



***SpontaneousInterventions: Design Actions for the Common Good***  
**United States Pavilion**  
**13th International Architecture Exhibition - la Biennale di Venezia**  
**Events and Programs**

(Venice, Italy -- August 2012) In conjunction with *SpontaneousInterventions: Design Actions for the Common Good*, the U.S. Pavilion curatorial team has organized three months of events and programs scheduled to take place both in Venice, Italy, and cities across the United States.

The curatorial team is pleased to announce that 44 project teams are traveling to Venice for the exhibition vernissage and will participate in thematic discussions every hour on the hour, our **Relay Series**, held in the courtyard of the U.S. Pavilion on August 28 and 29. A total of 11 panels involving more than 50 speakers will be moderated by members of the U.S. Pavilion organizing team, and will explore central concerns such as urban vacancies and underuse, the perception of the city, and social potentials of public space in an effort to develop and advance the discourse around this movement. Additionally, the schedule in the opening days includes two formal **spotlight** panels as well as **workshops** by exhibition participants Amphibious Architecture, a design charrette by participants Office for Urban Disruption, and a walking tour of Venice led by participant Mark Shepard of Serendipitor.

The courtyard contains an installation by Brooklyn-based firm Interboro, designed as a meeting area that can accommodate a wide-range of activity, from exhibition-related workshops and panels, to informal discussions and improvisational play. The installation, called *Commonplace*, is a site-specific adaptation of Venetian *passarelle*, the raised walkways used in Venice during *acqua alta*, the high tides that occasionally flood the city. The *passarelle* are configured in an "outdoor living room," featuring movable foam components that can be easily rearranged for conversation, work, rest or play.

Over the course of the exhibition, co-curator David van der Leer has organized **Center Stage: Interventions and Urban Policy**, a series of school-led public programs and workshops taking place at Interboro's courtyard installation and in other locations around Venice. Sessions vary from workshops to tours and design charrettes and examine to what extent interventions can play a role in urban policy. University participants currently include Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT); University of California, Berkeley; Rice University, Columbia University; University of Texas, Austin; North Carolina State University; University of Buffalo, State University of New York.

All events and programs will be detailed on the exhibition website [spontaneousinterventions.org/events](http://spontaneousinterventions.org/events). The current schedule of events and programs is as follows:

**Monday, August 27**

**15:30-16:00 pm: Press Conference**

U.S. Pavilion curator and commissioner Cathy Lang Ho; co-curators Ned Cramer and David van der Leer; and curatorial advisors, catalogue contributors, and others.

**Tuesday, August 28****10:00–11:00 RELAY: Citizen Science**

**Description:** Thematic panel discussion with exhibition participants on the use of digital interfaces between people, structures, and the natural environment.

**Moderators:** David Benjamin, Columbia University

**Panelists:** Ed Borden, Air Quality Egg; Michael Chen, Normal Projects; and Anda French, French2 Design

**11:00–12:00 SPOTLIGHT: Spontaneous Urbanisms**

**Description:** Spontaneous Urbanisms examines the state of the city and some of the motivating factors for the wave of citizen-led actions to improve the public urban realm. From urban blight to uneven development, property abandonment to stalled developments, social alienation to an overly privatized public sphere, urban interventionists are asserting their “right to the city.” This panel will frame the movement—the urge of architects, designers and everyday citizens to step in and fill in the gap where traditional top-down planning has failed or left areas of neglect—in a larger historical, cultural and political context.

**Moderator:** Toni Griffin, J. Max Bond Center for Design

**Panelists:** Mohsen Mostafavi, Nicholas de Monchaux, Claire Weisz, and Teddy Cruz

**12:00–13:00 RELAY: Productive Landscapes**

**Description:** Thematic panel discussion with exhibition participants around the use of food, urban agriculture and ecologies.

**Moderator:** Gordon Douglas, University of Chicago

**Panelists:** Carey Clouse, Crookedworks; Nancy O’Donnell, Pennsylvania Horticulture Society; Justin Hoover, War Gastronomy; Richard Saxton, Campito; Dorothee Imbert, Parking Plot; and Kevin Conger, Parkmobile

**13:00–14:00 RELAY: Vacancies and Underuse**

**Description:** Thematic panel discussion with exhibition participants addressing interventions that respond to underutilized urban space.

**Moderator:** Mimi Zeiger, journalist and critic

**Panelists:** Terry Schwarz, Cleveland Urban Design Collaborative; John Southern, Parkman Triangle; Andrew Danziger, Red Swing Project; Dan D’Oca, Interboro; and Julia Draganovic, No Longer Empty

**14:00–15:00 RELAY: New Networks and Participatory Planning**

**Description:** Thematic panel discussion with exhibition participants addressing new tactics for collective planning, and legal dimensions of private and public property debates.

**Moderator:** Anne Guiney, Institute for Urban Design

**Panelists:** John Hulsey, ICE Pops; Manuel Avila, Crown Heights Participatory Urbanism; Shin-Pei Tsay, Planning Corps; Dan Parham, Neighborland; Andrea Bauza, Urban Activo

**15:00-16:00 RELAY: Getting Things Done**

**Description:** Thematic panel discussion including exhibition participants on the subject of translating an idea or small-scale project into realized civic program.

**Moderator:** Anne Guiney, Institute for Urban Design

**Panelists:** Andrew Howard, Better Block; Sarah Filley, popuphood; Douglas Burnham, Proxy; Mike Lydon, Street Plans Collaborative; James Enos, Periscope Project

**16:00–17:00 SPOTLIGHT: From the Local to the Global: Scaling up and scaling down**

**Description:** This discussion will compare urban actions from around the world and investigate common as well as culture-specific causes. How can tactics that originate in one locale be replicated in other situations? We will also ask panelists to address the question of scale -- as we know many of the interventions we are featuring are small gestures -- but how can they be scaled up to address larger problems, creating not just individual, micro-improvements but becoming part of a larger network of participatory, citizen-led urban problem-solving.

**Moderator:** Mimi Zeiger, journalist and critic

**Panelists:** Mirko Zardini; Cameron Sinclair; Kylie Legge; Tom Darden, Make It Right; and John Ewing, Ghana Think Tank

### **18:00–19:00 WORKSHOP: Venice Mussel Choir**

**Description:** The Venice Mussel Choir workshop introduces the issues and challenges related to water quality monitoring, and demonstrates how to build a water quality sensor using living mussels. A prototype system incorporating an array of these mussel sensors will be submerged into the canal near the pavilion. Data from these sensors will be used to generate a song performed by synthesized voices, vocalizing changes in the water quality of the canal.

**Moderators:** David Benjamin, Natalie Jeremijenko, and Mark Shepard

### **19:00 WORKSHOP: Serendipitor Walk — Meet at U.S. Pavilion**

**Description:** Serendipitor is an alternate mobile application for the iPhone developed by Mark Shepard, and is designed to help you find something by looking for something else. The application combines instructions generated by routing services (i.e. Google Maps) with spontaneous instructions inspired by Fluxus, Vito Acconci, the Situationists and others. Enter an origin and destination and the application will map a route between the two. Mark Shepard will lead a walk through Venice using the application, departing from the US Pavilion. Space is limited; email [Venice@ifud.org](mailto:Venice@ifud.org) to reserve your space.

**Moderator:** Mark Shepard

## **Wednesday, August 29**

### **10–11:15 CENTER STAGE: Infrastructural Architectures for the American City (MIT)**

**Description:** Boston city officials and MIT's Center for Advanced Urbanism faculty discuss whether urban interventions on top of the Boston big dig, are tips of the iceberg or surface treatments indifferent to the scale of what happens underneath, and extrapolate this discussion to the larger picture of the American cities of the future.

**Moderators/Panelists:** Nader Tehrani, Alexander d'Hooghe, Anton Garcia-Abril, and Kairos Shen

### **11:00 WORKSHOP: Serendipitor Walk — Colonne di San Marco**

**Description:** This second walk led by Mark Shepard will meet at and leave from Colonne di San Marco, Piazza San Marco. Space is limited; email [Venice@ifud.org](mailto:Venice@ifud.org) to reserve your space.

### **11:30-12:30 RELAY: The Image of the City**

**Description:** Thematic panel discussion with exhibition participants around notions of perception in urban space, and ways of intervening to expand and alter citizen's interaction with the city.

**Moderator:** David van der Leer, Guggenheim Museum

**Panelists:** Matt Tomassulo, City Fabric; Quilian Riano, #WhoOWNSpace; Brett Snyder, Museum of the Phantom City; Graham Coreil-Allen, New Public Sites; and Phil Salesses, Place Pulse

### **12:30-13:30 RELAY: The Social Life of Urban Spaces**

**Description:** Thematic panel discussion with exhibition participants that explore social dimensions of public space.

**Moderator:** Gordon Douglas, University of Chicago

**Panelists:** Sierra Seip, Skipping Only; Valeria Bianco, ArtFarm; David Belt, Macro Sea; and Guy Zucker, Kiss

### **13:30-15:30 SPOTLIGHT: GOOD Ideas for Cities**

**Description:** Venice, made up of its many islands, is situated at the heart of a lagoon system that is rich in cultural heritage and wildlife. Yet modern infrastructure development and economic growth have brought the lagoon ecology and natural dynamics to the brink of collapse as well as threatening traditional livelihoods for residents. In what ways could the lagoon be brought back into the everyday life of Venice and considered an asset for the city without relegating it to being merely another tourist attraction?

**Moderator:** Alissa Walker

**Panelists:** Francesca Bortolotto Possati, CEO and owner of the BAUER; Jane da Mosto, We Are Here; Marco Zordan, Associazione 40XVenezia; Ezio Micelli, Deputy Mayor of Urban Planning; members of STUDIO TAMASSOCIATI Laura Candelpergher, Massimo Lepore, Raul Pantaleo, and Simone Sfriso; members of ETB Studio: Alessandro Tessari, Matteo Bandiera, Nicola Di Pietro, German Pro Lozano, Gianluca Parcianello; and SPEDstudio members Saverio Panata, Andrea Ambroso, and Enrico Dusi

### **Saturday, September 1**

#### **12:00–18:00 WORKSHOP: Office for Urban Disruption, “La CasaMare at Ospedale al Mare”**

**Description:** Charrette to re-design Ospedale al Mare and to plan interventions in Public Space used by immigrant caretakers and elderly populations in Venice, Italy.

**Moderators:** Quilian Riano, Mike Lyon, Aurash Khawarзад, Office for Urban Disruption

**Participants:** Valentina Bonifacio, Andrea Curtoni, Michele Girelli, Verena Lenna, Giulia Mazzorin, Laura Guadagnin, Vera Cozzada, Ucraina Più, Eugenia Belibov, Nelli-Elena Vanzan Marchini, Rena Mande, and Nic Ter Meer

### **From August 29 though November 23**

#### **Center Stage: Interventions and Urban Policy**

**A series of school-led public programs in Venice and in cities around the U.S.**

#### **Session #1: August 29, U.S. Pavilion courtyard**

**Title: *Infrastructural Architectures for the American City***

**Organized by Alexander d’Hooghe of the Center for Advanced Urbanism at MIT, Cambridge**

Boston city officials and MIT’s Center for Advanced Urbanism faculty discuss whether urban interventions on top of the Boston Big Dig are tips of the iceberg or surface treatments indifferent to the scale of what happens underneath, and extrapolate this discussion to the larger picture of the American cities of the future. Panelists include: Nader Tehrani, Alexander d’Hooghe, Anton Garcia-Abril, and Kairos Shen.

#### **Session # 2: September 21–23, U.S. Pavilion courtyard and locations in the Venice lagoon**

**Title: *Local Code Venice / Ecology of Strangers***

**Organized by Nicholas de Moncheaux of University of California, Berkeley**

This workshop will re-engage the historic interdependence between the city of Venice and the greater Venetian lagoon, through proposing a programmed, ecological re-development of the many dozens of abandoned islands that litter the lagoon’s outer horizon.

Up to 20 participants will join Nicholas de Monchaux, a featured exhibitor in Spontaneous Interventions, workshop co-director Sandro Bisa, and a range of local architects, landscape ecologists, and urbanists for three days together in the lagoon. Beyond background information on the lagoon, its changing ecology, and landscape of abandoned territory, the workshop will involve an introduction to the parametric urban design software—Local Code and the Finches plug-in for Rhino/Grasshopper—developed by de Monchaux and his collaborators at UC Berkeley (the use of this software by participants is encouraged, but by no means required). Participants will have the opportunity to have design work leading from the workshop exhibited at the pavilion, (as part of a rotating display) from October 25 until November 25.

Applications are open to any interested participants, and will be considered on a rolling basis until September 15, 2012, or until all slots are filled. To learn more, register your interest, and subscribe to updates, email [venice@localco.de](mailto:venice@localco.de).

#### **Session # 3: October 6–12, U.S. Pavilion courtyard**

**Title: *Can Activism Protect Architecture?***

**Organized by Jorge Otero-Pailos and Craig Konyk of Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture Planning and Preservation at Columbia University, New York**

The current economic crisis is testing the ability of governments to properly care for architectural monu-

ments. Although monuments remain theoretically protected by law, in practice that are damaged by neglect. While activism cannot realistically replace the capacity and responsibilities of government preservation, it can operate strategically to solve discrete problems and incite larger initiatives.

This 5-day student workshop in the U.S. Pavilion will explore ways in which activism might relate to the protection of monuments, particularly in light of the current divestment of governments-in-crisis from heritage. The U.S. Pavilion will become a case study for a series of hands on exercises, some practical (e.g. how to restore the concrete on the Pavilion), and some theoretical (e.g. how to incite larger political action by changing the appearance of a monument). This workshop is open to students currently enrolled at either Columbia University or Venetian universities.

**Session #4: early October, U.S. Pavilion courtyard**  
**Organized by Sarah Whiting of Rice University, Houston**  
 Details to come.

**Session # 5: October 20, U.S. Pavilion courtyard**  
**Title: *Creative Economic Growth: Fostering Tactical Urbanism in Austin, Texas***  
**Organized by John Blood and Elizabeth Danze of the University of Texas, Austin**

The City of Austin fully embraces its arts community as a driver of economic growth and vitality. A recent study commissioned by the City's Cultural Arts Division and Music Divisions found that the creative sector was responsible for \$4.35 billion in economic activity in 2010, and nearly 50,000 jobs. The same study also found that the creative sector grew by 25% over the past five years (a time period that includes the global recession), compared with 10% growth for the whole economy. This panel brings together leaders from the University of Texas at Austin's School of Architecture with City leaders from Austin's Economic Growth and Redevelopment Services Office to discuss how fostering tactical urbanism and nurturing the creative sector can be integrated into a city's overall strategy for economic growth.

**Session # 6: October 25–27, U.S. Pavilion courtyard**  
**Title: *La Felicità e la Città: Un'avventura Urbana***  
**Organized by Robin Abrams and Matt Tomassulo of North Carolina State University, Raleigh**

This workshop, co-directed by exhibition participant Matt Tomassulo and Robin Adams of the Healthy and Sustainable Cities Initiative, explores the link between spontaneity, discovery, spirituality and urbanism, in particular the role "spontaneity" and "discovery" play in making cities more livable. These experiences are increasingly provided by small, temporary, "pop-up", and mobile interventions, and we seek to understand, within the context of our hectic urban lives, why they bring such joy. Over a three-day period, this workshop engages visitors to the American Pavilion in a series of small urban "events" intended to spark discovery, with the aim of increasing our understanding of how and why they bring such large measures of pleasure.

**Session # 7: November 23–25, U.S. Pavilion courtyard**  
**Title: *Cittàdino: What is the city without citizens?***  
**Organized by Jordan Geiger, Joyce Hwang and Mark Shepard of the University of Buffalo, State University of New York, Buffalo**

What is a city without its citizens? Depopulation in Buffalo and in Venice pose this question, albeit in two dramatically different ways. In session 7 of Center Stage, visitors from the University of Buffalo will discuss some of the context in their home city, present recent projects that relate to depopulation and the city, and then lead a tour, likely departing by vaporetto and on foot, that identifies sites and creates suggestions for depopulation in Venice.

**Final dates and details for workshops will be announced on the website at [spontaneousinterventions.org/events](http://spontaneousinterventions.org/events).**