



Iceland Expert

Public Space Seminar

The Futures of Public  
Space and Beyond

May 14 2019

Reykjavik

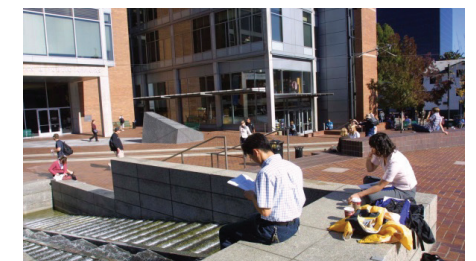
## THE REYKJAVIK SYMPOSIUM: THE FUTURES OF PUBLIC SPACE & BEYOND



### THEME

Tridib Banerjee in his influential and still apposite article *The Future of Public Space: Beyond Invented Streets and Reinvented Places* (*Journal of the American Planning Association*, Vol.67, No.1, Winter 2001) asks the key question of what is the future of public space in the times of changing nature of public life. Parallel with that we have the discussions and deliberations on the nature and future of public spaces either as a field of research, a theme, a sub discipline or an emerging discipline of its own standing. Public space have also become something of a favorite subject or a touchstone for critical urban theory in relation to philosophy, (urban or human) geography, visual art, cultural studies, social studies, urban sociology, landscape architecture, architecture, environmental psychology and urban planning and design. All of that is imbedded in a larger story and reality as well as vision of what the city of the future, as a whole, is going to be: a triumph of all it complex entities or an urban crisis with all side effects it brings or just simply both but also a fascinating hybrid of this physical/digital-virtual dichotomy (life of places and internet of things), all what we seem to be experiencing the happenings of lately.

While the research of W. Whyte and others on public spaces in the 1970s was almost entirely concentrated on the physical aspects of cities and its public realms, the future of public space and urban life more generally will (also) have to consider a more comprehensive look at what “reality” really is. Routine discussions on public space, either in practice or academia, typically omit a whole spectrum of possibilities ripe for critical discussion.



In a collection of short but intellectually invigorating reads, *The Future of Public Space*, beyond what we already know must reflect on all these possibilities beyond typical contexts and scenarios, beyond the physical and the objects, exploring a wide variety of impacts that different types of public spaces in the cities, the real and virtual – can have on everyday experiences in an increasingly commodified, programmed, controlled and privatized world.

Within that, the issues of “public” and “publicness” in the everyday patterns of social life in the cities and the relationship between the social life of urban form and the spatial patterns influence on human behavior still stand as key issues. Perceptions of place may be subjective and fleeting, but grounding life in effective contexts remains absolutely necessary. Resorting to nostalgia hardly helps in doing this, however; there is little to be gained from understanding place mainly as something lost. Lyn Loflands beautiful book title from 1999 *The Public Realm: Exploring the City’s Quintessential Social Territory* or Fran Tonkiss *Cities by Design: The Social Life of Urban Form* from 2014 beg for further discussions and amplifying voices beyond those within the world of conventional urban theory or –and architecture and planning criticism; we need to look for something else. In addition to that since at least the 1960s, a large body of field research literature has accumulated on public space and city design.

Nevertheless, there is still no central platform that connects the work that has been done, or that facilitates dialogue for greater cross-pollination between disciplines. Perhaps this lack of an evidence base for policy and practice is one reason why - despite the scientific and empirical evidence, good will and necessity - many cities still don’t get public spaces right. Designing safe, sustainable and healthy cities is the outcome of complex dialogues between many stakeholders, all with their own agenda. Urban form depends on the know-how of a plethora of actors; architects, urban planners, academics from different disciplines, politicians, traffic planners, and engineers, to name a few. To decrease the distance between practitioners operating in silos, platforms are needed where expert knowledge can be found in one place with a common terminology.

This special Pegasus Symposium event, organized by the Centre for the Future of Places (CFP) and headed by some of the world leading experts in the field (Keynote Speakers) will take place in the Nordic House in Reykjavik Iceland on the 14th of May, and as such it is a closed event, not open to the public, except for the researchers in the public space research database project.

The symposium will feature some of today’s leading global experts on public space and stellar academics within urbanism studies. The result of the symposium will be the “Icelandic Book on Public Spaces & Beyond”, produced as an anthology with all authors-speakers included plus two special guests. The project on the book will commence shortly after the Reykjavik meeting, and will be published by the Swedish renowned “Stolpe” Book publishers in Stockholm, Sweden. The Symposium also has a backdrop in the guise of the Public Spaces Research Database Project<sup>2</sup>. As part of our pre-summer ongoing discussion series on public spaces and the first Pegasus Symposium celebrating the book’s creation in place, please join us for a wonderful event on public space futures & beyond featuring leading voices in the fields of architecture, anthropology, sustainability, urban planning, urban theory, political science, environmental psychology, urban planning, urban design, urban sociology, and criticism. Each installment, keynote talk and chapter of the book by invited thinkers brings together leading voices on a single topic from different perspectives but on a path of convergence. Originating from a desire to start a public conversation about the built environment, keynotes will pose provocative themes and questions as well as speculations about the above mentioned elements of the public.

For short biographies of the thinkers - participants please see below; Organizers and Partners for the Icelandic Symposium on Future of Public Space:



# Program



“Everything has already been done; every story has been told every scene has been shot. It’s our job to do it one better.”

-Stanley Kubrick-

## Detailed Schedule Pegasus Symposium

08:30	Departure from the Hotel to the Nordic House Venue
09:00	Coffee & Snacks in the Nordic House
<b>Start</b>	
09:30	Opening and Introduction to the Symposium - Tigran Haas
09:40	<b>Peter Elmlund</b> - The Future of Public Space & Beyond and Database
<b>Part I</b>	<b>Symposium</b>
10:00	<b>Matthew Carmona</b> - Place Value: Place Quality and its Impact on Different Outcomes
10:20	<b>Ali Madanipour</b> - Rethinking Public Space: Between Rhetoric and Reality
10:40	Coffee and Icelandic Glacial Water
11:10	<b>Emily Talen</b> - Does the classic American main street still exist? An exploratory look
11:30	<b>Vikas Mehta</b> - Shades of Gray: Public Space and a Typology-Led Appraisal
12:00	Lunch

<b>Part II</b>	<b>Symposium</b>
13:30	<b>Don Mitchell</b> - People’s Park, Still? On the Political Economy of Public Space
13:50	<b>Setha Low</b> - Social Justice and Public Space
14:10	<b>Julian Agyeman</b> - Complete Streets: What’s Missing?
14:30	Break and Open discussion Coffee and Icelandic Glacial Water
<b>Part III</b>	<b>Symposium</b>
15:30	<b>Nan Ellin</b> - Good urbanism: Six Steps to Creating Prosperous Places
15:50	<b>Christine Boyer</b> - Open Societies, Common Spaces
16:10	<b>David Canter</b> - Creating Public Places without Designers
16:30	Coffee and Icelandic Glacial Water
<b>Part IV</b>	<b>Round Table</b>
17:00	Moderators - David Brain and Michael Mehaffy and Massimo Santanicchia; Participating - All keynotes: Elmlund /Carmona/Madanipour/Talen/Mehta/Mitchell/Low/Agyeman/Ellin/Boyer/Canter and Special Guest Reflection - Luc Anselin + Q&A from the Audience
<b>End</b>	
18:15	<b>Closing Remarks</b> Tigran Haas, Moderator
18:30	Social Events, Walk to the dinner venue or Relax
19:30	<b>Symposium Dinner</b> Venue: The Marshall House

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## Keynote Speakers



**Peter Elmlund** is the Director of Urban City Research and Future of Places International Network at Ax: son Johnson Foundation in Stockholm, Sweden that among other things provides support to a Masters in sustainable urban design at the Faculty of Architecture School in Lund University and a research project about Public Space at the Royal Institute of

Technology, Stockholm. Urban City Research has organized numerous international conferences and seminars on contemporary urban planning and design. The project also funds research and education at many Universities in Europe and the USA. Worth to mention is the Future of Places-project, which was collaboration with UN habitat and Project for Public Spaces (PPS) with the purpose of influencing the New Urban Agenda regarding the value of Public Space ([www.futureofplaces.com](http://www.futureofplaces.com)). Peter Elmlund is frequently sought-after speaker nationally and internationally.



**Matthew Carmona** is Professor of Planning & Urban Design at UCL's Bartlett School of Planning. His research has focused on urban design, design governance and the design and management of public space. Matthew was educated at the University of Nottingham. He Chairs the Place Alliance. Matthew is a Registered Architect and a Chartered Planner

and has previously lectured at the University of Nottingham and before that worked as a researcher at Strathclyde and Reading Universities and as an architect in both public and private practice. Matthew Carmona is an author of many books and peer reviewed papers. From protecting public rights in private spaces to ensuring 'permission in principle' preserves local character, Matthew Carmona is determined to reconcile public interest and private gain in well-designed places and spaces. In 2016 he was Specialist Advisor to the House of Lords Select Committee on National Policy for the Built Environment; in 2015 he won the RTPI Academic Award for Research Excellence; and in 2016 the RTPI Sir Peter Hall Award for Wider Engagement.



**Ali Madanipour** is Professor of Urban Design and the Director of Global Urban Research Unit at Newcastle University. He has studied (MArch, PhD), practiced, researched, and taught architecture, urban design and planning, winning design and research awards, and working with academic and municipal partners from around the world. Ali Madanipour's work has

focused on the design, development and management of cities, in particular the urban space, its social and psychological significance, processes that shape it, agencies of urban change, and implications of change for disadvantaged social groups and the environment. Professor Madanipour is the author of more than 20 books and 100s of peer reviewed papers in journals.



**Emily Talen** is Professor of Urbanism at the University of Chicago. Talen received a PhD in urban geography from the University of California, Santa Barbara. She also possesses a master's degree in city and regional planning from the Ohio State University. Her research is devoted to urban design and urbanism, especially the relationship between the built environ-

ment and social equity. Her books include: *New Urbanism and American Planning*, *Design for Diversity*, *Urban Design Reclaimed*, and *City Rules*. She also has several edited volumes - the most recent one is *Retrofitting Sprawl: Addressing 70 Years of Failed Urban Form*. and neighborhoods so that they can be more inclusive, supportive, and inspiring.



**Vikas Mehta** is the Fruth/Gemini Chair, Ohio Eminent Scholar of Urban/Environmental Design and Associate Professor of Urbanism. Dr. Mehta's work focuses on the role of design and planning in creating a more responsive, equitable, stimulating and supportive environment. He works on various dimensions of urbanity through the exploration of place as a social and

ecological setting and as a sensorial art. Dr. Mehta is the author of *The Street: a quintessential social public space*, which received the 2014 Book Award from the Environmental Design Research Association. Dr. Mehta's work has advanced the existing methods to study human behavior in public spaces and has developed measures of sociability of public spaces that are useful to urban designers, planners, architects, and landscape architects.



**Don Mitchell** is Professor of Cultural Geography at Uppsala University (since 2017) and Distinguished Professor Emeritus of Geography in the Maxwell School, Syracuse University. He also taught at the University of Colorado, Boulder. In 1998, he became a MacArthur Fellow, and in 2008 a Guggenheim Fellow. He was awarded the Anders Retzius Medal from the Swedish Society for

Anthropology and Geography in 2012. He is best known for his work on cultural theory, showing how landscapes embody strong links to histories of struggle, oppression, and unacknowledged labor involved in their creation and maintenance. He has applied this to the history of immigrant labor in California's agricultural landscapes, public and privatized public spaces.



**Setha Low** is a Professor at CUNY, The Graduate Centre at the City University of New York. She has received her Ph.D. in cultural anthropology from the University of California, Berkeley. She is also director of the GC's Public Space Research Group. She has been awarded a Getty Fellowship, an NEH fellowship, a Fulbright Senior Fellowship, and a Guggenheim. She is widely

published, with more than a hundred articles and chapters, and lectures internationally. Her research interests are: Anthropology of space and place; Ethnography and Qualitative Methodology. Her books include *Politics of Public Space* (2006), with Neil Smith; *Rethinking Urban Parks: Public Space and Cultural Diversity* (2005), and many others.



**Julian Agyeman** Ph.D. is a Professor of Urban and Environmental Policy and Planning at Tufts University. He is the originator of the increasingly influential concept of just sustainabilities. Worldwide, he is recognized as an expert, an innovator and thought leader. He is the author or editor of 11 books, including *Just Sustainabilities: Development in an Unequal World*, *Sustainable Communities and the Challenge of Environmental Justice*, *The New Countryside: Ethnicity, Nation and Exclusion in Contemporary Rural Britain* and.

and. He centers his research on critical explorations of the complex and embedded relations between humans and the urban environment, whether mediated by governments or social movement organizations, and their effects on public policy and planning processes and outcomes, particularly in relation to notions of justice and equity.



**Nan Ellin** is Dean of the College of Architecture and Planning at the University of Colorado Denver. Ellin's work in urban design, placemaking, community-building and university-neighborhood partnerships aims to enhance quality of life, specifically through improving the built and natural environments. She is the author of *Good Urbanism*, *Postmodern Urbanism*, and *Integral Urban-*

*ism*, co-author of *Phoenix: 21st Century City*, and editor of *Architecture of Fear*. Dr. Ellin directed the Urban + Metropolitan Studies Program at ASU. She wrote urban design columns for the *Arizona Republic* and consults on issues related to urban revitalization. Dr. Ellin teaches courses on urbanism and the culture of place.



**M. Christine Boyer** is a William R. Kenan, Jr. Professor of Architecture and Urbanism, B.A., Goucher College, M.S., University of Pennsylvania M.C.P., Ph.D., Massachusetts Institute of Technology) She is an urban historian whose interests include the history of the city, city planning, preservation planning, and computer science. Earlier she was professor and chair of the

City and Regional Planning Program at Pratt Institute and she has taught at Cooper Union, Columbia University and Harvard University. At Princeton she is the William R. Kenan Jr. professor of architecture and urbanism. She is the author of *Dreaming the Rational City*, *The City of Collective Memory* (both published by the MIT Press), *Le Corbusier: Homme de Lettres*, and other books.



**David Canter PhD** is an applied social psychologist, creator of Investigative Psychology. Emeritus Professor The University of Liverpool, Visiting Professor Liverpool Hope University. He began his career as an architectural psychologist studying the interactions between people and buildings, publishing and providing consultancy on the designs of offices, schools, prisons,

housing and other building forms as well as exploring how people made sense of the large scale environment, notably cities. He was the Professor of Psychology at the University of Surrey for ten years, where he developed investigative psychology. He set up and was Director of the Centre for Investigative Psychology at the University of Liverpool. Since 2009 he has been at the University of Huddersfield where he is the Director of the International Research Centre in Investigative Psychology.



**David Brain** is a Professor of Sociology and Environmental Studies (M.A., Ph.D., Harvard University and B.A., University of California at Berkeley). His research and teaching interests focus on the connections between place-making, community-building, and civic engagement, and on sociological issues related to the planning and design of good neighborhoods, humane cities, and sustainable development at the regional scale. He has been recognized internationally as an expert on contemporary efforts to transform the way cities are built, and as a frequent contributor to educational programs for citizens and professional practitioners. His published research has included work in the sociology of work, professions, and work organizations; social theory; and the sociology of culture.



**Dr. Michael Mehaffy** offers strategic consulting for walkable mixed-use projects, with an international practice based in Portland, Oregon. He consults on projects for private developers, NGOs and governments in North America, South America, Europe and Asia. Michael is also a noted researcher, author, speaker and educator in urban planning and architectural design.

He has held teaching and research appointments at six graduate institutions, and he is currently on the editorial boards of two international journals of urban design. He is also a regular author for noted research and professional publications. He holds a Ph.D. in architecture from Delft University of Technology (NL), He is guest scholar at the Centre for the Future of Places at KTH in Stockholm and is currently a Senior Researcher in Residence in the Ax: son Johnson Foundation.



**Ash Amin** is known for his work on the geographies of modern living: cities and regions as relationally constituted; globalization as everyday process; the economy as cultural entity; race and multiculturalism as a hybrid of biopolitics and vernacular practices. He has been founding co-editor of the *Review of International Political Economy*. He is a Fellow of the British Academy and of

Academy of Social Sciences, and Foreign Member of the Italian *Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei*. He holds an honorary doctorate from Uppsala University and is Foreign Secretary of the British Academy. Professor Amin is an author of more than 15 books and recipient of prestigious awards and honors globally. He is currently Director of Research in the Department of Geography at the University of Cambridge. **(Chapter Contribution Only)\***



**Richard Sennett** is the Centennial Professor of Sociology at the London School of Economics and former University Professor of the Humanities at New York University. He is currently a Senior Fellow of the Center on Capitalism and Society at Columbia University. Sennett has studied social ties in cities, and the effects of urban living on individuals in the modern world. He is the founding director of the New York Institute for the Humanities. In 2006, Sennett was the winner of the Hegel Prize awarded by the German city of Stuttgart. His books include *Families against the City*, *The Hidden Injuries of Class*, *The Fall of Public Man*, *Authority*, *The Corrosion of Character*, *Respect*, *The Culture of the New Capitalism*, *Together*, *The Craftsman*, and *Building and Dwelling*. **(Chapter Contribution Only)\***



**Massimo Santanicchia** is an architect, urbanist, planner, associate professor and program director in architecture at the Iceland University of the Arts in Reykjavik. Massimo graduated in architecture from Istituto Universitario di Architettura di Venezia IUAV in 2000. In 2002 he received his MA in Housing and Urbanism from Architectural Association in London, and in 2011 a MSc in Regional and Urban Planning Studies from London School of Economics LSE. Massimo has worked in architectural practices in Milan, London, Reykjavik and Jerusalem. His current research examines different architectural pedagogies across northern Europe and investigates how the notion of citizenship can contribute in renewing and expanding the agency of architecture.



**Special guest: Professor Luc Anselin** is Stein-Freiler Distinguished Service Professor of Sociology and the College Director, Center for Spatial Data Science, native of Belgium, where he did undergraduate work and a master's degree in economics and econometrics at the Free University of Brussels (VUB). His PhD is from Cornell University in the interdisciplinary field of Regional Science. Anselin comes to the University of Chicago from Arizona State University where he was a Regents' Professor and held the Walter Isard Chair. He was the founding Director of the School of Geographical Sciences and Urban Planning.

\* Professor Richard Sennett and Professor Ash Amin will be contributing to the book that will be published after the symposium. They wanted to participate but due to prior and unalterable prior commitments they could not attend.

## Moderator and Book Editor:



**Tigran Haas**, BArch/MArch, MSc., Ph.D. is the Associate Professor, Reader - Tenured (Docent, Lektor) of Urban Planning + Urban Design. Tigran Haas is currently the Director of the Centre for the Future of Places at KTH. His current research focus on contemporary trends and paradigms in urban planning & design, new urbanism, sustainable urbanism, social housing and urban transformations, and city development, ageing society, design and medialization of urban form. His Key works are: *New Urbanism & Beyond - Designing Cities for the Future*, Rizzoli 2008 (ed.) and *Sustainable Urbanism & Beyond - Rethinking Cities for the Future*, 2012, Rizzoli (ed.) and the current (2018) "In The Post-Urban World" - *Emergent Transformations Of Cities and Regions In The Innovative Global Economy* - Routledge. Tigran He has written over 60 scholarly articles, 35 Conference Papers, 6 books, 4 Research Anthologies, and has been involved in teaching in International educational programs.



## Key Partners



THE CENTRE FOR THE  
FUTURE OF PLACES

**The Centre for the Future of Places** at KTH Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm is, aside from becoming an International Hub for Research on Public Space & Beyond, doing studies on the subject from a global perspective, also becomes a clearing house for ideas and new proposals on how the cities should be planned, designed, and retrofitted best to meet both today's and tomorrow's challenges with the focus on public places and urban spaces.



AXEL OCH MARGARET  
AX:SON JOHNSONS STIFTELSE

**The Axel and Margaret Ax:son Johnson Foundation** for Public Benefit is a private foundation with the primary purpose of promoting scientific and scholarly research in general. Its focus today is on the humanities and social sciences; founded in 1947 by the Consul-General Axel Ax:son Johnson, owner of the Nordstjernan Group, and his wife, Margaret, the Foundation initiates its own research projects. Urban City Research is a program that was initiated in 2002. The general theme is The Humane City, and the purpose of the program is to share knowledge on how to build people-centered cities. Despite ambitious intentions to create a new society for a new era, the modernist urban development that dominated the post-war period focused on technological rather than on human aspects.



**Bokförlaget Stolpe** publishes high-quality books, primarily large-format, richly illustrated volumes. The publisher places great emphasis on content and design, as well as prepress, printing and binding.



