

## Dean's Roundup: 16 June 2017

**Roundup:** *Ceiling function*, the mathematical operation of rounding a number up to the next higher integer.

**Roundup:** a term in American English referring to the process of gathering animals into an area, known as a "Muster" in Australia.

**Rounding up:** when a helmsman cannot control a boat and it heads into the wind

**Roundup:** the plan for an invasion of northern France by Allied forces during World War II (Wikipedia)

**Dean's Roundup:** part blog, part bulletin; part honour roll, part curatorial [cu<sup>1</sup>ra-to<sup>1</sup>ri-al (ky<sup>00</sup>r<sup>1</sup>e-tô<sup>1</sup>r<sup>1</sup>ē-əl, -tôr<sup>1</sup>-) n. nounised by the Dean from curator + editorial]

Dear All,

Hans Zimmer, film score composer for Lion King, Rainman, Inception, Gladiator and many other blockbusters, has three key words of advice in his online Masterclass: Break the rules.

*Breaking the rules is not the same as dispensing with rules*, however. Following centuries-old traditions in design, science, social science, arts and humanities, FoA's academics are professionals at following rules to break rules.

Architectural historians use historical method to discover new insights that break popular beliefs about famous designers; computational designers use geometric algorithms to bend the rules governing building envelopes; real estate scholars use rules of econometrics to break established perceptions of market rules; urban planning researchers use rules of spatial epidemiology to break erroneous doctrines of urban design; FoA's green roof researchers use rules of ecology, architectural design, micro-climatology, institutional economics, radar remote sensing and Artificial Intelligence, to break the rule of unproductive roof-tops.

*Design without rules is not design*. It is play. It is unconstrained imagination. It may be desirable for a child or a first year student to design without rules in order to discover the need for rules. But as soon as this becomes constructivist and developmental, there will be rules at work, albeit underdeveloped, subjective, ill-expressed and fluid.

*Purposefully naïve design, like the Naïve Art movement, is not play*, it is an artistic statement and expression. Purposefully breaking former rules in ways that appear naïve, like cubism, abstract expressionism, impressionism, surrealism and quasi-random form-finding, is not play, it is a systematic exploration of new rules.

Today is the opening of FoA's Degree Shows in Architecture and Landscape Architecture. As I admire the impressive achievements of our students and teachers, I will be asking "How has this student used existing rules of design - creatively, cleverly, rigorously, profoundly and significantly?" "What viable or non-viable new rules have been discovered in the production of the design?" And "How have they pushed the boundaries and broken rules of form, function, visioning, spatial configuration, place-making etc., by applying both established and new procedural and inquisitorial rules?"

When Hans Zimmer pushed the boundaries of music for epic films in Ridley Scott's *Gladiator*, by mixing Wagner, melancholia, early twentieth century modern and female vocal wailing as an instrument, he created a masterpiece and influenced many subsequent film scores. The rules in film score writing are less rigid than the rules in symphony writing. Rules used in designing villas are less rigid than those used in designing housing for low-income families.

*We need to have rules to break rules.* Even our rule-breaking is constrained. Design and the breaking of design rules, both require their own kinds of methods and constraints. *Not all problem domains are equal in their scope of freedom to rule-break.* But rule-breaking is necessary in all fields of endeavor if they are to innovate and evolve.

Enjoy FoA's Final shows. We produce some of the best architectural students in the world. Look closely at what they are doing in their designs. All will embody multiple layers of carefully constructed articulation, testing, rejection and adoption of rules that govern architecture and shape cities.

Congratulations to all of our students exhibiting work in the Degree shows and also to colleagues listed below for their ongoing contributions to FoA.

# Teaching and other Achievements

## FoA Departments and Divisions

### Department of Architecture

#### 1. Dr. B S Jia and Miss Ling Li

- The Department of Architecture and the HKU-CIB student chapter together have co-organized the 2017 S.ARCH Architecture Conference, which was successfully held on 7 and 8 June. The S.ARCH (Sustainable ARCHitecture) is an international annual platform where practitioners, researchers, and industry leaders meet and exchange knowledge, insights and experiences on cross-disciplinary field of architecture and built environment. This year, we have delegates from 46 countries joining the platform and communication. Our Dean, Prof. Chris Webster, Dr. Beisi Jia and Miss. Ling Li (current president of HKU-CIB student chapter) attended the opening ceremony. We are also honored to have the Secretary for Education (SED) of Hong Kong SAR, Mr. Eddie NG, to give a welcome speech for all our delegates in the conference.



## Department of Real Estate and Construction (DREC)

### 1. Dr. Wilson Lu

- Was nominated as a member of the Global Leadership Forum for Construction Engineering and Management (GLF-CEM) 2017 held in University of Southern California, 27-28 May 2017. The GLF-CEM is intended to bring together professors from leading universities around the world who play a leadership and/or administrator role in their respective programs. The objective of this forum is to establish a body of academic leadership in the area of Construction Engineering and Management to discuss and share issues of common concern in Research, Teaching, Academic Administration, and Opportunities for Collaboration.



Dr. Wilson Lu was introducing the HKUrban and iLab



Group photo of the GLF-CEM at the USC campus

- Visited Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering at Stanford University from 29<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> May 2017. Prof. Kincho Law showed him around the Center for Integrated Facility Engineering (CIFE), the Problem Based Learning (PBL) lab, and School of Design (D School) to introduce the research and learning for Virtual Design and Construction (VDC), Building Information Modelling (BIM), and smart cities.



The Center for Integrated Facility Engineering (CIFE) for Virtual Design and Construction (VDC)



Fascinating technologies in the PBL Lab



Classroom scenario, School of Design, Stanford University

2. Ms. Meng Ye and Ms. Xi Chen, PhD candidates

- Attended the World Sustainable Built Environment (WSBE) Conference 2017, jointly held by the Construction Industry Council (CIC) and the Hong Kong Green Building Council (HKGBC). Ms. Xi Chen presented a research paper titled "Chen, X., Lu, W.S., and Liu, X.J. (2017). Does BEAM Really Matter to Construction Waste Management? What Big Data Does and Does Not Tell. Proceedings of the World Sustainable Built Environment Conference 2017 (WSBE17), 5-7 June 2017, Hong Kong SAR, China".

### Division of Architectural Conservation Programmes (DACP)

1. Prof. Lynne DiStefano

- Was appointed a new Member of the Ontario Heritage Trust Board on 5 June 2017. Members of the Board are appointed by the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, Representative of Her Majesty The Queen.

Website of the Ontario Heritage Board Trust:

<http://www.heritagetrust.on.ca/en/index.php/pages/about-us/board-of-directors>

### Division of Landscape Architecture (DLA)

1. Gavin Coates

- Spoke at the 'Deciphering Open Space' seminar organized by Civic Exchange on 28 April about open spaces and the public realm. Planning researcher Carine Lai untangled the definition of open space and discussed its distribution throughout Hong Kong, while landscape architect Gavin Coates shared his insights on how design can make the best use of limited open space in our urban environment. They discussed strategies to improve the quality, quantity and accessibility of Hong Kong's urban open space.

<http://civic-exchange.org/walkability/2017/04/28/deciphering-open-space/>

# Research Achievements

## HKUrbanLab research groups

### Centre for Chinese Architecture and Urbanism (CCAU)

1. Professor Weijen Wang, Olivier Ottevaere and Chad McKee
  - Anji Bamboo Construction Competition organised by Anji County Government invited CCAU of HKU Architecture to take part in designing and building a 200 square meter's bamboo visitor centre in August. Located in Anji, Zhenjiang, this 200 square meter's structure will be a permanent facility promoting the ecological tourism adjacent to a riverside wetland. With other invited universities, HKU will participate in promoting the research of bamboo design and construction, looking into the study of material fabrication technology as well as spatial innovation.

Led by Professor Wang Weijen, Olivier Ottevaere and McKee Chad, up to 12 students from different programs of the faculty of architecture will be designing and conducting this study in the summer of 2017.

### Healthy<sup>HD</sup>Cites

1. Dean Webster, Chinmoy Sarkar and Alain Chiaradia
  - Have had the following paper accepted by Land Use Policy, subject to minor revisions. The paper was led by Dr. Yang Xiao at Tongji University:  
*Yang Xiao<sup>a,\*</sup> Chinmoy Sarkar<sup>b</sup> Chris Webster<sup>c</sup> Alain Chiaradia<sup>d</sup>. Street-network-accessibility-based methodology for appraisal of land use master plans: An empirical case study of Wuhan, China, **Land Use Policy** (accepted, June 2017, s.t. minor revisions).*

## Fabrication and Material Technologies Lab

### 1. Christian Lange

- The HKU Fabrication and Material Technologies Lab, the only specialised lab that tests the use of robots in architecture in Hong Kong, has been featured in the following article published by SCMP:

<http://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/education-community/article/2097854/robots-are-taking-over-and-building-hong-kongs>

Christian, leading the lab's robotics research, believed that robots could give architects more control and say in the construction process. The lab is currently investigating the possibilities of robotically printed clay bricks as a building material.

