

# Dean's Roundup

Friday, 28 February, 2014

**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'ra-to'ri-al** (ky'ōō'rē-tōr'ē-əl, -tōr'-)] *n. nounised by the Dean from curator + editorial*

Dear all,

First, congratulations and thanks to all those mentioned below for their contributions to the Faculty's research and engagement agenda. Special congratulations to Professor Rebecca Chiu and Dr. FF Ng for their teaching awards. It is always good to see senior colleagues leading from the front. Particular congratulations too to Wang Jiejing, one of our 3<sup>rd</sup> year PhD students who has published a paper in *Physica A*, a respected statistical mechanics journal (Impact Factor 1.7). The paper is about geometric and statistical properties of space subdivision as a city develops but has strong links to economic and social theories of densification, which it would be good to explore in the Faculty.

Continuing with a series of Dean's Roundups where I propose projects suitable for writing up into GRF or other funding bids, this week focuses on urban design, private space and law. It follows from a highly entertaining and energizing double act that Jerold Kayden from Harvard GSD and I put on for 150 lawyers, economists, planners and architects in the Technion, Haifa, two weeks ago (see below). Jerold and I agreed to explore collaboration between GSD and HKU FoA on public space research and teaching. As a first step, I am looking for someone to lead a team to develop the following project (which is perfect for GRF).

Project title: Privately supplied public space in Hong Kong (or 'Hong Kong's corporate squatters').

Background: Jerold Kayden published his 'Privately owned public space: the New York City experience, in 2000, which was described by the Wall Street journal as 'a juicy little time bomb of a book'. The basic thesis was that public open space provided by developers as part of a deal on density (higher floor area ratio in exchange for a plaza for example), is often reneged on, since few are aware of the terms of the deal initially and fewer still remember or care. Following the book, Jerold started a web site, which is part crowd-sourced science, part knowledge exchange and part public space activism. It records all the legally required public goods in each of New York's privately provided public spaces, with maps and photos and invites the public to (a) post evidence of infringements and (b) post alternative designs and management ideas. Around 500 cases were documented in the book and the initial version of the web site.

The project has since spread to a number of other cities and we thought it would be great to try replicating it in Hong Kong. Hong Kong effectively has two planning systems: leasehold and statutory planning. There is scope in both to require private developers to provide public plazas and other public goods such as landscaping, walkways etc. Daniel Ho and Lawrence Lai did some pilot research on this a few years back and discovered what Jerold discovered in New York: some 'contributions' to

the public realm were not actually provided, others have been fenced off (illegally) and others have been left to degrade through insufficient management. This raises the interesting prospect of formal sector corporate squatting in HK: commercial land-owners illegally occupying land they have legally gifted to the public.

I have written several papers over the years about the private supply of public goods, so what with Ho and Lai, Webster et al, and other relevant studies in urban design by FoA, we should be able to show sufficient track record to get funding.

Method: (a) documentary analysis of contracts, building plans and planning decisions; (b) site investigation to discover what was actually constructed and what is there now; (c) construction of Website, following the Kayden model; (d) possibly some analysis of the effects of confronting the public and users with information about what should be there.

Analysis: totaling the quantity of corporately squatted land in HK; assessing the quality of corporately squatted land; categorizing it; mapping it; quantifying and qualifying other public goods contributions not provided or no longer provided (ie other than land *per se*); assessing the effects of making information about the legal rights of such spaces public.

Outputs: professional report to government and other stakeholders; journal paper on method; urban design journal paper; urban studies journal paper; property journal paper.

In response to my posting about the Cairo urban space project in last Dean's Roundup we have a team in place led by Scott Melbourne, preparing background research and starting to think about a GRF proposal. Please email me if you want to be involved in or to take a lead on this project that gives our own reversal twist on the 'occupy Wall street' theme.

Chris

# Department of Architecture

## I. Ms. Tris Kee

- was an invited speaker in the forum on People's Urbanism, curated by Jeffrey Bolhuis and Laurence Lord of Architecture Practice + Experimentation, at the HK Biennale 22 Feb 2014.
- was featured in Archi Daily on the project on HK Value Farm, an collaborated exhibition with HK Kadoorie Institute and Chinese University, on urban ecology, vernacular architecture and community participation.

<http://www.archdaily.com/category/urban-planning/>  
[http://www.kadinst.hku.hk/education\\_and\\_training\\_nf5.html](http://www.kadinst.hku.hk/education_and_training_nf5.html)



### THE IDEAL CITY CANNOT BE VIEWED AS A SINGULAR OR STATIC VISION

**FOR US THE FUNDAMENTAL CHARACTERISTIC OF A CITY IS MULTIPLICITY AND CHANGE; THE CITY ITSELF CAN BE VIEWED AS A TEMPORARY BUILT REPRESENTATION OF THE DIALOGUE BETWEEN MANY DIFFERENT PARTIES, INTERESTS AND POINTS OF VIEW, BOTH PRESENT AND PAST**

**WE VIEW THE IDEAL CITY AS A STRUCTURE THAT IS MOST OPEN TO THIS DIALOGUE; A CONTINUOUSLY EVOLVING ENTITY THAT IS STRENGTHENED BY THE DIVERSITY OF ITS INHABITANTS, AND ONE THAT CAN INCORPORATE THEIR EVER-CHANGING NEEDS, WISHES AND REQUIREMENTS.**

#### PUBLIC RULES

As part of the Hong Kong & Shenzhen Bi-City Biennale of Urbanism/Architecture 2013, Architecture Practice + Experimentation (AP+E) is presenting an interactive exhibition based on the theme of bottom-up urbanism entitled Public Rules.

Set within the overriding theme of the UABB 'ideal city' our exhibition Public Rules poses a theoretical view of urban development; an experiment where we are not interested in showing our vision of the ideal city but providing an initial structure that is to be completed by the visitors of the Biennale. Visitors to our exhibition are invited to interact with the spatial configuration that is presented to them and so change and amend it according to their perspective and wishes; thus making the visitors part of the project or 'inhabitants' as such.

Just as the city is a continuous documentation of past and current decisions, we propose to document the evolution of the exhibition; at set intervals a camera will record each stage of the representation and together these will illustrate how the city has evolved. The documentation of the interaction of visitors so becomes part of the evolving installation and the exhibit in this way addresses the issue of the democratization of design.

In the end we intend for our contribution to the Hong Kong Biennale not to directly answer the question 'what is the ideal city?' but to create an environment that invokes multiple interpretations and discussions, analogous to the city itself.

#### THE PEOPLE'S URBANISM

Through the catalyst of the economic crisis, urban development in The Netherlands has in recent years undergone a striking evolution. A field once dominated by large developers and co-operations is now witnessing the rise of small scale and private developers. We believe that this change is also an opportunity to re-evaluate the way we think about the development of cities and communities.

The People's Urbanism provides a platform for the presentation of concepts and research relating to bottom-up urbanism and aspirational urban development from both The Netherlands and Asia. During the debate architects, urbanists and academics will discuss how bottom-up urbanism principles could be applied to the context of Hong Kong and what this would mean for the future of its urban development, architecture and communities.

Architecture Practice + Experimentation is a research and design studio based in Amsterdam and Copenhagen founded by architects Jeffrey Bolhuis and Laurence Lord. AP+E creates spaces, buildings and frameworks that are open to multiple interpretations and the dialogue between a diverse range of inhabitants in contemporary society.

[www.AP+E.eu](http://www.AP+E.eu)



Photo by AP+E  
Bi-City Biennale Urbanism/Architecture Hong Kong 2013



Photo by AP+E  
2013 Hong Kong

## THE PEOPLE'S URBANISM

**JEFFREY BOLHUIS + LAURENCE LORD**  
Founders of Architecture Practice + Experimentation

**MS. TRIS KEE**  
Assistant Professor University of Hong Kong Faculty of Architecture  
Director of The Community Project Workshop

**LUIS AGUIRRE MANSO**  
Founding Partner agur Architects, Beijing  
Initiator of Urbanism research project

**TRAVIS BUNT**  
Design Director Urbanism Architecture & Design, Hong Kong  
Adjunct Assistant Professor CUHK  
Executive Curator UABBHK

Presentation & Discussion

Can we create the "ideal city" from the bottom up?

Organized by  
**AP+E**  
Architecture Practice + Experimentation

Sponsored by  
**creative industries fund NL**



**5PM-7PM SATURDAY 22.02.14**  
**KWUN TONG PIER, HONG KONG**

Organized by  
**AP+E**  
Architecture Practice + Experimentation

Sponsored by  
**creative industries fund NL**



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## 2. Dr. Hoyin Lee (ACP Director)

- co-organiser and moderator in Session 2 of the *Master Class Distinguished Lecture Series: Master Builders on Materials and Techniques of Conservation Projects in Mainland China and Hong Kong* (大師級傑出講座系列: 內地與香港 營造大師 論 建築文物保育工程 的材料與技術) on 22 Feb 2014. Session 2 of this four-session lecture series (consisting of eight lectures), organised by ACP, the Construction Industry Council, the Hong Kong Government and other parties, focuses on the construction materials and techniques of traditional Chinese buildings of Northern China. The objective of this lecture series is to promote the technical expertise of built-heritage conservation among building professionals in Hong Kong and Mainland China. Over 1,000 participants have enrolled to the lecture series. Website for this event: <http://www.hkcic.org/chi/ConservationProject/Index.aspx>.
- organiser of the *Open House of No. 27 Lugard Road*, a Grade 2 Historic Building that will be undergoing adaptation for reuse, possibly, as a “heritage hotel.” The underlying objective of the event was to provide conservation and building professionals a closer look at the feasibility of integrating conservation and development that will meet international best-practice in conservation and the expectation of prospective users, neighbouring residents and the general public in protecting what they value.

## Department of Real Estate and Construction

### 1. Professor K W Chau

- is appointed as the Chairman of Finance Committee and Editor-in-chief for *Surveying & Built Environment* of HKIS from January 2014 to January 2015.

### 2. Dr. FF Ng

- has been selected as one of the recipients for the Faculty of Architecture Teaching Award 2013. The Panel was impressed by Dr Ng's scholarship of knowledge management and development of a student-centred learning framework for Surveying Studio.

### 3. Dr. S W Poon and Dr. FF Ng

- their PhD student (Ms. Sung Wai Ki) has been adjudicated by Occupational Safety and Health Council (HK) as a successful holder of the OSH Student Research Scholarship.

### 4. Dr. S W Poon

- the dissertations of two HKUSPACE-Greenwich University MSc students (Ms. Wong King Chi and Mr. Lau Ka Keung) under my supervision were awarded the Merit Winners of OSH Best Project Award by Occupational Safety and Health Council (HK).
- his co-authored paper “Synergizing functional and environmental planning for mega-event led urban renewals and beyond: lessons from the EXPO 2010 Shanghai, China” (Deng, Poon & Chan) has been accepted by the *Journal of International Planning Studies*.
- Water Supplies Department has granted my research team to study the construction history and the heritage of Tai Tam Tuk Reservoir, as a research project for Centennial Anniversary of Tai Tam Tuk Reservoir Dam.

## Department of Urban Planning and Design

### 1. Dr. Roger Chan

- gave a talk at the Bartlett School of Planning, UCL, London entitled "Urban Fortunes in the Pearl River Delta Region, China" on 12 February 2014.
- was invited as discussant of the PhD Day conference of the Land Economy Department, Cambridge University held on 21 February 2014 at St Catharine's College.

### 2. Professor Rebecca Chiu

- has been selected as one of the recipients for the Faculty of Architecture Teaching Award 2013. The Panel was impressed by Professor Chiu's contributions to the development of the Housing Management programmes and enthusiasm in student engagement

### 3. Dr. Cecilia Chu

- Dr. Chu's Common Core Stage II proposal "The City: A Historical Survey of Urbanism and the Built Environment" has been selected for inclusion in the Common Core Curriculum in 2014-15 under the Humanities Aol.

### 4. Professor Anthony Yeh

- published a paper with details as follow:

Li Zhigang, Jiang Xu, Anthony G O Yeh (2014), "State Rescaling and the Making of City-Regions in the Pearl River Delta, China", *Environment and Planning C: Government and Policy*, Vol. 32, pp. 129-143.

### 5. Mr. Wang Jiejing

- published a paper with details as follow:

Yanguang Chen, Jiejing Wang (2014), "Recursive subdivision of urban space and Zipf's law", *Physica A: Statistical Mechanics and its Applications*, Vol. 395, pp. 392-404.

### 6. Dean Webster

- gave a keynote lecture at the International Planning, Law and Property Rights conference, held at The Technion University, Haifa, Israel, 13 February 2014. The Dean shared a stage with Jerold Kayden, professor of Urban Planning and Design at Harvard GSD (and a lawyer by original training) and the pairing was said by the organisers to be the best session this conference has ever had.
- gave a public lecture "Urban Wealth Modelling" at the Department of Land Economy, Cambridge on 19 February 2014.

- held a PhD workshop at the Department of Economy on 19 February 2014 and was session chair and discussant for a PhD student conference at St. Catharine's College Cambridge on 21 February 2014
- Dean Webster's sDNA urban network analysis software tool won the 2013 Cardiff University iSolve competition – multi-disciplinary teams of graduates from the university compete to develop new ideas for novel inventions created by university teams  
<http://sites.cardiff.ac.uk/isolve/current-projects/spatial-design-network-analysis-sdna/>