

10% RULE

INTERVIEW
SARAH HANSSON

NSFW

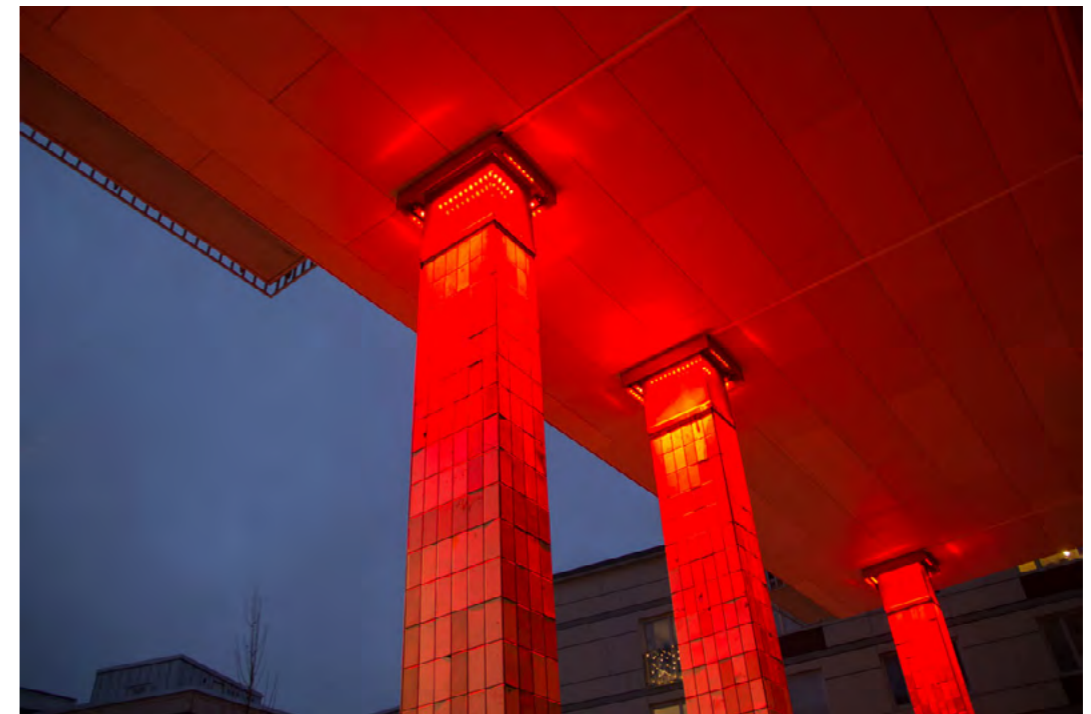
1 % RULE

INTERVIEW WITH

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The 1% rule stipulates that at least one percent of the total cost of new public spaces, infrastructure and real estate developments (including new construction, conversion and extension) should be used for commissioning artistic production. The objectives of the rule are to guarantee equal access to art for all citizens and to make sure artistic creation is integrated in city planning overall.

Gothenburg is the municipality that has accomplished the most in the implementation and development of the 1% rule in Sweden (in 2013, the initiative became compulsory in Gothenburg). Göteborg Konst has been the organization in charge of supporting and monitoring all the projects initiated through the 1% rule in the city.



Klas Eriksson

We can be Local, just for one day, Jöns Rundbäcks plats, Hisingen, 2016.
Photo © Jan Peter Dahlqvist *Image courtesy of Göteborg Konst.

People think the 1% rule is something new but the truth is that it's more than 80 years old, right?

Yes, the idea with the 1% rule was formed in 1937, however it was embraced more as a recommendation than as an actual public policy. Despite the fact that the initiative is in place nationwide, legally you are not obliged to follow it. It's actually up to the politicians of each region or municipality to implement it or not. I suppose that may be one reason why some people have never heard of it.

Gothenburg has implemented the 1% rule, what about other cities?

Other municipalities (not all of them) also apply it, but in a slightly different way. You need to understand that there are no exact protocols nor written procedures of how to structure the 1% projects. Each municipality has its own administrative guidelines.

The work Göteborg Konst has done regarding the 1% rule is outstanding. Have other municipalities asked you for advice on how to work and implement the rule ?

Yes, other municipalities and cities have visited us to learn more about what has been dubbed "The Gothenburg Model". We are happy for that acknowledgement, but the structure of our process also has its faults, there is no fixed way of action. We're still learning and elaborating with different methods of approaching the cooperation with the municipal developers, and how to deal with LOU (The Procurement Act). Other organizations have been successful in areas of the 1% rule where Gothenburg is still in need of development.

What's the current status of the 1% rule in Gothenburg?

Göteborg Konst has managed to have the process up and running for little over five years now. For a while it was working efficiently, but now we see a need to re-evaluate and develop the routine to better ensure a qualitative process which takes its primary point of departure in art's perspective on urban development.

Are the 1% rule guidelines outdated?

No, not at all. It is not the guidelines for the 1% rule that are outdated, its rather that we need to revise or processes and methods for cooperating with the municipal developers. We



Judith Hopf
A line, Valhallagatan 2-4, Göteborg, 2018.
Photo © Jan Peter Dahlgvist *Image courtesy of Göteborg Konst.

need to carefully think through the relationship between art and city development. I mean, we are talking about two structures working at a different pace and with different understandings about what art is and how it “functions”, what art should or should not do... I think there needs to be a balance between the various perspectives in order for it to make sense for an artists to engage in a project.

Talking about speed. It seems Gothenburg is going through an urban development frenzy. The city wants to build in 10 years what they didn't build in the last 50. Will this development translate into more 1% projects?

It will, yes, but the 1% projects will not stand in exact proportion to the urban development projects. Göteborg Konst certainly tries to ensure that the rule is implemented strategically in as many development processes as possible. We are a small organisation that serves the entire city, so we need to be smart about how we use our resources and where we put our efforts. This means also knowing when not entering into a project.

... Art is not an assembly line right?

No, exactly. We also need to take into consideration which areas of the city would benefit more from a project through the 1%. We can't just follow the path of urban and city developers. Again, we need to think strategically.

A premise of the 1% rule is the idea that art should be accessible to everyone. But the development market might have other interests and priorities. Blindly

following it will translate in an uneven distribution of the 1% rule projects. Any idea on how to balance this relation?

Precisely because of the connection you raise in your question, about the risk of uneven distribution, Göteborg Konst promotes the possibility of initiating art projects financed by the 1% which are not directly linked to urban development projects or construction projects. This way of working could allow long term perspective projects to develop without the pressure of the current development market in the city. I believe it could be a more sustainable way of working for our organization and the projects we support.

It seems that long term art projects are not the best match for the market. Could that be one of the reasons private and public city developers have turned to “Graffiti” inspired works? I mean, it's the best gentrifying tool: fast, easy to remove and already well established in the middle-class lifestyle.

We are aware of the use of urban art and graffiti inspired aesthetics in the gentrification process in Gothenburg. Göteborg Konst always tries to be thoughtful in our approach and we are aware of the market logics at play here, thus we avoid fast-track initiatives aimed to generate an immediate impact. Our intention is to work with projects that will keep on developing over time.

Urban art is an important and relevant artistic expression when initiated by artists and practices who departs from an experience of urban life, dealing with both the physical and social architecture of a city. But when being instrumentalised and used for commercial and market purposes, it loses both its critical and artistic impact.



Alina Chaiderov
Ut, Redbergsparken, Göteborg, 2016
Photo © Jan Peter Dahlqvist *Image courtesy of Göteborg Konst.



Ilja Karilampi
Thinking thinking dot dot dot, Recycling station in Rannebergen, 2018.
Photo © Jan Peter Dahlqvist *Image courtesy of Göteborg Konst.

Are there other initiatives working in the same field as you?

Yes, we're not the only organization in the city working in the field of public art. There are other public and private initiatives working in the same sector. All of them with their own set of guidelines and goals.

Is that good?

Yes, in general it's good. Not all public art initiatives can or should be a result of the 1% rule. We might not share the same ideals, but that doesn't make us opponents. Diversity brings new ideas to the table.

By the way, how can artists apply to work with a 1% project?

We mainly work through open calls. Once the framework of a project is set and it's time to procure an artist for a project, we announce in our communication channels, like our website, Facebook and Instagram.

Have you ever felt pressured by urban developers to make changes?

At Göteborg Konst we have refrained from entering into projects with tight time plans, or when the developers haven't accepted our recommended process. For example, when projects involve a big budget, artists can sometimes feel pressured to comply to whatever the developer demands in terms of functions etc. Thus, one of our most important tasks for us is to support the artists, and together with them use the space for negotiation so that the perspective of the artwork is guiding the process.

Some projects run smoother than others but each one represents a new challenge.



Runo Lagomarsino
Europa, ID Security Control, Port of Gothenburg, 2016.
Photo © Jan Peter Dahlqvist *Image courtesy of Göteborg Konst.



Fredrik Norén
Climbing wall at Torslanda's Sports Hall, 2016.
Photo © Jan Peter Dahlqvist *Image courtesy of Göteborg Konst.



Éva Mag
Jag + Du = Vi, Santos Sports Hall, Lindholmen, 2016.
Photo © Jan Peter Dahlqvist *Image courtesy of Göteborg Konst.

It seems that there is a fair amount of work behind each 1% project. Could that be another reason why municipalities don't apply the rule?

Well, all projects have their own levels of bureaucracy, but for municipalities who already have their own structures and policies to support arts and culture, the 1% rule might not seem as a necessary and relevant policy to add to their program.

We also need to take into account that all cities are not ruled by the same political parties. Not all parties share the interest or have the same approach in working with arts and culture.

Out of curiosity, are urban development and construction companies into art?

Well, not all of them see the relevance of working with contemporary art, but then there are some which are very interested and open to try new processes. Especially now that design, architecture and contemporary art viewed as more equal in the "Regeringens proposition 2017/18:110 - Politik för gestaltad livsmiljö". That shift has had a good impact. It has made our discussions with city developers easier.

Last but not least, cons regarding the 1% rule?

There has been a lot of cuts in the cultural budget nationwide and decrease in funding will of course have its consequences. State and municipal administrations might feel pressured to look for financing from other sectors to balance the deficit, but the 1% rule with its direct links to the market of urban development

is not the answer. The 1% budgets will always come with certain requirements. It would not be sustainable to only have policies like the 1% to support arts and culture. With the changing political climate, and the arm's length being debated, it is not far fetched to think that public art can be a site for political propaganda in the future, or that some municipalities will scrap the 1% rule for art entirely.

We can't always depend just on the market to fill up the budget gaps, right?

The market has its very own idea of what sustainability and ethics are. I would say it's a no!.

Sarah Hansson is Project Manager for the 1% rule for art at Göteborg Konst – Kulturförvaltningen. Prior she was Producer for the 2013 and 2015 edition of Göteborgs Internationella Konstbiennal (GIBCA), and before that substitute Assistant Curator at Bonniers Konsthall, Stockholm. She holds a BA in Aesthetics from Södertörns Högskola and is now studying for a Master's Degree in Curating at Aarhus University, Denmark.

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