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Original Research Article

The Role of Letters and Calligraphy in Public Art (Comparison of Three Examples of Iranian Public Letter-Based Art with Three Non-Iranian Examples Over the Decade)

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Abstract

This study aims at analyzing the effect of calligraphy on providing a relationship between the audience and the work in the public art context. The relationship between artistic work and audience is one of the most underlying issues in postmodern art, which can be achieved in public art more than in other types of art. Accordingly, the type of relationship caused by using letters varies in public art. This is because the letters play a cultural role as a visual element in history. To compare the effect of using letters and calligraphy in public art, three Iranian and three foreign letter-based works were compared. The study employs the descriptive method as a subset of qualitative studies.

This study aims at explaining the cultural significance and nature of letters and calligraphy in the new and postmodern arts of Iran, and its importance in communicating with the audiences in public arts. Which indicators can result in an effective audience-work relationship by using letters and calligraphy in public artworks? using letters and calligraphy in public arts can result in a better audience-art interaction in addition to its communicative function in the field of transferring the concept if it is used based on the identity background of audiences.

In the studied examples, two works of Al Seyed and Parviz Tanavoli have been recognized as successful works in the field of public art. The entanglement of these works with the urban context, and the relationship of letters with a cultural context of the audience are the most effective factors in the success of letter-based works. According to obtained results, the following characteristics can be counted for public art, which can communicate with audiences compared to other types of postmodern arts: public display, public audience availability, influencing the masses, inviting the audience to participate, creating a sense of joy and happiness, beautifying the urban space, better conveying the message, and stability of information. Also, if the proportion of language and calligraphy with the culture and identity of audiences is considered in public art that used letters and calligraphy as a visual factor, the most underlying aspect of communicating audiences in these works can be realized. Hence, one can make sure of effective audience-art interaction.

Keywords: *Postmodern art, Public art, Letter-based, Calligraphy, Contemporary art.*

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Introduction and problem statement

Various modern and postmodern approaches can be observed in Iran's contemporary art based on calligraphy and letters. The last decades of the 20th century observed deep evolutions in the concept of art and aesthetics. Hence, the decades have experienced a variety of instruments and approaches of modern art expression. Using letters in art was one of the experiences that existed since the modern age, which has gained new dimensions in the postmodern age. However, using letters and calligraphy has a long history in the history of east and west art (Amani, Balkhari Ghahi & Jabbari, 2021). On the other hand, the interaction between the artistic work and the audience is one of the most underlying issues of postmodern art. The interaction can be achieved in public arts more than in other types of art. In the early 20th century, the accelerated technological changes, increasing urbanization, and influence of art in urban space, and the interconnection of daily life with public spaces has cleared the need for public art. The city was changed into a fundamental issue for artists and urban planners (Rostami, Sarvari & Zargar, Eini, 2017, 53). On the other hand, communicating with audiences in public art can make the audiences identify the social and cultural elements of each other. Hence, a network of human relations can be created regardless of geographical restrictions.

This study aims at analyzing the effect of calligraphy in the audience-artistic work interaction in the context of public art. According to the postmodern art approach, the type of communication caused by using calligraphy and letters in public art is different from other approaches. For example, using calligraphy in Iran in public art can deepen the interaction with public art for audiences because of the rich background of calligraphy and its acceptability against people. Art as one of the explicit cultural manifestations can be deeply correlated to identity (Khorasani & Kafshchian

Moghadam, 2018). The contemporary artists, especially those in the field of public art, along with the Saqakhaneh school, use calligraphy as an underlying element of cultural identity to identify their contemporary works. The manifestation of Persian calligraphy in these works can express the worldview of Iranian people in the modernized form in imaginary works, and especially public art (Abdi & Gudarzi, 1999, 1).

Therefore, the reason for choosing letters as the main factor in public art investigation in this study is the cultural role of this visual element in the history of Iranian people and can create a different concept of public art-audience interaction. To investigate the effect of calligraphy on public art, the interaction was analyzed in three Iranian and three non-Iranian letter-oriented works.

Purpose: This study is aimed at explaining the cultural significance and nature of letters and calligraphy in the new and postmodern arts of Iran, and its importance in communicating with the audiences in public arts.

Question: Which indicators can result in an effective audience-work relationship by using letters and calligraphy in public artworks?

Hypothesis: using letters and calligraphy in public arts can result in a better audience-work relationship in addition to its communicative function in the field of transferring the concept if it is used based on the identity background of audiences.

Methodology

This is a descriptive-analytical study in terms of purpose. This study has described the effect of letters on public art and increased audience-work interaction. For data collection, bibliographic method and comparison of case studies were used. The population in this study consisted of two groups of public arts using calligraphy in Iranian and non-Iranian contemporary art. Inclusion criteria in this study are: the presence

of interaction, belonging to recent 15 years, the popularity of the artist, using letters or calligraphy as visual element. The sampling method in this study has been purposive sampling. Also, due to the impossibility of evaluation of the opinions of audiences about the foreign works, all works have been evaluated in final comparison based on characteristics based on the theoretical framework for postmodern public art, in which the audience-work interaction is considered. The descriptive characteristics of each work were analyzed in terms of proportion to desired indicators of public art, especially proportion to the context and culture of audiences and designation of work based on the physical context.

Literature review

Some works have been presented on the use of calligraphy in Iranian contemporary art and interactive art:

In a study conducted by Bahrami Nikoo and Sajadzadeh (2014), entitled “the role of public art in the creation of urban places”, public art has been described. Accordingly, in addition to considering the role of artistic activities and qualitative promotion of urban spaces, public art tends to explain its role in creating urban spaces. This study is significant in terms of emphasizing the necessity of interaction of public art with the audience in the present study.

In a study conducted by Stefan Gaie (2010) under the title of “public art and space”, the interdisciplinary approach of public art, urban sociology, and anthropology has been presented. The study has analyzed the challenges of public art. Based on anthropology, the importance of proportion to the cultural context of public art has also been presented, which is a key element in the present study.

Rostami et al. (2016) conducted a study under the title of “evaluation of public art components”. In

this study, they referred to the issue of changing the city as one of the main issues of artists in the postmodern age. Large urban spaces need public arts, which can communicate the urban space and visual perception of people. An underlying issue in this study was its relevance to the present study in terms of the audience-work interaction as one of the consequences of public art.

The study under the title of “reading the interactive typographic layout “for control” from the perspective of the principles of Gestalt visual perception” (2018) was conducted on the work “For Control”, which has paved the way for typographic space analysis. Accordingly, the interactive arrangements of this work have caused active participation of the audience in arrangement and more interaction of the work with other audiences because of using letters. This can emphasize the interactive importance of letters in art, which is also the issue of the present study.

Azadeh Dehghani (2008) conducted a study under the title of “modern art, interactive art, text, and typography; interaction as an instrument”. The study analyzed the role of letters in the domain of postmodern art interaction. In this study, the significance of cultural elements for the audiences in public spaces is considered to communicate the work rapidly by language and letters. Hence, this study is similar to the present study.

Yazdanfam (2011) conducted a study under the title of “the evolutions of Arab World: sorting the power and identity in the Middle East”, which was published in the magazine of Strategic Studies. The study analyzed the issue of identity in the Middle East after the evolutions of 2011. The dominance of Islamist discourse behind the events of that time and weakness of previous modern authoritarian discourses in Tunisia and Egypt were replaced by discourses based on the acceptability of various ideas and Islamism. The evolution can be an approach to postmodern discourse, which

has helped the revival of visual-identity features of these regions. Considering the evolutions shows the awareness of the cultural context of the societies and the importance of using Arabic calligraphy in the public art of these regions, which have been analyzed in the case studies.

Theoretical framework

• Postmodern art and communicating audience

Postmodernism is a sociological-historical concept, which refers to postmodernism's historical age (Barker, 2004). Postmodernity is affected by thinkers such as Friedrich Nietzsche, Martin Heidegger, Ludwig Wittgenstein, John Dewey, and recently Jacques Derrida and Richard Rorty (Reed, 2008), and its concepts were institutionalized in France in the mid-20th century (Nozari, 2000, 30). The most underlying feature of postmodernity that differentiates it from reading modern art can be deconstruction, and not what the author means (Zamiran, 2010, 77).

Hence, the characteristics of postmodernism works include ambiguity, irony, multiple symbols, ambiguous, humorous, varied, and scattered choices as the images of discretion of traditions (Zamiran, 1998, 81-83). This art passes the special geography of the author and tends to mix various artistic fields (Linton, 2003, 9-11). The advent of electronic media changed the concept of modern audience (Remesar, 2005, 121). In this type, the audiences are interrelated in active communication and cooperation (Denis McCoil, 2019, 23), and the audiences play a role in the formation of the work (Manovich, 2001, 62). Hence, some form of conversation is created between the work and the audience in postmodern art interactions. Also, language was used as a tool to transfer a message from the fans of postmodernism by that age (Zamiran, 2010, 77). Some examples of using language and calligraphy in postmodern works are presented in the following.

Using language in the frame of calligraphy in postmodern visual arts

The prose and art have been intertwined for many centuries. For example, one can refer to manuscripts of the Middle East with their detailed images. However, the situation was changed in the 20th century at the time that Magritte, a famous surrealist artist, wrote in his work: "this is not a pipe". In this work, the text is intertwined with the image, has completed the work. Cubists such as George Brock have become famous because of inserting text in their artistic works, and they have mostly highlighted the graphic quality of calligraphy in their works.

Since the 1960s decade, some artists emphasized text insertion in their artistic works increasingly. Compatibility and the power of letters make the audience show reaction. Intelligent game of words, political activity by words, and allocation of form to words are just some common features of 20th-century arts¹.

In the 20th art, consideration of calligraphy was considered since the time of the cubism movement at the level of the signified or a pure sign. In surrealism, calligraphy is integrated into the imaginations of the artist. Also, it appears in European Expressionism and American Abstract Expressionism and becomes a basic element of pop art. One of the features of these works in the modern age is that the artist is not submitted to structures of calligraphy and traditional calligraphy in the desired culture, and tends to find forms to create a visual work using letters and calligraphy. The words and letters in these works lose their common meaning, and new concepts can be created by changing their arrangement. Gabriella Giannachi writes in the book "Virtual shows": using text and typography tools enables the viewer to pass the connector and influence in the reality of artistic work (Giannachi, 2004, 81).

The examples of these works are the works of



Fig. 1. Arrangement of Black Book (1989), in Chicago Art Institute. Source: <https://mymodernmet.com>.

Christopher Wool, living in America, who is popular because of creating black calligraphy on white canvases since the 1980s decade. The bold letters in his works creating a sense of implementation with the stencil in the audience, have been inspired by graffiti of New York City² (Fig. 1).

Bruce Nauman, a multimedia artist, has created his works using methods such as arrangement, film, performance, sculpture, and photography. The most underlying works of Nauman are his Neon Sculptures. Focusing on semantics, he emphasizes how partial changes in words can leave basic effects on meaning. Nancy Spector, Guggenheim's principal director in New York, says: "self-perception and viewer encounter with the body and mind of self on the artistic subject can be interpreted as the subject used by Nauman" (Fig. 2).

Mel Bushner, the conceptual artist, began his professional activity in the 1960s. He used the walls of the gallery as a canvas to create his artistic works. Bushner is a diversity-oriented artist, and mostly uses letters in his works. It should be mentioned that such orientation in using letters can be observed in postmodern public art.

Using calligraphy in postmodern public arts

Public art is a type of art in the public space, observable and available for all people and can be created constantly in the fixed elements of a building or urban place. Also, temporary projects such as



Fig. 2. Nauman's work: "real artist helps the world with disclosure of mythic realities", 1967, Philadelphia Art Museum. Source: <https://mymodernmet.com>.

arrangements can be considered as examples of public art (Brisbane City Council, 2010, 6). Public art includes three variables of art, people, and the context where people communicate with each other (Mitrachea, 2012). The city beautification movement accelerated the development of this art in the late 19th century (Jo Landi, 2012).

Public art can be classified into three groups:

Art in public places, which is usually a modern abstract sculpture embedded to decorate or enrich the urban spaces, especially in the squares and in front of high-rise buildings and towers;

Art for the public interests with a temporary emphasis on social subjects, and not the environment, which tends to develop and show the social-political events.

Art as a public place, which is less focused on physical elements, and is mostly created to integrate the art, architecture, and urban landscape. Public art in urban spaces challenges the mind and ideas of the audiences (Remesar, 2005, 121).

Public art is a work created by both artist and the social classes and has three characteristics:

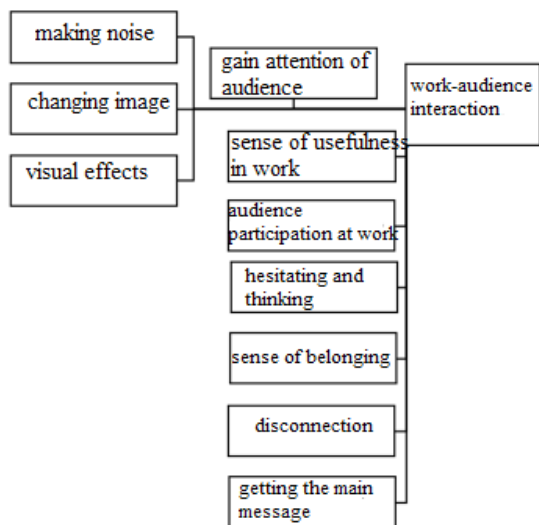


Fig. 3. The stages of interaction between audience and public art. Source: author with using the ideas of Remesar, 2005.



Fig. 4. Urban sculpture, in which different calligraphies of the word “Hossein” and the color have adapted the work with the Muharram Days. Source: <http://media.shabestan.ir>.



Fig. 5. Example of an urban element using Nastaliq Calligraphy as a visual element of the work with the non-religious theme. Source: <https://upload.wikimedia.org>.

It is permanent or temporary in terms of durability. In terms of the creator, it is artistic or citizenship art. The expenses are provided by the government, the private sector, or both of them (Sturley, 2010, 2). The stages of interaction between audience and public art are illustrated in Fig. 3. The examples of public art using calligraphy in Iran are presented in Fig. 4 & 5. According to public art components, the two works are permanent works created by the artist and using the government budget. They attract attention through the visual effects in them. As the letters and calligraphy, and religious contents have an old history in Iranian culture, they provide a cultural context to communicate with the audiences. The factors including thinking and hesitating, sense of belonging, and getting a message in these works pave the way for interpreting these works for the Iranian audiences because of such cultural adaptability. As it is observed, the concept of place or relationships and the total approaches of officials toward the city have been considered to choose these works. Therefore, because of decorative emphasis, they can be evaluated in the group of “art in a public place”. However, if the postmodern approach is considered in public art, direct interaction with the audience should be considered in addition to such issues in public art design. As a result, in the comparative works, the hesitation and sense of belonging obtained by observation and physical characteristics of the work would be analyzed in addition to the way of attracting the attention of audiences and the adaptability of the work with the cultural context. Table 1 presents the characteristics of the samples due to the limitations of the study in terms of direct presence in place based on the theoretical framework (Table 1).

Studying the example of public arts of contemporary artists using letters and calligraphy

• Works of Iranian artists

Aesthetic utilization of calligraphy in modern

Table 1. Studied factors of public art in the analysis of public art examples using letters and calligraphy Source: author.

Studied factors of public art			
Type of work in classification of public art	Art in a public place	Public interest art	Art as place
Type of effect in attracting audience attention	Making noise	Changing image	Visual effects
Type of predicted interaction between audience and work	The adaptability of work with a cultural context of audiences and getting the message	Possibility of hesitating about the work by the audience	The sense of belonging to the work
The function of work in public space	Making social capital	Increasing social interaction	Making space for social activity
Type of work formation in terms of durability and finance	Permanent or temporary	Government, private, cooperative	

form in Iran emerged for the first time in the 40s decade after the rise of the Saqakhaneh Movement (Mareknejad, 2006)³. The studies of Iranian forms and motifs presented Iranian-Islamic calligraphies as basic visual elements in the creation of artistic works because of flexibility in terms of form and size (Pakbaz, 2000). In these works, calligraphy is emphasized as a visual source derived from tradition (Kashmirshakan, 2015, 147), although traditional-modern consequence is desired (Abdi & Gudarzi, 1999, 1). However, letters and calligraphy can communicate non-Iranian audiences using aesthetic language utilizing images.

In the rest of the paper, the works of three Iranian artists are introduced:

The collection of “هیچ” (nothing) sculptures made by Parviz Tanavoli⁴, which have been shown many times in the frame of public art. For example, a “هیچ” sculpture made of stainless steel was embedded in Hamline University in St. Paul in Minnesota, the USA, in 1971. Another sculpture made by this artist has been recently installed in Canada. The sculpture called “lovers” is the largest and newest work of Tanavoli ordered by Millennium Development Group for the Triomphe residential tower project. The sculpture is made of

reflex stainless steel with a height of 5.5m⁵ (Figs. 6&7).

Also, three works of Parviz Tanavoli have been embedded in Aghakhan Park in Winford Drive in North York: lover poet (bronze), a popular sculpture of “هیچ” (made of stainless still), and horizontal lovers (bronze) (Figs. 8 &9)

The iron sculpture called “the universe” made by Alireza Astaneh⁶ is embedded in West Zafar Street in Tehran. The large wall project is done following the order of Eastern Collection and has dimensions of 15*9m. Astaneh created this work with the inspiration of a poem by Khayyam. The letters are made of the iron sheet with special covering and are expanded to 130m² (Fig. 10). Another example of public art created by this artist is located in Imam Khomeini Airport, Tehran. The Salam Gallery Terminal has columns decorated by this artist. Iranian calligraphy is combined with metal and has created volumes embedded on the columns to give special form and appearance to the environment (Fig. 11).

The concrete sculpture “ما” (we) made by Afshin Seighali⁷ in Seventh Tehran Sculpture Biennial (2018): the sculpture was exhibited for a while at the entrance of Tehran Contemporary Art Museum,



Fig. 10. Iron-made sculpture in Zafar Street, Tehran. Source: <https://www.chidaneh.com>.



Fig. 11. The columns decorated by Iranian calligraphy created by Alireza Astaneh in Imam Khomeini Airport. Source: <https://www.chidaneh.com>.



Fig. 12. New place of “L” sculpture in the eastern entrance of Laleh Park, Tehran. Source: <https://img9.ima.ir/d/r2/2020/07/23/3/157241941.jpg>.



Fig. 13. The artistic work “love for love” created by Wissam Shawkat, and his work in Berlin Subway Station. Source: <https://www.buro247>.

Said Dokins⁹ uses different artistic shapes for urban artistic design. The orientation of his works refers to reflex of the society from his history, death symbol, and conflict with power, destruction, survival, and control mechanisms of imposed regimes. Said Dokins analyzes the potential of words and letters informal, symbolic, and philosophical way. One of his projects called “Heliographies of memory” has applied lighting instruments to create visual painting space using calligraphy in well-known historical monuments or other symbolic places as temporary fields of the work. The “Heliographies of memory” project contains some images recording different modes of



Fig. 14. The wall painting using calligraphy and moment picture in the “Heliographies of memory” project. Source: <https://i.ytimg.com/vi/BtoDibLHeMY/maxresdefault>.



calligraphy. The texts are written by light. Hence, the words disappear immediately following the will of a calligrapher (Fig.14).

The method used by E¹⁰ Seed¹¹ in conducting public art projects is introducing himself to the desired community first of all. Gaining information from the place and nearness to local people are the preliminaries for him to create works. He uses Arabic calligraphy and different style to publish the message of peace, unity and emphasizing common aspects of existence. El Seed won the UNESCO Sharjah Prize for Arabic Culture in 2017. In 2016, he was introduced as an international thinker for his work “Perception”. In 2013, he did common works with Luis Viton in the project called “Foulard d’Artiste”. The example of his public art was published in June 2019 in the form of wall paintings of the Ain al-Hawa refugee camp in southern Lebanon. Because of his close relationship with women in prison, his paintings were then embroidered and sold by women. The color of his works used to be selected by women. His next project was “Perception”. In this work, he questioned wrong arbitrations of the society created based on the disputes and unconsciously. This work was created in the “Monshiat Nasr”



Fig.15. The wall painting of Ain al-Hawa refugee camp, and a schematic of “perception” in Cairo. Source: https://elseed-art.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Journey_DSC8844.

neighborhood in Cairo, in which the Zaraeab community lives as the Cairo garbage collectors (Fig. 15).

Another example is the proposed project of the modern art museum “Gyeonggi” in Ansan, South Korea. It is a horizontal aluminum work with laser



Fig. 16. A schematic of aluminum work created by El Seed located in the center of South and North Korea Border. Source: <https://elseed-art.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/EL-Seed-Korea04.jpg> .

Table 2. Analysis of important propositions of public art in the selected works of studied Iranian artists Source: author.

Artist	Work	Type of work in classification of public art	The function of work in public space	Type of formation of work	Type of work	The characteristics of work in interaction with the audience (attention attracting, and interaction with audience)	Analysis
Parviz Tanavoli	Lover sculpture	Art in public places	Providing social capital, providing a space for social activities	Permeant work of professional artist, government finance	Stable in the form of sculpture	Showing in public space, availability of public audience, beautification of urban space, better message transfer	Expressing the idea of the artist in creating various works with the content of "nothing", focusing on the personal idea of the artist and providing space for reaction and interaction of the audience with the idea, enabling hesitation and creating concept by the audience, international fame of Tanavoli's idea in terms of creating works with the content of nothing
Alireza Astaneh	The column of Imam Khomeini Airport Salon	Art as a public place, less object-oriented, and physical	Providing social capital, increasing social interaction	Permanent work by professional artist and with government finance	Stable and decorative	Showing in public space, availability of public audience, and beautification of space	Creation of minimalist works, innovative arrangement in contemporary calligraphy, applied expansion of Persian Calligraphy
Afshin Seighali	ما (we)	Art for public interest	Increasing social interaction, making social capital	Permanent work from professional artist, government finance	Stable in the form of sculpture	Showing in public space, availability of public audience, better message transfer	Multidimensional interpretability, the possibility of hesitating and meaning created by the audience

Table 3. Analysis of important propositions in public art in selected works of foreign artists and final analysis of works in terms of communicating audience. Source: author.

Artist	Work	Type of work in classification of public art	The function of work in public space	Type of formation of work	Type of work	The characteristics of work in interaction with the audience (attention attracting, and interaction with audience)	Analysis
Wissam Shawkat	Wall painting in a subway station	Art in public spaces	Providing social capital	Permanent and made by a professional artist, government finance	Stable and decorative	Showing in public space, availability of public audience, beautification of urban space	Inattentiveness to the social contexts and considering personal interest of the artist, international and translingual activity
Said Dokins	“Heliographies of memory”	Art in public spaces	Providing social capital, and a space for social activities	Temporary work by a professional artist, government finance	Temporary, playing with light	Better message transfer	Communicating citizens and attracting the attention in the urban landscape, inattentiveness to social contexts, and implementing personal ideas of the artist
El Seed	Perception	Art as public space, less object and physic-oriented	Providing social capital, increasing social interaction, space for social activities	Permanent work by a professional artist, private sector finance with the cooperation of government	Stable, decorative work	Showing in public space, availability of public audience, impressing the crowds, creating a sense of happiness, beautification of urban space, inviting the audience to participate, information stability, better message transfer	Connecting identity and contemporary life using Arabic calligraphy, presenting the message of love, respect, recognizing the social context, the proportion of the work and its message with historical and social contexts, connection of the work and society by selective contents, recognizing the priorities and identity of the audiences to choose relevant message

cut on the fences on the border between North and South Korea. This work, as a reminder, tells the young generations that there is a common culture, language, and tradition, which can gather the people and generations together beyond the political disputes (Fig. 16).

Conclusion, comparison of the works of public art created by Iranian and non-Iranian artists with the orientation of calligraphy

According to the perception of the author on each work and due to the field of creation of each work obtained by bibliographic investigations, components including hesitation and sense of belonging can be evaluated on an example of public art (table 2 & 3).

According to tables, the majority of works, except for the works of Shawkat, have been successful simultaneously to make sense of hesitating and sense of belonging in audiences. However, the level of hesitation and sense of belonging, and success of these works could not be determined due to the limitations of the study in terms of observation of the reaction of audiences. However, it could be mentioned at least that the works are qualified in terms of two underlying characteristics of public art concerning audience.

Also, based on important propositions of public art analyzed for these works, the two works of Alireza Astaneh and El Seed were similar in terms of paradigm “art in public spaces, less object-oriented”. On the proposition “the function of work in public space”, the works of El Seed were in the first rank. The only temporary work belonged to Said Dokins. The works of Dokins and Afshin Seighali played no significant role in the beautification of space. Among Iranian works, in terms of communicating the audience, the “Lover” sculpture created by Tanavoli possessed the first rank (showing in public space, availability of public

audience, beautification of urban space, and better message transfer). Among non-Iranian works, the works of El Seed gained the first rank in terms of communicating audience (showing in public space, availability of public audience, impressing the crowds, creating a sense of happiness, urban space beautification, inviting the audience to participate, stability of information, better message transfer).

Conclusion

One way to communicate audience is by using cultural elements in public artworks. Letters and calligraphy can possess an important function in this field based on the lingual emphasis of postmodern art. In the contemporary age, calligraphy has been widely used in the field of art in terms of graphism and visual aspects. This can affect the audiences in terms of identity, emphasizing cultural capitals, sense of belonging, communication, and getting a message on public art as visual art. This can be achieved if it is used in the cultural context. According to the importance of audience communication in postmodern art, using calligraphy as a visual form for the audience in public art can pave the way for the empowerment of this communication from a cultural aspect. This is because calligraphy and words have formed the infrastructure of the cultural identity of civilized societies during history. This becomes more important than before, especially in Muslim countries, due to the religious importance of letters and words because of the holiness of Quran words. The characteristics of public art in the field of communicating audience, which can communicate the audiences more than other postmodern arts, include:

Showing in public space, availability of public audience, impressing the crowds, inviting people to participate, creating a sense of happiness, beautifying urban space, better message transfer, and information stability.

In this study, some examples of public artworks created by three Iranian and three foreign artists using calligraphy have been analyzed. The study attempted to evaluate the successful manifestation of public art characteristics in these works. By comparing the characteristics of the work in terms of communicating audience with the works of two artists, the most adaptable works with the indicators of public art using calligraphy belonged to Parviz Tanavoli and El Seed. The work "Perception" by El Seed has communicated to the audiences more successfully than the "Lover" by Parviz Tanavoli. This is because this work possessed the majority of propositions associated with communicating audience: show in public space, availability of public audience, impressing the crowds, making sense of happiness, beautification of urban space, inviting the audience to participate, sustainability of information, and better message transfer compared to the "Lover" by Tanavoli. The works of El Seed were created based on its cultural context, although Tanavoli's work was installed in Canada because of the popularity of the artist and the high value of the work "هريج". In addition to the low relevancy of cultural aspects (in terms of cultural familiarity with Nastaliq calligraphy), the sculpture was not designed for a special place and was not intertwined with its urban context. However, the "Perception" by El Seed was created in the heart of public context and based on cultural fields of the society.

Although it was impossible to evaluate these works equally according to audiences, the author has described works and analysis of observable propositions in works to extract the indicators and communicative factors in these public arts. The audience-oriented field and cultural context can be inferred based on spatial properties of the work and identification of the cultural context of citizens. Other factors can also be inferred from this cultural context, including message transfer

and communicating audience.

Based on the analyses and results, it could be found that if the calligraphy and language used in public art are adaptable to the cultural context of audiences, the audience interaction in postmodern public art can be obtained easily. In the case that calligraphic language was not recognized as the main factor of public art for the audiences in terms of culture, it was hard to transfer message and communicate to the audience. Hence, the work could be evaluated just in the field of aesthetics and decoration in the limit of art in place. Public art with the tendency to use language and calligraphy has to choose calligraphy language based on public interest and create an understandable place for audiences to obtain the majority of communicative factors of public art and audience. This can create more sense of belonging between the audience and the work. Accordingly, it could be found that the research hypothesis was confirmed: "using letters and calligraphy in public arts can result in a better audience-art interaction in addition to its communicative function in the field of transferring the concept if it is used based on the identity background of audiences".

According to obtained results, the research question was analyzed: "Which indicators can result in an effective audience-work relationship by using letters and calligraphy in public artworks?"

Using calligraphy can be changed into a desirable interactive visual factor in the field of public art through the empowerment of indicators such as effective cultural interaction of audience and work, adaptability with the cultural context, and increased possibility of getting the message, increased possibility of hesitation about the work, increasing the sense of belonging to work because of cultural closeness in getting language, and familiarity with the letters.

Calligraphy and letters in public art can communicate with audiences easily because of

identity background if it is used based on the language of audiences. In the case of minimalist use of that, it can provide effective interaction between work and audience. However, paying attention to the beauty of form in letters, regardless of cultural familiarity with the desired language society, can increase the richness of public place forms visually, and affect hesitation and sense of belonging of citizens. However, by considering the adaptability of language and calligraphy and the cultural context of the audience, the most underlying aspect of communicating audience would be achieved more confidently. This was true about the works created by El Seed and Parviz Tanavoli. The difference between the two works was their entanglement with urban physic and cultural adaptability with the context, which impressed the audiences.

Endnote

1. <https://mymodernmet.com/text-art-masters/>
2. <https://mymodernmet.com/text-art-masters/>
3. Saghakhaneh was an artistic stream established in 1961 about 20 years after the beginning of modernism in Iran. Some modern and traditional and religious decorative elements were also formed in Iran (Pakbaz, 2008).
4. Parviz Tanavoli (born in 1937), Iranian sculptor, painter, researcher, and collector
5. <http://media.hamyaari>.
6. In the majority of works of Astaneh, the orientation of subjects is the symbolic correlation of word and image. By emphasizing calligraphies such as nail calligraphy, he has achieved some type of calligraphy. However, it should be noted that the works made by this artist are mostly focused on the aesthetics of calligraphy. These works can't be compared with the works of others artists using the calligraphy and concept of calligraphy. The letters and words contain meanings for special audiences. However, in the works of Astaneh, nothing is behind the words and letters, despite the works created by Tanavoli.
7. Afshin Seighali is an artist, whose name was given in Seventh Tehran Sculpture Biennial in 2018 because of his concrete sculpture «ما».
8. He is originally from Iraq and lives in Dubai now. The unique style used by him is inspired by traditional calligraphy and the freshness of contemporary culture. Wissam is active not only in traditional and contemporary calligraphy but also in emblem designation.
9. Said Dokins lives and works in Mexico City. He has been educated in the School of Art and Design and the National Autonomous University of Mexico and has also passed the courses of philosophy and art theory. Also, he learned traditional calligraphy from famous national and international calligraphers and using Japanese calligraphy. He began wall painting and public art in the 90s decade.
10. [https://www.thisiscolossal.com/2017/08/temporary-calligraphy-](https://www.thisiscolossal.com/2017/08/temporary-calligraphy-illuminates-historic-sites-throughout-europe/)

[illuminates-historic-sites-throughout-europe/](https://www.thisiscolossal.com/2017/08/temporary-calligraphy-illuminates-historic-sites-throughout-europe/)
11. El Seed.

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