

On the Novartis Campus in Basel, an arena of sustainable architecture and clean energy, dedicated to science and revenue, was recently inaugurated another building by a celebrity architect. However, if you wanted to get a closer look at it you realised rapidly that the whole is a glamorous gated city. Its antonym, the open city, and the demand for more of it are the topic of the upcoming 4<sup>th</sup> IABR. This is what our newsletter is particularly about. It might draw you to Rotterdam.

IACSA has moved to Graz. As a registered member you will be invited to attend there its first Annual Assembly early in October.

The Network Editor

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Announcement: Journal of Comparative Cultural Studies in Architecture

IACSA – the organisation

Introducing the 4th International Architecture Biennale Rotterdam,  
24.9. 2009 - 10.1. 2010

Open City — Designing Coexistence

THE THEME OF 4<sup>TH</sup> INTERNATIONAL ARCHITECTURE BIENNALE IN ROTTERDAM (IABR) is the «Open City». It starts on September 24, 2009. Concept and message have the style of handwriting of its curator, internationally renowned architect Kees Christiaanse and of his team from the ETH Zurich and from Rotterdam, Tim Rieniets (see his contribution below) and Fabienne Hoelzel. The approach is inspired from the classical bottom-up study of Jane Jacobs, *Life and Death of the American City* from 1961, pleading for re-

spect for the city-dwellers' eye-level as the basis for architecture and planning.

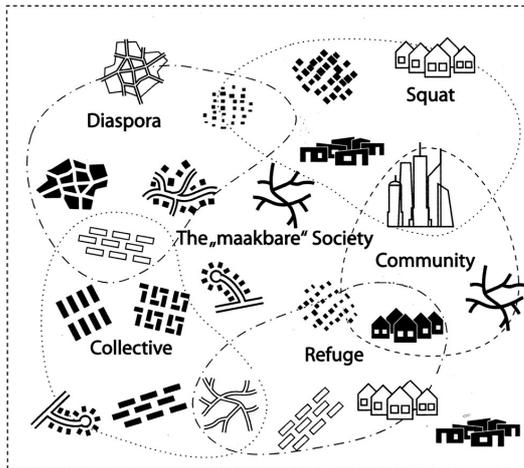
The Biennale follows «urgent social agendas». Thus the Rotterdam exhibition launches a counter-discourse to the global tendencies to close and lock urban space. The state is withdrawing from his responsibility for space in respect of social policy. Open City describes the city from its edges. Six leitmotifs characterise the «culturally dynamic urban condition» (KC) of Open City:

Sub-curators:

1. *Community* Interboro, New York
2. *Collective* Bart Goldhoorn and Alexander Sverdlov, Rotterdam/Moscow
3. *Refuge* Philipp Misselwitz and Can Altay, Istanbul
4. *Squat* Jörg Stollmann and Rainer Hehl, Zurich/Berlin
5. *Reciprocity* Daliana Suryawinata and Stephen Cairns, Rotterdam/Edinburgh
6. *Rotterdam—de maakbare samenleving* Crimson Architectural Historians, Rotterdam

The symposium *Open City—Designing Coexistence* lays ground for a theoretical basis and explores urban developments:

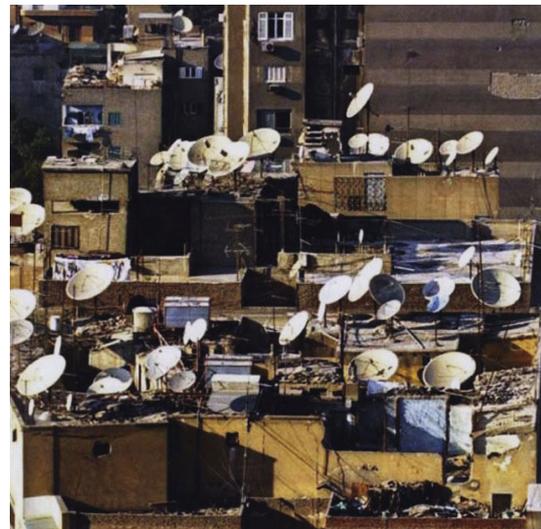
1. *Spaces of Migration*: The impact of mass migration and mobility.
2. *Transnational Spaces*: Mass communication and new forms of socio-spatial organization.
3. *Urban Islands*: New forms of segregation.
4. *Inequality*: Urban disparities and new regimes of marginality.



The Biennale is an important sign for contemporary architectural discourse on urban policies, aiming at «supporting a culture of criticality»<sup>1</sup>. It is the occasion of counter-rhetoric to architectural modernism that is publicly perceived only as *splendid starship*. The latter produces oversized sculptures that dominate quite often space like «irreconcilable solitaires» and withdraw themselves to the urban context «in an autistic way»<sup>2</sup>. The size of buildings ends in a desperate attempt to create visibility and identification for the economic and social local function. It fails to see that in their lee these icons absorb the urban civil public and contribute to the social and cultural fragmentation and polarisation in the cities. The IABR feels responsible for identifying urban misconceptions and wants to contribute to an urban design centring on the liveable diversity for its inhabitants. Open City means literally the hospitable city. It offers access to spaces, networks and infrastructures as essential urban living resources, and asks to conceive and plan the city as a space of possibilities, inviting to participation, to creative, dynamic and innovative potentials.

It is obvious that actor-oriented planning approaches and Cultural Studies are parents in many respects. In a forthcoming newsletter we will present contributions to the IABR from a Cultural Studies vantage point. ◀

Johanna Rolshoven



1. Misselwitz, Altay in *Workbook*, 95.
2. Stephan Braunfels, *Die europäische Stadt und die moderne Architektur*. Vortrag im Rahmen der *Vorlesungsreihe «Iconic Turn»* an der Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München, 22. Mai 2003.

by Tim Rieniets<sup>1</sup>

«THE WORLD HAS ENTERED the urban millennium,» former UN General Secretary Kofi Annan declared in 2001<sup>2</sup>, referring to the rapid growth of the world's urban population. Since then, the news has spread among the public and experts that from now on, the majority of the world's people will be city dwellers. The statistics are unmistakable: in this millennium, urban spaces will become the predominant human habitat on Earth. More people will live in cities, and an ever-growing surface of the planet will be covered by urban spaces. But will this millennium be «urban» in the full meaning of the word? Will it provide conditions under which people can encounter one another, exchange ideas, and join forces? In other words—will it hold *the capacity to generate innovation from diversity*?

Taking a closer look at recent urban developments, however, in many places, the promise of such an urban millennium seems to be a distant prospect. It sounds somewhat contradictory, but *although more and more people are living in cities, relatively fewer of them have full access to them*; to urban resources, to decision-making processes, and—last but not least—to their fellow citizens. Especially in those parts of the world, where the biggest share of urban population growth is concentrated, the lack of accessibility is the highest. According to the UN housing program *UN-Habitat*, the number of people living in cities under poor conditions has now reached the one billion mark, more than 30 percent of the global urban population. They do not have access to vital resources—such as shelter, fresh water, sanitation, education, health care or public transport—and are

either forcefully excluded or simply left on their own, be it in slums, camps or marginalized quarters. «The grave consequences of this situation,» UNESCO recently stated, «include massive evictions, segregation, and resulting deterioration of social coexistence»<sup>3</sup>.

Cities are not simply growing in size and population, they are also growing in terms of their ethnic, religious, and cultural diversity due to ongoing migration and heightened mobility. Cities have always attracted migrants for any number of reasons, and many cities have needed these newcomers in order to stabilize their populations. But in the recent past, this process has increased to such a degree that we now find ourselves living in an «age of migration»<sup>4</sup>. People are moving to and commuting between cities at an amazing rate and great distances, be they migrants, refugees, asylum seekers, guest workers, tourists, or business travelers. Migration, it can be said, is no longer an antipode to urban settledness but a constituent of contemporary cities and everyday life.

In many cities today, foreign-born inhabitants are no longer an exception, but the rule. In Miami, Istanbul, or Dubai they already comprise the largest part of the population, and in numerous other cities, non-natives will soon be in majority. Rotterdam, for example, which is hosting the Biennale, is one of these cities, accommodating 160 nationalities that make up 46 percent of the population. It is estimated that in ten years, the share of the foreign-born will reach almost 60 percent.<sup>5</sup> These inhabitants are not just changing the social and cultural composition of cities. They bring *new values and images*, they

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1. Slightly edited text of a talk by the author, in: Chair of Architecture and Urban Design, ETH Zürich (ed), *Symposium. Open City: Designing Coexistence*. ETH Zürich, March 2009.  
 2. Annan, Kofi A., Foreword. *Cities in a Globalizing World: Global Report on Human Settlements 2001*. Ed. UN-Habitat, London, 2001.

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3. UNESCO. *World Charter for the Right to the City*. Online at <http://v1.dpi.org/lang-en/resources/details.php?page=124>  
 4. Castles Stephen, Miller Mark J., *The Age of Migration*. Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke 2009.  
 5. Centrum voor Onderzoek en Statistiek, ed. *Factsheet-Prognose: Bevolkingsontwikkeling Rotterdam 2003-2017*. Rotterdam, October 2003.

establish *new practices and projects*, and they build *new networks within and beyond their adopted city*.

Against this background, it seems that more than ever, cities could be a manifestation of difference and heterogeneity, «the biggest aggregation of human life—the most complete compendium of the world», as Henry James said about London<sup>6</sup>. They could become urban in the way Richard Sennett has described it: places «where people can learn to live with strangers, to enter into the experiences and interests of unfamiliar lives»<sup>7</sup>. In many places, however, increasing cultural diversity is associated with opposite reactions: with ambient feelings of fear and estrangement and, ultimately, with tendencies towards segregation, which tear cities apart into places for those who can afford a «better place» and those who are left behind.



PROCESSES OF SEGREGATION are as old as urban history and it has been a part of the socio-spatial organization of cities. It has divided inhabitants into castes, guilds or classes and assigned urban spaces to them. What is different today is the way *segregation* can be produced: It *has become a commodity* offered by the real-estate

market and is *available to a growing share of the middle class*. More than ever people can choose where and with whom to live; and they can cluster according to their social backgrounds or simply according to lifestyle or business interests. The spaces produced by this trend can be seen in cities all over the world: Shopping malls, business parks, leisure zones or residential enclaves. The most radical urban typology generated by such processes of urbanization are the so-called *gated communities*—privately owned and governed housing complexes enclosed by walls and accessible only through guarded gates. In the United States, this kind of urbanization has been developing for decades. Here, it is estimated that 250,000 developments or 15 percent of the housing stock are private cities, and that in parts of the country, 90 percent of new housing is gated.<sup>8</sup> In other parts of the world, gated communities are rather new. Yet in most metropolitan areas of the world, these kinds of «private cities» are being built, promising their inhabitants a life in social and physical security, devoid of the uncertainties and disorder of urban life. As a result, many urban areas are no longer coherent territories; instead, what we have are urban «islands» occupying the same urban territories but rather detached from each other. In this context even heterogeneous urban spaces turn unto islands among other islands, which are sometimes so exceptional that they advance to «places to go out» and into tourist attractions.

While these places still hold the capacity for social encounter among residents, pleasure-seekers, voyeurs and tourists, other «urban islands» are more or less detached from the rest of the city. In a specialized business districts, for example, employees may be closer to their colleagues in London, New York or Tokyo and share more values with them in terms of interests, life-style and socio-economic background, than with

6. Edel Leon, Powers Lyall H. (eds), *The complete notebooks of Henry James*, 218. Oxford University Press, New York/London 1987.

7. Sennett Richard, *New Capitalism, New Isolation: A Flexible City of Strangers*. *Le Monde Diplomatique* February 2001.

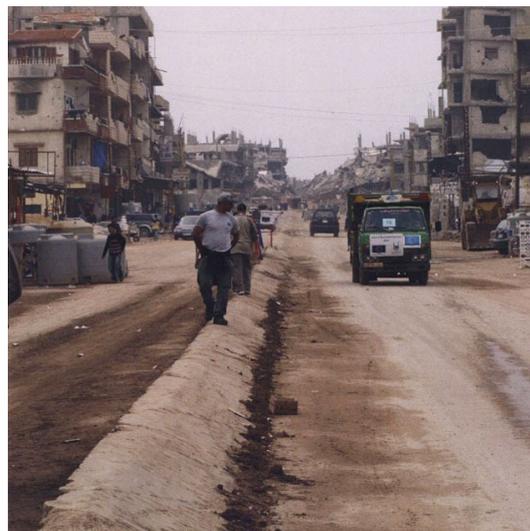
8. McKenzie Evan C. *The Dynamics of Privatopia: Private Residential Governance in the USA*. In: Glasze Georg, Webster Chris, Frantz Klaus (eds), *Private Cities: Local and Global Perspectives*. Routledge, London 2006.

somebody else living just a few blocks away. Migrants living in the same cities, to name another example, have established their separate communication and transportation networks, connecting them with their countries of origin and their kinsman in other cities. Also these networks have their places in the city, in the form of specialized travel agencies, telephone centers, Internet cafes, groceries, cultural centers and so forth.

In this spatial order *different geographies are superimposed, highly globalized and independent from each other, but coinciding in cities*. Here, these complementary geographies are producing a diversity of cultures and lifestyles, highly concentrated and in close juxtaposition, yet living in separately and disconnected urban spaces. The emergence of this internationally integrated yet highly fragmented society is made possible by means of modern mass communication. Urban life, which used to be tied to local conditions, is increasingly enmeshed with global networks of exchange and influenced by cultural and economic conditions that were once outside of its boundaries. Inexpensive telephone lines, the Internet, and satellite television have given rise to new forms of socio-spatial organization – to «virtual neighborhoods», «transnational communities,» or «diasporic networks» that transcend the limits of physical urban space. In this respect, perceptions of near and far and of inclusion and exclusion have changed under today's urban conditions.

But contrary to the imagery that cities are dissolving in the global «space of flows,» the global circulation of information and images generates a *new sense of exclusion and inequality*: «Media flows across national boundaries that produce images of well-being that cannot be satisfied by national standards of living and consumer capabilities; flows of discourses of human rights which generate demands from work forces that are repressed by state violence which is backed by global arms flows; ideas about gender and modernity that circulate to create large female work forces at the same time that cross-national ideologies of «culture», «authenticity» and national honor create increa-

sing pressures on just these working women to embody traditional virtues» (Appadurai, 1998).<sup>9</sup>



WHAT IS SHAPING OUR CITIES today is a spatial order that holds seemingly contradictory tendencies: On the one hand, this spatial order produces unprecedented diversity and heterogeneity in today's cities, a true «compendium of the world» and a rich basis for what we may call «urbanity.» On the other hand, it generates new mechanisms of segregation that tend to separate, contain, and control the very diversity it has produced and prevent it from cross-fertilization. For architects, planners, and decision-makers involved in urban development, the ultimate question is, how to react on these conditions and how to operate in this kind of city. Can we make it an Open City that benefits from its inherent diversity? Do we need to (re-)connect the spatial fragments and separated networks? Or should we even consider forms of urban coexistence free from the ties of urban territory and spatial proximity? These questions were the initial motivation for us to launch Open City as a conceptual model that questions recent urban developments and searches for models to facilitate coexistence in today's cities. ◀

9. Appadurai Arjun, *Modernity at Large: Interview with Anette Baldauf and Christian Hoeller*. *Hefte für Gegenwartskunst* (Wien) 3 1998.

## JCCS-a Journal of Comparative Cultural Studies in Architecture, New Issue and Call for Papers

We would like to kindly invite you to contribute an article to the Journal of Comparative Cultural Studies in Architecture (JCCS-a). JCCS-a is a comprehensive journal encompassing a wide range of topics within the fields of the built environment in the many regions and cultures around the world.

JCCS-a is a peer-reviewed, multi-disciplinary journal that includes the fields of theory of architecture, urban design, building construction, history, town planning inside and outside Europe, ethnology, and many more, with an emphasis on the built environment. The journal is an interdisciplinary platform for the debate of comparing cultures from manifold perspectives, which is already a fixed element in the individual contributions. The scale of research coverage ranges from studies drawn from vernacular forms in primitive societies as well as from advanced civilisations from all parts of the world.

The coverage includes on a macro and micro scale design related behaviour, material ethnology, ethnology related to the built environment, analysis of buildings drawn from the primitive and vernacular, town planning, urban design, public open space design in the primitive and civilised world, comparative studies related to the material world generally, the relationship between social behaviour and the physical world, etc. Some of the issues the journal addresses are: analysis of compounds, villages and towns, comparison of urban design and architecture in developing and developed countries, local identities by the built environment, non-European architecture, material ethnology.

Issue 2\_3 has just now been successfully published and is fully and freely accessible online. Please feel welcome to revise the contents at [www.jccs-a.org](http://www.jccs-a.org):

### Ephemeral Structures vs. Current Preservation Practice

*Erich Lehner*, On finiteness and infiniteness in building traditions

*Hermann Mückler*, On transience and ephemera in building traditions. Three examples of

cermonial huts, plazas and object in New Guinea

*Günter Zöhrer*, From track survey to cultural comparison. On interdisciplinary research illustrated on the architecture of Palau.

*Zámolyi Ferenc*, Tendencies of transience in the traditional architecture of Insular South-East Asia – Sketching theories and possibilities of research in house development

*Renate Bornberg*, Ephemera in Europe? The Lower Saxon Hall House

### Issue 4 2010: the Arab World

Many regions and countries of the Arab world are today in a phase of transition. Often still living in traditional environments and with traditional cultural backgrounds, many aim to gain a more modern way of life, although rooted in traditionalism. Particularly regions that became wealthy by the oil production, or others where many return today to their original homelands after staying for decades in Europe or America, transform lifestyle, environments and with it cities and villages in the Arab world. Coupled with the need for thousands of new homes particularly in the booming cities, all sorts of strategies are launched, some based still on CIAM goals, transport planning, others by international architectural features that can be seen around the world. On the other hand a protest of intellectuals as well as officials criticising such planning approaches has started and a rethinking of the own cultural heritage can be found, too.

In this issue of JCCS-a the many different approaches and tendencies, will be discussed. From Syria to Saudi Arabia vernacular traditional styles shall be discussed as well as modern town planning such as Dubai or Abu Dhabi will be included. By doing so the transformation process and shall be issued.

If you are interested in submitting a paper to above outlined or a related topic kindly send an abstract (150 words) summarising the content of your proposed paper. For issue 4 the deadline for abstracts is 1/9/2009, and for accepted abstracts, full papers should be

submitted by 1/12/2009. Once more, papers addressing other issues are more than welcome. Abstract outlining the main aims and objectives, all co-authors (if any) should be submitted to [office@jccs-a.org](mailto:office@jccs-a.org) for assessing suitability for publication in the journal.

Please note that the submission of a manuscript is no guarantee for publication in the journal, since all manuscripts will be subjected to peer-reviewing. Further relevant infor-

mation, such as aims and scope of the journal, instructions for authors and Editorial board page can be visited at [www.jccs-a.org](http://www.jccs-a.org) ◀

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## IACSA – the Organisation

IACSA is an association according to Swiss law, founded on September 17th, 2008. In practical terms and pragmatically the association has three levels:

I. The *Founding Advisors' Board*, is a group of personalities from different disciplines whose names stand for the field of Cultural Studies in Architecture.

II. The *Working Board*, is open for everyone interested and willing to contribute to build the network.

III. The *Network Editor* maintains and stimulates exchange and prepares the information management. Justin Winkler, who is presently given the task of network editor, is professor for human geography.

IACSA's Founding Advisors' Board, Working Board and informational members by August 20th, 2009, in percent: female 48, male 52. Countries represented, in percent:

CH	33.6	AT	6.8	BE, FL, JP, NL, US	3.5	◀
DE	28.1	FI	6.2			
FR	8.9	SE	4.1			
UK	7.5	IT	1.4			

## How to Register as a Member

If you sense that the idea of IACSA covers the field of your interest you are welcome to participate as a member of the Working Board. Simply write to

[iacsa@mobileculturestudies.com](mailto:iacsa@mobileculturestudies.com)

an informal demand. You will get an electronic version of the bylaws the electronic registration form presented below. You are free to ask any question concerning IACSA which we will answer within the bounds of our capacities.

## Founding Advisors' Board members (in alphabetic order)

Pauline von Bonsdorff, FI; Ingrid Breckner, DE; Catharina Dyrssen, SE;  
Elisabeth Katschnig-Fasch, AT; Angela McRobbie, UK; Colette Pétonnet, FR.

## Network Editor

Justin Winkler, CH