

Cities News

Cities Programme newsletter issue 17
Lent Term 2016



2015 graduates (from left) Nicole Hofert, Melissa Chinn, Samantha Merkt, Verena Stecher, Nelly Estevez, Aude Lucien and Bianca Ryseck. Image courtesy of Bianca Ryseck.

MSc student news

Congratulations to the MSc City Design and Social Science graduates of 2015, and especially to **Melissa Chin**, awarded the Cities Prize for Academic Achievement 2015, and **Samantha Merkt**, awarded the Cities Prize for Outstanding Contribution 2015 in recognition of her contribution to the work and culture of the programme.

See our Alumni news for more about the Class of 2015 and graduates from previous years.

This year's **City Design Research Studio** is concerned with infrastructure as urbanism. Working on different infrastructural elements, and in different site contexts across inner London, the Studio teams have been exploring 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 & 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).

The Studio is led by **Günter Gassner**, **David Madden**, **Don Slater** and **Fran Tonkiss** (on leave Lent Term).

The annual MSc field trip abroad is to **Belgrade** from 15 to 20 February.

Our core course Citymaking: the politics of urban form, taught by **Philipp Rode** and **Savvas Verdis**, is 10 years old this year! Follow on Twitter: [#citymaking](https://twitter.com/citymaking)

Alumni news



Fin House, London, 2015, image courtesy Rashid Ali.

Rashid Ali Architects (formerly RA Projects), the practice of **Rashid Ali** (2011) has been included in *New Architects 3*; a publication by the Architecture Foundation on the best architects to have emerged in the UK in the last decade.

Ankit Bhardwaj and **Aron Bohmann** (class of 2015) have been working as researchers at LSE Cities, joining previous graduates **Peter Griffiths** (2014), now Managing Editor, and **Francis Moss** (2012), Information Designer. Ankit has just left for Singapore/India.

Angelica Figueroa (2010) is now consultant at the Servicio de Cooperación Técnica (Sercotec) for the Chilean National Programa Barrios Comerciales. Her work focuses on promoting projects for improved public space and urban environment in 64 commercial districts as a part of comprehensive strategies of Local Economic Development.

Sarah Ichioka (2003) recently chaired a panel of Korean urban experts discussing "The Seoul Experiment" at the symposium to launch the forthcoming Seoul

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Biennale of Architecture and Urbanism (<http://sibau.saf.kr/>).

Ichioka is currently studying the well-being and social capital benefits of urban agriculture programmes as a Research Fellow at the Centre for Urban Greenery and Ecology within Singapore's National Parks Board.



Image courtesy of the National Parks Board of Singapore.

Adam Kaasa (PhD 2013) was appointed Director of Theatrum Mundi, a network and research project about urban culture. The position is held jointly between the LSE and the Royal College of Art. He gave a paper 'Future Perfect: Visualising the Urban in Time' as part of the Urban Theory panel at the American Sociological Association annual conference (August 2015).

Dr Dan Kilburn (PhD 2013) is launching an undergraduate summer school module - [Urban Development in Contemporary London](#) – as part of UCL's new International Summer School for Undergraduates (ISSU). The module explores how urban planning and policy in London is responding to the economic, social, and environmental challenges associated with its role as a 'global city'. As part of UCL's study abroad offering, the summer school runs for three weeks in July and August. Dan is a geography teaching fellow in the UCL Centre for Languages and International Education.

Kelcie Ralph (2010) earned her PhD from the University of California, Los Angeles in Urban Planning. Her dissertation, entitled 'Stalled on the Road to Adulthood', won the Barclay Gibbs Jones Award for the Best Dissertation in Planning from the Association of the Collegiate Schools of Planning. She has also just become an Assistant Professor at Rutgers University, where she teaches about transportation and environmental issues.

Andrew Rudd (2007) is Urban Environment Officer in the Urban Planning and Design Branch of UN-Habitat, the UN agency for cities. He spent the last two years leading substantive advocacy for the urban dimension of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), adopted by the world's leaders this past September in New York. As a result, the SDGs contain a dedicated urban goal (SDG-11) with universal targets related to housing, transport, planning, culture, resilience, environment and open space, and will be underlain by the first global standard metrics on urban sprawl and public space. In parallel, Andrew continues to lecture and write on issues related to sustainable cities.

Torsten Schroeder (PhD 2014) has won the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) President's Award for Outstanding PhD Thesis. The award was announced at the RIBA President's

Medals and Research Awards ceremony in London on 2 December 2015 and was presented by RIBA President Jane Duncan (to right in picture below) and Chair of the Research and Innovation Group Professor Flora Samuel (left). Torsten's research for his thesis "Translating the concept of sustainability into architectural design practices: London's City Hall as an Exemplar" was supervised by Professor Mike Savage and Professor Ricky Burdett.



Torsten Schroeder receives his RIBA award, image courtesy Torsten Schroeder.

During November 2015 **Guy Trango's** (2011) launched *Movement Johannesburg*, a book he co-edited with Zahira Asmal on the movements, migrations, and urban processes that made and continue to shape Johannesburg. Over thirty architects, academics, photographers, urban thinkers and artists contributed to the book, which, as a result contains powerful historical photography and graphic work. Widely-known contributors include Constitutional Court Justice Edwin Cameron, University of the Witwatersrand Vice Chancellor Adam Habib, photographers Jurgen Schadeberg and Andrew Tshabangu, and Johannesburg Mayor Parks Tau. Published by The City, *Movement Johannesburg* is available online.



Jessica Wurwar (2004) is now the Energy Manager at the New York City Department of Transportation, working to improve the city's energy efficiency. She continues to teach courses about food security and urbanization at the NYU School of Professional Studies Center for Global Affairs. She also continues to teach classes about cheese and wine.

Faculty news

Dr **David Madden** published an essay in the journal *CITY* entitled "There is a politics of urban knowledge because urban knowledge is political." See: <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13604813.2015.1024056>

In September 2015, David published a column in the *Washington Post* entitled "Five Myths About Public Housing." [Read the article.](#)

In October, David gave a public lecture at the Haus der Kulturen der Welt in Berlin. Entitled "Inequality and the Commodification of Housing," it was part of a series of public events organised under the name Wohnunsfrage: The Housing System. David also taught a seminar and contributed a chapter to the Wohnunsfrage's publication, *Housing After the Neoliberal Turn*, see [publisher's webpage](#).

In January David gave a public presentation at Openbare Bibliotheek Amsterdam on housing, gentrification and urban issues in London. The event began with a Skype interview with Richard Sennett and included a response from architect Fred Schoorl. For more information and a video see the [event webpage](#). Before the event, David was interviewed about housing in the Dutch newspaper *Het Parool*.

In January, David wrote a commissioned essay for the gallery Space on Mare Street in Hackney as part of an exhibition of work by the Colombian artist Iván Argote entitled *An Idea of*

Progress (21 Jan to 19 March).
More details: [webpage](#).

Finally, *In Defense of Housing*, written by David Madden and Peter Marcuse, is set to be published this summer by Verso.

We are delighted to welcome Dr **Don Slater**, Associate Professor in Sociology at LSE, as co-convenor of the Studio this year. He has been teaching in the Department of Sociology since 2001, and his research focuses on material culture and technologies in everyday life, with a particular interest in how economic, technological and cultural processes intersect within material cultures.

Don's current research programme with Jo Entwistle from KCL and Mona Sloane (LSE Sociology), *Configuring Light/Staging the Social*, extends this interest into the ways in which light, as a material, is configured into urban and public realm infrastructures, spaces and practices, and has a core concern with the ways in which sociologists and practitioners (designers and planners) can collaborate on configuring material culture. See [Facebook page](#).

Professor **Fran Tonkiss** published a piece on 'Democratic spaces' in the autumn issue of *The Architect*, the journal of the Sri Lankan Institute of Architects. In November, Fran gave a presentation on 'Cities after equality' at the KTH, Stockholm international seminar on *Cities in a Post-Urban World* marking the honorary doctorate awarded to Professor Edward Glaeser. Watch the video on [YouTube](#).

Also in November, Fran participated in the City Talks series curated by the Centre for Cities. Listen to the podcast: <http://www.centreforcities.org/multi-media/city-talks-is-urban-inequality-inevitable/>

LSE Cities news

LSE Cities is launching the Executive MSc in Cities starting in September 2016, designed for public, private and third-sector leaders who want to deliver large-scale change in cities. The programme consists of five modular teaching blocks over 12 months, followed by a six-month consultancy project, and is designed to be suitable for participants in full-time employment. Teachers will include **Ricky Burdett**, **Philipp Rode**, **Fran Tonkiss** and **Savvas Verdis**, with Tony Travers (Director, LSE London) and other urban experts from within and outside LSE. For more information see the [programme webpage](#).

In memoriam

Professor Edward W Soja, 1940-2015



Image: Amsterdam School for Cultural Analysis at the University of Amsterdam.

We were deeply saddened by news of the death of Ed Soja in Los Angeles in November 2015. Ed was a great friend and champion of the Cities Programme, teaching on the MSc City Design for many years as an LSE Centennial Professor. The author of such key works as *Postmodern Geographies*, *Thirdspace*, *Postmetropolis* and *Seeking Spatial Justice*, Ed had great enthusiasm and energy for engaging with students, and was a generous and warm-hearted colleague, always congenial and ever-disputatious. We will miss Ed greatly.