

# Cities News

Cities Programme newsletter issue 15  
Lent Term 2015



Class of 2014 at graduation ceremony, image courtesy of Benno Rembeck.

## MSc student news

Congratulations to the MSc City Design and Social Science graduates of 2014, who achieved great results including Distinctions for **Anitra Baliga**, **Jenna Keyes**, **Bronwyn Kotzen** and **Sofia Garcia**. Particular congratulations go to **Bronwyn**, awarded the Cities Prize for Academic Achievement 2014, and to **Sofia**, awarded the Cities Prize for Outstanding Contribution 2014 in recognition of her contribution to the work and culture of the programme.

See our Alumni news for more about the Class of 2014.

This year's City Design Research Studio, led by **Dr Günter Gassner**, **Dr David Madden** and **Professor Fran Tonkiss**, takes the theme of the 'critical city.' The word critical can describe something in the throes of crisis—or denote a critique of established ways of doing things. These two meanings provide the initial inspiration for our studio exploration. What does it mean to live in a city in a critical condition? How should we criticise contemporary forms of urban development? And what critical interventions can we propose for urban life today?



Graduates Claudia, Sofia, Paula, Bronwyn, Regina and friend, image courtesy of Paula Szejnfeld-Sirkis.

The focus is on **Tottenham**, in the borough of Haringey in northeast London. Tottenham is a place where many of the crises of urban life are visible. It is the poorest neighbourhood in the most unequal borough in the capital. Many Tottenham residents experience numerous forms of injustice, and the area has repeatedly been the site of uprisings and riots. And many locals feel that the council's official regeneration plans threaten to bring gentrification and displacement rather than social progress.

**Diana Martínez** (current MSc student) earned second place in the competition "Book of Ideas" organized by the European Cyclists' Federation. The purpose of the "Book of Ideas" is to inspire cities and organizations from all over Europe with cycling campaigns. Her idea was "Cycling for a shorter working day". The goal of this proposal is that workers who bike to work may finish their workday 20 minutes early. To know more about her project [read the post](#) in her blog [Cities for us](#). Twitter: [@Citiesforus](#)

Two photographs by **Diana** were selected to be part of the book *Around the World in 80 Bicycles* and the exhibition with the same name organized by *dérive Lab* and *El Caminante* (see under Alumni news).

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"Cities for us" in Copenhagen, Denmark. Winning image by Diana Martínez.

## PhD student news

Warm congratulations to **Dr Corinna Dean**, **Dr Richard Stockton Dunlap** and **Dr Torsten Schroeder**, who have all been awarded PhDs: **Corinna** for 'Establishing the Tate Modern Cultural Quarter: social and cultural regeneration through art and architecture', **Richard** for 'Reassessing Ronchamp: the historical context, architectural discourse and design development

of Le Corbusier's Chapel Notre Dame-du-Haut' and **Torsten** for 'Translating the concept of sustainability into architectural design practice: London's City Hall as an exemplar'.

## Alumni news

**Naveed Ahmed** (2008) is joining Transport for London (TfL) to head up the transport strategy function for the area of "Environment" (air quality, sustainable modes of transport, walking, etc.) for the Mayor of London.

**Mark Atkinson** (2006) has been co-chairing a Markets and Retail committee on the regeneration of Church Street Market in Westminster since January 2014, and compered a panel discussion on the local economy in Peckham for Peckham CoDesign in October. Mark is a Specialist Assistance Team Borough Advisor on markets for the latest round of the Mayor's High Street Fund. He will be attending the International Public Markets conference in Barcelona in March 2015.

**Shivaroo Channapattan** (2010) has been appointed Head of Department at the GC Patel Institute of Architecture, Veer Narmad South Gujarat University, Surat. He is also leading a team of urban designers and planners on a 'student-friendly' Campus Master Plan project for VNSGU at Surat.

**Carlo Castelli** (2011) organized a reunion for the Class of 2011 on 15 January, starting at the George IV pub on campus (where else?), followed by a meal at Belgo's restaurant. Early talks are taking place for the next reunion in New York 2016...

**Alex Feldman** (2006) is now a Vice President at U3 Advisors, a consulting practice - with offices in Philadelphia, New York City, and Detroit - that works with anchor institutions on economic development, urban regeneration, and real estate development strategies. Alex is currently leading consulting engagements in Detroit, Memphis, Charlotte, and Chula Vista, California.

**Jack Finegan** (2010), Urban Planning Officer at UN-HABITAT (United Nation Human Settlements Programme), is currently based in Yangon, working with UN Habitat in the Urban Research and Development Institute. URDI is a collaboration between Habitat and the Myanmar Ministry of Construction, with the aim of promoting urban research and awareness. As well as supporting the government in the development of planning capacity, URDI is also responsible for producing and disseminating urban research.

Part of URDI's remit is to develop relationships and institutional linkages with universities worldwide, to help bring a greater understanding of urban issues to the country - Yangon essentially had no urban planning system in place until 2011, and is now looking forward to extremely high rates of migration in the short term future. If anyone is looking at urbanisation in this part of the world, they are welcome to get in touch, c/o [cities@lse.ac.uk](mailto:cities@lse.ac.uk).

**Sofia Garcia** and **Bronwyn Kotzen** (2014) are the editors of *Reconstructing Sarajevo: negotiating socio-political complexity*, a publication with an introduction by **Fran Tonkiss** and contributions by recent graduates **Elizabeth DeWolf**, **Serena Girani**, **Claudia Sinatra** and **Paula Szejnfeld Sirkis** (Dynamic Reflections on Sarajevo: an open dialogue on memory, identity and the city) and **Ida Lien**, **Sobia Rafiq** and **Thomas Walker** (The Olympic Bulevar: In-betweenness and peripheries in Sarajevo), alum **Gruia Badescu** and others: [Reconstructing Sarajevo](#) (PDF).

**Bronwyn** and **Sofia** have also written a blogpost for the LSEE Research on South Eastern Europe blog: [LSE Cities: 'Reconstructing Sarajevo' report](#).

**Sofia** has a new job at one of Lima's borough's local councils, as the planning coordinator at the Council's Urban Planning Department.

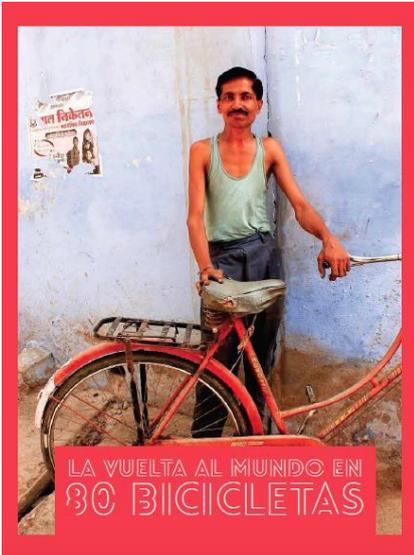
On 9 December 2014 **Dr Alasdair Jones**, Assistant Professor in the Department of Methodology (PhD Cities 2008) launched his new book *On South Bank: the production of public space* (Ashgate, 2014), with a talk in the Thai Theatre, LSE with Professor Phil Hubbard (University of Kent) as respondent. The event was chaired by Professor **Fran Tonkiss**. See [publisher's webpage](#).

**Adam Kaasa** (PhD 2013) is working on a research project at the Royal College of Art, where he is a research fellow. On 4 December 2014 RCA Architecture Research presented initial findings from the first nine months of the project, 'Public Spaces and the Role of the Architect - a comparative study of influential Modernist and contemporary examples in London and São Paulo'. The project is a collaboration between RCA Architecture and the Faculty of Architecture at the University of São Paulo and is supported by the AHRC in the UK and FAPESP in Brazil.

**Nisha Mistry** (2009) is now Director of the Urban Law Center at Fordham University School of Law in New York City. Launched in 2012, the Center focuses on the role of law and legal systems in urban environments, with the mission of supporting innovative, equity-centered approaches to urban law and governance. The Center is affiliated with the Fordham Urban Law Journal, an urban policy publication that will celebrate its 43rd anniversary this year. Nisha can be reached at [nmistry2@law.fordham.edu](mailto:nmistry2@law.fordham.edu).

**Dr Olivia Muñoz-Rojas** (PhD 2009) launched her blog last November, where she writes about current social and cultural topics: [www.oliviamunozrojasblog.com](http://www.oliviamunozrojasblog.com). She was invited to give a talk on post-civil war Barcelona in the series [Barcelona, from Textiles to Technology](#) at the LSE Catalan Observatory. She has been interviewed on city branding and the image of Madrid for *El País*

and the Basque daily *El Correo* as well as her art-research project [Femmes et WC](#) (on women and toilet queuing). She recently wrote on Paris's Pompidou Centre in cinema for *Teatro Marittimo*, *Revista de Cine+Arquitectura*, and the attack on *Charlie Hebdo* for the op-ed pages of *El Correo*.



Cover of *La Vuelta al Mundo en 80 Bicicletas*, image courtesy of Ximena Ocampo.

On 27 February *dérive* LAB and Editorial El Caminante (co-founder **Ximena Ocampo**, (class of 2012)) will launch the book *La Vuelta al Mundo en 80 Bicicletas* (*Around The World in 80 Bicycles*) featuring essays by LSE alumni **Julia de Martini Day** (2012) and **Ximena Ocampo**, and other experts including the architect and urban designer Ben Hamilton-Baillie, Buenos Aires Transportation sub-secretary, Guillermo Dietrich, and social psychologist Pablo Fernández Christlieb. The event will be held during the World Bike Forum in Medellín, Colombia, 26 February–1 March 2015.

*Critical Cities: Ideas, Knowledge and Agitation Volume 4* will be launched on Thursday 12 February 2015 at the Bishopsgate Institute in London. *Critical Cities* is edited by Deepa Naik and **Trenton Oldfield**, co-founders and organizers of 'This is not a Gateway', for book details see [www.myrdlecourtpress.net](http://www.myrdlecourtpress.net).

**Dr Susan Parham** (PhD 2009) received a special mention among the 279 entries for the 2014 Wolfson Economics Prize on How to Create a New Garden City, for her proposal (with Anthony Downs, Gascoyne Cecil Estates, Pablo Fernandez and Gavin Murray, Brooks Murray Architects): *How we would deliver a new Garden City which is visionary, economically viable, and popular*. Susan is Head of Urbanism at The Centre for Sustainable Communities, University of Hertfordshire.

**Max Pollock** (2012) works at a Baltimore-based nonprofit called Details that uses building deconstruction (rather than traditional demolition) to address the interrelated issues of vacancy and unemployment. In one recent project, Details deconstructed a block of 35 vacant rowhouses, creating 26 jobs for community members, diverting nearly 98% of waste from landfills and salvaging nearly 400 tons of reusable building materials. As part of the project, Max authors [baltimorebrickbybrick.com](http://baltimorebrickbybrick.com), a blog that redirects the "blight" narrative by focusing on the lives and histories attached to each vacant house.



Max Pollock leads walking tour of deconstructed rowhouses, image courtesy of Max Pollock.

**Sobia Rafiq** (2014) presented her Master's dissertation at the 'Young Social Innovators Conclave 2014', which was held at Mumbai's J.J. College on 10-11 October. The Conclave was organised jointly by UN-Habitat and the Narotam Sekhsaria Foundation to promote sustainable youth development in

India and brought together 50 young innovators who were selected from all over India with 50 experts from different fields, to share their cutting-edge initiatives and solutions, experiences and challenges in urban development. Sobia's project 'The Urbanisation of Waste' was amongst the four selected under the theme of Urban Planning. See Conclave [website](#).

**Sobia** has already begun working full-time as a Fellow at the 'Centre for Public Problem Solving' in Bangalore. It is an urban think tank which is a part of the 'Imagine Bangalore' initiative, currently working on issues related to the existing waste management system and deficits in the Bangalore master plan.

**Jeff Risom** (2009), partner at Gehl Architects in Copenhagen, is now Managing Director of Gehl Studio in the US. Jeff leads the San Francisco and New York based teams. In his time at Gehl, he has worked with public and private clients as well as non-governmental organizations in Europe, the USA, Latin America, India and China. He returns to the MSc City Design Studio each year as a guest practitioner. Jeff recently gave a TEDx talk at the World Bank, on [People first design](#).

**Alejandro Sajgalik** (2013) co-wrote and edited a book on the cultural and spatial impact of drones. As UAVs become streamlined devices for homeland security and consumer entertainment, the book explores vying presents and futures. *DRONE: Speculative Fictions in the Age of the Drone* was presented at the Dutch Electronic Art Festival in Rotterdam (2014) and was the upshot of the Networked Politics studio at Fabbrica in Treviso, Italy. Find out more: (<http://www.fabbrica.it/projects/drone>).

**Lindsey Scannapieco** (2010) of Scout, the urban design and development consultancy she co-founded with **Mat Triebner** (2010) was recently selected to redevelop the vacant Bok Technical High

School in South Philadelphia and transform this 340,000 square foot space into a new innovative centre for makers, creatives and entrepreneurs. The project was recently featured in the *Philadelphia Inquirer* by the Pulitzer Prize-winning architecture critic Inga Saffron: [Changing Skyline: Bringing Bok back.](#)

**Lindsey** was also recently named a 'Curbed Young Gun': from thousands of submissions, Lindsey was one of 10 people selected by a jury of leading design professionals. Curbed Young Guns aims to identify the most promising up-and-coming talent in the US in the fields of architecture, interior design, and urban development, whether they're a junior architect or draft person, interior design assistant or fearless head of a newly launched firm.

**Anna Bray Sharpin** (2013) is working as a specialist in non motorised mobility and road safety for the Institute of Transportation and Development Policy (ITDP) in Mexico City. She has a particular focus on developing public policy and legal frameworks to improve road safety for pedestrians and cyclists. In November 2014, the dissertation she prepared for her MSc, which investigated the impacts of Mexico City's institutional framework on pedestrian safety, was published in English and Spanish by ITDP. It is available for download on their website: <http://mexico.itdp.org/documentos/caminar/>



Mexican pedestrians, image courtesy of Anna Bray Sharpin.

**Dr Hyun Bang Shin** (2000), currently Associate Professor of Geography & Urban Studies at LSE, is to take part as invited speaker or session organiser/discussant in various academic events taking place in Manchester (February), Hong Kong (March), Chicago (April), Vancouver (May), and Seoul (May, October). His recent publications include a new book: Lees, Loretta, Shin, Hyun Bang and López-Morales, Ernesto (Eds.) (2015) [Global Gentrifications: Uneven Development and Displacement](#). Bristol: Policy Press.

In September 2014 **Claudia Sinatra** (2014) tutored for an International Design Workshop in Catania, and supervised - together with invited local and international architects - the one-week intensive project envisioning strategies of reuse for unfinished and abandoned public infrastructures - the so-called Sicilian Incompletion. This event was part of the on-going research 'Aretè: Abitare le rovine' on the reuse of modern and contemporary ruins in Catania, on which Claudia is collaborating together with the OAPPC Catania (the Italian ARB - Catania branch) and the association *Officina 21*.



Workshop in 'Le Ciminiere' - an industrial park converted into exhibition and event spaces. Image courtesy of Claudia Sinatra.

**Claudia** has been working as an urban designer at Space Agency - a London design and research practice whose work criss-crosses boundaries of graphic design, architecture and urbanism, focusing on space and user experience as a defining agent. There she has collaborated on an urban design competition led by

OMA envisioning strategies for Dubai's public realm regeneration.

In partnership with Puglia, Italy's Laboratorio dal Basso programme, **Giulia Toscani** (2013) organized a series of workshops to make cities more bike-able and liveable. The events, held in winter 2014, were for and led by young people working to improve quality of life and mobility in Italian cities. She invited **Magdalena Morel** and **Julia D Day** (2012) to lead sessions at the workshops (in Bari and Lecce) based on their experiences organizing for better urban mobility in Santiago and New York.



Cycling in Lecce, image courtesy of Giulia Toscani (left).

**Blaise Trigg-Smith** (2008) is in her second year at [Pocket Projects](#), the creative development consultancy which she co-founded with partner Karen Tan in Singapore. Pocket Projects focuses on creative redevelopment and adaptive reuse of Southeast Asia's heritage and underused places and spaces. They are currently working on two projects. The first, launched in December, is the adaptive reuse of an old 70s cinema building in Singapore into an independent cinema, events & art space, and artisan cafe. ([theprojector.sg](http://theprojector.sg)). The second, opening in the next few months, is The Row in Kuala Lumpur, a redevelopment of a row of 22 1940s shophouses into a 'creative enclave', hosting a mix of small

and creative businesses, F&B, independent retail outlets, events space and public green spaces in a refurbishment and extension of the original units. Website to launch soon!

[Ciudad Emergente](#), a collective practice co-founded in 2011 by **Javier Vergara Petrescu** (2009) and based in Santiago (Chile), is featured as an example of [Tactical Urbanisms for Latin America](#) in the exhibition [Uneven Growth, Tactical Urbanism for Expanding Megacities](#) at the New York Museum of Modern Arts, open until May 2015.

The project "[Recycling OkuPlaza](#)," commissioned by the National Council of Culture and Arts, was built in Valparaíso in January 2013. The starting point was the need for greater awareness and practice of recycling in the area. In a month, Ciudad Emergente collected more than 12,000 bottles with which a high-impact intervention was created in an important central space in the city. This under-utilised space was filled with life for a few days and the intervention helps to raise awareness about the problem and encouraged community members to share ideas about improving their environmental impact.



12,000 bottles...Valparaíso, image courtesy of Javier Vergara Petrescu.

## Faculty news

**Dr Günter Gassner** (PhD 2013) has been appointed Course Tutor in Sociology and City Design in the Sociology Department at LSE. He teaches on SO451 Cities by Design with **Professor Ricky Burdett** and leads the SO448 City Design Research Studio with **Dr David Madden** and **Professor Fran Tonkiss**.

**Günter** is setting up a research project to investigate the moral values and religious categories that shape speculative office developments in London in the aftermath of the global economic crisis. He is also organising a panel and presenting a paper at the 8th International Critical Theory Conference of Rome from 7 - 9 May 2015:

<http://luc.edu/rome/callforpapers/>.

Abstracts can be submitted until 28 February 2015.

**Dr Suzanne Hall** began her ESRC funded research project on 'Super-diverse streets' in January 2015 (ref: ES/L009560/1). Working with both an architectural and a social sciences researcher, the team will explore migrant spaces and economies on 'super-diverse' streets in Birmingham, Bradford, Manchester and Leicester.

**Suzi** participated in an invited visitorship at the University of Amsterdam in October 2014, co-sponsored by the Centre for Urban Studies and the Institute for Migration and Ethnicity Studies. She has published a chapter on 'Designing Public Space in Austerity Britain', in a forthcoming book on *Economy* edited by Juliet Odgers, Stephen Kite and Mhairi McVicar (Routledge, 2015).

In November 2014, **Fran Tonkiss** gave a public lecture on 'Divided cities: inequality and urban injustice' as part of the Alexander von Humboldt 2014-15 lecture series on Spatial Justice in the Department of Geography, Spatial Planning and Environment at the Radboud University of Nijmegen:

<http://www.ru.nl/gpm/koppeling/container-gpm/gpm-avh-lectures-2/>.

During her visit to Nijmegen, Fran also participated in a *Cultuur Café* evening session with graduate students, and a research workshop with faculty and doctoral researchers.

On 10 December, **Fran** took part in LSE London's debate and expert panel on Accelerating Residential Development in London, as part of the HEIF 5 project on Housing in London: Addressing the Supply Crisis.

**Fran** published a piece in Issue #5 of *cityscapes*, (African Centre for Cities in conjunction with Tau Tavengwa): [Ridding design of its saviour complex](#).

## LSE Cities news

**Dame Tessa Jowell** delivered her inaugural lecture 'Democracy, Decency and Devolution' at LSE on 8 December 2014, to mark her recent appointment as Professor of Practice with LSE Cities and the Department of Government.

The Urban Age Governing Urban Futures Conference, organised by LSE Cities and Deutsche Bank's Alfred Herrhausen Society, took place in Delhi on 14-15 November 2014. The conference explored the links between urban governance and our capacities to shape the future development of cities.

A new report on LSE Cities' activities from July 2012 to September 2014 was published in December. It includes extracts from LSE Cities publications and research, an overview of the public lecture and seminar programme, and information on projects, staff, advisers, governing board members and students.

The second LSE Cities Summer Executive Programme on London and Global Cities, will be held 29 June – 3 July 2015.



Philipp Rode at the first Summer Executive Programme 2014, image courtesy of LSE Cities.

For more on these stories and other news from the LSE Cities research centre, please see their website: [secities.net](http://secities.net).