

Press Release

## Uneven Growth: Tactical Urbanisms for Expanding Megacities

The exhibition is realized by MoMA in  
collaboration with the MAK

Exhibition Venue	MAK Exhibition Hall MAK, Weiskirchnerstraße 3, 1010 Vienna
Exhibition Dates	11 June 2015 – 4 October 2015
Opening Hours	Tue 10 a.m.–10 p.m., Wed–Sun 10 a.m.–6 p.m. Free admission on Tuesdays 6–10 p.m.

*Uneven Growth: Tactical Urbanisms for Expanding Megacities* presents the design scenarios of a 14-month initiative examining new architectural possibilities to address the rapid and uneven growth of six global metropolises—Hong Kong, Istanbul, Lagos, Mumbai, New York, and Rio de Janeiro. Six collaborative teams, each pairing local practitioners with international researchers, offer acupunctural outlooks on how to change the future of these urban environments for the better. As a trigger for a wider public discussion, the proposals in the exhibition present specific designs, policy models, and even visionary fictions to be imagined at different scales and in diverse urban contexts. *Uneven Growth* asks how emerging practices of architecture and urban design can learn from “tactical urbanisms” that have recently arisen in the form of everyday, bottom-up approaches to local problems. As a counterpart to centralized top-down planning, such developments are called upon as an inspiration for design scenarios raising awareness of the inequalities that prevail within a process of unstoppable urbanization. *Uneven Growth* is organized by Pedro Gadanho, Curator, Department of Architecture and Design, The Museum of Modern Art, in collaboration with the MAK.

The MAK installation features materials ranging from animations and documentary video, to renderings and drawings. In Hong Kong Is Land, MAP Office and Network Architecture Lab envision a sequence of artificial islands to support sustainable urban expansion and address future conditions. Superpool and Atelier d'Architecture Autogérée propose Tactics for

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Resilient Post-Urban Development, an open-source citizen-driven regeneration of Istanbul's TOKI mass housing complexes. In Lagos Tomorrow, NLÉ and Zoohaus/Inteligencias Colectivas explore innovative prototypes for the city's energy, water, and transportation networks. For Mumbai, URBZ and Ensamble Studio/MIT-POPlab propose Reclaiming Growth, in which inhabitants of the city's homegrown neighborhoods reclaim development for themselves. In The Other New York, SITU Studio and CohStra conceive two approaches to the provision of affordable housing and community-wide improvements. For Rio de Janeiro, RUA Arquitetos and MAS Urban Design ETH's propose The Carioca Way of City Making, a catalogue of everyday consumer products promoting the city as a collective endeavor.

Tactical urbanism is a highly pragmatic movement that applies to a spectrum of designers, from those who perform guerilla interventions of short-term change to those who seek to prod, provoke, or stimulate the political process toward incremental realization of fragments of what might be larger networks. In parallel with the design scenarios, an online platform ([uneven-growth.moma.org](http://uneven-growth.moma.org)) invites the public to contribute examples of tactical urban practices, as they are already mitigating inequality worldwide. A selection of submissions to the website will be featured in the MAK installation, placing projects by the public in dialogue with the proposals by the six teams.

The design scenarios of *Uneven Growth* are the culmination of a workshop phase during which the collaborating teams responded to the theme and developed proposals under the curatorial and critical guidance of MoMA's Department of Architecture and Design and an advisory board that included Saskia Sassen, David Harvey, Ricky Burdett, Neil Brenner, Nader Tehrani, Michael Sorkin, Marc Angélil, and Teddy Cruz. Workshops were held at MoMA PS1 in October 2013, The Value Factory in Shenzhen in December 2013, and MAK in June 2014. The exhibition's presentation at the Vienna Biennale follows a presentation at MoMA in November 22, 2014–May 25, 2015.

#### **Reclaiming Growth**

##### **URBZ: user-generated cities, Mumbai + Ensamble Studio/MIT-POPlab,**

Although Mumbai is often represented in bipolar terms as a city of slums and high-rises, its diversity of built forms represents the creative ways its inhabitants occupy urban space. Unplanned neighborhoods that have grown incrementally within a disproportionately small share of the city's land now absorb over half of the metropolis's 12 million residents. Many of them live in tiny "tool houses" that merge living and working spaces,

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generating value through use rather than from land speculation. In the name of redevelopment, however, these neighborhoods are being replaced by single-function high-rises, revealing the arrested imagination of the authorities.

Instead of seeing slums in need of clearance, Reclaiming Growth perceives neighborhoods in different stages of evolution. Rather than a tabula rasa, each homegrown neighborhood is seen as a "tabula pronta"—an environment shaped over time by users' needs and aspirations, possessing qualities that can drive their own development. The air is proposed as new territory where live-work conditions and public infrastructures recover their rightful place, liberating the excessive pressure on the land. This is not a speculative future, but an expanded present where inhabitants can reclaim growth for themselves.

### **Hong Kong Is Land**

#### **MAP Office + Network Architecture Lab**

Compressed between sea and mountains, Hong Kong is characterized by its extreme density and geography. A collection of more than 250 islands, the city/territory is under pressure from Beijing to absorb new waves of mainland migrants, which would require accommodating a 50 percent increase in its population of 7.2 million. The threat of exponential population growth, in combination with scarce land resources and rising sea levels, provides an opportunity to test an artificial island scheme that could extend to the Pearl River Delta and further along the Chinese coastline.

Man-made islands offer the possibility of sustainable urban expansion with new modes of living, working, and entertaining. With distinct geographic and physical boundaries, these paradigmatic spaces can exaggerate the logic of existing urban spaces. Hong Kong Is Land proposes eight new artificial islands to address current conditions while considering situations that will arise in the near future. Beyond offering a response to Hong Kong's unbalanced geography, the scenarios suggest a new language through which to raise global awareness of contemporary issues. Myths, legends, fictions, stories—as many narratives as possible are required to define the contours of a new territory.

### **The Other New York**

#### **SITU Studio + Cohabitation Strategies (CohStra)**

Over the past two decades, global investment and profit-driven development have engineered New York's social divide. Deregulation of private rental housing, withdrawal of funds for rental subsidies for the poor, and

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wage stagnation have created a crisis of affordability. A lesser-known consequence of this is an informal rental market that has illegally adapted apartments and houses to accommodate the lowest-paid populations. More than a century ago, Jacob Riis identified this same injustice: poor citizens, made invisible within existing housing stock, are left out of the policies and design decisions that shape their homes.

Two alternative approaches address New York's unevenness. Cohabitation Strategies proposes Cooperative Housing Trusts that challenge traditional conceptions of property. Land and buildings are owned collectively by tenants, community stakeholders, nonprofits, and city authorities, which guarantees permanent affordable housing while building social equity. SITU Studio proposes Community Growth Corporations that open up underutilized spaces to incremental growth. Outer-borough neighborhoods leverage undeveloped air rights to collectively finance community-wide improvements, facilitating a new informal rooftop urbanism for a city with scarce remaining land.

### **Lagos Tomorrow**

#### **NLÉ + Zoohaus/Inteligencias Colectivas**

Nigeria, Africa's largest economy and most populous country, is inhabited by over 170 million people. Lagos, its commercial capital, is home to about 20 million people. All Lagosians, regardless of social or economic status, face certain common challenges. While oil is cheap, the state energy network is only reliable for about three hours a day in many areas. Nearly 30 percent of Lagos state is covered by water, yet water is highly underutilized and inadequately managed. Bad roads compound poorly connected public transportation. Urban growth is so rapid that strategies to improve public services devised by authorities and city planners become obsolete before implementation. To counter income disparities most citizens have to set up their own businesses, often in semi-illegal conditions.

To bridge physical and socioeconomic gaps, Lagos Tomorrow examines three challenges—energy, water, and transportation—and rethinks them as opportunities. Using two representation tools—a map that echoes Lagos's complex reality and a catalogue of local inventions, situations, and players—prototypes are proposed to enrich the city, envisioned as part of a future urban reality that merges the day-to-day skills of informal bottom-up initiatives with official top-down plans.

### **The Carioca Way of City Making**

**RUA Arquitetos + MAS Urban Design, ETH Zurich**

Unevenness is a dominant feature of Rio de Janeiro, making it exemplary of Brazil's reputation as an unequal country. However, this strong polarization is about to change because Brazil's income distribution has drastically shifted during the last seven years—in Rio, 60 percent of favela residents now belong to an emerging middle class. Rio's government and its prevailing economic system, which privileges business interests, are transforming the city into a setting for market-driven development. However, the discontent of large portions of the population, demonstrated by recent protests, expresses the gap between the aspirations of an emerging consumer class and the lack of urban equality.

The *cariocas* (Rio's inhabitants) have always found ways to appropriate their built environment through *puxadinhos*—add-ons to existing structures made from leftover materials. Inspired by *puxadinhos*, the proposed Varanda Products accommodate the logic of the market in order to transform it. Varanda Products is a catalogue of everyday consumer products that promotes city making as a collective endeavor by encouraging small-scale urban entrepreneurship with the playfulness typical of the *carioca* way of life.

### **Tactics for Resilient Post-Urban Development**

**Superpool + Atelier d'Architecture Autogérée**

Turkey is one of the fastest-growing economies in Europe. At 14 million inhabitants and a yearly growth rate of 3.5 percent, Istanbul has benefited from this economic boom. Since the 1990s, the mass housing of its rapid urbanization has been organized predominantly through the Housing Development Agency of Turkey, Toplu Konut İdaresi Başkanlığı (TOKI), and employs a single urban typology: gated complexes of repetitive tower clusters on open land. TOKI development parallels the emergence of a new middle class in Istanbul for whom a TOKI flat is part of a dream of car and home ownership, even if this brings with it social isolation and long-term debt. In the face of continuing political, economic, and ecological uncertainties, TOKI inhabitants have to become more resilient.

Kolektif İşbirlikçi Toplum Oluşumu/The Collective and Collaborative Agency (KITO) is a post-urban development initiative that uses open-source, citizen-driven R-Urban strategies to transform TOKI complexes. KITO works at different scales to retrofit spaces, equipment, and institutions. KITO'da, an online network, creates an alternative economy, assigning value to local actions and empowering people to make, give, share, and

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save energy, services, goods, and skills. Instead of consuming the city, residents share in its production.

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Curator: Pedro Gadanho, Curator of Contemporary Architecture at the Museum of Modern Art, New York,  
Curatorial Coordination: Bärbel Vischer, Curator of the MAK Contemporary Art Collection

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Press Contact

MAK Press and PR  
Judith Anna Schwarz-Jungmann (Head)  
Sandra Hell-Ghignone, Veronika Träger, Lara Steinhäuser  
MAK, Stubenring 5, 1010 Vienna  
T +43 1 711 36-233, -229, -212  
presse@MAK.at, MAK.at  
press@viennabiennale.org, viennabiennale.org

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