The background is a solid black field. It is populated with several white geometric shapes: a small square at the top left, a horizontal bar at the top right, a vertical bar on the left side, a large diagonal bar on the left, a horizontal bar at the bottom left, a square at the bottom center, and a large L-shaped block at the bottom right. The text is centered in the upper half of the page.

Symposium of Urban Design History and Theory

convened by
Janina Gosseye
Tom Avermaete
Matthew Heins

1-3 November 2023
Delft, The Netherlands & online

**Symposium of
Urban Design
History and
Theory**

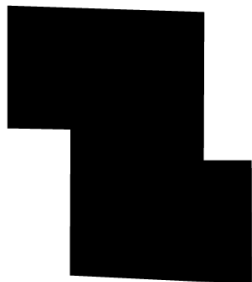


Table of Contents

General Programme	6
Conference Tracks	8
Sessions Overview	10
Wednesday, 1 November 2023	14
Thursday, 2 November 2023	48
Friday, 3 November 2023	154

2 November 2023 Concepts, Tools, and Theories

17:00 - 19:00

Berlage Room 2

**Discourses, Debates, and Ideologies in the
Discipline of Urban Design**

Tom Avermaete

Peter Laurence

When Urban Design Became “Urban”
Clemson University

Martin Kohlberger

Jacqueline Tyrwhitt’s Circulation of Grey Building
Literature, 1955-1972: Creating an Alternative
Knowledge Network
ETH Zurich

Elena Giaccone

Ordinariness and the Reevaluation of the Space of
the Street: James Maude Richards’ Commitment
to the Anonymous “Common Man” as a Critical
Perspective on Modern Architecture
Politecnico di Torino

Lutz Robbers

Designing Urban Design
Jade University of Applied Sciences

2 November 2023
17:00 - 19:00
Berlage Room 2

When Urban Design Became “Urban”
Peter Laurence

In 1950s America, urban was the modish qualifier for many postwar theories and ambitions for the modernization of cities. It was in this context that “civic design” modernized and aligned itself with federal funding programs to redevelop US cities and transformed itself into “urban design.” As compared to concerns for the civic nature of cities, urban design also aggregated an enormous terrain, including not only city centers but much of the built environment and its infrastructure. While implicated in Modernism’s disdain for the pedestrian-oriented city, this ambitious transformation significantly disrupted civic design’s half-century of theoretical, pedagogical, and practical development, such that civic design had to be “rediscovered” in New Urbanism, Tactical Urbanism, Placemaking, and other clever new movements decades later.

If the state of urban design in the US, the nation that invented the term, is any measure, it may be time to admit that urban design has been a failure in various ways and that professional bodies—the American Institute of Architects, the American Society of Landscape Architecture, the American Planning Association, and their sister academic organizations—bear a significant amount of the blame. This paper asks whether it is time to abandon or reinvent urban design in favor of a discipline that is genuinely intellectually and pedagogically integrated into the design disciplines.

Peter L. Laurence, PhD, is an Associate Professor of Architecture at Clemson University School of Architecture. He is the author of *Becoming Jane Jacobs* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016) and various publications on the history and theory of urban design.

Jaqueline Tyrwhitt’s Circulation of Grey Building Literature, 1955-1972
Martin Kohlberger

2 November 2023
17:00 - 19:00
Berlage Room 2

Creating an Alternative Knowledge Network: “Working from the second row in first-row organizations such as the United Nations or Harvard, the urban planner and academic Jacqueline Tyrwhitt was establishing an alternative knowledge network. From 1957 until 1972, she edited the *Ekistics Journal* and thereby published more than 2,000 reports and abstracts. By uncovering different knowledge from all around the world, abstracting articles and disseminating them via her personal network and through *Ekistics*, she made subaltern knowledge accessible to a wide audience of practitioners, academics, and development advisors. While working within and outside of dominant systemic relations, through distributing these abstracts and promoting hands-on ideas, Tyrwhitt managed to provide mutual aid and help locals in indigenous communities in sustaining their livelihood.

Analyzing and categorizing the abstracts she published in the *Ekistics Journal*, I compare her approach to ongoing trends of that time. In my paper, I try to understand the roles Tyrwhitt took as an expert and advisor at the UN, as a professor at Harvard, and especially through editing *Ekistics*. I argue that she skillfully adapted to changing conditions of technical assistance and a monetarization of knowledge to gain valuable information. Thereby, she managed to connect various non-canonical knowledge fields of grey building literature.

Furthermore, by extensive data analysis of the *Ekistics Journal* and the networks made visible within the single abstracts, the paper tries to discuss the position Tyrwhitt was working in. How is it possible to relate the networks she fostered to a simultaneous change of language and topics in urban planning and development aid from hands-on to policy-oriented? How did she tweak the discourse dominated by the legacy of colonial networks and later big American-centered organizations? And how did she manage to restructure the relationship of knowledge from the second-row positions she inhabited?”

Martin Kohlberger is a master’s student in the field of architecture at ETH Zurich. Before, he studied architecture at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna and philosophy at the University of Vienna. Moreover, he has worked for the Swiss architectural magazine *archithese*.

2 November 2023
17:00 - 19:00
Berlage Room 2

Ordinariness and the Reevaluation of the Space of the Street: James Maude Richards' Commitment to the Anonymous "Common Man" as a Critical Perspective on Modern Architecture

Elena Giaccone

On the occasion of the CIAM VI in Bridgwater in September 1947, James Maude Richards, editor of the *Architectural Review* and head delegate of the British MARS Group, delivered a heartfelt speech to urge a rethinking of Modern Architecture in light of its failed relationship with the Common Man of the Street. Starting from this first occasion of its emergence, the paper intends to analyze the discursive uses of the term as revelatory, in the context of the postwar reconstruction and of the establishment of the Welfare State, of two crucial aspects affecting Urban Design: a growing consideration for ordinariness and the reevaluation of the space of the street.

Thus, repositioning the figure of Richards as one of a critic and editor who devoted his career to the idea of a decent, anonymous architecture at the service of society, the research explores his interpretation of ordinariness as a challenge to the legitimate fields of operation and social responsibility of the architectural profession, and the reconsideration of the space of the street as a primary site of people reidentification and communitarian relationship.

Based on both original archival documents and secondary literature, the paper explores the exchange of ideas that took place within the English group during the preparatory meetings to the CIAM official congresses, observing Richards as a mediator in-between the MARS Group's gradual dismissal of prewar avant-gardistic ideals and the *Architectural Review's* cultural policy for a visual education.

Then, the study observes how the concept entered and affected the CIAM debate in Bridgwater and Bergamo (CIAM VII, in 1949), forcing the British Group to negotiate its positions in light of other international groups' perspectives and revealing the deep divide of architectural culture between Western and Eastern groups, hiding behind the rhetorical use of the figure of the "common man."

Elena Giaccone (1995) is an architect and Ph.D. student at the Department of Architecture History and Project at Politecnico di Torino. She studied between Italy, Belgium (UCL Brussels), and France (Paris La Villeie), graduating from an interdisciplinary honors program held by Politecnico di Milano and Torino. Currently, her thesis investigates the emerging definitions, shifting imageries, and ambiguous interpretations of the concept of the Common Man of the Street, as part of the broader postwar CIAM discourse within the field of urban design.

Designing Urban Design

Lutz Robbers

My contribution maps out the process of designing a new program in the discipline of urban design. In the winter term of 2021, a first group of about forty undergraduate students enrolled at the Jade University in Oldenburg (Germany) with the intention to study "Urban Design" rather than "Städtebau" or "Stadtplanung". In keeping with the anglophone denomination, the new academic offering not only paid tacit tribute to José Luis Sert's 1956 GSD conference as a consolidation effect that could bridge the ever-increasing divide between "systematic planning" and "artistic design". The semantic elasticity of both terms "urban" and "design" also provided the necessary leeway for probing the ordering of the spatial disciplines according to scale, type, as well as modes and media of thinking and intervention. Architecture, city, and landscape were no longer treated as separate curricular entities coexisting both epistemically and professionally. Rather, under the heading of Urban Design, they were to intermingle as productive hybrids, hence paving the way for interdisciplinary thinking and holistic practices.

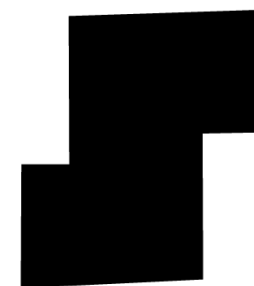
It is kind of ironic that Lower-Saxony's ministry of research and higher education ultimately approved (and financed) the new program (Bachelor and Master) by stipulating an official yet oddly hyphenated title: "Urban Design: Stadt-Land-Entwerfen" (City-Countryside-Designing). By connecting not only objects of study that hitherto were kept separate but also adding a denominal verb of "Entwurf" the program received a highly inspirational branding that promised, at least in its aspiration, to bypass the habitual dichotomies such as architecture vs city, urban vs rural, *Gestaltung vs Planung*.

More retroactive introspection than actualizing analysis of a successful project my intention is not so much to contribute a 'best practice' template for facile emulation. What I want to propose by charting the discourses, administrative procedures, disciplinary constraints, internal critiques, curricular debates, didactic innovations, decisional accidents that eventually led to the consolidation of a new academic offering is a debate about how to transform urban design's broadening definition into feasible educational offerings. The way, beginning in 2019, I designed "Urban Design" at a peripheral polytechnical institution was, in hindsight at least, exemplary for sketching out an educational institutional apparatus whose vocation lies less in satisfying fixed disciplinary or social demands and more in orchestrating the productive tensions inherent in the notions of both "urban" and "design". Just as the study of "Urban Design" has always been a promise of responding to growing complexities and disciplinary contradictions, so has the design of "Urban Design" been an agencement of things yet to fit.

2 November 2023
17:00 - 19:00
Berlage Room 2

Lutz Robbers holds a Ph.D. in the History and Theory of Architecture from Princeton University. He taught architectural history and theory at the RWTH Aachen, at the Bauhaus-University, Columbia University, and Princeton. Prior to that, he was a postdoctoral research fellow at the Internationales Kolleg für Kulturtechnikforschung und Medienphilosophie (IKKM), Bauhaus-Universität Weimar, where he was part of the research group "Tools of Design". He held research positions at the Cité de l'architecture et du patrimoine in Paris, the London School of Economics' "Cities Programme", the Canadian Center of Architecture (CCA), and the German Forum of Art History in Paris. He served as the editor of the journal *Candide – Journal for Architectural Knowledge*. Currently, he teaches architectural theory at the Jade University in Oldenburg, where he founded the "Urban Design" program.

**Symposium of
Urban Design
History and
Theory**



This symposium is convened by Janina Gosseye, Tom Avermaete, and Matthew Heins. The full conference committee consists of:

Tom Avermaete *ETH Zurich, Switzerland*
Nadi Abusaada *ETH Zurich, Switzerland*
Ellen Braae *University of Copenhagen, Denmark*
Jiaxiu Cai *Chinese University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong, China*
Isabelle Doucet *Chalmers University of Technology, Sweden*
Janina Gosseye *TU Delft, The Netherlands*
Matthew Heins *Independent Scholar, United States*
Conrad Kickert *University at Buffalo, United States*
Hannah le Roux *University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa*
Cameron Logan *University of Sydney, Australia*
Faiza Moatasim *University of Southern California, United States*

The local organizing committee of the TU Delft Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment includes:

Mina Akhavan *HAUP, Department of Architecture*
Serah Caltiz *HAUP, Department of Architecture*
John Hanna *HAUP, Department of Architecture*
Carola Hein *HAUP, Department of Architecture*
Li Lu *HAUP, Department of Architecture*
Nikos Katsikis *UD, Department of Urbanism*
Taneha Kuzniecowa Bacchin *UD, Department of Urbanism*
Rachel Lee *HAUP, Department of Architecture*
Victor Muñoz Sanz *UD, Department of Urbanism*
Phoebus Panigyrakis *HAUP, Department of Architecture*
Xin Sheng *HAUP, Department of Architecture*