

Cities News

Cities Programme newsletter issue 14
Summer Term 2014

MSc student news



Sarajevo field trip, image courtesy of Regina Kertapati.

Field trip to Sarajevo

This year's MSc students visited Sarajevo from 18-23 May for their annual field trip, at the invitation of the Faculty of Architecture and the Centre for Refugee and IDP Studies (CESI), Institute for Social Science Research, University of Sarajevo. Over a busy few days students, along with Professor **Fran Tonkiss** and Dr **David Madden**, explored the city and took part in workshops with faculty, research students and staff from these and other institutions, arranged by MSc City Design alum **Gruia Badescu**, who is researching Sarajevo as part of his PhD at Cambridge.

The group met Bosnian architect Ivan Štraus, whose well-known buildings include the Museum of Aviation in Belgrade. **Sobia Rafiq** writes, 'We had a long discussion with him on his approach towards architecture, Sarajevo's evolving city-scape, new architecture of the city and his ideologies. The meeting was in the famous Holiday Inn building of Sarajevo, also designed by him'.

Students are planning to produce a publication about Sarajevo in collaboration with LSE Cities in the autumn, with contributions from Cities Programme students and staff, and from academics and experts in Sarajevo.



Group with Ivan Štraus, seated centre. Image courtesy of Sobia Rafiq.

You will be able to see more images from the field trip and the full programme on our webpage: [Sarajevo 2014](#) (forthcoming).

Studio publication: *Resourceful City*

This year the City Design Research Studio focused on the Elephant & Castle in south London as a site for thinking about the potential of the 'resourceful city'. Against the backdrop of large-scale redevelopment in the area, and amid the wider rhetoric of the 'smart' city, we aimed to explore in more critical ways the assets, resources and capacities of such an urban context. Focusing on the central regeneration site and on the local streets and spaces that run out from it, the Studio groups analysed the connections and disconnections, diverse actors and interests, problems and potential that characterise this complex piece of city.

This year's publication was designed and edited by **Regina Kertapati** and **Claudia Sinatra**. *Resourceful City* will be launched on 1 July at the annual end of year party for MSc City Design students and all involved with the Cities Programme. It will also be available to read in PDF format from the website.

Teaching:

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

Lent Term expert seminar:
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Anitra Baliga's research on Mumbai roadside flower sellers is featured in an article in online newsletter Scroll-in. She finds that the informal fresh flower trade in Mumbai is efficient in its functioning and management, as traders regenerate the value of a scrap commodity by efficiently and ingeniously bringing it to buyers before it loses its worth. She writes of flower seller Mukesh: "Consumption and wastage is very high in cities; and he has been successful in identifying an entrepreneurial opportunity within this cycle." Where do they get the flowers and who buys them? [Read the article.](#)

Ahmad Osman was chosen to participate in a panel discussion on 'Intellectual Capital', organised by the LSE Students' Union as part of the London Festival of Architecture, which took place on 25 June 2014. The theme of this year's LFA was 'Capital', and the panel discussion focused on the

notion of intellectual production as an urban resource, while Ahmad's presentation concerned his work in progress on Beirut's transport infrastructure.



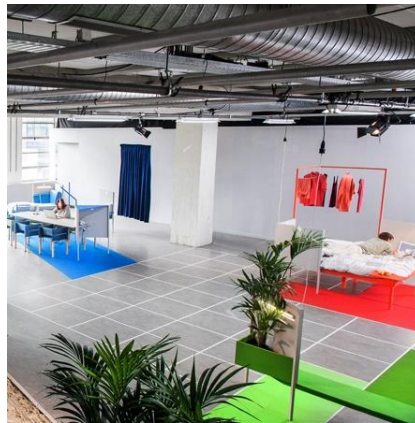
Roadside flower seller, Mumbai. Photo by Hashim Badani.

PhD student news

In March, **Katherine Robinson** presented a paper: "*Der Wedding ist mein Kiez*": Place(d) Poetry and representation', at the NYLON conference at the Institute for Public Knowledge in New York. In April, she was at the British Sociological Annual Conference in Leeds, where she gave a paper: 'Reading needs and reading together: the work of language in the public library'.

Alumni news

In March, **Julia De Martini Day** (2012) helped open Gehl Studio / New York, a new office for the US subsidiary of Gehl Architects, and works with the company as a project manager. In close collaboration with Copenhagen, and another new location in San Francisco, Gehl Studio aims to leverage the global experience of Gehl Architects with a committed presence in the US and take projects further - from strategy to design intervention. The Managing Director of Gehl Studio is another Cities alum - **Jeff Risom**.



Out of Office project – 'flexible', image courtesy of Anna Dekker.

Anna Dekker (2012) recently completed a one-month project at the modern art museum MU of Eindhoven, The Netherlands. In collaboration with design studio KNOL, the project Out of Office was partly based on her individual project fieldwork during her Master's, a social-architectural experiment questioning the modern nomadic and flexible work ethic. First, nomadic workers were invited to work in a colorful, flexible and playful space. Over the course of time it slowly transformed physically and socially into a more highly regulated space with strictly gray cubicles. With this play of extremes, the project team carried out research to investigate whether we become more productive and less stressed when we hand over some self-discipline and work according to set hours.



Out of Office project – 'rigid', image courtesy of Anna Dekker.

Peter Dunn (2010) will be beginning a PhD program in Urban Design and Planning at the University of Washington in September.

Alex Feldman (2006) is now a Vice President at U3 Advisors in Philadelphia, USA - a consultancy that works with Universities and Hospitals on real estate, community, and economic development strategies.

Lola Fernández-Redondo (2010) is now the "Smart and Sustainable City Coordinator" at the Royal Borough of Greenwich (RBG) within the Strategic Development Department. She is working on the definition of the RBG's vision and strategy while leading the development and implementation of a digitally enabled regeneration and Smart Cities approach for the RBG. Through this role and supported by the Digital Accelerator Programme (DAP) of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) she coordinates work with key internal and external partners to ensure that a Smart Cities infrastructure and environment is developed to encourage collaboration and innovation; supports smart and connected communities; improves service delivery; and contributes to sustainable development and economic growth.

Miriam Fitzpatrick (2004) presented a paper at the Architects and Humanities Research Association (AHRA) 2014 symposium on 'Setting-Out', based on her PhD research into the work of urbanist William H. Whyte. Her talk was entitled 'The Siren Call of William H. Whyte; An Odyssey from Critique to Direct Action'. If anyone has any links to Whyte, she would love to hear from them. Please contact Miriam.Fitzpatrick@ucd.ie.

In April 2014, Dr **Günter Gassner** (PhD 2013) participated in the panel discussion 'The Principle of Religion' as part of a three day symposium at Haus der Kulturen der Welt in Berlin, *City-Religion-Capitalism: Turning points of Civilisation*. Drawing on the work

of Walter Benjamin and Friedrich Nietzsche, he pointed to structural affinities between capitalism and religion as well as to Pope Francis's more recent critique of uncontrolled capitalism.

Günter presented a paper at the 7th International Critical Theory Conference of Rome in May 2014. 'Benjamin's Allegorical Skylines' used Benjamin's redemptive approach to historiography to develop a critique of the ways current design professionals approach historical buildings and the city from a distance.

In June 2014, Günter gave a talk on 'Marx, the circulation of capital and historical narratives in the City' at the Royal College of Art as part of *Kapital Architecture* (see below). As part of *Restless Futures: Contested Spaces*, a series of events organised by the Spatial Practices Programme at Central Saint Martins, Günter chaired a roundtable on 'Social Uprising and Political Imaginaries in the Age of Neoliberal Crisis'.

In July 2014, Günter will present a paper at the 12th International ACE (Art & Christianity Enquiry) Conference entitled 'Virgin Mary's Outspread Cloak in the City', drawing on his analysis of the use of religious imaginaries in developer-driven planning processes in London. He will also present a paper on 'Guilt and Debt in the City: The Pinnacle and the Austerity Tower' at the BSA Sociology of Religion Conference in Brighton.

In August 2014, Günter will present a paper at the RGS-IGB Annual International Conference: in 'Flattening Verticality' he argues against the oversimplified understanding of verticality that has characterised modern urban planning.

In July 2014, **Sarah Ichioka** (2003) is leaving her post as Director of The Architecture Foundation (London). She writes: 'I am confident that this is an excellent time for The AF's Board of Trustees and newly appointed Chair to plan the next phase of the

organization's future, leading up to its 25th Anniversary in 2016. I will be leading a new research project with the generous support of the Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts: for more [see webpage](#). Please get in touch if you'd like to learn more about this project, or perhaps be involved: mail@sarahichioka.com.'



Schemata workshop, Daybreak Cohousing, Portland, Oregon. Image courtesy of architect/Sarah Ichioka.

Dr **Alasdair Jones** (PhD 2008, now Assistant Professor at the Department of Methodology, LSE) is in the process of publishing a new book [On South Bank: The Production of Public Space](#) (Ashgate, July 2014). Published in Ashgate's 'Re-materialising Cultural Geography' series, the book is a close, ethnographic account of both the fit and tensions between the ongoing physical transformation and everyday use of London's South Bank.

Dr **Adam Kaasa** (PhD 2013, Research Fellow at the Royal College of Art), convened *Kapital Architecture*, a four-part public debate series exploring architecture through the lens of the 2014 London Festival of Architecture theme 'Capital', on 3, 12, 19 and 28 June. The event was organised by the School of Architecture at the RCA and When We Build Again in collaboration with Legion TV and LSE Cities.

Speakers included **David Madden** (Assistant Professor, LSE Sociology/Cities Programme), **Günter Gassner** (PhD 2013), Nicholas Beech, Linda Clarke, Jörn Janssen, Christine Wall,

Susannah Hagan, Katie Lloyd-Thomas, Alex de Rijke, and Oliver Wainwright.



Kapital Architecture, image courtesy of Adam Kaasa.

David Montero Jalil (2013) is now working as a coordinator of the Sustainable & Competitive Cities Program of Findeter, a Colombian development bank, local partner of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) for the formulation and execution of urban projects in Colombia. He also continues supporting the development of diverse social entrepreneurships and national civil organizations such as @LaCiudadVerde (The Green City), a think-do tank on urban sustainability that brings together creative academics, citizens, public servants and businesspeople to take action on the construction of more sustainable cities.

At the World Urban Forum 2014 held in Medellin, La Ciudad Verde launched the first Colombian Urban Sustainability Award for best cities' efforts, and citizens' actions towards sustainability.



Tactical urbanism by La Ciudad Verde, images courtesy of David Montero Jalil.

In the images above and below members of La Ciudad Verde demonstrate 'tactical urbanism' in

the streets of Medellin during the World Urban Forum, in this case a small-scale intervention in a street that had no pedestrian sidewalk. They created a colourful sidewalk to instigate change and awareness about the importance of creating and maintaining infrastructure for pedestrian safety in the city.



David Montero Jalil, tactical urbanist at work.

Francis Moss and Mirjam Wurtz (2012) have created the *Park Royal Atlas*, an employment study for the Greater London Authority revealing the importance and diversity of economic activities in Park Royal, London's largest industrial area with over 30,000 employees. They led a team surveying all of the 2,000+ workplaces as well as interviewing and photographing hundreds of businesses to combine both quantitative and qualitative insights into the area. Recently launched by the Deputy Mayor, the *Atlas* will inform policies and strategies for intensification, economic development and inward investment to maximise the benefits for local businesses of the regeneration of Old Oak Common, one of Europe's largest regeneration schemes. The *Atlas* can be downloaded from the GLA website: [Park Royal Atlas](#).

Elias Redstone (2003), is an independent architecture curator and writer who specializes in contemporary architecture and architectural photography through curatorial practice, research, publishing and consulting.

Elias is editor-in-chief of the London Architecture Diary. His forthcoming book *Shooting Space: Architecture in Contemporary Photography* (Phaidon, September 2014) is a collection of the best contemporary photography of architecture and the built environment from around the world, with accompanying essays. See [publisher's webpage](#).

Elias will be co-curating an exhibition at the Barbican Art Gallery, 'Constructing Worlds: Photography and Architecture in the Modern Age', from 25 September 2014 – 11 January 2015. The exhibition brings together 250 works by 18 leading photographers from the 1930s to now, who have changed the way we view architecture and think about the world in which we live.



Cover of *Shooting Space: Architecture in Contemporary Photography* (Phaidon).

Justinien Tribillon (2013), has had a peer-reviewed article published in the online journal *Metropolitiques* (16 April), based on the dissertation he completed for his Master's. In a map-based analysis of the effects of the Localism Act in London he argues that, rather than strengthening local democracy, it is reinforcing urban economic divisions through a new parochialism. Read the article: [The Localism Act in London: institutionalising urban divisions](#).

Faculty news

Dr **Suzanne Hall** has published a paper on 'Super-diverse Street: a trans-ethnography across migrant localities' in the journal of *Ethnic and Racial Studies* available for open download from [Taylor & Francis Online](#). She has also published a chapter on 'Emotion, Location and Regeneration' in an edited book on *Stories of Cosmopolitan Belonging*.

Suzi gave a keynote speech at the UCL workshop on 'Everyday Practices and Ordinary Geographies' on 10 June and a public lecture on 19 June on the localities of urban migration at the Max Planck Institute for the Study of Religious and Ethnic Diversity, Göttingen.

Fran Tonkiss gave the keynote lecture on 'Socialising design?' at the 'Designed to Improve' workshop at the University of Hamburg on 22 May, and the closing plenary at the 'Restructuration of Space' workshop at the Technical University of Berlin, 27-28 June.

Fran's interview with curator and writer Francesca Ferguson on 'Austerity to Audacity: On the emerging urbanism of small acts' was published in Issue 20 of the German digital magazine on architecture and urbanism [uncube](#).

LSE Cities is running an Executive Summer School short course at LSE, London and Global Cities: an intensive exploration and analysis of the governance, planning and design of London, 30 June - 4 July. The course will be led by LSE Cities' Directors Professor **Ricky Burdett** and **Philipp Rode**, together with Professor Tony Travers of LSE London.

For more on this and other news from the LSE Cities research centre, please see their website: [lsecities.net](#).