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MAS CONTEXT

MAS CONTEXT  
**PUBLIC**

ISSUE 8 WINTER 10



8 | PUBLIC WINTER 10

MAS STUDIO

Albert Siefert Points Out Highlights of Apollo 10 Liftoff to Belgium King and Queen © NASA

## 8 | **PUBLIC WINTER 10**

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Go public. From the successful spaces designed to be enjoyed by the community to the tools citizens have to influence those areas, common or not. From new design methods that create extraordinary opportunities to decisions that challenge our basic public structures. And all this through documentation, investigation and idealization of what can be done; because we believe in the power of PUBLIC. Yes, that is you.

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MAS Context is a quarterly journal created by MAS Studio that addresses issues that affect the urban context. Its aim is to provide a comprehensive view of a topic by the active participation of people from different fields and different perspectives. It instigates the debate.

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# Demand and Propose

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Issue statement by **Iker Gil**, editor in chief of **MAS Context**

*“Before it was a vacant lot. Now it is no longer a vacant lot but a public space that generates life in the neighborhood and supports new activities.*

*Our goal: to make the vacant lots ‘100% available’ ”*

estonoesunsolar

We should be in charge of our cities. We work, live and play in them. We meet, greet, eat and discover new things in them daily. I say ‘should’ because we don’t. We wait passively until some politician makes a decision — a moment that is usually used to criticize that decision. While it is true that a political leader should make decisions, why is the PUBLIC always waiting for someone else to decide? Why react when we can act? We want a PUBLIC that demands more and proposes more. A PUBLIC that understands the consequences of the laws and legislations approved by their leaders. A PUBLIC that stands up for the things that don’t benefit the community as a whole. We pay taxes and we should demand the most out of them. Demanding constructive discussion, providing other options and provoking a dialogue that will ultimately provide the best decision possible — for the PUBLIC.

Architect Lick Fai Eric Ho opens this issue by proposing a new way of approaching design. One that is generated from the bottom-up, that “understands the economic and social value of not only the sharing of resources, but also the cultivation of individual ideas through open collaboration, towards the possibility of an everyday culture and attitude towards design.”

Through his fictional images that narrow the streets of Los Angeles, David Yoon explores what type of city and mood those new streets would create. His fictional depictions of the streets, while they are not literal proposals, provide alternate frames for discussing whether another city is possible: one that puts human scale in the foreground.



The exploration of the street as a public space continues with the photographs by Rob Smith that document the everyday life in the streets of Shanghai. They are the natural extension to the public and private activities happening in the buildings nearby. Suddenly streets become living rooms, dining rooms, barbershops, libraries or repair shops.

LabRAD, the virtual hub for designers from various schools of architecture formed by Wayne Congar and Arielle Assouline-Lichten, proposes a new national building in their awarded proposal for the White House Redux competition. As explained in their statement, the current White House “is the final and most formidable roadblock prohibiting dialogue between the public and political power players. White House 2.0 is an open-source solution, designed to facilitate a symbiotic information exchange...with the aim of creating more effective legislation and elevating the role of the public in the political process.”

We looked at Superfund, the federal government’s program to clean up the nation’s uncontrolled hazardous waste sites. Through the visualizations by Andrew Clark and his research along with Matthew Hoffman, we start to comprehend how, where, and why the consequences of our seeping industrial past and present, legislation included, are sticking around for the next few generations.

Looking at the consequences of legislation in other locales, we paid special attention to the situation in New Orleans regarding its public housing and mid-century public schools. Architect Edward Emile Richardson explains the impact that the public housing laws





have had in the public housing system in the city after Hurricane Katrina. Francine Stock, president of DOCOMOMO US/Louisiana, writes about the current situation of the mid-century public schools in the city. Either demolished or in danger of demolition, these structures represent a type of architecture that was forward thinking and innovative in the way they were built and used by the public. The process to discuss their future when they become obsolete has failed to provide a fair space to listen to new options. Can we establish another way of approaching this problem?

We also showcased specific public buildings and spaces that are successful in their approach, process and result. The European Award for Urban Public Space selected this year two projects as joint winners: the Open-Air Library in Magdeburg (Germany) by KARO\* with Architectur + Netzwerk and the Norwegian National Opera and Ballet in Oslo (Norway) by Snøhetta. When your building, in this case the Open-Air Library, does not need any type of control and the residents call it the “library of confidence,” you know you have given them something that they have successfully embraced. Our third selected project, El Peine del Viento (Wind Comb), is the emblem of a city, embraced by citizens and visitors and the gift to its native city of the sculptor Eduardo Chillida and the architect Luis Peña Ganchequi. We talked to Luis Chillida, son of the sculptor in Chillida-Leku, the marvelous and indispensable museum of Eduardo Chillida, about this project.

And we finally asked you, our PUBLIC, about your favorite public space. A variety of places in many settings that make us ponder the big and the small aspects that help us enjoy a public space.

Enjoy the issue that closes our second year. And remember, when we say PUBLIC, we mean you. Go out there, demand and propose. Get PUBLIC with your ideas.

All images accompanying this text are interventions in vacant lots of the city of Zaragoza, Spain, during 2009 and 2010 by **estonoesunsolar**. **estonoesunsolar** is an initiative promoted by the Sociedad Municipal Zaragoza Vivienda and led by architects Patrizia di Monte and Ignacio Gravalos Lacambra.

For more information please visit [estonoesunsolar.wordpress.com](http://estonoesunsolar.wordpress.com)



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Visualization by Andrew Clark.  
Research by Andrew Clark & Matthew Hoffman

ROETHYLENE | DIELDRIN | CHROMIUM, HEXAVALENT  
DE, P,P'- | HEXACHLOROBUTADIENE | COAL TAR CREC  
ROCLOR 1248 | CYANIDE | AROCLOR 1242 | AROCLOR  
E, GAMMA-3 | TETRACHLOROETHYLENE | HEPTACHLOR  
DIOCYCLOHEXANE - BETA | ACROLEIN | DISULFOTO  
E | 1,3,5-TRICHLOROBENZENE | ENDRIN | BERYLLIUM  
BROMO-3-CHLOROPROPANE | PENTACHLOROPHENO  
TRACHLORIDE | AROCLOR 1221 | COBALT | DDT, O,P'  
TE | NICKEL | ENDOSULFAN | ENDOSULFAN SULFATE  
SULFAN, ALPHA | XYLENES, TOTAL | CIS-CHLORDANE  
CHLOR | BENZOCYFLODANTHENE | ENDRIN, KETONE  
JE | METHANE | ENDOSULFAN, BETA | AROCLOR 1237  
FLUORANTHENE | TOLUENE | 2-HEXANONE | 2,3,7,8  
METHYLARSONIC ACID | DI(2-ETHYLHEXYL)PHTHALATE  
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# Open manifesto for mass creation

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Essay by **Lick Fai Eric Ho**, architect and a founding member of **Tsunami Design Initiative**



Fueled by capitalism, the generic architecture that we commonly find is increasingly bland and overwhelmed with sameness. The seductive pool of “programmable alchemy” [1] that Rem Koolhaas called for in *Bigness* rarely occurs in a mixed-use commercial development. Dominated by the same forces shaping such developments, mixed-program is often boiled down to a same formula comprising of chain-stores including a gym, a bookstore, a supermarket, perhaps a home-improvement mega-store and a bank at the most valuable corner spot.

In the third-world, most informal economies are based on off-the-grid networks. Cell-phones hold the key to information dissemination, economic activities, and power. With ad-hoc power supply such as solar power independent of any infrastructural system, polycentric nodes of networks appear in an opposite nature to that of the infrastructure of the developed-world. The collective of individuals form a collaborative network in contrast to hegemonic consumerism. The same is also occurring, perhaps at a higher speed and more heightened level of change in the developed world where web 2.0 and social media is maturing and entering the life of anyone with access to the internet. It no doubt creates a new form of public sphere in our society, changes the way we interact, discuss issues, share half-baked thoughts, or post the status of every second of our lives.

What we see in this notion of collaborative network is the potential for the generation of a bottom-up design methodology, an informal ‘idea-infrastructure’ formed by the process of co-designing with public opinion involving a multitude of voices - a truer design process that is more representative of our pluralistic society. With movements such as ‘multitude’ and ‘collaborative consumption’, we are beginning to see the economic and social value of not only the sharing of resources, but also the cultivation of individual ideas through open collaboration, towards the possibility of an everyday culture and attitude towards design.

### From collaborative consumption to collaborative creation

‘Collaborative consumption describes the rapid explosion in traditional sharing, bartering, lending, trading, renting, gifting, and swapping reinvented through network technologies on a scale and in ways never possible before.’ [2]

1. Bigness, S,M,L,XL,  
Rem Koolhaas,  
p494

2. The Rise of  
Collaborative  
Consumption,  
Rachel Botsman  
and Roos Rogers



Car-sharing, apartment-sharing, swap-trading has become more of a commonplace in our society with the success of entities such as Zipcar, Airbnb, CouchSurfing, Netflix, SwapTree, BookMooch, etc. The culture of massive consumption has given a face-lift. By reinventing the redistribution channel, we are enjoying access to resources that we do not necessarily need to own individually. Technology and social media have also reinterpreted our lifestyles. Blogging, twittering, has all contribute to a collaborative and sharing lifestyle that transcends geographical boundaries and time. By short circuiting the middleman, the crowd is taking on a new consumption pattern in contrast to hegemonic capitalism through technological breakthroughs.

If such a collaborative and technological network is taking on a new role for consumption, the same infrastructure could be utilized for its role in creativity. Creative Commons, a nonprofit that promotes the sharing of creative work, gives a new definition for of “copyright”, “For those creators wishing to opt out of the copyright altogether, Creative Commons helps them do so by providing tools that allow you to place your work as squarely as possible within the public domain - a 'no rights reserved' alternative to copyright.” [3] Authorship has always been the guarded gem of creativity because when one idea is copied, the economic value an idea is lost. With collaborative creation, there is no single author. Multiple authors contribute to a same pool, and extracting from the same pool, rift and borrow from others, while all participants benefit from the inspiration, feedback, and expertise that not one individual could enjoy alone. Essentially the

3. Creative  
Commons.com



idea that one plus one equals to more than two. The same problematic is stretched to a different level of perspective given the diversity and synergy of its authors, making the solution more versatile, adaptable, and transformable. Of course the economic benefit is hard to measure, but it is a leap of faith that such a culture would create a cascading effect that is larger than just any one individual project.

In the theater arts, devising theater has been a more experimental form of performance in which multiple actors contribute to a play in which there is no screenplay. “It is determined and defined by a group of people who set up an initial framework or structure to explore and experiment with ideas, images, concepts, themes, or specific stimuli that might include music, text, objects, paintings, or movement... Devising is a process of making theater that enables a group of performers to be physically and practically creative in the sharing and shaping of an original product that directly emanates from assembling, editing, and re-shaping individual's contradictory experiences of the world. There is a freedom of possibilities for all those involved to discover; an emphasis on a way of working that supports intuition, spontaneity, and an accumulation of ideas. The process of devising is about the fragmentary experience of understanding ourselves, our culture, and the world we inhabit. The process reflects a multi-vision made up of each group members' individual perception of that world as received in a series of images, then interpreted and defined as a product. Participants make sense of themselves within their own cultural and social context, investigating, integrating, and transforming their personal experiences, dreams, research, improvisation, and experimentation. Devising is about thinking, conceiving, and forming ideas, being imaginative and spontaneous, as well as planning. It is about inventing, adapting, and creating what you do as a group.” [4] The notion of the experimentation of specific concepts and stimuli is particularly inspiring. As these notions could be presented to the public for a process of interpretation that would yield results that are unpredictable and challenges the status quo.

But what is the ultimate benefit of a 'devising' architecture? The idea is simple: that bottom-up and original ideas can challenge preconceived notions of what architecture is and can do. On one hand it challenges the production of architecture, and on the other the self-organization and self-actualization aspect of its participants, in other words, the cultivation of a creative culture in the public.

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4. Devising Theater: A Practical and Theoretical Handbook, Alison Oddey, p1

### Multiplicitous Desires

*“It is not, therefore, for us to bear the responsibility and task to ‘initiate change’, but rather simply to live its ethos, to produce its culture, to ceaselessly speculate and project, and to depend on its statistical distribution, its macroscopic determinacy... organization (design) need not be a reality itself – condemning us to mystical naturalism – but a negotiation between the real and what is merely imagined, felt, intuited, or anticipated.”*

*Sanford Kwinter [5]*

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5. Confession of an Organicist, Log 5, Sanford Kwinter

Traditionally an architect's client would define site, budget, program, and the architect would determine a form and expression to satisfy the client's desires. Such desires can vary from maximizing plot ratio for maximum profit, to building a world-class museum that operates solely on its aesthetic appeal. In such context, there is hardly any room for reinterpretation from the public. The public is a passive receiver. Even the most mature and elaborated community buy-in process would involve the architect drawing out a client's needs and then asking the community for their input on different proposals that were predetermined within a range of the client's desires. The public is still a passive receiver, even though they appear to be given a certain liberty of choice.

What if we start the process from the other end of the spectrum, and attempt to first extract the public's desire? What we traditionally understand as a public architectural typology needs a redefinition. While traditionally public architecture is defined by its function, scale and how architectural expressions signify its public importance, the new public typology is defined by the public process that gives birth to such a building. The form of this new public is hard to conceive, since it is liberated from site, budget, program and client, the traditional elements that are fixed in architecture. It is liberated from program because it is organically formed by public opinion. It is liberated from site because anyone could adopt and use the mass-developed programs where it see fits. It is liberated from budget because the same program could be developed at different sites with different scales. It is liberated from client because there is no one person to drive the program and design, but everybody can initiate change and harvest from a collective and collaborative pool of resources and designs that are developed for different functions and purposes.

In this context we must accept the fact that our societal values are massively different, and therefore a singular notion of a design solution would never satisfy the desire of the pluralistic public. The ground rules of such a project is then flipped. If notions such as change, multiplicity, and hybridization are our constants, and site, budget, clients are our variables, how would we conceive such a project?

Howard Moskowitz, a psychophysicist active in the food-tasting industry gave us a good reference of how one single solution could never satisfy the mass, “Moskowitz set up shop in the seventies, and one of his first clients was Pepsi. The artificial sweetener aspartame had just become available, and Pepsi wanted Moskowitz to figure out the perfect amount of sweetener for a can of Diet Pepsi. Pepsi knew that anything below eight per cent sweetness was not sweet enough and anything over twelve per cent was too sweet. So Moskowitz did the logical thing. He made up experimental batches of Diet Pepsi with every conceivable degree of sweetness—8 per cent, 8.25 per cent, 8.5, and on and on up to 12—gave them to hundreds of people, and looked for the concentration that people liked the most. But the data were a mess—there wasn't a pattern—and one day, sitting in a diner, Moskowitz realized why. They had been asking the wrong question. There was no such thing as the perfect Diet Pepsi. They should have been looking for the perfect Diet Pepsis.” [6]

On another occasion, Moskowitz was questioning the public to find a public desire that had not yet existed, “Standard practice in the food industry would have been to convene a focus group and ask spaghetti eaters what they wanted. But Moskowitz does not believe that consumers—even spaghetti lovers—know what they desire if what they desire does not yet exist. “The mind,” as Moskowitz is fond of saying, “knows not what the tongue wants.” Instead, working with the Campbell's kitchens, he came up with forty-five varieties of spaghetti sauce. These were designed to differ in every conceivable way: spiciness, sweetness, tartness, saltiness, thickness, aroma, mouth feel, cost of ingredients, and so forth. He had a trained panel of food tasters analyze each of those varieties in depth. Then he took the prototypes on the road—to New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, and Jacksonville—and asked people in groups of twenty-five to eat between eight and ten small bowls of different spaghetti sauces over two hours and rate them on a scale of one to a hundred. When Moskowitz charted the results, he saw that everyone had a slightly

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6. The Ketchup Conundrum, September 6, 2004, The New Yorker, Malcolm Gladwell

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7. Ibid

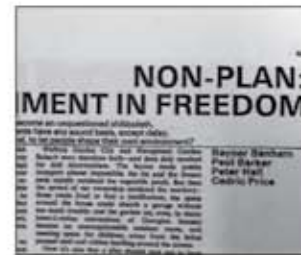
different definition of what a perfect spaghetti sauce tasted like. If you sifted carefully through the data, though, you could find patterns, and Moskowitz learned that most people's preferences fell into one of three broad groups: plain, spicy, and extra-chunky, and of those three the last was the most important. Why? Because at the time there was no extra-chunky spaghetti sauce in the supermarket.” [7]

To equate spaghetti sauce or Pepsis to architecture is a slippery road. But the fact is that most architecture that we find are very much produced by the same kind of cookie-cutter, even though they come in all kinds and shapes, the challenge is to find the process of conceiving this 'extra-chunky spaghetti sauce' in architecture. The problem is not what form of architecture we want, but how architecture is conceived as a cultural process in the public sphere, and how to stimulate the public for multiple desires that they are yet to find out. For a simple question that is prompted for the public, the result would almost always be plural rather than singular.

#### Four Open Trajectories

There has been a rich history of architects and urban planners advocating open processes of design. I would categorize these into four trajectories. The first involves the establishment of a free and open planning system that is non-prescriptive. Reyner Banham, Paul Barker, Peter Hall, Cedric Price's “Non-plan” (1969) openly challenges the model of urban planning pre-determined by functions specified by 'experts', what Paul Barker noted as 'essentially a very humble idea: that it is very difficult to decide what is best for other people'. Peter Hall further pushed this agenda and led to the establishment of enterprise zones in the UK, and notable success in the London Docklands which converted derelict industrial area into a successful financial district by alleviating tax and planning restrictions.

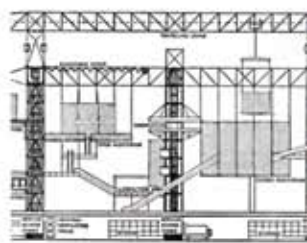
The second trajectory involves the empowerment of the individual and the public in the public decision process of planning. Paul Davidoff's “Advocacy and pluralism in planning” (1965) suggests planner operate like attorneys to support individual and community interests. There is an urge to directly connect the individuals and empower them in the decision making process. This led to a lot of influence in the United Nations and the way transitional housing and post-disaster or refuge housing are planned, empowering the community in the decision making process of newly constructed settlements, towns and



PLANNING FREEDOM

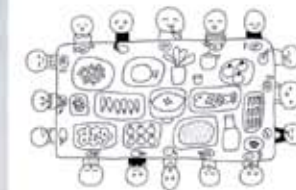


INDIVIDUAL EMPOWERMENT



ANTICIPATORY ARCHITECTURE

EVENTS



1. Non-plan: Reyner Banham, Cedric Price, Peter Hall, Paul Barker
2. Map of Enterprise Zones, UK
3. Game for masses, Future Farmers
4. Community Design Model, Art and Sustainability Laboratory, Stephanie Smith
5. Fun Palace, Cedric Price
6. Pompidou Center, Renzo Piano and Richard Rogers

7. Wily Theater, REX/OMA
8. Elemental Housing, Alejandro Aravena
9. A housing Urbanism made of waste, Estudio Teddy Cruz
10. Berlin Masques, John Hedjuk
11. Manhattan Transcript, Bernard Tschumi
12. Open Helsinki, Sitra and OK Do



city. This also led to the development of 'community design centers', which became 'the staging ground for professionals to represent the interests of disenfranchised community groups.' [8] These centers are still active in many cities across the US.

The third trajectory is an open building or indeterminate building process, perhaps best coined by John Habraken in 'Supports: an alternative to mass housing' (1961). In this model the architect designs the more permanent framework and infrastructure and the inhabitants can modify the less permanent components such as partitions and facade systems. In this process user participation operates at a smaller scale and a later phase. This trajectory also have many variations shared by and not limited to Herman Hertzberger, Cedric Price, Yona Friedman, Arata Isozaki. Cedric Price's Fun Palace (1960) was visionary in the way programs are transformable and indeterminate, which became a strong influence in the design of Centre Pompidou. The groups Metabolists and Archigram also share similar notion of infrastructure with plug-in and mobile components, although operating at an even larger city-wide scale. This trajectory still has a strong impact in a lot of contemporary work. Elemental by Alejandro Aravena operates exactly from the 'core and infill' concept where the vital half of the building which includes amenities is built, and participants fill in the rest of the structure according to their own budget and aesthetic preferences. They have successfully built quality low-cost housing projects in Chile and Mexico recently using this methodology. REX / OMA's Wily Theater, in a very different manner, addresses a 'transformable' theatrical machine that is adaptable to various events within the same genre of Fun Palace. Teddy Cruz takes this concept even further by adopting and learning informal architecture and shanty towns such as Tijuana and layering indeterminate and 'incubating programs' as a process of social change led by inhabitants.

The fourth trajectory deals with events at the public level that engage users less explicitly. This trajectory does not necessarily asks the users directly for their opinions and participation, nor does it empower the individuals through a decision making process, but indirectly recognizes and reads a city infused by activities and interactions between the inhabitants. Jane Jacob's 'The death and life of great american cities' (1961) embraces the power of neighbors and neighborhood. Michel de Certeau's 'Practice of everyday life' (1984)

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8. Community Participation Methods in design and Planning, Henry Sanoff, p4

engages the city as a text that is read and written by its very own citizen. I would also argue that John Hedjuk's 'Berlin Masques' (1979-83), and Bernard Tschumi's 'Manhattan Transcript' (1976-81) also operates in this genre. Their work questions of relationships between the city and its inhabitants in terms of time, events, movement, etc. They probe into the more subjective realms of folklore, individualities sponsored by the most spontaneous, unpredictable aspect of the public: human nature. This trajectory offer the widest and often most unexpected tract of research and experimentation.

The four trajectories vary in the degree of public engagement and control. They offer a backbone and framework towards a collaborative process. It is possible that for some instances, the solution is not to build anything but to impose events and programs. And for other instances, the solution would be a policy versus actual architecture. Yet for others, a new typology of architecture would be needed for a collaborative process. The balance of planning freedom, individual empowerment, anticipatory architecture, and public events gives us four powerful processes as a starting point for further action. Although with open participation and anticipatory framework in principle, these processes are either singularly conceived with a dominant author or a dominant ideology that influence changes from top-town, or are conceived to read the city and environment passively as a description and observation.

### **A Pluralistic Public Sphere of Design and Public Sphere of Production**

In 'Multitude', Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri argued that "we are entering an era where the ruled now tend to the the exclusive producers of social organization... not only is it not necessary for the one to rule (one referring to one entity such as a monarch or a political party), but in fact that the one never rules! In contrast to the transcendental model that poses a unitary sovereign subject standing above society, biopolitical social organization begins to appear absolutely immanent, where all the elements interact on the same plane." [9]

This "plane of immanence" is not about a formal or physical organization, but of a collaborative informational channel and platform. What we are lacking is a pluralistic public sphere of design, and subsequently a public sphere of production. To further quote Hardt and Negri, "Producing in common presents the possibility of the produc-

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9. Multitude: war and democracy in the age of empire, Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, p337

tion of the common, which is itself a condition of the creation of the multitude.” [10] Producing in common is in fact a public sphere where discourse is revolved around specific agendas and issues contributed collaboratively by the public, while the production of the common are objects, physical artifacts that result from this discourse through a renewed form of networked and collaborative production. With the maturing networked technologies, public spheres have also evolved in its form in the society, we no longer need to meet and deliberate in coffee houses or salons, or to assemble physically at one specific time. Kazys Varnelis's book “Network Publics” describes this condition, “the term networked publics references a linked set of social, cultural, and technological developments that have accompanied the growing engagement with digitally networked media.... now publics are communicating more and more through complex networks that are bottom-up, top-down, as well as side-to-side.” [11] Assembly and discourse could happen at anytime and anyplace suitable for its participants, on your smart-phone, between subway rides... with participants that span from one end of the world to another. Time, place and access, the traditionally limiting factors of assembly, has been freed with anyone that has access to the web, enhancing the openness of this assembly that traditionally is limited to the privileged.

The implication is two-fold: the possibility of a truly open creative channel that anyone, designers and non-designers alike can contribute in their own medium, where public ideas are openly shared, borrowed, riffed, copied, critiqued, enabled, etc, a collective pool where ideas are bred and harvested on an ideally infinitely open platform; also as important is a public sphere of production, in which the traditional middle-man and gatekeepers are bypassed and the consumers can directly communicate freely and effectively to suppliers and producers at a lower cost and higher level of customization that fits the pluralistic desires of the public. One is focused on the cultivation of ideas and discourse around specific agenda, in this case the design of our city and environment, the other focused on the production of objects via a collaborative and open supply chain.

A pluralistic public sphere of design, however, is not one that needs a determined result. In the latter case different voices are liberated through a collective platform, pros and cons are debated and a consensus is reached through this public process, or a “deliberative democracy”. This is the methodology in which many public decisions

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10. Ibid, p338

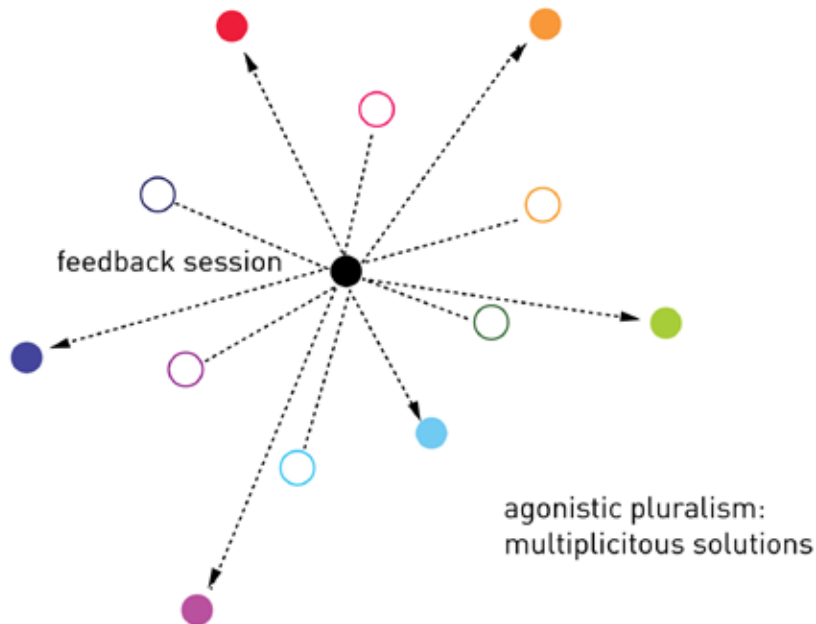
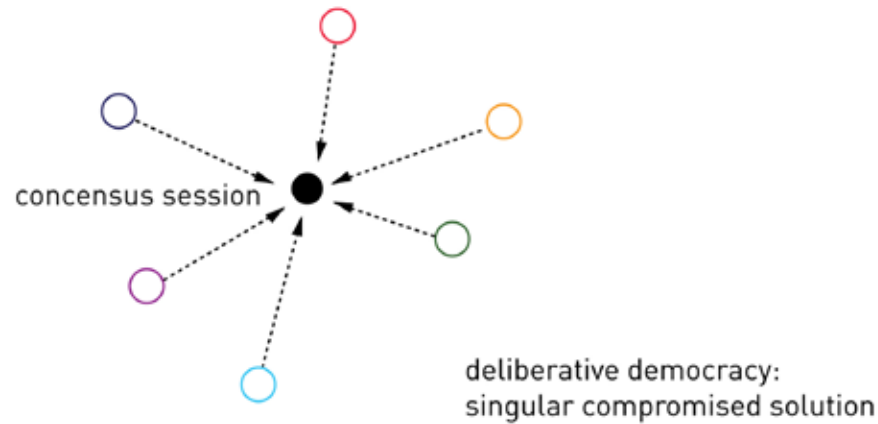
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11. Introduction, Networked Publics, Mizuko Ito, edited by Kazys Varnelis, p3

are made including approval or choice of design proposals in community board meetings, and many other political decisions in our democratic society. The system prioritizes on the supposedly fairness in which each party involved in the decision making process is given an equal opportunity to voice their opinions, and thus the collective decision, through a supposedly fair debate, is a fairly negotiated solution that balances and compromises the interests of all parties. Even though in this system there is a tendency for hegemony. The objective of such a system is to arrive at a close-ended solution for a specific problem.

The nature of design is always open-ended, however. Options are always proposed for clients, and there is never a fixated idea, and always a better idea to come. A pluralistic public sphere of design operates along this ideology. It does not need a close-ended solution. In fact, it wants to be as open-ended as possible so that it could adapt and situate itself in different situations given a larger problematic. It is relative rather than absolute, it prioritizes on the cultivation of a diversity of opinions rather than comprising different opinions as a silver-bullet solution. It operates more closely to what Chantal Mouffe stated as “agonistic pluralism”. The objective of a pluralistic public sphere is to generate creativity, and to gather a collective pool of ideas that each individual one, given the right circumstances, could flourish. No one idea is better or worse than another, because each can be chosen and used to adapt for different circumstances. There is no authoritative figure to decide which idea qualifies or not, only a series of debates and comments that naturally follows. It gravitates towards informal and organic development of information and ideas: more folk oriented, more close to the people, more amateur, more off-the-record and half-finished ideas, more organic, and more along the lines of natural selection.

The series of technological advancement throughout the century has given us various upgrades in our production cycle. From mass production we enjoy the low cost and availability of products because of the economies of scales. From mass customization we enjoy certain liberty of choices that adapt to our needs because of the shift from analog to digital production. We are now entering into an age of yet another new possibility of production, of mass creation or a public sphere of production, where the collaborative capabilities of technology are enabling ideas originating from the mass and sourced by the mass simultaneously for its production. This public sphere of produc-



tion is intrinsically tied with the ideas generation phase and essentially an extension of it. It also means the opening up of traditional guarded trades such as the construction trade. The suppliers would need to be more open-ended, allowing the mass to understand the production mechanisms, participate on its production and innovate within that; it is essentially a horizontal platform that users, designers, and suppliers become equal within the design and production cycle through effective information and knowledge sharing. The breaking down of these barriers and protectionism of trades would be a long process towards true mass creation where the mass has the power to generate ideas and produce them simultaneously.

### The agency of architect

The form of such a collaborative network and how it would function is still in a fetal stage of development. There may be many iterations and many versions of such platforms, each tailored for its specific purpose. One constant of these collaborative networks would be the empowerment of the crowd. Crowd-sourcing becomes a natural outcome if we turn the dial to a full degree of openness. The crowd contribute ideas, work on concepts, collaborate with each other organically, and even evaluate the results and provide feedback. Design by blogging, even design by twittering could be possible where ideas are disseminated and discussed before any program, site, or concepts are proposed. The crowd becomes designers and users simultaneously. The benefit of a fully open creative platform, like any other collaborative consumption entities, is that the cost of innovation becomes extremely affordable if not entirely free, as resources, in this case information and knowledge are distributed and shared more effectively. The speed and ability for ideas to update and regenerate also exponentially increases. Ideas are bred through this collaborative network, the more variety we breed, the more adaptable the harvest is for the real world. The collaborative network also allows other practitioners to contribute expertise on particular projects. Open Ideo is one example of what this platform could look like. Each participant is given a profile, a “design quotient” or “DQ” profile, and they can contribute inspirations, design concepts, evaluate ideas, collaborate, everyone can participate in their own way according to their own strength and resources. The DQ that you have essentially gives you a credibility in this stranger-meets-stranger collaborative network.



The higher the rating you have as a participant, the more reliable you are as a contributor to the collaborative system, like your dedicated Amazon marketplace seller that ships your product immediately upon receiving his order. The establishment, recognition, and cultivation of the individual in such a system is a key to successful commitment into the system.

The pitfall of such a model is that creativity, unlike products, is a service and something intangible. The professionalism of such a service could be seriously compromised and rendered useless if the crowd runs amok. The quality of the crowd determines the quality of the design product. This is where architects and designers can step in for the cultivation of public creativity. Sanford Kwinter's definition of an innovative architect gives us an insight of the project ahead of us, "an innovative architect is one who is not neurotically preoccupied with definitions. An architect who is heedless of boundaries, adventurous to the point of recklessness, who can endlessly tolerate the disapproval of his/her peers, and who is willing to be dismissed as an 'engineer', a 'sociologist', a 'filmmaker', an 'entrepreneur', an 'editor', etc. An architect who sees buildings as one link in the chain of social-design problem. An architect who sees 'the human' as an unfixed thing – an ongoing experiment – and who knows that design is always the design of the human being." [12]

Architects or designers hold a vital role as agents for the public. The opening of design to the public could have many trajectories. As architects it is both exciting and weary. Exciting because it means that design could step out into a territory that it has never reached before, fueled by technologies that is available at hand, and also in the hands of the amateurs that could turn out to be massive forces of creativity. Weary because architects has evolved from being the sole author to co-authors, total control over the design is lost to the general lay-person that do not necessarily have any understanding of architecture as a discourse in the contemporary society.

The question is balance and the role of architects in the mass creation process. In my opinion there are four vital roles of architects in this mass creation process: the first as research-journalist, the second as brief-writers, the third as facilitators, and the fourth as design partners to the public. Research-journalists scoop the general condition of the specific question at hand, gather the possible cause and research solutions that have been applied to the problem in the past, in a differ-

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12. Hunch 6/7:  
109 Provisional  
Attempts to  
Address Six  
Simple And Hard  
Questions, Sanford  
Kwinter

ent context or in another field or profession. Brief-writers ask specific questions in the public realm, consciously directing intervention in focused topics, context, or agenda yet opening the discussion towards the public. Facilitators help the open dialogue proceed in a constructive direction dominated by the crowd, they listen then ask questions, and is an important process in the incubation of a creative culture of the public. Good facilitators encourage open discussions and reveals potentials that are not seen by others. Design partners co-design with the public, offering professional expertise that is otherwise inaccessible and unaffordable for the public, such as representing the public for the contractor. The public need some kind of expertise to represent their concepts in spatial terms, and design partners could be the public's hands to draw out their desires. This is the most ambiguous of the four, yet offers the widest range of possibilities as an experimentation of different forms of representation and process of co-creation with the public.

### **A new paradigm of design**

Given the right circumstances, mass creation would grow and evolve naturally. It is not something that one could start or stop, but recognize and nurture at its beginning stage. Beyond contextualization, observing and listening becomes part of the vital process of conceiving architecture, we should ask the right questions and seek answers together proactively with the public. Although the social engagement movement in architecture started in the sixties, the conversation seems to have left off since then. The maturity of social media technologies seems to have brought us new lights of how a creative and collaborative network may form, something more proactive, something closer to the grounds, something more original, something more open, something lighter, something more humane, and something more massive and everyday. This is only the beginning of a new generation of architectural culture to come, it will never be a closed and complete project, but an open query of a new paradigm in design.

# Superirresponsible

Visualization by **Andrew Clark**. Research by **Andrew Clark** and **Matthew Hoffman**.



We should all be NIABYs when it comes to the uncontrolled disposal of hazardous waste. In 1980, SUPERFUND was signed into existence as the federal government's piggy bank and program to identify, remove and remediate contaminated sites across the nation. 30 years later, Superirresponsible examines our response and responsibility of the seeping industrial/ manufacturing/ technological past and present – in everyone's backyard for generations to come.

- {ARSENIC} {LEAD} {MERCURY} {VINYL CHLORIDE} {POLYCHLORINATED BIPHENYLS} {BENZENE}
- {CADMIUM} {POLYCYCLOAROMATIC HYDROCARBONS} {BENZ(A)ANTHRAcene}
- {BENZO(B)FLUORANTHENE} {CHLOROFORM} {DDT, P,P'-} {AROCLOr 1254} {AROCLOr 1260}
- {DIBENZO(A,H)ANTHRACENE} {TRICHLOROETHYLENE} {DIELDRIN} {CHROMIUM, HEXAVALENT}
- {PHOSPHORUS, WHITE} {CHLORDANE} {DDE, P,P'-} {HEXACHLOROBUTADIENE} {COAL TAR CREOSOTE} {ALDRIN} {DDD, P,P'-} {BENZIDINE} {AROCLOr 1248} {CYANIDE} {AROCLOr 1242} {AROCLOr}
- {TOXAPHENE} {HEXACHLOROCYCLOHEXANE, GAMMA-} {TETRACHLOROETHYLENE} {HEPTACHLOR}
- {1,2-DIBROMOETHANE} {HEXACHLOROCYCLOHEXANE, BETA-} {ACROLEIN} {DISULFOTON}
- {BENZO(A)ANTHRACENE} {3,3'-DICHLOROBENZIDINE} {ENDRIN} {BERYLLIUM}
- {HEXACHLOROCYCLOHEXANE, DELTA-} {1,2-DIBROMO-3-CHLOROPROPANE} {PENTACHLOROPHENOL}
- {HEPTACHLOR EPOXIDE} {CARBON TETRACHLORIDE} {AROCLOr 1221} {COBALT} {DDT, O,P'-}
- {AROCLOr 1016} {DI-N-BUTYL PHTHALATE} {NICKEL} {ENDOSULFAN} {ENDOSULFAN SULFATE}
- {DIAZINON} {ENDOSULFAN, ALPHA} {XYLENES, TOTAL} {CIS-CHLORDANE}
- {DIBROMOCHLOROPROPANE} {METHOXYCHLOR} {BENZO(K)FLUORANTHENE} {ENDRIN KETONE}
- {TRANS-CHLORDANE} {CHROMIUM(VI) OXIDE} {METHANE} {ENDOSULFAN, BETA} {AROCLOr 1232}
- {ENDRIN ALDEHYDE} {BENZOFLUORANTHENE} {TOLUENE} {2-HEXANONE} {2,3,7,8-TETRACHLORODIBENZO-P-DIOXIN} {ZINC} {DIMETHYLARSINIC ACID} {DI(2-ETHYLHEXYL)PHTHALATE}
- {CHROMIUM} {NAPHTHALENE} {1,1-DICHLOROETHENE} {METHYLENE CHLORIDE} {AROCLOr 1240}
- {2,4,6-TRINITROTOLUENE} {BROMODICHLOROETHANE} {HYDRAZINE} {1,2-DICHLOROETHANE}
- {2,4,6-TRICHLOROPHENOL} {2,4-DINITROPHENOL} {BIS(2-CHLOROETHYL) ETHER} {THIOCYANATE}
- {ASBESTOS} {CHLORINE} {CYCLOTTRIMETHYLENETRINITRAMINE (RDX)} {HEXACHLOROBENZENE}
- {2,4-DINITROTOLUENE} {RADIUM-226} {ETHION} {1,1,1-TRICHLOROETHANE} {URANIUM}
- {ETHYLBENZENE} {RADIUM} {THORIUM} {4,6-DINITRO-O-CRESOL} {1,3,5-TRINITROBENZENE}
- {CHLOROBENZENE} {RADON} {RADIUM-228} {THORIUM-230} {URANIUM-235} {BARIUM}
- {FLUORANTHENE} {URANIUM-234} {N-NITROSODI-N-PROPYLAMINE} {THORIUM-228} {RADON-222}
- {HEXACHLOROCYCLOHEXANE, ALPHA-} {1,2,3-TRICHLOROBENZENE} {MANGANESE} {COAL TARS}
- {CHRYSOTILE ASBESTOS} {STRONTIUM-90} {PLUTONIUM-239} {POLONIUM-210}
- {METHYLMERCURY} {PLUTONIUM-238} {LEAD-210} {PLUTONIUM} {CHLORPYRIFOS} {COPPER}
- {AMERICIUM-241} {RADON-220} {AMOSITE ASBESTOS} {IODINE-131} {HYDROGEN CYANIDE}
- {TRIBUTYL TIN} {GUTHION} {NEPTUNIUM-237} {CHRYSENE} {CHLORDECONE} {IODINE-129}
- {PLUTONIUM-240} {S,S,S-TRIBUTYL PHOSPHOROTRITHIOATE} {BROMINE} {POLYBROMINATED BIPHENYLS} {DICOFOL} {PARATHION} {1,1,2,2-TETRACHLOROETHANE} {SELENIUM}
- {HEXACHLOROCYCLOHEXANE, TECHNICAL GRADE} {TRICHLOROFLUROETHANE} {TRIFLURALIN}
- {DDD, O,P'-} {4,4'-METHYLENEBIS(2-CHLOROANILINE)} {HEXACHLORODIBENZO-P-DIOXIN}
- {HEPTACHLORODIBENZO-P-DIOXIN} {PENTACHLOROBENZENE} {1,3-BUTADIENE} {AMMONIA}
- {2-METHYLNAPHTHALENE} {1,4-DICHLOROBENZENE} {1,1-DICHLOROETHANE} {ACENAPHTHENE}
- {1,2,3,4,6,7,8,9-OCTACHLORODIBENZOFURAN} {1,1,2-TRICHLOROETHANE} {TRICHLOROETHANE}
- {HEXACHLOROCYCLOPENTADIENE} {HEPTACHLORODIBENZOFURAN} {1,2-DIPHENYLHYDRAZINE}
- {2,3,4,7,8-PENTACHLORODIBENZOFURAN} {TETRACHLOROBIPHENYL} {CRESOL, PARA-}
- {OXYCHLORDANE} {1,2-DICHLOROBENZENE} {1,2-DICHLOROETHENE, TRANS-} {INDENO(1,2,3-CD)PYRENE} {GAMMA-CHLORDENE} {CARBON DISULFIDE} {TETRACHLOROPHENOL} {AMERICIUM}
- {URANIUM-233} {PALLADIUM} {HEXACHLORODIBENZOFURAN} {PHENOL} {CHLOROETHANE}
- {ACETONE} {P-XYLENE} {DIBENZOFURAN} {ALUMINUM} {2,4-DIMETHYLPHENOL} {CARBON MONOXIDE} {TETRACHLOROETHANE} {HYDROGEN SULFIDE} {PENTACHLORODIBENZOFURAN}
- {CHLOROMETHANE} {BIS(2-METHOXYETHYL) PHTHALATE} {BUTYL BENZYL PHTHALATE} {CRESOL, ORTHO-}
- {HEXACHLOROETHANE} {VANADIUM} {N-NITROSODIMETHYLAMINE} {1,2,4-TRICHLOROBENZENE} {BROMOFORM} {TETRACHLORODIBENZO-P-DIOXIN} {1,3-DICHLOROBENZENE}
- {PENTACHLORODIBENZO-P-DIOXIN} {N-NITROSODIPHENYLAMINE} {1,2-DICHLOROETHYLENE}
- {2,3,7,8-TETRACHLORODIBENZOFURAN} {2-BUTANONE} {2,4-DICHLOROPHENOL} {1,4-DIOXANE}
- {FLUORINE} {NITRITE} {CESIUM-137} {SILVER} {CHROMIUM TRIOXIDE} {NITRATE} {POTASSIUM-40}
- {DINITROTOLUENE} {ANTIMONY} {COAL TAR PITCH} {THORIUM-227} {2,4,5-TRICHLOROPHENOL}
- {ARSENIC ACID} {ARSENIC TRIOXIDE} {PHORATE} {BENZOPYRENE} {CRESOLS} {CHLORDANE, TECHNICAL} {DIMETHOATE} {ACTINIUM-227} {STROBANE} {4-AMINOBIIPHENYL} {PYRETHRIN}
- {ARSINE} {NALED} {DIBENZOFURANS, CHLORINATED} {ETHOPROP} {ALPHA-CHLORDENE}
- {CARBOPHENOTHION} {DICHLORVOS} {CALCIUM ARSENATE} {MERCURIC CHLORIDE} {SODIUM ARSENITE} {FORMALDEHYDE} {2-CHLOROPHENOL} {PHENANTHRENE} {HYDROGEN FLUORIDE}
- {2,4-D ACID} {DIBROMOCHLOROMETHANE} {DIURON} {BUTYLATE} {DIMETHYL FORMAMIDE}
- {PYRENE} {DICHLOROBENZENE} {ETHYL ETHER} {DICHLOROETHANE} {4-NITROPHENOL}
- {1,3-DICHLOROPROPENE, CIS-} {PHOSPHINE} {TRICHLOROBENZENE} {2,6-DINITROTOLUENE}
- {FLUORIDE ION} {1,2,3,4,6,7,8-HEPTACHLORODIBENZO-P-DIOXIN} {METHYL PARATHION}
- {PENTAERYTHRITOL TETRANITRATE} {1,3-DICHLOROPROPENE, TRANS-} {BIS(2-ETHYLHEXYL)ADIPATE} {CARBAZOLE} {METHYL ISOBUTYL KETONE} {1,2-DICHLOROETHENE, CIS-}

2007 CERCLA PRIORITY LIST OF HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES

# 1976 RCRA TSCA

Congress establishes authority for controls over hazardous waste from generation to disposal through the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act.

Congress enacts the Toxic Substances Control Act, which provides EPA with authority to protect public health and the environment through controls on toxic chemicals that pose an unreasonable risk of injury.

# 1980 CERCLA SUPERFUND

Congress passes the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA or Superfund) to address the dangers of abandoned or uncontrolled hazardous waste dumps by developing a nationwide program for: emergency response; information gathering and analysis; liability for responsible parties; and site cleanup. CERCLA also creates a Trust Fund (or "Superfund") to finance emergency responses and cleanups.

# 1982 HRS NCP NPL

EPA publishes the Hazard Ranking System (HRS) as the principal mechanism for evaluating environmental hazards of a site.

EPA issues first national guidelines for implementing CERCLA in its revised National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan (NCP), which sets forth the procedures in emergency responses and cleanups.

EPA creates the first National Priorities List (NPL), classifying sites as the nation's priorities under Superfund. Only sites on the NPL, updated annually, may qualify for long-term remedial actions financed by the Superfund.

# 1983 SARA RIGHT TO KNOW

Congress passes the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act (SARA), which in part: strengthened CERCLA's enforcement provisions; encouraged voluntary settlements instead of litigation; increased State involvement in every phase of the Superfund program; increased the focus on human health problems posed by hazardous waste sites; and encouraged greater citizen participation in how sites are cleaned up. SARA also contains the community right-to-know law requiring public records of chemicals managed at a facility.

# 1986 ENFORCEMENT

EPA initiates "Enforcement First" policy where EPA gives first priority to finding the parties who are potentially responsible for a release and gets them to address the problem they created.

# 1989 OPA

Congress enacts the Oil Pollution Act, establishing a tax-based compensation trust fund and makes the costs of pollution cleanup the responsibility of the oil handling industry.

# 1990 PPA

Congress passes the Pollution Prevention Act establishing pollution prevention as national policy and encouraging novel technologies and processes that avoid the formation and/or use of hazardous substances.

# HRS2

EPA revises the Hazard Ranking System in accordance with SARA to help ensure the HRS accurately assesses the relative degree of risk to human health and the environment posed by uncontrolled hazardous waste sites.

# 1992 SACM

EPA issues the Superfund Accelerated Cleanup Model (SACM) to streamline the traditional Superfund response process by providing prompt reduction in risk and an earlier initiation of enforcement and public participation activities.

# 1994 OSWER SRI/FFRRO

EPA's Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response (OSWER) in Washington, D.C. oversees the Superfund program. OSWER is responsible for short term responses conducted under the authority of Superfund.

# 1995 BAA

EPA launches the Brownfields Action Agenda, which outlines four activities to help States and communities implement and realize the benefits of the Brownfields Program.

# TAX FEES

Congress fails to reauthorize four fees, which were excise taxes on chemicals and petroleum and a special income tax on corporations, and they are eliminated on December 31, 1995.

# 1997 BNP

EPA launches the Brownfields National Partnership, linking the efforts of more than 25 organizations and Federal agencies.

# 1999 SRI

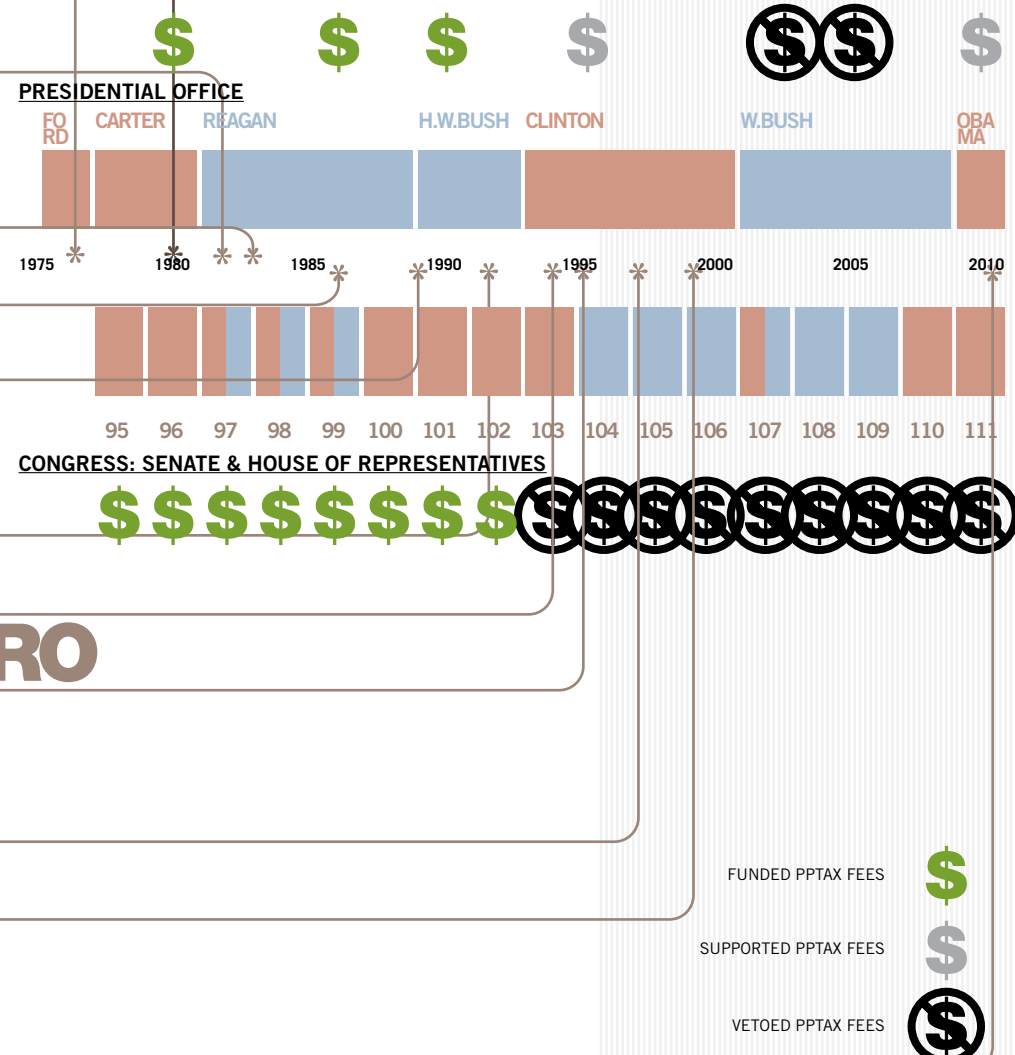
EPA announces the Superfund Redevelopment Initiative, a coordinated national program providing communities with the tools and information needed to turn cleaned up Superfund sites into productive assets.

# 2010 ARRA

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (Recovery Act) allocates \$633,817,454 to EPA Hazardous Substance Superfund.

# SUPERACTS

Each year, the Congress decides how much money to appropriate for EPA's Superfund program from the Superfund trust fund and provides direction on how the funds should be spent. Although the trust fund supports the Superfund program, the EPA does not have the authority to use the fund without these appropriations from the Congress. Since 1995, the Congress and the Executive office have failed to reinstate the "Polluter Pays" tax.

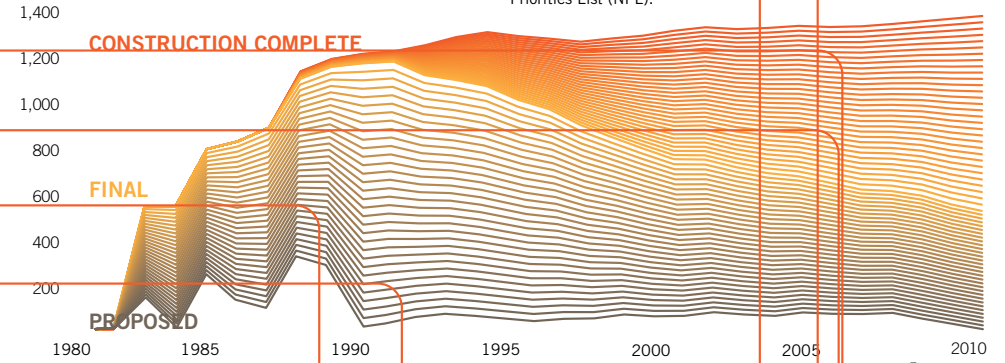


#1099	<b>28.10.10</b>	Footo Mineral Co. (PAD077087989) East Whiteland Township, Pennsylvania Population within one mile: 1,001-5,000
#1000	<b>26.09.06</b>	Macalloy Corporation (SCD003360476) North Charleston, South Carolina Population within one mile: 1,001-5,000
#750	<b>06.09.00</b>	Pepe Field (NJD980529598) Boonton, New Jersey Population within one mile: 5,001-10,000
#500	<b>02.12.97</b>	Publiker Industries Inc. (PAD981939200) Philadelphia, Pennsylvania Population within one mile: 5,001-10,000
#250	<b>21.06.94</b>	Olmsted County Sanitary Landfill (MND000874354) Oronoco, Minnesota Population within one mile: 101-1,000
#1	<b>30.12.82</b>	Walcotte Chemical Co. Warehouses (MSD980601736) Greenville, Mississippi Population within one mile: 10,001-50,000

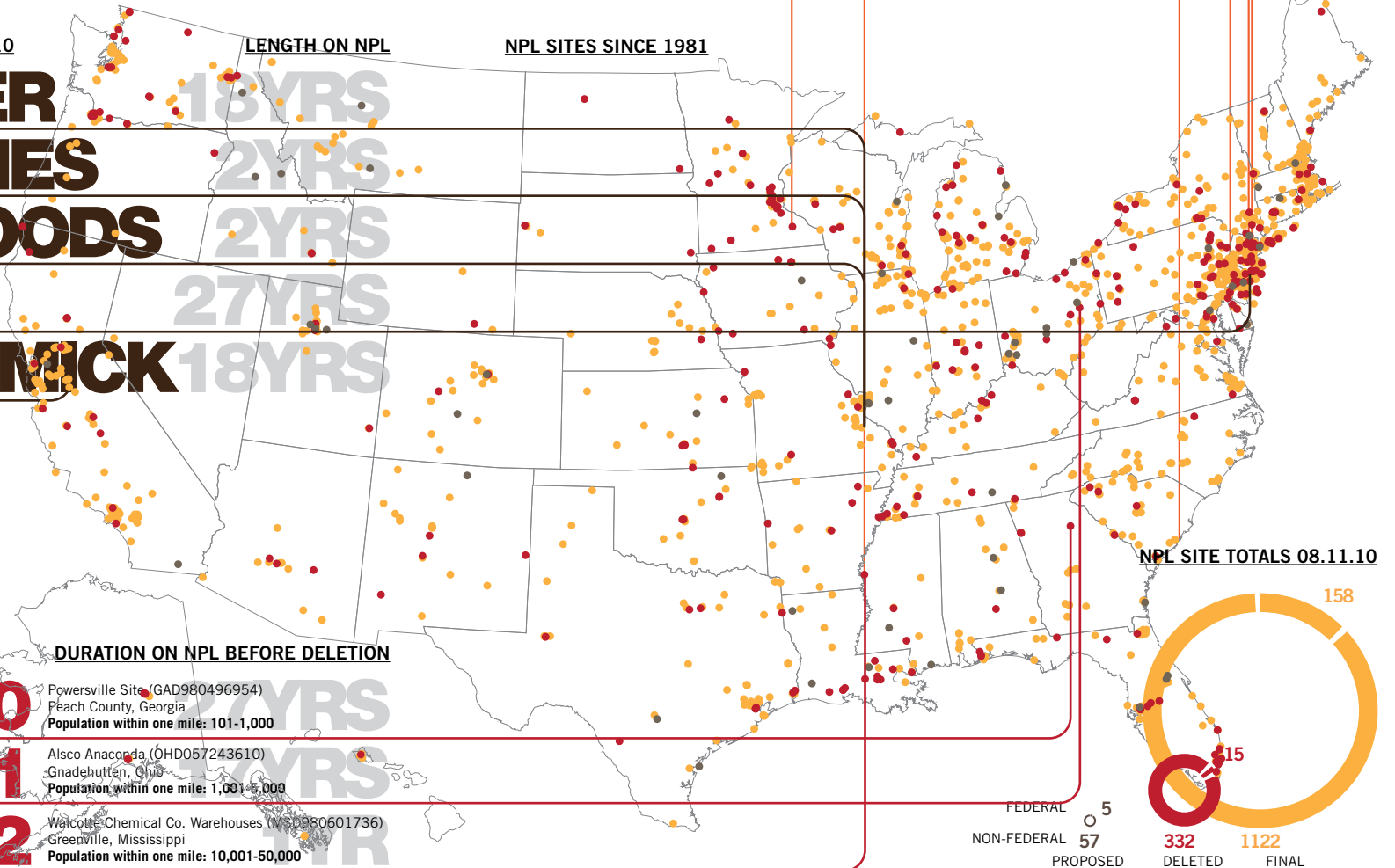
# SUPERSITES

EPA, the principal agency responsible for administering the Superfund program, has identified more than **47,000 hazardous waste sites** potentially requiring cleanup actions and has placed some of the most seriously contaminated sites on its National Priorities List (NPL).

CONSTRUCTION COMPLETION # OF YEARS / 250 SITES



HIGHEST HRS FINAL NPL 2010	LENGTH ON NPL
84.91	<b>BIGRIVER</b> 18 YRS
76.81	<b>OLDMINES</b> 2 YRS
76.81	<b>RICHWOODS</b> 2 YRS
75.60	<b>LIPARI</b> 27 YRS
74.86	<b>MCCORMICK</b> 18 YRS



DELETED NPL SITES DURATION ON NPL BEFORE DELETION

#347	<b>01.11.10</b>	Powersville Site (GAD980496954) Peach County, Georgia Population within one mile: 101-1,000
#250	<b>05.11.01</b>	Alsco Anaconda (OHD057243610) Gnadenhutten, Ohio Population within one mile: 1,001-5,000
#1	<b>30.12.82</b>	Walcotte Chemical Co. Warehouses (MSD980601736) Greenville, Mississippi Population within one mile: 10,001-50,000



# 1 POLLUTER PAYS TAX

The four "Polluter Pays" fees were the financial backbone of the Superfund program for more than 20 years. They included assessments on crude oil, chemical feedstock, imported chemical derivatives and corporate environmental income tax.

# OIL

This was a tax of **9.7 cents per barrel** (or 23 cents per gallon) on domestic refineries on the amount of crude oil they bought, and on importers on the amount of refined petroleum products they imported into the United States.

**9.7c PER BARREL**

# CHEMICALS

This was a tax on 42 toxic chemicals associated with dangerous substances at Superfund sites. The tax ranged from **\$0.22 per ton to \$4.87 per ton**, based on the chemical, except for xylene that was taxed at \$0.13 per ton.

**2c - \$4.87 PER TON**

# IMPORTED CHEMICALS

This tax was a complement to the feedstock tax to ensure that companies did not escape from paying the tax by importing chemicals that were produced overseas from **113 combinations of the 42 toxic chemicals**.

**2c - \$4.87 PER TON**

# ENVIRONMENTAL INCOME TAX

This tax was on the profits of large corporations at a rate of **0.12 percent on taxable profits in excess of \$2 million** (or \$12 per \$10,000). Corporations in the manufacturing industrial sector would pay 41% of this tax.

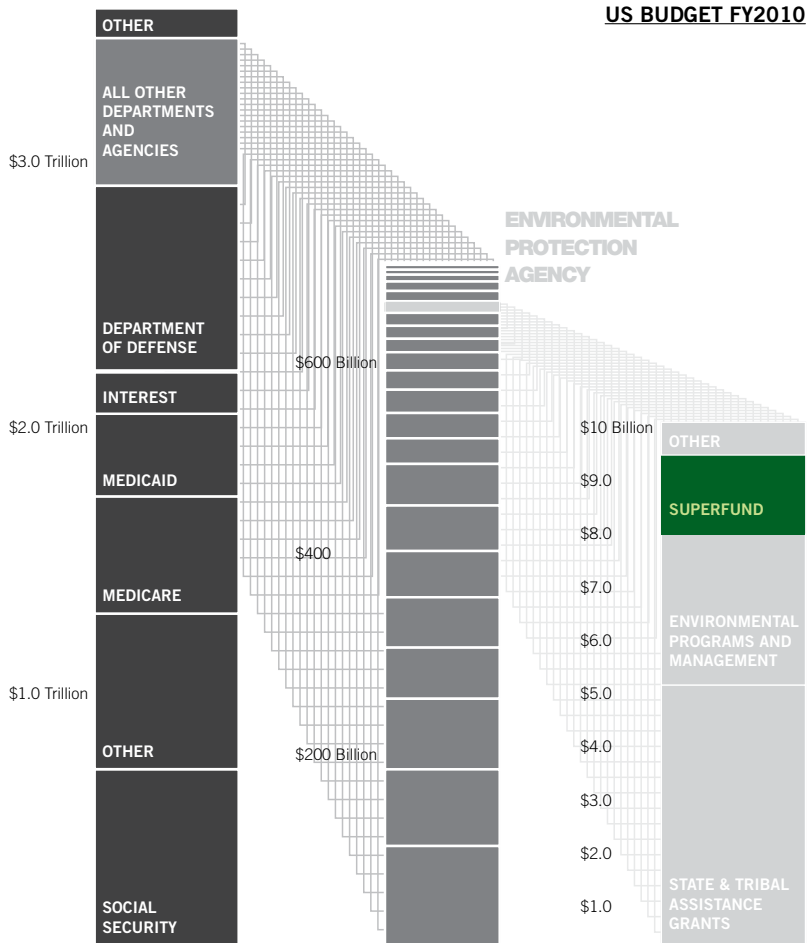
**\$12 PER \$10,000**

# 2 GENERAL TAXPAYER

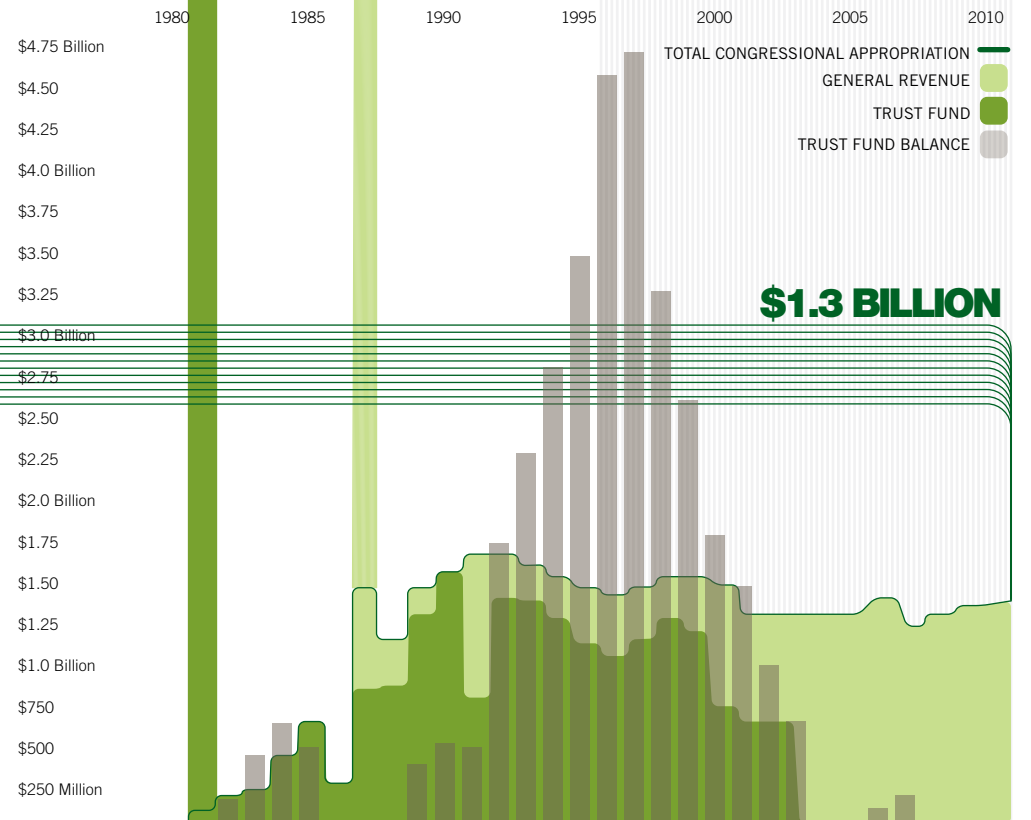
By 2003, Superfund had run out of money in its trust fund and the entire financial burden fell to U.S. taxpayers. Congress has annually allocated approximately \$1.2 billion of general revenues—taxpayer's money since that time.

# SUPERDEFUNDED

The Superfund trust fund has received revenue from two major sources: (1) taxes on crude oil and certain chemicals, an environmental tax assessed on corporations based upon their taxable income; (2) appropriations from the general fund; and two minor sources (3) fines, penalties, and recoveries from responsible parties; and (4) interest accrued on the balance of the fund.



CONGRESSIONAL APPROPRIATIONS 1981 - 2010



**RESPONSIBLE PARTIES**  
**70% OF SUPERFUND SITES**

CERCLA authorizes EPA to compel the responsible parties to clean up contaminated sites and also allows EPA to conduct cleanups and then seek reimbursement from the four classes of "potential responsible parties": (1) the current owner or operator of the site; (2) the owner or operator of a site at the time that disposal of a hazardous substance, pollutant or contaminant occurred; (3) a person who arranged for the disposal of a hazardous substance, pollutant or contaminant at a site; (4) a person who transported a hazardous substance, pollutant or contaminant to a site; that transporter must have also selected that site for the disposal of the hazardous substances, pollutants or contaminants.

**ENFORCEMENT EXPENDITURES**

EPA's enforcement expenditures—which accounted for the majority of expenditures not related to site cleanup—fund four activities: (1) identifying responsible parties, (2) negotiating with these parties, (3) litigating against some parties, and (4) supporting EPA's enforcement work.

**\$30.0B SINCE 1981**

Analysis of EPA data showed that the agency's enforcement expenditures at NPL sites alone have returned benefits valued at an estimated **\$29.9 billion to the Superfund program** through fiscal year 2007.

**BANKRUPTCY**

Another threat to the financial stability of the Superfund program is corporate bankruptcies where polluting companies are allowed to avoid the costs of cleaning up their Superfund sites by declaring bankruptcy.

**\$1.17B**

In 2009, GM entered a government – engineered bankruptcy aiming to emerge as a new, leaner company with fewer factories, dealerships and employees. In November 2009 that the company estimates **environmental cleanup costs for its 120 properties at less than \$450 million.**

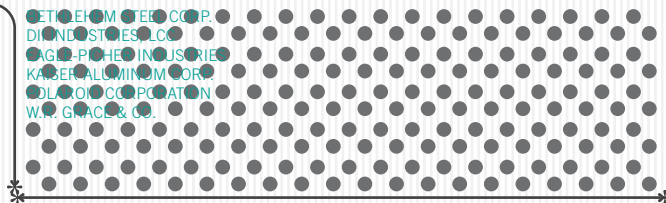
**\$1.79B**

The Asarco bankruptcy will impact an estimated 90 communities where there are 75 contaminated sites in 21 states, including 20 Superfund sites, and 95,000 asbestosis claimants. By 2007, claims in the Asarco **bankruptcy totaled over \$25.2 billion and was later reduced to \$1.79 billion.**

**SUPERLIABLE**

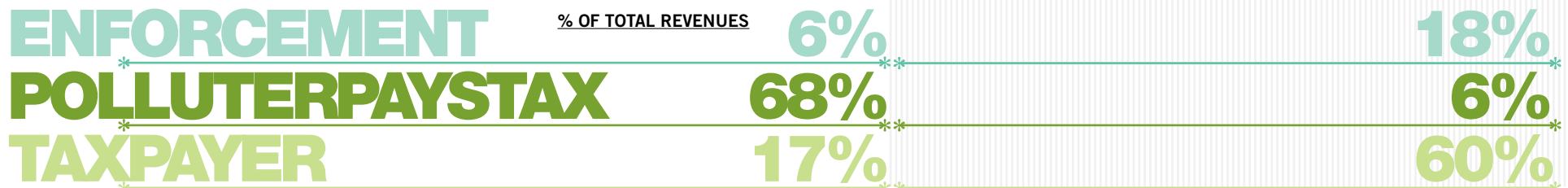
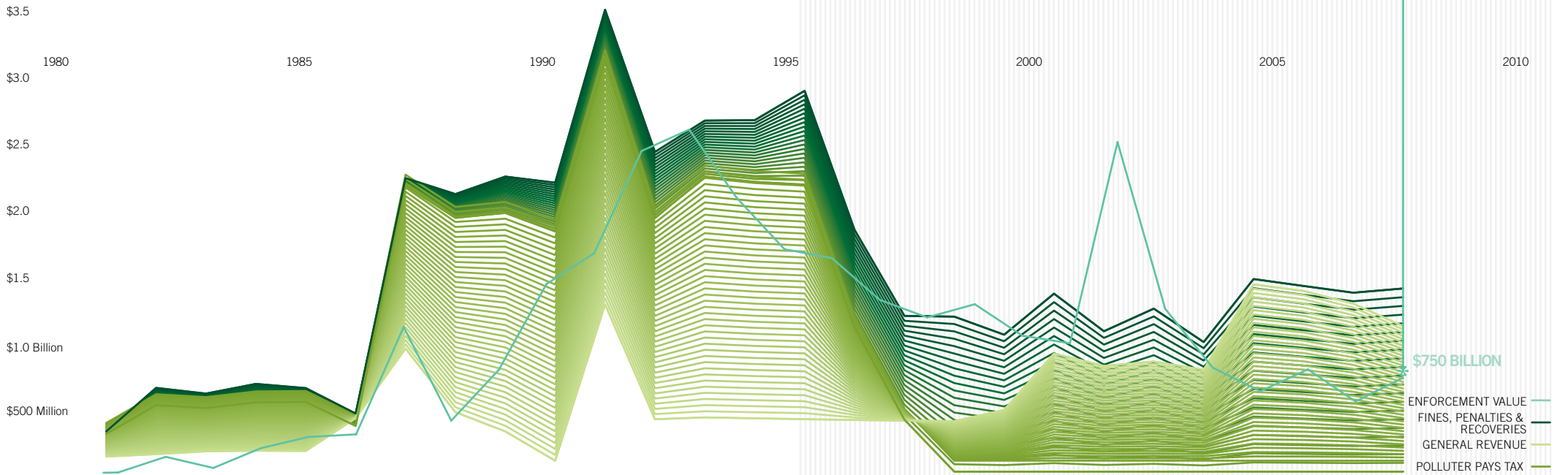
When Superfund was created in 1980 through the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act, a Trust Fund was set up with approximately \$1.6 billion to pay for the cleanup of any site where a polluter could not be located, was bankrupt, or refused to take action.

**6 COMPANIES 120 SITES 28 STATES**



**BANKRUPTCY AFFECTED SITES 1997-2007**

**SOURCES OF REVENUE FOR SUPERFUND**



**1999 SRI**  
**2004 RTU**  
**2006 RFR**  
**SWRA**  
**TAG**

In 1999, EPA launched the Superfund Redevelopment Initiative (SRI), a coordinated national effort to facilitate the return of the country's most hazardous sites to productive use.

Developed in late 2004, the RTU Initiative is designed to remove barriers to appropriate reuse at those Superfund sites where construction of the cleanup remedy has been completed.

This is an environmental status report written in plain language that helps the real estate market, local governments and local residents understand how a site can be reused and for what purposes.

Once all aspects of a cleanup are in place for a site and land use restrictions are in place, EPA can determine that the site meets the Agency's designation called Sitewide Ready for Anticipated Use, or SWRAU.

Technical Assistance Grants (TAGs) make it possible for communities to hire the experts they need to understand the complexities involved in site reuse.

# SUPERREUSE

Since its inception, Superfund Redevelopment has helped communities reclaim and reuse thousands of acres of formerly contaminated land. Through an array of tools, partnerships, and activities, Superfund Redevelopment continues to provide local communities with new opportunities to grow and prosper. Towns and villages around the country are recovering idle properties and returning them to productive use.

**244,000 ACRES**  
**80,000 ON-SITE JOBS**  
**\$2.7 BIL ANNUAL INCOME**

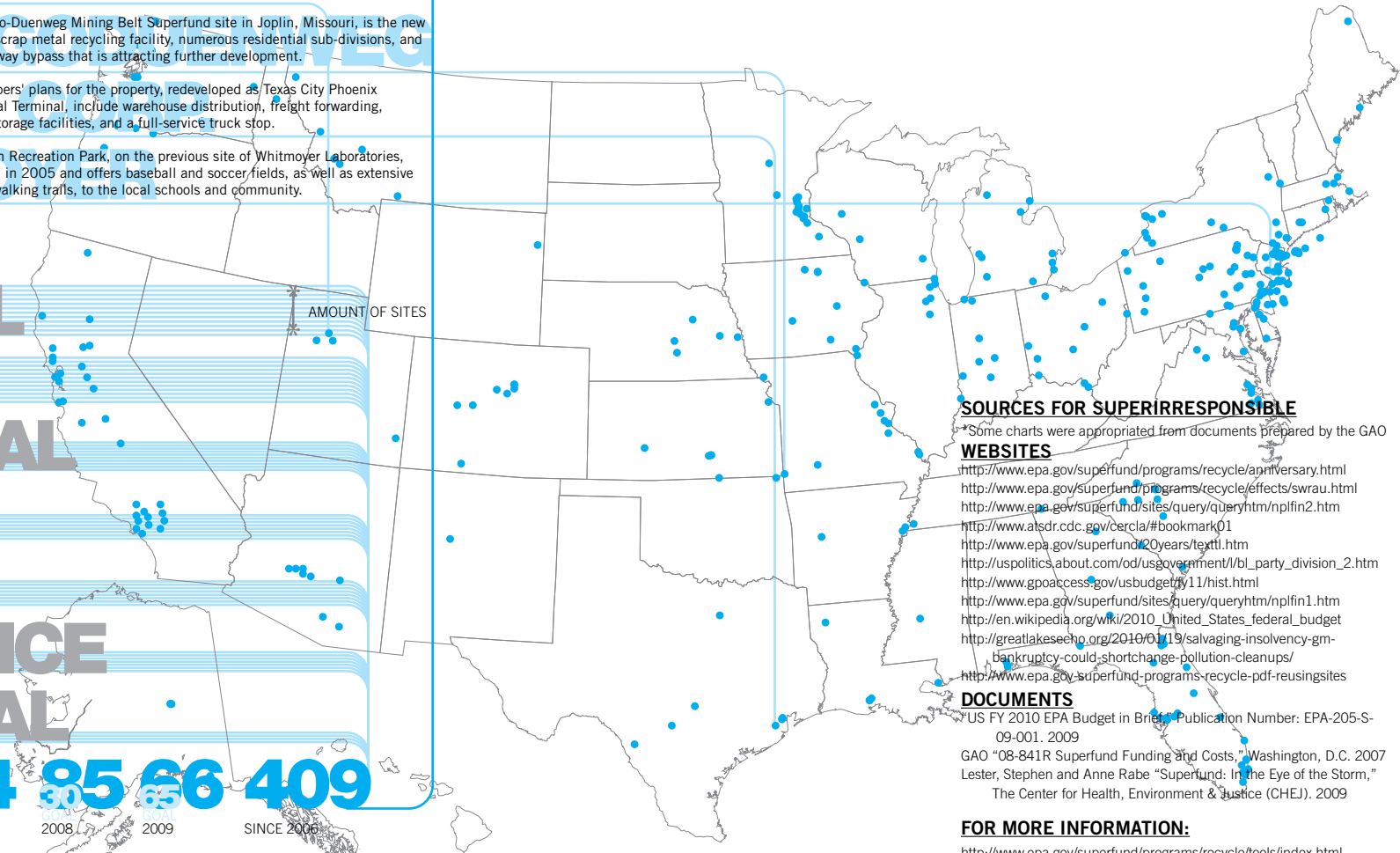
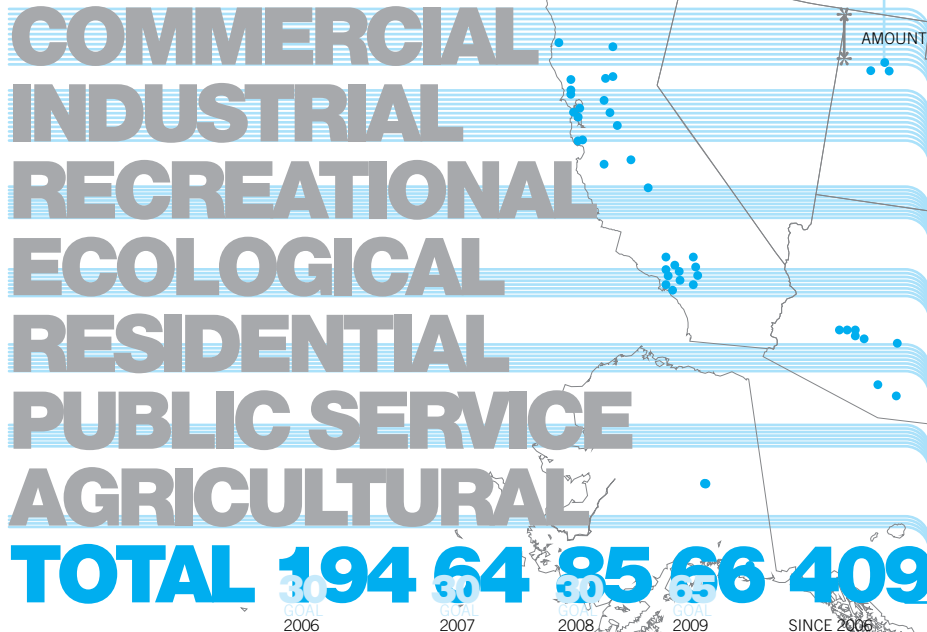
SRI OUTCOMES 2006 - 2007

EXAMPLE REDEVELOPMENTS

- 24 MIDVA** Once home to five smelters, the site is now becoming a large-scale, commercial, recreational, and residential development. The restored riparian border of the Jordan River will be a linear park with trails linking up with the Salt Lake area.
- 11 ORO** The Oronogo-Duenweg Mining Belt Superfund site in Joplin, Missouri, is the new home of a scrap metal recycling facility, numerous residential sub-divisions, and a new highway bypass that is attracting further development.
- 18 TEX** The developers' plans for the property, redeveloped as Texas City Phoenix International Terminal, include warehouse distribution, freight forwarding, container storage facilities, and a full-service truck stop.
- 22 WHIT** The Jackson Recreation Park, on the previous site of Whitmoyer Laboratories, was opened in 2005 and offers baseball and soccer fields, as well as extensive tree-lined walking trails, to the local schools and community.

YEARS FROM NPL LIST TO REDEVELOPMENT

TYPES OF REUSE 2007



SOURCES FOR SUPERIRRESPONSIBLE

\*Some charts were appropriated from documents prepared by the GAO

WEBSITES

- <http://www.epa.gov/superfund/programs/recycle/anniversary.html>
- <http://www.epa.gov/superfund/programs/recycle/effects/swrau.html>
- <http://www.epa.gov/superfund/sites/query/queryhtm/nplfin2.htm>
- <http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/cercla/#bookmark01>
- <http://www.epa.gov/superfund/20years/texttl.htm>
- [http://uspolitics.about.com/od/usgovernment/l/bl\\_party\\_division\\_2.htm](http://uspolitics.about.com/od/usgovernment/l/bl_party_division_2.htm)
- <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/usbudget/fy11/hist.html>
- <http://www.epa.gov/superfund/sites/query/queryhtm/nplfin1.htm>
- [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2010\\_United\\_States\\_federal\\_budget](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2010_United_States_federal_budget)
- <http://greatlakesecho.org/2010/01/19/salvaging-insolvency-grm-bankruptcy-could-shortchange-pollution-cleanups/>
- <http://www.epa.gov/superfund/programs/recycle-pdf-reusingsites>

DOCUMENTS

- US FY 2010 EPA Budget in Brief Publication Number: EPA-205-S-09-001. 2009
- GAO "08-841R Superfund Funding and Costs." Washington, D.C. 2007
- Lester, Stephen and Anne Rabe "Superfund: In the Eye of the Storm," The Center for Health, Environment & Justice (CHEJ). 2009

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

- <http://www.epa.gov/superfund/programs/recycle/tools/index.html>
- <http://www.epa.gov/superfund/community/process.htm#pasi>



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# Shanghai Streets

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Photographs by **Rob Smith**

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Streets are much more than a road to drive on and a sidewalk to walk on. They are the natural extension to the public and private activities happening in the buildings nearby. They are informally occupied by people for work, play, rest, and to socialize. Suddenly streets become living rooms, dining rooms, barbershops, libraries or repair shops. Photographer Rob Smith captures images of everyday life on the streets of Shanghai.

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Study Hall



Local News



Cyclesmith





Street Shave





Meat Market



Shanghai Games





Poker Dot Pajamas



Stalemate



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# DESPAIR: Disaster Enabled Suppression of the People's Access to Inalienable Rights

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Essay by **Edward Emile Richardson**, architect and native of  
New Orleans



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Public housing protest at New Orleans City Hall in 2007  
© Gpax

*"What I'm hearing which is sort of scary is that they all want to stay in Texas. Everybody is so overwhelmed by the hospitality. And so many of the people in the arena here, you know, were underprivileged anyway so this (chuckle) – this is working very well for them."*

*Former First Lady Barbara Bush, on the hurricane evacuees at the Astrodome in Houston, Sept. 5, 2005.1[1]*

The comments by then President Bush's mother to Katrina evacuees in the Houston Astrodome, in retrospect, neatly capture a prevailing attitude held by Americans towards the basic human rights, or lack thereof, of America's urban poor. They are seen as a liability, as individuals gaming the system, as undeserving of basic public support. Weeks later this bias played out as those New Orleans public housing residents who were able, trickled back to their native city. They were welcomed not only by a ruined city and natural disaster of historic proportions, but by an equally historic redevelopment agenda which would forever dissolve the communities they had inhabited for generations. The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) had decided to seize the opportunity presented by the complete evacuation of the City of New Orleans and the major public housing projects located there, and put the final nail in the coffin for public housing in the Crescent City. The subsequent story of these developments in a post Katrina New Orleans frames what has become a national devolution in low-income housing policy in the United States. And unfortunately, for underprivileged New Orleanians, it has not been "working very well for them". At all.

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1. Comments recorded on NPR's program, Marketplace.

### Politics of Displacement

*"Everyone hates public housing, except the low-income people who live there and the people on the long waiting lists to get in."*

*Peter Dreier [2]*

*"In the history of United States, poor people and people of color have disproportionately been subjected to forced relocation. HOPE VI is one more chapter in this sad history. Forced relocation, even with good intent, must be approached with extreme caution. The first principle should always be to do no harm."*

*Sheila Crowley, President of the National Low Income Housing Coalition [3]*

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2. Peter Dreier, "Does Public Housing Have Any Future?," Rooflines: Blogging Beyond Bricks and Mortar (June 2010).

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3. Sheila Crowley, Testimony to the Financial Services Committee, U.S. House of Representatives (March 2010).

After Katrina, public housing residents returned to find their homes in the 'Big Four' public housing projects (St. Bernard, C.J. Pete, B.W. Cooper and Lafitte) boarded up, windows and doors sealed with plate steel. In many cases, residents were forced to make appointments with housing officials to even access and retrieve their belongings. Shortly thereafter, HUD made public their intention to demolish these housing projects, encompassing over 4,500 units in total. All were historic structures listed on the National Register, soundly built, and many had little to no flood damage. Yet with Katrina, the politics of disaster had made possible that which would otherwise be politically untenable.

Like the St. Thomas Housing Project before them, they would be replaced with mixed-income communities with only a small percentage of dedicated low-income units and would be funded with HOPE VI grants. Historically, the HOPE VI program (Housing Opportunities for People Everywhere) represents a fundamental shift in public housing legislation. The program was initially created to address a small percentage of public housing stock, determined by a HUD appointed commission to be "severely distressed." In New Orleans, this group mainly consisted of inner-city public housing projects built before 1980, which had reached a state of advanced deterioration by the early 90's. The causes for this phenomenon are attributed to reduced funding to HUD, increased proportions of the extremely poor in public housing and persistent waves of drug epidemics during the 80's. [4]

What differentiates HOPE VI from previous public housing strategies is its ability to embody both liberal and conservative political positions; liberal in its social potential for the future of public housing and conservative in its market potential to create mixed-income communities grounded in self-sufficiency. This new model rejects the previous public housing with its high concentrations of poverty as fundamentally flawed. It seeks to both reintegrate public housing into the mixed-income fabric of the city and redistribute concentrations of low-income families across the city. At the scale of the project, the mixed-income nature of HOPE VI developments allows for the integration of public housing, tax credit housing and market housing. The intent of this integration being to dissolve any visible differentiation between subsidized and unsubsidized housing tenants. Individual units, then, are constructed to satisfy market needs providing a considerable increase in the quality and quantity of amenities to tenants. Here, designation of units is no longer required as public housing tenants can theoretically

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4. Larry Keating, "Redeveloping Public Housing," APA Journal (2010), vol. 66, no.4.



Aerial photos of the 'Big Four' prior to demolition. Simply reconnecting these communities with the urban street network could have gone a long way in improving the cross use and security of these historic communities.  
© Google Earth

occupy any of the unit types, thereby eliminating any perceived stigma associated with public housing.

In New Orleans, public housing tenants who “chose” not to return to redeveloped HOPE sites either left subsidized housing all together, relocated to other housing projects or participated in Section 8 voucher programs. Section 8 provides one to two year vouchers for private housing where the tenant pays no more than 30% of their salary towards rent. The government, then, subsidizes the gap between the low-income tenant payments and the market rent. In theory, Section 8 allows for public housing tenants both increased mobility and increased housing choice. It follows that HOPE VI can operate at numerous scales in the city including project specific community building, private market dispersion via Section 8 and relocation of tenants to other housing projects. In this capacity, it has had a greater potential to effect broad changes, both positive and negative, across Metropolitan New Orleans than any past housing legislation.

Since its inception in 1992, the HOPE legislation has evolved through a series of revisions and re-directions via Congress, revisions that largely tended to favor the market aspects of the program over social concerns. The two initial revisions occurred in 1994|1995; first with the repeal of the longstanding requirement that local authorities provide one-for-one replacement housing units (1994 Rescissions Act); and second with the HUD requirement that all applications include provisions for demolition (1996 HOPE NOFA). While the demolition requirement was later repealed the following year, HUD continued to strongly encourage it over rehabilitation as a primary focus of HOPE VI. These changes foreshadowed a more substantial rewriting of the program four years later. The Quality Housing and Works Responsibility Act of 1998 (Housing Act of 1998) reflects the first substantial rewriting of the HOPE VI program. This legislation effectively broadened the scope of the program from the “most distressed” to include all projects with very low-income residents and serious deficiencies in design or physical infrastructure. In addition, provisions were incorporated to lower concentrations of the very poor residents in redeveloped sites, to allow for offsite replacement units for public housing tenants and to give HUD the authority to repeal federal rules “governing rents, income eligibility, and other areas of public housing management’ and authorizing a system of local preferences.” [5]

5. Ibid.







ants falling into this category, HOPE VI communities were a bad deal indeed for existing residents, by regulation alone potentially allowing only 10% of the existing community with the opportunity to transition to the new development.

The St. Thomas Housing Project, for example, once home to 800 families (a majority of which were extremely low-income) was demolished in 2001 and replaced by River Garden; a HOPE VI funded mixed-income community which only had provisions for a maximum of 47 extremely low-income families (or 5% of the total proposed units) to reside in the new development. Due to these provisions, new redevelopments resulted in displacement of poor families outside the public housing system. For while many of these residents will go into other HUD programs such as Section 8, there is also growing evidence that a considerable number lose touch with housing authorities and may become homeless. Statistics show that since Katrina, New Orleans homeless population has roughly doubled and is now at an estimated 12,000 people. [8] This is perhaps why housing officials manipulated the Katrina evacuation to force evictions in the 'Big Four'. After St. Thomas, public housing residents knew they would be getting a bad deal in the process and would have presented a more formidable opposition to attempts to redevelop.

8. See <http://www.nesri.org/hmb/NOLAFactSheet.pdf>

There was a two-fold increase in the homeless population in New Orleans after the storm. © Gpax.



What was: housing after the storm before demolition. Unlike Cabrini Green or Pruitt-Igoe, the majority of New Orleans housing projects were garden walk-up units and complied with or could be easily modified to adopt principles of defensible space. © Gpax.



What could have been: One of three original St. Thomas units not demolished and instead historically renovated. Many redevelopment plans have chosen to retain one quad of the original public housing for historical record. They demonstrate how the majority of existing public housing could have been modernized rather than razed for redevelopment. © Gpax.





**Human Rights and Housing**

*“One of the gravest post Katrina and Rita threats to human rights has been government actions violating the human right to housing in New Orleans. Developers – pursuant to federal legislation – have demolished public housing units across New Orleans – the only housing affordable to thousands of families living in the city.”*

*Tiffany M. Gardner, Director, Legal Program & Special Project on Hurricane Katrina [9]*

HUD’s public housing evictions raised such concern among the international community that in 2009, the UN sent a special rapporteur on the Right to Adequate Housing, Raquel Rolnik, to investigate. Her subsequent report confirmed what public housing advocates had been arguing for years. First, the HOPE VI approach to housing had ‘overly emphasized housing as real estate rather than as a basic social need.’ [10] Budgetary data reinforces this assertion with rebuilding of the ‘Big Four’ projected to cost \$762 million. By contrast, repair of the existing housing, many with minimal damage from Katrina, was estimated to only cost \$130 million. [11] The UN report found that units were being demolished “without sufficient mechanisms for tenants to find comparable housing in the interim.” [12] It noted that “in some instances, housing projects were demolished and land made available to developers, without replacement housing being made available to tenants ...” with “... some of this land remaining vacant for years.” [13] Most importantly, the report recognized that current public housing residents had been stigmatized and “treated with contempt and disrespect for their basic human dignity.” [14] The report concluded with broad recommendations from legislated involvement of community members to one-for-one replacement of public housing units, to allowing demolitions only after replacement units had been made available, to proper maintenance of existing public housing stock. Most importantly, though, it underlined a right to return for existing residents as a fundamental entitlement.

Studies have found in many cases that public housing residents’ social networks primarily consist of other social housing residents. [15] As a result, rather than pursuing mobility to other neighborhoods through Section 8 or other mixed-income developments, displaced HOPE VI residents largely stay within their existing neighbor-

9. See [http://nesri.org/fact\\_sheets\\_pubs/No\\_Shelter\\_from\\_the\\_Storm.pdf](http://nesri.org/fact_sheets_pubs/No_Shelter_from_the_Storm.pdf)

10. See [http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/docs/13session/A.HRC.13.20.Add.4\\_AEV.pdf](http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/docs/13session/A.HRC.13.20.Add.4_AEV.pdf)

11., 12., 13, 14. Ibid

15. Sudhir Venkatesh and Isil Celimli, “Tearing Down the Community,” NHI Shelterforce Online (November / December 2004), Issue #138.

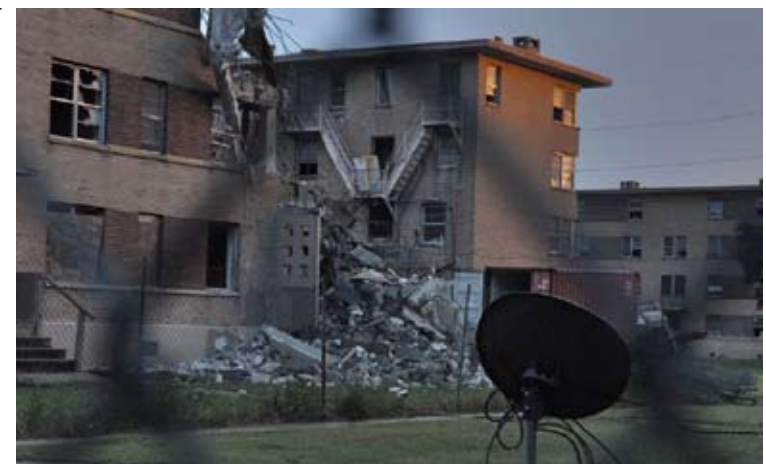
hood and the networks and support systems they’ve constructed there for generations. In the real world outside the beltway, community trumps de-concentration every time. Also, as the majority of households were not typical nuclear families in New Orleans public housing, currently policy overwhelmingly discriminates against minority women headed households (for instance, African American women-headed households comprised 77% of pre-Katrina residents). [16] These factors provide the foundation for an argument that the current experiment of poverty de-concentration being executed by the federal government is at best exceptionally misguided and at worst woefully malicious. Legislating a right of return must play a central role into new policies on the horizon.

16. See [http://colorlines.com/archives/2010/08/women\\_and\\_children\\_hit\\_by\\_housing\\_crisis\\_in\\_post-katrina\\_new-orleans.html](http://colorlines.com/archives/2010/08/women_and_children_hit_by_housing_crisis_in_post-katrina_new-orleans.html)

B.W. Cooper: Demolition protest in 2007. © Gpax



B.W. Cooper: Demolition in 2007. © Gpax





## A Future for Public Housing Policy?

*“Because public housing lacks a constituency with any influence, it has been easy for Democrats and Republicans alike to come up with just enough money to keep public housing open, but not enough for it to be sustained. Public policy has allowed the slow starvation of public housing.”*  
Sheila Crowley, President of the National Low Income Housing Coalition [17]

There remains some potential to resolve contradictions in current housing regulation to better protect residents. Over the summer accusations flew within ranks of public housing supporters over a new legislation, PETRA being proposed by the Obama Administration. [18] It proposed three central measures that could positively address the structural shortcomings of current housing policies while attempting to ensure fiscal health in the future. First, it would make law the commitment to one-for-one replacement of public housing units. This would permanently close the redevelopment loop hole provided be HOPE VI which has allowed so much of our nation’s housing stock to be permanently demolished without replacement. Second, it would strengthen resident’s rights to representation against unfair rent increases and evictions and also ensure the tenants have a right of return if they’re required to vacate their homes for repairs and redevelopment. Finally, it would allow housing authorities to leverage the same types of funding for renovation of existing structures that have been allowed for demolition, i.e. understanding that the lack of renovation funding being a key ingredient to the path to demolition.

The vehicle of this funding, unfortunately, has been troubling to many. PETRA proposes that ownership of federal properties would be no longer through the federal government but instead through private entities acting as agents of HUD. This provision poses a different kind of risk for public housing by exposing projects to the risk of foreclosure, currently a non-issue in conventional public housing. It potentially trades the current displacement, de-concentration regime with displacement via the vagaries of the market and whether private entities could make new laws ‘work’ financially. One wonders if the current systems have thrown out the baby with the bath water in allowing the push toward public | private ventures to dominate so much of federal housing policy. Perhaps some social programs do

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17. Sheila Crowley, “Status Quo Won’t Save Public Housing,” Huffington Post Online (June 2010).

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18. PETRA stands for Preservation, Enhancement and Transformation of Rental Assistance.

need big government as a sole proprietorship to serve the people’s needs best and most justly. As another advocate wrote, ‘mend it, don’t end it.’ One thing is clear, though, maintaining the status quo is unacceptable. Under current law, housing stock will continue to be demolished, residents displaced across the country and a new housing crisis soon to arrive.

For New Orleanians, unfortunately, any good that might come from present policy progress would be largely too little too late. Their communities have already been torn asunder, their homes dissolved and reformed into New Urbanist market experiments that have yet to withstand the test of time. Currently, as of October 2010, housing officials have even noted that expiration of the Gulf Opportunity Zone Tax Credits in December may put the completion of over half of the ‘Big Four’ redevelopments in jeopardy of not being constructed at all. The audacity of this type of disaster enabled change being carried in a difficult economic climate with such a degree of cultural insensitivity is truly disturbing. One can only hope that in the future, policy makers will finally create programs that live up to their misleading acronyms and provide real hope and not despair to those citizens that need it the most in the worst of times. The creation and destruction of impoverished communities deserves better consideration than our current system cares to give. In New Orleans, perhaps, the best solution for the creation of future affordable housing could be to adopt inclusionary zoning measures on development in the city (i.e. mandating minimum percentages of all future housing development be affordable, sustainable housing), while this may not result in the immediate change so sorely needed, at a minimum it ensures a constant augmentation of existing affordable housing stock and the potential to replace the critical housing lost in in the wake of Katrina. This would at least ensure that as we continue to rebuild New Orleans, we rebuild for everyone.

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# Is there a future for the recent past in New Orleans?

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Essay by **Francine Stock**, curator of the **Tulane School of Architecture's New Orleans Virtual Archive** and president of **DOCOMOMO US/Louisiana**



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Curtis and Davis, architects. Frank Lotz Miller, photographer. Thomy Lafon School. Undated. Curtis and Davis Office Records, © Southeastern Architectural Archive.

Significant modernist architecture is disappearing from the urban fabric of New Orleans at a truly alarming rate. Since the enactment of the 2008 School Facilities Plan for Orleans Parish the mid-century modern public school has become an endangered species in New Orleans. [1] Of the city's thirty public schools designed and built in the 1950s, only four are left standing today. [2] Soon only one may remain. These were not generic 20th century buildings but significant award winning architecture, efficiently designed and therefore, quality candidates for sustainable reuse. Currently three of the four modern schools left in New Orleans are endangered with demolition even though the Federal Emergency Management Agency determined that facilities on the campuses were eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. DOCOMOMO Louisiana has advocated for their preservation, but to no avail. This essay will highlight the four schools recognized the Louisiana Landmarks Society as Most Endangered in 2008 and the singular school from the era which has been saved.



1. Stock, Francine, "New Orleans Schools 1950-1959." Weblog entry. Regional Modernism: the New Orleans Archives. February 13, 2008. <http://www.regional-modernism.com/2008/02/new-orleans-schools-1950-1959.html> Devore and Joseph Logson, pp. 338.

2. Between 1952 and 1960 thirty new public schools were built and eighteen were renovated. See Ferguson, John C. "The Schools of the 1950s: the International Style in New Orleans," in *Crescent City Schools* by Donald Devore and Joseph Logson, pp. 338.

(above) Carver High School Auditorium (below) Phillis Wheatley Elementary School © Francine Stock.

3. "Architects Win Honors in Design," *The Times-Picayune*, January 16, 1955

4. Stock, Francine, "Preservation Matters: Keynote Address by Robert Ivy," Weblog entry. Regional Modernism: the New Orleans Archives. February 10, 2009. <http://www.regional-modernism.com/2009/02/preservation-matters-keynote-address-by.html>

5. Smith, Helena Huntington, "The Child Is The Monument," *Colliers*, September 3, 1949.

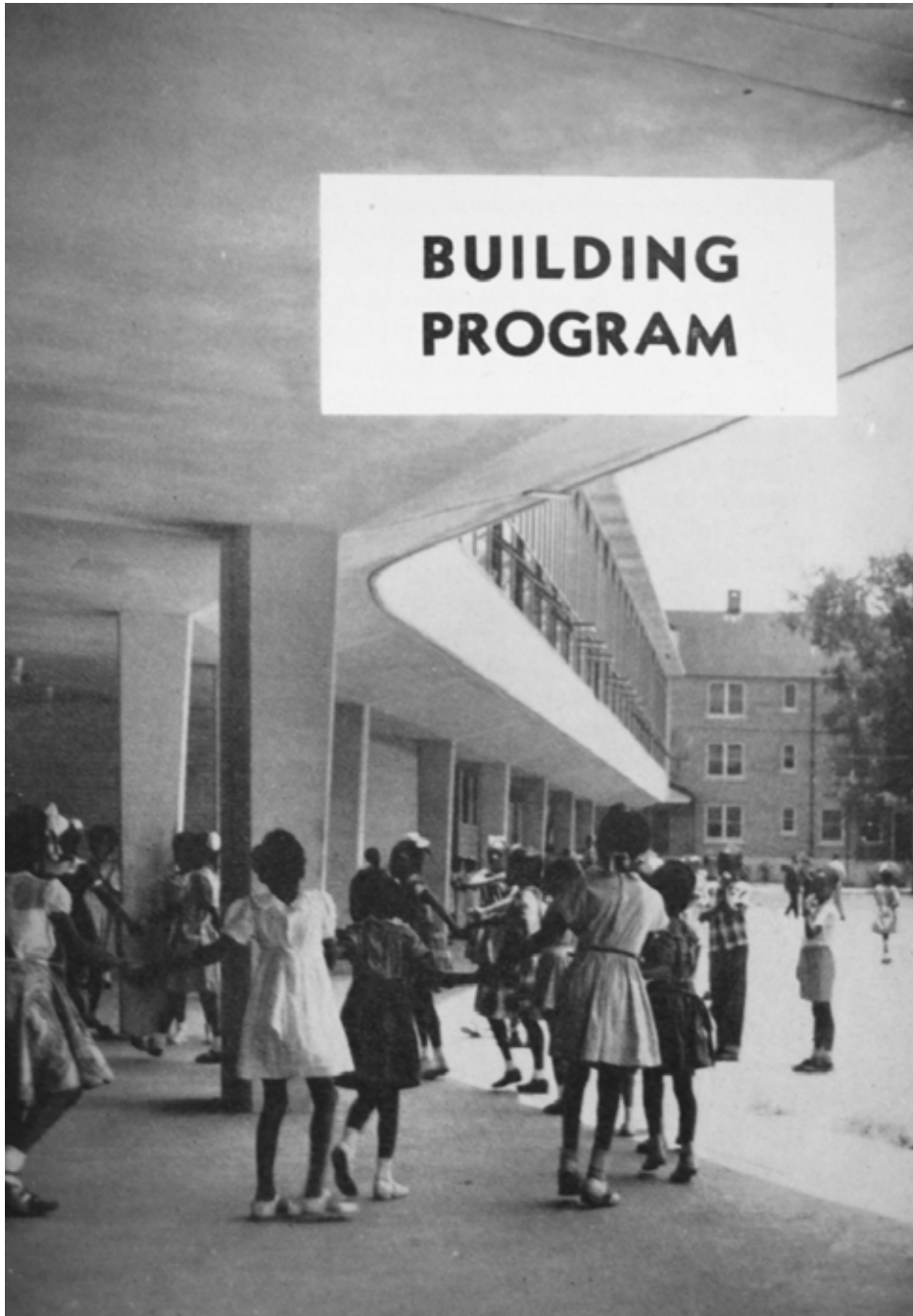
### Progressive architecture in the humid south

One does not normally associate New Orleans with Modern architecture, yet in the 1950s the city was experiencing an architectural rebirth. In 1955 Walter Gropius juried the *Progressive Architecture's* second annual design awards. That year *PA* recognized more buildings designed by architects from New Orleans and Louisiana than from any other city or state in the nation. [3] New Orleans was becoming known not only for historic architecture, but also for the innovative designs of a cadre of architects who practiced with a regional approach to modernism. Many of our modern buildings were designed with a similar sensitivity to site and climate as our historic homes: utilizing convection, understanding how to pull a breeze across a room, extending roof lines to shield walls from intense sun and rain, and elevating buildings off the ground to protect our primary living and working spaces from flooding. [4] In fact the *PA* citation for the Phillis Wheatley Elementary School (1955, Charles R. Colbert) specifically recognizes the facility's bilateral lighting, cross ventilation, open corridor, and its elevation off the ground, asserting the significance of the structure's responsiveness to site. The Phillis Wheatley School shares these sustainable design strategies with our most significant historic homes such as Madame John's Legacy (1795) and the Pitot House (1799). The spirit of the Phillis Wheatley structure is thoroughly modern as evidenced by its cantilevered steel trusses, transparent skin and bold concrete piers.

### A continuous planning and building program

Architect Charles Colbert spearheaded the initial drive to modernize school facilities in New Orleans. In 1948, this young assistant professor at Tulane University School of Architecture coordinated a Second Year studio focused on designing schools suitable to our climate and sensitive to the needs of children. Colbert then organized a public exhibition of this student work. Over thirty thousand people from New Orleans came to view the students' architectural models of "revolutionary school construction" as reported by *Collier's* magazine. "They went away all steamed up over such items as modern, soft-finish, non-glare desk tops; light-absorbing, easy on-the-eyes green chalk boards instead of old-fashioned blackboards; glass wall blocks which filter light and produce a soothing indirect illumination in the classroom; windows on two sides; 'orientation' toward prevailing breezes----and all this at a smaller cost per foot than is usual for conventional school buildings." [5]



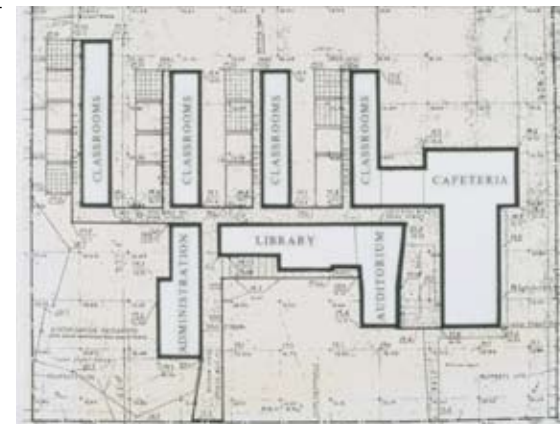


Curtis & Davis, architects. Frank Lotz Miller, photographer. Superintendent's Annual Report. New Orleans Public Schools 1953-1954. City Archives, New Orleans Public Library

From 1949-1952, Colbert served as Supervising Architect and Director for the new Office of Planning and Construction for the Orleans Parish School Board. In 1952, he produced *A Continuous Planning and Building Program*, a comprehensive study of existing facilities. Colbert analyzed existing public school facilities and provided a road map for short and long term growth and development. The city had not built a single school facility in the 1940s and the population was rapidly expanding resulting in a tremendous need for new facilities. Most would be built as neighborhood schools with separate elementary junior and senior high schools. Colbert also introduced the idea of a 'school village' to address urban density and the high price of central city lots. Instead one could integrate three schools on a larger campus in a more rural setting.

Architecture firms involved in this mid-century modern renaissance include: Burk, Lebreton and Lamantia; Charles R. Colbert; Curtis and Davis; Favrot, Reed Mathes and Bergman; Freret and Wolf; Goldstein, Parham and Labouisse; August Perez and Associates; and Ricciuti Associates. Several school buildings were recognized by national architecture journals and organizations for the design merit. The Thomy Lafon Elementary School received the AIA Honor Award in 1954. Progressive Architecture cited Charles Colbert's Phillis Wheatley Elementary School in 1955. Curtis and Davis were later awarded PA's highest honor, the First Design Award in 1957 for their innovative George Washington Carver Junior-Senior High School. New Orleans mid-century architects were not just making headlines and history. These 1950s schools were models of regional modernism, formally expressing a modern spirit while integrating the wisdom of our ancestors to design for and with our environment and landscape.

McDonogh 39  
Elementary  
School plan.  
© Nathaniel  
C. Curtis, Jr.  
collection,  
Tulane School of  
Architecture Visual  
Media Center.



### McDonogh 39 Elementary School

Goldstein, Parham and Labouisse; Freret and Wolf;  
Curtis and Davis, associate architects, 1952  
Demolished 2010



A Planning and Building Program for New Orleans' Schools, 1952, photograph by Clarence J. Laughlin, Louisiana and Special Collections Department, Earl K. Long Library, University of New Orleans

McDonogh 39 Elementary School in the Gentilly neighborhood was the first modern school built in New Orleans and a model facility. [6] McDonogh 39 was a 'finger school' in plan with four lengths of classrooms connected at one end to a broad administrative wing of offices. Between the fingers were a series of courtyards. The bands of classrooms were then connected by a corridor on one side. Both sides of the classrooms and corridor had operable top-hinged windows providing ample ventilation even when it rained. In addition the covered corridor filtered sunlight from the classroom reducing heat gain.

Many of New Orleans' schools from the 1950s exhibited innovative and integrative approaches to circulation, lighting and ventilation. Architects widely rejected the traditional double-loaded corridor as its use could significantly increase construction cost and absorb as much as 30% of the total square footage. [7] An open or enclosed 'side hall' with operable windows provided bilateral natural lighting and ventilation. Architect Charles Colbert designed three schools with exterior circulation galleries, a hallmark of Louisiana vernacular architecture. Curtis and Davis's first school was designed with no corridor.

6. Later renamed after local civil rights activist Avery Alexander.

7. Le, Trung. "Redesigning Education: Rethinking the School Corridor." Weblog entry. Fast Company. March 26, 2010. <http://www.fastcompany.com/1598539/re-designing-education-trung-le>

## Thomy Lafon Elementary School

Curtis and Davis, 1954

Endangered



Curtis and Davis, architects. Frank Lotz Miller, photographer. Thomy Lafon School. Undated. Curtis and Davis Office Records, © Southeastern Architectural Archive.

The curved concrete forms of the Thomy Lafon Elementary School (1954, AIA Honor Award) offer an early indication of the firm's expressive and regional approach to modernism. Arthur Q. Davis (b. 1921) described the form of the Lafon School as a "long, thin classroom wing, gracefully bent to avoid monotony." [8] Nathaniel Curtis Jr. (1917-1997) suggested the layout of the elevated Lafon School was "the next logical step after the finger plan." [9] Designing the school without corridors proved to be quite economical, costing

just \$10.31 per square foot to build. [10] The kindergarten wing was accessible by a playful ramp to the upper story. Beyond the kindergarten, classrooms were paired to share toilet facilities. Elevating the classrooms on concrete stilts gave the children covered play space on a tight urban site. It also saved the classrooms from flooding post-Katrina. While the use of piloti may have been inspired by Le Corbusier, the practice of elevating structures to avoid flooding and better catch a prevailing breeze is a French Colonial tradition.

8. Davis, Arthur Q. *It Happened by Design*. University Press of Mississippi, 2008.

9. Heard, Lemann and Klingman. *Talk About Architecture*. Tulane School of Architecture, 1993.

10. "The No Corridor School," *Architectural Forum*, April 1953.



## Phillis Wheatley Elementary School

Charles R. Colbert, 1955

Endangered



Charles Colbert, architect. Frank Lotz Miller, photographer. Phillis Wheatley Elementary School. Undated. American Institute of Architects, New Orleans Chapter Collection.

Charles R. Colbert considered the Phillis Wheatley Elementary School his highest accomplishment as an architect and planner. [11] It is by far one of the most compelling monuments of the era. Wheatley is the culmination of a series of regional design innovations in which Colbert integrated modernist methods and materials with sensitivity to climate on urban sites. The Hoffman and McDonogh 36 Elementary Schools (both 1954, Sol Rosenthal and Charles Colbert) were riffs on a double galleried finger plan with ample courtyards. In Wheatley, Colbert literally took the plan to another level. The entire classroom building was elevated eleven feet above grade on two rows of chevron-shaped concrete piers. Twelve shop-fabricated steel trusses formed the classroom structure. An

exterior circulation gallery and central pedestrian bridge created a relationship between the classrooms and the central light court. The intention of the elevation was to create generous play space on a tight urban site. The cantilever freed the play space from a field of obstructing columns that would be required in a more conventional post and beam construction. The result was stunning. Airy, light-filled classrooms elevated from the street gave the effect of a modern tree house, an appropriate and poetic setting for a child's classroom. The School Executive Better School Design Competition honored the Wheatley School nationally with its Top Award. [12] Wheatley was exhibited internationally by the U.S. State Department in Berlin in 1957 and in Moscow in 1958. In 2010 the Phillis Wheatley Elementary School was named to the World Monuments Fund Watch.

11. & 12. Colbert Lowrey Hess Boudreaux Firm Brochure, circa 1971, "Colbert, Charles" Biographical File, Southeastern Architectural Archive, Special Collections Division, Tulane University Libraries.

**George Washington Carver Junior-Senior High School  
and Helen Sylvania Edwards Elementary School**  
Curtis and Davis, 1958  
Demolition active



Curtis and Davis, architects. George Washington Carver Junior-Senior High School. Undated. Curtis and Davis Office Records, © Southeastern Architectural Archive.



In his 1952 report, Charles Colbert first described the idea of a 'school village.' He noted that in some instances, urban land values in the densely populated center of the city could be twenty times higher than in the newer suburbs. Colbert suggested selecting a site of "ninety beautifully wooded acres, at the edge of urban development, six miles away" from the densely populated center of New Orleans would save six million dollars in land acquisition. He calculated that this savings would support nearly a century of "quality bus transportation" and envisioned the buses as "mobile classrooms." The teachers would travel with the students and with a set of visual aids to extend classroom instruction during the commute to their "semi-rural, college-like campus." [13] The mobile classrooms never materialized. However Colbert's idea of a 'school village' with a courtyard arrangement and a first-class auditorium that could also serve the neighboring community formed the

basis of the Carver campus plan designed by Curtis and Davis. The integration of three schools (elementary, junior and senior high) on a 65-acre campus in the upper ninth ward allowed the schools to share common facilities (cafeteria, kitchen, auditorium) and yet retain age-segregated classroom buildings. [14] The auditorium was also available in the evening for community events. The striking design of the auditorium with its soaring (40 ft high and 200 ft long) parabolic concrete vault and hinged buttresses was truly monumental. [15] In 1957, Curtis and Davis' plan for the Carver schools was honored with *Progressive Architecture's* First Design Award and the American Institute of Architects' Best Overall Plan for a School Complex, a testimonial to the architectural quality of Curtis and Davis' design as well as reforms set in place by Charles Colbert.

13. Colbert, Charles R. *Idea: the Shaping Force*. Pendaya Publications, 1987, pp. 48-50.

14. The Helen Sylvania Edwards Elementary School (1958, Curtis and Davis) shared many campus facilities with Carver, but has already been demolished.

15. "New Buildings," *Interbuild*, January 1960, pp. 31-34.



McDonogh 36 Elementary School  
 Sol Rosenthal and Charles R. Colbert, 1954  
 Renovation 2010, John C. Williams



Mahalia Jackson Early Childhood Family Learning Center (originally McDonogh 36 Elementary School),  
 © Francine Stock.

In a field of lost opportunities we have a singular instance of adaptive reuse. McDonogh 36 Elementary School was the only school from the 1950s not slated for demolition by the School Facilities Master Plan. The school was renovated by architect John C. Williams for a non-profit foundation and re-opened in 2010 as the Mahalia Jackson Early Childhood Family Learning Center. During renovation, the facility was stripped bare to the concrete and steel structure, shedding years of unsympathetic alterations and redundant mechanical systems. The form is a fusion of a ‘finger plan’ school with a double galleried

plantation house. Mature live oaks inhabit the courtyards between the wings. Initial concerns that the final product could trend toward the phony colonial were unnecessary. The modernist spirit survived. The renovation includes walls of operable windows and an open air circulation gallery. The new program is brilliant and the renovation reminds us how modern school facilities *could* be retrofitted to serve the community in new ways if only given the chance.



Public buildings dating from the modernist era are experiencing a period of extreme vulnerability. Their architectural and mechanical systems are reaching the end of their life cycle and are in need of reinvestment. A clean and clear modernist vision is likewise marred by neglect and unsympathetic alterations during the past decades. While nineteenth century buildings sometimes become more romantic as they decay, the results of deferred maintenance on mid-twentieth century buildings are unflattering at best. In addition, the modernist style has yet to reach an era of broad understanding and appreciation by the general public. Preserving modernism is especially challenging in the city of New Orleans, which is widely recognized for its eighteenth and nineteenth century architecture. Modern buildings are often viewed as 'intrusions' to the historic fabric. The situation is further complicated when Federal funds earmarked for disaster recovery favor demolition over renovation and adaptive reuse.

DOCOMOMO Louisiana participated as a consulting party in several FEMA-sponsored Section 106 consultations, hoping to preserve threatened modern architecture and in doing so benefit Louisiana's recovery. However the process has failed in New Orleans. None of the modern structures are being saved. For example, in 2009 FEMA determined the Carver auditorium and cafeteria buildings were eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. DOCOMOMO Louisiana advocated for the auditorium structure to be retained as part of a new campus plan and suggested that it be adaptively reused as an open air pavilion. However, the City of New Orleans issued a demolition permit on November 1, 2010. Demolition is active and expected to be complete by the time this article is published. DOCOMOMO Louisiana has filed objections with FEMA and withdrawn from further participation in Section 106 consultations. Not only has the process failed to live up to the spirit of the National Historic Preservation Act, it has absorbed this organization's energies and dictated a hyper active advocacy agenda with no positive results. This must change.

### Learning from New Orleans

Currently, DOCOMOMO Louisiana is investigating alternative approaches to advocacy by identifying opportunities to educate the public and celebrate or modern heritage. The first step is to focus on a widespread effort to educate the public about modernism in our midst, its significance in the landscape, and the inherent sustainability of its



Louisiana  
Superdome at night  
© Daniel Schwen.

adaptive reuse. This can be accomplished by meeting with neighborhood groups, hosting architectural tours and also by sponsoring a city-wide campaign to landmark our beloved but recently endangered Louisiana Superdome (1975, Curtis and Davis). Engaging with real estate developers may also provide better opportunities for conservation, by identifying vacant modern buildings and discussing both their historic significance and tax credits available for renovation. Reinvesting in a weathered and awkwardly adapted but structurally innovative modernist building has the potential to renew the futuristic spirit of the recent past and even be emblematic of the city's recovery. DOCOMOMO Louisiana will continue to work towards the documentation and conservation of our region's sites, buildings and neighborhoods of the modernist movement. We sincerely hope to be left with more than just documentation.

DOCOMOMO Louisiana is a regional chapter of an international committee dedicated to the documentation and conservation of the buildings, sites and neighborhoods of the modern movement. In accordance with DOCOMOMO-US, the Louisiana chapter advocates the documentation and conservation of the City of New Orleans, State of Louisiana and the Gulf South region's manifestations of the Modern movement.

# White House 2.0

Text and project by **Arielle Assouline-Lichten** & **Wayne Congar** of the think-tank **lab/RAD**



Since 1792, increased levels of opacity have been grafted onto the basic palatial template of James Hoban’s design, reflecting the public’s decreasing access to an increasingly complex U.S. government. Despite its relatively unchanged formal reading from Pennsylvania Avenue, the White House has been transformed from a built expression of presidential power to a global emblem of cloistered politics and public inaccessibility evident in extensive subterranean additions and a shift in primary function from residence to storehouse of classified information.

Currently, the White House is the final and most formidable roadblock prohibiting dialogue between the public and political power players. White House 2.0 is an open-source solution, designed to facilitate a symbiotic information exchange between a global public of everyday experts and the U.S. government with the aim of creating more effective legislation and elevating the role of the public in the political process. Transparency penetrates the existing palace-cum-bunker typology by rededicating its existing computerized brain center to the input and output of public concerns rather than confidential information.

White House 2.0 collects and sorts public input, generating graphical and textural output to broadcast onto screens affixed to the interior walls of the executive residence and West Wing. After placing a concern, an individual can see the graph into which their input was incorporated. Where it appeared in White House 2.0 and, via webcams, observe high-level government officials analyzing the information, all in real-time. Similarly-themed output is broadcast within the same area of the building, therefore reorganizing existing programmatic arrangements and empowering the collective public voice to dictate circulation through it.

In short, White House 2.0 insists that presidential and governmental power is dependent on streams of unrefined information input and active involvement from a public empowered by evidence that their voice is being heard.





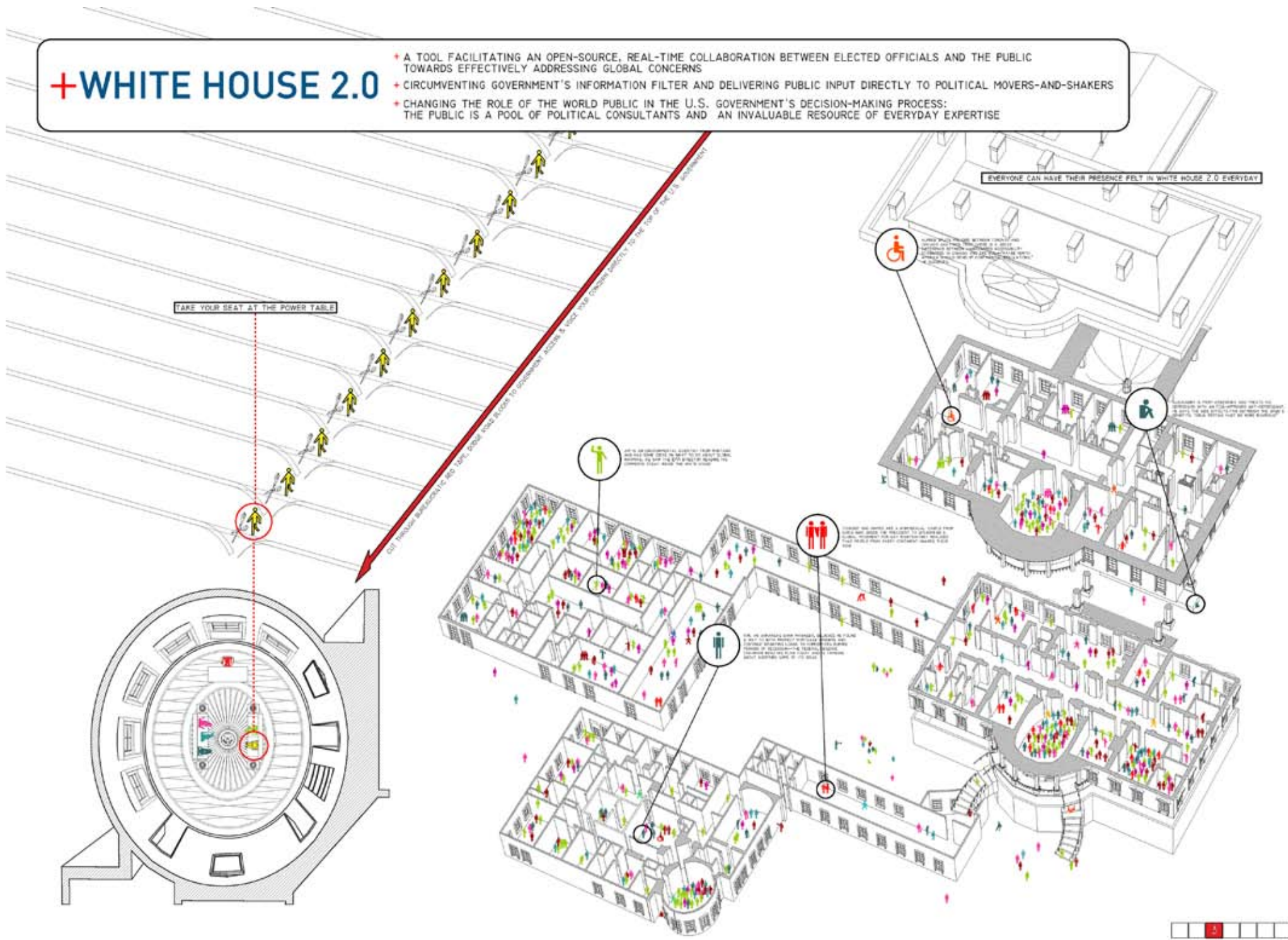




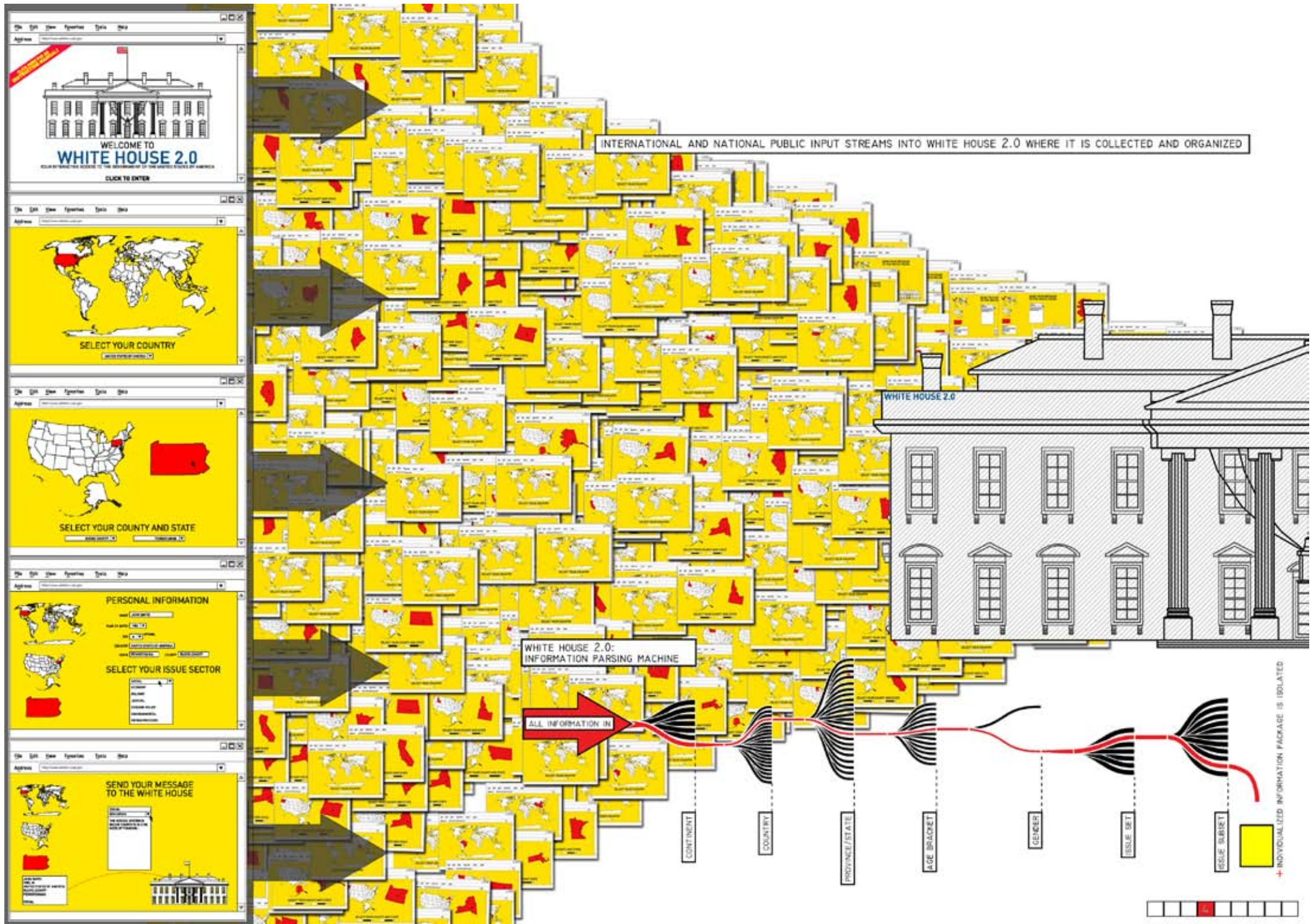


# +WHITE HOUSE 2.0

- A TOOL FACILITATING AN OPEN-SOURCE, REAL-TIME COLLABORATION BETWEEN ELECTED OFFICIALS AND THE PUBLIC TOWARDS EFFECTIVELY ADDRESSING GLOBAL CONCERNS
- CIRCUMVENTING GOVERNMENT'S INFORMATION FILTER AND DELIVERING PUBLIC INPUT DIRECTLY TO POLITICAL MOVERS-AND-SHAKERS
- CHANGING THE ROLE OF THE WORLD PUBLIC IN THE U.S. GOVERNMENT'S DECISION-MAKING PROCESS: THE PUBLIC IS A POOL OF POLITICAL CONSULTANTS AND AN INVALUABLE RESOURCE OF EVERYDAY EXPERTISE

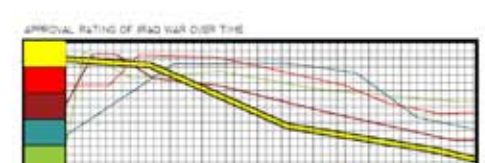
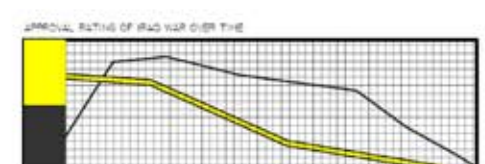
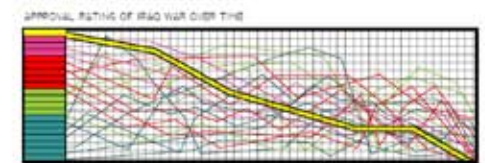
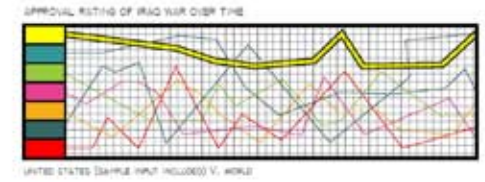
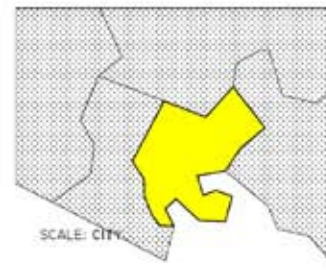
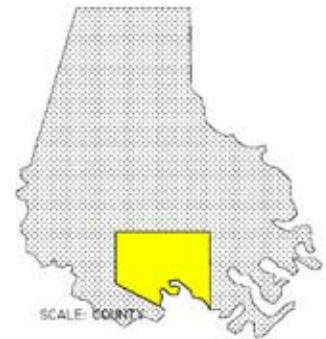
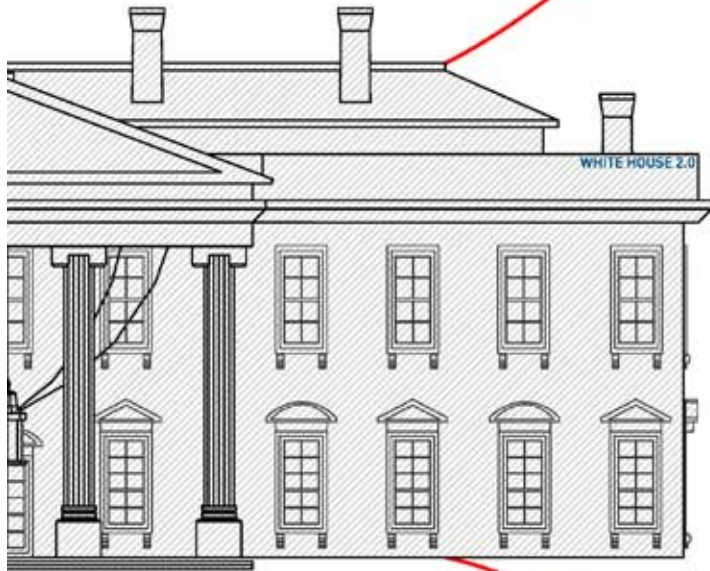








GRAPHICAL AND TEXTUAL OUTPUT, ADDRESSING PUBLIC CONCERNS ACROSS ALL POLITICAL SCALES, IS GENERATED AND BROADCAST ON THE WALLS OF WHITE HOUSE 2.0 FOR GOVERNMENT CONSUMPTION



PROGRAM ARRANGEMENT IN WHITE HOUSE 2.0 IS ORGANIZED ACCORDING TO ISSUES OF PUBLIC CONCERN

WHITE HOUSE (CURRENT STATE): PROGRAMMATIC ORGANIZATION BASED ON PERSONNEL HIERARCHIES

WEST WING 1ST FLOOR

- 1 Oval Office
- 2 Cabinet Room
- 3 President's Study
- 4 Historical Room
- 5 Lobby
- 6 Special Assistant to the President and Personal Aide
- 7 Medical Assistant to the President and Personal Assistant
- 8 Assistant to the President and Deputy National Security
- 9 Deputy Assistant to the President and Deputy Press Secretary
- 10 Assistant Press Secretary
- 11 Assistant to the President and Deputy National Security Director
- 12 Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs
- 13 Vice President
- 14 Assistant to the President, Deputy Chief of Staff and Senior Advisor
- 15 Special Assistant to the President and Assistant to the Senior Advisor
- 16 Assistant to the President and Deputy Chief of Staff
- 17 Assistant to the President and Deputy Chief of Staff for Policy
- 18 Assistant to the President and Chief of Staff

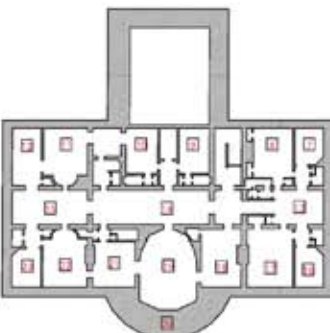
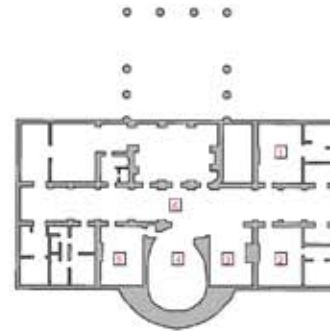
Reception Area

WEST WING 2ND FLOOR

- 1 Counselor to the President
- 2 Assistant to the President for Communications
- 3 Assistant to the President for Legislative Affairs
- 4 Deputy Assistant to the President for Legislative Affairs
- 5 Assistant to the President for Economic Policy and Domestic, National Economic Council
- 6 Deputy Assistant to the President for Economic Policy and Deputy Director, National Economic Council
- 7 Assistant to the President for Presidential Personnel
- 8 Deputy Counselor to the President
- 9 Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy
- 10 Deputy Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy
- 11 Assistant to the President for International
- 12 Counselor to the President

MANSION 1ST FLOOR

- 1 Library
- 2 Veranda Room
- 3 Game Room
- 4 Office for Assistant Secretary
- 5 Map Room
- 6 Dining Hall



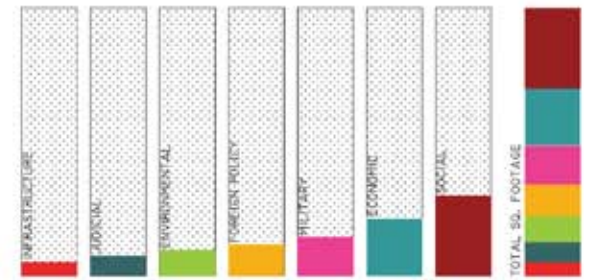
MANSION 2ND FLOOR

- 1 Obama's Office Room
- 2 Obama's Bedroom
- 3 East Bedroom
- 4 West Bedroom
- 5 President's Dining Room
- 6 Family Kitchen
- 7 East Office Hall
- 8 Dining Hall
- 9 West Office Hall
- 10 Jack's Office Room
- 11 Jack's Bedroom
- 12 Baby's Room
- 13 Upper Oval Room
- 14 Thomas Ballroom
- 15 Private Office Room
- 16 President's Bedroom
- 17 Dining Room
- 18 Baby's Room

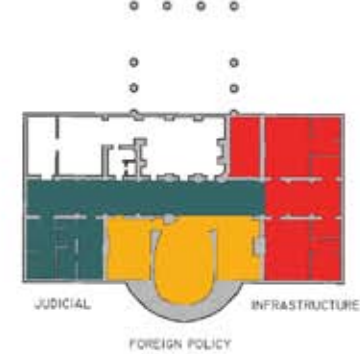
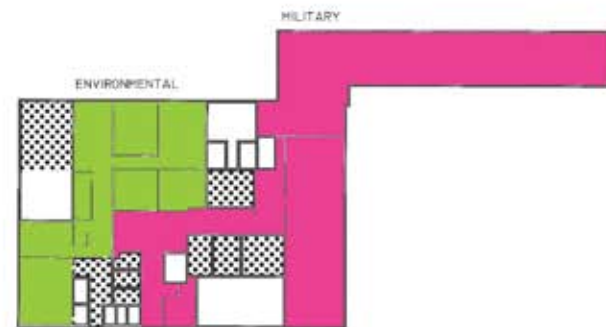
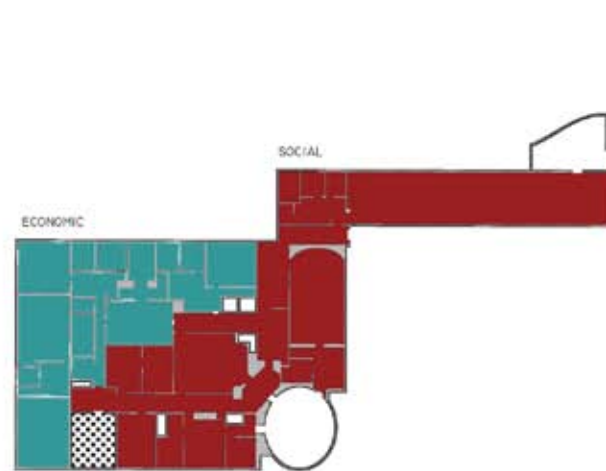
WHITE HOUSE 2.0: ISSUE-BASED PROGRAMMATIC RE-ORGANIZATION



FEDERAL GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS (% BY ISSUE SET)



% SQ. FOOTAGE IN WHITE HOUSE 2.0 ALLOTED FOR EACH ISSUE (ACCORDING TO GOVERNMENT BUREAU & AGENCY DIVISIONS)



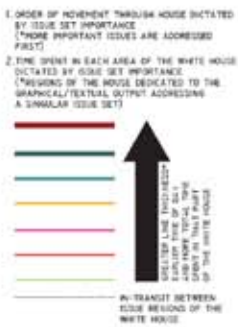
\* PRIMARY PRIVATE SPACES IN PRESIDENTIAL MANSION ARE RETAINED  
 \*\* RECEPTION AREAS IN WEST WING ARE RETAINED



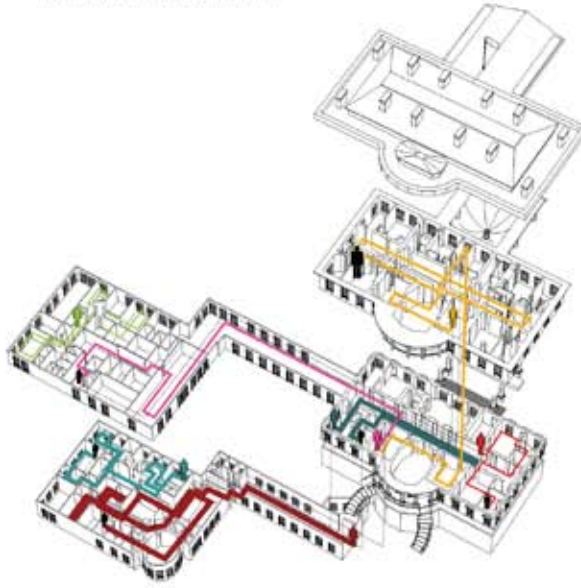
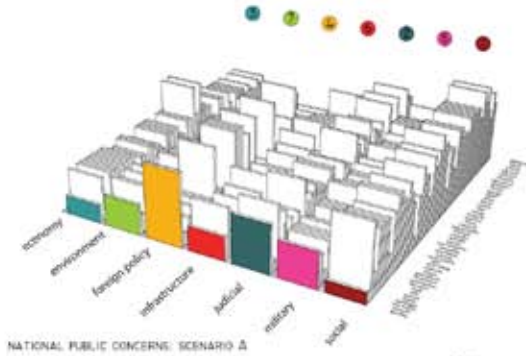


PUBLIC INPUT & RESULTING GRAPHICAL/TEXTUAL OUTPUT SCRIPTS CIRCULATION THROUGH WHITE HOUSE 2.0

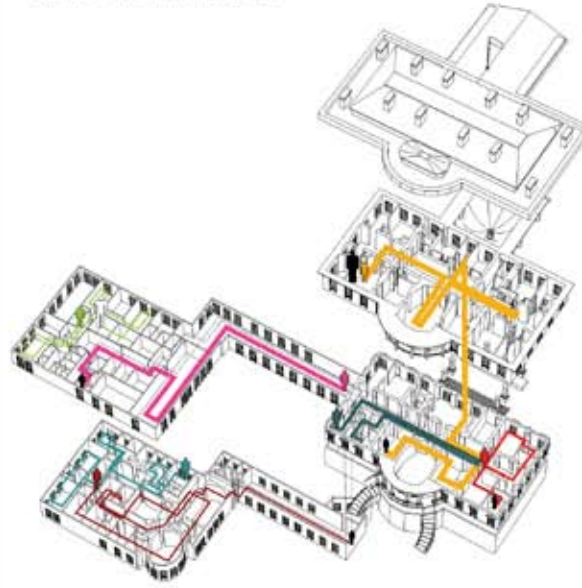
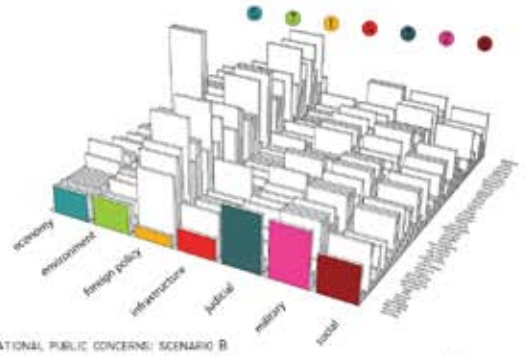
+ LEGEND



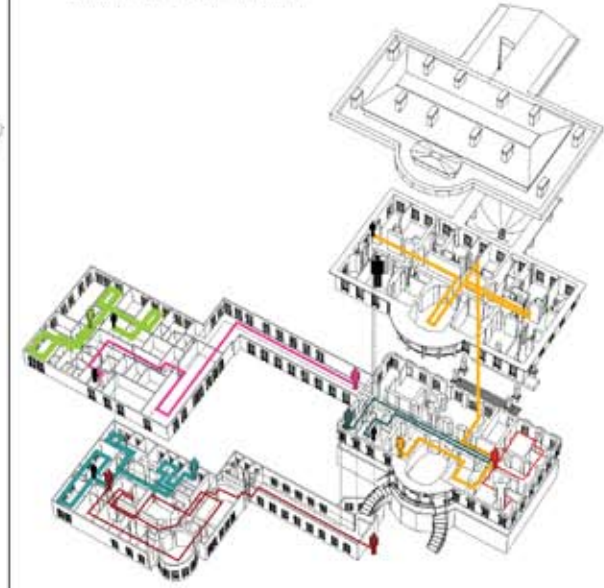
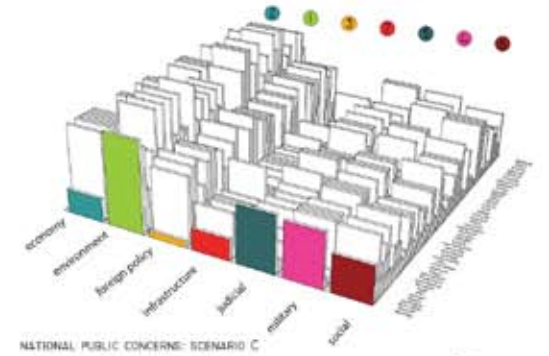
+ SCENARIO A



+ SCENARIO B



+ SCENARIO C

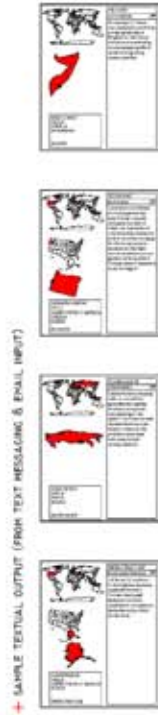




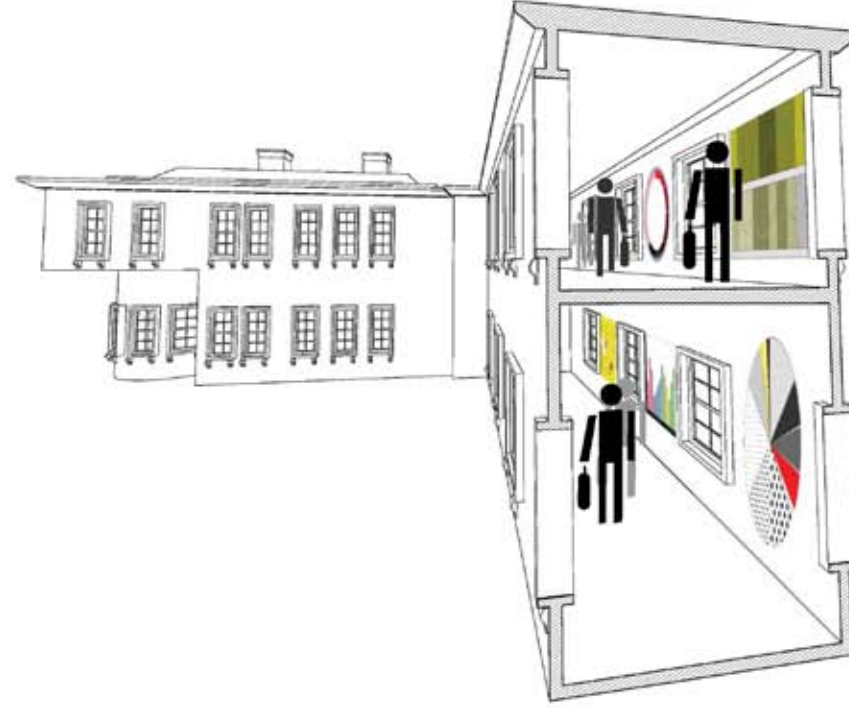
INTERIOR MODIFICATIONS NECESSARY TO UPGRADE EXISTING WHITE HOUSE TO WHITE HOUSE 2.0: PUBLIC BROADCASTING MACHINE

SECTION A: VIEW TOWARDS EXECUTIVE RESIDENCE

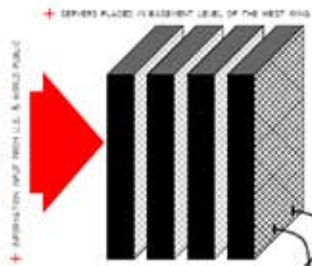
SECTION B: VIEW TOWARDS WEST WING



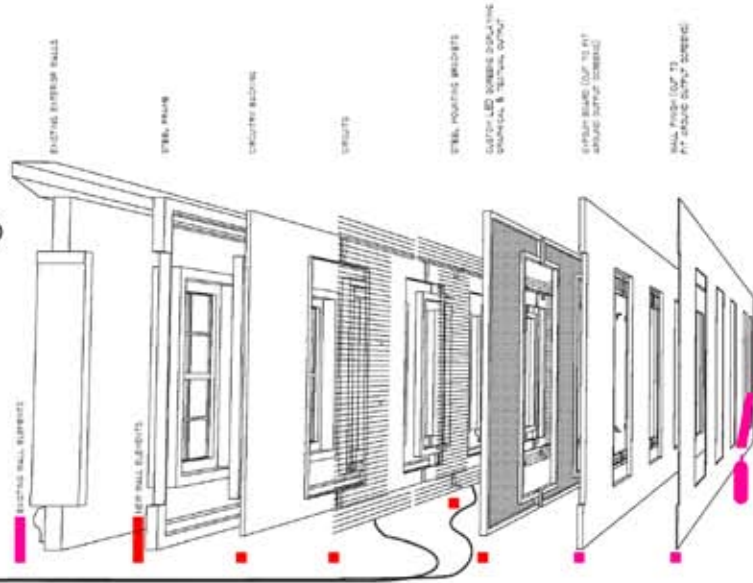
+ SAMPLE TEXTUAL OUTPUT (FROM TEXT MESSAGING & EMAIL INPUT)



+ SAMPLE GRAPHICAL OUTPUT



+ INFORMATION FROM PUBLIC IS RECEIVABLE



+ HIGH-LEVEL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS



+ PUBLIC ACCESS TO HIGH-LEVELS OF THE WHITE HOUSE AND U.S. GOVERNMENT





# + WHITE HOUSE 2.0 USER MANUAL

WELCOME TO WHITE HOUSE 2.0 INTERACTIVE MESSAGING SYSTEM!

TO BEGIN, SELECT EITHER YOUR PERSONAL COMPUTER OR YOUR MOBILE TELEPHONE.

FOR MOBILE PHONE USERS, CONTINUE TO STEP 2.

FOR PERSONAL COMPUTER USERS CONTINUE TO STEP 8.



STEP 1.



MAKE SURE YOUR MOBILE PHONE IS TURNED ON AND ACTIVATED, WITH SMS (TEXT MESSAGE) CAPABILITY.

CHECK WITH YOUR PERSONAL SERVICE PROVIDER FOR MORE INFORMATION REGARDING SMS MESSAGING SERVICES.

BEGIN A NEW SMS MESSAGE.

REFER TO YOUR INDIVIDUAL PHONE MANUAL FOR INSTRUCTIONS ON HOW TO CREATE AN SMS MESSAGE.

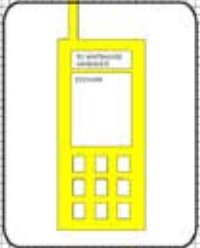


STEP 2.

AS THE RECIPIENT OF YOUR MESSAGE TO THE WHITE HOUSE, SIMPLY TYPE THE LETTERS "WHITEHOUSE" OR ENTER THE NUMBER "9448366873"

SELECT TO WHICH SECTOR YOU WISH TO CONTRIBUTE INFORMATION AND TYPE THE WORD IN THE MESSAGE BOX.

CHOOSE EITHER:  
SOCIAL  
ECONOMY  
MILITARY  
JUDICIAL  
FOREIGN POLICY  
ENVIRONMENTAL  
INFRASTRUCTURE



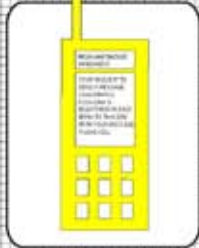
STEP 3.



STEP 4.

PRESS SEND AND WAIT APPROXIMATELY 5 - 60 SECONDS FOR A RESPONSE FROM THE WHITE HOUSE.

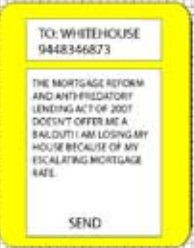
IF YOU DO NOT RECEIVE A MESSAGE WITHIN 5 MINUTES, PLEASE TRY AGAIN AND VERIFY THE RECIPIENT ENTRY.



STEP 5.

REPLY TO THE SMS RECEIVED FROM THE WHITE HOUSE WITH YOUR MESSAGE.

YOUR MESSAGE WILL BE SUBMITTED TO WHITE HOUSE DATA COLLECTION.



STEP 6.

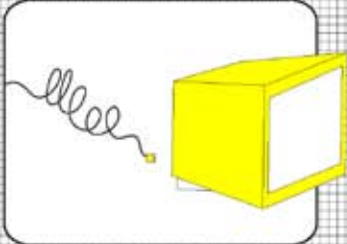
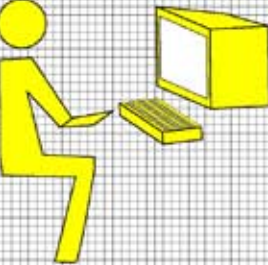
PROCEED TO STEP 11 TO VERIFY YOUR INPUT IN REAL TIME AND WATCH HOW YOU HAVE AFFECTED THE AGENDA OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT.



STEP 7.



STEP 8.



STEP 9.

MAKE SURE YOUR PERSONAL COMPUTER IS CONNECTED TO THE WORLD WIDE WEB (INTERNET).

IF YOU DO NOT OWN A PERSONAL COMPUTER, YOU MAY ACCESS THE INTERNET AT A PUBLIC LIBRARY NEAR YOU! FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT [WWW.USA.GOV](http://WWW.USA.GOV)



STEP 10.

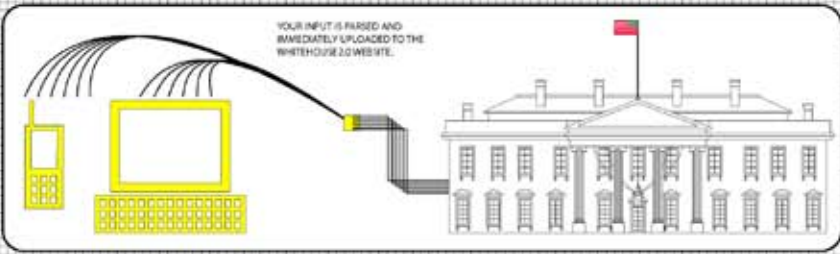
DIRECT YOUR INTERNET BROWSER TO: [WWW.WHITEHOUSE2.GOV](http://WWW.WHITEHOUSE2.GOV)

YOU WILL FIND FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS FROM THE WEB PAGE.

UPON COMPLETION, PROCEED TO STEP 11 TO VIEW YOUR INPUT.



STEP 11.



DIRECT YOUR INTERNET BROWSER TO: [WWW.WHITEHOUSE2.GOV](http://WWW.WHITEHOUSE2.GOV)

FOLLOW THE INSTRUCTIONS TO TRACK YOUR INPUT TO SEE YOUR IMMEDIATE EFFECT ON THE AGENDA OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!



STEP 12.





# Narrow Streets Los Angeles

Images by David Yoon

Could the entire mood of a neighborhood depend on something as simple as street width? That was the question David Yoon, a writer, designer, photographer, and self-confessed urban planning geek living in Los Angeles, asked himself after returning from a trip to Paris. He started documenting existing streets of Los Angeles and narrowing them to see the effects that his manipulations had on the city. His fictional depictions of the streets, while they are not literal proposals, provide the perfect platform to discuss if another city is possible, one that puts human scale in the foreground.



FICTIONAL Westwood Blvd & Pico Blvd, West Los Angeles





ACTUAL Sunset Blvd & Clark St, West Hollywood





FICTIONAL Sunset Blvd & Clark St, West Hollywood





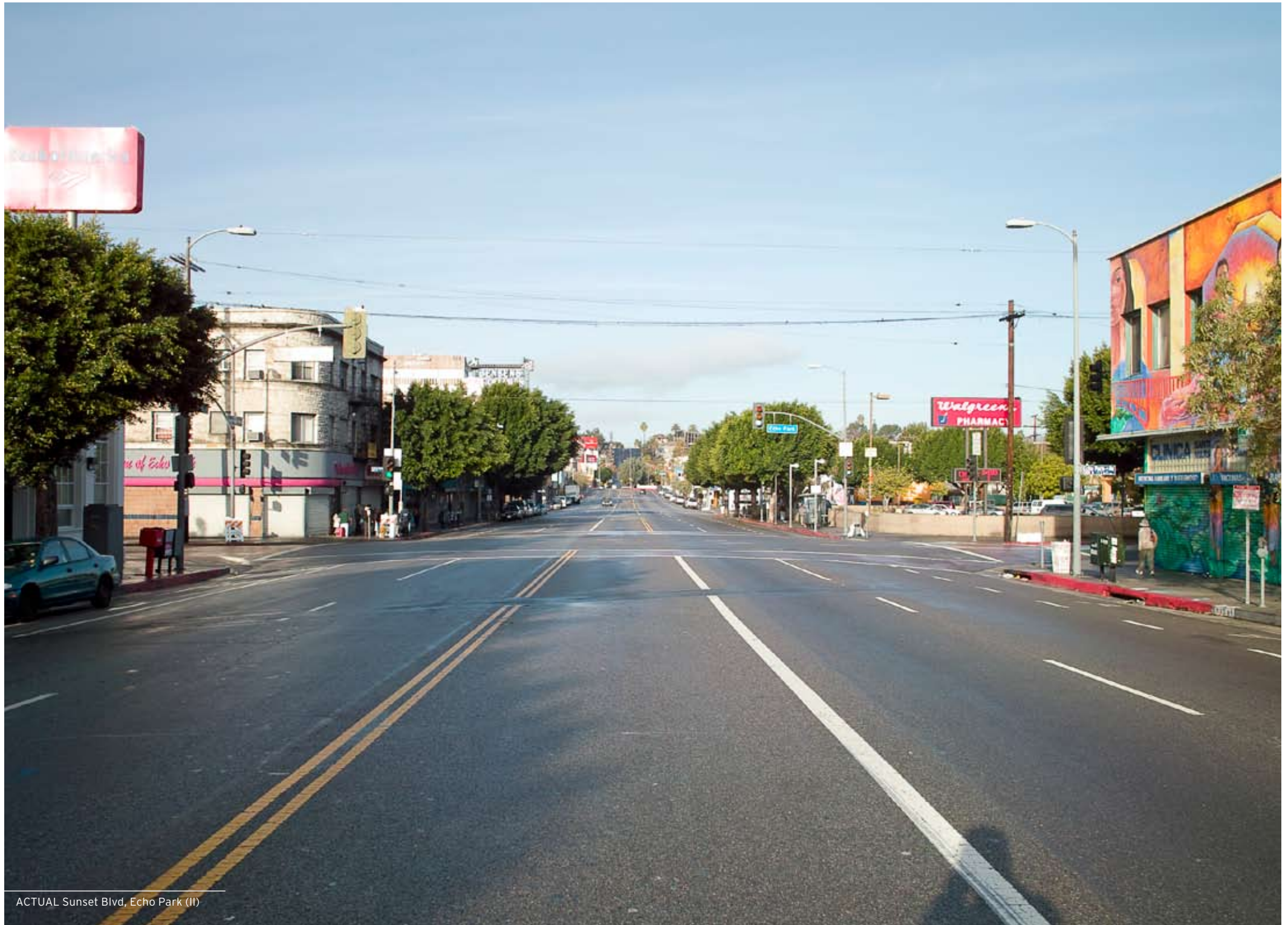
ACTUAL Ocean Ave & Santa Monica Blvd, Santa Monica





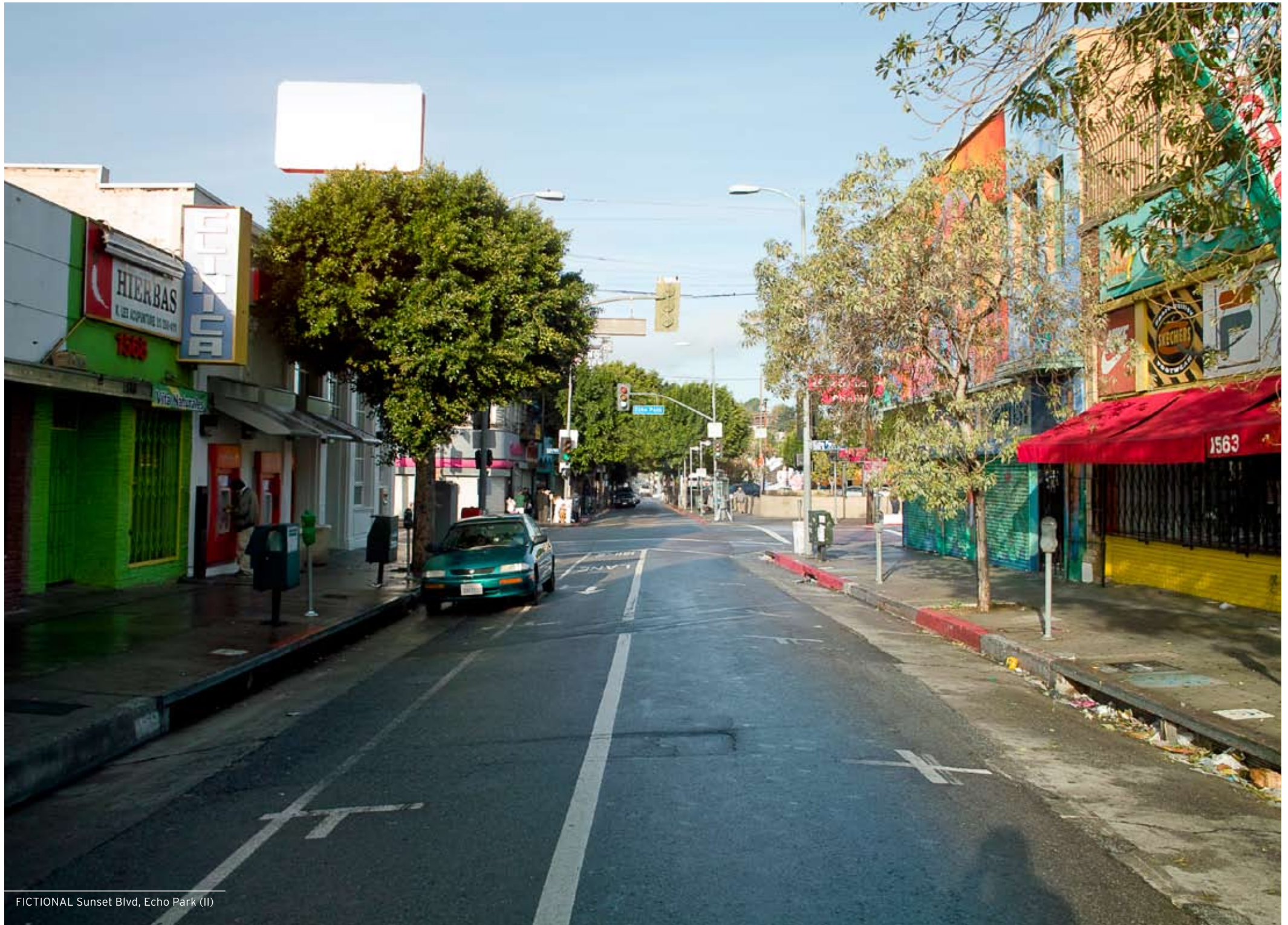
FICTIONAL Ocean Ave & Santa Monica Blvd, Santa Monica





ACTUAL Sunset Blvd, Echo Park (II)





FICTIONAL Sunset Blvd, Echo Park (II)





ACTUAL 1st St, Little Tokyo





FICTIONAL 1st St, Little Tokyo





ACTUAL Burbank Blvd & Van Nuys Blvd





FICTIONAL Burbank Blvd & Van Nuys Blvd

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# El Peine del Viento

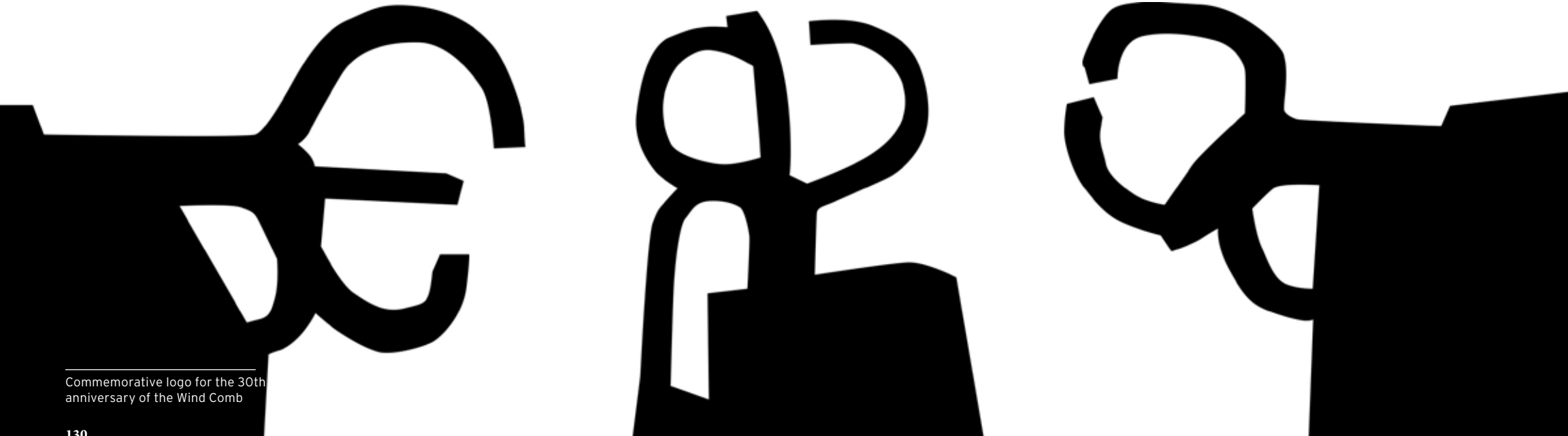
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**Luis Chillida**, son of the late sculptor **Eduardo Chillida**, talks to **Iker Gil** at Chillida-Leku Museum about this personal project

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El Peine del Viento (Wind Comb), a public space built more than thirty years ago in San Sebastian, has become the emblem of the city and a place the city cannot be understood without. Situated at one of the edges of the bay at the base of the Igueldo mountain, it is visited daily by locals and tourists to contemplate the sea, the horizon, gather, and to fish and to walk. The late sculptor Eduardo Chillida (1924-2002) and the late architect Luis Peña Ganchegui (1926-2009) gave the city a place that had been waiting to be appreciated by the city. This fall, Luis Chillida, son of sculptor, met with Iker Gil at the artist's museum in Hernani to talk about this project.

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Commemorative logo for the 30th anniversary of the Wind Comb



### Experiencing a place

Since he was a child, the Wind Comb, at that time called “Paseo del Tenis”, was my father’s favorite place. He was a person who enjoyed being calm. It was at the end of the city and nobody was there; he would just be alone on the rocks. Instead of going to school, he would go to the rocks and watch the sea, watch the waves. He always said that he wanted to be a sailor. He loved the sea, the horizon, sailors’ stories... those were things that he was attracted to.

When he started working as a sculptor in 1952, my father made his first Wind Comb already thinking about that place, thinking that at some point the city needed to regain it. It was a lost place in the city. He started thinking about ideas for that place but of course, at that early stage of his career, he could not approach anybody and say that he wanted to do something there. But in his mind, he started doing a series of studies and projects there.

During the next two decades, he kept making versions of that project, about eight during the 50’s and one more during the 60’s. They were all to be located on a central rock, the first one you see when you arrive. The deciding factor to make the Wind Comb a reality was the involvement of a group of people from San Sebastián such as the owners of the Ramos bookstore, the most important bookstore, or the deputy mayor from City Hall. Outside of San Sebastián, my father’s work was recognized by this time but this group of people knew that in his own city, his work was not yet known. To help him gain local recognition, they proposed that my father have an exhibition in San Sebastián. He replied that he was really thankful for their intention, but that “an exhibition is ephemeral. It is something that comes and goes,” and that what he really wanted to do was something that would stay forever in the city. They thought it was a great idea and my father, of course, had a place in mind, a place that had to become part of the city, a place he had been thinking about for years.

### Giving prominence to what existed

It was after 1966 when the actual project started. It took eleven years to complete, so it wasn’t a fast process but nowadays, it would be impossible to do because of the current laws and general bureaucracy. As he wanted to adapt the space itself, the first thing he did was contact the architect Luis Peña Ganchegui. This was their first project together. My father knew his previous work and, in particular, he liked his project



Site and rocks  
before the Wind  
Comb.  
© José Elósegui

for the Trinidad Plaza in San Sebastián, built in 1961. They started to talk about the project as a whole. They were not to be two projects as sometimes you find, when an architect designs a plaza and then the sculptor places his sculpture. It was a single project, one part the sculptures and the other the plaza in front of them. It was a shared project on which both of them worked for years.

Initially, the idea was to make one central sculpture in the first rock. It was not until they had received all the permits to build that my father realized that a single sculpture was going to attract all of the attention and, in a way, the rest of space was going to be somehow neglected. People's vision was going to wrongly concentrate on a single point. It was then that he started thinking about placing three sculptures instead of one. He wanted to mark three points from which the space that they define would be more important than the sculptures themselves.

Three sculptures made sense for him in terms of time: past, present and future. From observing the site for so long, he realized that the stratum of the Wind Comb is the same as the one of the Urgull Mountain and Santa Clara Island, this last one a little inside the bay. In theory, those rocks had been a single rock that, through erosion, had separated. The central part, the one that creates the island, was the hardest one and the water went to the sides, forming the bay. It was then that my father started thinking about two of the three sculptures, the one that is on the rocks of the Igueldo mountainside and the one on the first rock that you see when you arrive. Those two sculptures are searching for each other, trying to link to what was previously connected: the past and the present. And then he wanted to define a point that would take us beyond this place, the horizon, the future, what is going to come. That is the third sculpture, the one furthest from us. For my father the horizon was the motherland, what we have in common.

He felt the main aspect should not be the sculptures but the sea, the air, the wind, the waves, the rocks, the stratum. This place needed to be appreciated, and with his work, he gave prominence to what already existed there. In reality, that was his way of working on any project. When he was working on a block of granite, he was letting the granite behave naturally. And this is the same as the way he worked with steel. He did not try to dominate a material, but work with it. So trying to impose something that did not belong to the site was not his way of working. He wanted this natural space that he had loved and observed to be the true protagonist of that place.



Water sprays at the  
Wind Comb  
© Jesús Uriarte

The Wind Comb is a very calm place, without cars, without noise... the true noise is the one coming from the sea. The other noise is the one generated by the water sprays on the plaza that dissipate the pressure of the water below. There used to be a water collector in that area, where the water of the sea would go inside and instead of closing it, they provided an exit for it. They created seven symbolic holes representing the seven Basque Provinces. At some point they wanted the sprays coming from the holes to produce music, so they worked with the composer Luis de Pablo to see if the sound could actually produce musical notes. But it was impossible. Each wave is completely different and so is its pressure.

In the end, the sculptures helped us to pay attention to the place. Before the sculptures, there was already a place, but there was a house in ruins, trees, lawns... nobody paid attention to those things, but they were here. Now, when people come to this area, they say that is a marvelous place where they feel really comfortable. And that is because Eduardo made something so people would pay attention to it. It is not only a place where the sculptures are located. The site becomes the place.





Eduardo Chillida at the Wind Comb  
© Francesc Català-Roca.

### Working in the unknown

I spent a lot of time with my father in the factories along with the workers. He was a person who accumulated a lot of people around him, people used to doing mechanical work, repeating the same task, like building the crank of a ship. It had to be exact, precise; each movement was calculated, studied how it had to be. However, when they worked on a sculpture, the most important thing for my father was that the material was worked right at that moment, that the material expressed itself and that not everything was under control. For him, the work of an artist was something closer to the world of the unknown than the known world. Of course, you needed a technique to work in a factory and you needed tools, but for him, the moment in which you didn't know what was going to happen, that was the moment of creation.

At the beginning, he would draw a line in the ground and say to all the workers in the factory, "Imagine that this line is the limit. It is the limit where we are going to start working. We are going to be bending the material and there is a moment where it breaks, because everything has a limit, you can't do with steel anything you want. And you, you are people who have worked extensively with steel of these dimensions, you have studied all your life, you engineers know everything, and having that knowledge keeps you from crossing that line. You are never going to cross the limit because you know that there is a point in which something that you don't have control of is going to happen. That's why you are never going to get close to that limit. However, I am naive and what I like is to work on the other side of the line. I like to reach the point in which the material surprises us with its reaction. We will get surprised and that's okay. If it breaks it is my responsibility, not yours, so let's take that step."

A lot of people think that before making a big sculpture, there are models built, or that molten steel is poured into a mold, but that's not the case. The sculpture has been worked on directly, fighting with the material. My father's process was to work in the unknown. There was a moment in which neither the engineer was the engineer nor the crane operator was the crane operator... each one gave his opinion. Suddenly someone would say, "If I pull from here and you grab it with the press, then we can do what Eduardo wants. Let's try it".

The sculptures could not be created as a single piece because the technology was not available. They were built in two parts that then were connected. And there is a curiosity about this. Inside one of the



One of sculptures waiting to be installed  
© Fototeca Kutxa





Eduardo Chillida and one of the sculptures  
© Jesús Uriarte.

sculptures, between the two steel parts, all of the workers who had been involved in the project signed their name. All of them signed their name, because in the end, all of them had been involved in the project. They all had a role in the creation of the work. Now they come to the museum and tell me, “I have a sculpture in Washington, DC, I have a sculpture in Berlin...” And I think this was one the great qualities of my father. After something had gone right, my father would always take the workers to have lunch to celebrate the success, to celebrate that they had reached a point they didn't think they could reach.

My father always said that the sculpture belonged to him while he was working on it. Afterwards, when the sculpture was finished, it belonged to the rest of the world. It was no longer his. The moment of the creation was when he was thinking about it and working on it. When he finished it, that sculpture would start its own life and he would concentrate on the next one.

#### Placement on the site

For the 70's, it was a really technically complicated project. It was a project in which big sculptures needed to be placed in rocks with working conditions that were really difficult: tides, storms with strong waves, working without the type of cranes we currently have, and, in general, working without much of the technology available nowadays. In this regard, it was critical to have the involvement of José María Elosegui, the engineer of the Gipuzkoa Provincial Council. He was a friend of my father since he was a child. They studied together in Madrid. With him, he started to study how to place the sculptures in their final location. To be able to place them correctly, they had to maintain them in a very specific position in order for the composites to stick to the rock. Each arm of the sculpture had to penetrate over three feet into the rock, with minimal technical means. They started to think about ideas of any kind to solve this problem. One was requesting a “Chinook” helicopter, the ones with two propellers, from the US Army to carry the sculptures and place them from above, especially on the furthest rock. But this was not a viable solution, as the helicopter pilots could not stay in the same place for the amount of time needed. Another idea was to lower the sculptures through the side of the Igueldo mountain with pulleys, but that wasn't feasible either. Another one was to use a barge, but they couldn't get close enough to the location because the area is really shallow, with a lot of rocks and strong waves. So they looked into more

Installation of one of the sculptures  
© Fototeca Kutxa



traditional techniques and finally, they proposed to build a temporary bridge. They talked to ULMA, a really important company nowadays that produces scaffolding, but at that time it was just starting. They talked to them to see if there was a way to build a bridge that could reach the final location of the sculptures and that could have rails so the sculptures themselves could be carried with carts similar to those used in mining. My father did not want to leave any type of mark on the site and if they were to make a bridge out of concrete, it would mark the site where it was built. So they created a bridge made out of a tubular structure supported by small concrete feet that were later removed. But it was a relatively weak structure that moved with the waves. The day that they placed the sculpture the bridge creaked everywhere. Nobody had the absolute certainty that they were not going to fall into the water. It was a little risky, but they did a great job and they were able to transport and place the sculptures the way they wanted. Without leaving a mark.





Installation of one of sculptures  
© Jesús Uriarte.

### A place of calm

My father liked the Wind Comb because he liked to be calm by the sea. The Paseo Nuevo (New Seafront), on the other side of the Bay, is more impersonal. It is called New Seafront because it is rebuilt often as a result of being continuously damaged by strong waves. It is an artificial seafront constructed over the coast and has that useful quality that the Wind Comb does not have: parking. It is a place where people park when they go to the Old Town. It is a really nice area but it is not a place where you simply go to stay.

There was a time in which my father was a little embarrassed going to the Wind Comb because people would recognize him and say hi to him. So he decided to go early in the morning. He liked to get up early, he liked to think in the morning and since we went to live in Igueldo in 1982, he would go before dawn, to see the sunrise from there. Fishermen go to the Wind Comb at that time to fish. He always said that it was really quiet, you could only hear the waves, and he enjoyed being there with the fishermen.

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People at the Wind Comb © Francesc Català-Roca.



### Becoming an emblem

It was a project that, at the time it was constructed, was forward-thinking and risky. If you check the newspaper archives of that time, people did not understand the project. “They are going to place some steel rods in the rocks? Why don’t they make parking for the beach or a cafeteria?” The society of that period was different from the one that came after and, above all, modern art was something that was not understood by the people of that time. So nobody wanted to be associated with the project, and the Mayor did not want to get himself into trouble.

The Wind Comb was never officially dedicated when it was finished. My father said, “I actually don’t care. It’s been dedicated by the wind, the waves, people walking ... why does anybody have to come to officially dedicate it?” So they never made that official dedication. They just removed the fences and people started walking over there and from that moment, it became a place. But in 2007, on the 30th anniversary, with my father having already died, we decided to dedicate his project. In the end, it was the project itself that convinced the people of its own worth. Everybody feels that they are part of this project. It has become the emblem of the city, the image of San Sebastian. If you do a project and people don’t like it, they will always question it, but if you make it right, people will embrace it.



# What is your favorite public space?

Your responses to the question of **MAS Studio**.



Piazza del Campo in Siena  
© SkyDivedParcel

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Alvaro Leonardo

Urban waterfronts like the Juan Aparicio Waterfront in Torre Vieja (Alicante) by Carme Pinos. The connection between natural and artificial nature. The limit that allows us to think looking towards the infinite without leaving the dynamic urban surroundings. Interaction of two opposite conditions needed for the current human being.

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Andrew Clark

Buena Vista, Colorado. Mountain views. White water rafting. Big, big blue sky. Every color of blue and far as you can see.

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Carmen Rüter

I favor the Karmelitermarkt in Vienna's 2nd district for the vivid and lively atmosphere it developed in an unpretentious neighborhood.

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Carol Coletta

Lurie Garden in Chicago, a place that is, at once, of the city but isolated from it.

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David Jimenez

Piazza del Campo in Siena. It is at the same time a plaza, a stage, a viewpoint and a stadium. They are all part of the city itself, fully integrated into its structure and monumentality.

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Edgar Gonzalez

The beach: it is the epitome of the tension between public and private. Dichotomy between exposing oneself half-naked in a public space and feeling comfortable.

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Iker Gil

Dujiangyan in Chengdu. A great sequence of paths, temples, and views of an amazing irrigation system built more than 2000 years ago.

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Jacob Comerici

Ocean Beach, San Francisco. Walking its expansive coastline helps put things into perspective. And the nightly bonfires are nice too.






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Jaime Velez

The Zócalo plaza in Mexico City. Its combination of monumentality and austerity creates a really interesting dynamic. To me it represents, maybe in an indirect way, the contrast of the two cultures, the indigenous and the European. Its mega scale provides it with an air of magnanimity and power. At the same time, its surface allows an incredible amount of activities, from political demonstrations, celebration of national festivities, and entertainment to commercial activities and food posts. I know it might have been by pure chance but nowadays its size is perfect for a megalopolis like Mexico City.

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Jan Klerks

Chicago River between Michigan Avenue and State Street. Dynamic place with 100+ years of tall building architecture plus a magnificent place to be.

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Jason Pickleman

Harry Bertoia's now destroyed installation of Sounding Rods (1975) within the sunken plaza of the Standard Oil Building (now Aon Center) in Chicago.

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Javier Arbona

The one that still needs to be claimed; the one that is demanded.

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Jeff Leitner

Barton Springs in Austin, Texas. It's an extraordinary swimming hole that somehow feels both public and anti-establishment simultaneously. Built with public funds, managed with public funds BUT maintains a populist feel.




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Jessica Lybeck

Wicker Park in Chicago. I enjoy the tended gardens, eclectic loitering crowd, ample sunshine and great lunchtime seating around Gurgoyne fountain - not to mention it's two blocks away from my office.

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Jesus Rodriguez

Wacker Drive in Chicago, especially the area by the river. The architecture is fantastic, each building different and interesting - like the bridges - , sidewalks and streets are wide and it is an urban area that is not overwhelming.

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Joseph Altshuler

Riding the 'L' on any CTA elevated line in Chicago. Simultaneously digesting the kinetic cityscape flashing by outside with the impromptu interactions percolating within.

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Josh Cooper

Airports. I like all of them for the way they do what they do. They are the intersection of government, civis, commerce, transit, theatre.

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Julie Michiels

Piazza Navona in Rome. I love the contrast of narrow streets leading into the large vibrant open space and the mix of locals and tourists.

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Kathryn Clarke  
Albright

Market Square Park in Blacksburg, Virginia. Since Dec. 2009 when 32 tubas played seasonal music, the park and farmers market have become THE community gathering place for people of all ages and economic status.






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Ken Byron

Millennium Park in Chicago—Skyline views reflected in the "Bean", kids playing in the Crown Fountain, ice skating in winter, summer concerts in Frank Gehry's Pritzker Pavilion.

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Liz Potokar

The ice skating rink in Millennium Park in Chicago. Full of people, activity, and great views of the city. Add some snow and Christmas lights, and it's perfect for the holidays!

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Maritere Rovira

The beach by Ocean Park in Puerto Rico. It is a place in the urban area to interact, watch and be watched, where wearing few clothes is appropriate!

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Michael Nicolson

Crown Zellerbach building site in San Francisco. Privately owned public space with great materials, proportions and access that requires contemplation.

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Mimi Zeiger

- Dog run at Tompkins Square Park. Fido and Fifi are names of 1) pooches 2) drag queens 3) squatter punks.
- Crissy Field, San Francisco: former airbase remediated into bayside walking path... and the warming hut at the end of the trail serves good coffee.
- Fulton Street Mall: all of Brooklyn in the mix—hipsters, hiphoppers, street preachers.

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Nadia Ribas

Any place that has not been affected by the human being. Natural in essence, nature as the purest public space.




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Niemann

Tian'anmen Square in Beijing. No trash cans, no amenities, no benches, no landscape, no art, no privacy. Some lighting, many security cameras. But it works.

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Peter Kindel

Central Park in New York. Because of the mix of natural and built form that define the ultimate urban park, and the rocky outcroppings and native vegetation that give one a sense of nature in the midst of a dense metropolis.

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Richard Prouty

The Paris Arcades: a dream space and the hollow mold from which the image of the modern was cast.

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Ruben Russ

The sea. It is the only place in which you can still feel being surrounded by nature, without a crowd, without traffic, without industries. Each time I go into the water I realize how insignificant we are, the power of nature and how much we damage ourselves when the damage the sea.

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Steve Kismohr

Chicago Lakefront Bike Trail, because of its access to the lake, access to the length of the city, and the beautiful views that can be had on it.

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Xavier Vendrell

La Rambla de Catalunya in Barcelona. It's a street, a plaza, a shopping mall, a gathering space, and a place of interaction for the citizens. The central area allows for a variety of uses and it can be crossed easily so the commercial spaces on both sides are easily connected. And, although it is designed, it doesn't seem to be that way, everything happens in a natural way.

# European Prize for Urban Public Space

Projects by **KARO\*** with **Architektur+Netzwerk**, and **SNØHETTA**. Intro text by **Iker Gil**.





Which are the public projects that truly have citizens in mind? Are the designers more important than the developers who finance the projects? Is there a specific place that emphasizes the public concept over other aspects? And really, what is a public project nowadays? These are some of the questions that we were asking ourselves when deciding which projects to showcase in this issue that exemplify successful public spaces. We agreed that using the awarded projects from this year's European Prize for Urban Public Space would fit perfectly, as those same questions were the underlying criteria of the award.

The European Prize for Urban Public Space is a biennial competition with the aim to recognize and encourage recovery projects and defense of public space in cities. In 2000, the Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona created this award and it is currently organized in collaboration with the Cité de l'Architecture et du Patrimoine (Paris), The Architecture Foundation (London), the Netherlands Architectuurinstituut (Rotterdam), the Architekturzentrum Wien (Vienna) and the Museum of Finnish Architecture (Helsinki).

The projects awarded during its first decade range in scale, location within the city, financing, generation, process and the definition itself of what public might mean. As the architect David Bravo points out in his essay in "In Favour of Public Space" (ACTAR, 2010), "the concept of public space is impossible to pigeonhole into specific formal types. (...) It is a subjective place, loaded with political content, which implies urbanity or, in other words, it is defined by the fact of coexistence in community and hence by awareness of ourselves and respect for others."

The heterogeneous approach to public space is perfectly represented in this year's edition, when two projects were named the joint winners: the Open-Air Library in Magdeburg (Germany) by KARO\* with Architektur + Netzwerk and the Norwegian National Opera & Ballet in Oslo (Norway) by Snøhetta. These projects represent two differentiated ways of designing. The library is a magnificent and successful bottom-up approach, one that started with the direct involvement of the community to create a temporary installation that later turned into a real building. The Opera and Ballet building, however, is a top-bottom approach, a project commissioned by the Norwegian Government as the first step to redevelop the marginal port (and historic) area of Bjørvika.

Both different, both public, and both with citizens in mind.

For reference, we include the selection criteria used by the jury to evaluate all the submissions as explained in the official website of the award.

### Selection criteria

The criteria that will govern selection of the projects that are presented for the European Prize for Urban Public Space will not be exclusively related with the quality of the work from a strictly architectural point of view. The jury will also consider other aspects that enable evaluation of the urban transformation that has taken place in the specific setting.

1. The explicitly urban nature of the intervention. The size of the city or town is not a limiting factor although priority will be given to medium-sized or large municipalities and those with a more general urban significance.
2. The public ownership and/or clearly public-spirited vocation of the project.
3. Appropriateness of interventions to the functions required of public space, from those directly linked with citizens' occupation of a space, through to those pertaining to the collective imaginary.
4. Capacity of the interventions to reduce social fractures within the city and eliminate physical and/or symbolic barriers in order to enhance quality of life for the inhabitants.
5. Contribution of the projects in the domain of environmental improvement, in promoting public transport and innovation in the treatment of public installations, energy resources and urban waste.
6. The degree of citizen participation and engagement in the conception, carrying out and/or subsequent maintenance of the space. Degree of acceptance by users.
7. Transversal character of the planning concepts and/or objectives that have guided the project (sociology, demography, history, architecture, economy, engineering, landscaping, anthropology, etc.).



Open-Air Library by KARO\* & Architektur+Netzwerk  
© Thomas Völkel

**Authors**  
KARO\* with  
Architektur+Netzwerk

**Collaborators**  
Christian Burckhardt  
Gregor Schneider  
Mandy Neuenfeld

**Developer**  
Department of Building  
and Construction,  
Bürgerverein  
Salbke-Fermerleben-  
Westerhüsen e.V.

**City**  
Magdeburg (230,052  
inhabitants)

**Country**  
Germany

**Beginning year**  
2005

**Beginning of work year**  
2008

**End of work year**  
2009

**Area**  
488 m<sup>2</sup>

**Cost**  
325,000 euros

## Open-Air Library

The southeast of Magdeburg belongs to these urban areas in Eastern Germany which are characterized by shrinkage, abandoned industrial plants and fallow land. A post-industrial city landscape with high unemployment and figures of vacancy up to 80%. This also concerns the district Salbke. The spatially intact city center stands almost completely empty. Its image is shaped by pasted over shop windows and fallow land. Here the encountered reality served as a resource and starting point for an urbanistic experiment: With the strategy “City on Trial” the site of the former district library has been transformed into an Open-Air Library.

The project was planned right from the beginning as a **social sculpture**. The design and the functions were planned in a very close and open participation process. The aim was to create new and to enhance existing social networks. In collaboration with the local residents the fallow zones of the former village library were developed as a “bookmark”. Remembrance, history and narratives provided the background for the “re-occupation” of the abandoned expanse. An old empty shop was used as base for a temporary library and camp for a building workshop. There, books were collected and design strategies for reclaiming the site were developed.

With more than 1.000 lent beer crates the favourite draft was mocked up together with the locals as a temporary sculpture in the scale 1:1 [2005]. The shelves of the temporary library were filled by the residents with book donations. A festival followed with poetry slam and readings to prove the everyday suitability of the new urban situation. Since 2005 more than 20.000 books were collected and the local residents pursue a reading café quite near the site. It took some years to organise the money for the construction of the so called “bookmark”. Since 2006 the project is part of a research project by the federal government and was funded as a pilot project for realisation. In June 2009 the Open-Air Library opened officially. The residents which take care themselves for a reading-café as well as for the Open-Air Library call it a “library of confidence”: There is no registration needed and there is no control. You can take a book whenever you want, but should bring it back voluntary or at least another one. The shelves are never closed - the library is opened for 24 hours a day.

KARO\*





Open-Air Library by KARO\* & Architektur+Netzwerk  
© Thomas Völkel





Norwegian National Opera & Ballet by Snøhetta  
© Ronny-André Bendiksen

**Authors**  
SNØHETTA

**Collaborators**  
Integrated art on the stone clad surfaces, with artists Kristian Blystad, Kalle Grude and Jorunn Sannes. Integrated art on the metal clad facades with artists Astrid Løvaas og Kirsten Wagle.

**Developer**  
STATSBYGG

**City**  
Oslo (586,860 inhabitants)

**Country**  
Norway

**Beginning year**  
2000

**Beginning of work year**  
2003

**End of work year**  
2008

**Area**  
38,500 m<sup>2</sup>

**Cost**  
500,000,000 euros

## Norwegian National Opera and Ballet

The building is the first component of the urban transformation of the Bjørvika area, starting a change from run down harbour area to a modern part of Oslo.

The conceptual basis of the competition entry, and the final building, is a combination of three elements - the wave wall, the factory and the carpet.

**The wave wall:** Opera and ballet are young artforms in Norway. these artforms evolve in an international setting. The Bjørvika peninsula is part of a harbour city, which is historically the meeting point with the rest of the world. The dividing line between the ground "here" and the water "there" is both a real and a symbolic threshold. This threshold is realised as a large "wave wall" on the line of the meeting between land and sea, Norway and the world, art and everyday life.

This is the threshold where the public meet the art.

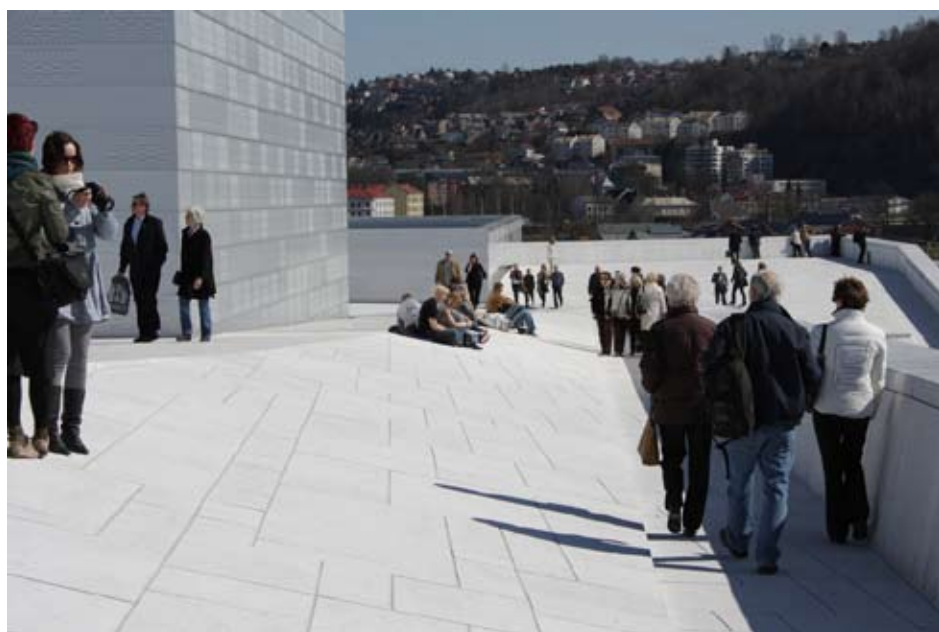
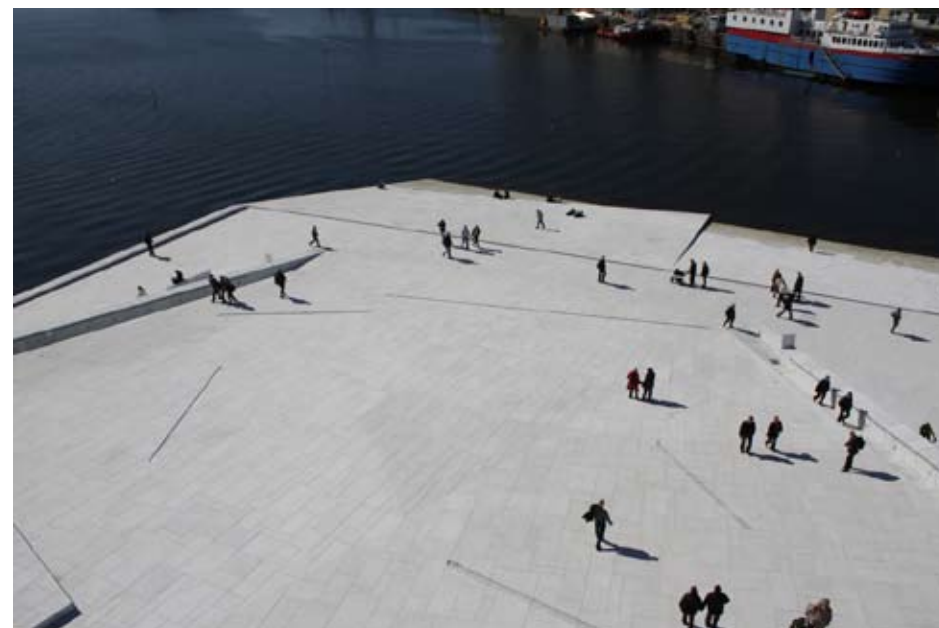
**The factory:** Snøhetta proposed that the production facilities of the operahouse should be realised as a self contained, rationally planned "factory". This factory should be both functional and flexible during the planning phase as well as in later use. this flexibility has proved to be very important during the planning phase: a number of rooms and room groups have been adjusted in collaboration with the end user. These changes have improved the building's functionality without affecting the architecture.

**The carpet:** The competition brief stated that the operahouse should be of a high architectural quality and should be monumental in its expression. One idea stood out as a legitimization of this monumentality: the concept of the togetherness, joint ownership, easy and open access for all. To achieve this, we wished to take the opera accessible in the widest possible sense, by laying out a "carpet" of horizontal and sloping surfaces on top of the building. this carpet has been given an articulated form, related to the cityscape. Monumentality is achieved through wide horizontal extension and not verticality.

The Oslo Opera is one of the three projects in the EU-project "Eco-Culture" which focuses on energy efficiency in cultural buildings. We have tried to minimize the numbers of materials - and surface treatments - to the minimum. These materials constitute the visible elements of architecture: stone, glass, aluminum, and wood.

Snøhetta





Norwegian National Opera & Ballet by Snøhetta  
© Ronny-André Bendiksen

## CONTRIBUTORS

**Luis Chillida** is the director of the Department of Communications, Marketing and Friends of Museo Chillida-Leku, as well as a member of the Executive Committee and the Board of Directors. From 2000 to 2004 he was the director of Museo Chillida-Leku. He raced motorcycles and cars from 1988 to 1997.  
www.museochillidaleku.com

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http://issuu.com/mdh264/docs/art\_meadow\_\_the\_feral\_artscape

**KARO\*** is a platform for communication, architecture and spatial tactics founded in 2000 by Stefan Rettich, Antje Heuer and Bert Hafermalz. Stefan Rettich was visiting professor at the university of Kassel and is teaching since 2007 at the Bauhaus Kolleg in Dessau. KARO\* has been invited to various international exhibitions, among others to the XI. and the XII. architecture biennale in Venice and has been awarded with the 2010 European Prize for Urban Public Space.  
www.karo-architekten.de

**labRAD** was founded in 2007 by Arielle Assouline-Lichten and Wayne Congar as a student administered think-tank and production unit. labRAD has served as a virtual hub for designers from various schools of architecture and design in the US and abroad.  
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### Open Manifesto for Mass Creation

Lick Fai Eric Ho (pg. 8-9, 11, 16-17, 22)

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Andrew Clark (pg. 26-37)

### Shanghai Streets

Rob Smith (pg. 38-55)

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### Is there a future for the recent past in New Orleans?

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### What is your favorite public space?

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### European Prize for Urban Public Space

Thomas Völkel (pg. 154-155, 158, 160-161); Ronny-André Bendiksen (pg. 162, 164-165)



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NEXT ISSUE:

9 | **NETWORK** SPRING 11

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Our next issue will focus on the topic of NETWORK.

We live in a world where politics, economy, ecology, society and culture are strongly connected. They create formal and informal NETWORKS that shape our cities and the way we experience them. It is the moment to explore them to understand the possibilities of NETWORKS in our society.

For information on the submission guidelines and other questions, please visit [www.mascontext.com](http://www.mascontext.com)

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