Marthijn Pool

Marthijn Pool is a founding partner of Space & Matter, an architecture and urbanism office that is defining new development strategies at the intersection of online platforms and the built-environment. At their office in Amsterdam, we discussed how architectural practice can use digital tools to return the "right to the city" to its end-user.

How does using the Internet as a tool for organizing collective dwelling promote affordability and equity?

Architecture is still a niche product. I think we have more to offer, but how do we get it to the people that actually need it? We started thinking about flipping the system. Instead of the developer at the top of the food-chain, it should be the end-user, describing his demands, his budget, and the outcome that would be an optimum fit. With www.WeBuildHomes.nl, we took this idea and inverted the development chain. — product, process, equity, capital

If architecture is the custom-made suit, which is full of expensive R+D and prototypes, how can we make architecture available to normal people? It should be a suit that fits, provided in many sizes. We asked multiple architects to design multiple houses for different lifestyle budgets so we could build up a collection of pre-made architectural designs. We worked with a contractor to make them fit for execution, all on the pre-investment of our own time. Then, online, the end-user picks the home that fits her budget, lifestyle, and some aesthetic preference. Providing this custom-suit only works if we have lots of suits to make sure there is a 95% match for what she actually desires. — equity, product

We are taking high-cost, high-quality design, and selling it multiple times. We have Mecanoo and NL Architects providing designs, of which there more than a hundred. These are architects the average person would never be able to afford if the cost wasn't spread out over multiple sales. — product

How do the architects that work with you feel about this reframing of their work, from custom architecture to product design?

Of course, our architects are worried about becoming product designers—the thought gives them goosebumps. They say, "we need to know about the context; we need to know about the client." I say, yes, I agree, but if I know that I need to give the client 100 hours of my time to actually give him the design I would like to make, the project becomes too expensive and hits a dead-end for this specific lower market segment. If we accept the fact that we are independent of context, independent of client, but actually do provide the project that our client desires, then we have a project and a client that would otherwise not have access to architecture. — unsolicited, process, product, equity

How does this process allow for new modes of iteration, or real-world beta-testing?

In analogy to the App Store—WeBuildHomes is the App Store, Space & Matter is Apple, and the architects build the apps (or homes) that we sell. They upload their designs and we update them with user feedback. — process, product

Gerald Frug

Gerald Frug is the Louis D. Brandeis Professor of Law at Harvard Law School, where he teaches local government law and, we expect, illuminates its expansive implications for the stewardship of our cities. The author of two prescient books expounding this dependency of city-making on governance, City Making *and* City Bound: How States Stifle Urban Innovation, *Professor Frug's work and position is a unique resource for urban advocates seeking structural reform. He wonders why we (architects) don't talk about it. So do we.*

At the architecture school, and maybe architecture more broadly, there is something of a retreat from government, with a renewed focus on community. It's sort of a trope in our discipline that we should be rallying around the small scale. And on the other side, the right is retreating by treating government as a fee for service. Shouldn't we be interested in pursuing something in the middle?

The retreat from government is a very bad idea, for everybody. From the right, the retreat is spoken about using the work "market." From the left, it's spoken about with the word "community." And for the left, the word "community" is a warm and fuzzy idea. Everyone is getting together and making their own decisions. But it doesn't work that way. One of the puzzling things about planners and architects in recent decades is that they think they need to talk to the people of the community. We certainly want to hear from people in the community—it's not that we don't. But what about people outside that neighborhood who will also be affected? Why are they not part of the community? Where does the community begin and end? And who are these people? And what gives them the ability to represent the people in their neighborhood, let alone people outside of it? One thing that communities try to do is to keep everyone else out of the decision making process. — public, process, equity

It's interesting that going far enough left, in which this idea of community becomes so central, almost misses the fact that it's strong communities that lead to things like segregation. Once you start asking people in a neighborhood what they want, it might turn out they don't want people that are different from them. — equity

It might be the opposite, too. The structure of community doesn't tell us anything about which one it is.

Right, there's a neutrality. I wonder if public space, which you speak about often, might have in its spatial DNA a way to exist in the middle of these. Could you speak not just to its importance, but to ways in which we might conceive of the creation of public space through government? It's easy to conceive of public space that might bring different groups of people together, but ultimately it's very difficult to think of the ways in which they might be realized.

The way they might come to fruition is through an organization of spaces that are attractive and accessible to many kinds of people. One great thing about Central Park in New York is how many kinds of people

On the Ground

Contributors: DAVID LANGDON (M.Arch I, '18), MADELYNN RINGO (M.Arch I, '16), KEVIN HUANG (M.Arch I, '18), JAMES COLEMAN (M.Arch I, '18), BRIAN CASH (M.Arch I, '19), JEREMY JACINTH (M.Arch II, '18), MEGHAN ROYSTER (M.Arch I, '18)

9/10
FC YSOA won its first game last week 2-1 against "Liquorpool." JONATHAN MOLLOY (M.Arch I, '18) scored both goals, the second of which was won through a game of rock-paper-scissors. The team is now 2-0.

9/12
Students from the RUFF STUDIO attended The Color of Law, a book reception and panel at the Yale Law School. Panelist Bishop John Selders responded to a question regarding the balance between activism and actionable change: "It's not about Democrats or Republicans, it's about turning up."

9/12
The CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP had its first rooftop lunch meeting.The group meets weekly on Tuesdays for discussion, prayer, and, of course, fellowship.

9/13
EQUALITY IN DESIGN held two events last week: their first introductory lunch meeting and a pre-6/7 pizza party. Some came for the mingles, but most came for the munch. Their agenda for the semester includes a robust lineup of Brown Bag lunches, outreach initiatives, professional equity projects, curriculum engagement, and general activism.

9/15
The second CHICAGO ARCHITECTURE BIENNIAL, "Make New History" opened this past weekend. Quipping about the seeming return to a postmodern aesthetic, organizer Mark Lee asked, "Are we waking up from a parametric nightmare?" MADELYNN RINGO (M.Arch I, '16) notes the models were big and, on more than one occasion, furry and pink. Studio Gang opened its penthouse to YSoA alumni and faculty. JEREMY JACINTH (M.Arch II, '18) and ORLI HAKANOGLU (M.Arch I, '19) served as the official Paprika! correspondents. Their bulletin comes out 9/28.

9/15
DEBORAH BERKE and RICHARD DE FLUMERI were spotted at last week's 6/7. The theme? Paul Blart: Mall Cop. (Hope your desk stayed dry, Paul)

9/15
JAMES COLEMAN (M.Arch I, '18) announced yet another Brown Bag Lunch Series featuring PETER EISENMAN, KURT FORSTER, FRANK GEHRY, and MARIO CARPO. The discussions will begin this Thursday, September 21st at 1:00 in room 322 with "Brunelleschi + Rossi."

9/16
Congratulations JOYCE HSIANG and BIMAL MENDIS!

9/17
The third year class surprised the 6th floor denizens with warm cookies the midnight before their first review.

9/18
Upon returning empty-handed from the "Great Frame Giveaway" at the Yale University Art Gallery, JAMES COLEMAN (M.Arch I, '16) mumbled, "I think this might be a metaphor for my life, always rushing places only to find everything gone." YUAG staffers appeared dazed and confused in the aftermath: "They came like the locusts."

The GEHRY STUDIO has hit the ground running this semester. No sign of Gehry yet, but his studio has been to prison and back. Over the past two weeks, they spoke to a formerly-incarcerated best-selling author, a Yale Law school professor, the commissioner of the Connecticut Department of Corrections, and several members of the group Impact Justice.

After two months of negotiations, the administration finally agreed to let BRIAN CASH, DAN WHITCOMBE, JEN LAI, CHRISTOPHER TRITT, KATRINA YIN, and DAVID BRUCE, (all M.Arch I, '19) plant low-maintenance pollinator-friendly perennials in the top terrace planters. Take some time to stop and smell the echinacea.

9/19
In discussing the liabilities associated with Heatherwick's Hudson Yards sculpture/installation/architecture/?, PHIL BERNSTEIN told his Pro-Prac class "Damn straight there are life-safety concerns. Grandma could get killed on that thing."

The following are excerpts from longer conversations.
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Process / Product

The built environment is both a passive reflection of and an active instrument for societal beliefs, cultural agendas, economic pressures, and legislative powers. What we build is inevitably a translation of these influences, and therefore lacks the primacy of the system that afforded its construction. More important than the house is who owns it. More important than the public space is who has access to it. *Product* is unfailingly beholden to *Process*.

Despite its unique position to offer spatial solutions to problems of fundamental societal importance, architecture and its actors face a systemic reality in which work is perpetually imagined but rarely implemented. We are *dependent*—on money, law, and policy—and *subservient*—to ownership, budget, and external agendas.

So we have mastered what we can implement: *form, light, material, space*. Though immensely powerful, these first principles have proven limited in their capacity to effect expansive good, precisely because of their late entry into the conversation. We ask, then, what might be our next principles? We believe they lie among those processes that define architecture's possibilities: *platform, product, service, model, capital, law, policy, etc.* Here, in an expanded praxis of spatial potential, we believe architecture can find new utility in the public interest.

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Process / Product

Andy Bernheimer

Andy Bernheimer is an architect and a teacher. Assistant Professor and former Director of the Master of Architecture Program at Parsons the New School for Design and principal of his own firm, he has worked extensively on affordable housing projects, executing subtle and complex projects within the constraints of New York City construction practices. Providing tangible social impact in the city, he says, means honing an understanding of nearly immutable architectural constraints.

If we zoom out, what about addressing the urban policy that sets the stage for these realities? At the scale of urban policy, developers have to put together a collage of financing, but is that system itself worth questioning? Perhaps architects could be more apt at negotiating the system than the pro-forma? Would this level of policy be more effective for us to intervene?

I teach at a school that is highly focused on civic equity, but at times we get too deep into the policy side of things, how to make projects happen. And then architects, who tend to like to conduct processes, try to take on the role of not just designing the building, but [designing] a policy or a process that not only empowers us but makes things better for others. Do we become the politicians? The policy makers? We're professionally trained to design and make buildings. It's a question of "scope-creep." Is the architect the best person to do that?A few of us on faculty at Parsons sometimes get a little frustrated that when you go to a discussion with architects, it becomes an overarching conversation about how architects should be able to impact every part of the process. I'm an optimist, and idealist, and a bleeding-heart liberal, and I want us to do way more, but I'm also very skeptical about how much we can do.

process
possibilities
policy

On the policy side of things, we probably have a better chance of changing building code or zoning. Another thing I've been doing at Parsons, besides the housing work, is the use and deployment of mass timber. That's something that is driving me a little bit crazy. I feel like I'm trying to tear down a huge barrier. I've actually been talking with someone about trying to get the DOB or the city to allow us to build timber buildings that are lighter, go up faster, fireproof, safe, better for the environment, better for the dwellers, and better for the building industry long-term. I think that's where we can have impact on policy.

And that gives us design opportunity; it has dual benefit.If we can build out of more systems, then we have more possibilities for formal expression, still at the right budget. If you told a really talented architect to do a building out of block and plank for this price per square foot, I don't know that they would come up with something that is fundamentally different. It might be better composed or nicer looking, because they're better designers, but it's not going to be a fundamental change in the way that we use that material to make the building. But if there were three or four systems by which you could build it, and they would all be on budget, you would get a much more diverse formal language of housing, even knowing that the units are relatively prescriptive (largely because of stringent accessibility code).

possibilities
policy

How have you gone about interfacing with this as an issue? Where do you think the architect's place is in the conversation?

Phil Bernstein

Phil Bernstein is an architect, technologist, and thinker. Formerly a vice president at Autodesk, Inc. and an associate principal at Pelli Clarke Pelli Architects, Phil teaches "Architectural Practice and Management" and "Exploring New Value in Design Practice" at YSoA. As his students and eager interlocutors, we asked him about the possibilities for architects to redefine their own possibilities in search of a renewed efficacy in socially-minded practice.

How much pure building research is going on at Yale right now? The government invests almost nothing in building-related research funding. Billions and billions of dollars are spent on tech, health, military stuff, but the government spends 1/10 of 1% of its entire research budget on things related to the built environment. So there's no money there. And as we talked about, the building industry itself is completely calibrated around lowest first cost. There are zero incentives. I'm going to spend extra money, on a project that's highly speculative, for which at least for a lot of things like safety or building systems, there's a higher likelihood of failure – so why am I doing this?

possibilities
capital
policy

This is where our line of speculation always ends up. Is one of the answers that more of us should be politicians? How do we even interface with a problem like that?

If we're still moving to the left of the continuum here, as far left of the continuum has to do with policy, it's social policy. Whether you're a politician or whatever, these are the priorities that our society has established for whatever reason around issues related to the built environment. There's no NIH of the built environment.By virtue of contrast, look at the research and funding infrastructure of the medical school versus the architecture school. The places where it is happening are engineering schools and state schools where the construction management department is trying to figure out the best way to pump concrete.

possibilities
policy
public

It's true both in building technology and public policy, that most research done into things like affordable housing and subjects much more of a social nature are funded by non-governmental institutions like Goldman Sachs. In large part, our current society depends on private financial institutions to finance this stuff. And now Facebook and Google are getting into affordable housing. There's all this open space that's getting filled by people that aren't architects.

But it's also diletante-ish, right? I was just at Google in San Francisco a couple months ago, and they have this whole sustainable products research group that's building this giant worldwide index of the sustainable characteristics of building products. That started because Larry Page wanted his office renovated and he said somebody brought him a carpet sample and he asked someone, "Why does this carpet smell so bad? What are all these chemicals I'm smelling?" I admire the fact that he spent his money, got interested, pursued this question, and is benefitting the greater good – but is that really a systematic way to do this? Some rich guy is interested in it?

Bryan Boyer

Bryan Boyer is a cofounder of Dash Marshall, where he leads their strategic design work focused on social impact in American cities. Previously, he helped develop the Helsinki Design Lab and Makeshift Society Brooklyn. After graduating with an architecture degree, Bryan quickly learned it wasn't architecture he was in love with, but the relationship between humans, the institutions they create to organize themselves, and how those institutions relate to the tools they build.

Do you feel that in order for these new processes to take hold, they need material proof? Or is it enough just to have something to point at?

Just to clarify, you're asking if you have to build the building for the architecture to be done?

product

Yes…

I don't think so. Here's why. The Branch Libraries work and some subsequent work we've done for Civic Commons is really intended to create space for considering unknown alternatives. Those projects are meant to be delivered in a way that is just a little bit beyond the status quo, and it's a tricky balance to strike where we want stuff to feel different enough that the viewer or the reader perks up and says "Hey, I don't recognize this," but not so distant so that they can discount it and say that it's science fiction. So that's why with the library project and the civic commons film, you see a concern with more than just, "Hey it would be great if libraries could hover off the ground and create space for a market below and have an interesting green roof!" It's also about the way that collaborations between institutions snowball up to allowing those kinds of new things to happen. It's not just the what, it's also the how.

possibilities
process

To use the library project as an example, we created what I think of as a slow film, which is basically a narrated slideshow, which one of my colleagues presented at the forum that was organized at the end of that project. We also created a newspaper that was essentially a summary of the presentation. One of my colleagues, Landon Brown, was doing a project for Toshiko Mori with the Brooklyn Public Library, and was visiting one of the directors there and saw in her office a stack of our newspapers. So the way that I think about the work is that we're trying to create a media experience, some artifacts, some tools in the most basic sense, to give people the confidence to do something different tomorrow than what they did yesterday. And from that perspective, I don't think you have to build any of the buildings that we have in the proposal or even make the t-shirts that are in there. I think those are more indications of a direction, closer to a master plan than an architectural plan. That being said, would we like to build some of that stuff? Absolutely. And if we are given the opportunity, or somehow manifest the opportunity to do that, we would take the work that you see in the libraries project as the brief, the terminus of that project becomes the beginning of a new design project. The same way you would interrogate the brief for a studio project, we would take the assumptions and givens that came out of that film, and turn them on their head again and start over.

possibilities
process
product

product

You're almost defining the rules for other architects —

The following are excerpts from longer conversations.
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Vishaan Chakrabarti

Vishaan Chakrabarti is the founder of PAU (Partnership for Architecture and Urbanism). He is an Associate Professor of Practice at Columbia GSAPP and the author of the acclaimed book, A Country of Cities: A Manifesto for an Urban America. *Although Vishaan has worked at the highest levels of development and real estate, as President of Moynihan Station Venture and Director of the Manhattan Office for the New York Department of City Planning, running a "die-hard architecture practice" is exactly where he wants to be. Social impact and the art of building, he says, are inevitably intertwined.*

Over the past ten to fifteen years, we've seen management consultants, financial consultants, larger banks even, that are dabbling in architecture and planning itself. So, what are the levers you've pulled to make yourself valuable?

You can think about it by trying to translate how we think about beauty and form to how doctors think about their work: two surgeons, alone having a drink, may talk about things that are highly specific to their field. But, if they are talking to a politician about healthcare reform, they are not talking about how to make an incision, right? It doesn't mean that the surgery isn't important. It's just that there are different topics at different layers that you need for different audiences.

public

How do you toggle between those layers? Professionals in all disciplines tend to work in verticals. We're pursuing a project and maybe we've got a client with us, maybe they've hired an attorney, they've got a vertical of their project. It's a big project and they need to get that done and it needs to get approved by city government. The person they are going to meet with on Tuesday at 4 o'clock who works for city government--and I feel like I've really learned this from having been on different sides of the table--they are actually thinking in horizontals. They are operating in a world where they are going from meeting to meeting trying to thread together a comprehensive agenda. These people that you are meeting with when you are getting project approved —they are looking at the entire city. If you haven't read the newspaper and don't understand that maybe a site two doors down from your site had a huge infrastructure problem, or just had a big political scandal erupt around it, so that community is all fired up... if you think it's just that your project is the greatest thing since sliced bread, you are going to fail in that meeting. You didn't understand the horizontal context; all you were concerned with is the vertical of your project.

the city

I'm not saying you have to pick one or the other; I'm saying you've got to do both. I think the field is more challenging today, not less. If you are trying to do the kind of work that we're doing at PAU, you have to be a Swiss army knife: you've got to be this person who can operate really well in the vertical—in terms of beauty and form, material, construction —and in the horizontal—the politics, including the social, economic, and racial concerns. These things cut across society in all sorts of ways. You've got to operate on both axes all the time.

process
product

Once the work has been done to establish a project, do you think there becomes an intrinsic relationship between the frame and the product? To take the Indian Museum of [illegible] as an example, do you think these couldn't be

John Pontillo

John Pontillo is an associate at FSG, a social-impact consulting firm. After graduating from Swarthmore College, John served as a Peace Corps volunteer in Moatize, Mozambique, where he did work in disease prevention through clinics and construction projects (employing members of his soccer team to install mosquito nets on every house in his village). Although he might change his mind at breakfast tomorrow, he hopes to work towards producing social equity through policy. He says he may need an architect.

The first is called Collective Impact: if you want to effect social change, the most effective and sustainable way to do so is through an aggregation and [alignment] of all social entities in a given area. For example, if you have a lower than average high school graduation rate, you should engage not only the school, but athletics, arts, churches, youth groups, parents, [and] PTAs to align them on overarching goals, share data, convene and foster collaboration, and collect those resources to push in the desired direction.

process
possibilities
equity
public

The other is called Shared Value: creating *social* impact and value and creating *business* impact and value are not mutually exclusive. CSR (corporate social responsibility) is very popular with corporations that make billions of dollars and are presences in our daily lives (like Unilever, Nike, etc.). They have so much money and they want to show that they care about the communities in which they work. They have foundations that take a small percentage of what they make and put it towards social impact. A lot of companies will sponsor a walk or a run or a beach clean-up, give away things, or run a recycling campaign. They're siloed, one-off projects that tend not to be sustainable. We try to work with these corporations to link a social challenge with a business opportunity, with the intention of making it profitable. At that point, it's no longer CSR—you're creating sustainable social impact incentivized by its profit.

capital
equity

Do any of these projects interface with the built environment?

I think the project in Brazil does. We were working with a large wood pulp company that at its inception, cut down forests, and planted expansive eucalyptus forests. When this occurred in the 60s and 70s in Brazil, there were still large communities of indigenous people living in rural places as well as isolated communities called *Quilombolas*—descendants of African slaves who escaped from plantations and set up their own societies in isolated areas. They were pushed off their land, and, eventually, there were attempts to defend their rights, and a demand for retribution. There were acts of retaliation, whereby some people in these communities set fire to forests or stole wood. They were reacting to the fact that their homes were destroyed, never to be replaced. The eucalyptus forests are known as "green deserts" in some of these areas because of the perception that nothing else can grow there. They were not given an opportunity to thrive on the land they had inhabited for a long time.

When we got involved, the company was already pretty far along towards Shared Value. We did data analysis to promote the fact that if they could increase the number of people living around the eucalyptus

Anika Singh Lemar

Anika Singh Lemar is a Clinical Associate Professor at Yale Law School. She teaches the Community and Economic Development clinic (CED), which provides transactional legal services to organizations seeking to advance economic opportunity. CED's clients include affordable housing developers, community development financial institutions, farms and farmer's markets, fair housing advocates, and neighborhood associations. We went in eager to understand her interface with architects, we left with a job. YSOA, Anika wants to meet you.

Civil rights proponents in education have seen their fight reach the highest level of law, through the landmark Brown v. Board of Education (1954) case. The highest-level decision housing advocates have received was the Mount Laurel doctrine (New Jersey Supreme Court, 1975). Do you see prospects for change at the federal level that will effectuate fair housing beyond the scale of city zoning policy?

Most groups that I work with are singularly focused on building affordable housing. However, there are two problems at play here that are the result of longstanding racist federal policy: one is where people live today, and the other is the location of wealth.

the city
equity

The accumulation of affordable housing doesn't do anything for the accumulation of wealth. I might prefer to live in Guilford rather than New Haven with my Section 8 voucher, but merely living in Guilford is not going to allow me to accumulate the home equity that leads to wealth. You are still renting, and even if you are living in affordable home-ownership, your ability to make any equity is often limited to 5% per year.

Then, on the affordable housing piece, we just have less and less subsidized housing over time. Even if you want for people to live in a place like Guilford, on the assumption that their kids are going to Guilford schools, and will therefore be more likely to succeed later in life —that alone is proving more difficult. [Living in a place like Guilford] does not let people accumulate wealth, but it does allow them to accumulate some non-cash resources that are going to be very helpful later. But, even then, you are only able to help a small number of people.

the city
equity

If I see optimism, it is in these budding YIMBY movements, and a generation of people [who] are willing to talk about race. I find more and more people [who] are willing to say, "diversity isn't just something that I'd like my kids to have in college." I don't know why magically, when they turn 18, diversity becomes important.

possibilities
the city
equity

Legal scholars have always struggled with the prevalence of NIMBY, because it is never going to be in anyone's interest to show up at 9:00pm to be for something. But, today, you do see some people showing up at 9 pm to be for something. A little.

I think the affordable housing fight is really important. But, I do think there is a cultural shift that is going to happen in addition to these policy decisions that may be more important.

possibilities
the city

Rory Hyde

Rory Hyde is a designer, curator and writer based in London. His most recent book, Future Practice: Conversations on the Edge of Architecture *is a comprehensive and provocative look at alternative modes of architectural practice. He is Curator of Contemporary Architecture and Urbanism at the Victoria and Albert Museum and Design Advocate for the Mayor of London. In his upcoming book,* How to Make the Next City, *he responds to present challenges to architecture's public relevance. Rory was kind enough to give us a sneak peak.*

How do you imagine increasingly-decentralized labor practices affecting the landscape of spaces in the city?

What set me off in this direction was that I was giving a lecture at a conference about livable cities. I was doing an interview, and somebody asked me, "What are the key things for livable cities?" I gave them the Copenhagen-style, good urban practice checklist: density, bike lanes, walk-ability, etc. After I started doing the work and putting the talk together, I realized, all these things are predicated on commuting! On the fact that your workplace is going to be distinct from your home, and that the city is divided up along these lines of commercial center and suburban perimeter.

the city
possibilities

Still, the mainstream thinking around architecture and planning is that sprawl is bad and it is going to drag us all under, and that density is good, and all the rest. But, actually, paradoxically, are the suburbs the future? Is the future really about density, or is that just what architects want? How do we respect what the public wants—their own free-standing home, their own land—and reconcile that with issues of sustainability and public service? It's trying to tackle some of the sacred cows, I guess, and ask why we think they're the answer. If we can decouple where we work from where are, do we end up with a whole new typology where actually suburbia becomes the model? It's a place with a bit more room for experimentation, with ambiguous, baggy space in-between buildings for testing new ideas; the future might lie in retrofitting suburbia to have some more of the characteristics that allow us to live, work, learn, look after each other, and develop new businesses.

the city
possibilities

possibilities
product

Using this premise of "retrofitting suburbia" as an example, what ways forward do you see for architects to make these ideas actionable?

That's why I am so interested in practice. To me, alternative, diverse forms of practice are the ways we can address questions like this one. Today, the architect puts up a sign and waits for the phone to ring, or enters a competition, or take a tender. That model is only successful within a certain bandwidth. It is much more successful within urban centers, at the upper end of the economic spectrum. So, we've got one tool which will address a particular range of problems. To address the suburbs, we need a different kind of tool.

process
the city
capital

To learn from other models, it might be that the architect that can work in that context is more like a general practitioner—like a local doctor. Instead of seeing ten clients a year, you might see ten clients a day. You might be dishing out very small spatial prescriptions to adapt that context into being more efficient economically or socially. So, inside of a shared work-space at the scale of these neighborhoods, I imagine a "general practitioner architect" who is charging one hour at a time, sitting down with a thick black pen and providing advice to ten people a day.

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