

Cities News

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Summer Term 2012

Faculty

Ricky Burdett
Suzanne Hall
Philipp Rode
Fran Tonkiss
Savvas Verdis

Lent Term expert seminars

Michael Duff
Sarah Sackman

Summer Term master-class

Ash Amin
and Michel Wieviorka

Administrator

Anna Livia Johnston

Cities Programme

lse.ac.uk/LSECities/citiesProgramme

T: 020 7955 6828

For enquiries or to join the Cities Programme Listserv mailing list please email cities@lse.ac.uk

MSc student news

After sending our students to freezing Moscow for last year's **field trip**, this year's students spent a sweltering week from 18-25 March in Ahmedabad, India, as guests of CEPT (Center for Environmental Planning and Technology) University Faculty of Architecture, working with their counterparts on the Urban Design master's programme at CEPT to explore the implications of the fast growing city's Sabarmati Riverfront development project. The trip was made possible by a generous donation from the Ove Arup Foundation. More details and images can be found on our website's Ahmedabad 2012 page (the images below are by our students).

Studio Publication: this year's 2011-12 City Design Research Studio theme was 'Public City: a studio exploration of the Barbican and its urban locale', addressing the question 'how is public space and public culture constituted in a rapidly changing city?' Our studio publication launch will be held at LSE on 26 June. *Public City* will also be available to read as a PDF from the website.

Expert seminars were given in Lent Term by barrister and expert in public law, planning and environmental law **Sarah Sackman**, on 'law and the city', and sustainable urbanism strategy consultant (and Cities alumnus) **Michael Duff**, on 'urban environments.' In Summer Term students had a master-class with Professors Ash Amin (Cambridge University) and Michel Wieviorka (Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, Paris).

How do public space improvements support residents and local business? From January through April, **Ilana Adleson, Caitlin Amos, Julia Day** and **Daniela Gorny** worked with Valerie Beirne, on behalf of the Bankside Urban Forest Partnership at the Better Bankside Business Improvement District (BID), to answer this question and more. As part of this project, they have collaborated to define public realm indicators and develop a methodology that Bankside can use to qualitatively and quantitatively evaluate area improvements, ranging from adding greenery to plazas to calming traffic on streets to improving access to parks.

The methodology is user-friendly and straight forward and will be implemented by their current staff, street-team wardens, or potential youth partners. What is most innovative about this project, and partnership, is that it reflects a BID prioritising quality of life for all area stakeholders (residents and visitors as much as businesses) and finding an effective means to communicate how improvements to the public realm can support the area, as well as in terms of how its spaces are perceived and used.

Guy Trangoš has joined the LSE Cities Grosvenor project as a researcher, working with Juliet Davies and Sabina Uffer on urban resilience.

PhD student news

The annual **Writing Cities** conference, organised by graduate researchers at the Cities Programme, the Department of Urban Studies and Planning at MIT, MIT Media LAB, Harvard Graduate School of Design and Harvard Law School, was held in Cambridge, MA from 10-12 May 2012, on the theme 'Limits'. This was the fifth annual conference in the ongoing graduate/faculty collaboration between the LSE, Harvard and MIT. The second volume of working papers from the 2011 conference held at LSE, *Writing Cities 2: 'Distance and Cities: Where do we stand?'* is available to read as a PDF from our PhD programme web page.

citiesLAB Volume 2 will be launched on 26 June and available to read as a PDF from the website soon. The essays by Cities Programme doctoral researchers in this year's publication engage with critical aspects of a '*politics of design*'. The concept of politics is grounded in the figure of the citizen and the space of the city, and the papers collected here are all concerned with the ways in which 'everyday' forms of urban citizenship – and especially the rights of the resident – are claimed, imagined and represented.

Adam Kaasa co-organised the 10th Annual NYLON conference at the BGSS in Berlin from 12-15 March. He presented a paper 'The idioms of architecture: a method to read the limits between texts and buildings' at the Writing Cities conference in May.



Who's that man? Jorge Martin and friends in Ahmedabad (image Francis Moss)



Ahmedabad: CEPT University courtyard (Joshua Simoneau)



Ahmedabad: balcony (Francis Moss)



Radio Mogadishu (image supplied by Rashid Ali)

Adam co-edited *Writing Cities 2* (May 2012) with **Gunter Gassner** and **Katherine Robinson** and contributed a chapter, 'Appearing In or Out of Time: Temporal Rhetoric in Mexico City Modern'. He also published an essay 'The Importance of Being Seen' in the experimental magazine *All That Is Common*. Adam ended five years of work on the Urban Age and LSE Cities logistics and communications at the end of May, moving to a post as Research Officer at the centre on the Theatrum Mundi project, an international collaboration to link urban practitioners with people from the performing and visual arts.

Since February, **Katherine Robinson** has been undertaking fieldwork in Berlin as part of her research looking at the uses and role of the library as a public space and public good, based on case studies in London and Berlin.

Torsten Schroeder will give an invited talk at the GreenBRIDGE symposium 2012 entitled "Valuing Sustainability in the Built Environment", at the University of Cambridge 25 to 26 June 2012

Alumni news

Rashid Ali (MSc 2011), the recipient of the 2011 Giles Worsley Fellowship for Architecture at the British School in Rome will present his research at this summer's London Festival of Architecture (LAF). *Mogadishu – Forgotten Pasts and Distant Futures* is a site-specific, image and sound installation that charts the urban transformation of Mogadishu, from the late 19th century, through to the first few decades of the 20th century. The installation is a platform for a broader audience to engage for the first time with this particular aspect of the city's cultural history. It will be at the Swiss Cottage Library from 5 July to 5 August. The LAF will be taking place at various sites across London from 23 June to 8 July.

In December 2011 **Mark Atkinson** (2006) took part in a live online discussion hosted by the Guardian Local Government Network. The topic, responding to publication of LSE's *Reading the Riots* research, was 'Building Strong Communities'. Mark spoke about his work with Volunteer Centre Kensington and Chelsea tapping embedded social capital in Portobello Road market to re-establish a sense of

community cohesion and local empowerment after the August 2011 London riots.

Alisa Brem (2009) has been awarded a Fulbright Fellowship to travel to Italy this autumn to study local government implementation of sustainability policies in Tuscany. She will be based in the Department of Urban Planning at the University of Florence's School of Architecture. She recently completed her Juris Doctor and has been working as a development associate at Insight Property Group on commercial real estate development projects in Washington DC.

Shivrao Channapattan (2010) has co-founded a collaborative international design practice in architecture, master planning, landscape and interior design - [D]Sync. in Surat, Gujarat, India. He has also joined the CGP Institute of Architecture, Interior Design and Fine Arts as Associate Professor at the VNSG University in Surat, and taken up the task of establishing a Research and Development unit which will support students and society at large through research dissemination and consultancy services.

Miriam Fitzpatrick (2001) will be giving a talk on her research into urbanist William Holly Whyte to the Urban Design Group (London) on 2 August. Miriam lectures in architecture and urban design at University College, Dublin.

Since March, **Nisha Mistry** (2009) has been serving the City of Newark, New Jersey (U.S.) as a Manufacturing Advisor with the Department of Economic & Housing Development. She is also currently a Non-Resident Fellow with the Brookings Institution's Metropolitan Policy Program and a Research Associate with the Institute for the Study of Political Economy & Law in Turino, Italy. She resides in her native New York.

Dr Hyun Shin (MSc 2000; Lecturer in the Department of Geography and Environment, LSE) has recently completed research on socio-spatial impacts of mega-events with a case study of the 2010 Guangzhou Asian Games, funded by the STICERD/LSE Annual Fund New Researcher Award (2009-2011).

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City, Street and Citizen

The measure of the ordinary

Suzanne Hall



New book by Suzi Hall

Cities News editor: Anna Livia Johnston

Hyun is also one of the key organisers of the Urban Studies Seminar Series (2011-2012), *Towards an Emerging Geography of Gentrification in the Global South*, funded by the Urban Studies Foundation and the Urban Studies journal (see <http://goo.gl/sWHjG> for details). Two workshops were held successfully as part of this seminar series, once in London in March 2012 (<http://goo.gl/5QUg5>) and again in Santiago de Chile in April 2012.

Faculty news

Suzanne Hall discussed her new book *City Street and Citizen: The Measure of the Ordinary* (Routledge 2012), on the life and livelihoods of a multi-ethnic street in south London, with Caroline Knowles, Professor of Sociology and Head of the Centre for Urban and Community Research, Goldsmiths, at a very well attended event at LSE on 12 June co-hosted by LSE Cities and the Sociology Forum and chaired by Dr Claire Alexander from the Department of Sociology. Suzi has been invited to join the Runnymede Academic Forum, the UK's leading independent race equality think tank.

Fran Tonkiss participated with Cities doctoral researchers Gunter Gassner and Adam Kaasa in the 5th annual Writing Cities workshop, hosted by Harvard/MIT, May 10-12. In March she took part in the 9th annual NYLON conference, bringing together graduate researchers from NYU, Columbia, LSE (including the Cities Programme's Adam Kaasa and Katherine Robinson) and Goldsmiths, and held this year in Berlin. In February, Fran chaired the LSE launch of Richard Sennett's *Together*, and was in conversation at the RSA with Avner de-Shalit about his recent book with Daniel A. Bell on *The Spirit of Cities*. In June, she chaired the launch at the Architecture Foundation of Owen Hatherley's *A New Kind of Bleak*, and did a seminar on 'Spaces of Enclosure' with Amita Baviskar hosted by Stockholm University's Department of Social Anthropology and White Architects.

Fran's recent publications include 'The One-Dimensional City', *City* 16/1-2; 'Informality and its discontents', in M. Angélil and R. Hehl (eds) *Informalize! Essays on the Political Economy of Urban Form* (Berlin: Ruby Press); and 'Economic globalization' in G. Ritter (ed.) *The Wiley-Blackwell Encyclopedia of Globalization*.

For updates on Ricky Burdett, Philipp Rode and the work of LSE Cities research centre please see lsecities.net.