

Quotes – For interviews - our contributors and their areas of expertise

Francesca Ferguson (UK) Festival Director

Over the years, Berlin has generated a multitude of urban interventions and occupations of space by architects, landscape designers and artists. Many of the design strategies that have transformed undervalued, liminal and temporary spaces are now prototypes that are subsequently exported elsewhere.

URBAN COMMONS

Massimo De Angelis (IT) Professor of Political Economy and Development and co-director of the Centre for Social Justice and Change.

[Key focus: commons / city governance / activism]

The struggle for commons, even as the yet nebulous political space opened with struggles against enclosures, have an immediate crucial effect: they contribute to bring capital to crisis by posing the question of limit to capitalist accumulation.

Aristides Antonas (GR) Architect and writer, principal of Antonas Office

[Key focus: archaeologies / urban protocols / excavations Athens]

Athens is a test field for neoliberalism. This is why it became my test field, too. It has condensed a general problem in a specific place, namely the difference between global North and global South.

Nicola Bacon (UK) Nicola Bacon, Founding Director of Social Life, Young Foundation Fellow, Fellow of the Academy of Urbanism

[Key focus: social sustainability / community urbanism]

Environmental sustainability is now well recognised (if still difficult to put into practice); we need to get a lot cleverer at finding ways to make places "socially sustainable.

Britta Jürgens (DE) Architect and developer, DEADLINE architects

[Key focus: pioneering new architectural approaches and concepts / widening participation]

They are those who have freed themselves from the rusty shackles of our profession, and are operating in cooperative networks to find new solutions to the challenges facing our cities.

Elke Krasny (AT) Theorist, urban researcher, professor of art and education at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna, curator of the exhibition *Hands-On Urbanism 1850-2012. The Right to Green.*

[Key focus: hands-on urbanism / green civic enterprises]

The specific ways in which garden practices actively renegotiate ruling antagonisms will be indicative as to what degree this ongoing process of rurbanization has the capacity to reinvent, and possibly hold, the city's promise of future-oriented opportunity not just for the select few, but for many.

Jens Ludloff (DE) Ludloff + Ludloff Architekten

[Key focus: land rights and procurement / sustainable development / property ownership]

The conflicts that arise between finance and urban planning departments regarding the allocation of vacant land according to inheritable building rights ('Erbbaurecht') are often due to short-sighted financial planning.

Doina Petrescu (RO) Architect, activist and co-founder of Atelier d'Architecture Autogerée
[Key focus: resilient design / communities and crisis / urban resilience]

We are committed to temporary commoning or occupations, focusing on the rights to use rather than ownership. Temporariness has become a strength and an essential part of the bottom-up strategy of resilience.

Ethel Baraona Pohl (ES) Critic, writer and curator, co-founder of dpr-barcelona and editor of Quaderns.
[Key focus: Crisis economies / adhocacy/curating architecture / Athens]

The role of the dissident architect appears not as a figure of resistance but as an opportunist who understands his/her context and decides to react and adapt in a Darwinian sense, where not the strongest but the most flexible species succeed.

Fran Tonkiss (UK) Professor of Sociology, and Director of LSE Cities Programme.
[Key focus: urban and economic sociology / social theory / urban development]

It's easy to dismiss practices of small urbanism as simply niche, transient or low-impact. The point is they scale up – across different sites and cities – to a broader urban political economy of investment, intervention and social return.

Amalia Zepou (GR) Vice Mayor for Civil Society and Municipality Decentralization, Athens
[Key focus: urban governance / crisis response / politics and resilience]

People who care for their neighbourhood and give up their time to make everyday life easier for everyone; these people don't talk: they act. This represents a new way of expressing civic responsibility, one which is far removed from party politics and which produces direct results.

URBAN OPEN SOURCE

Daniel Charny (UK) Designer, curator and co-founder of creative projects consultancy From Now On
[Key focus: Maker movement / developing maker spaces / enabling prototypes developments to become successful professional endeavours]

The increasing transparency enabled by social media and networked platforms is cause for optimism. Here socially-minded, benefit over profit, joined-up thinking programmes are growing.

Adam Greenfield (US) Founder of Urban Scale, author of 'Against the Smart City'
[Key Focus: networked cities / smart citizens / post-national states]

Understand that I'm not at all interested in "smart", in smart anything. What I am interested in is creating circumstances in which ordinary city dwellers are able to acquire understanding of their participation in civic life.

Indy Johar (UK) Architect, designer, information architect developer, co-founder of studio 00
[Key focus: non-monetary economy / civic participation/urban governance / Information architecture/open source approaches]

The city of the future understands the role of design as being the architect of conditions that seed the culture and hardwire the capacity of the city to serve as an 'empathy engine'; we must unleash this city.

Martin Schwegmann (DE) Actors of Urban Change

[Key focus: Cross-sector communication and cooperation / rethinking urban design]

I am convinced that the expansion of the current tool kit of planners towards an incorporation of communication (participation) and urban research is inevitable if we want to find sustainable and inclusive answers to the challenges our cities are facing today.

URBAN LIVING & WORKING

Wolfram Putz (DE) Founder Partner of GRAFT, architect and academic

[Key focus: The future of residential housing / interdisciplinary approaches / Make City as Platform]

The traditional boundaries of architecture must be increasingly questioned to include interdisciplinary methods and techniques that as a matter of practice expand the quest for meaning and enrichment.

Kristien Ring (US) Designer, planner, author, founder of AA Projects, curator URBAN LIVING exhibition at DAZ

[Key focus: living and working typologies / self-made projects]

It is time that our cities are determined by the people who live there—and that profit take a back seat to high-quality solutions that contribute positively to the surrounding urban communities.

Eike Roswag (DE) Ziegert Roswag Seiler Architekten Ingenieure

[Key focus: natural materials / new urban resources / construction alternatives]

Inner city houses made from wood have a lot of potential for future living typologies. Natural materials are the tools with which we will overcome the fossil fuel era.

Andreas Rumpfhuber (AT) Architect and researcher based in Vienna, founder of Expanded Design, an office for design and research.

[Key focus: social housing / housing as societal project / intersection of architecture and design]

They are signs of the new organisation of our cohabitation, which we have to understand as emancipatory spaces of possibility, able to have a positive impact on the current situation. It is about restructuring our society with knowledge about space and the potential for its organisation.

Gudrun Sack (DE) Founding partner, Nägeliarchitekten

[Key focus: Hybrid typologies/switchable spaces / changeable floor plans]

Thinking of new typologies means thinking of the city as a system of spaces, each with specific demands which must be addressed. The city becomes a three-dimensional network, a reflection of the social web that connect us all.

Christian Schöningh (DE) Architect, founding partner of Die Zusammenarbeiter, co-housing initiatives expert

[Key focus: Baugruppe / co-housing/Berlin 'DIY' housing initiatives]

Urban planning does not work without political will. Politicians need corrective influences. It is important to me that all these 'alternative developments', as they are called, are accepted as genuine alternatives for urban planning. If not Mediaspree, then what?