

# UC Berkeley

## Courses

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Reading Cities, Sensing Cities | Fall 2014 Colloquium

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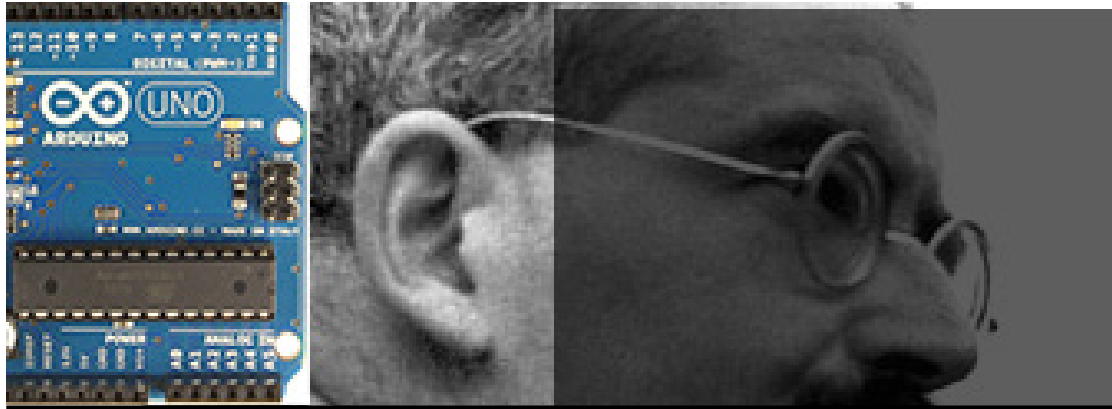
# READING CITIES, SENSING CITIES A GLOBAL URBAN HUMANITIES INTERDISCIPLINARY COLLOQUIUM

FALL 2014  
COLLOQUIUM

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# COLLOQUIUM POSTER



## READING CITIES SENSING CITIES

a global urban humanities interdisciplinary colloquium

THURSDAYS 1-2 p.m.

WURSTER HALL 106

CY PLAN 298/RHETORIC 244a, CCN: 13887, 1 credit

Visitors welcome

- |       |                             |  |
|-------|-----------------------------|--|
| 8.28  | Art+Village+City: China     | M Crawford, Architecture                         |
| 9.4   | Mapping the Mission         | Darin Jensen, Geography                          |
| 9.11  | Bearden's Berkeley Mural    | Lauren Kroiz, Art History                        |
| 9.18  | Blind in the City           | Chris Downey, Architect/Georgina Kleege, English |
| 9.25  | Sensing San Leandro         | Greg Niemeyer, New Media                         |
| 10.2  | pARTicipatory Urbanisms     | K Shankar/K Larson                               |
|       | Urban Pilgrimage            | P Maitland/L Yang                                |
| 10.9  | Uneven Modernity in Tbilisi | Harsha Ram, Comp Lit                             |
| 10.16 | Creative Class Civil Wars   | S Steen TDPS                                     |
| 10.23 | Music+Urban Space: Vienna   | N Mathew, Music                                  |
| 11.13 | Dublin/Mumbai, Text/Film    | Catherine Flynn, English                         |
| 11.20 | Tokyo Slumlords 5 pm        | J Sand, Georgetown, Japanese History             |

Updated schedule available at [globalurbanhumanities.berkeley.edu/academic-program](http://globalurbanhumanities.berkeley.edu/academic-program)

Schedule subject to change; sign up for Global Urban Humanities listserv for notices

For information, contact Susan Moffat, instructor: [susanmoffat@berkeley.edu](mailto:susanmoffat@berkeley.edu)

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# COLLOQUIUM DESCRIPTION

## READING CITIES, SENSING CITIES

*A GLOBAL URBAN HUMANITIES INTERDISCIPLINARY COLLOQUIUM*

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Fall 2014

City Planing 298, Rhetoric 244, 1 Units

**Instructor:**

**Susan Moffat**, Executive Director, Global Urban Humanities Initiative  
& Creative Director, Future Histories Lab

What does it mean to read a city? When urban designers say a landscape is legible, what does that mean? We think that we navigate a city with our eyes, but what do our other senses tell us? And what happens when we substitute machine sensing for that bodily human encounter with the city? What place do novels and other narratives play in mapping the cities of our imagination—and the physical cities we design and build? In this speaker series, we considered approaches from a variety of disciplines that attempt to understand and represent cities.

This interdisciplinary colloquium presented speakers investigating cities and urbanism from multiple angles—through texts about cities, through looking at cities as texts, through art, photography, music and sound, film, performance, mapping, and crowdsourced sensing technologies.

Speakers included faculty and graduate students from departments including Architecture, Art History, Art Practice, City and Regional Planning, Comparative Literature, Geography, Theater, Dance and Performance Studies, and more.

The colloquium was part of the Global Urban Humanities Initiative, a joint project of the Arts & Humanities Division and the College of Environmental Design. Our aim with this speaker series was to provide a gathering place where people from different disciplines can learn about each other's work on global cities.

All lectures were open to the campus community, and visitors were encouraged.

# COLLOQUIUM SUMMARY

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## SPEAKER SCHEDULE-

**08/28 Art + Village + City in China's Pearl River Delta.**

- Margaret Crawford, Professor, Architecture

**09/4 Experiential Mapping of the Urban Form: Mission Possible: A Neighborhood Atlas and Intranational International Boulevard.**

- Darin Jensen, Staff Cartographer and Continuing Lecturer, Department of Geography

**09/11 Representing Urban Diversity: Romare Bearden's "Berkeley-A City and Its People" (1973)**

- Lauren Kroiz, Assistant Professor, History of Art

**09/18 Reading Cities as a Blind Person**

- Chris Downey, Architect
- Georgina Kleege, English

**09/25 Sensing San Leandro: Capturing Cityscapes through Sensors**

- Greg Niemeyer, Associate Professor, Art Practice

**10/02 Experiments in Online and Print Journals on Cities: Urban Pilgrimage**

- Padma Maitland, Architecture and South and Southeast Asian Studies
- Lawrence Yang, East Asian Languages and Cultures

**pARTicipatory Urbanisms in Sao Paulo and New Delhi**

- Kirsten Larson, City and Regional Planning and Architecture
- Karin Shankar, Performance Studies

**10/09 Uneven Modernity and the 'Peripheral' City: Between Ethnography, History and Literature in Tbilisi**

- Harsha Ram, Associate Professor of Slavic Languages and Literatures and Comparative Literature

**10/16 Creative Class Civil Wars: Displacement and the Arts in the Bay Area**

- Shannon Steen, Associate Professor, Theater, Dance & Performance Studies

**10/23 Urban Space, Spectacle, Memory and Music in Nineteenth-Century Vienna**

- Nicholas Mathew, Associate Professor, Music

**10/30 Nature and Culture at the Albany Bulb Landfill**

- Susan Moffat, Project Director, Global Urban Humanities Initiative

**11/06 The Art of Change: Exploring Neighborhoods in Transition**

- Sue Mark, marksearch.org and Anisha Gade, UC Berkeley Architecture

**11/13 Joyce's Dublin and Katarina Schroter's Mumbai, Shanghai and Sao Paulo**

- Catherine Flynn, Assistant Professor of English

**11/20 The Tokyo Model: Lessons in Slum Non-Clearance from the World's First 'Megacity'**

- Jordan Sand, Assoc. Professor of Japanese History and Culture, Georgetown University

**12/04 Final Discussion and Get Together**



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## **Art + Village + City in China-**

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## **Experiential Mapping of the Urban Form- Mission Possible: A Neighborhood Atlas and Intranational International Boulevard-**

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## **Representing Our Urban Diversity: Romare Bearden's Berkeley-The City and Its People (1973)-**

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## **Reading the City as a Blind Person-**

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### **Sensing San Leandro: Capturing Cityscapes Through Sensors-**

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### **Experiments in Online and Print Journals on Cities: Urban Pilgrimage and pARTicipatory Urbanisms-**

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### **Urban Space, Spectacle, Memory and Music in Nineteenth-Century Vienna-**

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## **The Art of Change: Exploring Neighborhoods in Transition**

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## **The Tokyo Model: Lessons in Slum Non-Clearance from the World's First "Megacity"**

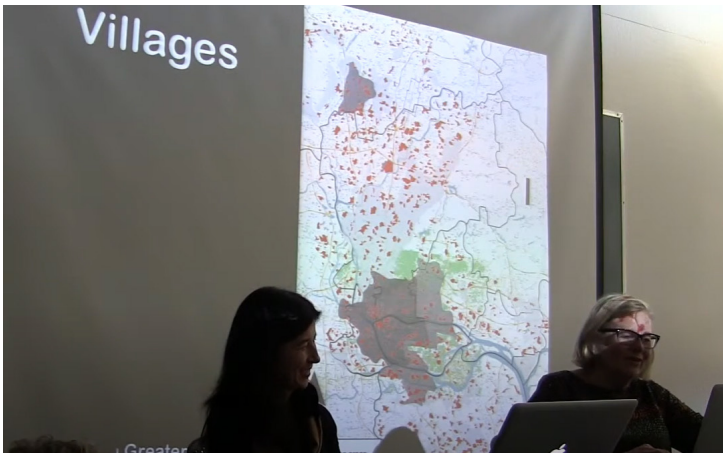
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# COLLOQUIUM SESSIONS- VIDEOS

## ARC OF THE SEMESTER

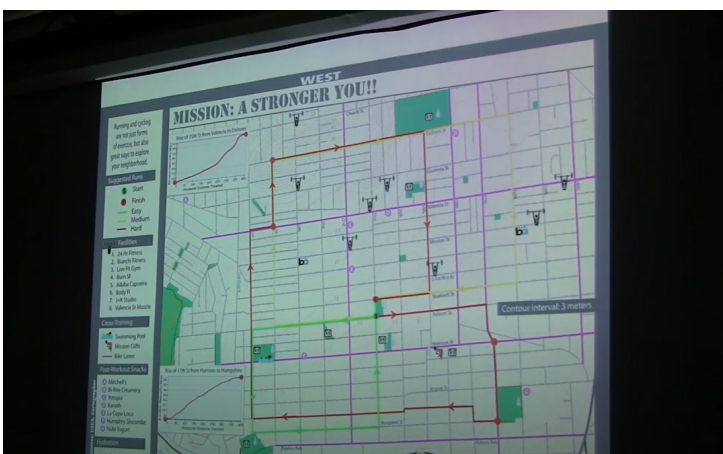
### WEEK 1- ART + VILLAGE + CITY IN CHINA



Presentation by Prof. Margaret Crawford (Architecture) on Art+Village+City in China's Pearl River Delta, a traveling research studio she will be teaching with Assistant Prof. Winnie Wong (Rhetoric) in Spring 2015 at the time of this video.

Before its current incarnation as the “factory to the world” and one of the densest multi-city clusters in the world, the Pearl River Delta (PRD) region was covered with agricultural villages. These villages are today surrounded by urban development as “villages-in-the-city,” and are home to migrants from all over China. Due to their unique legal status, today urban villagers are among the few Chinese citizens who control their own land, build their own houses and elect their own leaders. Since 2006, central and municipal government policies have worked toward eliminating the village as an independent entity in the city. Art, design, and the creative economy have been central to this tension between village and city, and the “art village” has emerged as a transformative and distinctive urban phenomenon.

### WEEK 2- EXPERIENTIAL MAPPING OF THE URBAN FORM- MISSION POSSIBLE: A NEIGHBORHOOD ATLAS AND INTRANATIONAL INTERNATIONAL BOULEVARD



Darin Jensen presented on Mission Possible, a neighborhood mapping project in San Francisco's Mission District, and on a new project mapping International Boulevard in Oakland, titled “Intranational International Boulevard.”

These projects of experiential learning send cartography students into the field to experience the places they will map. Using personal experience and field methods to capture data, students return to the lab to combine their experiences with other data to collaboratively create a holistic picture of place.

Darin Jensen is the Staff Cartographer and a Continuing Lecturer in the Department of Geography. He is currently pursuing an MFA in Creative Writing Non-fiction at Mills College.

## WEEK 3- REPRESENTING OUR URBAN DIVERSITY: ROMARE BEARDEN'S "BERKELEY-THE CITY AND ITS PEOPLE" (1973)



Assistant Professor Lauren Kroiz, History of Art, presented on Romare Bearden's Berkeley mural, an important work of public art that is the source of the ubiquitous multi-ethnic logo found on everything from City of Berkeley trucks to stationery and brochures. She reflected on the relationship of painting, the construction of place, and regional planning. In her Fall 2014 course Regionalism, Nationalism, Globalism, Kroiz examined critical models of place and its influence developed in the twentieth and twenty-first century, exploring authors and artists including Lewis Mumford, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Thomas Hart Benton, and Richard Diebenkorn. Kroiz's current research focuses on the ways regionalist educational projects linked art and citizenship in the United States during the 1930s and 40s.

Kroiz's book *Creative Composites: Race, Modernism, and the Stieglitz Circle*, was awarded the 2010 Phillips Book Prize and was published by University of California Press in 2012.

## WEEK 4- READING THE CITY AS A BLIND PERSON



Georgina Kleege (English) and Christopher Downey (Architecture) talked about navigating the city as a blind person, with perspectives informed by their professions of writer and designer.

Georgina Kleege joined the English department at the University of California, Berkeley in 2003 where in addition to teaching creative writing classes she teaches courses on representations of disability in literature, and disability memoir. Her collection of personal essays, *Sight Unseen* (1999) is a classic in the field of disability studies. Essays include an autobiographical account of Kleege's own blindness, and cultural critique of depictions of blindness in literature, film, and language.

Many of these essays are required reading for students in disability studies, as well as visual culture, education, public health, psychology, philosophy and ophthalmology. *Blind Rage: Letters to Helen Keller* (2006) transcends the boundaries between fiction and nonfiction to re-imagine the life and legacy of this celebrated disability icon. Kleege's current work is concerned with blindness and visual art: how

blindness is represented in art, how blindness affects the lives of visual artists, how museums can make visual art accessible to people who are blind and visually impaired. She has lectured and served as consultant to art institutions around the world including the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York and the Tate Modern in London.

Christopher Downey, AIA, is an architect, planner and consultant who lost all sight in 2008. Today, as one of the few practicing blind architects in the world, he is dedicated to creating more helpful and enriching environments for the blind and visually impaired. His work ranges from a new Department of Veterans Affairs blind rehabilitation center, to renovations of housing for the blind in New York City, and to the new Transbay Transit Center in San Francisco. He teaches accessibility and universal design at UC Berkeley (Arch 269) and serves on the Board of Directors for the Lighthouse for the Blind in San Francisco.

## WEEK 5- SENSING SAN LEANDRO: CAPTURING CITYSCAPES THROUGH SENSORS



Professors Greg Niemeyer and Ron Rael are co-taught a course entitled Sensing Cityscapes: Sensors, Cities, Policies/Basic Protocols For New Media in which students created and interrogated tools for collecting data on urban metabolisms. Through a suite of practical projects, the course introduced methods for retrieving and working with existing city data, investigating cities through surveys and mapping, generating data through digital sensing and ways of presenting data publicly. Students actively partnered with the City of San Leandro to find new ways of collecting and using data to improve city planning.

Born in Switzerland in 1967, Greg Niemeyer studied Classics and Photography. He started working with new media when he arrived in the Bay Area in 1992 and he received his MFA from Stanford University in New Media in 1997. At the same time, he founded the Stanford University Digital Art Center, which he directed until 2001, when he was appointed at UC Berkeley as Assistant Professor for New Media. At UC Berkeley, he is involved in the development of the Center for New Media, focusing on the critical analysis of the impact of new media on human experiences. His creative work focuses on the mediation between humans as individuals and humans as a collective through technological means, and emphasizes playful responses to technology. His most recognized projects are Gravity (Cooper Union, NYC, 1997), PING (SFMOMA, 2001), Oxygen Flute (SJMA, 2002), ar (Pacific Film Archive, 2003), Ping 2.0 (Paris, La Villette Numerique, 2004), Organum Playtest (2005), Good Morning Flowers (SFIFF 2006, Townhouse Gallery, Cairo, Egypt, 2006), [blackcloud.org](http://blackcloud.org), [sevenairs.org](http://sevenairs.org), and [polartide.org](http://polartide.org).

Ronald Rael is an Associate Professor at the University of California, Berkeley with a joint appointment in the departments of Architecture and Art Practice. Rael's research and creative work transforms the practice of architecture into a cultural endeavor — one that is defiant, inventive and tied to contemporary issues. The work relies upon a deep understanding of place, and its inherent resources, and makes careful links between a broad spectrum of tools that come from manual, industrial and digital approaches to making architecture.





Walk With Me- Interactive Light Installations produced by students in the Sensing Cities course

## WEEK 6- EXPERIMENTS IN ONLINE AND PRINT JOURNALS ON CITIES- URBAN PILGRIMAGE AND PARTICIPATORY URBANISMS



Padma Maitland (Architecture and South and Southeast Asian Studies) and Lawrence Yang (East Asian Languages and Cultures) discussed Urban Pilgrimage, a special web-based and print issue of the UC Berkeley architecture journal Room One Thousand. It examined the historical and contemporary connection between cities and the itineraries of those who pass through them.

Karin Shankar (Performance Studies) and Kirsten Larson (City and Regional Planning and Architecture) discussed pARTicipatory Urbanisms, an innovative one-time, web-based publication exploring the multifarious meanings of “participation” and its conditions of possibility in making art and politics in urban spaces.

Both publication projects were selected from a highly competitive slate of proposals for support from the Global Urban Humanities Initiative. Selected by the Initiative, Urban Pilgrimage and pARTicipatory Urbanisms represent important examples of the methodological experimentation embodied in the growing field of urban humanities. Both publications were completed in Spring 2015.

## WEEK 7- UNEVEN MODERNITY AND THE “PERIPHERAL” CITY: BETWEEN ETHNOGRAPHY, HISTORY AND LITERATURE IN TBILISI AS A BLIND PERSON



Harsha Ram is an Associate Professor of Slavic Languages and Literature, and Comparative Literature. His most recent book is *The Imperial Sublime: A Russian Poetics of Empire*; his forthcoming book at the time of this video is entitled *Crossroads Modernity: Aesthetic Modernism and the Russian-Georgian Encounter*.

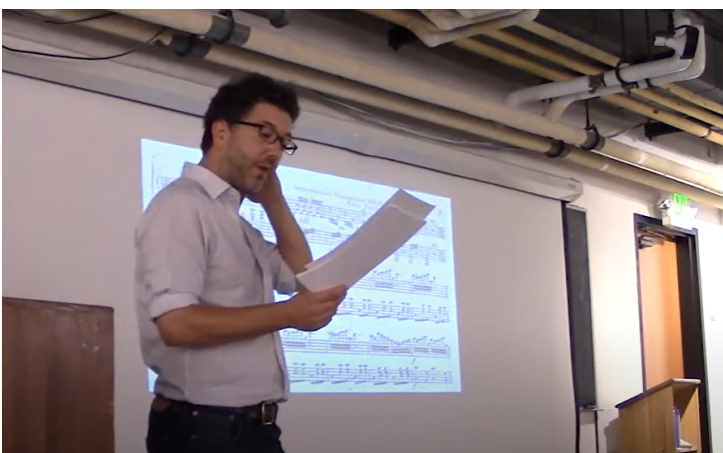
## WEEK 8- CREATIVE CLASS CIVIL WARS: DISPLACEMENT AND THE ARTS IN THE BAY AREA



Associate Professor Shannon Steen (Theater, Dance, and Performance Studies) presented research from her project “Creative Class Civil Wars,” which explored the ways our concepts of creativity are shifting to exclude those in the arts. Her presentation examined how those changes are rooted in the history by which “creativity” became a legitimate object of academic research, a history itself based in Cold War international rivalry that now takes China as its primary object of anxiety. Her presentation forms part of her current book project *The Pacific Century*, on the performance cultures of the Pacific tech triangle (the Bay Area, Tokyo, and Shenzhen, China). Associate

Professor Shannon Steen writes and teaches about race and performance, primarily in the intersection of the African American and Asian American worlds. She is the author most recently of *Racial Geometries: The Black Atlantic, Asian Pacific, and American Theatre* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2010; part of the *Studies in International Performance Series*), and is co-editor of *AfroAsian Encounters: Culture, History, Politics* (New York University Press, 2006). She has published articles in *Theater Journal* as well as *Essays in Theater/ Études Théâtrales*.

## WEEK 9- URBAN SPACE, SPECTACLE, MEMORY AND MUSIC IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY VIENNA



Nicholas Mathew, Associate Professor in the Department of Music, gave a presentation on the role of music and sound in the emergence of modern civic sensibilities in Napoleonic Vienna, and how printed music came to shape a new politics of urban pedestrianism.

Professor Mathew’s published work has focused on the relationships between music and politics: the place of music in political institutions, the role of music in the public sphere, and the ways in which music constructs identity and subjectivity – as well as issues of appropriation, subversion, musical trashiness, and political kitsch. His books include *Political Beethoven* and *The Invention of Beethoven and Rossini*, edited with Benjamin Walton.



## WEEK 10- NATURE, CULTURE, AND CONFLICT AT A SHORELINE LANDFILL: THE ALBANY BULB



Susan Moffat gave a talk on *The Atlas of the Albany Bulb*, her oral history and mapping project about a landfill on the eastern shore of San Francisco Bay. The Atlas project included a website presenting stories, maps, and images of this vegetated pile of rubble known for its spectacular views, informal art, dog walking, and a longstanding encampment of residents who created homes, community spaces, and monuments out of found materials. This community was evicted earlier this year to make way for a state park. In addition to the website, Moffat contributed to an exhibit of documentary and art work on the Albany Bulb that was mounted at the SOMArts gallery in San Francisco in February 2015.

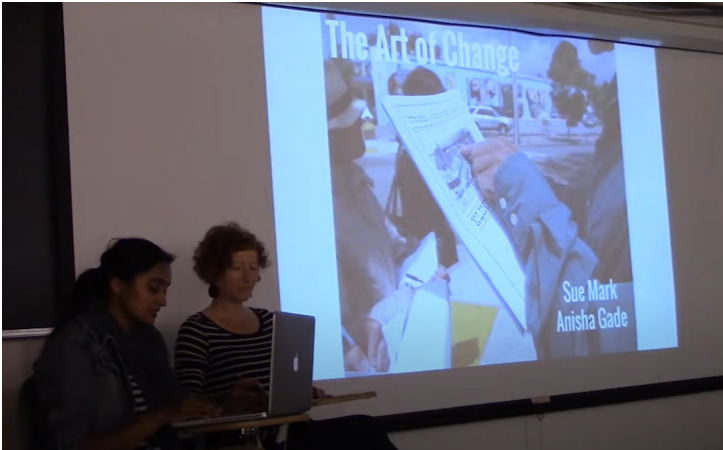
In her talk, Moffat reflected on how conceptions of nature and culture affect this highly contested site, which has been the location of bitter battles between people holding different notions of the proper uses of public space, and of what a park should be. She reflected on methodological and ethical issues associated with documenting and representing people and their places, and on the different ways ethnographers, archeologists, oral historians, journalists, sociologists, urban planners, landscape architects, geographers, biologists, and others investigate urban sites like this one.

Susan Moffat is project director of the Global Urban Humanities Initiative. She has worked in the fields of affordable housing, environmental planning, land conservation and regional planning advocacy, and journalism. Her writing on Asian cities, ethnicity and place, and environmental issues has been published in *The Wall Street Journal*, the *Los Angeles Times*, *Fortune*, and *Planning*, and she has curated exhibits on cartography and on the San Francisco Bay shoreline.

*The Atlas of the Albany Bulb* is a project of the Global Urban Humanities Initiative, which is funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. The Atlas is made possible with support from Cal Humanities, a non-profit partner of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Note: This week's talk was not recorded.

## WEEK 11- THE ART OF CHANGE: EXPLORING NEIGHBORHOODS IN TRANSITION



Cultural researcher Sue Mark of [marksearch.org](http://marksearch.org) and Anisha Gade, urban planner and design researcher, engaged in a reflective conversation about creative place-making efforts that can influence, empower, and inform community identity during periods of gentrification. In particular, Mark's interdisciplinary project, *Communities' Crossing*, created historically- and culturally-informed interventions along San Pablo Avenue in the area where Berkeley, Emeryville, and Oakland intersect. This project was supported by PRINT PUBLIC, an innovative neighborhood initiative by the Kala Art Institute and multiple community partners. Mark and Gade's conversation was grounded in three larger questions: the connection between real-estate development and critical art practices; the impact of media representations of the urban and the architectural; as well as the creation of platforms that can function as living neighborhood archives.

Anisha Gade is a Masters student in City Planning and Architecture. She has a background in community development and communications. She is currently engaged in two projects: an ethnographic research project documenting demographic and land-use changes in Silicon Valley, and the second, a critical design/research initiative interrogating media representations of architecture and urbanism. She is currently acting as a consultant for *Communities' Crossing*.

Sue Mark, with a BA in Philosophy and Linguistics and an MFA from the California College of the Arts, creates national and international performance-based projects exploring the intersections of lost history and cultural complexities. The *marksearch* team (collaborating with Bruce Douglas) situates their cross-disciplinary work along the evolving continuum of social practice art by creating sculptural structures for improvisational collaboration in public spaces. Since 2000, *marksearch* has collaborated with non-profits, community groups, students, historians, urban planners, and municipalities worldwide to create projects that move beyond aesthetic experience.

*Communities' Crossing* is produced for *Print Public* with support from Kala Art Institute, Berkeley, CA, and is made possible with support from Cal Humanities, a non-profit partner of the National Endowment for the Humanities. Visit [www.calhum.org](http://www.calhum.org). This project is also supported by the Oakland City Council and funded by the City of Oakland's Cultural Funding Program.

## WEEK 12- FROM 1904 DUBLIN TO THE MEGACITY: PUBLIC ACCESS IN ULYSSES AND KATARINA SCHRÖTER'S THE VISITOR

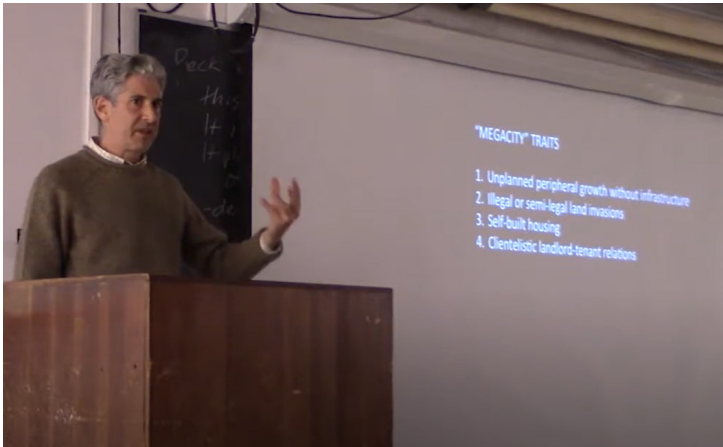


Catherine Flynn works on British and Irish modernist literature. Her book project, *James Joyce, Walter Benjamin and the Matter of Modernity*, reads *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake* alongside the Arcades Project, considering Joyce and Benjamin's radical rejections of the conventions of fiction and theory within a context of urban writing that ranges from nineteenth-century realist fiction to twentieth-century surrealist works.

Flynn joined the Department of English in 2012. She was a Postdoctoral Fellow at Stanford University's Introduction to the Humanities Program from 2009 to 2012. She received her Ph.D. in Comparative Literature from Yale University in 2009 and her B.A. in English and Philosophy from University College Cork in 2000. She practiced as an architect in Ireland and in Vienna, Austria; she has a B.Arch from University College Dublin.

This talk raised the question of urban knowing, of processes of knowledge that take place outside of familial, social and professional contexts and that depend upon the urban fabric. It looked at the means used to construct and represent such processes in literary and filmic representations of the city and the megacity. It examined Schröter's 2014 filmed record of encounters with strangers in Shanghai, Mumbai and Sao Paulo and her passage from the street to the dwelling places of these randomly encountered individuals. To begin thinking about the complexities of Schröter's engagements, the talk looked at Joyce's representations of urban life at a series of scales: a scene between Leopold Bloom and an old acquaintance on a Dublin street, a montage of multiple events in the city, and a comprehensive description of the municipal waterworks' route to a kitchen. It compared the technical means availed of by Joyce and Schröter: urban (infrastructure, systems of circulation), artistic (stream of consciousness, static camera, montage) and personal (both Joyce and Schröter's personae engage in silent looking, empathy and mimicry) and it considered the pressures put upon those means by the megacity.

## WEEK 13- THE TOKYO MODEL: LESSONS IN SLUM NON-CLEARANCE FROM THE WORLD'S FIRST "MEGACITY"



Co-Presented by the Center for Japanese Studies.

Jordan Sand presented his research on the activities of a Tokyo slumlord at the turn of the 20th century. Sand is Professor of Japanese History and Culture at Georgetown University in Washington, DC. He teaches modern Japanese history and other topics in East Asian history, as well as urban history and the world history of food. He has a doctorate in history from Columbia University and an MA in architecture history from the University of Tokyo. His research and writing has focused on architecture, urbanism, material culture and the history of everyday life.

*House and Home in Modern Japan* (Harvard, 2004) explores the ways that westernizing reformers reinvented Japanese domestic space and family life during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. His most recent book, *Tokyo Vernacular: Common Spaces, Local Histories, Found Objects* (University of California Press, 2013), analyzes problems of history and memory in the postindustrial city. He has also examined the comparative history of urban fires and firefighting, the modernization and globalization of Japanese food (including sushi, miso, and MSG), and the history of furniture and interiors, and topics in the study of heritage and museums. He is presently working on a study of manifestations of colonialism in physical forms ranging from bodily comportment to urban planning.

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# COLLOQUIUM REFLECTIONS

## THOUGHTS ON URBAN VILLAGES BY A NATIVE OF GUANGZHOU

September 2014

By Siying Wang

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*As part of the Global Urban Humanities Initiative Colloquium, students and visitors were asked to write responses to each of the weekly guest lectures. On August 28, 2014, Prof. Margaret Crawford (Architecture) gave a presentation on her continuing research on urban villages in the Pearl River Delta— independent jurisdictions that are being swallowed up physically and administratively by large cities. Along with Asst. Prof. Winnie Wong (Rhetoric), they taught a studio course on the Pearl River Delta in Spring 2015.*

*Siying Wang is a visiting student at UC Berkeley.*

As an exchange student from Chinese majoring in urban planning, I was attracted by Margaret Crawford's presentation at the first sight of the poster announcing the lecture. It was especially interesting to me when Margaret talked about the urban villages in Guangzhou, my hometown. Here, I would like to share some thoughts with you from my point of view as a Cantonese person.

Urban villages occur in almost every fast-developing city in China. "Village" has a particular meaning compared to the term in other countries due to some unique principles and regulations that apply only to places designated as "villages" in China. In my eyes, urban villages have a poor and backward image. I had never associated urban villages with art. As Margaret showed us in her slides, urban villages are full of 'shaking-hands buildings' (built so close together that people on the upper stories can shake hands with

each other out of their windows) and 'under-construction areas.' In recent years, people in Guangzhou, including me, avoided getting too close to urban villages. Buildings there were dangerous and seemed quite ready to collapse. Most inhabitants were either farmers or the poor.

I wondered, "How could urban villages do anything with the arts? In what way can they be able to connect with and influence each other?" I now think the old and out-of-date opinion towards urban villages should be rethought, considering the developments that have happened in the recent years. Take Zhujiang New Town, for example, which is also an urban village in Guangzhou. It has now developed as the new central business district of Guangzhou: the old images are now replaced by skyscrapers and modern facilities. This progress is enhanced by the force of cooperation between government and villages' residents and, of course, even the whole society.

Art exists in many ways and forms during the development of urban villages. Arts in Zhujiang New Town are developing in the normal way: old buildings were replaced by new ones directly. Brand new green projects cover the formerly desolate area. Arts in Xiaozhou Village develop in another way: many old buildings remain as art galleries or other aesthetically creative spaces for artists.

'Shaking-hands buildings' might represent the typical image of most urban villages in Guangdong. However we should look at the bigger picture of this developing topic, by knowing that arts exist in both the modern way and traditional way in urban villages.



Image: Cao Fei, *Mirage (Cosplayer Series)*, 2004

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# BEARDEN'S BERKELEY—A MURAL BY A VISITING ARTIST, CURATED BY COMMITTEE

September 2014

By Faith Hutchinson

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*On September 11, 2014, Lauren Kroiz spoke about Berkeley—The City and Its People, a mural by Romare Bearden that once hung in Berkeley City Hall, was exhibited at the Museum of Modern Art, and is now indefinitely in storage. She asked viewers to consider the intentions of the city leaders of 1973 in inviting a well-known African-American artist from the East Coast to portray their city. Kroiz is Assistant Professor of Art History at UC Berkeley.*

*Faith Hutchinson is a candidate for the Master of Information Management and Systems at the UC Berkeley School of Information.*

In representing a place, we are as much limited by the constraints of the two-dimensional canvas as we are by our narrow experiences. Romare Bearden's mural "Berkeley--The City and Its People" presents an example of the flattening of place into symbols, artifacts of emotion, memory, and still other intangible provisions of identity. Berkeley deconstructed itself during the Free Speech movement of the 1960s, and as the city entered the 1970s, residents found in the renovation of City Hall an opportunity to manifest the transformation via monument. Thus, the démodé landscape photograph that occupied the chamber of City Hall was to be replaced with a mural by Romare Bearden. The selection of this black artist served to communicate Berkeley's embrace of diversity, but why not select a person of color who was a local son or daughter? Much like the decision to establish a symbol of the new Berkeley, the selection of this artist was an explicit vision of the city.

Based in New York for the majority of his life, Bearden was an established name in American art by the 1970s. In commissioning him, Berkeley councilmembers used the

artist's race, urban subject matter, and art-world renown as a proxy for describing the city's progressive, cosmopolitan, and aesthete qualities. Bearden was famously known for capturing life of a specific segment of Black America. His collages are scenes of brownstone and cement where the lifeblood of community flows through arteries of a bustling physical environment. As mentioned during the class discussion, "Berkeley--The City and Its People" depicts a busy jumble that feels more like the artist's home of New York City. The style of Bearden's mural gives the impression that Berkeley is a bustling, vibrant place, but this summary necessarily discards the quiet and the somber, the routines that inform daily life. It was said that Bearden's 10-day visit to the city came with a detailed agenda, and in designing the artist's experience in this way, the patrons of the mural had to decide what to highlight. In effect, the mural was created by committee, but it is arguable whether the resulting pastiche shows the compromise of collaboration, the limited engagement of the artist, or the idealism that is part of bestowing identity to a place that means different things to different people.



Mural by Romare Bearden that once hung in Berkeley City Hall

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# USING SENSORS TO FEEL, THEN DECIDE

September 2014

By Faith Hutchinson

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*On September 24, 2014, Niemeyer and Rael discussed how using sensors to collect data allow “reality-based” decisions about places to be made, using projects that they and their students have undertaken in San Leandro as examples.*

*Faith Hutchinson is a candidate for the Master of Information Management and Systems at the UC Berkeley School of Information.*

“Standing on the bare ground, -- my head bathed by the blithe air, and uplifted into infinite spaces, -- all mean egotism vanishes. I become a transparent eye-ball; I am nothing; I see all; the currents of the Universal Being circulate through me; I am part or particle of God.”

-- Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Nature*

Professor Greg Niemeyer describes two frameworks of data collection: “hard eyes” and “soft eyes.” The former is closer to the scientific method, relating information back to an explicit hypothesis and emphasizing focus over risk. On the other hand, “soft eyes” invoke the approach of Ralph Waldo Emerson, who proposed that nature must be appreciated with a transparent eye; that is to say, we become more connected to the significance of our world by seeing it and not looking for it.

In common practice, data science is a pursuit of quantified evidence in support of a hypothesis: the domain of hard-eyes. To be sure, many purposes can be served with a focused, solution-oriented approach. Companies like The Climate Corporation and Propeller Health enable citizens to protect their natural and bodily resources by retrieving organized environmental data. Rather than collecting information for the sake of later analysis, Professors Niemeyer and Rael utilize sensors to promote action in the present. Sensors tend not to visually announce their affordances, but these sensors emerge in the city of San Leandro

housed in colorful casings, a presentation that requires curiosity and direct, tangible interactions from passersby.

It is also significant that these sensors, via placement and record, are vested in the public. Were the “Hi” sensor featured in a gallery instead of in public at transit stops, the attending audience would reflect a specific type of resident, and their reactions or data would not necessarily be representative of the broader community. Niemeyer describes data as a means to “feel all the people walking across the city,” a statement which beckons back to the previous lecture in which Georgina Kleege compared her walking stick to long fingers that skirt over the surface of the world. This similarity in Niemeyer and Kleege’s description of experiencing a city implies greater intimacy results from using the scope of human senses to read beyond the visual record.



The “Hi” Sensor featured in the Sensing Cityscapes course

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# URBAN AP(ART)HEID: WHO AND WHO DEFINES CITIZENSHIP?

October 2014

By Brandon Harrell

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*On October 2, 2014, Padma, Lawrence, Karin, and Kirsten shared reflections on their research and the process of curating their respective publications that came out in Spring 2015.*

*Brandon Harrell is a graduate student in the Master of City Planning program at the UC Berkeley College of Environmental Design.*

Karin Shankar and Kirsten Larson seek to discover the various participatory processes that unfold, or don't unfold, when New Delhi and São Paulo grassroots community organizations attempt to manifest their dreams for social change. During several interviews they each identified 10 organizations that consider themselves to be "participatory"-asking them questions such as, "What is urban citizenship? What does taking part in the city look like? Do you participate?" After their interviews are translated and transcribed into English, results will be posted on the diptych-style website and hopefully used as a resource for international community-based organizations to share participatory practices.

In my opinion, the most important information came during Kirsten and Karin's description of the "ART" in "pARTicipatory" and its place in the formation of not only the city, but its citizens. Quoting Clare Bishop, Karin says:

*"The artist is no longer the sole creator,  
The audience is no longer the passive spectator,  
The object, is not an object, but a process."*

What we find is that these diverse organizations not only engage with their goals for enacting community transformation on a daily basis, but also grapple with the meaning and social process of forming the "citizen." Classically, citizenship involves adopting a set of rights and privileges in exchange for other freedoms as defined by statutory law. Citizenship then, by default, inherits a notion of belonging to, or being welcomed into, a group or larger body

of fellow citizens. This two-fold definition, one being a strict political procedure and the other involving a more esoteric formation, is at the heart of pARTicipatory Urbanisms. Chintan, an informal waste workers collective in New Delhi states that an urban citizen should have a basic standard of living and access to the city. Cia Antropofágica, a street theatre collective from São Paulo, did not claim to have a political stance or assertion on the topic but did state quite emphatically that, "We do not have direct politics, but if a politician wanted to become a magician, and didn't, isn't that political?"

In both cases we were challenged to consider the periphery of urban environments, the social periphery and geographic periphery, or the peri-urban. The peri-urban is home to the most rapidly growing population of working class citizens, immigrants and urban poor in major metropolises worldwide. These urban environments are often reflective of apathetic, remiss governments whose relationship with their citizens is akin to that of an absent, negligent, and sometimes blatantly abusive, parent. Basic services and access to a dignified way of life are not promised. As we may come to discover, the formation of the "citizen," an oftentimes politically empowered character, is not what we find. Instead, a new definition of "citizen" may be more appropriate.

As previously mentioned, art and politics do not seem like the most similar of traditions, however, both have intermingled since their earliest conceptions. From the brazen street installations of Banksy to the behind-the-scenes conversations with Louis "Satchmo" Armstrong, art and collective voice have been exercised to reject cultural assimilation, subvert hegemony, and to assert oneself into and onto the urban landscape.

Thomas Brothers writes in Louis Armstrong's New Orleans that Louis Armstrong's disinterest in cultural assimilation was "an indication of psychological security and confidence... It may also be taken as a political stance. To insist on the value of vernacular culture and to reject assimilation was not an idle position to take," and still isn't to this day. Perhaps the essence of citizenship, then, is the psychological security and confidence expressed by those participatory organizations on the periphery, the outliers engaged in vernacular culture. Via participatory processes citizen groups acknowledge and engage with their commonalities, their common work and common struggle in the city in which they dwell, and recognize that by virtue of existing,

that the “belonging” one feels as an attribute of citizenship is the blood, the beating pulse of what it means to be a citizen. As for the aforementioned “politically empowered character,” well, I’d say that is a matter of perspective.

Our bustling metropolises are not only synonymous with the often political contestation of physical space and geographic place, but are now (one could say “still”) the epicenters of where the evolving nature of what it means to be a “citizen” is challenged. pARTicipatory Urbanisms will surely take our understanding of participation and citizenship to new progressions and more importantly serve as a positive, transformative tool for international grassroots organizing.



# REDIRECTING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TECH AND INNOVATION

October 2014

By Robyn Perry

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*On October 16, 2014, Shanon Steen presented research from her project “Creative Class Civil Wars,” which explores the ways our concepts of creativity are shifting to exclude those in the arts.*

*Robyn Perry is a candidate for the Master of Information and Management Systems degree at the UC Berkeley School of Information.*

*“The notion that diversity in an early team is important or good is completely wrong. You should try to make the early team as non-diverse as possible.”*

*– Max Levchin, co-founder of PayPal*

*“I want to stress the importance of being young and technical. Young people are just smarter.”*

*– Mark Zuckerberg, founder of Facebook*

Shannon Steen’s recent talk, Creative Class Civil Wars: Displacement and the Arts in the Bay Area, situated the broad question of how US cities are changing economically in a discussion that touched upon my own studies of technology and culture at the School of Information. Steen used Richard Florida’s notion of the “rising creative class” as the focal point of an examination of the state of art and artists, and the shrinking support of the infrastructure that sustains their work and enlivens our American cities.

Florida propounds the rising creative class as the solution to struggling cities, perhaps the most recent in a line of silver bullet strategies for urban renewal, as a commenter aptly pointed out in the discussion following Steen’s talk. Though the “creative class” sounds like artists of all stripes, Florida’s analysis leans away from the (struggling) thespian, painter, poet or muralist, and towards the oft-lauded tech worker. Many cities have created favorable conditions to usher in this tech worker, his company, and his future startup. Some of the I School curriculum is designed to funnel

more workers, albeit thoughtful and informed ones, directly into Florida’s creative class. In effect, Florida drops the actual artist from said creative class. What he offers instead is an ode to the tech workers, the “productive” creative class that brings innovation, “disruption,” and infallible youth.

Particularly interesting was Steen’s guidance through the history of creativity as a notion in Western culture, and its move from the exclusive domain of God to that of the Renaissance artist, the elitism of artist as distinct from artisan in the 19th Century, to the scientific study and intentional propagation of creativity in children in the modern era, which saw the beginning of the removal of the artist from her authoritative position on creativity. Steen’s talk brought into relief the fact that the current notion of creativity, like many other commodities in US culture, is something we think we can manufacture on demand, and something that we can grow, as if in a Petri dish, if only we arrange the right conditions for it. Many use the existence and bustling churn of Silicon Valley to evidence the fact that indeed, creativity is being pumped out by the hundreds of startups and apps and interfaces.



From an April Fool’s Day action by activist group Heart of the City and artist/interventionist Leslie Dreyer of Google bus action fame. Activists blocked buses and announced that a new service, GMuni, would be offering free transit for all.

However, this is all taking place at the risk of the heart and soul of our cities, and artists themselves. As “old-fashioned” creatives

like playwrights, poets, writers, potters, sculptors, and their ilk are forced to resort to Indiegogo and other crowd-sourced funding strategies for one-off projects, their ability to thrive and produce art in the city withers. Meanwhile, the tech companies that are operating in the physical world are raising skepticism that this kind of “innovation” is at all good for San Francisco. On the contrary, it has spawned (some) companies that are capitalizing on public goods, sometimes with unabashed greed and opportunism. After Steen’s talk, I wondered how the burgeoning tech worker community might put some of their high incomes towards strengthening the arts in our cities. Although I’m skeptical that the problem would be solved by the very forces that have caused it, it would be interesting to challenge the Valley to produce a startup that makes the crowd-sourced funding of arts infrastructure extremely easy, fun, and hip.

Steen’s talk drove home the fact that there’s a direct interplay between the elements that make San Francisco and its surrounding cities the place to be, and those that forewarn its decline. Those of us at the I School have the responsibility to double-down on our efforts to be thoughtful and discerning in our contributions to innovative technologies, and tread lightly in a city that was made cool long before we came on the scene. Given a recent article by Carlos Bueno in Quartz from which the quotes at the top of this post were drawn, the tech worker culture of Silicon Valley has tended towards insularity and in-crowd behaviors. I can’t think of a better antidote to such insular clique-ishness than a thriving and protected arts culture in the Bay Area.



# THE SOUND OF URBAN SPECTACLE

October 2014

By Swetha Vijayakumar

On October 23, 2014, Nicholas Mathew presented on the role of music and sound in the emergence of modern civic sensibilities in Napoleonic Vienna, and how printed music came to shape a new politics of urban pedestrianism.

Swetha Vijayakumar is a PhD student studying the History of Architecture and Urbanism.

*“The spectacle is not a collection of images; rather, it is a social relationship between people that is mediated by images.”*

- Guy Debord, *The Society of Spectacle*

In 1967, Guy Debord offered a radical critique on modern societies in his book *The Society of Spectacle* by arguing that the nature of society changes with the advent of mass media. Raymond Williams in his book *Keywords* (1985) describes “Spectacle” as a “Theory of Sight.” While much has been said about the role of sight in the making of a spectacle, Nicholas Mathew presents a new component of spectacles. He throws light on the role of sound in creating urban spectacles. In his presentation titled “Urban Space, Spectacle, Memory and Music in Nineteenth-Century Vienna,” Mathew discusses the relationship between music and social life, and the making of public spectacles in 19th century Vienna. The images of the 1814 Vienna Prater Fest that Mathew showed are depictive of this, illustrating many people gathered to witness a musical performance. It was described as “a poetic and sublime scene beyond description.” “Spectacle” in the Oxford English Dictionary is defined as “a person or thing exhibited to, or set before, the public gaze as an object either (a) of curiosity or contempt, or (b) of marvel or admiration.” For the burgeoning middle class in the 19th century, a large concert by a famous musician like Beethoven was not only a marvel of music but also a sight to behold. Beethoven’s piece that Mathew played during the presentation, when first performed in Vienna, he explains, was as visually captivating as it was musical. The Victory Music was intended to re-create the imageries from a

battlefield for all those who weren’t present. The orchestra, divided into two parts, marched onto the stage from two sides and met in the middle to perform this piece.



Image showing a huge gathering of people on the other side of the bridge – Prater-Fest, Vienna 1814. Image courtesy of Nicholas Mathew.

Vienna is the capital and largest city of Austria. It has had a long-standing tradition of classical music, where several famous musicians like Mozart, Joseph Haydn, Beethoven, Franz Schubert, Johannes Brahms, Gustav Mahler, and Arnold Schoenberg lived and worked. Vienna houses some of the best opera houses, theatres, and concert spaces in the world. Viennese Balls are major tourist attractions, and have been a part of the city’s cultural legacy since the 19th century. These Balls are night-long events held in large concert halls or opera houses where up to nine live orchestras perform together. Music is often said to be a key part of Viennese culture and urban life. Mathew briefly discussed the role music plays as an instrument for political expression. In Napoleonic Vienna, musical compositions were often responsible for shaping new public experiences in urban spaces.

The new musical compositions reflected changes in society and responded to them in various ways. With the advent of a new class of bourgeoisie, the classical period in Vienna (late 18th century to early 19th century) was when public concerts were first held on a large scale, and became an important part of daily life in the city.

The moving away of musical performances from courtly rooms to the public sphere was reflective of an egalitarian nature of music.



Ignaz Von Mosel, an 18th century Austrian composer, notes here the bonding effect of music:

*Here music daily performs the miracle that is only otherwise attributed to Love: it makes people of all social stations equal. Members of the nobility and of the bourgeoisie, princes and their retainers, those in authority and those beneath them sit together at one music stand, the harmony of the music making them oblivious to the disharmony of their social standing.*

In a city like Vienna, which has a strong classical tradition, and which in the 19th century was arguably at the forefront of radical musical creations, the city itself becomes a living museum for showcasing past musical traditions. The place is simultaneously both real and imagined. In his famous book *Practice of Everyday Life*, Michel de Certeau compares the act of walking to speech:

*The act of walking is to the urban system what the speech act is to language. It is a process of appropriation of the topographical system on the part of the pedestrian (just as the speaker appropriates and takes on the language); it is a spatial acting-out of the place (just as the speech act is an acoustic acting-out of language).*

Here the city can be thought of as the metaphorical theatrical space of everyday life. Then, to quote Mathew, “public would be actors. They will be both spectators and performers in the city.” Lefebvre describes the experience of the “polyrhythms” of the city as “he who walks down the street is immersed in the multiplicity of noises, murmurs, rhythms.” Mathew’s presentation of the role of music in creating new civic sensibilities in 19th century Vienna can be understood as the historical backdrop for the impact that thousands of live concerts and public performances have on public life. Music, even today, has the potential to create an urban spectacle like no other.

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# BAY AREA LANDSCAPES AND THE CONFLICT OVER OPEN SPACE

October 2014

By Alana MacWhorter

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*On October 30, 2014, Susan Moffat presented on The Atlas of the Albany Bulb, her oral history and mapping project about a landfill on the eastern shore of San Francisco Bay, which has been the location of bitter battles between people holding different notions of the proper uses of public space, and of what a park should be.*

*Alana MacWhorter is a graduate student at the UC Berkeley College of Environmental Design working toward a joint degree in Landscape Architecture and Urban Design.*

Susan Moffat, project director of the Global Urban Humanities Initiative at UC Berkeley, presented an overview of the politics and history of Albany Bulb this past week through her work, The Atlas of the Albany Bulb-- an oral history and mapping project of the Bulb and the community formed on the repurposed Bay fill landscape.

The complex rhetoric framing the site's interweaving cultural and natural landscapes sheds light on the deeply emotional conflict over open space management and the displacement of the Bulb's temporary residents. In order to thoughtfully delve into the politics of the contested Albany Bulb, we must reflect on the impact of overarching competing Bay Area narratives by environmentalists, social justice activists and bohemians. All of these are juxtaposed to expose a lack of intersecting discourses addressing these landscape typologies embedded with conceptions of divergent cultural and ecological meaning. Therefore, our contemporary activists are without the necessary toolkits to address both the aesthetics of and access to "wilderness" within the region, as well as the politics of representation in such landscapes.

This spurs self-critique--are we a progressive region accepting of hybrid landscapes of "wilderness" and diverse groups of people, or are we only comfortable within our own

homogeneous niches? Must we feel comfortable in every context and with all groups of people and types of environments? If that's not necessary, must we still continue to intensify the stark binaries of such environments, or can we acknowledge and respect the proclaimed multicultural, ecologically diverse landscapes that comprise the Bay Area?



Image courtesy of Susan Moffat

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# EXPLORING NEIGHBORHOOD BOUNDARIES AND TRANSFORMING COMMUNITY

November 2014

By Yuqing Nie

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*On November 6, 2014, Sue Mark and Anisha Gade discussed their project, *Communities' Crossing*, a creative placemaking effort along San Pablo Avenue.*

*Yuqing Nie is a candidate for the MArch degree at UC Berkeley.*

Last week, artist Sue Mark and urban planner/design researcher Anisha Gade gave a talk on their latest creative place-making effort in NOBE (North Oakland, Berkeley, Emeryville). They shared their thoughts on how the cultural project can effectively engage local community groups and shape their sense of identity under the context of gentrification.

Their conversation reflected on the relationships between people and the city. Urban planners and social practice designers should take these dynamic relationships especially seriously. Their project preparation starts with simply walking the streets of Oakland in order to find the boundaries of its neighborhoods. Those boundaries are often blurry and the effort of drawing definite boundaries proved to be impossible, in that the flow of the people, landscape and history are not restricted by arbitrary boundaries. But the walking exercise was a crucial part of preparing for the project because it let Sue and Anisha become fully immersed in the city. Only in this way can a person get a true sense of the city and community identity.

Later in the lecture, Sue addressed the importance of setting and format when prompting community engagement. She had originally wanted to start a discussion about Oakland in the public library. However, she later found that a walking discussion in the streets was more appealing than leading a panel discussion in a crowded dark room. So, she moved the discussion outdoors and the event turned out to be a great success with 75 people showing up to engage in a meaningful discussion while actually experiencing the city's presence.

Although Sue and Anisha's place-making project is primarily centered on the community, Sue acknowledged that "logic of the place will rule the work rather than the logic of the community." But they believe that functional relationships between authority (government bodies), organizations and the community are crucial in the construction and success of the project even as they actively probe and prioritize the needs of the community. As a result, their community engagement works heavily towards promoting the wellbeing of the local people. By retrieving the personal stories and history of the community, their place-making project provides a cultural force to unify the local dwellers under the wave of gentrification. By organizing public discussion and thought-provoking activity, their project also serves an important role in transforming the community.



*Communities Crossing* participants. Image courtesy of Gene Anderson

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# TOKYO'S FLOW: THE IMPORTANCE OF MATERIAL IN HISTORICAL TOKYO

November 2014

By Yael Hadar

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*On November 20, 2014, Professor Jordan Sand presented his research on the activities of a Tokyo slumlord at the turn of the 20th century. Yael Hadar is a graduate student in the UC Berkeley Department of Landscape Architecture and Environmental Planning.*

No phenomenon can be explained outside of its context. In his lecture, "Lessons in Slum Non-Clearance from the World's First Megacity," Professor Jordan Sand talks about the historical context in which Edo became Tokyo, the largest metropolitan area in the world.

Professor Sand addressed in his lecture two things that I found fascinating. One was the idea of fire as a force that shapes the city and its population. The other was the idea of materials and the flow of materials.

The buildings in Edo were destroyed by fire approximately once every 5 to 10 years. The temporality of place made investments in real estate not worthwhile. In this setting, Professor Sand brings the unique story of Osaki Tatsugoro, an illiterate builder who purchased peripheral land at the end of the 19th century and built a neighborhood called Nishimaru-cho that had approximately 300 housing units.

What I found most interesting about Osaki's story is the lease agreement he had his tenants sign in which the tenants gave away their right to all the human waste they produced at the site so that Osaki could sell it as fertilizer. The lease agreement also states that when a tenant does not follow said agreement, Osaki is allowed to take out all the outside shutters and floor boards from the house to deter the tenant from staying.

This relates directly to a finding Professor Sand presented in the form of an image of what people from Edo took with them in the case of fire--their textiles, floor boards and movable doors.

Both of those examples, Osaki's lease and the image of what people chose to save from fire, can teach us the importance of movable materials in historical Tokyo. When everything can be destroyed quickly, things need to be moved quickly. This, Professor Sand says, can teach us about the importance of flow. When we come to look at a city like Tokyo we should consider looking at the movement of materials, the movement of "stuff," rather than try to investigate the space, as it might be that those are still the things that are valued in a place like Tokyo.



*Edo Period fire print. Image courtesy of Jordan Sand*

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READING CITIES, SENSING CITIES  
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