

NOVEL BRIEF TALKS

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NOVEMBER TALKS 2022
FUTURE(S)



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Another year went by with the lecture series "November Talks" hosted at the Faculty of Architecture, Czech Technical University in Prague (FA CTU). The significance of the seventh year in the series was elevated by the theme FUTURE(S) - Time for a Change. Four renowned international personalities shared their rational approach to futuristic ideas and provided the architecture fraternity with just enough food for thought. Prague's November Talks have been a part of the lecture cycle held in leading European architecture facilities since 2006 with the support of the Sto Foundation. FA CTU has been honoured to host this event since 2015.

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Irena Fialová

The Prague November Talks series of lectures are dedicated to a general theme each year. After the series of lectures on the joint theme of VISIONS in 2018, TRANSFORMATIONS in 2019, and TAKING RISKS in 2021, we selected “FUTURE(S). Time for a change” as our theme. The reasons why we are opening the discussion about the future are several.

With the advent of digital technologies, many new concepts in architecture and urbanism have been developed in the last thirty years, leading to new possibilities of performance and efficiency in the design, realisation and use of our buildings and cities. In December 2015, the Paris Agreement on climate change was signed by 196 countries. Many of us as professionals dealing with the built and unbuilt environment aimed above all at exploiting digital technologies to achieve a climate-neutral world by mid 21st century.

This technological vision of a Smart future full of Smart cities with Smart buildings was abruptly halted by the Covid-19 pandemic, the Russian-Ukrainian war and an accelerating climate change. The extent of human and natural suffering occurring simultaneously in various parts of our planet has revealed deeper problems and inequalities within societies and around the world than we were previously aware of. This situation forces us to radically reassess our current priorities and models in proportion to our

shrinking capabilities and accelerates the need to work harder and faster for a better, healthier, more resilient and sustainable planet. The question we are facing and urgently need to discuss and answer as best as possible is: How do we imagine this better future?

We are grateful to all four of our speakers - Winy Maas, Alice Cabaret, Karen Cook and Carlo Ratti - that they approached the theme from different angles and created a vibrant and inspirational mix of ideas and proposals, plans, projects, experiences, events and realisations. In these politically and economically challenging times, they all energetically presented their views and opinions with deep personal involvement and became real harbingers of a new positive future.

I would like to thank the Sto Foundation for the financial support that has made November Talks in Prague possible for the seventh time already. I would also like to thank the November Talks team that takes care of everything - Karolína Kripnerová, Kateřina Rottová, Veronika Kastlová, Jarmila Vokounová and Akshatha Ravi Kumar. As all the lectures were registered and are available online, we changed the form of a part of this publication. Instead of reviewing the lectures, we are publishing interviews with the speakers. I hope this extra level of personal and authentic information is appreciated.



Till Stahlbusch

The motto of the lectures for the November Talks 2022 at the Faculty of Architecture at CTU was timely and well-chosen. It was also interestingly illuminated from many exciting angles by the four renowned speakers.

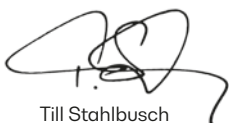
The need to adapt the topics of new construction, renovation of buildings and housing to the dramatic climatic developments as quickly as possible is undoubtedly the most critical task facing young architects in particular. It will determine their activities for the rest of their professional lives. In concrete terms, it is a matter of moving away from the previous practice of always understanding architecture with regard to the construction of new buildings.

The building sector accounts for a significant proportion of the increasing consumption of raw materials and produces a large amount of waste and CO₂ emissions. The Sto Foundation has set itself the goal of bringing about a rethink with various promotional measures, especially for

architecture and civil engineering students: How can the large ecological footprint of the construction industry be reduced? How can building, resource efficiency and climate protection be combined? How can the increasing demand for housing and the growing urbanisation worldwide be reconciled with the duty to treat nature, resources and the climate with care?

As a foundation, we see one way to a more resource-efficient construction method in reuse, i.e., extending the lifespan of what already exists. If the users' needs change, buildings do not necessarily have to be demolished. New life can often be breathed into them through conversion, extensions and innovative usage concepts.

As the Sto Foundation, we are pleased that this vital discourse, this significant rethinking, has long since found its way into teaching at the CTU in Prague, and we wish students and the teaching teams good thoughts and ideas for their work.



Till Stahlbusch

Winy Maas

MVRDV, Rotterdam



Lecture

The Future City: what's next?

annotation

The call for sustainability has never been louder. When we think about cities of the future, we often think of sustainable, smart cities. But what happens after this thought has been provoked? Is that all? According to Winy Maas, they are much more than that.

mvrdiv.nl

motto

"I advocate denser, greener, more attractive and liveable cities, with an approach to design that centres around user-defined, innovative, and sustainable ideas for the built environment, regardless of typology or scale."

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“It is one of my deepest-held beliefs that ideas, even as-yet-unrealised ideas, can deeply impact our world. And sometimes, big dreams, no matter how unachievable they might seem, can have a bigger effect than small, easily-achieved goals.”

Winy Maas

Winy Maas (Schijndel, the Netherlands, 1959) is the co-founder and principal architect of MVRDV, an interdisciplinary studio that works at the intersection of architecture and urbanism. The award-winning Dutch practice was set up by Maas alongside Jacob van Rijs and Nathalie de Vries in 1993 and has established an international identity with a wide variety of buildings, cities and landscapes that are innovative, experimental, and theoretical. Maas has received international acclaim for his urban planning and building projects across all typologies and scales. Over the past 25 years, he has been responsible for many award-winning projects.

Besides his work for MVRDV, Maas is a Professor of Urbanism and Architecture at the Delft University of Technology. In 2008, he founded "The Why Factory" at the TU Delft, a research institute that explores the possibilities for the development of our cities by focusing on the production of models and visualisations for cities of the future. "The Why Factory" collaborates intensively with other academic institutes around the world. Maas was also the guest editor of the Italian magazine *Domus* for 2019. He is an urban research curator of Manifesta 2020 Marseille, was a member of the urban committee Qianhai in Shenzhen and is a supervisor for the new eco-quarter of Bastide Niel Bordeaux. He is also a visiting professor at the Faculty of Architecture for the academic year 2022 - 2023.

With "The Why Factory", he has published more than thirteen books on The Future City, including *Green Dream* (2010), *Copy Paste* (2017), and *Porocity* (2018). He has written and published several books on the theories behind MVRDV, like *Farmax: Excursions on Density* (1997) together with co-founder Jacob van Rijs; *KM3: Excursions on Capacities* (2005), *Five Minutes City* (2003), and *Skycar City* (2007).



Markthal, Rotterdam

The Markthal is formed by the construction of privately-developed apartments arranged into a large arch, strategically allowing a private initiative to create a public space.



Depot Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam

Depot Boijmans Van Beuningen, the world's first fully accessible art depot, offers a glimpse behind the scenes of the museum world and makes the whole art collection accessible to the public.



Seoulo Skygarden, Seoul

Located in the heart of Seoul, a true plant village has been realized on a former inner-city highway in an ever-changing urban area accommodating the biggest variety of Korean plant species, transforming it into a public park.



Radio Hotel and Tower, New York

The distinctive design of the Radio Hotel and Tower comprises a stack of blocks that match the size of the buildings in the immediate context, clad in eight different colours of glazed brick. It was the first completed building by MVRDV in the United States.

Tainan Spring, Tainan

Tainan Spring was a large commercial structure that no longer served its intended purpose, it had become a drain on the vitality of downtown Tainan. The Spring shows what solutions are possible for unused shopping malls.



Tianjin Binhai Library, Tianjin

Tianjin Binhai Library is a cultural centre featuring a luminous spherical auditorium and floor-to-ceiling cascading bookshelves that functions not only as an educational centre but as a social space and connector from the park into the cultural district.



The Imprint, Seoul

The Imprint is a new 2-building art-entertainment complex near Seoul's Incheon Airport. It is part of the larger Paradise City complex of 6 buildings in total, which will provide a full suite of entertainment and hotel attractions.





Valley, Amsterdam

Valley is an attempt to bring a green and human dimension back to the inhospitable office environment of Amsterdam Zuidas. MVRDV designed the dramatic, geology-inspired, plant-covered high-rise for developer Edge.

In conversation with Winy Maas

You have already given a few interviews. What do people ask you repeatedly?

I will neglect questions such as 'what my favorite city or design is'. And you will never hear from me 'what my favorite Netflix series are'.

Is it still true that students from Central Europe are shy and do not join in the debate with others?

How to compare that? It is my first half year in the central (as you call it) part of Europe. Like in many places, some students are communicative, and others are less. People from schools like Yale or Princeton maybe talk so much that they don't design a product. But the schools in Belgium, for instance, have a beautiful combination of words and design. They use two or three words that blend very directly. It's also a way of communication, but anyway the content level of communication needs to be high. That is needed, especially in group work.

You can talk through drawings and words, and you can speak through proposals. That needs training because the students can be intimidated here. That requires a safe place with openness also from the teachers to work on that. Maybe some students didn't feel safe with professors because of certain things in the past. In other words, they would get a bad note if they asked stupid (what is that anyway?) questions.

You are not scared of the future because you always talk about adaptation. Do students fear the future?

Certain students and also architects stick, maybe out of fear to lose control, to the existing and act more to 'confirmation' than to 'exploration'. It does not apply to every project, but if I for instance see the results of the current Czech price for architecture, I think a sort of safety has been awarded by the jury. Then I wonder how curious people are, and how wise.

A considerable part of new buildings is built without architects. If you are ill, you go to the doctor. If you need a better house, you rarely find an architect. They know everything about construction or sustainability from the university but can't apply the knowledge.

It's quite a Czech problem, to be honest. It probably comes down to how you define liberty after having lived for a while under the communist regime. People tend to do it themselves and don't see what an architect can bring. This wish of doing it yourself is high, and the moment you touch that, you get almost in political trouble.

The beauty committees (*Welstandscommissie*) are crucial in the Netherlands in this respect. They review the project from ecology to aesthetics. You could also do that here, but your definition of liberty blocks that. You focus only on monument protection in the Czech Republic. Seemingly that's politically correct and everybody has agreed to fulfil that. On the other hand, the interpretation of heritage is not as liberal as in other countries and what about quality outside heritage zones?

Tell me about your first visit to Czechoslovakia. I think that you were really young at that time.

I think I was 23. A research group in Delft wanted to study Loos versus Corbusier. They also measured their buildings of them and their pupils. In one of those missions, they sent students like me from Delft to Czechoslovakia. It was my first time seeing Olomouc, Brno or Prague's Baba.

I met with opinions that Czechoslovakia did not produce first-class architecture. They say that Baba is something we just imitated from Germany or England.

Well, the relationship at that moment between Czech and Dutch, amongst other architects, was powerful, for instance. And so, it is influenced by the eight and the Opbouw, by Bauhaus and other impacts. But let's also not forget that Russian architects were already experimenting and connecting. There was a kind of small network of people that were working on this modernizing act. It is already wonderful that Czechia participated. And in Baba I love Mart Stam's House the most. A Dutch had the opportunity to make this highlight here. It doesn't have a complete view of the city because it's on the second row, but it's a very intelligent building.

And there's the invention of having a neighbourhood out of modernist houses; there were not so many, two small ones in the Netherlands and Germany. The fact that you did it, there's a sign of courage and internationalisation. Then you can compare yourself in general and learn from each other. I think that's very fruitful.

But I also think the communist time, if I may say that, has given us fantastic buildings, and the resistance to that is for a while understandable, but now it is getting confusing. The Tower of Žižkov is one of the world's wonders. Old Federal Assembly, the house with a second building on top, close to Wenceslas Square, is an example of how to densify historic buildings. It is courageous architecturally. Maybe it can, with some minor additions/comments, become the symbol of a New Young Governance.

These houses are more popular among the younger generation because young people don't connect them with the communist era.

There were terrible things in those times, but also better regulated in certain elements. Some architects say Prague is and should be only baroque. I think that is a provocative remark because that doesn't give place to other kinds of 'baroqueness' like Baba or communist buildings. Without them, Prague would be so boring.

Can you compare Czechia from your first visit and now? We all know that there are more cars and the facades in The Old Town are more colourful. But what is interesting, especially for you?

Looking back, I, like many others, can easily fall partly into a trap of nostalgia. I am a runner and was then the only one running on the street. It was cold, and I forgot my pants, but of course, I had my boxer shorts. So I ran through Olomouc in my boxer shorts. The police picked me up because of my indecency. We had, of course, communist guards in our cars when we went around. It was the moment that the trams, which are still sometimes in the streets, had this kind of hyper-nostalgia feeling when you jumped on them. But I could smell the coal energy everywhere, which I hated. And the food was terrible. To be honest, the dinners in Obecni Dum were horrendous. The infrastructure was bad. And still, as it lacks high-speed railways, it leads to massive usage of cars. The sprawl of second homes of those days has flooded the countryside and has killed the landscapes.

Could you connect with the community, with Czech students and young architects?

One of the architects in the state office made all the plastic mullions in every building yellow. I loved that subtle protest. Now I see a country that wants to be part of the European Union. The government takes more initiative. The issue in the building industry is that it is not the best in the world yet. People also think that you suffer from Easyjet tourism, leading to a kind of overdose of cheapness.

I think it is very good you have started to make international architecture competitions. You have CAMP, a flagship of the same level as Pavillon de l'Arsenal in Paris. But CAMP would deserve more subsidiaries and independence to catch up with, for instance, Het Nieuwe Instituut in Rotterdam.

You have an incredible interest in culture, which should get more international momentum. It would help if you made more translations of your emerging literature. Please do. I cannot do that by Google Translate endlessly.

I tried to go to your theatre but didn't understand a word. You remain very national despite all the positions that you have. It can be a choice. You can say, okay, we want to be the introverts of Europe, but pronounce it. I sometimes don't know what Czech people really think.

You spoke in your lecture about leaders who you met during your career. The issues of the Czech Republic come from a lack of leaders in our country.

You had good leaders in the past who were exemplary for the world. That's quite a problem in more countries out there. I think the Netherlands also had much stronger leadership, and you also see it in Germany. There is a kind of crisis in leadership. And yes, we must make a culture and a spirit that allows for that. That create trust in it.

Maybe it's your hyper-individualism that somehow is blocking it because you only want to have freedom. But how to allow for leadership? It's a contradiction. But how to create that wisdom and trust in each other? You cannot build a whole society on individualism. I see a hope with your new president.

You already mentioned over-tourism. I was watching your lecture about the market hall in Rotterdam in 2016. The building attracted many tourists. Are people still happy with it?

Tourism deserves a place in our society because there is a leisure interest for everybody. I dedicated one book to The End of Leisure because it culminates not only in the tourist industry. We made a kind of complete list in terms of costs, revenues and square metres. You start to wonder at what moment everything is leisure in our society and who's then working?

Rotterdam lacked leisure. It was the ugly bird of Dutch cities because of the bombardment. Every tourist goes to Amsterdam. No one has seen a Chinese tourist in Rotterdam for hundreds of years.

Rotterdam made a lot to its emancipation. Tourists coming to see our market hall were a confirmation that Rotterdam is not as ugly as you think. It has another kind of status than Amsterdam, where the mayor struggles with the number of tourists. The enlargement of beauty and excitement throughout the periphery is seen as a way to reduce the density of the old centre. I like that as it helps to solve many problems in the periphery. It needs to avoid gentrification, though.

Architecture has the power to start a change in an ugly place.

I predict that Kosmonautů here in Prague will be the hottest place in the future (*the current official name of the metro station is Háje - ed. note*).

Do you like it?

I love it. I think it has a scale that is unearthly and somehow also socially intriguing. People are going to live there. I always feel I cannot say something wrong about it anymore. You could do that maybe 40 years ago, but now it's a possible escape from the city.

Do you have other favourite places in Prague outside the city centre?

I don't know Prague that well yet. I love Šárka. It's nice that you have a nature reserve in the city's heart, which should be

protected from building new villas. I was embarrassed and surprised by this satellite town just north of Jenerálka.

Nebušice?

It's hilarious. You have a perfect copy of the American dream there.

Maybe it should also be protected?

Ha! It's worthy of UNESCO! I was there when everybody was washing their car on the street. They have these kinds of old-style 19th-century lanterns! I don't want to live there at all, but I am curious that it happened. I was also amazed by the private schools, to be honest. Some fences look like prisons, which is worrisome because education should be public and equal for me!

I think private schools or blocks of flats behind fences started in the 90s, but they are not so popular nowadays.

Not sure if that is true. By the way, I love Trója, especially the vineyards. I would want to skip that road that goes through it, though.

You speak about Trója, which many people like, but it is still a village in the city. One of the most significant issues of Prague is that many parts are not very dense, so you do not have enough density for new businesses or good public transportation.

It's a sort of escapism which is not to be blamed, but if we can make more dense quarters as Dejvice in your city, that would help.

You have an office in China. What did you learn about this country?

Change of subject? Do you want to compare Czechia with China? :) We have already worked there for 25 years, and it's a very dialectic relationship. Because on the one hand, I'm critical of social rudeness, and I'm critical of human rights, and also about the complete central planning. Initially, I was doing more in Shenzhen because it's more experimental than in Beijing.

But I also love it and want to keep a relationship. It is so important to stay in dialogue. I like it for the energy and for that dialogue you can have with many people, and of course, there are also many disappointments. But I cannot be a reporter without that.

I always wonder if it is ethical to collaborate with China or not. Maybe the collaboration can help, for example, in human rights.

Yeah! that was also the strategy up until a year ago for Russia. I also wanted to work there because I think specific intellectual components were and are very nice, and there are many nice people. In China, communication is not as easy because you always need translators, and you have to trust

them. Usually, when I speak with a client, I look into their eyes, and we have a direct relationship; you can see the nuances in the eyes. And that is what I sometimes missed during COVID in China. You don't build the project because of miscommunication or misunderstanding. That's more serious than in other countries. It also exists in the Czech Republic - your "hmm" means "no", and it is hard to get an honest "yes".

Where do you take the initiative to be like a psychologist or moderator between community, developer or city?

I think it's one of the nicest and most constructive roles; maybe I am more of an urbanist than an architect. And I think our architecture is communicative. It's very readable. I don't want to make one-liners, but I want to make comprehensive things with a story and a depth that are meant for communication.

I think that architects are often too serious about their work. You use humour and jokes not only in the presentation of your architecture. I found many jokes on your Twitter. But you use humour also in the project, for example, you put words or prints on facades. Do you think you're doing this for the surrounding community?

In our office, we do not like the elite approach of architects when they know everything better. We can do a fantastic job; we have more skills. Humour relativises the over-seriousness and somberness that dictates architecture. And who am I to determine the development of a city?

We are creating a society where we want to turn everybody into the middle class. It sounds weird, but that's the neo-Northwest European style; let me say it that way: to allow for wealth so that everybody can live well with it. I think that the majority of our people are, therefore, not stupid. Can they make an opinion? Come on, more than ever. And then, I need to approach people collectively, be communicative and ask their opinion. This is not populism; maybe you can call it 'pop'.

Many architects dream of being famous enough to have wealthy clients and design luxurious buildings. Is social housing a big part of your work?

Not enough, to be honest. I love our diverse projects where you see a mélange of social and more expensive housing. For me, this mélange is one of the tools to do not only in specific areas but everywhere; also social housing is needed in Pařížská Street or on Champs-Élysées.

That's quite a challenging task, isn't it?

Not at all if we collectively believe in that. I can add some stories on top of the roofs of Champs-Élysées. So: why not? I dream of adding this layer to that part of Paris. And some projects do that. At our Crystal Houses (*Amsterdam*), the two upper floors are dedicated to social housing on top of the Hermés store.

Alice Cabaret

The Street Society, Paris



Lecture

Future-proofing our cities

annotation

Building better urban futures requires a radical paradigm shift. Alice Cabaret inspires us to rethink and take action in our urban environments by exploring the intersection between urbanism and various fields such as neuroscience and popular culture.

motto

"Sapere Aude!" is a Latin expression meaning "dare to know."

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the-street-society.com

“With cities accounting for about 70% of global carbon emissions, architects and urban professionals are on the front line to fight climate change. This requires challenging inherited, limiting concepts in terms of urban development while actively promoting new values and implementing solutions for fairer and healthier urban futures.”

Alice Cabaret

Alice Cabaret is a French urban strategist with international experience in creative urban transformation. She founded The Street Society, an innovative urban agency based in Paris, and co-founder of the [S]CITY initiative, which focuses on exploring the connection between neuroscience and urbanism.

Alice's primary motive is to bring unexpected perspectives and expertise to the urban transformation field. The Street Society provides strategic solutions to transform underused spaces into new places through trend forecasting, spatial activations, collaborative design and urban research. The agency's project-based philosophy brings together global talents from diverse backgrounds, such as architecture, landscaping, design, art, ecology and science.

Alice holds a Master's degree in Urban Affairs from Sciences Po (Paris) and a Property Development (ESPI) certification. She is the author of "Back to the Streets" (Wits University Press) and contributor to the Monocle "Guide to Building Better Cities" (Gestalten). She is one of the 40 Parisian women featured in the book "The New Parisienne" (Abrams / Gallimard) and part of the "12 People to watch in 2022" (Condé Nast Traveller).

With her passion for exploring the link between people and places and designing contextual, bespoke interventions, Alice pushes the boundaries to create more attractive, resilient, and inclusive urban places.



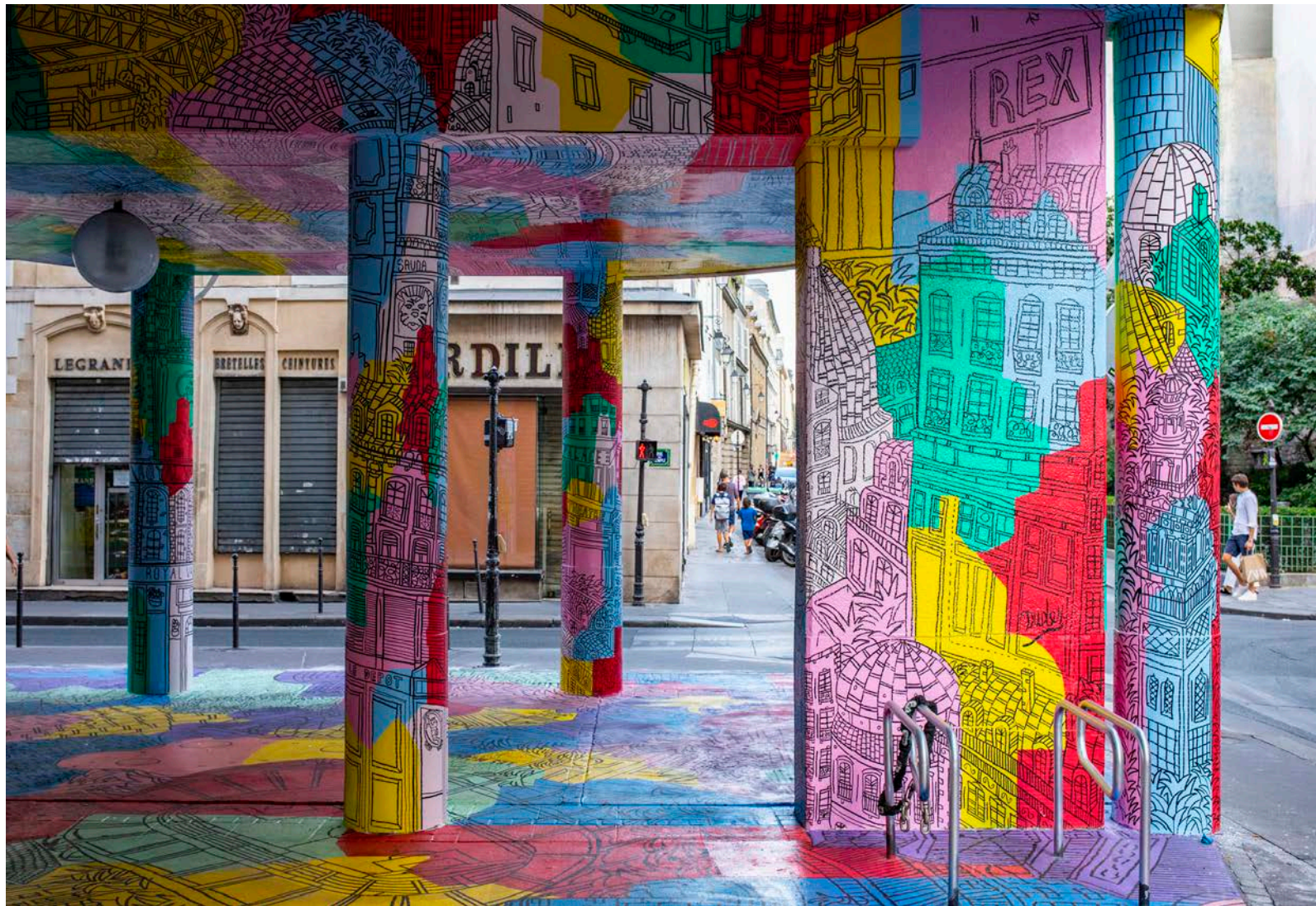
CELP, Lyon

Competition winner for the transformation of the major Perrache hub in Lyon (originally built in 1976 by René Gagès) with a mixed-use program including a generous rooftop park.



Ecoquartier Saint Vincent de Paul, Paris

Saint-Vincent-de-Paul is an abandoned hospital activated by temporary uses (Les Grands Voisins) before its current transformation as an eco-district. The Street Society contributed to the strategic plan to design the future uses of the ground floor spaces of this urban project.



Up/Side/Down/Town, Paris, Le Marais

Winner of the "Embellir Paris" ("beautify Paris") competition by the City of Paris, The Street Society and artist Daniel van der Noon created Up/Side/Down/Town, an immersive artistic intervention right in the heart of Paris's renowned Marais district, celebrating LGBTQ+ urban memories.



Venice Architecture Biennale 2018

The Street Society, together with Atelier Berger Mila, organised an urban exploration workshop at the French Pavilion of the 16th Venice Architecture Biennale.



8 Morrisson Street, Durban

This warehouse was previously used as a storage depot for courier goods. In 2014, an entire activation plan for the launch of the building as the first step of its reconversion process was designed and implemented.

Dream Street, Toronto

Dream Street is a colorful, utopian cityscape mural co-created with the youth from Paris and Toronto. This vertical playing platform was produced as part of The Bentway's Playing in Public exhibition in Toronto (summer 2021).



In conversation with Alice Cabaret

Urban planners often discuss the safety of the environment. You moved to South Africa just after your graduation. Why did you choose Johannesburg, considered one of the most unsafe cities in the world?

After graduating from Sciences Po university in Paris, I moved to Johannesburg to work as an intern with the French Development Bank. We worked on the development of affordable housing and urban infrastructure upgrades. I got quickly fascinated by the complex dynamics of the city. I decided to stay longer and published research with Witwatersrand University about walking practices in the town, which is a fascinating question in this urban context still affected by segregation. On the other hand, Johannesburg has amazing creative energy and so much potential on many levels. I still love this city.

Did your family and friends believe that you could make some positive change?

They could because they saw positive changes, especially in the Maboneng Precinct. It was a mostly abandoned industrial area on the east side of Johannesburg. I joined the team that developed and transformed this neighbourhood into a new mixed-use, diverse district. We tried to activate the street and bring a more open model for urban development where people can feel safe, connected and inspired.

You are the founder of The Street Society. Can we describe it as an urban planning studio?

The Street Society is a creative urban strategy agency. We bring new life to underused and mostly unloved spaces. We do so through urban trends research, spatial analysis and recommendations, and creative installations. It is a platform to foster partnerships around positive space transformation with people from different backgrounds and diverse perspectives, like designers, artists and scientists.

What projects are you working on right now?

At the moment, we are working on a wide range of projects

from public space transformation (for which we have developed a specific tool) in Paris, temporary activations of buildings, street art installations to major adaptive reuse projects in France and Europe.

For example, we recently won the transformation project of the central transport hub in Lyon jointly with Dietmar Feichtinger Architects. The challenge here was to bring love to the building, which is maybe the most unloved one in Lyon.

We worked on the strategy to transform this project into a mixed-use hub with new landscape spaces and 25 000 m² of new programming inside the building. The building is designed to be as self-sufficient as possible and to give back to the neighbourhood.

How do you start communication with municipalities or private investors? How do you present your added value for the project?

The Street Society pushes space analysis in a more alternative, creative and collaborative way. When designing, we collaborate, for example, with neuroscientists to deeply study senses and emotions around space. We also bring creativity to the design process collaboratively with artists, designers, environmental experts or landscapers.

Cities, property developers or cultural organisations see value in our contribution because they know it makes their projects more resilient on many levels and more connected to their existing surroundings and communities.

A lot of architects lost their motivation for change. How do you maintain your beliefs or self-confidence when things do not go according to plan?

That is a key question. We live in a time of extremely rapid change, especially regarding climate change, and many decisions must be taken quickly to improve and adapt our urban environment. It is vital to take action: there is nothing worse than just sitting back and not doing anything. This is why I believe in local, targeted, community-driven action.

Prague citizens are afraid of gentrification. You often try to bring diversity into an area.

Regulations (for example, regarding social housing) and awareness of the local dynamics are essential tools for creating thoughtfully diverse projects. We use the different stages of the project, from temporary use to long-term operation, to offer opportunities, involve other people and try a wide range of activities that will bring diversity to an area.

An integral part of your effort is the work with students. What is significant about it?

That's right - we should actually organise a FACTU workshop! We regularly share our methodology and some of the tools we developed with students. For example, through our Urban Design Thinking methodology that allows you to invent new programs and uses for any space. We also organize workshops in high schools about ecology and architecture.

I am interested in your workshop with students in Nantes, where you worked with an old abandoned concrete building. It is a big issue in Prague, where we have a lot of similar structures from the 70s and 80s connected with the communist era. What were the results of the workshop?

This particular workshop was realised with the Ecole Boule design school. We worked on an office building from the 70s in Nantes, which had to be transformed to welcome new uses. We went on site and taught the students how to actually listen to the building, using, their senses and alternative urban analysis tools. We also encouraged them to connect with the local community. The students then designed a new program for the building in a very collaborative manner using our urban design thinking methodology.

How can advanced methods (such as data science or neuroscience) help urbanism?

Neuroscience offers new opportunities to understand

deeper spatial layers through analysing senses or emotions, and taking this data into account in the design process.

I love these tools because not only do they allow you to collect data and information about space, but they also have an impact on the people you interact with, making them more conscious about their urban environment.

What do you think about the meta-verse and virtual reality?

I'm interested in the collaboration and cooperation dynamics between users in the meta-verse. One central question is how do you prevent inequalities and violence, which you can find in urban spaces of the real world, from being replicated in these spaces?

There is also the threat of escapism in this virtual world and its impact on the energy invested in improving your real environment. And, of course, significant concerns about data consumption and its environmental impact.

You talk about inherited norms that need to be changed. Could you give me some examples?

I would like to challenge the constant growth paradigm that has been driving the last years of urban development, as well as the lack of diversity and the lack of diversity regarding decision-makers in the urbanism and property development spheres. This is essential in order to better address the needs of people from different age groups or that are neurodivergent, for example.

One of your latest works, the playful mural in Toronto, was designed with children.

We think that children are not taken into account enough in the urban planning process. Also, the stats about the mental and physical health of children growing up in cities are worrying. This collaborative piece in Toronto, commissioned by the Bentway, represents a "Dream Street" imagined by children at their scale. It serves as a perfect background for playing and engaging about the future of their urban environment.

Karen Cook

PLP Architecture, London



Lecture

22 Bishopsgate: A Vertical Village

annotation

Why would people want to work on an office building? How can a tall building make a positive impact on its neighbours? How can architects navigate a complex site, lead stakeholders with diametrically opposing viewpoints, and realise a project, all in a challenging world of climate change and cost pressures? Karen Cook breaks it down systematically.

motto

“Work toward PRE-FAB, POST-CARB societies.”

plparchitecture.com

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“Now we witness global, epochal crises that are destabilising – but that makes fertile ground for bold new ideas and actions. Architecture is a vocation requiring life-long learning. Surround yourself with smart people with different backgrounds to exchange experiences and test new ideas. Prague is a beautiful city with a unique history and culture – be proud of it, build on it, and strive to make it even better.”

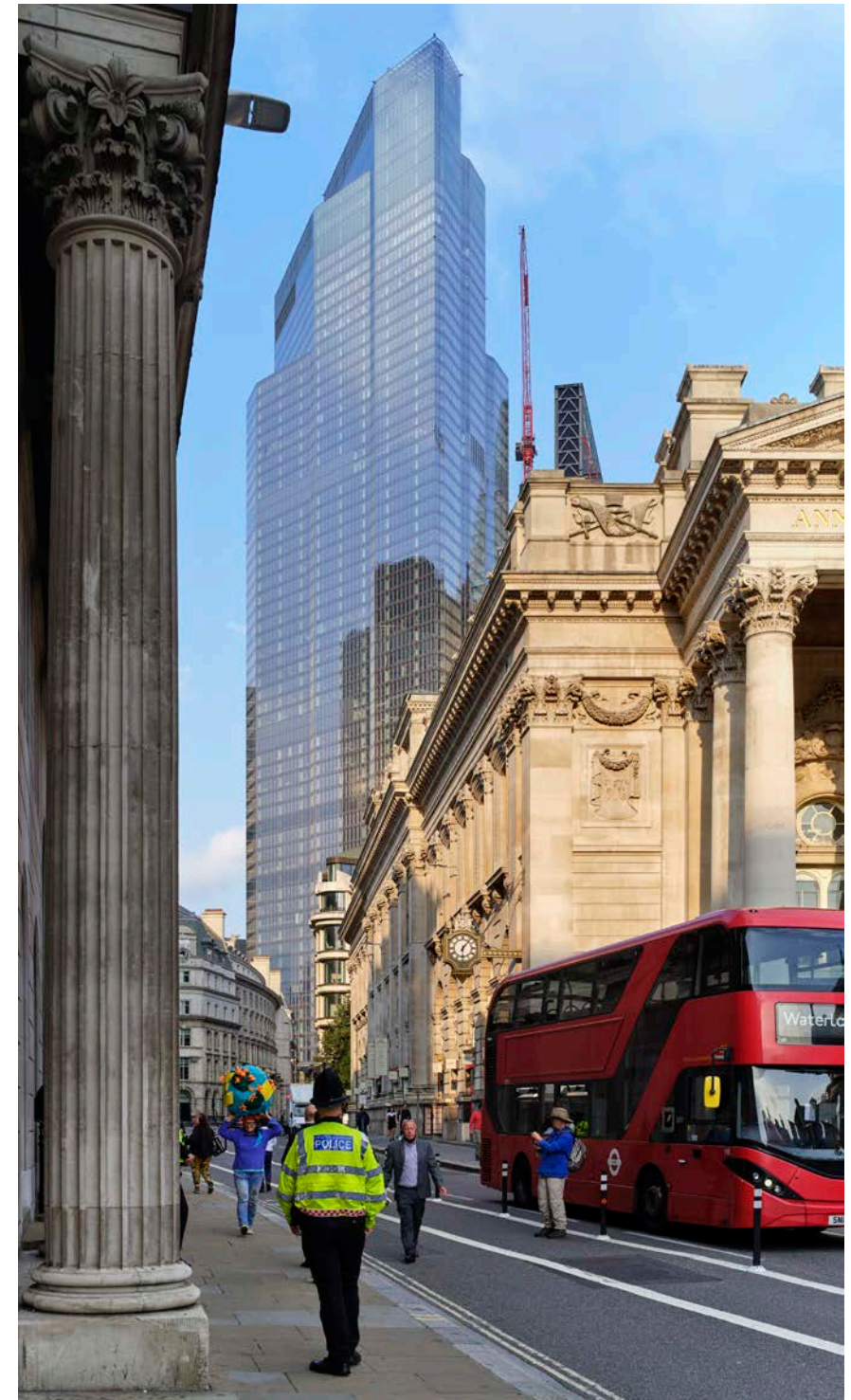
Karen Cook

Karen Cook, the founding Partner of PLP Architecture and previously a partner of KPF's London office, has been designing "tall buildings" in Europe for the last decade. Her design approach stems from an analytical process, a respect for context, and the integration of technology and materials, aiming to make better places to work and live.

Karen led the competition-winning design in 2003-2004, while at KPF, for the radical refurbishment at La Defense of Tour CB31, now Tour First, whose design team she led until her departure in 2009 to found PLP Architecture. Reborn as France's tallest tower, HQE certified, Tour First won the 2011 MIPIM Award for Best Office Refurbishment.

At PLP Architecture, Karen led the design team winning planning consent for the New West End Company's Old Cavendish Street Pavilion, a meeting point designed to improve the public experience along Oxford Street, London. Currently, Karen leads design teams for a high-rise residential building in Ottawa and new schemes in London, Paris and Prague. Among her significant work in Prague are the Danube House and Nile House in the Karlín district. After years of cooperation and partnership in the KPF and PLP offices, in 2022, she founded the Spice Design studio with Jean Le Lay.

Designs which Karen has led have been exhibited at the Royal Academy and form part of the permanent collection at the Pompidou Centre. She is a member of the City Architecture Forum, the Henry Jackson Society and the American Institute of Architects, on whose board she served as Treasurer of the UK Chapter. She has lectured on the topics of Design and Technology, Sustainability and Tall Buildings at professional and student forums, and participated in design competitions and student degree juries in the UK, USA, Czech Republic, France and Belgium. Karen earned a Master's in Architecture from Harvard University after receiving a bachelor's in Architecture and Art degrees from Rice University.

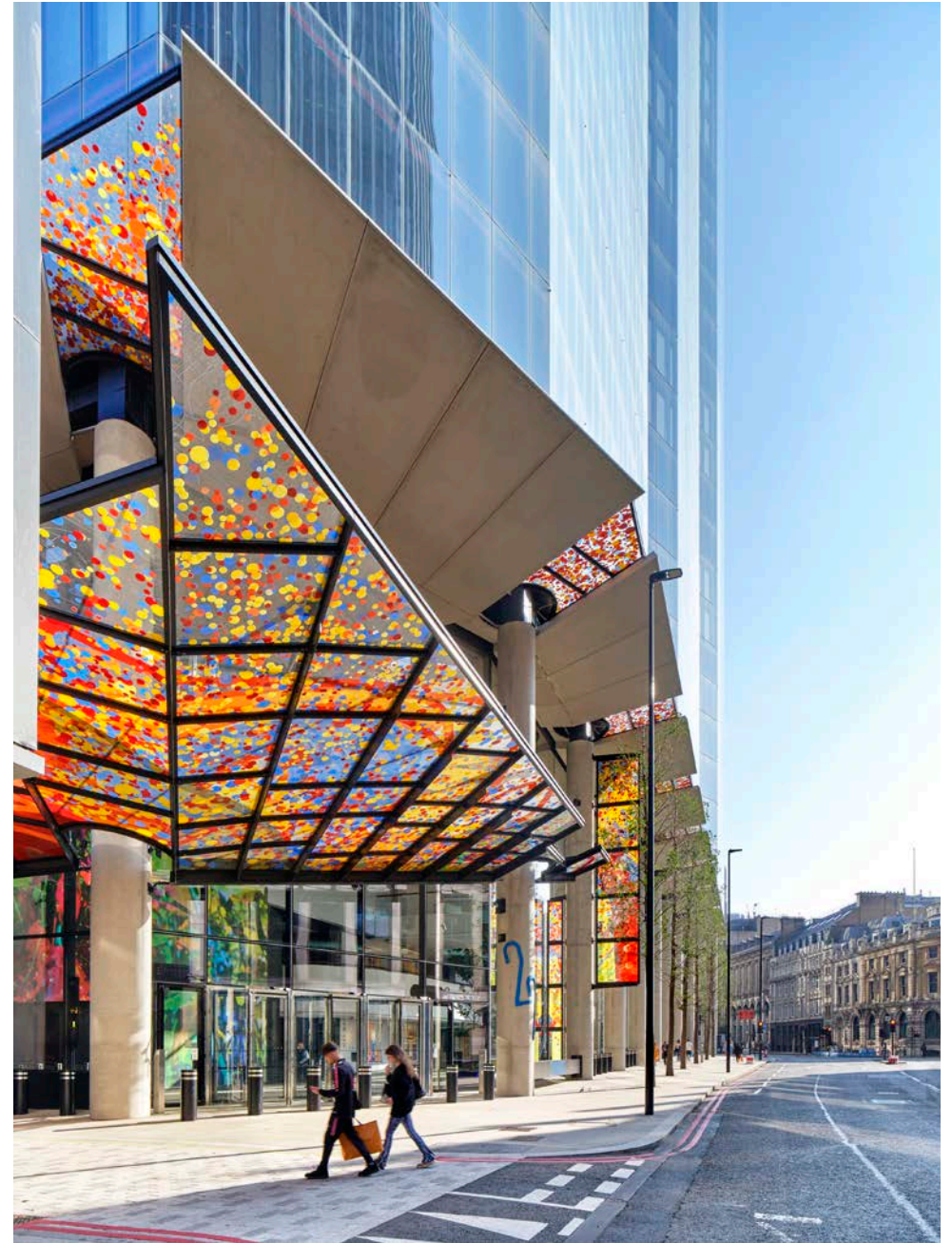


22 Bishopsgate, London

View from Bank of England, City of London.
Design for Lipton Rogers Developments and AXA IM.



22 Bishopsgate, London
View from Threadneedle Street, City of London.



22 Bishopsgate, London
North entrance canopy artwork by Alexander Beleschenko.



4 Cannon Street, London

Steps away to create a pocket park and to reveal Christopher Wren's St. Nicholas Cole Abbey. Design for Pembroke Realty on behalf of Fidelity. Winner of the Best Contribution to Context, City of London, 2021.

In conversation with Karen Cook

You had the opportunity to influence the face of Prague. Could you think back to River City and your role in the Danube and Nile House construction?

My first visit to Prague was in 1999, which was very special. We studied your city in architecture school, and all we knew about it was what Christian Norberg-Schulz had written, which was difficult to follow if you had not visited the place.

The area of the future River City was 60 hectares of undeveloped land. It had been part of the river where the goods were offloaded for workshops in Karlín. Gradually it became railroad land, a sort of amusement fair and nothing in the end.

The place was an inner periphery in the heart of the town.

If you compare Prague then to Prague today, the centre of energy has changed and shifted closer to Karlín. The purpose of the river project was to bring people from Karlín to the river, and now, 20 years later, there will be the pedestrian bridge linking to Holešovice. I guess the future connection with the concert hall would be even more exciting.

Could you describe your work with the bank of the Vltava River?

The actual riverbank was a forbidden zone because there were ecological constraints to protect the existing wildlife and the existing plants that the wildlife used as their habitat. So we were not allowed to do anything to the actual river bank. The entire land is built up a little bit higher than it was initially to deter flood water. But of course, when the building was nearly finished, there was a terrible flood, and it turned out that this level was still not high enough.

The river walk seems to me today to be very successful. People use it for cycling, work, leisure, walking their dogs or taking their children for walks. When I look at all the buildings built up along the river, it's a massive transformation. The traffic authorities did not want interruptions to Rohanské nábřeží, which I think is unfortunate because it prevents this area from becoming more of a part of the urban fabric. A highway remains, dividing Karlín from the river.

How did you cooperate with Czech colleagues?

I've worked all my life in commercial buildings. Working for developers, we often do not meet the occupant. The projects are designed to be pleasing to everyone, which means not very particular in character, but reaching the standards that the real estate agents seek.

Working in Prague was a completely different experience at the time, as we are talking about the year 2000. Purchasing a catalogue component was more expensive than having someone here make it by hand. It allowed us not only to design everything uniquely for the building but also to speak to the person.

I would say that it gave us a rich experience in bringing together all sorts of different collaborators. We could not speak the same language, so they would get actual samples in their material, which was a very different way of working for us. We have always worked on drawings before. I was so pleased with the result because of this input from all the different artisans and craftsmen. I have tried to bring it into my future work after working here.

You prepared a lot of interesting solutions, especially supporting sustainability. I am also quite interested in the tunnels which connect the houses.

The developers drove the sustainability objectives. They wanted it to be the most sustainable building at the time in the Czech Republic. We developed an underfloor air system. It has been around since the Romans, and it's used in many European buildings. It allowed us to have a flat slab concrete ceiling exposed and a raised floor with an underfloor air supply, which is very comfortable. Post-covid, people say it is a healthier way of delivering air to space.

The underground tunnels are of two types. The air is brought in under the building through the third basement. The idea is to use the earth to temper the air. In the summer, it cools the air a little bit, and in the winter, it warms the air before it goes into the mechanical system of the building.

Then, a tunnel connects all the buildings to avoid delivery vehicles above the ground. I have been in cities where every

single office building has a ramp entrance from the street, and it can really kill the public space.

Can you describe how Prague changed from your first visit?

My first visit was in 1999, so it has been more than 20 years. I remember it very well because Vít Řezáč, who is one of your professors here, was working on the project at the time, and he invited me to go and see the castle after dark. There was a snowstorm, and hiking up the hill seemed longer with every step.

I think Prague has undergone different changes since then, hasn't it? Initially, there was a wave of money and commercialisation, and some of the original inhabitants could not afford to live in the city centre anymore. I think that is unfortunate because of the risk that the centre is becoming a museum.

The city should think about that, maybe to maintain the population staying permanently in the centre or whatever area of Prague. I know from the visit to CAMP that the city is experiencing growth. I think growth can be favourable if the designs for the urban spaces and the uses are correct. Prague has a prescribed zoning system like most of Europe. This can be a good thing, but it can also be a handicap because when things need to be changed, it can be a little bit slow to go through government procedures.

As long as there are suitable open spaces and people feel safe, higher density can be a positive thing rather than just extended growth at the same density. It is economical. Businesses can afford to be in the area. You can comfortably walk to your bakery, your office or to meet your friends. And this generally makes a better city.

In one of your lectures, you talked about London's planning and regulations, which are not so normative. Could you describe this process more profoundly? I ask because we are trying to find a new system in Prague.

The London approach has pros and cons. The pro might be that if a change needs to be made due to pressures on the city, these needs can be addressed more quickly. The con would be that when land is in private ownership, it's tough to get a consensus with enough landowners to make a significant difference for a whole area. So you end up negotiating one site at a time. If you need to put in new infrastructure or if an area is short of particular use, it is

tough to say to a private landowner you must put a hospital on your site instead of a luxury highrise residential building.

The people who are unhappy with the system say: could we please have a prescribed zoning plan like most of Europe? So I do not know what the best solution would be. I think maybe it is healthy to have master plan competitions regularly so that ideas can be debated not only in public but among architectural professionals. If you have a master plan competition for an area, discuss the uses and density, and try to solve where the open space should be. I think there is no perfect solution, and you must constantly modify it.

The London procedure needs an excellent reputation for the city clerks because they have to discuss the solution more profoundly with the investor.

Yes, but London has 33 different governmental districts, and they do not talk to each other. What I see as an architect is that working in various districts is very different because even if it is London, it is still tough to get 33 qualified teams in the planning departments. Moreover, when we need to build homes for 10 thousand people, some districts do not have enough planners with that experience. So there are boroughs that are better organised than others. Some recruit people from all over the world.

You have ample experience in highrise buildings. Their construction is like a never-ending story in Prague. The big question is: how to protect existing heritage?

Some cities have a simple rule like no buildings over 22 or 28 metres. Paris, for example, said: we build all our tall buildings at La Défence. And I think that worked in the 60s but not today. In London, if a building is in a conservation area, it can be challenging to build anything tall. There are also strategic views of St. Paul's, which are in the immediate vicinity of the cathedral. In addition, the London View management framework covers views that advisors have debated with the mayor, agreed upon by the mayor and enshrined in the planning law. There are views from different locations, some of which are obvious, some of which are less.

I saw a map of these views and zones in your lecture. Isn't it too complicated?

People who initially supported this approach now argue that it is not complicated enough. It is straightforward with computers today to make a CAD model of the whole city,

quickly check all the viewpoints, and see where a building can be seen.

The development is heading to kinetic views because people experience the city as a complex. I would say that probably exists in Prague too. If you are walking along the Charles Bridge looking at the castle, it is not a single static view which is relevant. It is the entire sequence.

Do you have any recommendations for moderating this discussion about highrise buildings?

I think that too often, the debate is about height and beauty, while it should be about public space or the quality of the services provided. The discussion should be more about what happens at the ground level. If those needs are met, people will be happy living there. One characteristic that I think is perhaps unique to Prague is the extent of art which can be found everywhere in the city. It is on the pavement, in buildings and public transport stations. This helps to elevate the mundane experience to a sublime one. That would be something that should be brought into the discussion about tall buildings as well.

How did you work with public space in the project of 22 Bishopsgate?

We offer a public route across the site, opening up an old Roman route. It is open 24 hours a day. There is no door or gate, totally open air. And then there is also a new public space at the top of the building, which is something that the mayor wanted. Previously, the idea was that facilities would have paid viewing galleries, but these will be free to access during the day to compensate for the lack of generous public space at street level.

The building should also be very friendly to commuters.

I hope so. 22 Bishopsgate has what the client calls an active commuter park. There are 1,700 bicycle spaces, which is a significant number. And so the owner and the developer realised that to service that many people, it would be better to offer an improved class facility because otherwise, you could have quite a mess on your hands. They provide towels for everyone. There are showers and lockers, places to clean or repair your bicycle.

We were also thinking of folding bicycles. The commuters cannot bring large ones on the train, but you can get a folding bicycle. Especially those people who have a long

journey when they go back home, they can use their bicycle on the train. I think the developer's main intention was to create a building where people would feel better at the office than they would if they had stayed home.

The website said that it is a vertical village. I admit, I was sceptical initially because I thought it was just a marketing slogan.

Maybe it is one reason why the building continued to lease during the pandemic. 22 Bishopsgate has a lot of small tenants for the city standards, so they take one or two floors of space. Those spaces are too small to offer amenities to their staff. The building offering these different amenities allows the company to compete with much larger firms, like the more prominent tech companies, who can provide these amenities to their staff.

I have noticed that some projects have a very complicated and luxurious name and some buildings, like 22 Bishopsgate, use just the address. Does it say something about the investor?

The developer was keen that the building should be known for its address, so that people could find it. A structure like this has a lot of international visitors. He also feels it should be about the people inside, not the building.

In the post-pandemic world, the question is: will people want to return to work in an office? The character of the building became secondary to its qualities. And I, as an architect, find that important. Finally, the values that an architect brings to the building are the ones the commercial client seeks. How do I provide better daylight? How do I create a better spatial experience? How do I give people some variety in their experience? Thanks to the developer's new objectives, we worked with artisans and craftsmen to create the interiors and even to bring artwork to the street.

Can I ask you where your home is now? Do you prefer the city centre of London or something quieter?

London has multiple centres. I mentioned the 33 different boroughs and lived in one of the central boroughs. I have lived there for 30 years, so I sometimes think I should move to the city where my office is. I spent a lot of time in Paris as well. I met my partner, Jean, who is working here in Prague, so it has a double purpose for me to be here.

Carlo Ratti

Carlo Ratti Associati, Torino



Lecture

Senseable Cities: The City of Tomorrow

annotation

The Internet is entering the physical space – the traditional domain of architecture and design – becoming an “Internet of Things” or IoT. Addressing many domains: from production to citizen participation, from energy to mobility to public hygiene, all of which require new insights due to the changes brought forth by the COVID-19 pandemic. Prof. Carlo Ratti will address these issues from a critical point of view.

motto

“I like the dialogue in Truffaut’s masterpiece movie Jules et Jim, especially the one between Jim and his professor Albert Sorel. “So what should I become?” – “Curious.” – “It’s not a job.” – “It’s not a job yet. Travel, write, translate... Learn to live everywhere. Start right away. The future is for the curious in their profession.”

carloratti.com

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“The discipline we all learned at school as “architecture” no longer suffices alone to respond to them. Young architects should see themselves as “choral architects”, a term I started using in our book *Open Source Architecture*. They need to venture further out and absorb knowledge from other disciplines. As they start and grow their own firms, such a trans-disciplinary approach will help them mobilize experts and communities from different fields to solve problems on the urban, national and global scale.”

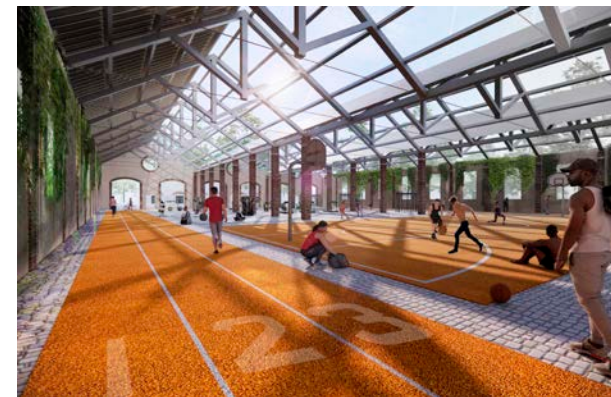
Carlo Ratti

An architect and engineer by training, Professor Carlo Ratti teaches at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where he directs the SENSEable City Lab and is a founding partner of the international design office Carlo Ratti Associati. Ratti has co-authored over 500 publications and holds several patents. His work has been exhibited worldwide at venues such as the Venice Biennale, the Design Museum in Barcelona, the Science Museum in London, and The Museum of Modern Art in New York. Two of his projects – the Digital Water Pavilion and the Copenhagen Wheel – have been included by TIME Magazine in the “Best Inventions of the Year” list.

In the last decade, Carlo has given talks worldwide on the theme of Smart Cities. In addition, his work has been exhibited in international venues, including the Venice Biennale, New York’s MoMA, London’s Science Museum and Barcelona’s Design Museum. He has been featured in Esquire Magazine’s “Best and Brightest” list and Wired Magazine’s “Smart List.” Blueprint Magazine included him among the “25 People who will Change the World of Design,” and Fast Company named him one of the “50 Most Influential Designers in America.”

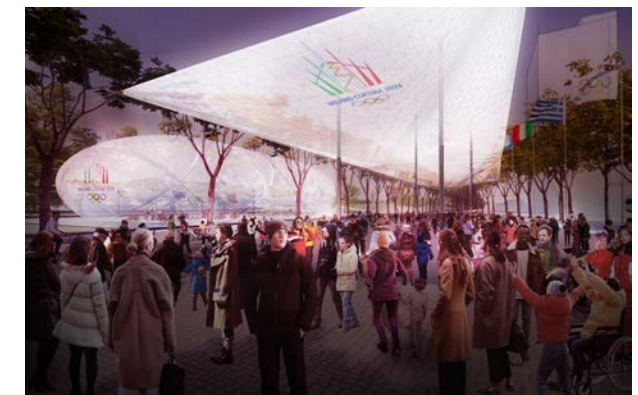
Ratti was a presenter at TED, curator of the Future Food District pavilion for the 2015 World Expo in Milan, and is currently serving as a member of the World Economic Forum Global Future Council on Cities and a special adviser on Urban Innovation to the European Commission.

Along with being a regular contributor to Project Syndicate, he has written for international media, including The New York Times, Washington Post, Financial Times, Scientific American, BBC, and others. Ratti graduated from the Politecnico di Torino and the École Nationale des Ponts et Chaussées in Paris and later earned his MPhil and PhD at the University of Cambridge, UK.



Parco Romana. Milan

Parco Romana transforms a disused railway yard into connective tissue that links the southeast area of Milan to the city centre. Parco Romana is built around a new Great Park that serves as the green lung of the development.





Italian Pavilion Expo Dubai 2020

The Italian Pavilion building at Expo Dubai 2020 was designed by CRA-Carlo Ratti Associati and Italo Rota Building Office, with Matteo Gatto and F&M Ingegneria.



The Pavilion envisions an architecture that challenges how buildings are usually developed for temporary events such as a World Expo, in which many newly-built structures end up in landfills after just a few months. Contrary to that approach, it was conceived as an architecture that can transform itself through time sustainably.



In conversation with Carlo Ratti

In one interview, you said that crisis is a time to be creative. Do you think we've been clever enough in the last three years?

I think the world has had to be very creative for the past three years. The exciting thing for me is that during the pandemic, we didn't have examples from the past to look at, so we had to find new solutions. Cities, for instance, had to try things in a new way, taking more risks and being more creative. Cities are usually more conservative, but this time, the whole world found new ways to use public spaces, to negotiate public and private and have a new approach for pedestrians. It's first about the crisis, but the other important thing does not have references, so one has to find new solutions for how the city works.

Have cities changed during the pandemic?

Yes, cities have changed, and they are still changing; there's a lot of transformation going on. One reason is that we had no blueprint to follow and were forced to find a new type of solution and experiment.

I was thinking about the general agreement that we should build more dense cities. But during the pandemic, people tried to escape from the cities because they were no longer safe.

A dense city usually uses less energy because there are shorter distances and people do not have to travel. The pandemic did happen in the past, in fact, in a much more devastating form. In the 13th century, Venice lost 60% of its population – yet still, people came back to living closer together. I think we are already back on the trajectory of densification.

When I was looking at your City Lab website, I was wondering if you have already collected enough data to could be able to build an ideal city for people.

Ideal city would be a combination of things many cities are doing – experiments from Copenhagen with sustainability,

Boston with participation, Milan with bringing nature back to the city etc.

City Lab collects data for particular projects. Is there something like a global database we could use to manage various global crises – environmental, housing, etc.?

It's a good point. Data is usually very city-specific. In some places, data is available for everyone; in some areas, data is restricted. Not every type of data can be opened up; for instance, some data has privacy constraints. So data is dependent on where you are, but what we are sharing more and more is the intelligence and knowledge to read and analyze the data – in publications and scientific articles.

Don't you think there might be a problem in the future with people not wanting to share the data?

Big companies or agencies know a lot about us, but we know very little about them. When we started working with data for the first time to describe cities, a regular mobile phone collected 10 data points per day. But now, smartphones contain thousands of data points a day about where we are, what were we doing, and if we are moving, walking, or cycling. This data goes online, but we know very little about where exactly. I think this is about to change. A few years ago, we organized a conference about the new, more transparent social contract between people who share their data and those who collect it and how it should be used. That is an essential part of today. But still, if people know that the data is being used for good, for society, then most people would be happy. Covid demonstrated that.

Is there some specific area or field you would still like to explore using tools developed in City Lab?

We are working more with data related to our health. We now don't suffer from inflammation like our ancestors who

would get an infection, the disease would spread, and they would die – that was traditional inflammation. Today the key problem in western societies is what is called meta-inflammation, which is all that leads to degenerative diseases, from arteriosclerosis, heart disease and Alzheimer's. And Meta-inflammation is related to your lifestyle and environment. Still today, societies in the jungle, in the Amazonia, etc., usually don't suffer from meta-inflammation; it's related to living in the city and our lifestyle.

Another thing we are very interested in is related to health and the city; we've been working on it for a few years. We started before COVID; when we looked at viruses – in our bodies, every cell has ten viruses and bacteria living with us – it's called a microbiome. And we started to measure the microbiome in sewage. Then COVID happened and what started as a research project turned into an actual start-up. The key finding was we can use sewage to monitor epidemics. If you can look at the situation from neighbourhood to neighbourhood, you don't have to lock down whole cities, only selected parts.

One of your recent works is the Stockholm-19 project, where you researched how pandemic restrictions have affected the use of various urban services in Stockholm. What was the initial idea behind the project?

While the COVID pandemic unfolded over a long period of time, speculative claims were made about its meaning for the future of cities. At the core of the matter is understanding what types of restrictions affected the spread of the virus, how conditions affected behaviour, and how these were related to different neighbourhoods in a city, which have different spatial, social and financial makeups.

As most of the world came under strict lockdowns and curfews, Sweden went against the grain to implement partial restrictions and recommendations on using specific spaces. These measures made people highly dependent on local services close to their homes. Compounded

with well-documented issues in housing segregation and social polarization, we believed Stockholm was a particular case that warrants a closer look.

As input, you used 87,000 Tweets and a citizen survey. Could you explain the process?

First, we gathered geolocated data from Twitter and sorted all 87,000 tweets according to the Point of Interest (POI) data. By marking out the differences in location patterns before and during COVID-19, we obtained a preliminary understanding of people's habitual changes over the two periods. Second, a survey conducted by the public participation geographic information system (PPGIS) on 25 March 2020 was used for cross-referencing. 895 individuals were asked to identify places they 1) still visited, 2) frequented more often, and 3) avoided during the pandemic and provided reasons for their choices.


While the Twitter dataset provides insights into the shifts of overall patterns, the survey offers a qualitative understanding of changes and consistencies by detailing the locations visited and their motivations.

What are the research results?

The takeaways are manifold. Among the most important is a spike of activity in outdoor recreational spaces – the 119% increase in tweets during the pandemic corresponds to responses of the PPGIS survey interviewees, as almost two-thirds of them mentioned they frequented a park or a green area more often.

However, there is a significant difference in how accessible green spaces are to different quarters in Stockholm. Specific neighbourhoods with inadequate access to parks and essential services were at high risk when COVID broke out. In this sense, our research outlines the zonal inequalities that had always existed in the city, which were made evident by the severe pandemic.



NOVEMBER TALKS 2022



FUTURE(S). TIME FOR A CHANGE

7 | 11 Winy Maas
MVRDV, Rotterdam
www.mvrdv.nl

CTU in Prague, Faculty of Architecture
Gočár Hall 155
Thákurova 9, Prague 6 – Dejvice
November 7 // 18.00 / 17.30 welcome drinks

NOVEMBER TALKS 2022



FUTURE(S). TIME FOR A CHANGE

14 | 11 Alice Cabaret
The Street Society, Paris
www.the-street-society.com

CTU in Prague, Faculty of Architecture
Gočár Hall 155
Thákurova 9, Prague 6 – Dejvice
November 14 // 18.00 / 17.30 welcome drinks

NOVEMBER TALKS 2022



FUTURE(S). TIME FOR A CHANGE

21 | 11 Karen Cook
SPICE Design Limited, London
www.22bishopsgate.com

CTU in Prague, Faculty of Architecture
Gočár Hall 155
Thákurova 9, Prague 6 – Dejvice
November 21 // 18.00 / 17.30 welcome drinks

NOVEMBER TALKS 2022



FUTURE(S). TIME FOR A CHANGE

28 | 11 Carlo Ratti
Carlo Ratti Associati, Turin
www.carloratti.com

CTU in Prague, Faculty of Architecture
Gočár Hall 155
Thákurova 9, Prague 6 – Dejvice
November 28 // 18.00 / 17.30 welcome drinks



Fostering knowledge!



Sto Foundation

Under the motto Fostering knowledge! The Sto Foundation seeks to shape the future through education. The overarching purpose of the Sto Foundation picks up on the Sto SE & Co. KGaA's guiding principle, Building with Conscience, and raises awareness of the importance of designing environment and human-friendly living spaces.

Since its establishment in 2005, the non-profit foundation has been fostering the next generation of construction industry personnel, future painters and plasterers, aspiring architects, interior designers and building planners. The annual funding for scholarships, workshops, seminars and lecture events was raised to million euros, and more than fifty projects could profit from sponsoring in 2021.

The two funding areas – architecture and the building trades are treated equally. Many young craftsmen are successfully progressing up the Sto Foundation's educational pyramid from an apprenticeship to a university Degree or continuing their education and training in one of the international exchange programs or practice-oriented projects, often while engaged in dialogues with architects from all over the world.

In international summer schools, architecture, interior design and building industry students must prove that they can transfer their knowledge to real-life situations. They are devoted to sustainable planning and building as well as working with volunteers from different cultures.

These students learn first-hand from representatives of world-famous architecture offices how their role models think and work. As part of the November Talks, these architects present interesting expert lectures to an audience of thousands at six locations in Europe.



Faculty of Architecture CTU in Prague



The Faculty of Architecture at the Czech Technical University in Prague (FA CTU) is the most highly respected architecture school in the Czech Republic. We focus on today's critical issues regarding architecture, cities and the environment. We welcome over 500 new students each year into our programs in architecture and urbanism, landscape architecture, and industrial design. We offer access to the architectural profession in all EU member states. Our students are proud to be part of international teams, events and research, winning professional awards.

The heads of vertical design studios are recognized as top professionals in their fields. Our dedication to research, innovation, creativity and excellence ensures that our graduates are well-equipped for future challenges. The new FA CTU building, designed by the leading Czech architect Alena Šrámková, houses four large lecture halls with state-of-the-art audio-visual technology, entirely equipped study halls for seminars and teaching, design studios with individual facilities for all students, IT labs, VR labs, 3D printing laser and CNC cutting, as well as several exhibitions, a café and foyers in which students relax and socialize.

The Czech Technical University (CTU), with over 17 000 students, is an internationally recognized higher education and research university with more than 310 years of tradition and an excellent reputation. With over 50 study programs offered in English, every fifth student comes from abroad. The CTU campus hosts the National Technical Library, public parks, university canteens, and affordable restaurants. Situated in the heart of Europe, CTU offers a great location and a comfortable and affordable life in the beautiful historical city of Prague, listed on the UNESCO Register of World Cultural and Natural Heritage. In addition, Prague is a charming and safe city, with lower crime and lower living expenses than Paris or Berlin, and its Vaclav Havel Airport serves over 160 destinations, including many low-cost links.



The lecture series NOVEMBER TALKS: FUTURE(S) - Time for a Change was held at the Faculty of Architecture CTU in Prague in November 2022. The lecture series and this publication was produced with the kind support of the Sto Foundation.



Design installation by students from Winy Maas Studio, a visiting professor at FA CVUT 2022-2023.

Lecture series

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Irena Fialová

Cooperation:
Till Stahlbusch

Lecturers:
Winy Maas
Alice Cabaret
Karen Cook
Carlo Ratti

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