

Cities News

Cities Programme newsletter issue 13
Lent Term 2014

MSc student news



Class of 2013 with Cities Programme staff at launch of Studio publication *Local City*, image courtesy of Minh Toan.

Congratulations to the MSc City Design and Social Science graduates of 2013, who achieved great results including a record (we think) nine Distinctions. Particular congratulations go to **Alejandro Sajalik**, awarded the Cities Prize for Academic Achievement 2013, and to **Jacob Bielecki**, **Juan Sebastian Lama** and **Amy Parker**, jointly awarded the Cities Prize for Outstanding Contribution 2013 in recognition of their contribution to the work and culture of the programme.

This year's **City Design Research Studio** has moved south of the river, focusing on the 'Resourceful City: a studio exploration from the Elephant and Castle to St. George's Circus'. This stretch of south London involves a diversity of territories and issues, including a vacated, large-scale housing estate (the Heygate), the London College of Communication and London Southbank University, the Elephant and Castle transport intersection, and extensive land for private redevelopment, including the Elephant and Castle Shopping centre and the nearby Aylebury Estate.

Only a ten-minute bus ride to the more prestigious city to its north, this highly strategic area hosts varied and competing interests, problems and challenges.

The Studio is led by Dr **Günter Gassner**, Dr **Suzanne Hall**, Dr **David Madden** and Professor **Fran Tonkiss**.

This year's **international field trip** has also moved, from March to May, so this year's students can hope for some warmer weather for their visit to **Sarajevo**, joined again by Cities alum **Gruia Badescu**.

Expert seminars in Michaelmas Term were given by barrister and expert in public law, planning and environmental law **Sarah Sackman**, on the legal regulation of urban space and Professor **Edward W. Soja**, who returned from the US to hold his annual masterclasses for the Cities Programme on metropolitan regions and spatial justice.

Current MSc City Design student **Dylan Bulkeley** helped organise a conference on 'Culture and Social Change: The role of aesthetics' held by the Department of Sociology on 16-17 December. He is now starting work on a research project with LSE sociologist Dr Michael McQuarrie, looking at the trajectory of community-based organisations in urban authority and governance over the last forty years, and helping Dr McQuarrie generate GIS maps of Cleveland Ohio to visualise the racial segregation of the city in the 1970s compared to today.

MSc City Design student **Bronwyn Kotzen** will be speaking on the theme of 'Architecture without Buildings' at the World Information Architecture Day conference in Bristol this February. Her presentation raises a series of questions and provocations on the production of built form, and the role architects play in the physical and social organisation of cities in a world of uncertain urban futures.

Teaching:

Ricky Burdett
Günter Gassner
Suzanne Hall
David Madden
Philipp Rode
Fran Tonkiss
Savvas Verdis

Michaelmas Term masterclasses and expert seminars:
Edward W. Soja
Sarah Sackman

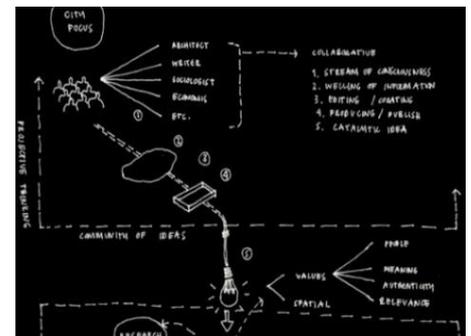
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Anna Livia Johnston



Detail of presentation, image courtesy of Bronwyn Kotzen.

Bronwyn will explore alternative models of praxis beyond the current object-making culture of design, moving towards a process-driven architecture of 'meaning rather than building' in the contemporary, changing city.

PhD student news

Warm congratulations to **Günter Gassner**, **Adam Kaasa** and **Daniel Kilburn** who have all been awarded their PhDs: Günter for his thesis 'Unfinished and unfinishable: London's skylines', Adam for 'Writing, Drawing, Building: The Architecture of Mexico City, 1938-1964', and Dan for 'Together, Apart? Situating Social Relations and Housing Provision in the Everyday Life of New-build Mixed-tenure Housing Developments'.

Günter has been teaching with Professor **Ricky Burdett** on the MSc City Design core course Cities by Design, and will take a key role in **City Design Research Studio** during Lent Term 2014. Adam is taking up a new position as Research Fellow in the Department of Architecture at the Royal College of Art, working on a collaborative project between the RCA and the University of São Paulo on 'Public Spaces the Role of the Architect', which explores the complex legacy of Modernism in London and São Paulo. Dan is now Research Fellow in the National Centre for Research Methods at the University of Southampton.

We are delighted to welcome **Katherine Hyman**, who has joined the Cities Programme for three months as a visiting research student. Katherine is a doctoral candidate in the Architecture, Planning and Geomatics Department at the University of Cape Town. She received her MPhil in Sustainable Development Management and Planning from Stellenbosch University. Currently, she is based at the African Centre for Cities, researching sustainable urban infrastructure in relation to policies and practices of urban local government in the City of Cape Town. Her research interests evolve around the question of urban sustainability in cities of the global south, and the role of urban infrastructure as an intervention point for activating purposive sustainable urban transitions.



Image above of a mural in Koloniestraße, Wedding, Berlin, taken by **Katherine Robinson** while doing PhD fieldwork in Wedding which explores the connections two public libraries have with their locality.

Alumni news

Rashid Ali (class of 2011) will present *Mogadishu - Lost Moderns*, at the [Mosaic Rooms](#) in London 7 March–26 April 2014 (private view: Thursday 6 March, 6.30-8.30pm). This is the first exhibition to explore Mogadishu through its architecture and urban environment, narrating the story of Somalia's journey from traditional African nation via colonisation and post colonialism to emergent independent state. Challenging mainstream depictions of the city solely as a place of conflict and destruction, Rashid and photographer Andrew Cross offer a unique visual account of what remains of the city's urban fabric and key modernist symbols after two decades of civil conflict. These images are presented with rare archival photographs that document the city's architecture under Italian colonial rule.

This timely exhibition offers a space for reflection on the value of civic architecture and heritage preservation. It also presents a unique perspective of a city in conflict, and an opportunity to promote new thinking on the broader discourse of urbanism in Africa and the Arab world.



Abandoned building, Mogadishu, courtesy of Rashid Ali (image Andrew Cross).

James Armitage (PhD 2007) has seen his designs realised for a new apartment development in the sensitive historic context of Sidmouth, Devon. "Sanditon" is the first classical building to be built in the Regency resort for over a century. Fusing elements of the local vernacular with modern-day living requirements, the design makes the most of the site's prominent position 200m from the seafront, maximising views and outdoor living areas. The development includes thirty apartments in two buildings set within landscaped gardens.



Image courtesy of James Armitage.

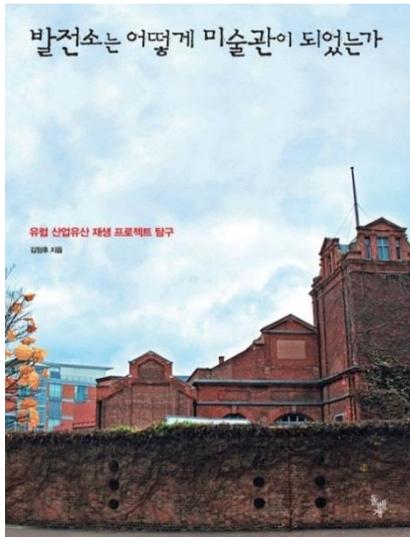
Denizer Ibrahim (2012) has joined tech start-up [Appear Here](#) as Head of Special Projects. This online marketplace connects brands/retailers to vacant spaces across the UK. Denizer says 'The mission is to make booking a retail space as easy as booking a hotel room. Appear Here has over 400 spaces listed, with exclusive partnerships with the biggest UK landlords including British Land, Land Securities and TFL, and 4,000 brands searching for space, such as Google and Microsoft as well as cutting-edge independent brands wanting to launch an idea and showcase their story. We want to help seed exciting ideas into boring high streets and cookie-cutter shopping malls. We call it space for ideas.'

Dr Alasdair Jones (PhD 2008) has recently joined the LSE's Department of Methodology as an Assistant Professor in Qualitative Research Methodology. In this role he is teaching research design and qualitative research methods, and from summer 2014 he will co-convene a summer school on ethnographic methods. Alasdair has also been made an Associate of LSE Cities and is currently writing up research conducted in Sydney, Australia, into the fit between sustainable design features of masterplanned developments and their residents' living practices. Drawing on his Cities Programme doctoral work, Alasdair's book [On South Bank: the production of public space](#) will be published by Ashgate in June 2014. For further information on Alasdair's work see his [profile](#) in the Department of Methodology.



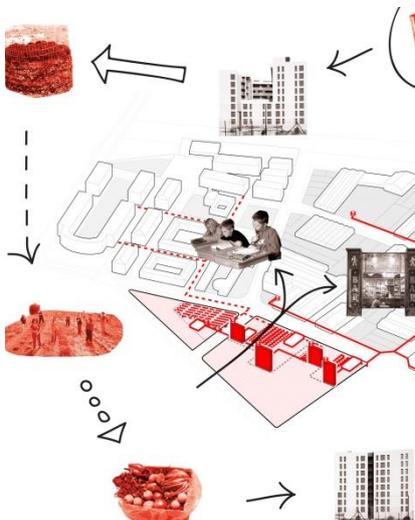
Image of signage on South Bank courtesy of Alasdair Jones.

Emma Källblad (2013) is now coordinating the Centre for a Sustainable Built Environment at the Royal Institute of Technology (KTH) in Stockholm. She's continuing to research the form that universities and other knowledge producing organisations take to enhance interactions with their surrounding cities; her blog on the subject can be found here: buildingonideas.wordpress.com/



Dr Robin J. H. Kim (PhD 2010, now Research Fellow at UCL and Visiting Professor at Dongguk University, Seoul) has published a new book *Industrial Heritage and Urban Regeneration* (Dolbegae Publishing Press, 2013). With case studies in 13 European cities including London, Paris and Madrid, the text explores the remaking of industrial estates and buildings as an effective means of 'materialising' environmental, economic and social sustainability. The book will be translated for English publication.

Jorge Martin (2012) and **Giulia Toscani** (2013) received an honourable mention for their project 'Derecho a la infraestructura' at the European competition, Barcelona's site. See their blog with the drawings: www.exposeproposepoliticise.com



Detail from 'Right to Infrastructure' project, image courtesy of Giulia Toscani.

Francis Moss (2012) is currently undertaking a study of the existing local economy around London's Olympic Park with Marko & Placemakers in collaboration with URS. He is also working at the GLA on a study of Park Royal, Europe's largest urban industrial area.

Lindsey Scannapieco (2010) and **Mat Triebner** (2010) of Scout have been awarded a commission with Brent Council to design and develop a hoarding project in South Kilburn which engages with the local community. Their proposal will seek to develop furniture designs with local stakeholders to be CNC cut from hoarding panels at the project's end. You can find out more information about the project at www.watchthiswall.co.uk or www.scout-ltd.com.



Adam and Adriana make a W and a B at the World Bank, image courtesy of Adam White.

In another alumni collaboration, **Adriana Valdez-Young** (2012) and **Adam White** (2010) joined forces to win the first ever World Bank Youth Summit Case Study Competition in October 2013. Selected among hundreds of different teams, Adam and Adriana's proposal used mobile phones and public events to improve urban participation in post-earthquake Pisco, Peru. Adam and Adriana, who worked on the project remotely, met in person at the award ceremony for the first time - having been introduced over email by Savvas Verdis a year earlier.

Launched in May 2013, **UrbanControversies.com** has been evolving as a collaborative platform that aims to explore, analyse and ultimately push forward a debate about urban conflict.



After a successful first phase targeted mainly at students, academics and friends of LSE Cities, the curators **Amy Parker**, **Juan Sebastian Lama** and **Justinien Tribillon** (all 2013 graduates) are happy to announce the website has now been redeveloped and re-launched. They write: 'We invite you to see the new and improved site which will include new articles, a new look and new features for exploring urban conflicts around the world.'

'This UrbanControversies.com 2.0 will aim at a wider audience by accepting submissions in English, Spanish and French. Geographically, professionally, academically we want to reach new readers and rally new contributors. Most importantly, we count on the LSE Cities network to spread the word and to contribute to the platform!'

Follow us on Twitter:

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Like us on Facebook:

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Sign up for our email updates:

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Faculty news

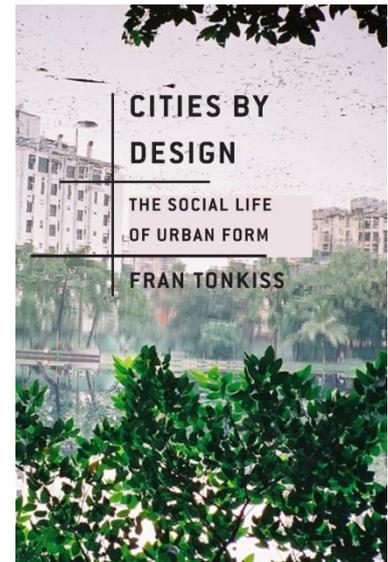
In January 2014 Dr **Suzanne Hall** gave a presentation at the University of Southampton's Department of Geography and Environment on work emerging from her ethnography of the economic and cultural life of Rye Lane, an intensely multi-ethnic street in Peckham, south London. The effects of accelerated migration into London are explored through the reshaping and diversification of its shop, street and city spaces.

Suzi has written a blog post for Discover Society, 'Multilingual Citizenship', based on her Ordinary Streets research for LSE Cities. [Read the full article here.](#)

In October 2013, Dr **David Madden** published an article in the *Guardian* entitled "Gentrification doesn't trickle down to help everyone." He also has an article coming out in the *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* on "Neighborhood as Spatial Project," and a chapter, "City Becoming World", in a volume edited by Neil Brenner, *Implosions/Explosions: Towards a study of planetary urbanization*.

David gave two invited papers in December: one on "Public Housing in a Private Time: NYCHA and neoliberalism," looking at the political-economic transformation of public housing in New York; the other on "What We Talk About When We Talk About Planetary Urbanization," looking at contemporary theories about urbanisation at the planetary scale.

Fran Tonkiss has a new book, *Cities by Design: The social life of urban form*, published by Polity (December 2013), see [publisher's webpage](#). In early 2014 she published "From Austerity to Audacity: Make-Shift Urbanism and the Post-Crisis City", in Francesca Ferguon (ed.) *Make Shift City: renegotiating the urban commons* (Jovis Verlag).



The Dutch Ministry of Infrastructure took forward a decision on the future development of the Amsterdam–Almere–Markermeer region based on a recommendation from LSE Cities for an incremental development approach, beginning with the intensification of existing sites. Dr **Savvas Verdis** was project lead on the report and **Anna Dekker** (MSc City Design class of 2012) was the researcher. The full report can be downloaded from this [LSE Cities webpage](#).

For more news from the LSE Cities research centre, please see their website: secities.net.

In memoriam

We were very sad to receive the news that **Mariela Aranda**, alumna from Chile (class of 2005), passed away after a short and tough fight with cancer. She was urban planning advisor to the Mayor of Recoleta Municipality, in Santiago. She is remembered by her friends and colleagues from the Cities Programme, and our deepest sympathies go to her partner Gonzalo and their son Maximiliano.