PUBLIC & THEIR PROB- -LEMS

EDITORIAL:

In conjunction with Professor Saskia Sassen's lecture at the Yale School of Architecture, this issue of Paprika takes a close look at the roles played by art and architecture in the evolution, definition, construction, and occupation of spaces, places, and groups considered to be "public." In light of what Jonathan Crary has described as the "widespread depreciation and disparagement of the 'brick and mortar' world"—and of Sassen's own recent work in exposition on the various "socioeconomic and environmental dislocations" characterizing the contemporary geopolitical landscape—the concepts of physical territory and built form achieve new prominence as essential to the reclamation and reconstruction of a truly public realm. Recent advances in digital networking technology and social media have granted us unprecedented capacity for communication and connection, but despite our access to such tools, the new types of association they provide remain remote and indirect. This condition is neither inevitable, nor necessary. As artists and architects—as people invested, both personally and professionally, in the betterment and sustenance of the built environment, of the city, the neighborhood, and the community—should we not take stock of our work's potential to help bring publics into being? As builders, is it not our role to make visible, and thereby to empower, otherwise illegible public formations?

Surry Schlabs

"We will need more, **much more** ...
multiple vectors ...

FOLD №

09

$0.00   10/8/2015

ON THE GROUND:

193 Winthrop Avenue, New Haven
Yale Building Project 2015

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please visit
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or drop by for
a copy!

G. 9.2
Combining the histories of monument and diplomacy, LUCIA ALLAIS illuminates the legislation of global heritage in her lecture "Designs of Destruction" during the J. Irwin Miller Symposium by the weaving together of bureaucracy, construction, and identity.

H. 10.2
Friday's keynote lecture by PETER SLOTERDIJK proceeded at a decidedly slower pace than the day's previous presentations, eschewing TED-talk style rapidity in favor of a thoughtful, more deliberate narrative, and compelling listeners to meet Sloterdijk "where he was." His talk addressed our shifting understanding of the globe's physical nature, tracking humanity's metaphysical understanding the earth as an object, beginning with the ancient Greeks and ending in the present day. The tenor of his presentation was summed up at the end of his lecture. He sat in front of Hastings to present an indiscernible image in a book, unsure of how to project it on screen, so instead inviting those interested to come closer to take a look.

I. 10.3
HASHIM SARKIS, Dean of MIT's School of Architecture and Planning, delivered the closing lecture at the City of 7 Billion symposium, calling for a return in architectural thinking to physical geography, not just social geography. He covered a wide range of work, including that of Shakespeare, Le Corbusier, Mies van der Rohe, Enric Miralles, and Bruno Latour. His carefully constructed lecture was a thoughtful response to the many voices heard during the course of the symposium. It integrated the many disciplines that create a "Constructed World," including anthropology, philosophy, economics, oceanography, landscape, cartography, urban planning, and geology. He beautifully wove all these threads back into architecture. Starting with a quote from Shakespeare, a meditation on space 'in a nutshell,' he located the origin of space, as such, at the horizon, from which it moves out into the landscape, there engaging the ground, from where it forms the architectural object. He ended with the thought that, in a nutshell, there is 'an infinite space of action for architecture to explore.'

J. 10.4
ELIA ZENGHELIS' advanced studio returned late Sunday night, exhausted from seven days in Athens and Thessaloniki, the cultural capital of Greece. The studio worked hard during the day, meeting with local architects and presenting their preliminary research on three occasions, including at Thessaloniki City Hall. By night, the studio went Greek: that is, often eating dinner at nearly midnight, followed by a nightcap with Elia and his wife, architect ELENI GIGANTES. A highlight of the trip was a tour of the Athenian Acropolis and ancient agora, led by assistant professor of architecture PANAYOTIS TOURNIKIOTIS from the National Technical University of Athens. As we contemplated the Pnyx Hill and Pericles' Speaker's Platform, the seat of ancient Athenian democracy, Tournikiotis recalled, "this was my playground as a child. I never knew it was a special place. Let's climb."

K. 10.5
It was announced by TONI HARP (MED) at the reception for the 27th Building Project house—at 193 Winthrop Ave.— in New Haven—that JAN LEWIS, an active member of the West River neighborhood and an employee at Yale New Haven Hospital, plans to buy the house and live there with her daughter. Thankful that students "got the roof right," ROBERT STERN emphasized that the 1,300 SF house was built at half the cost of previous projects. Constructed for less than $100/SF (not counting the more than $180,000 of free materials, or the cost of the students labor), the new owner will be purchasing it for $155,000. Surveying the reveals of her new bedroom, she wondered whether Yale would get around to installing baseboard.

L. 10.5
"Architecture today is not about building, it is about assembling," suggested ROBERT STERN in his seminar Parallel Moderns, talking not about the architects of the lecture—but THOMAS HEATHERWICK, and how he follows Dutch Architect HENDRIK PETRUS BERLAGE, who in his Amsterdam Stock Exchange integrated steel and masonry into a tectonic whole.

M. 10.6
A common theme emerged as students from the PORPHYRIOS, ZENGHELIS, and EISENMAN studios shared experiences from their travels: the pace of walking tours through the studios' respective cities was slowed, one by the professor's demeanor, two by the professor's age.

Some times, to re-launch a career, you need to retire: SEAN GRIFFITHS, CHARLES HOLLAND, and SAM JACOB, the principles of the ostensibly-dissolved London based firm, FAT, will be returning to Yale for a (final?) curtain call, replacing DEBORAH BERKE as advanced critics next semester, joining an already stacked lineup which includes FRANK GEHRY, ZAHA HADID, and WOLF PRIX.

A. 9.28
In a non stop tech-tour of San Francisco, studio WEISS MANFREDI saw IDEO's latest innovation: a new type of nail polish brush.

B. 9.29
"Beauty is a forbidden word in architecture," protested DEMETRI PORPHYRIOS as he encouraged his studio to work its way through medieval cities they had spent the previous month 3d modeling, after all, "you cannot be inspired by a text, unless you know the text by heart."

C. 9.29
In the Kielder Forest just south of Scotland, studio SUNIL BALD took one lane roads deep into the UK's largest timber farm to see the darkest sky in Europe.

D. 9.30
Based in Florence, studio EISENMAN took a 3.5 hour trip to Arezzo—both ways—to see a single Piero della Francesca painting. The next day included an equally long trip and brief stop in Urbino.

E. 9.30
During class this week, in a discussion about Philibert De L'orme's Trompe at Anet, NATE HUME tells students that architects are constantly trying to prove their value by making things impossible.

F. 10.1
THE CITY OF 7 BILLION presents a densely layered, radically geocentric view of the human experience on planet earth, proposing from both extra- and intra-terrestrial perspectives questions of what it means to live and to create on this pale marble of blue.

SU. 04   J

MO. 28   A

TU. 29   B C

WE. 30   D E

TH. 01   F

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LESBOS
THE POSSIBILITIES OF AN ISLAND
Daphne Agosin & Gregory Cartelli

The word *island* comes from the Latin word *insula* and the old French word *isle*—the meanings behind which refer to the idea of detachment and formlessness. The defining characteristics of an island appear to be "*smallness*" and "*remoteness*."

There is a sense of freedom in the idea of an Island, apart from the world, surrounded if not moved by the tidal flows and currents of the ocean, unshaken by the tectonic frictions of continents and countries. The clearly defined edges of islands sustain specific identities and create a mythological allure for the rest of the world. Lesbos, our island in case, is a place of unique identity. The 2008 publication "Walking Trails of Lesvos" outlines eighteen routes through and around the island, encompassing national parks, heritage sites, byzantine churches, Sapphic tourist destinations, resorts, and beaches. However, in light of recent events, there may need to be a new path added.

Six miles off the western coast of Turkey, the northernmost shore of the island of Lesbos has been the point of arrival for a growing number of refugees and migrants since at least 2009. Among this group are Syrians, Afghanis, Iraqis, and others, and in 2015 alone, roughly 164,000 displaced people have arrived here, far outnumbering the nearly 80,000 tourists who visit Lesbos each year. Their journey doesn't end at the beach, however, as these migrants are then forced to make their way, on foot, twenty-five miles south to the island's only processing center in Mytilene.

Thus has the touristic imaginary of Lesbos been compromised. No longer a place apart, a paradisiacal setting; no more the longed-for peaceful abode, surrounded by deafening ocean. Perhaps the image of this place has always been an illusion, constructed by guest and host alike. The island's international marketing has long made note of its remote location relative to other islands, such as Mykonos or Santorini. Lesbos is "more than just another Greek island,"

we are told, remaining "virtually unaffected by mass tourism." The island's petrified forest, its wetlands, castles, mosques, churches, and beaches all make the case for Lesbos's exceptionality as a non-traditional tourist destination, and in 2009 it was awarded a "European Destination of ExcelleNce" (EDEN) award, its cultural heritage protected by national legislation, its economy both self-sustaining and locally managed.

This year the island has been both terminal and terminus for a new group of arrivals. Souvenir sales have dropped in parallel with a decline in tourism, while camping equipment continues to fly off the shelves. Will the forces of capital respond to this bottleneck in global urban migration, shifting the Lesbian economy into line with the needs of the island's new guests? In this potential future, how will a culture built on hospitality respond to this new economic necessity? Its identity born, in part, from isolation, can Lesbos evolve into something different, an immigration portal in both identity and use, a front door, as it were, to Europe?

Local resident responses to the influx of refugees range from the sympathetic and compassionate to the fearful and conflicted. Some see little more than a shift in client base—where once there were tourists, now stands the International Rescue Committee. Others simply struggle to make do in the face of cancelled reservations. Local sympathy for the plight of the migrants may be due to the island's own diversity of historical and cultural identity, having fallen, at one point or another, under Persian, Genoese, Roman, Turkish, and Greek control. Still, the island's micro-economy struggles with the physical and practical realities of its own fragility. Operational and waste-collection services are overburdened, new refugee processing centers have yet to be built, and more buses are desperately needed to move the island's growing population around.

The authorities of Lesbos have made official calls to the EU for help, appealing for material support in line with the trans-European policies they now struggle to follow. The "1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees," like the resolutions adopted in 1967 in the spirit of that protocol, make clear the rights of refugees to non-discrimination, non-penalization and *non-refoulement*—the prohibition of expulsion. Although assembled in good faith, this document fails to take stock of the socio-spatial realities of contemporary Europe. Whereas before the European Union, the "*the Contracting State in whose territory (the refugee) is residing*"—that is, the signatory state where a refugee happened to land—was considered to be responsible for the provision of all guaranties and protections under the convention, today that burden falls on the weakened economies of the EU's southernmost member states, which serve as the Union's physical gateways.

Heritage in Lesbos is a palimpsest of diverse cultural fluxes across and throughout history. Today, the state of the *displaced* is one of precarious street life, insalubrious refugee camps, and a complex culture of mutual distrust. An effective, and rapid, socio-spatial reconfiguration is demanded of this small island. What architectural dispositions might address the momentary reality in which the diverse-but-particular community of contemporary Lesbos—one comprised of residents, refugees, tourists, and volunteers—is immersed?

Statue of Liberty, Mytilene
Μιχαήλ Δελγγιάννηης

Church Creative Stall, Noun Project *Trees* Zlatko Najdenovski, Noun Project
Passports TukTuk Design, Noun Project *Refugees* Jason Dilworth, Noun Project
Martini Glass Philip Glenn, Noun Project *Ruins* Creative Stall, Noun Project
Theater Role Play, Noun Project *Mosque* Oliver P Wilson, Noun Project

REGISTRATION CENTER
POLICE/AID
REFUGEE CAMP
NATURAL PARK
BEACH
CHURCH
MOSQUE
ANCIENT SITE
WINDMILL/SHAKER
FREE WIFI
TAKE ME TO EUROPE
PORT
AIRPORT
INJURED CHILDREN HOSPITAL

PITY IN PINK
3 DAYS, 3 PUBLICS
THE STATE OF THE ART OF ARCHITECTURE AT THE CHICAGO BIENNIAL

Daniel Glick-Unterman & Misha Semenov

Pearl Ho

"You fuck this up and you'll set Chicago architecture back for years."

—Stanley Tigerman (M.Arch '61) to Sarah Herda, co-director of the 2015 Chicago Architecture Biennial

This weekend, correspondents Daniel Glick-Unterman and Misha Semenov traveled to Chicago to represent PAPRIKA! at the opening preview weekend of the Architecture Biennial, an enormous event that brought more than a hundred architecture firms together around the loosely-defined

In India, one rape occurs every twenty two minutes.

Many of us were raised to have a certain respect for the man-made landscape, seeing in the built environment a neutral canvas, a place for us all to sketch out the contours of our common existence. But this environment is no tabula rasa; it is a socially constructed entity which both inherits and embodies the qualities of gender, race, and class relations in society. Architecture, in particular, is the stone cold record of the ebb and flow of social, political and economic forces beyond our immediate control. The city, then, stands as a material expression of that power, baked into rigid form, translated into cookie-cutter grids. In India, and places like it, physical violence often becomes the unwritten grammar fixing structure to this urban landscape. And misogynistic violence, in particular, thrives in those places where the lack of infrastructure has been married to a certain seedy, smug complacency, thus comprising the dysfunctional logic of the modern city.

It can be difficult to understand, and even harder to reveal, the complex network of power relations underpinning the thriving culture of rape and violence against women in India. Perhaps it is time, then, that we, as architects, address those facets of the problem we can hope to understand: the deeply ingrained, distinctly spatial dimensions of women's struggles today. Keller Easterling has urged architects to think of space as a medium, a powerful instrument of human ingenuity, capable of being deployed against even the world's most intransigent challenges. If, as Anthony Vidler says, architecture is frozen history, then surely those of us who build have the power to construct something new, and good, for society.

On December 16, 2012, Jiyoti Singh, a 23-year old medical student, was fatally gang raped by six men with a metal pipe on a moving bus.

The bus which captured Jiyoti Singh that night must be understood as more than a neutral instrument of public transportation—it is a vehicle of accentuated masculine power. Indeed, this bus exemplifies how apparently benign miscalculations in auto-centric planning often have their costs measured not in dollars, but in human lives. One devastatingly impactful component of contemporary urban infrastructure in New Delhi, for instance, is the Ring Road—an enormous beltway encircling the city. While more than an especially efficient automotive transportation network, this non-stop infrastructural switch allows traffic to pass, unimpeded, through vast stretches of some of New Delhi's most impoverished neighborhoods, without so much as a traffic light, without having to stop, without ever being seen. K.T. Ravindaran, former head of the New Delhi School of Planning and Architecture, has noted that "One of the most common places of rape in Delhi is a moving vehicle...They can just go on until the fuel runs out." The construction of bridges and overpasses along major roadways has gradually eliminated the need for traffic lights, steadily increasing the speed of urban vehicular traffic over the last decade. These apparently benign infrastructural updates have produced a parallel surge in crimes.

In India, one rape occurs every twenty two minutes.

We often hear architects, in both the profession and the academy, pontificate on our moral responsibility, as stewards of the built environment, to facilitate positive social change. In the wake of famine, flood, and earthquake, architects are quick to embrace this responsibility, offering their expertise in the service of those millions left behind by natural disaster and tragedy. What, then, of social disaster? What of cultural tragedy? Are the countless victims of rape and abuse somehow less worthy of our professional attention? Is this not a call to action?

While correlation does not necessarily imply causation—and while the culture of rape and sexual assault is far too pervasive to be remedied through basic infrastructural improvements—a clear relationship between the lack of basic infrastructure in many parts of India and the perpetuation of violence against women and girls suggests a spatial component to this admittedly much larger problem, one which can and should be addressed, not only by governments, but by all of us with a stake in maintaining a safe and free built environment, in the perpetuation of a public sphere. It is, however, jarringly clear that India's cities are failing the country's women. That failure is structural. In order to remedy this, new infrastructural systems must be fundamentally rooted in feminism, broadly understood to include the spatial and material—indeed the public-support structure and facilitation of equality for women. Feminism must be cast into our cities' infrastructure.

Hundreds of thousands of women and girls across India risk the daily threat of rape and assault, in both urban slums and rural areas, due in part to their communities' lack of basic sanitation infrastructure, the likes of which are taken for granted throughout much of the west. Many girls wait until dark before they head out, ashamed to be seen in the daylight. UNICEF has reported that in 2011 alone, 10.6 percent of rape victims were under the age of 14. Indian government statistics suggest that 51% of unrecognized slums and 17% of recognized slums are entirely without latrines.

On the evening of May 28, 2014, a 14 year-old schoolgirl and her 15 year-old cousin accompanied each other to a field a mile away from their house to relieve themselves. There are no toilets at their home in Uttar Pradesh. The next day, they were found hanging from a rope in a mango tree.

Committed on and along India's motorways—the most dire of which being violent assault against women trapped in cars, trucks, and buses.

In India, one rape occurs every twenty two minutes.

NO 1979

NO 12

NO 609

CHARLES KANE

Charles Kane's elegant series of [...]
compositions were based on the [...]
visit to the former Winchester [...]
factory, here in New Haven. The [...]
ings' titles do not denote the [...]
completion, however. Rather, [...]
objects, groups, and moments [...]
when taken together, compri[...]
understanding this specific [...]
history of labor relation[...]
is, they allude to the co[...]
dissolution—of a particul[...]
in public.

ON HIP-HOP

Wesley Hiatt

"$100,000 for that little sound—and I'm like, 'Come on! Where's the love at?' I'll just play it my damn self."
— J Dilla, 2003

New York City, 1975—A Disco DJ cuts back and forth between tracks to keep a crowd moving. Techniques developed as means of shifting between records quickly evolves into a form of music very much its own. This music marries DJs, working with increasingly vast and varied libraries of vinyl records, to the rhymes and exclamations of rappers, or MC's, the public faces and spokesmen of the city's emergent Rap scene.

Such is one of Hip-Hop's many creation myths. While I'm confident this music needs no introduction, I'd like to position the aesthetics of Hip-Hop alongside some of the architecture commonly associated with this very moment in time, that is, the architecture of Postmodernism. To do this, in part, to redeem a school of architectural thinking too long absent from thoughtful, critical discussion, an absence which persists, I believe, despite what certain ostensibly hip, but ultimately unthinking, design blogs and magazines have heralded as the new "PoMo Revival." Emerging from a very specific American—the rejection of cultural tendencies broadly understood in terms of the postmodern: formal and visual appropriation, the rejection of conventional notions of authorship, a newfound access to popular historicist artifacts put to use in the service of unabashedly pluralist performance. Of particular interest here is the common Hi-pHop production technique known as *sampling.*

By *sampling* I refer to an artist's act of appropriating a piece of recorded aural, not original to the work of that artist, self-consciously appropriated from others, and combined with additional artistic creation. One familiar example of this technique would be Kanye West's use of Ray Charles' *I Got a Woman* in his popular hit *Gold Digger.* Other, perhaps more exemplary—and certainly more fundamental element of any public form—production—rapping (MC-ing), turntablism. Indeed, the various forms of Hip-Hop are born, and survive, well outside of modern art's foundational institutions, in commodified, singular objects, but also by way of its relationship to the public. I mean a range of constituent places inextricable from generous notions of the public: the corner, the nightclub, the car, the ball court, the street.

Architecture's unique and long-lived presence on the public street insists on a certain type of encounter, if not thorough engagement, with the public, providing the members of that public an opportunity for direct resistance, or willful ambivalence vis-à-vis cultural, social and political mores. It is in this dual capacity for encounter and resistance that Postmodernist architecture's appropriation and reuse of history both requires and is enabled by a public sympathetic to that history—a shared heritage, in order to be put to work. A sampled architecture engages the aspirations, values, and history of its public, while nonetheless remaining critical of them, thus resisting the forces of capital which might otherwise serve to restrict its appreciation to the moneyed, landed classes; or worse, to enforce a cultural apathy in architectural design in the interest of easy commodification.

Modern traditions—traditions favoring, above all, the twin concepts of original-ity and singular genius.' Indeed, in eschewing explicit reference to previous work by others, Hip-Hop producers and musicians make appropriation of the old a veritable precondition of the new. In my view, this notion might, without too much of a stretch, readily be applied to a school of Postmodern architecture, thereby raising important questions about the production and criticism of architecture today.

One such question regards architecture's relationship to capital. Reading Postmodernism in terms of Hip-Hop's culture of sampling might even free it from the common critique that would align its values with those global capitalism. Aside from creating new work by way of appropriating the old, sampling encourages the continued making of art through precisely these means. Denying the possibility of commodification, the free sampling of history results in works which constantly build on themselves, valuing process, temporality, and change over singular, salable objects. Such a definition, of course, would seem to refute the common argument, posited by Kenneth Frampton and others, that Postmodernism reduces the whole of architectural history to a series of easily consumable, commodifiable, singular objects, comprising a certain world view.

Seen in this way, the various arts associated with this brand of postmodern aesthetics, far from being tools, or instruments, of capital, might in fact serve as sites of resistance to it. Viewed through the cultural lens of Hip-hop and sampling, architecture has potential to be one of the most effective sites of such resistance, due in part to its stubborn denial of commodifiable, singular objects, by way of its relationship to the public.
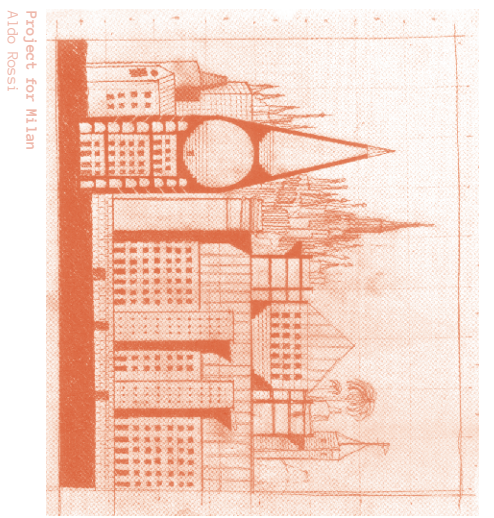
of copyright infringement, despite the "original artists' approval of the mash-up.' Impossibly expensive use rights for samples also prove to be a constant frustration for many Hip-Hop artists. To wit, see J Dilla, above. We should be thankful that no similar situation existed to stop Rossi from appropriating the image of Plečnik's done in Ljubljana for his project in Milan.

A public that views its history not as a stagnant document of long-past words and deeds, but as something to be put to work—to be shared in a creative commons, reused, willfully misappropriated, and sampled—can and must resist the forces serving to stall and bankrupt creative culture, in the interest of a culture based on proceeds and profit. Not merely a fad to be consumed, Postmodernist architecture's enduring value will be found in its aspirations for meaningful engagement in the public sphere, an engagement which takes stock not only of form and space, but of time and place, too. It heralds a living architectural tradition which, like Hip-Hop, constructs its future through public engagement with its past.

Footnotes:

1 "Dilla Interview 2003 Part1 Of 4". YouTube. N.p., 2015. Web. 20 Sept. 2015.

2 Dezeen. "Postmodernism Is Back. Welcome To Dezeen's Pomo Summer". N.P., 2015. Web. 19 Sept. 2015.

3 Schusterman, Richard. "The Fine Art of Rap." In Pragmatist Aesthetics: Living Beauty, Rethinking Art. 2005. Second. ed. Boston, Massachusetts: Rowman & Littlefield, 2008

4 Dezeen. "Postmodernism Is Back. Welcome To Dezeen's Pomo Summer". N.P., 2015. Web. 19 Sept. 2015.

5 cbscds2.wordpress.com "Paul Mccartney Is Down With Hip-Hop". N.P. 2015. Web. 20 Sept. 2015.

NO 186

"SHRED THE FILES."

...dark, abstract ...artist's recent ...Repeating Arms ...the sequence of their ...they refer to places, ...in history which, ...a framework for ...site's role in the ...in Elm City. That ...struction—and gradual ...ular notion of urban life

"The State of the Art of Architecture," a theme borrowed from a conference organized in Chicago by Stanley Tigerman (M. Arch '61) almost forty years ago, in 1977. That event, funded by the Graham Foundation, was fairly hermetic, small, and elitist. Its 2015 counterpart aims to be something different. As Sarah Herda, the co-artistic director of this year's event, and current Director of the Graham Foundation, said in a March 23rd interview with *New City*, "It's about making ideas public, and giving the public access to ideas." Indeed, this event is explicitly marketed as being for the public: admission is free. Its main venue, the Chicago Cultural Center, is centrally located and has a longstanding relationship with the public, as such, and the exhibition itself is well-complemented by a variety of partner programs, talks, and exhibits at more than 20 other venues throughout the Windy City.

Given the theme of this week's broadsheet, "Publics and Their Problems", and considering the gravity of an event like the Chicago biennial, we set out to explore ideas about what, and who, comprises the public addressed by this biennial and, furthermore, how the biennial frames its relationship to that public. Herda alludes to this in her description of the biennial's overarching mission: "it's not only leaders of institutions or political figures, but everyone in daily life making decisions about space. We want the decisions about space to be a resource [for] the public, a way to think about...things in a new way." Joseph Grima, the other co-director, echoed Herda's words in an interview with PAPRIKA!: "...the biennial is making a case to the public about the value of architecture," he explained. Given that the biennial has been heavily promoted both by Chicago mayor, Rahm Emanuel, and by the Graham Foundation, it's hard to feel it important to analyze the organizers' view of themselves in relation to the public; to consider whether or not events like this one might serve to construct new notions of the public; and to ask of the people "making decisions about space," to those to whom decisions about space, or those to whom architecture will make its "case", *who they really are.*

Here, we present, what we found to be *three distinct products* of the biennial, over the biennial's three opening days, along with a series of anecdotes which, in sum, begin to tease out what, exactly, this notion of the public means.

Day 1: The Press

The first day of the Biennial catered to assembled members of the press and local politicians, who gathered to witness an opening endorsement by mayor Emanuel, followed by the first panel of the weekend, addressing "what is urgent in architecture today." With manifestos recited, and generic follow-up questions answered, the participants were escorted out to a brisk round of applause, as Herda and Obrist announced the precise location of their exhibits, and called the next participants to the stage.

Could the organizers have developed a format more explicitly focused on each firm, or on the details of their exhibits? Certainly. But its "telegraphic" nature was part of the point. Per Grima: We wanted the exhibits to communicate meaning and a rationale, it is, like the exhibit itself, telegraphic. Architects have to be telegraphic today. In our reality, in the extreme competition for attention, architects have to be able to pick their language." Several manifestos were quickly re-posted to Instagram, Twitter and Facebook, so perhaps Grima has a point. Even if realistic, the idea that architects should be able to communicate to the public in the span of 15 seconds, through the media, rather than otherwise, is cut to what, exactly, this notion of architecture.

Day 2: The Profession

On the second day, the halls of the Chicago Cultural Center bustled with activity, as exhibiting architects, local designers, collaborators, workers from other disciplines, and a veritable army of design critics, writers and plus-1's poured in to attend VIP-only events. Lectures and openings were held throughout the day, and participants gradually converged upon the main attraction. The day culminated with a euphoric reception at the Cultural Center, featuring an open bar, two dance floors, several DJs pumping deep-house and soul music, and hors-d'oeuvre tables serving hot pretzels with a cornucopia of dipping sauces arrayed against BP logos.

Not all the architects, however, were drinking the Kool-Aid. Earlier that day, at the "unprogrammed Architecture" roundtable, a discussion about planning for the unexpected in architecture and urbanism spiraled into a litany of accusations against the event, foremost among them a charge that two days of exclusive-access openings had forced a shutdown of the Cultural Center's regular public services, resulting in a scene of homeless Chicagoans, accustomed to showering at the building, while a very different "public" sipped red wine and vodka-cranberry inside. Tellingly, this conversation was cut short by the Cultural Center's program director, who praised the public nature of the event.

Day 3: The Chicagoans

Saturday marked the official opening day of the exhibition to the general public. At last, the press, the designers, the writers, and the city politicians made way for a much more diverse group of visitors. And finally, the exhibits could fulfill the task Grima had bestowed upon them: "speaking about architecture in extremely direct, simple terms is subversive in a situation in which architecture tends to be discussed in extremely technical terms, in esoteric jargon." Saturday, and the direct, exoteric spirit of the exhibit. Saturday afternoon, the halls were filled with Chicagoans broadcasting self-produced photos (including selfies in great profusion), families with kids, elders explaining what plans, sections, and models were, and a residue participating architects, commenting to each other about how much the exhibits had "come alive" with the arrival of visitors.

While the array of well-executed 3D-printed models and colorful computer drawings presented few exemplify the sort of tried-and-true representational methods familiar to architects and designers of every stripe, for this visitor, they still made a strong aesthetic case for the value of architecture to "the public," framing architecture's claim to "the public," thus emphasizing its accessible terms.

INTERVIEW WITH SASKIA SASSEN

Juan Pablo Ponce de Leon
Saskia Sassen

Current crises, most notably the one in Syria, have attracted the world's attention to violent processes of expulsion, but their narrative still seems to be largely event-based, despite the fact that expelled populations are at their highest level since the end of World War II. How can designers go about not just visualizing, but reconstructing narratives in the public consciousness that tie singular events to larger themes of expulsion?

This is a critical issue. As you may know, quite a few refugee camps and displaced people camps are third or more generation, and have become cities, of a sort. It is important that they be recognized as cities and have the autonomy to make decisions about building, economy, etc. But the humanitarian system does not allow them to be cities: if they start building they lose their rights to payments from the humanitarian system. [We see the] same situation in the Palestinian territories. The older generations warn the younger ones: do not build, because if we build we lose our benefits form the international refugee system. But the young are beginning to build—building is making a claim, a claim built in stone.

Michel Agier has a very large international project on refugees and their habitats, [and] held a major conference in November last year. It was very moving, with several researchers working on diverse refugee and displaced people camps. As you know, refugees are recognized as such—[the term refers to] people who have left their home countries due to extreme conditions—and they have a formal status in the international system. Displaced people are internal refugees, housed in camps inside their home country; they have little recognition internationally, mostly informal, and are often forgotten in the general discussions about refugees. The camps, whether internal or in a foreign country, come in many shapes and sizes. Some camps are small and almost invisible to [local] residents..., some are unstable, or improvised, but are [nonetheless] camps. Calais is one such example [of an improvised camp]. Then we have large ones that can be quite developed...

From where I look at current histories I think we are dealing, yes, with logics that are familiar, but we are [also] witnessing an emergent, deeper history. And for this emergent history the language of migrants and refugees might not be enough. I think the deeper level is one we might capture with the language of massive loss of habitat for more and more people across the world. War is only one [contributing factor here], though it has escalated, and today there are forty countries which are home to militarized conflicts. But there is also dead land and dead water—due to mining, the replacement of small holder farms by a plantation economy—desertification, flooding, etc.

One of the most alarming sections of your book covers the rise of for-profit, private prisons, which architects help to make tangible in the most literal way: by designing them. In light of Zaha Hadid's recent comments regarding the mounting death toll among construction workers on her stadium project in Qatar—in which she suggested that an architect's only responsibility should be to the client, and that dangerous job-site conditions were not her concern—and of the apparent complicity of design professionals in the construction of prisons, refugee camps, etc., what role do you see architects playing in 'democratic' or otherwise exploitative spatial regimes?

This is a complicated question. While architecture is a nexus between the architect's role in... the materials, the place, and a larger world of consequences good and bad... what happens on a construction site, with all its dangers and high risk situations, is very much central to governments' obligations to protect all those on their territory.

A key trend is the privatizing of advantages, profits, and success; on the one hand; and the other, holding local and national governments responsible for everything that goes wrong, or entails a greater cost. This is not right. This is an extreme format, [wherein] benefits go to the big firms, costs to the governments, and...citizens pay for the losses of corporations. Corporations know this and are organizing to speculate wildly....[while] our 'democratic' political systems collaborate in enabling [them].

You emphasise the historical importance of spatial proximity between oppressors and the oppressed to the viability of past uprisings or revolutions, noting the radical separation of these two groups from one another in the 21st century. Do digital networking tools—widely touted as playing influential roles in the Syrian, Egyptian, and Turkish uprisings—narrow the divide between oppressors and oppressed? Or do such tools only offer the appearance of agency?

I am grateful that you bring up this proximity between power and powerlessness... one can really, under specified conditions, become complex. Even if there is no major empowerment, it is central to my work, but I do about a hundred interviews every year.

There are moments in history and in the development of economies when power and powerlessness occupy the same space...

While the types of expulsion you describe in Africa—and even Greece—have been more or less rapid, transformation of middle class domestic forms and conventions of domestic architecture. Does architecture merely reflect existing conditions; or is there a way for architects to resist, slow down, or make visible the process of dispossession and expulsion; processes we at least in 'global cities,' are closely tied to the issue of financial elites?

Architecture can and must transform our cities. [Architects can't do this alone as it will involve]... with concepts of stone... we need multifunctional spaces to construct [where] housing and commerce combine to construct cultural components... we need to redraw at least part of our cities is still so common [for cities] to have only one major economic center, rather than twenty or thirty. Look at London, with its [myriad] high streets across the city. And we need to recognize how gendered much physical planning is.

We need to recover genuinely public space for all—men, women, children, old, young—[whether out] invisible barriers of gender or economic status. This is what cities can enable, unlike suburbs, with their mostly homogeneous populations.

SASKIA SASSEN is Robert S. Lynd Professor of Sociology at Columbia University, where she co-chairs the Committee on Global Thought. She is the author of several books, including The Global City (Princeton University Press, 1991) and most recently, Expulsions: Brutality and Complexity in the Global Economy (Harvard University Press, 2014). Her work has been translated into over twenty languages. She has received diverse awards, including multiple doctor honoris causa, and has been chosen as one of the Top 100 Global Thinkers in multiple lists. Most recently, she was awarded the 2013 Principe de Asturias Prize for the Social Sciences, elected to the Netherlands Royal Academy of Sciences, and made a Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et Lettres by the French government.

DESIGN IN PUBLIC & THE SEATTLE DESIGN FESTIVAL

Susan Surface
Program Director, Design in Public

Design in Public, a strategic initiative of the American Institute of Architects Seattle, is the festival. Its stated vision is of 'a future where community, designers and leaders collaborate—recognized as a world design capital—where communities, designers and leaders work together to create their shared best city.' The organization exists to promote this place and the production of cultural events and exhibitions. As I come from an organizing background that is more grassroots and less 501c(3), I work to shift our priorities and policies somewhat, while remaining within this framework.

At Design in Public and the Seattle Design festival—which just wrapped up, having run from September 12th to September 25th this year—we focus on what is happening, what is needed, and what best serves the people who live in Seattle. These are major issues and I do not have all the answers, but multi-nodal mixed spaces would enable some who are marginal and at risk of falling out or being expelled in there, and to gradually recover. The truth is I think we are facing a massive loss of habitat [of which] the many, refugees and displaced are only the most visible moment. As I describe in Expulsions, there is much land that is dead and much water that is dying, and the same goes for water. Water is, according to many, the most at-risk component of our lives.

It will take some very radical changes and interventions to halt this process. I am afraid that well designed cities will go only so far [toward] incorporating those at risk. We will need more, much more... multiple vectors.

The Seattle Design Festival's programs are scheduled through an open call. There is no application fee or specific requirement other than that the content must pertain to design, and should address one of the year's theme—in 2015, that was 'Design for Equity.' The theme we choose establishes our programming for the following year, not only the two-week-long festival. We understand the concept of 'Design for Equity' to mean the bare minimum standard for any adequate, competent design process or product, and not a special category comprising 'extra-good,' or somehow superfluous 'do-gooder' activities.

Since we basically outsource our programming through an open call for programs, the events at the festival truly reflect the interests and priorities of people in our city. We accept programming of all types (exhibitions, films, lectures, panel discussions, tours, performances, and more); from all types of hosts (design firms, individuals, artists, lawyers, city agencies, real estate developers, community groups...); and in all types of venue (from luxury showrooms and museum auditoriums, to free spaces in community centers and branch libraries). [As] we have rigorous quality control standards, and insist that all groups involved adhere to the principle of 'Nothing about us without us.' Participants are not allowed to host events that talk 'about' demographic groups, if those groups are not directly self-represented. If an explicitly self-representing firm proposes a panel discussion on the design of domestic violence shelters, for instance, we require that someone who has actually lived in a domestic violence shelter be involved as either co-organizer or speaker.

We encourage participants in the festival to create programs with interactive and conversational opportunities, and to avoid hierarchical lecture-audience event models, whenever possible. We require program partners to make their events accessible by booking ADA-compliant venues, providing all-gender restrooms, and providing building and ASL interpretation. The vast majority of our programming is free and open to the public, and all require with fees have either sliding-scale or scholarship options. So that attendees are not burdened or excluded by having to arrange to pay for childcare, we maintain a policy that prioritizes self-represented; if those groups are not directly affected... we require that someone who has actually lived in a domestic violence shelter be involved as either co-organizer or speaker.

There is a tendency among architects and designers to describe their ambitions in the civic realm in terms of 'bringing architecture and design to the public', or 'educating society about architecture and design.' Design in Public operates instead from the assumption that the amorphous 'public' already understands the society—themselves. They often know it better than those who are in decision-making and gatekeeping positions do, because they live with its effects.

In turn, we frame designers as everyday members of the public, rather than an elite category of professionals who are neighbors who serve on community boards, march with #BlackLivesMatter, and show up to support each other's efforts. We are skeptical of totalizing terms like 'the community' or 'the general public,' while we recognize that we are the public, too. By normalizing, and actualizing, this attitude through our work as the festival, we hope to transform the principle, 'Nothing about us without us,' into standard design practice. We encourage designers to un-learn their professional aspirations to heroism, so that we might all come to understand ourselves as collaborative, participatory visionaries.

One of our favorite examples of citizen-led public transformation comes from a community group called RBB the CD, or Red/Black/Green the Central District, a historically Black, working class neighborhood. Seattle's Department of Transportation (SDOT) recently inaugurated a special project to paint several sidewalks in our historic 'gayborhood' in rainbow stripes, spatially recognizing the history of the Capitol Hill area by day Pride 2015. RBB the CD then painted a Central District sidewalk in Red, Black and Green, colors associated with African American heritage. SDOT's immediate response was—thankfully—not to remove the new design, but simply to ask RBB the CD to modify the designs with reflective strips for nighttime safety. This direct action has since pushed SDOT to implement an open policy for neighborhood groups to design their own crosswalks. This is an example of a city agency playing catch-up to what our citizen-experts are already doing to mark public space as their own.

Seattle Design Nerds installation at the SD2015 Block Party
Photo: Susan Surface

Lake City Civic Learning Plaza convened by SDOT and the Department of Neighborhoods
Photo: Susan Surface

Encamped in Ballard
Dr. Sharon E. Sutton, FAIA leads charrette on design for homeless encampments. Photo: Trevor Dykstra