

# Cities News

Cities Programme newsletter issue 18  
Summer Term 2016



Suzi Hall, image courtesy of Catarina Heeckt.

## New Cities Programme Director

We are delighted to announce that from 1 September 2016 **Dr Suzanne Hall**, Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology and Senior Research Associate, LSE Cities, will be the new Director of the Cities Programme.

We would also like to express our gratitude to **Professor Fran Tonkiss**, who has been an inspirational and dynamic Director of the Programme for the last eight years. Luckily she is still with the Department of Sociology at LSE, where she is now Director of Undergraduate Studies, and will continue to be involved with the Programme.

For those not familiar with her work, Suzi is an urban ethnographer who practised as an architect in South Africa. She studied for her PhD in the Cities Programme and was recipient of the LSE's Robert McKenzie Prize for outstanding PhD research (2010). She taught on the MSc City Design for several years as an LSE Fellow before becoming a permanent member of faculty. Her research monograph, *City, Street and Citizen: The measure of the ordinary*, was published in 2012.

Suzi's research and teaching interests include social and economic forms of inclusion and exclusion in the context of global urbanisation, where she currently

focuses on the micro economies and spaces of urban migration. She was awarded an ESRC Future Research Leaders grant (2015-2017) for a comparative project on 'Super-diverse Streets: Economies and spaces of urban migration in UK Cities', which emerged out of her LSE Cities research project 'Ordinary Streets'. She took time out of teaching in order to conduct research, but has re-joined the CP team and will convene the core course Cities by Design and co-convene the City Design Research Studio in 2016-17.

More on Fran and Suzi under Faculty News.

## MSc student news



Students celebrate the launch of *Infrastructural Urbanism*, image courtesy of Alejandra de la Mora.

This year's **City Design Research Studio** was concerned with infrastructure as urbanism. Working on different infrastructural elements, and in different site contexts across inner London, the Studio teams explored how infrastructures make the city, and how spatial and social forms might be transformed through infrastructural interventions, with reference to open space and green infrastructure (Elephant and Castle); transit infrastructure: railways and waterways (Elephant and Castle/ Hackney); everyday infrastructure: streets and pavements (Hackney); and social and community infrastructures (Somers Town/Kings Cross). This allowed the students to explore crucial questions for understanding and intervening in today's

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contested, unequal cities: To what degree are infrastructural systems 'neutral'? How are they economised as sites of investment? How do built infrastructures relate to social practices? How can small-scale interventions centred upon infrastructures speak to larger scale urban challenges? What political projects are encapsulated within urban infrastructures?

The Studio publication which resulted from the project, ***Infrastructural Urbanism***, was launched on Tuesday 7 June with a party in Coopers restaurant – a change from our usual location on the top floor of the New Academic Building. The publication was edited by MSc student **Megan Groth**, with the guidance of **Dr Günter Gassner** and cover design by **Alejandra de la Mora Maurer**. It is available to read as a PDF from this webpage: [Cities Studio publications](#).

If you would like a hard copy of this year's and/or last year's publication *Critical City* (subject to availability) please email Megan: [m.c.groth@lse.ac.uk](mailto:m.c.groth@lse.ac.uk).



Visit to the "Design for a New World" graphic design exhibition at the Museum of Yugoslav History, Belgrade, image courtesy of Caroline Freisfeld.

This year's annual MSc field trip was to **Belgrade** from 15 to 20 February. The students were accompanied by Dr David Madden and Dr Günter Gassner. They were assisted by architect and researcher Dubravka Sekulić, who researched and planned their programme and accompanied them on the trip.

**Caroline Freisfeld** (MSc City Design 2015/16) is currently developing community projects around informal learning with the Brussels-London based urbanist organisation City Mine(d). They are testing how informal learning can increase people's agency in the economy. The EU funded projects will run as of September 2016 in London, Berlin, Barcelona and Antwerp, carried out by the organisations Tesseract, Transit, NDVR and City Mine(d).

## Alumni news

**Mariana Alegre** (class of 2013) is promoting the "Occupy Your Street" strategy in Lima, Peru. This is a citizen-led initiative, from Lima Cómo Vamos observatory funded by AVINA, seeking to create new public spaces and regenerate and revitalize already-existing places through low-scale, low-cost, fast-implementation and high-impact urban interventions. It generates systemic changes through collaborative solutions with a gradual bottom-up approach and rigorous usage and impact measurements to produce solid evidence to validate and support the pertinence and social value of the interventions. This is pivotal to incorporating them in local

government's public policies. In 18 months, "Occupy Your Street" has implemented eleven public spaces in 5 districts benefiting almost 200,000 people.



Copia de Rimac, Lima. Image courtesy of Jairo Rosales.

**Catarina de Almeida Brito** and **Justinien Tribillon** (2013) are the editors-in-chief and co-founders of *Migrant Journal*, a print-only six-issue publication published twice a year that aims at rethinking migration in all its forms and the spaces it creates. After a successful crowdfunding campaign on Kickstarter, they will release the first issue 'Across Country' in October 2016. Visit their website [migrantjournal.com](http://migrantjournal.com) for more information on the projects, or find them on Twitter and Facebook: [https://twitter.com/migrant\\_journal](https://twitter.com/migrant_journal) <https://www.facebook.com/migrantjournal/>



*Migrant Journal 1, Across Country*. Image courtesy of Justinien Tribillon

Justinien will join The Bartlett, University College London to start a PhD degree under the supervision of Dr Claire Colomb (School of Planning) and Dr Ben Campkin (School of Architecture) in September 2016. His research will focus on the role of the Paris *périphérique* (ring road) in the division between city proper and *banlieue* (suburbs), and the relationship between the built environment and urban imaginaries in the context of Greater Paris.

**Anne Baker** (Class of 2015) recently began a PhD in the School of Sociology at the Australian National University in Canberra on the topic of home and housing.

*Miscellaneous City: chaos and coherence in Beirut*, an essay by **Ankit Bhardwaj** and **Melissa Chin** (2015) based on the students' field trip to Beirut last year, is now available to read as a PDF from the website: [read it here](#).

Chophouse Row in Seattle, developed by Dunn & Hobbes (founder and principal **Liz Dunn**, class of 2011), is one of 26 developments from around the world selected as finalists in the Urban Land Institute's (ULI) 2016 Global Awards for Excellence, widely recognized as one of the land use industry's most prestigious award programmes. Winners will be announced in October 2016.

The LSE London Film Festival organised by **Dr Melissa Fernandez** (PhD Cities 2010) with Dr Miranda Iossifidis (Goldsmiths) on 13 July will bring together researchers, film-makers, practitioners and the general public, to discuss problems, solutions, and the future of the housing supply crisis in London. At the event LSE London will present some of its own short films about London housing. Contact: [m.fernandez1@lse.ac.uk](mailto:m.fernandez1@lse.ac.uk) and [m.iossifidis@gold.ac.uk](mailto:m.iossifidis@gold.ac.uk)

**Sofia Garcia** (2014) has an award from the Hubert H. Humphrey Fellowship Program - granted by the US Department of State - to study at MIT for one year in the

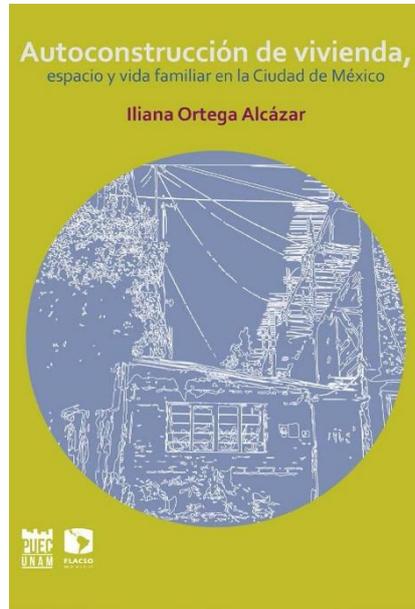
Special Program for Urban and Regional Studies. It is a one year program for mid-career professionals where she will research housing, diversity and the possibilities of inclusionary planning in the context of Lima, a city that is constantly expanding and whose growth is determined almost solely by market forces and speculation.

**Juergen Kufner** (PhD 2012) presented a paper entitled: 'Embracing Conflict: extending the analytical frame of conflict planning' at the RMIT/AESOP conference [Moving beyond conflict in planning: towards a critical consensus politics?](#) hosted by RMIT in Barcelona on 16-17 June 2016. In the paper he draws on the conflict theory of Georg Simmel. Post-foundationalist theory is extended in terms of the possibility for distinguishing between productive and pathological forms of conflict.

**Nisha Mistry** (2009) has been named a Manager at Bloomberg Associates, a global consultancy founded by former New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg. Recently, she facilitated the first-ever Urban Law Day at the United Nations Headquarters and participated in UN-HABITAT Expert Group Meetings in Barcelona and New York City, as part of preparations for Habitat III, the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development that will be held in Quito, Ecuador on 17– 20 October 2016.

**Dr Iliana Ortega-Alcázar** (PhD 2008) published her book *Autoconstrucción de vivienda, espacio y vida familiar en la Ciudad de México* (Self-help housing, space and family life in Mexico City) as a co-edition between FLACSO-México and PUEC-UNAM. The book takes us inside the complex multi-family plots that make up the consolidated self-help settlements of Mexico City. Based on an ethnographic study of Santo Domingo, it offers a novel interpretation of urban consolidation and densification processes in the global South. The book examines, through a cultural

lens, how extended families cluster in multifamily plots, developing an intense communal life. What is at heart is not the form that the houses take as they expand but the process of building itself; a process laden with social meaning and potential for change. Iliana is a Research Fellow at the University of Southampton.



**Paul McGann** (2009) of [Grow Elephant](#) writes that they have just opened a cafe at the community garden on New Kent Road, to help raise money to fund the garden and other projects. The Tropics Café serves drinks and snacks and has a licenced bar.

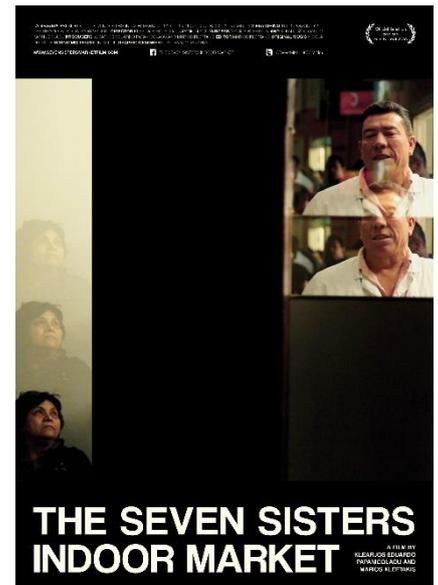


Grow Elephant Community Garden and cafe, image courtesy of Paul McGann.

**Dr Susan Parham** (PhD 2009) has been appointed as Academic Director of the new International Garden Cities Institute, which has recently been established in Letchworth Garden City as part of a research partnership between the University of Hertfordshire and the

town's governors, Letchworth Heritage Foundation. Working with a diverse group of academic and Institute founding partners in the UK and internationally Susan will be delivering research on a range of 'planned cities' themes. For more details about the new Institute see <http://www.gardencitiesinstitute.com/>

**Gonzalo Peón Carballo** (2013) was General Coordinator of Education Planning and Technologies at the Mexico City Education Ministry until June, and is now Deputy Director of the Institute for Transportation and Development Policy (ITDP) in Mexico: <https://www.itdp.org/> <http://mexico.itdp.org/>. He says 'It would be great to know who else is working on transport, mobility and education', so if you are involved in these areas do get in touch with him: [gonpeon@gmail.com](mailto:gonpeon@gmail.com).



Architect **Claudia Sinatra** (2014) has been working on the production and graphic images for a documentary film project 'The Seven Sisters Indoor Market'. This feature-length documentary explores urban re-development in London through the eyes of a migrant community in Seven Sisters. The film is especially effective in its translation of socio-spatial research into documentary cinema and premiered as part of London's East End Film Festival on 25 June at Rio Cinema with a screening + Q&A with the director

Klearjos Papanicolaou (LSE Sociology alum 2014). More info: <http://www.sevensistersmarketfilm.com/>

**Bianca Ryseck** (2015) is a digital researcher and writer at WhereIsMyTransport. She's heading a blog and external communications on how data can be leveraged to deliver accessible public transport that can unlock the potential of people and societies in emerging cities.

In August **Guy Trangoš** (2012) will begin studying for a doctorate in design at Harvard Graduate School of Design under the supervision of Dean Mohsen Mostafavi.

## Faculty news

**Dr Günter Gassner** will be taking up a new position as Lecturer in Urban Design in the School of Geography and Planning at Cardiff University from September 2016. Günter has contributed his design expertise and critical insights to Studio since 2009/10, playing a central role as Course Tutor since 2014. He has also brought his engagement with social and spatial theory, and his commitment to open and questioning intellectual inquiry, to the Cities by Design course, as co-teacher with Ricky Burdett.

Günter is an exceptional colleague and teacher. All of us who have worked with Gunter, been taught or supervised by him, have benefitted greatly from his intellect, energy, collegiality and commitment. We will miss him, and wish him all the best in his new role.

After an extended research sabbatical working on her 'Super-diverse Streets' project across Birmingham, Bristol, Leicester and Manchester, **Dr Suzi Hall** has returned to the Cities Programme. Her recent publications include:

2016 Hall, S., King, J. and R. Finlay, 'Migrant Infrastructure: Transaction economies in Birmingham and Leicester, UK', *Urban Studies*, pp. 1-17, Early View DOI 10.1177/0042098016634586.

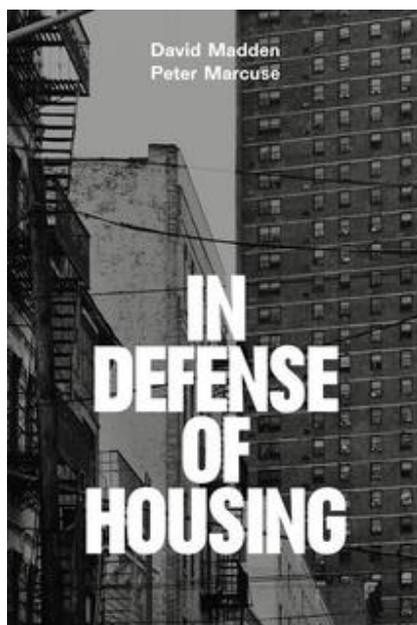
2016 Hall, S. and Savage, M. 'Animating the Urban Vortex: New sociological urgencies', *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 40(1) pp. 1-18, Early View DOI: 10.1111/1468-2427.12304.

2015 Hall, S., King, J. and R. Finlay, 'Envisioning Migration: Drawing the infrastructure of Stapleton Road, Bristol', *New Diversities*, 17 (2) pp. 59-72. (in press).

2015 Hall, S. 'Migrant Urbanisms: Ordinary cities and everyday resistance', *Sociology*, 49(3), pp. 853-869

In April, **Dr David Madden** delivered a public lecture at Humboldt University in Berlin on "The Housing Question in New York City: Commodification, Alienation, Resistance." David also gave a talk in June at Technische Universität Berlin entitled "Projects: Notes on the Politics of Public Housing in New York City."

*In Defense of Housing: The politics of crisis*, co-authored with Peter Marcuse, will be published in August (ebook available now) by [Verso](#).



On Friday 6 May, while London waited for news of the Mayoral election result, **Fran Tonkiss** took part in a panel at the Royal Academy of Arts, on 'Centre or suburb: locating the soul of 21<sup>st</sup>-

century London'. Later that month, she gave a lecture on 'Socialising design: architecture in the post-European city' in the Accademia di Architettura lecture series at the Università della Svizzera italiana, Mendrisio.

Also in May, Fran did a seminar with graduate students as part of the Higher Seminar in Public Places and Urban Space Studies, KTH, Stockholm, and in June she was a plenary speaker at the Summer Institute of Urban Studies (SIUS) at the University of Manchester.

## LSE Cities news

The [Urban Age 'Shaping Cities' conference](#) at the 15<sup>th</sup> International Architecture Biennale in Venice on 14-15 July will investigate how people, institutions, policymakers, investors and designers affect the physical form of cities, and how this impacts on the way we live in cities. Building on its ten-year legacy as an international investigation of cities, the Urban Age conference will engage with the themes of land ownership, migration, tolerance and equity to inform and shape the debate on sustainable urban development at Habitat III (Quito, 17-20 October).

LSE Cities/Urban Age is also holding an exhibition on [Conflicts of an urban age](#) at the Biennale from 28 May – 27 November 2016.