural movement, “supported public art that related to local history and national ideals.”⁴⁵ With its emphasis on local artists and the decoration of public buildings, it served as a precursor for the General Services Administration for the Art’s Art in Architecture (A-i-A) program, and the National Endowment for the Arts’ Art in Public Places programs.⁴⁶ The NEA began supporting the public arts directly in 1965 as an independent agency of the federal government, with a mission to advance artistic

⁴⁰ Ibid., 13.

⁴¹ Ibid., 18.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Richard D. McKinzie, *The New Deal for Artists*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), xi.

⁴⁵ Seine, xi-xiii.

⁴⁶ Thalacker, Donald W., *The Place of Art in the World of Architecture* (New York: Chelsea House and R.R. Bowker Company, 1980). For a survey on NEA public funding, see John Beardsley, *Art in Public Places* (Washington D.C.: Partners for Livable Places, 1981), 10, 44-55.

excellence, creativity, and innovation for the benefit of individuals and communities, offering matching grants to civic and university communities for the commissioning of works for public sites.⁴⁷ Both programs contributed significantly to the public art revival of the late 1960s. An excerpt from *Critical Issues in Public Art* details the revolution of urban renewal programs for the arts in the United States:

“This revival coincided with a period of widespread urban renewal. The Great Society task force was created in 1964, and a year later the Department of Housing and Urban Development was signed into being. In 1966 the Model Cities Act was passed,⁴⁸ and a variety of local zoning ordinances offered bonuses to builders for the inclusion of open space. Public art became a part of urban renewal programs, as it had been in centuries past, functioning as an emblem of culture and a manifestation of economic wealth, a sign of the power for its patron.”⁴⁹

To that end, the NEA established its Art-in-Public-Places (A-i-P-P) program in 1967, which intended to reach the widest possible audience by responding to local requests.⁵⁰ Its official aims included: “increasing awareness of contemporary art; fostering aesthetic enhancement and socially-minded redevelopment of public spaces; offering American artists, especially emerging ones, opportunities to work in public contexts; supporting artistic experimentation; and engendering direct community involvement in the commission and placement of art.”⁵¹ Since its inception, the NEA has

⁴⁷ Senie and Webster, xi.

⁴⁸ Mark I. Gelfand, *A Nation of Cities: The Federal Government and Urban American*, (New York City: Oxford University Press, 1975), 348-87.

⁴⁹ Senie and Webster, xi.

⁵⁰ Knight, 15.

⁵¹ Ibid.

awarded more \$4 billion to support artistic excellence, creativity, and innovation, making it the largest annual national funder of the arts in the United States.⁵²

Chapter Two: The Processes of Urban Renewal

Most scholars' vision of gentrification remains closely tied to the process as it was defined in 1964 by sociologist Ruth Glass. Here is her 1964 finding statement (Glass 1964:xviii), which revealed this new, detached process of gentrification:

“One by one, many of the working-class quarters of London have been invaded by the middle class – upper and lower. Shabby, modest mews and cottages – two rooms up and two down – have been taken over, when their leases have expired, and have become elegant, expensive residences. Larger Victorian houses, downgraded in an earlier or recent period – which were used as lodging houses or were otherwise in multiple occupation – have been upgraded once again ... Once this process of “gentrification” starts in a district it goes on rapidly until all or most of the original working-class occupiers are displaced and the whole social character of the district is changed.”⁵³

I. Gentrification of a City

While gentrification can be described in a variety of ways, most authors agree on a singular description of gentrification as the process of replacing lower income groups and uses in a given urban neighborhood for higher ones.⁵⁴ Gentrification is an effort on

⁵² "About the NEA," <http://arts.gov/about>

⁵³ Ruth Glass, *Introduction: Aspects of Change*, (London: MacGibbon & Kee, 1964), xiii-xlii.

⁵⁴ Kathryn P. Nelson, *Gentrification and Distressed Cities: An Assessment of Trends in Intrametropolitan Migratio*, (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1988), 11.

the part of political and business leaders to restore distressed urban communities by seizing land and property, and replacing them with new homes, schools, and businesses. The ultimate goal is for transformative businesses and middle class residents to relocate to these areas, which in effect, increases property values and revitalizes impoverished communities. Although the process often involves the renovation of residential neighborhoods occupied by the working class, it can also occur in nonresidential areas where the building stock is economically obsolete but adequately fit that redevelopment is viable.⁵⁵ On the surface, the gentrification of a community seems like a positive attempt to strengthen its economy and that of the city as a whole, but it has negative consequences as well.⁵⁶ The ethics behind gentrification are questionable as the process often displaces original inhabitants. Though this is not always the case as some urban communities are left abandoned for years before gentrification occurs. Gentrification is a widespread study, and is categorized in a variety of different scholarship. The processes detailed below follow its histories and trajectories throughout the last forty years, and are simplified for relevance and space limitation.

An analysis of gentrification has been key to urban geography and urban studies literature over the last forty years. Some of the earliest attempts to explain gentrification are divided into two schools of thoughts, production (supply) and consumption (demand) side theories. Production-side theory is associated with human geographer, Neil Smith, who explains gentrification as the relationship between money and production. Smith suggest that “low rents in suburban areas after World War II led to a movement of capital

⁵⁵ Neil Smith, and Richard Schaffer, "The Gentrification of Harlem?," *Association of American Geographers*, 76, no. 3 (1986): 347.

⁵⁶ Rowland Atkinson, "Does Gentrification Help or Harm Urban Neighbourhoods? An Assessment of the Evidence-Base In the Context of the New Urban Agenda," *Centre for Neighbourhood Research* (2002): 6-7.

into those areas as opposed to inner cities. As a result, urban areas were abandoned and land value there decreased while land value in the suburbs increased.”⁵⁷ Smith next came up with his rent-gap theory and used it to explain the process of gentrification. “The rent-gap theory itself describes the inequality between the price of land at its current use and the potential price a piece of land could attain under a “higher and better use.”⁵⁸ Using his theory, Smith argued that when the rent-gap was large enough, developers would see the potential profit in redeveloping inner city areas. The profit attained by redevelopment in these areas closes the rent-gap, leading to higher rents, leases, and mortgages. Thus, the increase in profits associated with Smith’s theory leads to gentrification.⁵⁹ The consumption-side theory, recognized by geographer David Ley, examines the physical characteristics of people performing gentrification and what they consume as opposed to the market to explain gentrification.⁶⁰ It is said that the new emerging middle classes enjoy arts and leisure, and are concerned with aesthetics in their cities. This ‘new middle class’ as described by Ley, suggests that professional and managerial workers are actively associated with the process of gentrification, and their impact on central housing markets, retailing and leisure spaces in the inner city effects urban planning and urban policies.⁶¹ Gentrification therefore allows such changes to occur and satisfies this new population. Ley also suggests that art and the artist are a critical part in gentrification, as they supply the demand for this new, rich cultural capital through the production of art.⁶²

⁵⁷ Neil Smith, "Gentrification and the Rent Gap," *Association of American Geographers*, 77, no. 3 (1987): 463.

⁵⁸ *ibid.*

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰ David Ley, *The New Middle Class and the Remaking of the Central City*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 185-220

⁶¹ *ibid.*, 191.

⁶² *ibid.*

The process of gentrification can be broken down into three waves, as stated by geographer Jason Hackworth.⁶³ The first wave began in the 1960s, and prior to the economic recession that settled throughout the global economy in late 1973, gentrification was seen as sporadic if widespread.⁶⁴ Disinvested inner city housing within the older northeastern cities of the United States, Western Europe and Australia became targets for reinvestment. In cities like New York, developers and investors used the downturn in property values to consume large portions of devalorized neighborhoods.⁶⁵ A second wave followed in the late 1970s and 1980s, as gentrification became increasingly intertwined with wider processes of urban and economic constraints.⁶⁶ New neighborhoods were converted into real estate frontiers, and cities that had not previously experienced gentrification realized far-reaching strategies to attract this new form of investment.⁶⁷ Hackworth describes this process as ‘anchoring gentrification’, “This process becomes implanted in hitherto disinvested central city neighborhoods. In contrast to the pre-1973 experience of gentrification, the process becomes common in smaller, non-global cities during the 1980s.”⁶⁸ For example, In New York City, ‘the presence of the arts community was often a key correlate of residential gentrification, serving to smooth the flow of capital into neighborhoods’⁶⁹ like SoHo, Tribeca, and the Lower East Side. This witnessed political struggles between developers and the displacement of the poorest residents. Post-recession gentrification – the third wave of the process, is a

⁶³ Jason Hackworth, and Neil Smith, "The Changing State of Gentrification," *Journal of Economic and Social Geography*, 92, no. 4 (2001): 464-477.

⁶⁴ Hackworth and Smith, 466.

⁶⁵ Hackworth and Smith, 467.

⁶⁶ Neil Smith, "New Globalism, New Urbanism: Gentrification as Global Urban Strategy," *Antipode*, 34, no. 3 (2002): 440.

⁶⁷ Hackworth and Smith, 466.

⁶⁸ *ibid.*, 467.

⁶⁹ *ibid.*, 467.

theoretical expression of the economic conditions and processes that make reinvestment in disinvested inner city so appealing for investors.⁷⁰ What marks this latest phase of gentrification in many cities is the ambitious effort by corporate and state powers in the construction of newly built complexes in central cities across the world, which has become an increasingly unassailable capital growth strategy for competing urban economies.⁷¹ During this phase, gentrification was expanding both within the inner city neighborhoods that it affected during the earlier waves and to more remote neighborhoods beyond the immediate core.⁷² Kate Shaw illustrates a vivid and excellent interpretation on the third-wave of gentrification, when she calls it:

“A generalized middle-class restricting of place, encompassing the entire transformation from low-status neighborhoods to upper-middle class playgrounds. Gentrifiers’ residences are no longer just renovated houses but newly built townhouses and high-rise apartments. Their workplaces are as likely to be new downtown or docklands office developments as warehouse studios. Gentrification extends to retail and commercial precincts, and can be seen in rural and coastal townships as well as cities – Designer shops, art galleries, bars and restaurants form the background to a landscape of people in semi-public space watching the passing parade and sipping chardonnay from a boutique winery, beer from a microbrewery, coffee from organic beans grown in the developing county *de jour*.”⁷³

⁷⁰ Neil Smith, and James DeFilippis, "The Reassertion of Economics: 1990s Gentrification in the Lower East Side," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 23, no. 4 (1999): 638–653.

⁷¹ *ibid.*

⁷² Hackworth and Smith, 468.

⁷³ Shaw, Kate. "Gentrification: What It Is, Why It Is, and What Can Be Done about It." *Geography Compass*, 2, no. 5 (2008): 1697-98.

Due to space limitations - the remainder of this chapter focuses on gentrification as it affects displacement and the role that art and the artist plays in redevelopment.

II. Gentrification and Displacement

“Displacement from home and neighborhood can be a shattering experience. At worst it leads to homelessness, at best it impairs a sense of community. Public policy should, by general agreement, minimize displacement. Yet a variety of public policies, particularly those concerned with gentrification, seem to foster it.”⁷⁴

As stated earlier, gentrification refers to a process of class progression and displacement in areas broadly characterized by working-class and low income households first identified by Glass (1964).⁷⁵ Since the 1960s, researchers and policy-makers have sought to resolve the sharp defining line between equitable reinvestment in inner-city neighborhoods and divided displacement. Areas in which gentrification occur are usually run-down urban cores, lower income families are priced out and sometimes left as vagrants with no place to go. The replacement of these individuals and the small, retail chain businesses in these areas causes the most tension between residents and developers. Studies devoted to the displacement of original inhabitants becomes a problematic subject given the inevitable political arguing over the adequacy of data and debates about

⁷⁴ Peter Marcuse, "To Control Gentrification: Anti-Displacement Zoning and Planning for Stable Residential Districts," *New York University Review of Law and Social Change*, 13, no. 4 (1985): 931-945.

⁷⁵ Rowland Atkinson, "Measuring Gentrification and Displacement in Greater London," *Urban Studies*, 37, no. 1 (2000): 149-165.

what constitutes displacement itself.⁷⁶ Displacement is a result of “housing demolition, ownership conversion of rental units, increased housing costs (rent, taxes), landlord harassment, and evictions.”⁷⁷ Residents who avoid these direct displacement pressures may benefit from neighborhood improvements, but may suffer as critical community networks and culture are destroyed.⁷⁸ Due to the increase of property values after gentrification, neighborhoods become off-limits, forcing low-income residents to look elsewhere for housing, producing what Peter Marcuse has called “exclusionary displacement.”⁷⁹

The work of Peter Marcuse has been widely cited to explain the four different types of displacement: “Direct last-resident displacement, which deals with the physical (i.e. winking - when landlords cut off heat in a building, flood it, or set fires in it, forcing the occupants out) or economic (i.e. rent-hike eviction); Direct chain displacement: this goes beyond standard ‘last resident’ counting and includes previous households who were forced to move out due to deterioration of the building or rent hikes; Exclusionary displacement: this refers to those residents who cannot access housing because it has been gentrified (or abandoned); and Displacement pressures: this is the dispossession suffered by low income groups during the gentrification of their neighborhoods.”⁸⁰

Gentrification is not a minor phenomenon that affects a few communities; it is evidence of vast urban restructuring. The recent wave of gentrification has carried throughout global cities with its speed and force that few, if any, predicted. Just as most

⁷⁶ Atkinson, *Measuring Gentrification*, 150.

⁷⁷ Kathe Newman, and Elvin Wily, "Gentrification and Displacement Revisited: A fresh look at the New York City experience," *Urban Studies*, 43, no. 1 (2006): 23-57.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Tom Slater, "Missing Marcuse: On Gentrification and Displacement," *City: An analysis of urban trends, culture, theory, policy, auction*, 12, no. 2 (2009): 303.

things are set to change in a growing economy, gentrification is part of a local economic growth to stabilize the housing market. Low-income residents who manage to resist displacement may enjoy a few benefits from changes brought by gentrification, but these bittersweet fruits are quickly rotting as the supports for low-income renters are quickly drifting to welcome the new-middle class. Affordable housing, known as housing that poor or 'lower' class people can afford, are thus turned into market rate housing, referring to housing that only middle to upper class income people can afford.

III. Urban Pioneers: Artists' Developing Urban Communities

The process of gentrification continues as it depicts the role of the artist. The first residents to relocate to urban neighborhoods are the artists, or urban pioneers. Typically, arts-led gentrification occurs when a low income community with a low housing market and cheap rent becomes the site of an influx of young artists and their cohorts, who form loose associations and host events until the neighborhood gains a reputation for being hip, or desirable to higher income dwellers. The artist moves into the inner city, and over time, based on popular demand, or on the consumption theory, turns it into an attractive place that draws in young professionals, which then transforms urban neighborhoods into appealing commercial properties. Artists will typically accept the risks of rehabilitating deteriorated property, as well as have the time, skill, and ability to carry out these extensive renovations, with the aid and sponsorship of urban developers.⁸¹ Ley (1996)

⁸¹ Loretta Lees, Tom Slater, and Elvin Wyly, *The Gentrification Reader*, (London: Routledge, 2010), 134-161.

states that the artist's critique of everyday life and search for meaning and renewal are what make them early recruits for gentrification.⁸²

Artists have comprised a growing occupation in the United States⁸³; this helps explain their greater significance for urban development. The National Endowment for the Arts did a study that linked the proportion of employed artists to the rate of inner city gentrification across a number of U.S. cities.⁸⁴ Beginning in the late 1960s, an intensive effort by the Ford Foundation to fund artists individually and through non-profit organizations, linked with the creation of the National Endowment for the Arts and a growth in regional corporate funding for the arts, enabled more artists to build careers by combining grants with earned income.⁸⁵

Stuart Cameron and John Coaffee (2005) suggests that art and the artist play a critical role of the long-established theories of gentrification, looking respectively at the culture and capital as the key driving forces of the process.⁸⁶ Cultural analysis of gentrification identifies the individual artist as an important agent in the initiation of gentrification processes in urban class neighborhoods. The emphasizing role of property capital follows the artists into gentrified localities, commodifying its cultural assets, thus displacing the original gentrifiers. The role of the artist as a pioneer of gentrification is most commonly associated with the work of David Ley. Ley's work has been regarded as one of the leading supporters of the consumption (demand) side model of gentrification which

⁸² Ley, *The New Middle Class*, 201-5.

⁸³ NEA, "Artists in the Workforce: 1990-2005," 3-4, <http://arts.gov/publications/artists-workforce-1990-2005>

⁸⁴ *Ibid*, 13-17.

⁸⁵ John Kreidler, "Leverage Lost: The Nonprofit Arts in the Post-Ford Era," *In Motion Magazine*, February 16, 1996.

⁸⁶ Stuart Cameron, and Jon Coaffee, "Art, Gentrification and Regeneration: From Artist as Pioneer to Public Arts," *European Journal of Housing Policy*, 5, no. 1 (2005): 40.

focuses on the agency of the gentrifier and in particular on the cultural and aesthetic values of the 'new middle class' as the backbone of the gentrification process.⁸⁷

In the center amongst social groups of rich in cultural capital and poor in economic capital is the urban artist. Ley suggests that the artist is the pioneer for a specific fraction of the middle classes: a 'new middle class' who are professionals in the media, higher education, and design, especially those working in the state or non-profit sectors, that he also refers to as the 'new cultural class'.⁸⁸ This 'new middle class' emerging from suburbs into newly developed neighbors are higher in cultural capital than in economic capital, and who share something of the artist's antipathy towards commerce and convention.⁸⁹ "Like the artists, they are indifferent to the charms of suburban life and have stretched an alternative topography of meaning across the space of the metropolis."⁹⁰ This coincides with the three waves of gentrification. While the work of Neil Smith (1979, 1986) provides the most powerful account of the role of capital in the process of gentrification, the specific role of arts and the artist in second wave gentrification is most associated with Sharon Zukin's analysis of the SoHo district of Manhattan and the development of the artists' loft and of loft living.⁹¹

Sharon Zukin's history of New York loft conversions presents an effective illustration as an early example. If decline in the manufacturing sector made loft conversion possible in a material sense, loft living also reflects the ethics adopted by artists who had come to believe in the value of escaping the conformity of the 9 to 5

⁸⁷ Ley, *The New Middle Class*, 201-5.

⁸⁸ *ibid.*, 15.

⁸⁹ David Ley, "Artists, Aestheticisation and the Field of Gentrification," *Urban Studies*, 40, no. 12 (2003): 2540.

⁹⁰ *ibid.*, 2540.

⁹¹ Sharon Zukin, *Loft Living: Culture and Capital in Urban Change*, (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1982), 115-190.

workday. Activities like tours of artists' studios - studios that became lofts for non-artists and then models for new developers - helped to celebrate and idealize artists' lifestyles, and thereby generalized and mainstreamed appreciation for cultural producers' ways of living. The idea that there was an audience for such tours indicated that the artist was becoming an exhibit and a lifestyle model. What we find in the growing popularity of loft living is then a manifestation of what Zukin calls the Artistic Mode of Production (AMP): “the translation into economic value of the cultural capital that attached to artists' ostensible ways of living and working.”⁹² This AMP was necessary to the gentrification of New York's SoHo manufacturing district; it helped to separate “the built legacy of the industrial city from the social matrix of industrial production,”⁹³ as old downtown factories were translated into artists' studios and then into the scarce and costly commodity luxury housing soon thereafter. Zukin believes the shift in art's social value plays a direct role in urban transformations.

In the 1960s city planners had intended to destroy SoHo for a massive urban renewal project that included housing developments and a highway connecting New Jersey to Brooklyn. Due to community opposition, The Lower Manhattan project, envisioned by architect Paul Rudolph was terminated and the highway was never built.⁹⁴ SoHo – “South of Houston”, is iconically home to the cast-iron district. These buildings were originally used for manufacturing and warehouse goods, and were dedicated to industrial occupations until the late 1960s. In 1962, “a non-partisan civic organization dedicated to the advancement of good government called the City Club published a report

⁹² Ibid., 176.

⁹³ Ibid., 180.

⁹⁴ Yael Friedman to Urban Omnibus online forum, October 12, 2010, Paul Rudolph's Lower Manhattan Expressway, <http://urbanomnibus.net/2010/10/paul-rudolphs-lower-manhattan-expressway/>

titled 'The Wastelands of New York City' that recommended a large part of what is now SoHo be razed, as there were no buildings worth saving, and replaced with new housing."⁹⁵ The following year, Chester Rapkin, an economic consultant for the City Planning Commission argued for the viability of the area's building stock, stating, "the old buildings still housed small industries that employed many low income and minority workers that was still a viable tax revenue source for the city."⁹⁶ As a result, these buildings were saved from demolition, but by the late 1960s landlords in the area were left with empty lofts that were too small to be used for construction, "in an M1-5 neighborhood, zoning was only for light manufacturing and commercial, not residential use."⁹⁷ Because of the amount of un-occupied lofts, artists began to live illegally in the lofts in SoHo from the late 1960s and created communities there. In 1961, the Artists Tenants Association was working to prevent the eviction of New York City artists from non-residential buildings. This group secured Artists in Residents Status (AIR) for some artists, and allowed up to two families to reside in a factory building without changing its Certification of Occupancy.⁹⁸ The Department of Cultural Affairs mandates that certification be required by the city's zoning resolution, which permits artists to live and work in SoHo and NoHo, manufacturing-zoned districts. An artist according to state law is defined as "a person regularly engaged in the fine arts, such as painting and sculpture, or in the performing or creative arts, including choreography and printmaking, or in the

⁹⁵ Yukie Ohta to Urban Omnibus online forum, June 5, 2013, Living Lofts: The Evolution of the Cast Iron District, <http://urbanomnibus.net/2013/06/living-lofts-the-evolution-of-the-cast-iron-district/>

⁹⁶ *ibid.*

⁹⁷ *ibid.*

⁹⁸ *ibid.*

composition of music on a professional basis and so certified.”⁹⁹ This excludes commercial artists, such as illustrators or photographers, the theory being that they were skilled to perform in various fields and able to afford studios in other areas. In order for artists to remain situated in these lofts, they had to provide samples of their work, a resume of their training, exhibition history and professional references. Then in the 1970s artists’ groups, such as the Artist Tenant Association, SoHo Artist Association and Artist Against the Expressway, won zoning changes that permitted those lofts to be used as joint living and working quarters, as long as the city determined that at least one occupant was an artist. Although zoning changes secured the artists who were loft owner, it did not provide protection for renters. Landlords began taking advantage of rising real estate values by raising rents and attempting to evict artists. The Lower Manhattan Loft Tenant Association formed in 1978 to fight for the rights of renters, eventually resulted in the enactment of Article 7C of the New York State Multiple Dwelling Law in 1982.¹⁰⁰ The “Loft Law” ensured that tenants could not be evicted but required building owners to obtain the proper certificate of occupancy. The rapid changes to SoHo brought about commercial development. Art galleries began moving to Chelsea in the 1980s and 1990s to seek lower rents, and were replaced by elegant restaurants and high-end boutiques. Rents and property values have skyrocketed over the past forty years, and many of the artists who made SoHo a desirable neighborhood moved to other areas due to rising rents and other financial constraints. Building owners who purchased early on at rock-bottom prices saw their property value increase and decided to sell their lofts at a large profit and

⁹⁹ Hinds, Michael deCourcy, “City Drafts Formal Rules for Living in Artists’ Lofts.” *The New York Times*, May 25, 1986.

¹⁰⁰ Ohta, “Living Lofts: The Evolution of the Cast Iron District,” June 5, 2013.

move away by choice.¹⁰¹ The SoHo of today is used as an adjective to describe an “aesthetic or a lifestyle that is glamorous and hip with a dash of bohemia mixed in, as in SoHo-style loft of SoHo chic.”¹⁰² “The story of SoHo—which was transformed from a bohemian artist’s enclave to one of the most expensive zip codes in the country—has remained significant not only because of the now-iconic artworks it helped produce: in just a few decades, the area has become a retail and restaurant capital with upscale homes and hotels. The “SoHo Effect” demonstrates how artists and art can transform neighborhoods and then economies on a grand scale.”¹⁰³

Returning more directly to the relationship between art and gentrification, both art and culture, and gentrification have been extensively used in public policy – “as instruments of physical and economic regeneration of declining cities, the two are often associated in a relationship of mutual dependence.”¹⁰⁴ In the first wave this involved the creation by artists of a milieu for the production of art, and in the second wave the commodification and private consumption of this artistic milieu, the third wave emphasized on public-policy engagement and the link to regeneration through public art and artistic events, particularly through the creation of landmark physical infrastructure for the arts, such as galleries and museums.¹⁰⁵ By using the artist in tracing the evolution of gentrification and its explanations, one can begin to understand their place in urban redevelopment. The artist creates the landscape for the new middle class, and supplies the demand for a housing market through the production of art.

¹⁰¹ *ibid.*

¹⁰² *ibid.*

¹⁰³ Pechman, Ali. “A Guide to SoHo's Legendary Artists' Lofts.” *Art 101*, June 3, 2013.

¹⁰⁴ Cameron and Coaffee. *Art, Gentrification, and Regeneration*, 46.

¹⁰⁵ *ibid.*, 46.

Chapter Three: Miami as a Cultural Center for the Arts

This chapter will focus on the case study of Miami's Wynwood Arts District, a former industrial neighborhood turned art district. The revitalization could have not been possible without the private sponsorship of Goldman Properties, Wynwood's largest property owner, and state and local support of ArtPlace America and the James L. Knight Foundation. Established in 2011, ArtPlace America "works to accelerate creative place making by [generous] grants and loans ... their aim is to drive community revitalization by placing arts at the center of economic development."¹⁰⁶ The Knight Foundation - "promotes informed and engaged communities...we support the arts because they inspire our minds and souls"¹⁰⁷ - is a founding funder of ArtPlace, and works in conjunction with the National Endowment for the Arts and seven federal agencies. To date, ArtPlace has awarded 134 grants to 124 organizations in more than 79 communities across the United States for a total of \$42.1 million.¹⁰⁸

I. The Beginning of an Era: Miami's Graffiti Art Scene Explored

A strong graffiti art scene has existed in Miami for over a quarter century, but it has hardly been documented. Just like New York City in the early 1970s, Miami's graffiti art scene saw its birth with the explosion of the hip-hop movement. From as far north as Miami-Dade and Broward county line to as south as Homestead, the city was transforming itself into a massive canvas, sprawled with different crews, each with their

¹⁰⁶ "ArtPlace" 2011. <http://www.artplaceamerica.org/about/>

¹⁰⁷ Alberto Ibarguen, comments from *The Wynwood Walls and Doors*, by Goldman Properties (New York: Goldman Properties, 2012), 226.

¹⁰⁸ "ArtPlace", 2011

own distinct style.¹⁰⁹ Artists explain that Miami's graffiti scene is often overlooked, not only because of its extreme southern geographic location, but also because of the media's slick graffiti-free "South Beach" image of Miami.¹¹⁰ Miami's graffiti art movement began in the 1980s with artists 'bombing' old construction sites known as "Penits." (Fig. 12) The name penit came about because the first abandoned place to be discovered and covered with graffiti art, according to the old-school artist 'Freek', "was rumored to be an abandoned penitentiary and the name somehow got shortened to penit and just stuck."¹¹¹ These penits have become museums of graffiti art and "incubators of style." Miami would soon experience a graffiti boom like New York, and this generation of writers had a group of local pioneers who offered lessons, an advantage that was not lost in the newer group of writers.¹¹²

In 1984, with the unveiling of Miami's Metrorail Transportation system, Miami's first and only elevated subway train, a number of young graffiti writers began riding the 21-mile long train and became aware of the work being produced around the city by their peers.¹¹³ The addition of the mass transit system was the driving force for the explosion of graffiti art in Miami's inner city. New pieces appeared on strategically selected rooftops and buildings on a regular basis, creating a moving gallery of graffiti for the city's Metrorail passengers.¹¹⁴ Having seen the success of the subway art era of New York, Miami's Metrorail designers reluctantly assumed that graffiti would follow in the

¹⁰⁹ Aurelio Roman, "Miami Graffiti History 1980's," in *The Wynwood Walls and Doors*, by Goldman Properties (New York: Goldman Properties, 2012), 237.

¹¹⁰ James Murray, and Karla Murray, *Miami Graffiti*, (New York: Prestel, 2009), 4.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 8.

¹¹² Roger Gastman, and Caleb Neelon, *The History of American Graffiti*, (New York: Harper Design, 2011), 302-304.

¹¹³ "Graffiti Already A Problem For Miami's Future Metrorail" 1981

¹¹⁴ Roman, "Miami Graffiti History 1980's," 237.

same form and added design details as deterrents.¹¹⁵ They were correct: Within two years, writers gravitated to the rooftops along the train tracks, and it was SEAM, a writer from northeast Miami, who dropped one of the first rooftop pieces along with members of the VO5 crew. One of the earliest founding crews of graffiti was the VO5 (Very Original 5) crew, whose main members were Wynwood residents.¹¹⁶ At the time, Wynwood was a predominately Puerto Rican community, and a destination for young graffiti artists seeking recognition and fame amongst peers.

Wynwood also saw the grand opening of the Bakehouse Art Complex (BAC) in 1987, an artists' workspace that provided local, emerging, and mid-career artists with the opportunity to creatively explore and develop their artistic endeavors. The BAC was originally located in Coconut Grove, Florida in the early 1980s but after the displacement of artists due to rent hikes; the search for an older building that could be purchased at a cheaper rate became an important strategy to prevent artists from gentrification.¹¹⁷ The BAC is valued as the ideal place to view local contemporary art. The Bakehouse, with its 20-foot high walls offered a premier spot for writers to piece their "burners"¹¹⁸. Aurelio Roman, an original crewmember of "Creators Of Def Effects" speaks on the legitimacy of graffiti in Miami brought by the BAC, "Rather the denounce their activities, they allowed [us] to finish [our] works. Some consider this the earliest instance in which a legitimate South Florida art organization recognized graffiti as a true art form."¹¹⁹ Today, their space is unrivaled as they offer patrons a first-hand look at 70 artists studios, two

¹¹⁵ Gastman, 173.

¹¹⁶ Roman, 237.

¹¹⁷ Arlys W. Raymond, "Bakehouse Art Complex," in *The Wynwood Walls and Doors*, by Goldman Properties (New York: Goldman Properties, 2012), 235.

¹¹⁸ "The Words: Graffiti Glossary" 1994-2013 <http://www.graffiti.org/faq/graffiti.glossary.html> - Burners: "...A burner is any piece that has good bright colors, good style (often in wildstyle, which is a very complicated and difficult tag to do) and seems to "burn" off of the wall."

¹¹⁹ Roman, 237.

galleries, project room, print room, photo lab, ceramic kiln area, woodworking and welding areas; the BAC allows artists to discover, create, and cross-over new media into their work. Opened seven days a week with free admission, the BAC is recognized as South Florida's premier center for creativity in visual arts.¹²⁰

Currently, the Miami art scene has experienced great developments with the launch of Art Basel Miami Beach in 2002 and the Wynwood Arts District in 2009. This district is now home to 70 galleries, 5 museums, 3 public collection spaces, 12 art studios and 5 art fairs. Developers and gallery owners have since invited local and international street artists from across the globe to create large-scale murals around the district, embracing Miami's long-standing cultural diversity. High-profile artists include Barry McGee, Shepard Fairey, Ryan McGinness, and Faile, just to name a few.

Miami has been home to thousands of graffiti writers since the early 1980s and Wynwood's Bakehouse Art Complex was one of the first legal spots to paint. Most recently, Primary Flight¹²¹ has introduced hundreds of out-of-town artists to Wynwood's warehouse walls. (Fig. 13) It took the genius mind of Tony Goldman to imagine that these unprepossessing buildings could become the vibrant centerpiece of an emerging arts district. Miami was on its way to becoming the next, big arts epicenter.

¹²⁰ *ibid.*

¹²¹ "Primary Flight" 2013 "is the first organization to take an entire art district, roughly 30 blocks by 5 blocks worth of previously occupied industrial factories, and envision the available concrete landscape as an open air museum. In 2007, Primary Flight invited 35 artists to paint on strategically located walls throughout the Wynwood Arts District and Miami Design District, maps were circulated, inviting patrons to experience an art form, known for its secrecy, live in the streets of Miami over a five day period." <http://primaryflight.com/history>

II. The Art Basel Effect

Before Art Basel, today's leading fair for Modern and Contemporary art, there was only one contemporary art fair, in Cologne, which had started in 1967 with just 18 German galleries.¹²² One year later, three Basel gallerists Ernst Beyeler, Trudi Bruckner, and Balz Hilt decided that Switzerland should have an art fair too. Switzerland is the world's largest offshore banking market, and there remain few assets one can purchase anonymously with undeclared money.¹²³ As it turned out, Basel was also the right place for a global art fair. Value-added taxes are low in Switzerland, and banks are comfortable taking art as collateral.¹²⁴ The fair proved to be a success from the very start as 90 galleries and 30 publishers from 10 countries exhibited at the inaugural show of 1970 that welcomed over 16,000 visitors.¹²⁵ Bruckner credits Beyeler as the presiding genius in Basel, "Ernst Beyeler was the key to its success because he had the international connections. His expertise in modern art also meant that the fair included the canonical masters of the 20th century and attracted the solid, rich collectors who could then be drawn into more adventurous territory."¹²⁶ To celebrate the 150th anniversary of photography in 1989, Art Basel became one of the art world's leading platforms for promoting the medium. In the mid-1990s, the Swiss Bank Corporation, which later merged with Union Bank of Switzerland to become UBS, became Art Basel's main sponsor.

¹²² Anna Somers Cooks, "Forty years of Art Basel," *The Art Newspaper*, June 9, 2009

¹²³ Marion Maneker. "Why Basel Became the Capital of the art Fair world," *The Art Market Monitor*, June 21, 2013.

¹²⁴ *ibid.*

¹²⁵ "Art Basel - About Art Basel" 2013

¹²⁶ Cooks, "Forty years of Art Basel," 2009.

Nearly 30 years after its inauguration to the art world, Art Basel was in the midst of looking to expand the fair. Members of the Art Basel staff traveled to Miami and were influenced by many of the art collectors that lived there, such as the Rubells, Bramans, and the de la Cruzes, and a number of others who were regular buyers at Basel. Instead of becoming just another art fair in New York, the team decided Miami is a place that will have more of a standout with Europeans, especially with its warm weather and friendly community. When the committee of Art Basel finally made the decision to open their second location in South Florida, they spoke with a few collectors and arranged a meeting with the Host Committee and Mayor of Miami Beach.¹²⁷ In September 2000, Miami Beach Mayor Neisen Kasdin announced that the Art Basel show was coming to Miami Beach, its first venture outside its native Switzerland. Kasdin was passionate about the city's art and culture. Earlier in his tenure he had formed Miami Beach's first cultural arts council and established a program to help pay for art in public places.¹²⁸ Miami-native and conceptual artist, Carlos Betancourt was excited about the venture as he states it was a sign that "the city was finally growing up. It was no longer just a place for dumping money and partying, but it was about to get an injection of culture that was going to help move it into the twenty-first century. Art Basel presented a doorway to an entirely different Beach. I was ecstatic."¹²⁹ Within three months of the announcement, 400 exhibitors had applied and 150 of the finest contemporary art galleries had bought spaces at the Miami Beach Convention Center. The fair was supposed to debut in December 2011, but fell victim to the post-9/11 fallout. The fairs promoters took out full-

¹²⁷ WRLN radio interview

¹²⁸ Gerald Posner, *Miami Babylon: Crime, Wealth, and Power - A Dispatch from the Beach*, (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2009), 160-336.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, 336.

page ads in the Miami Herald and The New York Times explaining the cancellation and promising an even bigger event the following year.

In 2002, Art Basel finally made its debut in the beautiful and tropical city of Miami Beach, Florida. At the nexus of North America and Latin America, the show reflects the city's multi-cultural identity, presenting a diversity of work from galleries and artists of the region. A few reasons why the fair was introduced to Miami is due to its southern geographic location, varied culture, and intermediary agent between the Americas. The premier fair of Art Basel located in the Miami Beach Convention Center would go on to host some 260-odd galleries that welcomed the very best work from modern and contemporary artists. Art Basel Miami Beach established itself as the premier show in the Americas, and ranks among the favorite wintertime events of the international art world.¹³⁰ Since then, Art Basel Miami Beach has added several sectors to their programming including, Art Nova which focuses on recent works by artists of all generations, Art Basel Conversations in 2004 introduced a panel discussion with prominent art collectors, museums directors, curators and artists, and Art Parcours in 2010 with a goal of presenting site-specific public art productions and performances by renowned artists and emerging talent.¹³¹ In recent years, the Art Basel fair has introduced various satellite fairs throughout Downtown Miami, Midtown, Wynwood, and South Beach, including: Scope, Pulse, Art Miami, NADA, Art Asia, just to name a few, showcasing some of the best modern and contemporary art. Now in its eleventh year, the city has garnered hundreds of millions of dollars in deals that were made at the fair with purchases by art collectors from around the world.

¹³⁰ "Art Basel - About Art Basel" 2013.

¹³¹ *ibid.*

III. Uncovering Miami's Wynwood Arts District

A few years after Art Basel made its debut in Miami Beach, a neighborhood just north of the hustle and bustle of downtown, Wynwood, began developing an arts center that is known today as the Wynwood Arts District. Wynwood has become a mecca for local contemporary, visual and performing artists. The neighborhood of Wynwood is roughly 1.3 square miles, and spans through North 20th Street to the south, North 36th Street to the north, Interstate 95 to the west, and the Florida East Coast Railway to the east. (Fig. 14) Wynwood was not always the creative utopia it is today, ten years ago it was an abandoned warehouse district, it was home to one of Miami's roughest sections; drugs and crime piled high along the streets of this once dilapidated area. Now it has transcended into an eclectic hub for artists and art connoisseur. "As a result of immigration patterns in the 1950s and 1960s, Wynwood was home to a large and thriving Puerto Rican community. As industries began to relocate their factories overseas to take advantage of lower labor costs, Wynwood, like many other blue-collar manufacturing towns throughout the U.S., also began to decline. Within two decades, Wynwood would lose 60 percent of its garment manufacturers and associated industries, and was additionally hit bottom by the recession of the early 1970s."¹³² Many Puerto Ricans have moved to more affluent areas of Miami such as Kendall and Coral Gables due to socioeconomic success in the past years. Recently, however, the neighborhood has seen a push towards gentrification with increased investments and developments. In the past decade, Wynwood has undergone a process of gentrification, in which graffiti and street

¹³² Angela Carter, "The Wynwood Big Buy: How a Few Wealthy Developers Misappropriated Street Art to Jump Start Gentrification." October 31, 2012.

art played a very significant role.¹³³ The revitalization of Wynwood is different from other gentrification projects; in this case, Wynwood is developer-led instead of artists-led. The development of Wynwood into an arts community was entirely the project of a few wealthy gallery owners and real estate developers. In the early 1990s, the Rubell family purchased a 45,000 square foot warehouse and converted it into a gallery on Northwest 29th Street and North Miami Avenue, known today as the Rubell Family Collection.¹³⁴ “Between 1998 and 2002, many other wealthy art collectors came into the neighborhood, some from Miami but most from New York. Bernice Steinbaum, Marty Margulies, Brook Dorsch, and others set up galleries in the vicinity of Wynwood.”¹³⁵ Large real estate developers converted mass box-like warehouse buildings into gallery spaces and artists’ lofts.

Since 2004, real estate developer and visionary Tony Goldman of Goldman Properties, the man behind the revitalization of SoHo and South Beach,¹³⁶ began purchasing properties in Wynwood to assimilate the area from urban decay to artistic landmark. Mr. Goldman began his real estate empire when he opened Goldman Properties Company in 1968 on the Upper West Side of Manhattan. In 1976, Goldman saw potential in the SoHo district of Manhattan and was attracted by its imposing cast-iron architecture and realized that the vast loft spaces in the factories could be appealing places to live. In an interview for the *New York Times*, Goldman spoke about his interest in renovating the neighborhood of SoHo, “The cast-iron district expressed a powerful sense of place that didn’t exist, that doesn’t exist, in many places in the world. But it was

¹³³ *ibid.*

¹³⁴ Rubell Family Collection, 2009.

¹³⁵ Carter, “The Wynwood Big Buy,” 2012.

¹³⁶ Poster, *Miami Babylon*, 160-185.

the historic fabric, first and foremost, that captivated my attention and interest.”¹³⁷

Thereafter, he bought and renovated 18 buildings, including the SoHo Building on Greene Street, turning it into the district’s largest and tallest mixed-use office building. For the artists and young professionals in the community, he opened restaurants to attract a young and chic crowd: first the Greene Street Café, a jazz supper club, and then the SoHo Kitchen and Bar. Goldman, who recently passed away in the fall of 2012, was known for envisioning thriving and architecturally appealing neighborhoods where others see only desolation and neglect. Goldman’s visionary genius lead him to revitalize SoHo in the 1970s, the Art Deco district in South Beach during the 1980s, and now, with the aid of his creative team, building and renovating the neighborhood of Wynwood.

Goldman Properties’ Senior Managing Director, Marlo Courtney provided some perspective on the reconstruction of the neighborhood. “Our interest in developing the Wynwood Walls was due in large part to the neighborhood -- buying critical mass of property and developing through a detailed process has evolved by bringing in transformative tenants whose businesses flourish the neighborhoods, such as Panther Café, The Miami New Times, and Del Toro Shoes.”¹³⁸ In 2009, during Art Basel Miami Beach, Tony Goldman and Jeffrey Deitch began collaborating on what is now recognized as one of the largest outdoor street art exhibitions; the Wynwood Walls. “Wynwood is considered our town art center,” says Courtney. Goldman began acquiring contemporary art works through Deitch and was inspired by his street art collection. In envisioning the program for the Wynwood Walls, Deitch and Goldman were planning on using the six building façades as canvases for art. The challenge was selecting the great work to adorn

¹³⁷ Leslie Kaufman, “Tony Goldman, SoHo Pioneer, Dies at 68,” *The New York Times*, September 15, 2012.

¹³⁸ see Appendix

the Walls on 25th-26th street of Northwest 2nd Avenue; the complex has a total number of six buildings with 18 walls. Both men curated the Walls the first year in 2009 and since then have welcomed international street artists from over 15 countries to participate in the mural program. Many of the murals might not be replaced, depending on how well they hold up but most are considered precious gems to the community, especially works by high-profile artists. The Wynwood Walls are privately owned by Goldman Properties, and are located in the heart of a neighborhood that has long been a center for community and public art, home to the Bakehouse Art Complex, generations of graffiti crews and Primary Flight's street art initiative. In 2010, Goldman Properties opened Joey's, an Italian restaurant owned by Goldman's son and Wynwood Kitchen and Bar, a restaurant whose backyard are the walls themselves, features more than two dozen murals from the best street artists working today, Shepard Fairey, Os Gemeos, Nunca, among them. (Fig. 15) Between the two restaurants and the Wynwood Walls, they have attracted over 10,000 people a month to the block, "which transformed a blighted neighborhood into a destination".¹³⁹ These artists have brought Goldman's vision to life. By joining together to transform a deserted wasteland into a spectacle of artistic performance, these artists' have essentially changed the way people view art. They have created one of the world's largest outdoor street art museum that have thousands of people traveling to Miami each year to see. (Fig. 16) Goldman Properties quickly expanded the Wynwood Walls to include the "Wynwood Doors" and "Outside the Walls". Together the team has commissioned some 48 works by 38 artists from 10 countries.¹⁴⁰ The entire district of Wynwood, aside from the Goldman Properties' buildings, is adorned with large-scale

¹³⁹ Goldman, Tony. "The Power of Public Art," in *The Wynwood Walls and Doors*, by Goldman Properties (New York: Goldman Properties, 2012) 17-18.

¹⁴⁰ *ibid.*

murals; most are temporary exhibitions, commissioned by various property owners, produced for advertising campaigns or music videos.

The Wynwood Walls initiative provides life to vacant lots. While the use of art as a force of urban revitalization is not new, the case of Wynwood raises questions about the lasting impacts of art for the sake of redevelopment. The streets are visually appealing to visitors, yet access to affordable housing and the erasure of local social histories become important concerns as real estate prices increase. Courtney informed me on the procedural methods to re-build this community, “Wynwood Walls is an urban revitalization project initiated by the eminent property developer Tony Goldman that sought to transform an area that was in desperate need of urban renewal into the first permanent [street] art museum in the world. By selecting art world heavy hitter Jeffrey Deitch, currently the director of the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, to curate the first installment of the program, Goldman ensured that his project had both the legitimacy and punch it needed to thrive.”¹⁴¹ When mentioning gentrification, Courtney emphasizes that no residents have been displaced, and that the businesses moving in are creating dozens of new jobs. It is not really gentrification, he says. “It’s more like gentrification.” The neighborhood was completely abandoned when the business model was conveyed and gentrification was planned; this time it was developer-led, instead of being artists-led. Though the art was used as a marketing tool to bring in the new residents and businesses. As we have seen earlier, artists are in fact a driving force in the gentrifying process, and it is no different in Miami. The graffiti artists in Miami were and still are a huge influence to the building and planning procedures of the neighborhood, as it is for

¹⁴¹ see Appendix

the new businesses. The only difference now is that the works commissioned by Goldman Properties are spectacular in scale, and completely legal.

Wynwood is a safe haven for graffiti writers and street artists. The district provides them with endless space to create works while garnering free publicity. It is an important asset to the community of Miami, as it supplies the city with the essential tools for creating a viable town center for the arts. It also offers legitimacy and encourages local, younger artists to work freely in their own community. Each month the neighborhood hosts a monthly gallery art walk that welcomes over 5,000 visitors. Offering galleries the opportunity to display works by local and international artists to a public mass who would not normally come to the area to browse for art. Courtney speaks on veteran art dealer and Wynwood tenant Greg Schienhaum, “Greg created his fine art gallery that offers an array of internationally known street art right at the heart of the district. He elevated artists to a different platform and gives thanks to the district for allowing such success to its neighboring tenants.”¹⁴²

In and around the district are newly built condominiums that emulate loft style residences once made famous by New York artists in the late 1960s. Real estate developer David Lombardi began purchasing properties in the neighborhood of Wynwood in 2000 after striking gold in the housing market of South Beach. Lombardi, like Goldman, began purchasing dilapidated buildings in South Beach and saw great potential in the neighborhood of Wynwood. It was Lombardi who first introduced the gallery walk to the district after attending the grand opening of the Dorsch gallery¹⁴³ in

¹⁴² see Appendix

¹⁴³ Emerson Dorsch. 2013 - Widely acknowledged as a pioneer of Miami's art district Wynwood, Brook Dorsch was the first to move a commercial gallery to the then run-down warehouse district in 2000. <http://www.dorschgallery.com/about>

2000 and getting inspired to create an artistic community. Along with his business partner, Todd Glaser, Lombardi Properties, Wynwood's second largest developer, began developing loft style buildings in 2005, designed for joint living and working spaces for artists and young professionals. Lombardi speaks on the demand for housing in Wynwood, "The demand for these kind of spaces were enormous... this led us to think boldly about building a "ground-up" project of lofts but one where the artists could take an ownership stake in the neighborhood and not get forced out through out 'gentlefication'!"¹⁴⁴ Today, Lombardi Properties own four loft-style buildings in Wynwood, these include: Wynwood Lofts which is 36 units; Cynergi, 100 units; Terminal Lofts, 8 units, and Parc Lofts, 55 units. These loft-style buildings reflect the rich architectural, social, and urban history of SoHo and the evolution of a new mode of city living that continues to thrive in different cities to this day.¹⁴⁵

In 2012, Miami landed 3 of 47 creative place-making grants from ArtPlace America. The Wynwood Arts District was awarded a \$140,000 grants from ArtPlace to launch a Business Improvement District (BID), "where local property and business owners fund projects to enhance the neighborhood, focusing on security and improving the streetscape, the BID will enable Wynwood to continue its impressive growth, which in the space of a decade has become South Florida's epicenter for arts and creative businesses."¹⁴⁶ The Light Box at Goldman Warehouse in Wynwood received a \$385,000 grant; "funding will support the activation and stabilization of a 12,000 square foot multi-tenant performance and visual art space in the heart of district. The Light Box will be a

¹⁴⁴ Lombardi Properties, 2013. Lombardi explains the demand behind creating loft-style apartments in and around the district. <http://www.lombardiproperties.com/neighborhoods.php?id=3>

¹⁴⁵ Ohta, "Living Lofts: The Evolution of the Cast Iron District," June 5, 2013.

¹⁴⁶ Knight Foundation, "ArtPlace grants mean business in Miami," June 12, 2012.

space for artists to research and make work, explore disciplines, and hone their unique voices through extended residencies, international exchange, cross-disciplinary approaches and the presentation of new work.”¹⁴⁷ The third and final grant in the Miami area goes to the Bass Museum of Art in South Beach for “TC: Temporary Contemporary,” ‘a public art projects program that will bring recognized contemporary artists to create temporary, site-specific artist projects within the Arts District of Miami Beach.’¹⁴⁸ ArtPlace has awarded the Bass Museum of Art with a grant of \$220,000, recognizing the project’s ability to bring new vibrancy to the area, even when Art Basel is not in town.

One of the most transformative elements to the gentrification process of Miami was the ratification of the Business Improvement District (BID). Jose Nava-Lujambio, Representative and Executive Administrator of the Wynwood Arts District Association spoke with ArtPlace on the BID formation process, “The BID is a designated area in which the commercial property owners decide to collectively raise their own taxes by a small percentage in order to fund improvements within the district’s boundaries. In the State of Florida, communities who are seeking to become a Business Improvement District have to do so by holding a ballot election. In order to become a BID, 50 percent + 1 person of the property owners must vote in favor of the establishment. Upon a successful BID vote, 100 percent of the money which the commercial property owners assess themselves goes directly into the improvements in the District.”¹⁴⁹ The election was held on the 4th day of June 2013 and of the 302 ballots cast, 274 ballots were cast as a yes vote, and 28 ballots were cast as a no vote. As a result, the Wynwood Business

¹⁴⁷ Artplaceamerica/about

¹⁴⁸ Knight Foundation, “ArtPlace grants means business in Miami,” 2012

¹⁴⁹ Wynwood Arts BID | ArtPlace.org

Improvement District was approved by a majority of affected property owners of the BID area. (Fig. 17) Wynwood will now be able to develop its urban infrastructure and explore services that will ensure a safe and more pedestrian-friendly district. The BID covers a 47-block stretch from 20th to 29th street and from the railroad tracks near North Miami Avenue to Northwest 5th Avenue. The initiative is expected to generate about \$700,000 in the first year alone, the revenue financing a variety of projects and services to improve the geographic area, such as security, sanitation, support of the arts, marketing, and transportation.¹⁵⁰ Wynwood BID Project Director, David Collins, expresses his optimism on the project by stating, “Business improvement districts happen to revive commerce in urban areas...[and] will be a catalyst for real improvement in the Wynwood over the next ten years.”¹⁵¹ Project advocates see the BID plan as the next step towards a Wynwood transformation from a past as an industrial warehouse district to a future as a vibrant pedestrian-friendly cultural art destination. Joe Furst of Goldman Properties says, “We can now supplement WADA’s (Wynwood Arts District Association) activities and focus on more arts-related programming.”

The Wynwood Walls, Doors and Outside the Walls, were the instant explosive and creative statement that Miami needed to ignite and accelerate change, the revitalization of this once neglected neighborhood into a thriving arts community was envisioned by a passionate and inventive businessman. The end product is a vibration of color, talent and spirit that envelops and inspires each visitor to experience the beauty and captured energy of Miami, Florida.¹⁵²

¹⁵⁰ Miami New Times, Wynwood’s New BID Promises Fewer Car Break-ins, Cleaner Streets...

¹⁵¹ BID Wynwood interview by Aisha Moktadier

¹⁵² Wynwood book, pg 245

Chapter Four: Conclusion

Art has shaped and inspired thousands of years of civilizations, as made evident by the countless museums, galleries, theaters, and venues existing around the world today. The term street art or post-graffiti established itself from the graffiti writing style of the 1970s. From its emergence in the New York hip-hop era, graffiti and street art have flourished our city streets and made art accessible for the public. Artists create works to be experienced and explored by as many individuals as possible, with as many different individual ideas to satisfy an emotion or feeling that is expressed through an engagement with the arts. The public in a way creates the reality, meaning, and conception of the work. Graffiti is typically recognized by the ‘tag’ or signature of the artist, while street art is concentrated on interacting with the public. Street art was deeply rooted in the creativity of the displaced and alienated urban communities of America during the second half of the twentieth century. This movement inspires people in similar circumstances to a world increasingly urbanized; divided by the rich and the poor, and by migration and dislocation.¹⁵³

Over time, art aficionados have taken notice to the art form and began implementing its uses into commercial galleries and auction houses. To date, graffiti and street art have sold over millions of dollars in the international art market, and share a space in contemporary art books alongside art movements like Abstract Expressionism and Neo-Pop. Albeit regarded as vandalism, graffiti and street art are characterized as public art, developed on the streets. These art works have thrived in communities with its vibrancy and telling account of a neighborhoods’ cultural history.

¹⁵³ Cedar, Street Art: The Graffiti Revolution, pg 8

Through the aid of public and private sponsorship, public art in the United States has garnered widespread support since the inception of the National Endowment of the Arts in 1965. Moreover, the NEA, along with several other agencies, has awarded over \$4 billion in grants, making them the largest annual national funder of the arts. By increasing awareness of contemporary art, these government-sponsored alliances have given artists the opportunity to work in the public context by supporting artistic experimentation, and engaging direct community involvement for the placement of art.

Artists are almost always the first residents to relocate to derelict neighborhoods when gentrification is planned. The urban pioneers, as they are called, usually accept the risks of rehabilitating deteriorated property, as well as have the time, skill, and ability to carry out these extensive renovations, with the aid and sponsorship of urban developers.¹⁵⁴ The term gentrification is broadly used to describe a trend in which developers and artists renovate and restore neglected areas within an urban community by seizing land and property, and transforming them into desirable places that attract a new middle class, described by geography David Ley as, “professionals in the media, higher education, and design, especially those working in the state or non-profit sectors, that he also refers to as the ‘new cultural class’”.¹⁵⁵ The ultimate goal is for transformative businesses and middle class residents to relocate to these areas, which in effect, increases property values and revitalizes impoverished communities. Often times, this process begins when artists create public art projects that fortify urban communities and thus, influence and inspire people within the community. Art affects each person differently, which is the true beauty of art and inspiration. Gentrification is sold to us as something

¹⁵⁴ Lees, Loretta, Tom Slater, and Elvin K. Wyly. *The Gentrification Reader*, London: Routledge, 2010.

¹⁵⁵ Ley, *The New Middle Class*, 15

that is creative; it is about urban ‘renaissance’, the rebirth of the central city.¹⁵⁶ By virtually changing the way urban cities are shaped, and destroying authentic landmarks and replacing them for better and newer uses, the role of the artist inevitably creates a new lifestyle through gentrification. As we have seen through several scholarships, gentrification occurs throughout major cities in the world, and the role of the artist remains prominent during the entire course of redevelopment.

Today, Miami is recognized as a cultural center for the arts, and generates thousands of visitors each year eager to experience the vitality of the city through spectacular art events hosted by Art Basel Miami Beach and the Wynwood Arts District. Since 2002, Art Basel Miami Beach has established itself as the premier show in the Americas, and ranks among the favorite wintertime events of the international art world.¹⁵⁷ The fair, now in its eleventh year, could have not been possible without the amalgamation of Miami’s art collectors in convincing the directors of Art Basel to locate a second fair in Miami Beach. Before the Wynwood Arts District came to exist, Wynwood was a non-historic district with very few distinguishing features other than a mass of similar box-like warehouse buildings and a symmetrical and organized urban, gritty grid system of streets and sidewalks. The open configurations of the former industrial buildings were a perfect setting for modern loft spaces; this type of space is attracting many creative-industry companies and individuals to move in the area. Tony Goldman saw the potential for a pedestrian-friendly community and setting for an arts district, the neighborhood was a perfect location where people could one day gravitate to and launch their explorations. Goldman decided that with Wynwood’s large stock of

¹⁵⁶ Lees, *The geography of gentrification*, p 6

¹⁵⁷ *ibid.*

warehouse buildings, all with no windows, would be the giant canvases to create and display the greatest street art ever seen in one place. With the implementation of transformative restaurants, shops, and nightclubs, this neighborhood has turned into an appealing hangout for young professionals engaged in the arts and entertainment industries. After years of planning and collaborating with the worlds' most recognizable street artists, Wynwood became the art district that Goldman anticipated.

Upon entering this eclectic warehouse district, art enthusiasts can journey through magnificent murals and mind-blowing creative projects that brands the area one of the largest permanent outdoor street art exhibitions in the world. The Wynwood Arts District is home to over 70 art galleries, numerous art venues such as the Bakehouse Art Complex, and the world-famous Margulies and Rubell Family art collections. The future of Wynwood lies within the recently approved Business Improvement District (BID) grant, an initiative sponsored by ArtPlace America and the commercial property owners within the district's boundaries, to raise funds for a variety of projects and services that will improve the geographic area, such as security, cross walk implementation, installation of waste receptacles, and the development of Miami Arts Charter School.¹⁵⁸ Through the BID, the Wynwood Arts District Association can now focus on implementing more art-related projects to the neighborhood. In the last year, *Forbes* ranked Wynwood at number 19 in its list of "America's Hippest Hipster

¹⁵⁸ The mission of the Miami Arts Charter School is to provide a rigorous academic education, with special emphasis placed on the performing and expressive arts. Our goal is to awaken students' minds and hearts through an intensive immersion in the fine arts, and to foster a sense of connection to one another and the world. Specializing in instruction in music, dance, art, theater and creative writing, Miami Arts Charter School seeks to engage students in meaningful academic work and inspiring performance experiences that will propel their artistic creativity and excite them about life itself. | Miami Arts Charter School – Mission Statement - <http://www.miamiartscharter.net/index.jsp>

Neighborhoods”¹⁵⁹ and was named 6th most stylish neighborhoods in the world by *Complex* magazine.¹⁶⁰ In nearly a decade, the skilled combination of artists, gallery owners, and developers have transformed the city of Miami into one of the worlds’ most travelled to destinations.

¹⁵⁹ Forbes, America’s Hippest Hipster Neighborhoods by Morgan Brennan

¹⁶⁰ Miami New Times, Wynwood Named the Sixth Most Stylish Neighborhood in the World