

ARTS OF THE WORKING CLASS

EXTRABLATT N°5

WORLDS OF HOMELESSNESS

Worlds of Homelessness proposes an interdisciplinary and global engagement with homelessness and its connections to inequality, gentrification, racism, and migration. The project creates a platform for local and international artists, architects, and scholars to come together to share ideas.

by Lien Heidenreich-Seleme

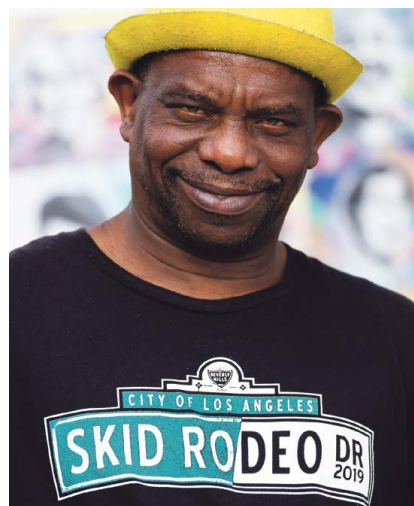
In Los Angeles, where the phrase „Homelessness is just a paycheck away“ is all too well known, the divide between the „haves and have-nots“ is ever-present. While the city is best known for its Hollywood image, it is estimated that 60,000 individuals experience homelessness in LA County on any given night. Among these are also students and working-class individuals, who have to live in their cars because they cannot afford to pay rent.

Worlds of Homelessness is a project of the Goethe-Institut that offers an interdisciplinary engagement with the issue of homelessness and its many related themes, such as the gap between rich and poor, participation, inequality, gentrification, racism, and migration. Worlds of Homelessness brings together international artists, architects, scholars, and others to create a platform to share ideas, thoughts and to present their work, as well as examining the wide range of strategies employed to engage with the many questions and challenges surrounding the issue.

The project is developed in cooperation with the Los Angeles Poverty Department, which has created art with and promoted the activism of Skid Row Artists for decades; the Thomas Mann House, the renowned and independent architecture school SCI-Arc, the Institute on Inequality and Democracy at UCLA Luskin; and NAVEL, a collectively driven cultural organization.

The Worlds of Homelessness event series, including discussions, music performances, and film screenings, took place from October 22. through 27., 2019 in Los Angeles at the Skid Row History Museum and Archive, NAVEL, and SCI-Arc, and culminated with the Los Angeles Poverty Department's 10th Annual Festival for All Skid Row Artists on October 26. and 27., 2019.

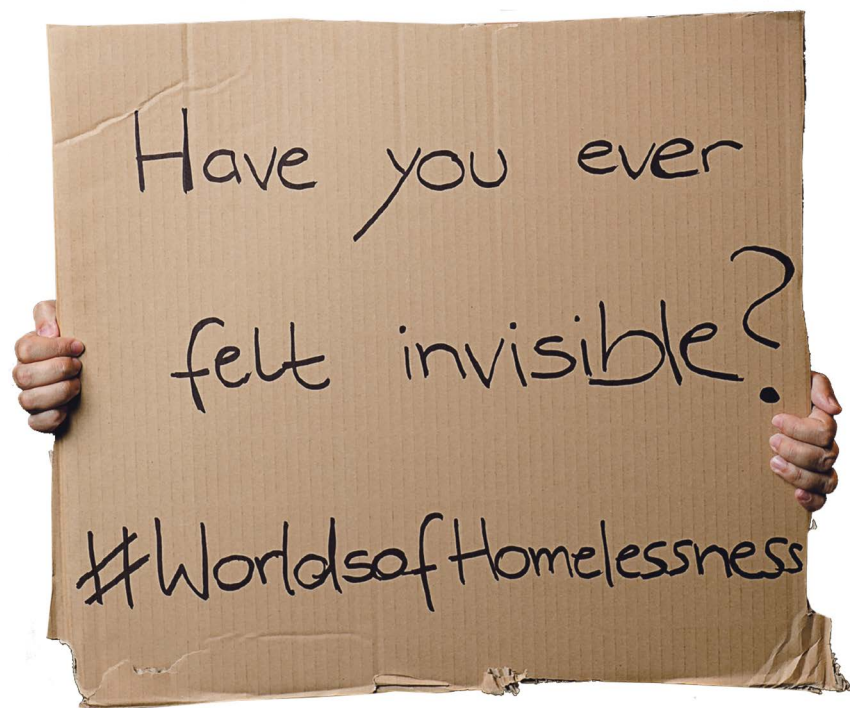
“How are the issues of homelessness and housing precarity spoken about and addressed in different communities, cities, countries, or parts of the world? How can we understand and examine the interconnectivity and linkages between homelessness and its many related themes, such as the gap between rich and poor, participation, inequality, gentrification, racism, and migration? How have artists engaged in a meaningful way with homelessness? What



Festival for All Skid Row Artists
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Festival for All Skid Row Artists
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Have you ever felt invisible – Worlds of Homelessness
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strategies have they used to engage with communities, or are they part of the communities themselves? What challenges do artists face, and how do they engage with these challenges? What types of artistic engagements with homelessness are problematic, and why? How can architects produce mutually supportive environments for houseless communities? How

can community-driven processes contribute to responsible and comprehensive design solutions? How can schools of design and architecture encourage the success of such initiatives? How is knowledge about homelessness generated? How do we collect data, and how is this data used? How can the knowledge and needs of communities themselves become

important drivers for knowledge production and ways forward?“ These were some of the questions discussed during the event series.

The film screenings included the film EX°ST about Radames Eger, who grew up in Brazil and moved to Frankfurt, Germany with a dance scholarship. He has experienced homelessness and designs and creates clothes for homeless people, including jackets that can be converted into tents or sleeping bags that he distributes to the community for free. A film screening of “The Advocates,” by Remi Kessler, had guests Rudy Salinas and Mel Tillekeratne, two of the advocates portrayed in the film, in discussion with the audience.

The Los Angeles Poverty Department's Festival for All Skid Row Artists is a two-day festival of performing and visual art with plenty of music showcasing the diverse range of talents among Skid Row residents. Taking place in Gladys Park, the festival has become one of the most anticipated grassroots cultural events in Skid Row, where over 100 Skid Row Artists perform or display their artwork to enthusiastic audiences. The participants of the Worlds of Homelessness project joined the festivities.

It is a great pleasure to make some of the wonderful contributions of artists, architects, scholars, and particularly people who formerly and currently experience homelessness available to a broader readership as part of this Extrablatt of the Arts of the Working Class. I would like to thank each of the contributors for allowing us to present their outstanding work, as well as the Arts of the Working Class team, for the collaboration!



Lien Heidenreich-Seleme

is the Director of the Goethe-Institut Los Angeles. She studied languages and international law at the Freie University Berlin and joined the Goethe-Institut in 2004. She was the Director of the Goethe-Institut in Afghanistan before supporting the openings of new institutes and offices in sub-Saharan Africa. Subsequently, she worked as the Head of cultural programs sub-Saharan Africa at the Goethe-Institut in South Africa.

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WORLDS OF HOMELESSNESS

Worlds of Homelessness ist eine interdisziplinäre und globale Auseinandersetzung mit dem Thema Obdachlosigkeit als Ausdruck weiterer gesellschaftlicher Fragestellungen wie Ungleichheit, Gentrifizierung, Rassismus und Migration. Das Projekt bringt lokale und internationale Künstler, Architekten, Akademiker und andere Persönlichkeiten zusammen, um Ideen auszutauschen.

von Lien Heidenreich-Seleme

Die Schere zwischen Arm und Reich ist in Los Angeles allgegenwärtig. Während die Stadt meist durch Hollywoodstars bekannt ist, leben in LA County geschätzte 60.000 obdachlose Menschen. „Homelessness is just a paycheck away“ ist eine bekannte Floskel der Stadt, in der teilweise Studenten und arbeitende Menschen in ihren Autos leben, weil sie die Mieten nicht zahlen können.

Worlds of Homelessness ist ein Projekt des Goethe-Instituts, das eine zweijährige interdisziplinäre Auseinandersetzung mit dem Thema Obdachlosigkeit als Ausdruck weiterer gesellschaftlicher Fragestellungen wie Arm-Reich, Partizipation, Ungleichheit, Gentrifizierung, Rassismus und Migration umfasst. Worlds of Homelessness bringt Künstler, Architekten, Akademiker und andere Persönlichkeiten zusammen, um Ideen, Gedanken und ihre Arbeit zu dem Thema auszutauschen und neue Auseinandersetzungen mit den Fragestellungen und Herausforderungen zu schaffen.

Das Projekt wird in Zusammenarbeit mit dem LA Poverty Department, die seit Jahrzehnten mit obdachlosen Künstlern in Skid Row arbeiten, dem Thomas Mann Haus, der Architekturschule SCI-Arc, dem Institute on Inequality and Democracy at UCLA Luskin und NAVEL, einer kollektiven Kulturorganisation durchgeführt.

Die Worlds of Homelessness Veranstaltungsreihe beinhaltete Diskussionen, Musik und Filmvorführungen und fand vom 22. bis 27. Oktober 2019 in Los Angeles im Skid Row History Museum and Archive, NAVEL und Sci-Arc statt und endete mit dem 10. Festival for All Skid Row Artists des Los Angeles Poverty Departments am 26. und 27. Oktober 2019.

„Wie werden die Themen der Obdachlosigkeit und Wohnungsnot in verschiedenen Orten, Städten, Ländern oder Teilen der Erde diskutiert und adressiert? Wie können wir die Verbindungen und Zusammenhänge zwischen Obdachlosigkeit und den zahlreichen, damit verwandten Themen wie Arm und Reich, Partizipation, Ungleichheit, Gentrifizierung, Rassismus und Migration verstehen? Wie können sich Künstler auf sinnvolle Weise mit Obdachlosigkeit auseinandersetzen? Welche Strategien haben sie angewandt, um sich mit den betroffenen Bevölkerungsgruppen auseinanderzusetzen, oder sind sie selbst Teil davon? Welchen Herausforderungen sehen sie sich dabei gegenüber, und wie gehen sie damit um? Welche Formen der künstlerischen Auseinandersetzung mit Obdachlosigkeit sind problematisch und warum? Wie können Architekten Umgebungen schaffen, die sich gegenseitig unterstützen und für wohnungslose Gemeinschaften geeignet sind? Wie können Grassroots Prozesse zu verantwortungsvollen und umfassenden Designlösungen beitragen? Wie können Schulen für Design und Architektur den Erfolg solcher Initiativen fördern? Wie wird Wissen über Obdachlosigkeit generiert? Wie werden Daten erhoben und wie verwertet? Wie können das Wissen und die Bedürfnisse der betroffenen

Bevölkerungsgruppen zu wichtigen Katalysatoren für die Wissensproduktion und Lösungswege werden?“ Dies waren einige der Fragen, die diskutiert wurden.

Die Filmvorführungen beinhalteten den Film EX°ST über Radames Eger, der in Brasilien aufwuchs, durch ein Tanzstipendium nach Europa kam und nun in Frankfurt am Main lebt. Er war selbst obdachlos und entwirft und schneidert Kleidung für Obdachlose, wie etwa Jacken, die zu Schlafsäcken oder Zelten umfunktioniert werden können. Diese Kleidungsstücke verteilt er kostenlos unter den Bedürftigen. Nach der Filmvorführung von „The Advocates“ von Remi Kessler diskutierten Rudy Salinas und Mel Tillekeratne, zwei der im Film porträtierten Advokaten, mit dem Publikum.

Das Festival for All Skid Row Artists des Los Angeles Poverty Departments ist ein zweitägiges Festival für darstellende und visuelle Kunst mit viel Musik, auf dem die unterschiedlichen Talente der Bewohner von Skid Row vorgestellt werden. Das Festival im Gladys Park hat sich zu einem der am meisten erwarteten kommunalen Kulturereignisse in Skid Row entwickelt, bei dem über 100 Skid Row Künstler ihre Arbeiten vorstellen und einem begeisterten Publikum präsentieren. Die Gäste des Worlds of Homelessness Projekts nahmen an dem Festival teil.

Ich freue mich sehr, dass wir einige der wunderbaren Beiträge von Künstlern, Architekten, Akademikern und insbesondere von Menschen mit Obdachlosigkeitserfahrung einer breiteren Leserschaft im Rahmen dieses Extrablattes der Arts of the Working Class Zeitschrift zugänglich machen können. Ich möchte allen Mitwirkenden dafür danken, dass wir ihre herausragenden Arbeiten vorstellen dürfen, sowie dem Team der Arts of the Working Class für die ausgezeichnete Zusammenarbeit!



Radames Eger Zeltjacke © Jonas Reuter

THE RIGHT TO HOUSING IS A HUMAN RIGHT

The Goethe-Institut Los Angeles organized a four-day conference called “Worlds of Homelessness,” bringing local and international scholars, advocates, artists, architects, and current or formerly unhoused people together for conversations held in downtown Los Angeles.

by Catherine G. Wagley



Fabian Debora of Somos LA Arte: When does life experience become expertise?
© Khalid Farqharson

The event opened at the Skid Row History Museum and Archive, a space run by the performance art collective the Los Angeles Poverty Department, aka the LAPD. Artist John Malpede, who founded the LAPD in the mid-1980s, collaborates to create performances with residents of Skid Row, where a concentration of the city’s unhoused people live. The collective opened the museum and archive in 2015. It served as an ideal venue for the conference’s opening – and later, its closing – as it assumes that Skid Row residents have the knowledge and expertise to document and preserve their own lived experience.

How do we talk about homelessness?

The opening panel on October 22, titled “Framing the Issue,” questioned the language we use to discuss homelessness, including whether “homeless” is even the best term, and outlined systemic factors contributing to worldwide housing precarity. Ananya Roy, of the UCLA Institute on Inequality and Democracy, spoke about the criminalization of poverty, while Barbara Schöning, director of the Institute for European Urban Studies at Bauhaus-Universität Weimar, discussed the Expropriate Deutsche Wohnen movement in Berlin, a public revolt against private corporate landlords. Crushow Herring, an artist, muralist and entrepreneur who lives on Skid Row, framed living unhoused as a rejection of the very system that racially discriminates and criminalizes poverty. Michele Lancione, an urban ethnographer and activist based at University of Sheffield, argued that our collective narratives – including the limiting ways in which we often discuss homelessness – must change if we want a more inclusive future. After the panel ended, the L.A. Playmakers, musicians who belong to the Skid Row community, played until nearly midnight.

When does life experience become expertise?

On October 23, the conference met at Navel on the southwest edge of downtown for film screenings and a discussion on how art can engage with homelessness. John Malpede, artist Henriette Brouwers, and LAPD collaborator Walter Fears spoke about how the LAPD uses performance to engage conversations around the local and national policies that affect the lives of Skid Row residents. Actor and scholar Licko Turle described how street theater and social movements coalesce in communities of unhoused people in Salvador in Brazil. Fabian Debora, an L.A. artist who currently serves as director of Somos LA Arte Homeboy Art Academy at Homeboy Industries, described his own journey with addiction and art, and asked when life experience would begin to be seen as true expertise. The question brought warm applause.

A panel at Sci-Arc on October 24 included architects Darin Johnstone from Los Angeles; Alexander Hagner



Catherine Wagley

is an art critic and journalist based in Los Angeles. She is a contributing editor for the art journal *Momus* and *Contemporary Art Review Los Angeles (CARLA)*. She served as an art critic for the *LA Weekly* from 2011-2017, and contributes to *artnet News*, *ARTNews*, *Hyperallergic*, the *LA Times* and *The LAnd*, among other publications. She is a recent recipient of the Rabkin Prize for art journalism. Her current work often focuses on issues of obscurity: how do we pull stories from the margins of different art worlds without forcing them to fit the mainstream narratives we already know how to tell? Additionally, her reporting in Los Angeles frequently explores the relationships between the art world, gentrification, and urban geography.

from Vienna; Thorsten Deckler and Tebogo Ramatlo from Johannesburg, South Africa; and Ana Elvira Vález from Columbia. The panelists presented projects they had completed, and also discussed different ways of thinking about affordable housing. The only event that did not include a current or formerly unhoused person or someone working daily with unhoused communities, this panel ended in heated debate over the language we use to discuss homelessness and the way we talk about money in a world, and a city, with steep wealth disparities.

What needs to change to ensure the right to housing?

“Worlds of Homelessness” ended on October 25, once again at the Skid Row History Museum and Archive. The final panel included two scholars who focused on our lack of adequate, sharable data on unhoused populations worldwide: Jutta Allmendinger, President of the Berlin Social Science Center (WZB), and Hilary Silver, of George Washington University. Two others, Cristina Cielo of the Latin American Faculty for Social Sciences in Quito, Ecuador and Charles Porter of the United Coalition East Prevention Project in L.A., discussed the possibilities for self-organizing and collective empowerment of marginalized communities. The discussion that followed was wide and urgent, once again touching on how both our mentalities and systems of governance and capital must change if we are to ensure a right to housing.

The Festival for all Skid Row Artists, hosted annually by the LAPD, marked the end of the four-day event. The guests of “Worlds of Homelessness” took part in the festival, which features art from Skid Row residents who work in music, visual art, theater, and a range of other forms.

LAPD

Los Angeles Poverty Department (LAPD) creates work that connects the experiences of people living in poverty to the social forces that shape their lives and communities.

by Henriëtte Brouwers & John Malpede

Skid Row is the poorest area in Los Angeles, with the largest concentration of homeless people of any neighborhood in the US. At the time of the LA Poverty Department's founding, homelessness in this area was thought of as a "beans and blankets" issue: The poor and homeless were warehoused in shelters, fed in soup lines and there was little belief and no means for assisting people to rise out of this condition. LAPD started as part of a movement with advocates, residents, and social service professionals to change the paradigm by putting forward the idea that Skid Row could be improved by embracing and nourishing the powers of the people who live there. LAPD added the arts to this activist mix.

Skid Row Los Angeles is often described as "the last Skid Row in America." What's left out is that all the skid row areas in other cities have been bulldozed, built upon and up-scaled – with all low-income residents displaced. This was about to happen in Los Angeles in the early 1970's. A downtown business community generated plan that passed City Council was reviewed when Tom Bradley became Mayor. The business generated plan, "The Silver Book Plan," called for the demolition of all the single room occupancy (SRO) hotel housing in Skid Row and reserved only one block for a large mission and detox center. The Mayor called for public hearings. Catherine Morris and Jeff Dietrich, the first Skid Row activists from the Catholic Worker community, attended the public hearings and became clients of Chuck Elsesor, a public interest lawyer from the Legal Aid Foundation. The three of them and Gary Squier from the Community Design Center developed an alternative plan that argued for saving the single room occupancy hotel housing in a 50 square block area of Skid Row – and for allowing only extremely low-income housing to be built there. It was described as "the containment zone" arguing that if housing and amenities,

including parks, and a branch library were created there, Skid Row folks would stay in that area rather than spending time in the rest of downtown – or drifting into surrounding neighborhoods. This convinced cynical City Council members as well as those concerned about the

low-income community, that because it was not dispersed has been able to self organize and articulate and defend its interests. Thousands of people live in Skid Row on the streets, and in the past 35 years more than 60 former flophouse hotels have been transformed and new hotels

built by nonprofits to provide safe, affordable, permanent housing. This housing stock has been preserved due to the organized civic engagement of Skid Row residents and activists, who have succeeded twice in enacting moratoriums on SRO hotels to prevent their conversion into upscale accommodations. Today, more than half of the people living in Skid Row are permanent residents of these hotels, among them the elderly, women, families, veterans, a large and active drug recovery community, those with mental and physical disabilities, and people recovering from incarceration.

Los Angeles Poverty Department embraces the power of imagination to motivate people, and not only artistically – by acknowledging the hopes, dreams, rational and spiritual power at the core of everyone's humanity. LAPD has grown from a pipsqueak organization – to become a larger, but still pipsqueak organization – that has had a major impact on raising the value placed on the arts by activists, social service providers and policymakers.

LAPD's theater projects have thematically focused on a constellation of inter-related issues of continued importance to Skid Row, and other low-income communities. These performances have challenged, destabilized and overturned the dominant narrative on interconnected issues, including gentrification and community displacement, drug recovery, the war on drugs and drug policy reform, the status of women and children on Skid Row and mass incarceration and the criminalization of poverty.

LAPD has created these theater projects in Skid Row and in extended residencies in communities throughout the US, and in the UK, France, The Netherlands, Belgium



1991 CALL HOME – callers on the street © LA Poverty Department



2003 La Llorona, Weeping Women in Skid Row © LA Poverty Department

lives of low-income people, to embrace the "containment plan" and abandon the wholesale bulldozing and obliteration of Skid Row. The Containment Policy had the consequence of protecting Skid Row from development. The containment and segregation of Skid Row has resulted in the grassroots creation of an ever-strengthening

#CREATIVESTATEMENT



2002 Agents and Assets – Detroit © LA Poverty Department

and Bolivia, while working with drug recovery programs, shelters, policy advocates, and arts organizations.

“Agents and Assets” addressed the devastation of lives and communities by the “War on Drugs” and was created in Los Angeles, Detroit and Cleveland at moments when drug policy reform campaigns were making change in those cities. Our performance project “Biggest Recovery Community Anywhere” debunked the city of LA / developer narrative that Skid Row was infested by drug dealers and emphasized that Skid Row’s free recovery programs and the 80 weekly recovery meetings organized by Skid Row residents attested to its large, active and sophisticated recovery culture. This project was instrumental in changing the perception of Skid Row, which is now widely recognized throughout the city as the place where recovery happens. Our 2016 performance, “What Fuels Development?” celebrated the campaign we were active in to prevent non-profit housing developers from leasing their street-level storefronts for upscale, full bar restaurants – that were an affront to their low-income, just off the streets tenants who were struggling with sobriety. Our 2017 installation and performance, “The Back 9” challenged the way land-use decisions are made. The project initiated a dialog with the city’s planning department, and led to the formation of a grassroots coalition that developed a plan that articulates that current Skid Row residents want their neighborhood to remain theirs in the future – with no displacement.

LAPD tells the rest of the story – what you don’t hear elsewhere. We create change by telling the story of the community in a way that supports the initiatives of community residents. We work to create recognition of the community and its values.

We want to create a normative community in Skid Row and normative communities for all people living in poverty. In other words, if they’ve got municipal services in other parts of town, then we want them in ours. If they’ve got parks, libraries, community centers, then we want the same. We want the same policing in our community as in others. Not, bending the laws using racial profiling or harassing people so that they will leave the neighborhood so that it can be developed.

We make change by creating initiatives that bring together, grassroots advocacy and arts organizations, community members and Skid Row service providers. With the Urban Institute and Americans for the Arts, we initiated a series of neighborhood conversations for residents



John Malpede

directs, performs, and engineers multi-event projects that have theatrical, installation, public art, and education components. He is Artistic Director of the Los Angeles Poverty Department (LAPD), a performance group he founded in 1985, that is comprised of people who make art, live, and work on Skid Row. He has produced projects working with communities throughout the US, as well as in the UK, France, the Netherlands, Belgium, and Bolivia. His 2004 work RFK in EKY sought to recreate Robert Kennedy’s 1968 “war on poverty” tour in the course of a four-day, 200-mile series of events focused on historic and current issues and social policy. As a 2008-2009 fellow at MIT’s Center for Advanced Visual Studies, Malpede developed Bright Futures in response to the worldwide financial crisis. In 2013, John Malpede received the Doris Duke Performing Artist Award. In 2014, the Queens Museum of Art in New York City mounted the first retrospective gallery exhibition on the work of the LAPD, which traveled to the Armory Center for the Arts in Pasadena in 2016.

and community organizations to articulate the role of culture in Skid Row and to find out what are their desires for the future. The results were published by Americans for the Arts in a paper co-authored by Maria Rosario Jackson of the Urban Institute and John Malpede of LAPD. The paper affirmed the importance of grassroots culture arising from the initiatives of Skid Row residents, and has been an often-cited source of validation among Skid Row cultural activists and cited at numerous government meetings. The report found that culture comes from the ground up in Skid Row, with people making visual art and music in their hotel rooms, in the parks, and on the sidewalks. The obstacles to making art and the dearth of available workshop, rehearsal and performance spaces motivated LA Poverty Department to initiate the annual Festival for All Skid Row Artists, and in 2015 to establish our Skid Row History Museum & Archive. In October 2020, we held our 10th annual Festival for All Skid Row Artists where 125 Skid Row artists performed and showed their work. LAPD has documented the work of over 900 artists who have participated in one or more of our festivals. The festival undeniably instantiates the creative vitality of Skid Row.

In 2012 we held our first biennial Walk the Talk performance parade. This project honors people who live and work in Skid Row and who have made it one of the most significant areas for solving the problems that other people have given up on. As with the Festival for All Skid Row Artists, and many of our other projects, Walk the Talk affirms that Skid Row is a community. A community nominating process engages community brainpower to identify initiatives and people who had made transformative contributions to the neighborhood.

The selected honorees are interviewed by LAPD (and others who wish to attend). The interviews are distilled into short performance scripts that we perform on the sidewalk in front of the place where each honoree does their work. A visual artist does a portrait of each honoree, and a New Orleans style brass band leads performers and the crowd as we dance through the streets of Skid Row from the site of one scene to the next. The parade route is different for each biennial parade, as it is determined by the location of each honoree's work.

In April 2015, LAPD opened its Skid Row History Museum & Archive. The museum functions as a means for exploring the mechanics of displacement in an age of immense income inequality, by mining a neighborhood's activist history and amplifying effective community resistance strategies. The current exhibition, "How to House 7,000 People in Skid Row" identifies land-use policies that could generate 3.5 billion dollars to house people un-housed in Skid Row. The Skid Row History Museum & Archive hosts hundreds of events yearly, LAPD events and those initiated by community members and groups. It also serves as a literal and artistic common ground, a space for Angelenos to meet and explore civic issues together.

Skid Row History Museum & Archive 250 S. Broadway, LA CA 90012
Open: Thu. Fri. Sat. 2-5pm

Los Angeles Poverty Department – LAPD

Founded in 1985 by director-performer-activist John Malpede and based in Skid Row, Los Angeles Poverty Department (LAPD) is a non-profit arts organization, the first performance group in the nation made up principally of homeless people, and the first arts program of any kind for homeless people in Los Angeles. LAPD creates performances and multidisciplinary artworks that connect the experience of people living in poverty to the social forces that shape their lives and communities. LAPD's works express the realities, hopes, dreams, and rights of people who live and work in L.A.'s Skid Row. John Malpede and Henriëtte Brouwers are co-recipients of the 2018 City of Santa Monica Visual Artist Fellowship.



Henriëtte Brouwers

is the Associate Director of the Los Angeles Poverty Department since 2000. She co-directs, produces, and performs in many LAPD performances. Born in the Netherlands, Brouwers has performed, directed and taught throughout the Netherlands, France and the US. In Paris, she became a member of Augusto Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed group (1979-82) and studied corporeal mime with Étienne Décroux. In the Netherlands, she founded movement theater ACTA and performed with Shusaku & Dormu Dance Theatre, Griff Theater, Nationaal Fonds, and others. In 1993, the Theatre Project in Baltimore presented her work, "A Traveling Song." In the same year, 7 Stages theatre invited her to perform the solo "Maya in The Decline and Fall of the Rest" by Jim Grimsley and was movement director for "Blue Monk" by Robert Earl Price for the 1996 Olympic Arts Festival in Atlanta. She performed her solo Malinche and La Lengua, the Tongue of Cortès in the US and the Netherlands and directed a series of devised performances based on the Mexican legend of La Llorona: The Weeping Woman. She is featured in artist Bill Viola's renowned "The Passions" series. Henriëtte Brouwers worked with John Malpede on the creation of RFK in EKY (2004) a community-based re-enactment of Robert F. Kennedy's 1968 trip to investigate poverty in Appalachia.



1985 Talent Show Los Angeles Poverty Department – Thieves Corner © Axel Köster



1989 Jupiter 35 – Highways Performance space © LA Poverty Department



2014 Walk The Talk © LA Poverty Department

AM FREITAG IST MAL WIEDER BEERDIGUNG

Skid Row gilt als eines der gefährlichsten Viertel von Los Angeles. 2.000 Obdachlose leben hier in Zelten. Für Stadtplaner und Soziologinnen eine Herausforderung.

von Elisabeth Wellershaus



Crushow Herring © Michael Jaffe

Ich komme pünktlich um zehn und sehe Bürgersteige voller Zelte. Einkaufswagen, in denen die spärlichen Besitztümer der Bewohner*innen aufbewahrt werden. Paletten mit Dosenessen neben gebrauchten Spritzen. Der Uringeruch beißt in der Nase. In der Regel treiben die Einladungen des Goethe-Instituts mich in aufgeräumte Tagungszentren, Galerien oder Theater. Das Thema Obdachlosigkeit, um das es im aktuellen Projekt in Los Angeles geht, lässt sich abseits der Straße aber nun mal kaum fassen. Vor einem Zelt, das er mit seinen beiden Pitbulls teilt, empfängt mich Crushow Herring. Er ist Teilnehmer der Konferenz Worlds of Homelessness und hat mich eingeladen, ihn hier zu interviewen. Als ich ankomme, fegt er den Bürgersteig, plaudert mit Nachbar*innen aus den Zelten nebenan. Und ich staune. Über Skid Row, das als eines der gefährlichsten Viertel von L.A. gilt und für Herring schlicht freundliche Nachbarschaft zu sein scheint.

Bislang sind sämtliche Versuche gescheitert, die Zeltstadt in Downtown L.A. mit ihren mehr als 2.000 Bewohner*innen zu räumen. "Zustände wie in der Dritten Welt", schrieb der Völkerrechtler Philip Alston vergangenes Jahr in einem UN-Bericht über das 50 Blocks große Viertel, in dem seit Beginn des 20. Jahrhunderts arme und marginalisierte Angelenos leben. Stoisch beobachtet Herring den Mann von der Stadtreinigung, der die gelben Graffiti-Botschaften hinter seinem Zelt übermalt. "Junkie-Asyl", "Vorort zur Hölle", lauten gemeinhin die Zuschreibungen von außerhalb des Viertels. Doch Herring kann damit nichts anfangen. Er ist freiwillig hier – und zwar deutlich öfter als bei seiner Frau und den Kindern in Long Beach.

Eigentlich müsste er nicht mehr in Skid Row leben. Vor knapp 20 Jahren schlug er als erfolgloser Basketballspieler ohne Job und Wohnung hier auf. Dealte, wie so Viele, mit Crack, um über die Runden zu kommen. Der Kontakt zu Sozialarbeiter*innen und Künstler*innen im Viertel aber hat Herrings Leben verändert. Die eigenen Kunstprojekte interessierten irgendwann auch jenseits von Skid Row, das toughe Image des Viertels faszinierte die Galerist*innen. Doch zumindest phasenweise wohnt er noch hier, will jetzt andere unterstützen. "Vielleicht, weil es der einzige Ort war, an dem ich damals willkommen war", sagt er und winkt Menschen zu, von denen manche mehr tot als lebendig an uns vorbeischlurfen. Auch Mitarbeiter*innen von Drogenpräventionsprojekten und der Jobvermittlung grüßen den 42-Jährigen. Menschen vor Kirchen und Suppenküchen, die Sprayer im Park.

Am Abend wird Herring auf dem Podium des Goethe-Instituts sitzen, am Wochenende ein Musikfestival moderieren. Er bewegt sich zwischen hippen Galerien und Nachbarschaftstreffen, organisiert Workshops, schafft Toiletten für die Community mit ran. Fast riecht seine Geschichte ein bisschen nach Hollywood, aber fürs Kino fehlt Skid Row die Romantik. Viele hängen schlicht hier fest: Frauen, die sich vor gewalttätigen Männern verstecken, Abhängige, die fast alles für den nächsten Schuss tun, Zwangsprostituierte, Traumatisierte. Doch selbst sie scheinen in Skid Row eine Art Zuhause gefunden zu haben. "In Obdachlosenheimen hat man ein Dach über

dem Kopf, hier gehört man dazu", sagt Herring schlicht.

Stadtplaner*innen erforschen das Phänomen informeller Strukturen längst mit großem Interesse. Suchen weltweit nach angemessenem Umgang mit den Konsequenzen städtischer Verarmung. "Menschen, die sich formellen Wohnraum nicht leisten können, schaffen sich eigene Lösungen", schreiben Fabian Frenzel und Niko Rollmann in der taz. Zwar ist Skid Row bereits die Art von stigmatisiertem Ghetto, vor dem sie tendenziell warnen. Doch gezwungenermaßen trägt gerade hier die Gemeinschaft. "Friday?", ruft eine junge Frau Herring im Vorbeigehen zu. "Friday!", antwortet er. Mal wieder eine Beerdigung.

Er trägt eine elektronische Fußfessel

Dort, wo gefühlte Wohlstandssicherheit das Leben bestimmt, blickt man mit einer Mischung aus Mitleid und Befremden auf das Geschehen in Skid Row. Noch atmen die Besserverdienenden ruhig, weil die Obdachlosen noch nicht ganz bis vor ihre Haustür vorgedrungen sind. Dabei verlieren immer mehr arbeitende Menschen Haus und Wohnung – auch in den Zelten von Skid Row leben viele, die morgens ins Büro gehen. In L.A. liegen die offiziellen Obdachlosenzahlen bei 36.300. Eine Mischung aus steigenden Mieten, prekären Arbeitsbedingungen und fehlender sozialer Absicherung treibt die Menschen auf die Straße. Die spärlichen Reintegrationsangebote der Stadt erreichen sie dort kaum.

So gerät das Bild des zugehörnten Penners, der seinen Abstieg selbst verschuldet hat, in extreme Schiefelage. "In unserer Gesellschaft werden vor allem Afroamerikaner*innen viel zu schnell und pauschal als Kriminelle abgestempelt", sagt Charles Porter von der Drogenberatungsstelle UCEPP. "Wenn sie erst mal auf der Straße leben, werden sie nur noch als gesellschaftliche Störfaktoren



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wahrgenommen, die die räumliche und soziale Ordnung stören." Herring schüttelt resigniert den Kopf, wenn er von den Reinigungsaktionen erzählt, mit denen die Polizei sein Viertel regelmäßig "säubert" und die wenigen Besitztümer der Bewohner*innen einkassiert. Den Weg zum Mittagessen gehen wir auf Umwegen, Herring trägt eine elektronische Fußfessel, an einer bestimmten Straße darf er nicht mehr vorbei. Angeblich hat er dort 2015 jemanden ausgeraubt. Er bestreitet das – doch seitdem er in Skid Row lebt, hat die Polizei ihn auf dem Kieker.

Auf dem Podium von Worlds of Homelessness spricht Herring am Abend vor Architekt*innen, Soziolog*innen und Leuten aus dem Kiez. Über die Kriminalisierung der Armut, institutionalisierte Diskriminierung, Polizeigewalt – darüber, dass all dies noch immer zu oft als Problem anderer abgetan wird. Neben ihm sitzt die deutsche Stadtplanerin Barbara Schöning und erklärt, warum auch Berlin kein Mietwunderland mit bezahlbarem Wohnraum mehr ist. Wie die Preise innerhalb der letzten zehn Jahre durch ausufernde Immobilienspekulation durch die Decke gingen. Und die Obdachlosenzahlen auch dort steigen – selbst wenn die Zustände längst nicht so dramatisch sind wie in L.A. Und Zeltsiedlungen ohnehin meist reflexartig abgerissen werden.

Vier Tage diskutiert Herring mit über Wohnungsnotfragen in den USA, Deutschland, Italien, Kolumbien und Südafrika. Verhandelt die extremen Unterschiede zwischen den Heimatländern der geladenen Expert*innen und applaudiert der US-Soziologin Hilary Silver, die am Ende eine entscheidende Gemeinsamkeit benennt: die Flexibilität des Begriffs Zuhause. "Es ist nicht das konventionelle Dach über dem Kopf, das uns Zugehörigkeit vermittelt", sagt sie. "Es sind die sozialen Strukturen, die uns tragen."

Strukturen, die sich im erstaunlichen Potenzial von vermeintlich "gescheiterten" Gegenden wie Skid Row zeigen, wo Drogenentzug, Jobvermittlungen oder den Bau neuer Duschzentren längst die Community selbst übernimmt. Die damit das staatliche Versagen gegenüber den Missständen vor Ort entlarven. Die Abgrenzung von der "Armut der anderen": Ich praktiziere sie selbst, wenn ich Alltagsszenen unter Berliner S-Bahn-Brücken oder vor Supermärkten ausblende. Dabei liegt die Chance sicherlich auch jenseits von Skid Row im Hinsehen: darin, aus den Bedürfnissen und Ideen "der anderen" zu lernen.

Am Tag nach der Konferenz sehe ich Crushow Herring beim Skid Row Arts Festival. Er steht auf einer kleinen Bühne und kündigt ein Straßenorchester mit einem Solisten an, der früher beim Los Angeles Philharmonic spielte. Vor dem Stand einer Theatertruppe plaudert ein ehemaliges Gangmitglied der Denver Lane Bloods mit einem Schauspielkollegen. Hinter ihnen ein ehemals obdachloser junger Mann in Uniform, der sich sein Medizinstudium verdient, indem er über die Community wacht. Zwischen Fitnessgeräten und Spielplatzequipment die schunkelnden Menschen aus Skid Row. Und als Momentaufnahme sieht ihr Leben an den Rändern definitiv nach mehr aus als nach schlecht verkleideter Anarchie.

HOUSING JUSTICE IN UNEQUAL CITIES

by Ananya Roy

Housing precarity is not a new phenomenon. In a series of essays titled “The Housing Question,” which were published as a pamphlet in 1872, Friedrich Engels noted that structures of housing shortage and geographies of urban displacement were a necessary accompaniment of capitalism. Engels’s uncanny analysis, as relevant today as it was for the industrial city of the late 19th century, is rooted in his own confrontation with social difference. Son of a wealthy German industrialist sent to observe the cotton industry of Manchester, his encounter with inequality and exploitation at this node of colonial capitalism was to set into motion a formidable critique of the institution of housing, including various bourgeois reforms meant to allay the crisis of slums and poverty.

Engels’s essays lead us to ask: what is the housing question of the early 21st century? Building on many decades of research in the cities of the Global South and Global North, I wish to foreground two processes that are central to today’s housing question. The first is the financialization of land and housing. While housing has long been constituted as a commodity, the first decades of the 21st century are marked by a structural shift whereby large financial investors, the most notorious of which is possibly Blackstone, have sought to turn housing into an arena of financial speculation. In the United States, the Great Recession of 2007-2009 demonstrated the devastating effects of predatory housing debt, engulfing entire neighborhoods and cities in foreclosure. But such financialization continues to deepen, driven by the oligopolistic power of global finance and the deregulatory impulse of governments.

The second is the criminalization of poverty. In cities around the world, the urban poor face stigmatization and exclusion, often through the use of legal reason and legal authority deployed by municipal governments. Framed as encroachers, the unhoused and informally housed are positioned as violations of spatial and social order. Such forms of criminalization are especially harsh today in U.S. cities, with Los Angeles bearing the dubious distinction of pioneering cruel and harsh policies of banishment that deny rights to those on the margins of propertied citizenship. Indeed, in Los Angeles, a series of

municipal ordinances have turned houselessness into a state of social death, without the constitutional protections and civil rights that accord to those who are housed.

Both these processes – the financialization of land and housing and the criminalization of poverty – must be placed within the present history of racial capitalism. Engels’s analysis of the housing question, despite its brilliance, is glaringly silent on one point: that Manchester was not only the scene of capitalist exploitation but also that it was a node of colonial capitalism, linking the industrial city of England to the ravaged hinterlands of the British empire. One form of exploitation was deeply

across national borders, these movements constitute the frontlines of urban struggle. They are fighting for rent control and social housing. They are challenging the rightlessness of the unhoused. Most significant, they are crafting new meanings of property and rent, personhood and tenancy. With the uncanny analysis that Engels once demonstrated, they are pinpointing the structures of wealth accumulation for which housing precarity is a necessary accompaniment. Rejecting bourgeois reforms, these movements, from Los Angeles to Berlin, Barcelona to Durban, Rio de Janeiro to New York, are mobilizing instruments of expropriation to insist upon the social

function of property and to demand the decommodification of housing. Inevitably, such movements are in alliance with those striving for racial justice and climate justice. Together, they could very well rewrite today’s housing question.

With this in mind, I share an image from the work of organizations and movements in Santa Ana, California. A Latino working-class community, Santa Ana has faced displacement and dispossession. And it is here that movement leaders and scholars continue to assert visions of community-controlled land and social housing. This is the face of housing justice in unequal cities.

**NOT
FOR SALE**
**our community
our story
our legacy**

NO GENTRIFIERS ALLOWED!!

linked to another form of dispossession. Today, in many cities around the world, especially in the United States, the contours of financial exploitation are the throughlines of racial and ethnic segregation. Today, in many cities around the world, especially in the United States, carceral power is directed at racial others and can be understood as the after-life of slavery and colonial conquest.

If such processes constitute today’s housing question, then what is housing justice in unequal cities? It is precisely this question that animates a new global research network situated at the Institute on Inequality and Democracy at the University of California, Los Angeles, for which I serve as director. We view the present historical conjuncture as a moment not only of substantial housing precarity but also of an extraordinary proliferation of housing justice movements. Often connected



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RECENTERING THE POLITICS OF HOME. NOTES FROM WITHIN AND FROM BELOW

I met Paolo in 2009, while doing fieldwork in Turin. He was about 40.

by Michele Lancione

Topic	Example 1	Example 2	Example 3	Example 4	Example 5
Ungratefulness of homeless man	I just read a story that the homeless man wants money for the pic being disclosed without permission... How ungratefull!	are you kidding me, the update on this guy is ridiculous! [...] this man has chosen to be homeless & do whatever it is he's doing to put him there. sorry, but i will totally think twice before i give them anything.	Seems this guy is very ungrateful now and wants his piece of the pie because his picture was posted online without his permission. Should be arrested for loitering now.	What a great officer to help, now this homeless man 'Wants a piece of the pie' for the photo, what a loser, he should just be grateful for the boots but he wants a handout, what a loser	It was on the news today that unfortunately this man isn't homeless, he lives in an apt in Brooklyn or the Bronx? So sad to hear this amazing and good deed went to someone selfish
Homeless is a fraud	Turns out the man is not homeless and won't wear the boots because they are worth a lot of money to him! Geez!	HE ISN'T HOMELESS!!! FRAUD!!! FRAUDI!!!	For those who don't know, this man is not homeless, it's a choice.	He's Not Homeless!!!!	this man is NOT homeless at all. for the last 3 years he has been pooling this but i have seen him dressed better then most. His hustle will always be this.

“Those shoes are hidden. They are worth a lot of money [...] I could lose my life.”

Mr. J Hillman, interviewed by the NYT

We were sitting on a bench. We had bought two beers and two *tranci di pizza*, because that's what you do in Turin when you are walking and chatting. Paolo was telling me that dealers in the city gave away opiates for free in the early 80s: a long term customer loyalty programme to establish a habit in new users. By the late 80s, he was smuggling cocaine for tourists on expensive holidays in Kenya. By the early 2000s, he had been through a therapeutic community for addicts in Tuscany. But this was not the whole story. He was excited about a new relationship with a lady he was in love with. He was worried whether his mother would forgive him. His life flickered between more and less stable times. He had periods on the street, where he would return to day-hubs, free showers, and soup kitchens alternating with periods of being temporarily housed. He was a homeless drug user, but also a peer educator; he was a giver as well as a taker, a friend as well as an informant, a hustler and another body under the burning Italian sun. You couldn't reduce him to a single definition. Paolo was *a plural*: a whole universe entangled with many past and present others, sitting with me on a bench, eating pizza, talking, and smoking in Turin.

Mundane encounters like the one with Paolo showed me the poverty of social science when it comes to capturing the multiple, nuanced complexity of life. Academic discourse about homelessness often silences and contains, it measures and controls. It tries to fit Paolo into a definition of the “the homeless,” which can then be translated into a set of policies for a “service user.” It tries to contrast him with a “normal” subject, the subject at home, making him the one outside – out-casted in the land where things are less, where life itself is conceived and managed on the basis of its supposed *lessness*.

So the question I'd like to ask is: *How can we do*

more? I am not simply saying “How can we do more to respect Paolo's complexity” but more *to demolish the silencing operating by normative discourse and see, once and for all, the light that comes through, and from, life at the margins?* How do we avoid arid intellectual encapsulations and analytical reductions? How do we move beyond categorical interventions? How do we avoid reducing a life to one dimension: “Paolo-the-homeless”; “Paolo-the-drug-user”; “Paolo-the-dealer”; “Paolo-the-deviant,” to start instead to conceive life as *a plural*, a multitude?

I'm not the only one asking these questions: post-structuralist thinkers, anarchists, feminist scholars, critical race theorists, and the anti-psychiatry movement have been doing so for years. But I've developed my own take on this problem, one that is specific to the field of homelessness. My argument is that three things are needed. Firstly, we must attack what I call the “economy of homelessness.” This is a set of discourses, cultural habits, blueprints to actions and a knowledge-making enterprise, which reduce the margins to their given definition and neat policy problems. Secondly, we need to rethink the ways we talk about “home,” to stop seeing it as the opposite of “homelessness” and to start recognising the ways in which precarity also structures so-called “normal” experiences of housing. Thirdly, when it comes to resistance, we must look to life at the margins for inspiration, and learn to feel the light that comes through, to being attentive to that life on its own terms.

On the economy of homelessness

To understand why homelessness is such an established feature of the urban landscape, we must move beyond the idea that it reflects an objective struggle for housing, happening “out there”. Instead, we need to look at how

homelessness is *made*, how it is constructed by the discourses and practices populating an “economy of homelessness”. Borrowing from Foucault we can understand this economy of homelessness as something that combines the production of knowledge with interventions that define and discipline. Its effect is to reduce the homeless subject to a depersonalised urban paradigm. With help from this framing, one no longer needs to encounter a homeless person “to know” about homelessness; one always *already* knows about it: from popular discourse, from movies, from videogames, from seeing something that fits that paradigm on the streets, from social media. This “economy of homelessness” erases the living subject, and replaces her with a “cultural truth of homelessness,” which is then reproduced and reinforced by policies and institutional interventions. The individual vanishes, replaced by patronizing ideas and stereotypes. And to show you the damage that this does, here's another story.

On a November night in 2012, Police Officer Larry DePrimo was patrolling Times Square in Manhattan. He saw a homeless person sitting barefoot, and was deeply moved. So DePrimo decided to buy the man a pair of shoes and socks. Jennifer Foster, a tourist from Arizona, saw this act of charity and took a photo with her mobile phone. Her picture was published on the NYPD Facebook page, and from there, it went viral. Within hours it had been viewed 1.6 million times, had 275,000 ‘likes’ and more than 16,000 comments. The international media from Mexico City to Sydney carried the story. Obviously, Donald Trump also tweeted about it.

Intrigued by this response, I analysed 48,000 online comments under the original Facebook post. I wanted to understand how people were talking about this case. Many of the comments praised the virtuous actions of

Larry DePrimo, and compared him to the Good Samaritan of the Bible (Luke 10:30-37). As you know, the Samaritan in the original story is the unknown quantity: he is the foreigner, the potential enemy. But he nonetheless helps a man who has been robbed and beaten in the street, in an act of neighbourly love that transcends barriers and asks for nothing in return. The implication is that we owe each other a concrete form of practical care, even if we are “strangers”¹.

But this framing denies the robbed man a voice. We don’t know – because Jesus does not tell us anything about these points – how the ‘victim’ feels, or what he thinks. Similarly, in the modern case, it is only DePrimo we know about: the homeless person is a blank recipient, uncharacterised. It’s therefore high time that we gave him back his identity: his name is Jeffrey Hillman, and he is a 54 year old black American Army veteran. And the importance of his voice is so great because, once we hear it, the whole relationship of care posited by the Good Samaritan framing crumbles into pieces.

On the 2nd of December, the New York Times published an article titled “Homeless Man Is Grateful for Officer’s Gift of Boots. But He Again Is Barefoot.” A journalist following up on the story had gone back to Times Square, and found that Jeffrey Hillman wasn’t wearing the shoes he had been given. When asked why, Mr. Hillman replied: “Those shoes are hidden. They are worth a lot of money [...] I could lose my life.” While he was grateful for the gift, Hillman was deeply uncomfortable about his story being so well-known. He had taken the shoes off, because he feared they made him vulnerable, a target. He was frightened of being beaten and robbed as a consequence of being the recipient of charity: the very things that happened to the victim of the biblical story *before* the Samaritan arrived on the scene!

Several commentators on Facebook did not like what Mr. Hillman had to say. They began to question his actions, and to speculate about his motives: “[S]oon after, the bum sold the boots... he claims he’s “hidden” them... suuure buddy” wrote one. “I see the homeless man now wants a piece of the pie that his image is creating, what a dick...” said another. And there is plenty more on this vein. In not fitting with the paradigmatic view that was constructed for him, Mr. Hillman immediately ceased to be the poor homeless man worthy of charity and suddenly became an unworthy greedy trump like many “others.”

What this story shows is that our encounter with homelessness is always partial. Not only do we never encounter the full individual who is homeless, but our responses are overlaid with layers of normative social narratives. When homeless individuals like Mr. Hillman are presented – often by pure chance – as having agency to make choices that run against social norms, they are then portrayed as undeserving, as bad, even as enemies of society. Academic and policy literature likes to think it stands outside this nasty version of the dominant framing, but that is not true. Too often we see the scholarly literature calling itself “critical,” to then only end up repeating

what is simply another version of the same moralising attitudes, utilitarian policy responses, and depersonalised approach. The central problem is that people are trying to “solve” the homelessness “problem” without enquiring about the personal, lived experience of people experiencing precarious housing, and often without grounding that experience in its own specific historic lineage.

This framing will always produce the same, inadequate answers: it is a closed loop. So I think that at this point we need to get out of our comfort zone and start to reconsider homelessness from a new angle, a new starting point. And this brings me to my second point: rethinking the vital, central concept of *home* itself.

At home(lessness)

In my work, I argue that the problem with homelessness is that it is defined as the negation of home, conceptually and practically. The “less” in the word “homeless” signals a lack: the absence of shelter, financial stability, ontological security, and so on. Home is supposed to be the opposite of this lack: a plenitude made up of shelter,

from the financialization of housing as an asset (mortgages, rent), the normalization of eviction, the precarity of living in violent households, these are all forms of “lessness” that affect people who are not “homeless” in the conventional framing. Lessness is the *precondition* of being at home in the contemporary urban West, and possibly beyond.

Home is constructed around an exclusionary act. Home is made of walls and doors, which create control and allow the policing of a border. Home is made of social relationships based on emotional bonding, which are carved out through exclusion (there is no bonding if there is no exclusion of others). Home is constructed, in its material form, by accumulations of capital, accumulations that emerge from, and reproduce, systems of oppression. And home is structured by internal exclusions: unbalanced gendered power relationships and paternalistic modes of breeding. In other words, home is grounded in multiple forms of exclusion. It is rooted in precarity, in the possibility of being made less, in *lessness*: because precarity is the only thing that can emerge when you have a home structured around enduring exclusion and unequal power relationships.

So *lessness* in this context saturates home. It exists beyond, above, and before the event of displacement that makes someone homeless. It is tangled up in the everyday choices we all make. But this is obscured by the way that homelessness is currently framed. The fictional distinction between the normal home and the pathological state of homelessness is a bordering tool. It creates *l’autre*, the deviant other, a passive subject of study and care. It disguises the fact that we are actually not that different from Paolo or Jeffrey Hillman. I don’t mean that in the soft humanitarian sense of a shared underlying humanity that persists *in spite of* difference. I mean that we are *actually* not very far removed: the same forces that make Paolo homeless affect all of us too, albeit some are of course even more charged because of the intersection of those forces with other forms of injustice (including racialisation). But when it comes to home, the difference is one of intensity, not kind. We are all under pressure, under threat from the same unbalanced violent exclusionary power, as contemporary housing crises show.



“NYPD Officer Larry DePrimo has made the entire city proud with his generous act of kindness [link] NYC loves the NYPD” – Donald J. Trump, 27th November 2012, Twitter

Picture by Foster, NYPD’s Facebook page

financial stability, and ontological security. I believe we need to question this binary. We need to ask *why* home is something that has the potential of becoming a lack, *why* it has the potential of being eradicated, *why* it can be displaced.

To do this, we must look at the precarity that structures both of these concepts together: home and homelessness. Both are founded on the same affective substratum: something I call “lessness.” *Lessness* is a condition that is perceived by everyone, but at differing levels of intensity. A rough sleeper is affected by *lessness* in ways that most of us cannot imagine. Our bodies are not exposed to the same degree of privation. But this does not mean that we are different in kind, or outside of the same affective game. We are also subject to housing precarity in less intense forms. The burden of debt that results

The politics of life at the margins

So we need to challenge both the economy of homelessness, and the specific way that home is defined in a binary with its lack. But what do we use to replace conventional understandings? This brings me to my third point, which offers an orientation: to look within the light coming from within and from below: from the margins of normative homing structuring.

As bell hooks argued, the margins are neither a place nor a category to define a group. Instead, the margins are the site of a tensioned politics of resistance. Here, people have *already* developed a practical and effective challenge to “lessness.” Here, people are dwelling in ways that break open the habitual status quo. Here, people are organising themselves (sometimes in very everyday

ways) to oppose the precarity and displacement at the bottom of conventional ideas of “home.” Here, people are inhabiting the cracks of the world, which are also the places – to paraphrase Leonard Cohen and Gloria Anzaldúa – where the light gets in. The task of the urban researcher is to feel that light, to take it on its own terms, to learn from it. I will give you two brief examples.

In a recent essay, Saidiya Hartman tells the story of Esther Brown. Esther is a young black woman living in Harlem at the time of World War I, who “hated to work, the conditions of work as much as the very idea of work.”² So Esther resists the discipline and the pressure of everyday life by strolling in the open. In describing her walking, Hartman tells us that the ways in which bodies move is about more than simply coming and going. In her movement, Esther constructs a differential modality of being. Conventionally, she would be defined as homeless or vagrant, but in reality she is contesting the dominant habitus, challenging the demand that her black body stays still, works, gets out of the way of white people. The “[w]andering and drifting” of Esther – without organization, without declared politics, without recognition – is not just an embodiment of her precarity, but a precarious political form of embodiment.

The body of Esther Brown was not supposed to move in the way it does. By walking, she traces a ritornello, a refrain, which cuts through habitual racialized segregation and displacement in the US city. Yet, within the frameworks of both wider society and the academy, both Esther’s rebellion and, more fundamentally, Harlem’s everyday “choreography of the possible” are almost entirely ignored. The ways in which Esther inhabits the world – and therefore the ways in which she constructs an alternative version of “homing” the world – it is silenced. And this neglect is itself a form of discrimination, as Harman points out:

“the potentiality of their lives has remained unthought because no one could imagine young black women as social visionaries, radical thinkers, and innovators” (2018:470)

A second example. A community living underground, a few meters away from the main train station in Bucharest, showed me the ways that radical dwelling could be woven into the fabric of an apparently “homeless” existence.

They lived in the tunnels of Bucharest’s heating system, a space which they called “casa” or “home,” without a shred of irony. This home was an assemblage of circulation: of bodies, of drugs, of materials for recycling, which they sorted and sold in the informal markets of the city. They were organised: they had electricity, light, a TV, a stereo, and a kitchen where they cooked communal meals. 30 or 40 people lived together in this way, for more than two decades, carving out a resistant margin in a world that did not have space for them, and

that expelled them throughout a history of socialist nationalist policy, racialized confinement, and the total privatisation of housing under the dominant logic of the “new,” modernised and civilised Bucharest.

Conventional wisdom says that these people pose a problem to be solved. The “homeless” need to be institutionalized; the drug users cured; the urban hustlers restrained. But in the underground, a radical affirmation of difference was possible, an alternative truth was proposed. Ileana explained this to me, as she washed the collective dishes in a bucket, 3 meters below the surface of the road:

“It’s a very good life here, we have food and warmth, and we have everything we need. [...] No one is left behind to watch the others eating. We eat together; we are like a family.”

This lively “infrastructure of care” points to something more profound, more radical than “resilience.” The community had rearranged the status quo to sustain lives

led on their terms. I met people who had lived in the underground for more than 15 years: they dreamt and loved there; fought and died there; harassed each other, but also cared for each other in ways that would have been impossible in one of the city’s homeless shelters. Just as Esther Brown inhabited the margins as a site of resistance through strolling, the community of *boschetari*³ of Gara de Nord refused to “fit,” and instead proposed and assembled a different kind of home. They dwelt in and through history, via horizontal alliances and grounded solidarity. By taking this as a serious form of resistance, we can recognise the limitations of our existing economy of homelessness, and challenge the “lessness” at the heart of our individualistic, excluding and self-deprecating idea of home.

Buonanotte

We need to get closer to housing precarity, to the places where it is lived and felt. We need to get closer to the place where all representations of that precarity, of the

lived experience of life at the margins crumble, so that we can recenter the politics of home from the uncanny experiences and propositions of these in-between spaces.

Paolo passed away in September 2015. His last post on Facebook was a 😊 of a sunset taken from his hospital room. The text was simple: “Buonanotte 😊” (Goodnight). We spoke for the last time on the phone, a few days before. The traces that remain of his life, and many others like it, are fragile, and ephemeral. They cast a translucent light that science and policy have for too long silenced and cast away. But we can work together to re-encounter Paolo, Mr. Hillman, Ester, Ileana and so many others like them, in order to re-articulate home from below and from within despite its violent impossibility. And we can only do this by moving outside of established narratives, by being attentive to capitalised and racialised histories, and by listening to alternative forms of living and breathing resistance. That site of resistance – the site where home is made possible again through solidarity and collective labour – is the place to inhabit: the only shared future worth pursuing.



Paolo was an atmospheric and collective subject that was somehow individuated, but impossible to contain in a single definition.

Collage by Paolo



Michele Lancione

is an urban ethnographer and activist interested in issues of marginality and diversity, homelessness, and radical politics. His works have been published in top international journals in the field of Urban Geography, Housing Studies and Anthropology. His first edited volume is entitled *Rethinking Life at the Margins*, while his non-academic works include a collaborative documentary around forced evictions in Bucharest, Romania (www.ainceputploaia.com). Michele is also one of the founders and editors of the open-source *Radical Housing Journal*, an Editor of *City*, and Corresponding Editor for Europe at *IJURR*. He is based at the Urban Institute and the Department of Urban Studies and Planning, University of Sheffield, UK. You can get in touch @michelelancione.

- 1 Including the following: “he went to him and bandaged his wounds”; “he put the man on his own donkey”; “he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper”; etc.
- 2 Hartman, S. (2018) *The Anarchy of Colored Girls Assembled in a Riotous Manner*. *South Atlantic Quarterly* 117.3, 465–90.
- 3 Homeless, hustlers.

HOUSING AS A CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Lessons from the Housing Crisis and Housing Movement in Germany

by Barbara Schöning

Traditionally, Germany was known for providing quality market-rate and subsidized housing for the majority of its population. But currently, the country is facing a severe housing crisis. Within the last decade, rents, and prices for residential property have steadily increased.¹ This increase has especially, but not exclusively affected major cities and their surrounding regions.

How The Housing Question Got Lost in Transformation(s)

Three major trends have added to this development: First, Germany, as many other western welfare states, has seen a deep transformation of housing policy. In line with the ordoliberal concept of a social market economy, West-German housing policy has, from the beginning, strictly limited state intervention into the housing market, except in situations of severe housing crisis. Therefore, national housing policy gradually withdrew from the 1960's model of direct subsidies for social housing, in favor of more market-oriented instruments (individual housing subsidies, homeownership). This trend increased with the general retrenchment from national welfare state policies from the mid-1980s on. The number of newly funded social housing units decreased, and existing units, temporarily designated as social housing, foreseeably lost that status. By 2016, only 1.24 Million of the 2.87 Million units of social housing available in 1990 remained.² In 1990 the nonprofit housing sector was practically dissolved by abolishing its tax privileges, a move that resulted in the transformation of affordable nonprofit stocks into market-rate housing. Secondly, this transformation coincided with changes in the housing market: large profit-oriented investors and financial players bought formerly affordable housing stocks, with the expectation of higher profits. Simultaneously, residential property became an important asset for increasingly privatized individual retirement planning, thereby putting additional pressure on the rental market.

Thirdly, these changes came about within a general move towards entrepreneurial urban politics and met little public or local opposition. Many cities sold their municipal housing stocks, focusing instead on inner-city urban upgrading and housing for the middle classes. When the dynamics of housing price development intensified after the 2008 financial crisis, national housing policy and municipal housing strategies had already faded away.

The Housing Question Today

Although from the early 2010s on, the Housing Question was on the table for a large part of the population, the crisis appears to be extremely polarized in spatial and social terms. Economically flourishing cities and urban regions experience housing shortages, while many rural and economically depressed areas experience a housing surplus. The amount and quality of living space per person increase for upper-income households, but decrease for low-income households, who also face the highest increase in housing costs.³ As affordable and social housing is scarce and mostly concentrated within the cities – socio-spatial segregation is enforced.

Despite this polarization, resistance against market-oriented housing and urban policy is growing all

over the country and across social classes. While national and state governments intensified housing policy temporarily, general corrections to market-oriented housing policy remain out of sight. Such changes would necessitate a revision of the paradigm underlying housing provision in Germany.

Challenging the Rules

Housing is a human right and is simultaneously a basic need and a market good. Its provision, therefore, has always been subject to social negotiations within modern societies, resulting in societal compromises – nationally specific “housing regimes” – framed by the particular national welfare regimes in which they were embedded. Just as globalized flexible capitalism has permeated and radically changed our societies and personal lives, it has also transformed established national housing regimes and increased the dynamics of housing markets. But presently, thousands are taking to the streets to challenge market-oriented urban development and housing policy.

In Germany, a remarkable example of this is the so-called movement for the “expropriation” of large housing companies in Berlin: “Deutsche Wohnen Enteignen”. This title, however, is misleading, as the initiative doesn't object to expropriation. Instead, it refers to Article 15 in the Grundgesetz (German Basic Law) that has never been enacted. Article 15 explicitly allows for land property, natural resources, and means of production to be socialized if the title in question is to be deemed public property and part of the collectivized economy.

The petition seeks a referendum in the Berlin Senate that would appropriate all housing and land in Berlin held by for-profit companies with more than 3.000 housing units. According to the initiative, these companies possess strong market power and provide a basic good, but place greater value on profits than on housing quality, people, and neighborhoods. The petition also calls for all the potentially communalized units to be administered by a new public housing corporation that is to be democratically controlled by the public and its renters. Primarily, “Deutsche Wohnen Enteignen” seeks to buy back the housing stock previously owned by municipal housing companies, before their sale to large companies such as “Deutsche Wohnen.”

Within only three months, between April and June 2019, 77,001 people signed the petition – three times



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the amount that would have been necessary to force the Berlin government to pass the referendum. Although the constitutionality and admissibility of the referendum are still in question, the public pressure to pass the referendum is enormous. Understandably, the ever-increasing dynamic of market-oriented housing and urban policy is radically challenged by a public that is increasingly aware that the marketization of housing and urban policy is contributing to the housing crisis and social segregation in cities.

Towards Understanding Housing as “Critical Infrastructure”

With this in mind, it might be helpful to add a new conceptual dimension to the debate on housing. Housing is not only a basic need but is moreover a critical piece of infrastructure that shapes our lives and our society. Just as water, energy, and streets: few of us have the means and knowledge to provide for it on our own. Once housing is built, it will be there to structure our individual lives, our cities, and societies for quite some time. If that is true, however, we must ensure adequate housing provision for all – and accept that the logic of the market has yet been able to solve the housing question.

- 1 Indexes for rent rose from 81.9 pts (1995) to 109.7 (2017). Statistisches Bundesamt. (2018). Entwicklung des Mietpreisindex für Deutschland in den Jahren von 1995 bis 2017 (2010 = Index 100). Statista. Statista GmbH. Accessed: 2019/9/10. <https://de.statista.com/statistik/daten/studie/70132/umfrage/mietindex-fuer-deutschland-1995-bis-2007/>
- 2 Janson, M. (2018). Immer weniger Sozialwohnungen in Deutschland. Statista. Statista GmbH. Zugriff: 10. September 2019. <https://de.statista.com/infografik/12473/immer-weniger-sozialwohnungen-in-deutschland/>
- 3 See <https://www.armuts-und-reichtumsbericht.de> [2019/09/10]

EX°ST

A film by Jonas Reuter and Radames Eger

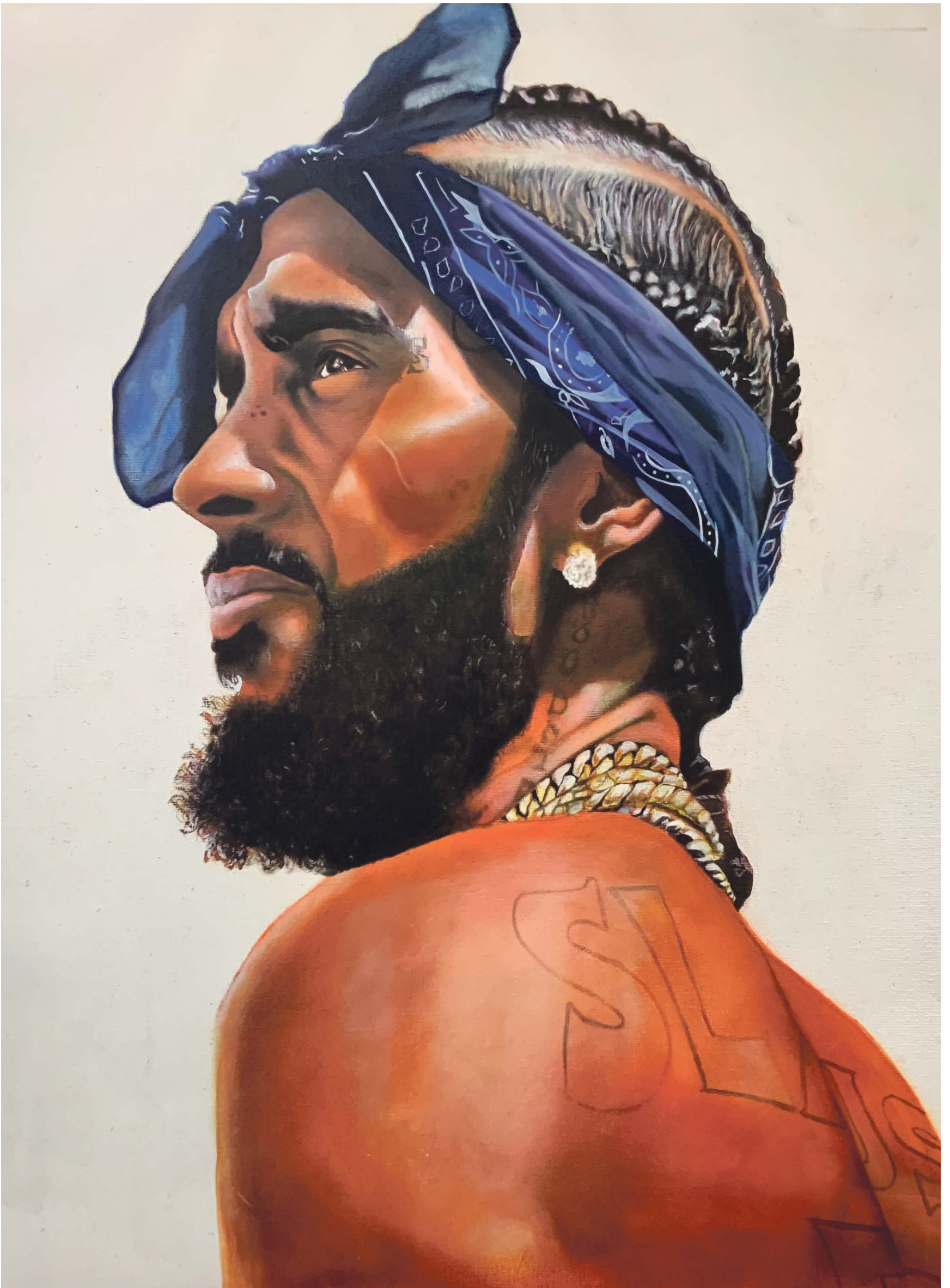


Film Still EX°ST Radames Eger © Jonas Reuter

Radames Eger grew up in Brazil and moved to Frankfurt, Germany, with a dance scholarship. For years, the fashion designer has dedicated his work to those disenfranchised by the fashion industry: people without a permanent residence. With his multifunctional fashion, the designer, who has experienced homelessness himself, wants to help primarily houseless people to protect themselves from cold and theft.

In 2018, in order to give the subject of homelessness a platform, he planned a tour through all German state capitals, in which he exhibited one of his designs, the “tent-jacket”, at public places. For three weeks, he and filmmaker Jonas Reuter lived on Germany's streets and in homeless shelters. The film portrays Eger's work and their journey and tries to give a voice to those who are otherwise unheard.

Jonas Reuter: I am a 24-year-old photographer and filmmaker from Germany. Born in a small village near Frankfurt am Main, I moved to the city during my university studies in Motion Pictures, where for the past five years, I have lived among bankers and those experiencing homelessness. I love Frankfurt, Techno, and people. It was in a Techno club that I met Radames Eger, and after numerous lengthy conversations, our friendship grew. In 2018, we embarked on an unbelievable journey, which we documented in the film EX°ST.



FESTIVAL FOR ALL S

In 2008, the Los Angeles Poverty Department brought together Skid Row residents and groups to look at how art gets made in Skid Row
In 2009, LAPD and community partners started the Festival for All Skid Row
The goal of the festival is to celebrate the rich artistic heritage of Skid Row as well as to create a registry

2019-2018

Hayk Makhmuryan & studio 526

My name is Hayk Makhmuryan, and I'm an art organizer in the Skid Row neighborhood – Eleven going on twelve years.

We've been with the Festival the first year so that makes it ten years and it's really awesome to be part of something that you've seen grow and blossom and continue to be. Something I've become a strong proponent of is long-term involvement and consistent involvement in whatever community work you're doing, whether it's in Skid Row or anywhere else. And a festival like this is a good example of that, a great example of that.

I get to have reunions with folks I know (hugs Chella). I get to see new people connect, but mostly it's a reunion. It's a way to be in a place you like, that I like, and to see people, other people that enjoy being here, to catch up, and to do something artful together, but just as much to catch up, to hug the person you haven't seen for a year. I just saw someone that I haven't seen for eight years.

+

I coordinate Studio 526, and today I'm at the festival, facilitating all the visual artist booths and working with the collaborative painting. I feel very strongly about having a platform that connects around people's interests and what people like to share with someone else. Arts happen to be a really great platform for those connections to be fostered. The moment a person realizes that they're not there because someone is going to tell them what they need to be doing or who and how they need to be interacting, conversations and projects and ideas just blossom. My background is in visual arts. Being in a space with fellow artists who are sharing their ideas, I get to jump in with my ideas and then we build on that together and that's extremely rewarding. The fact that we are in the Skid Row neighborhood has everything to do with arts and cultural spaces. When we talk about the importance as a human right for anyone to have space for creative work, to connect with others who also feel they need to be around arts and culture. So it's as much about community strengthening as it is about an art space.

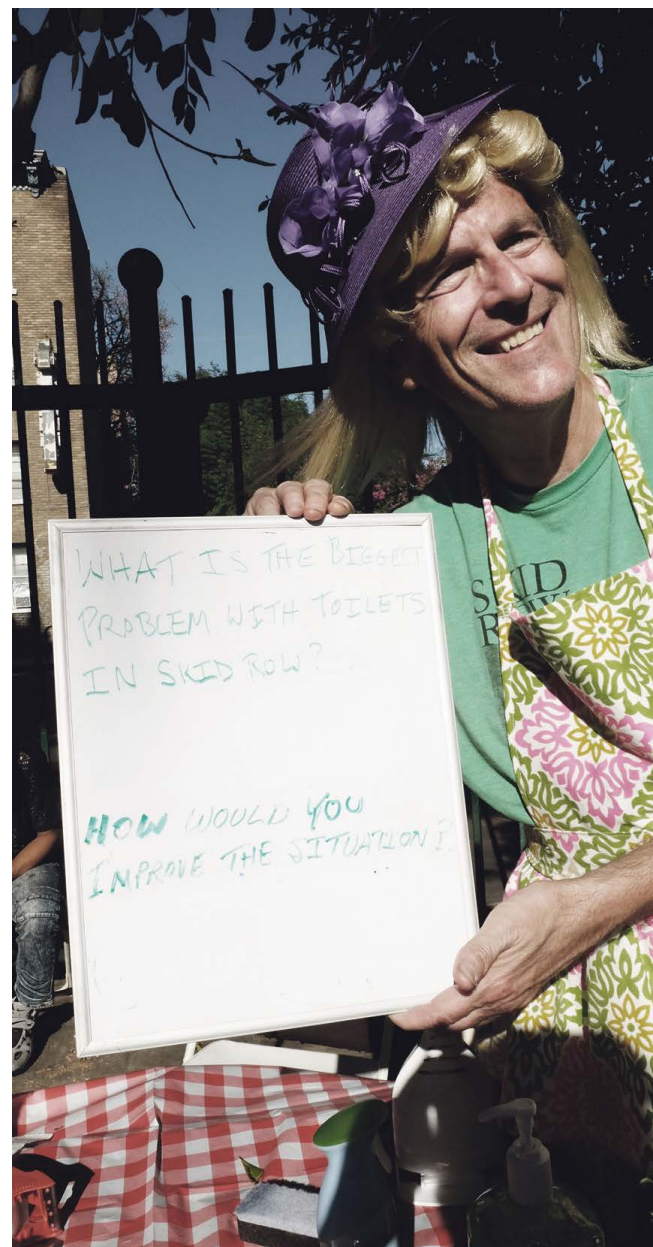
2017

THE TOILET LADY – Tom Grode – LAPD member / resident

I was one of over 20 people who worked on a report that came out a few months ago called "No Place To Go: an Audit of the Public Toilet Crisis in Skid Row." The point of the report is: there is a huge disparity between the number of public toilets available in Skid Row and the minimum hygiene standard for a United Nations Refugee Camp. The report got a lot of media attention, and now with Hepatitis A, the issue is even more serious. One proposed solution is to bring in portapotties and hire community members to monitor them. That's what San Francisco does in their Pit Stop program.

In Gladys Park, at the Festival, we set up a table next to five portapotties just to make folks' portapotty experience a little more pleasant. We had some spray cleaner, toilet paper and paper towels, hand sanitizer, and in charge of the table was the Toilet Lady! We have air freshener, smells wonderful, and a fly swatter, flies like to be around the portapotties, and best of all are the mints. People loved the mints. They came back to the table again and again to get more mints. These were the best mints in the history of mints – next to a group of portapotties.

I had this white board and people could write on the board their answers to two questions: **What Is The Biggest Problem With Toilets In Skid Row?** and **How Would You Improve The Situation?** Forty people answered the two questions and I got to talk to them about toilets, which is my favorite thing in the whole world to talk about! So what was the number one answer? Fifteen people answered the first question this way: NOT ENOUGH! and the answer to question number two: BUILD MORE!



SKID ROW ARTISTS

low. The resulting paper, "Making the Case for Skid Row Culture", determined that in Skid Row, art-making comes from the ground up. Row Artists to give a platform to all the independent artists in Skid Row. y of Skid Row artists, which to date numbers more than 800. Here is a variety of voices from the festival.

2017
Dimitri Taylor

I've come several times to the festival. However, I didn't have the courage to sign up. Today, I felt that it was necessary to sing the song that I did, which was Marvin Gaye's, **What's Going On**.

There's a lot of atrocities that are being done to everyday people. It's not a black thing: it's people, humanity. I'm ready to have all of the murders stopped that's happening in the United States. I feel exhilarated having participated. I feel like I have done more of my duty as being a part of this community. It is to tap into a rich art, and I feel really good about being a part of today as well as yesterday, when I sang with the choir.

I have been a member of the community since 2000. I lived here homeless twice, in 2000 I had three girls with me. I was crying so hard because I did not want to come down here, but when I came down, I found such a different picture than what had been painted in my head about what is down here. I found that this is a city within its own city. This is a city rich in culture, rich in art, rich with lives. These are people that have come upon hard times. There are people who have mental health issues. There are people who just want to live down here because they want other people to see their lives, and there being hope.

I volunteered, and I'm still a part of The Downtown Women's Center. This is the only center downtown that services women. They have very many resources there. I want to thank the community for embracing my family and keeping us grounded and welcoming us. It has been a very good learning lesson: it has expanded the thinking that I have about human beings as a whole. I learn more every day about the vastness of the richness of this beautiful city within itself. There is no city that is like this. It is a wonderful city. Instead of scratching the surface: come, dive in and come see what beauty that lies here in Skid Row.

2016
Mark Montue

I'm hanging out with Michael Blaze from the *Skid Row Photography Club*. Anybody who wants a picture, we take their picture, and we give it to them, free of charge, of course.

Carol Johnston

I'm here to support Mark Montue and Mike Blaze. I'm also here to support Stephanie and the fellow artists at this spectacular festival and filming some live musical performances and doing some media marketing, getting the word out right now, while it's happening. I heard about Skid Row the first day I arrived here in L.A. I was supposed to move in with a friend, and it didn't happen. So, I found myself homeless, and I made some phone calls, and I found myself down at L.A. Mission. I went around to a few different shelters. In that experience, I learned all about the homeless population here in L.A.

I was familiar with it in D.C. because I volunteer with a number of programs there. I had no idea it was happening out here in L.A. until I saw it first hand. Everybody told me not to come downtown. I'm glad that I did because what I found when I'm down here is not what a lot of people were telling me. There's a bigger picture that needs to be seen by the whole world of what's down here on Skid Row. It's a beautiful community, it's a lot

of beautiful families down here, and it definitely needs to be shown, more than what the media portrays as being Skid Row. There's a lot of resources down here. I've come across a lot of people that have asked me to help them, and they seem ashamed, but I tell them, I hug them anyway, "Look, don't be ashamed to ask for help. It's here, use it." Understand this; Skid Row is about people. Here it's about love and commitment and community. We're all in the same boat. Nobody is greater than any other. Understand that if you find yourself here, you find yourself among love.



"WALK THE TALK" CELEBRATES SKID ROW VISIONARIE





In Brazil, the increase in homelessness is linked to Brazilian public policy and the capitalist economic system.

Without permanent addresses, unemployed individuals are unable to find jobs, earn an income or access public services. As a result, these individuals fall outside the system and often suffer from physical or psychological illness. Those without a permanent address are not accounted for, because the Brazilian Institute of Statistical Geography relies on census data collected from household surveys. They do not exist! Therefore, there is no public policy to diminish or end this social situation because they are invisible.

When the document prohibiting the enslavement of blacks was signed in 1888, "former owners" of slaves essentially put black women and men out into the streets, half-naked and without any rights. Without documents or work, these people came to live in the city's streets, homeless, and without support other than from religious charities. I have been working with the Theater of the Oppressed since 1986, when I first met Augusto Boal, as part of the "Integrated Centers of Popular Education," or CIEP project of the socialist government of Leonel Brizola in Rio de Janeiro.

In addition to providing educational opportunities, the project aimed to remove orphaned, abandoned children from the streets and place them with foster parents, often civil servants like firefighters and police, who lived with the children in the CIEPs. Unfortunately, public policy efforts to eradicate homelessness among "street boys and girls" in the state of Rio de Janeiro through adoption ended when the right-wing government regained power and canceled the program. Augusto Boal and I, along with five other popular educators continued this work on our own and created the Oppressed Theater

Center of Rio de Janeiro linked to the Center du Theater de l'Oprimmé of Paris, France, which I had met in 1986.

In 2001, the MST (Landless Rural Workers' Movement) National Assertive Theater Brigade was created with the contribution of Augusto Boal and formed over 40 theatrical groups and a theater production system based on the concept of AgitProp: Agitation and Propaganda. This legacy of revolutionary experiences in Germany and the former USSR, which implemented highly politicized artistic languages as a means to create dialogue with the people. Elements that have been systematized: Study + Organize + Propaganda + Agitate = AgitProp praxis.

The MST theater brigade, using the Leninist concept that guides the movement, began to research the theatrical forms of Agitation and Propaganda and the relationship between art and politics in revolutionary processes, such as the Journal Theater and the Invisible Theater that Boal would incorporate into the Theater of the Oppressed's method. Theater can only reinforce the dominant ideology, not confront it. One must always question whether or not the theater we create is a weapon of oppression or liberation.

This depends on the relationship between Form vs. Content: it is not enough to address issues that are important for class struggle and social movements. It is necessary to understand and use forms that break with the dominant way of thinking and world view.

In the 1960s, through the work of Augusto Boal,

THE THEATER OF THE OPPRESSED AND THE BAHIA HOMELESS MOVEMENT

by Licko Turle

Brazilian theater became increasingly activist. The emergence of Arena Theater, Dramaturgy Seminars, Popular Centers of Culture (CPC) at UNE Volante, and Peasant Leagues continued until the 1964 Military Coup, when the connection between artists and workers was violently interrupted, with arrests, murders, and exiles, including the expulsion of Augusto Boal. Work in activist theater in Brazil resumed following re-democratization and the rise of the Workers Party led by Luis Inácio Lula da Silva, who was also a political prisoner. At the time, the CTO – Theater Center of the Oppressed, which I created with Augusto Boal following his return from exile, was among the leading representatives of Group Theater.

From 1992 to 1995, I worked with the MST SOL DA MORNING settlement in cooperation with the Legisla-

the resistance of the black people against racism in Brazil, all originated here. I am a research professor of Black Theater, Street Theater, and Theater of the Oppressed in the Doctorate and Masters programs of the School of Theater. I also have two students who work directly with various social movements within the homeless population, including the Bahia Homeless Movement that fights for housing. I guide and supervise their research and work with the Theater of the Oppressed. As a result, I have been able to connect the university community with the homeless population through various events and training courses. One of these activities was the International Theater and Oppressed Days in 2018 and 2019 that bring together researchers and practitioners of Theater of the Oppressed from Brazil and abroad. This year, the Bahia Homeless Movement participated in activities at the university, and the university visited the Manoel Faustino occupation where they live. Together, the participants developed an artistic modality called MYSTIC. Mysticism is not just the performative act they do at the beginning of their assembly, but rather a method of self-recognition, an act of telling their own story, and a form of synthesizing collective struggle. MYSTIC can be called the driving force that animates

the fight and can manifest itself in the form of a march, a land occupation, in the solidarity of a gesture, or the beauty of a song at sunset after a day of work. Mysticism is an aesthetic organization to produce this collective feeling that animates the movement to fight, to excel, and to realize themselves as humans.

In this sense, it is an act of shared poetics and a way of evoking (materializing) the feeling/energy of the fight. Mystic stems from Mystery, a Greek ritual from the 6th century BC of initiation in the worship of the goddesses Demeter and Persephone, both linked to agriculture and fertility.

By the Middle Ages, Catholics adopted the term. It is presently associated with Liberation Theology and shares its origin with the Pedagogy of the Oppressed, and the Theater of the Oppressed.

Mystic poetically cuts historical moments with different narrative forms. Within the Epic Theater, the mystic evokes both present and past public events and handles elements of struggling utopia, that is, it projects the future. At the Arena Theater, Augusto Boal used the technique referred to as 'ideological warming' as a way to prepare the audience and introduce them to the theme of the play they were about to watch. In the Theater of the Oppressed, some wildcards maintain this dynamic, through mentioning events of violence and oppression that occurred in the previous week or month. The MSTB uses the techniques of Teatro Jornal to prepare their Mystics."

A Work of the Oppressed Theater is only completed by the relationship with the public that analyzes the reality of the dominant culture that oppresses it. To take action, one needs to know how the oppressor and oppression work. Replace conservative work that merely reproduces contemporary events and themes with works that offer a view into the future, the new, tomorrow. A new Aesthetics for a new Ethics!



Workshop Theatre of the Oppressed © Licko Turle

tive Theater in Rio de Janeiro. After training, one of its leaders was integrated into the team and multiplied the techniques within the MST Movement. For the last three years, I have worked at the Federal University of Bahia in the city of Salvador, which, according to official data, is home to the largest black population in Brazil and outside the African continent. Samba, capoeira, bossa nova, and



Licko Turle

was born in Rio de Janeiro in 1960. He is an actor, director, and professor with a master's, doctorate and postdoctoral degrees in Theater. He is a visiting professor in the Graduate Program of the Theater School of the Federal University of Bahia. In 1986, with Augusto Boal, he created the Theater Center of the Oppressed in Brazil; and created in 1999, with Amir Haddad, the Tá Na Rua Institute for Arts, Education, and Citizenship. He is the author of three books on Theater of the Oppressed and four on Street Theater. He has worked in Asia, Europe, Africa, North, Central, and South America and all Brazilian states. He has investigative interest in ethnic-racial areas, street dwellers, Popular Theater, Political Theater, Street Theater, and social movements. He coordinates the events International Conference Theater of the Oppressed and University; National Meeting of the Brazilian Street Theater Network, and Black Forum of Performing Arts. His current shows as director and co-director in Bahia are: "Essay for Democracy" and "Black Skin, White Masks." He accompanies the MSTB – Homeless Movement of Bahia, the Articulation of the Old Center of Salvador, the School of Theater in the MST-Perus, São Paulo, SP and the Theater Movement of the Periphery of São Paulo. He currently lives in Salvador, Bahia, where he wants to install the project "Escola de Teatro Negro."

WORLDS OF HOMELESSNESS – WORLDS OF HOPELESSNESS ?

by Alexander Hagner

als expertInnen in der entwicklung von gebäuden verfügen wir mit unserem architekturbüro gaupenraub über werkzeuge, die in unserer umgebung dringend gebraucht werden. weil wir der überzeugung sind, dass nicht nur eigentum, sondern auch fähigkeiten verpflichten, stellen wir diese seit knapp 20 jahren auch unseren obdachlosen nachbarInnen zur verfügung.

menschen, die jedoch ohne zuhause zu überleben versuchen, sind, je länger dieser zustand andauert, unserer erfahrung nach sehr schwer einzuschätzen und daher zählen sie zu unseren schwierigsten bauherren. um trotzdem am ende auch für sie zu einem hervorragenden architekturprojekt zu gelangen, braucht es daher in jeder hinsicht auch von unserer seite wesentlich mehr zuwendung. und darüber hinaus ist auch die realisierung solcher



VinziDorf Wien © Florian Albert



VinziDorf © Kurt Kuball

projekte in höchstem maße schwierig, weil jede künftige nachbarschaft projekte für obdachlose menschen (fast immer) grundsätzlich ablehnt.

bisher war nur eines unserer projekte davon ausgenommen -> VinziRast-mittendrin, das ich daher als exemplarisch für die bemühungen um ein gutes lebensumfeld in der urbanen gesellschaft hier näher vorstelle:

dank mehrerer zufälle hatten wir die chance, ein leerstehendes gebäude mitten in wien zu einem einzigartigen gemeinschaftshaus umzubauen und zu erweitern. seit 2013 wohnen und leben dort ca. 30 personen, die eine hälfte studierende und die andere ehemals wohnungslose menschen. sie teilen sich gemischte 2-er und 3-er WGs und viele von ihnen arbeiten auch im haus, da es noch über werkstätten verfügt, über veranstaltungsräume und



VinziRast Lokal – „mittendrin“ © Kurt Kuball

über ein restaurant, von dem aus sich über die jahre ein florierendes catering- service entwickelt hat.

die grundidee des projekts war und ist, dass durch gemeinschaft – und sei sie noch so durchmischt – innerhalb guter rahmenbedingungen stigmatisierungen überwunden werden können und dass gemeinschaft dann in der lage ist, einzelne wieder aufzurichten. darüber hinaus hat sich VinziRast-mittendrin aufgrund seiner lage mitten in der stadt und auch aufgrund seines hybriden raumprogramms in den letzten jahren als botschafterin für das gesellschaftliche miteinander über alle vorurteile hinweg und weit über seine baulichen grenzen hinaus entwickeln können.

von den anfängen/der konzeption des raumprogramms über den oft partizipativen prozess der realisierungsphase bis hin zum heutigen alltagsleben im und um das projekt herum haben wir in der umsetzung viele antworten auf die frage, was architektur, also der gebaute raum dazu beitragen kann, gefunden.

daraus haben wir viele learnings gezogen und damit inzwischen generelle ansätze für das künftige bauen für randgruppen entwickelt – und wir haben die erkenntnis gewonnen, dass, trotz zunehmender gentrifizierung und segregation gerade in großen städten, dennoch kein grund zur hoffnungslosigkeit besteht – sofern wir diese entwicklungen nicht einfach hinnehmen oder gar bedienen, sondern wirkliche alternativen denken und auch realisieren – auch architekten verfügen hier über geeignete werkzeuge.



Alexander Hagner

(geboren 1963 in Deutschland) absolvierte eine Tischlerlehre, bevor er ein Architekturstudium an der Universität für angewandte Kunst in Wien aufnahm, das er 1995 abschloss. 1999 gründete er gemeinsam mit Ulrike Schartner gaupenraub +/- (<https://architektur.se/>) als offenes Büro für Architektur, Design und urbane Strategien, die sich zumeist mit außergewöhnlichen Themen befassen. Seit 2002 arbeitet Hagner unabhängig an alternativen Projekten für Obdachlose. Dazu gehören die Notschlafstelle „VinziRast“ (2004), die Wohngemeinschaft „VinziRast-WG“ (2010) sowie „VinziRast-mittendrin“ (2013) – ein Haus, in dem Obdachlose und Studenten gemeinsam wohnen und arbeiten.

INTERMEDIATE SPACES

by Ana Elvira Velez Villa

I am convinced that creative and conscious design can help identify new approaches to put forward responsible and comprehensive design solutions.

Homelessness and housing precarity is a worldwide problem, that is increasing exponentially, not only in industrialized countries but also in developing countries where public policies, accessibility, and economic restraints are the main questions discussed overall.

As in the entire global south, Colombia has a critical housing deficit in contexts of poverty and inequality. 32% of the Colombian population is homeless or live in a precarious house, meaning that there is at least a 3.8 million household deficit. (DANE, 2005).

During the last two periods of the national government, housing programs have advanced in order to reduce the deficit. However, these fast-running initiatives focus on the efficiency of housing as a product, regardless of its functionality, its relationship with habitat and the shaping of good neighborhoods and cities. This desire to reduce the quantitative deficit ends up increasing the qualitative deficit with dysfunctional and decontextualized housing.

To attend to the problem, we must migrate towards a holistic concept of housing and habitat, by understanding the constant relationship between the most private space (the domestic domain) and the most public space (the street) to build integral and quality living neighborhoods and cities that identify with our tropical environment. These concerns revolve around two issues: character and intermediate spaces.

Character has to do with how housing should build neighborhoods with socio-cultural and urban architectural identity by understanding its territorial context and environment. The identification of dwelling forms and their architectural elements will characterize each solution and build different places aware of its surroundings.

Intermediate spaces have to do with the sequence and gradations of spaces between the domestic domain and the street through a series of intermediate spaces. The design of housing cannot only be solved by designing the unit itself. Intermediate spaces are an additional and inseparable part of the solution. We find eaves of roofs, corridors, galleries, porches, balconies, terraces, patios, stairwells, bridges, all of which connect interior spaces with collective or public spaces allowing a clear relation between the interior and exterior and an appropriation of this area from the inhabitants. All of these spaces contribute to the building of sustainable communities and become the texture of our landscape.

But how can design engage and create thoughtful processes and reflect on what is essential for a decent life, a decent neighborhood, and a decent city? By reviewing 3 cases of social housing schemes in the region and posing the main questions to be tackled, we explore how intermediate spaces can contribute to the construction of integral and quality living spaces, inserted and connected to their context.



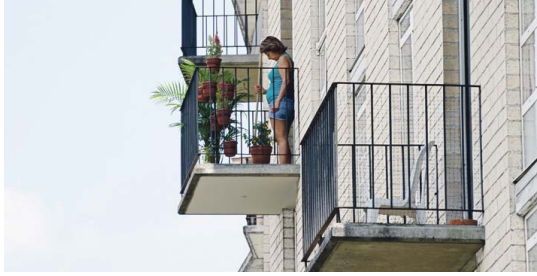
Ana Elvira Vélez Villa

believes in conscious and creative design at multiple scales as a method of intervention able to contribute to equality in the building of the city. Since 2017, she is a consultant for Comfama, the biggest family compensation Corporation for Antioquia, where she leads several designs for urban and rural housing throughout the 125 towns of the region. Her main strategy is the design of intermediate spaces; these are the spaces that bond the private and public spheres and are capable of hosting the customs of collective and individual daily life, allowing the building of sustainable communities.

La Playa apartments,

is a project located in the downtown area of the city of Medellín, enjoying all the facilities of urban conditions developed between 2000-2004 by a private developer under the VIS program to bring social housing in the downtown areas of the big cities. The questions raised were:

- How can compact design allow a feeling of low density?
- How could a flexible design allow identity?



La Playa Apartments © Isaac Ramirez Marin

La Habana,

is one of the three projects designed for the coffee town of Salgar after an overflow of the Liboriana creek destroyed 384 homes and 17 bridges in May 2015. The reconstruction was developed through a public-private-social partnership and the affected community. The questions raised were:

- How can stacked row houses achieve the idea of a street house?
- What is the proper scale to rebuild a neighborhood?



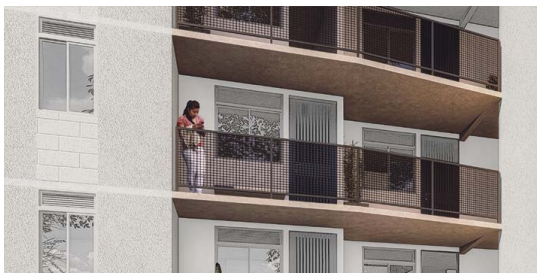
La Habana © Isaac Ramirez Marin

Jardines-Curazaos,

is the first stage (in construction) of a large social housing scheme in the banana region city of Apartadó, developed by *Caja de Compensación Familiar Comfama* (A non-profit private family compensation corporation entity whose objective is the improvement of the worker's family's quality of life).

The aim is to consolidate habitat and environment models suitable for social housing where the public and intermediate space guarantees social relations and the construction of neighborhood life, with an adequate scale and density for its context. The questions raised were:

- How can the first stage of the project include all the principles of the total neighborhood scheme?
- Can we build a financial support program for the community that accompanies the philosophical planting garden scheme?



Jardines-Curazaos © COMFAMA

As architects, we can contribute to the definition of better homes, neighborhoods, and cities. "One of the basic human requirements is the need to dwell, and one of the central human acts is the act of inhabiting, of connecting ourselves, however temporarily, with a place on the planet which belongs to us and to which we belong."

(Foreword, In the Praise of Shadow, Jun Ichiro Tanizaki)

MMA

by Michael Maltzan

I founded Michael Maltzan Architecture (MMA) in 1995, as an architecture and urban design practice that works globally across a wide range of typologies, from cultural institutions to city infrastructure. Fundamental to our work is the paradigm of housing. Often thought of as having its own forms of technical knowledge, particularities of building code, and economy, housing has historically been one of the most expansive archetypes within the field, witnessing progress that goes well beyond technical and functional challenges. Housing manifests a complexity of architectural ideas, touching on social, economic, political, aesthetic, and urban questions. We are dedicated to exploring how these ideas around housing reinforce the rest of the practice's work and how that work, in turn, fuels the thinking around housing. Housing is not a separate set of ideas, instead an integral part of a much larger whole. The typology is a deeply integrated and influential part of our practice.

Some of the firm's most acclaimed work includes both small and large housing projects that embrace innovation in design, program, and construction, to create inspiring homes regardless of a resident's socio-economic status. Fundamental to the design approach is the recognition that the planning and design of affordable housing has a profound impact on the social, cultural, political, and economic landscape of our cities. Successful housing must be engaging, innovative, and inspiring if it is to nurture residents and cultivate community. It can support individual and collective experiences in our communities regardless of the size of the development, neighborhood, or city. Architecture can, at its very best, create innovative, human-centered, uplifting spaces that are true foundations for people's lives.

In 2003 MMA began working on multi-unit housing projects in Los Angeles with the Skid Row Housing Trust, a non-profit housing developer focused on providing housing for homeless individuals. Three of those award-winning projects are New Carver Apartments (97 units), Star Apartments (102 units), and Crest Apartments (64 units). These are Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) models that include vital social infrastructure for the inhabitants. Each building is oriented toward a particular homeless population. New Carver Apartments is for elderly homeless; Star Apartments is for people with chronic physical and mental disabilities; Crest Apartments is for formerly homeless veterans. Each community requires a complex set of services. Being out on the street in search of supportive services has led to high levels of recidivism and instability. Moving services, doctors, and caseworkers into the housing creates a greater likelihood of building stable lives for the residents. Consequently, each of these projects takes on greater programmatic complexity, effectively becoming a community within the city – the kind of community that its inhabitants have lacked for much of their lives.



Star Apartments © Iwan Baan



Crest Apartments © Iwan Baan



New Carver Apartments Courtyard © Iwan Baan



Michael Maltzan

founded Michael Maltzan Architecture, Inc. in 1995. His projects cross a wide range of typologies, from cultural institutions to city infrastructure. His multi-family residential projects completed over the past decade, including Star Apartments, New Carver Apartments, Crest Apartments, and One Santa Fe, have gained international acclaim for their innovation in both design and construction. These projects have been featured in exhibitions and publications worldwide and are the focus of Michael's most recent book, "Social Transparency: Projects on Housing," published by the Columbia University Press in 2016.

INFORMAL STUDIO

A teaching experiment from Johannesburg bringing together formal and informal housing processes. The [in]formal Studio transplants academic training into real-life situations of informal urbanism, engaging in partnerships with residents as active agents of development. Developed by 26'10 south Architects at the University of Johannesburg these courses represent the culmination of the "Housing and the Informal City", a research project by 26'10 south Architects in collaboration with the Goethe-Institut, Johannesburg.

by Thorsten Deckler



A group of community architects and Ruimsig residents who assisted students in measuring the settlement
© Alexander Oppen



Re-blocking map for Ruimsig showing remaining structures (in solid black) and re-located structures (grey)
© 26'10 south Architects

Founded in 1886 when gold was discovered on a savannah plateau, Johannesburg quickly grew into an economic powerhouse on the African continent. Under Apartheid the city was strictly segregated according to race and eventually isolated from the world through global sanctions. With the advent of democracy in 1994, Johannesburg once again became an economic magnet for people from Africa and beyond and now, 25 years into democracy, it is known as the creative capital of the southern hemisphere. It is also known as one of the world's most unequal cities, and it is where we live and work as architects.

Here the lack of public safety, decent schooling, housing and healthcare have presented amazing opportunities for the private sector with architecture used as a tool for sanitizing and securing the urban landscape for a few who can afford it. Despite ambitious upgrades of poorer neighborhoods, the beginnings of a public transportation system and the building of thousands of subsidized houses, the template laid down during Apartheid persists, leaving many citizens to their own devices in meeting their basic needs, including housing. In South Africa, a backlog of 2.3 million houses (Stats SA 2012) has resulted in people building their own homes and neighborhoods. Yet the formal system in which we have been trained as architects condemns these self-made homes as illegal. Africa is home to ten of the fastest-growing cities in the world and it is estimated that 75% of urbanization will be informal.

Change cannot be conjured without suspending judgment of the perceived problem.
Thorsten Deckler

The InformalStudio was created with this in mind and to investigate how the seemingly opposed realities of formal and informal could be brought into a more productive relationship. What started as a long term research project in collaboration with the Goethe-Institut Johannesburg, culminated in the design and teaching of a university course on in-situ upgrading. The course was developed at the University of Johannesburg together with a number of lecturers as well as several NGO's and CBO's that form part of the South African Slum Dwellers International (SDI) Alliance. Most importantly, the studios were held in communities mobilized through the SDI methodology and involved residents working together with students and lecturers.

An aspect of the InformalStudio distinguishing it from many design and build initiatives led by visiting architecture schools is that it does not assume to be delivering development (usually in the form of a building), but rather aim to support a people-driven development process. The question of who is "the" expert was challenged early on and established a fundamental shift that acknowledged residents as legitimate partners and experts of their lived reality. This helped to mutually set a teaching agenda that balanced the learning outcomes for students and staff with generating useful outcomes to support each particular settlement.

Two seven-week courses were held in Ruimsig (in 2011) and in Marlboro South (2012), respectively. The main output of each course was the mapping of a hitherto "unseen" urban reality. These mappings became practical planning tools for residents, but also tools of agency enabling residents to speak the language of city planners and partake in the decisions affecting them.

The two courses are briefly summarized below:

INFORMAL STUDIO: RUIMSIG

Residents of Ruimsig, a small informal settlement west of Johannesburg, had just completed a self-enumeration and required an accurate map of their settlement. Through the studio, students and residents produced this map and also a re-blocking strategy which outlined proposals for immediate improvements which could be undertaken by residents themselves. The main objectives of re-blocking

are: the equitable distribution of land, addressing overcrowding and the activities of slumlords, the adjustment of movement routes to suitable road widths for improved circulation and passage of emergency vehicles, and the eventual introduction of services. Re-blocking is motivated by minimal physical adjustments, thus respecting the organic logic of how people first settled the land.

After the course, residents, assisted by NGOs systematically began to tackle the physical upgrading of their surroundings, moving houses and fences and re-settling households from congested land and flood lines into better positions. This involved protracted discussions amongst residents themselves which were not always benign, yet were guided by the SDI methodology and with an achievable outcome insight.

Through the association with the university and the production of a re-blocking plan, Ruimsig has received increased attention from city authorities who even declared the area an 'experimental zone' in which certain municipal standards and by-laws may be re-defined in order to meet the spatial demands of the settlement. The effects of this have been a sense of security of tenure which has visibly manifest in improvements people have made to their homes and gardens. Perhaps most powerful, for us as architects, is the idea that an informal settlement is simply a young city growing up and the question is what do its inhabitants actually need to thrive? Even Manhattan started as an informally settled trading post!

INFORMAL STUDIO: MARLBORO SOUTH

In 2012, the studio was invited to work in Marlboro South, an industrial buffer strip implemented during Apartheid to separate Alexandra, one of Johannesburg's oldest black townships, from its more affluent white neighbors. Over the past three decades, approximately 1,500 mostly poor black households moved into the area in order to benefit from its central location. In the process highly organized communities established themselves in abandoned factories and warehouses making do with municipal services and living under the constant threat of eviction.

It was agreed that students, again assisted by residents, would produce an accurate land-use map of the existing situation. This research revealed a living and working neighborhood with schools, churches, crèches, restaurants, markets, and even a brass band. A spatial development framework and improvement strategies were developed with which the community and NGOs could counter the city's protracted efforts to evict people from the area and ironically return it to its Apartheid-planned status as an industrial buffer.

As part of the deliverables to the Goethe-Institut, 26'10 south Architects produced a traveling exhibit that communicates methodologies and insights in the form of models, drawings, and maps. Popular media such as comics, a newspaper, and films make the information accessible to as wide an audience as possible. This has even resulted in the material making its way into the office of the South African Presidency, but that is another story...

CONCLUSION

Working in the Informal Studios has taught us, as architects, a number of things. That change cannot be conjured without suspending judgment of the perceived problem. We have learned that the problem contains the solution, but that it is hidden, firstly through our privileged outrage at the unfairness of the situation and secondly through our education as "experts" of a narrow field. We have learned that working in complex situations requires crossing the boundaries that define our expertise and to bring together different experiences, insights, and readings of the city. An example that best illustrates this comes from a subsequent workshop on upgrading held in East London, South Africa, where various built environment professionals sat around a table together with the informal mayor of a small settlement occupying an area reserved for stormwater run-off. Much of the discussion circled around what is the role of a road? Why is it

taking up so much space? Is it for cars, ambulances, and firetrucks? Is it to manage stormwater? Is it to distribute services? Is it a public space?

The answer is, of course, all of the above and more.

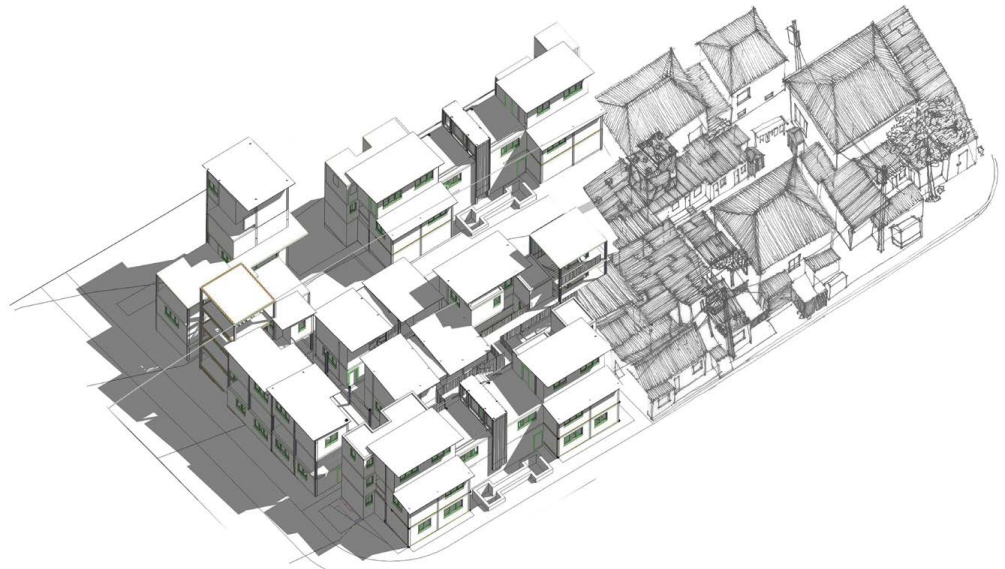
Similarly, we can ask what is a home? Is it a bolt hole to access the city economy? Can it be shared? If it is too small, can the city provide the rest? Is home in an entirely different city or even country? Can a home be a shop, factory, or office? Why can't it be built with my own hands?

Working in Johannesburg has made us acutely aware of the limits of our influence in undoing deep structural damage. Working through the InformalStudio with over a hundred collaborators and as part of a network

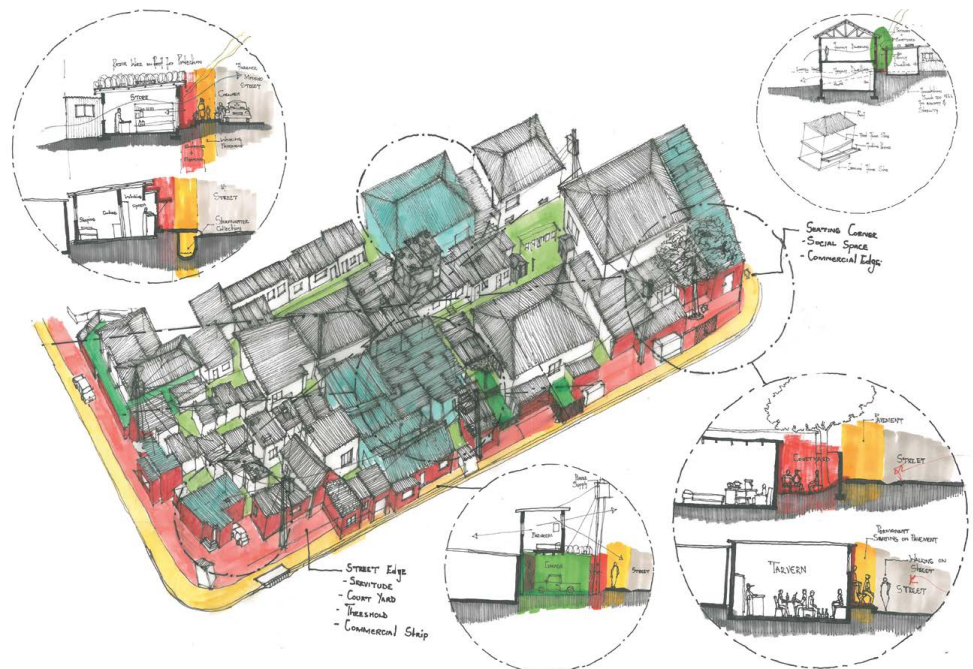
of thousands more has revealed to us a new power that lies in observing, engaging and collaborating – not to fix a problem but to lean into it and discover existing systems that already contain the answers we seek.

The InformalStudio was developed and taught by Thorsten Deckler and Anne Graupner (26'10 south Architects) together with Alexander Opper (at the time director of the Architecture Master's Programme, University of Johannesburg). Critical support and insights were provided by Steve Topham (National Upgrade Support Programme) and Andy Bolnick (iKhayalami).

The studio was, however, only made possible by the contribution and commitment of over a hundred other lecturers, students, residents of Ruimsig and Marlboro South, city officials as well as members of the Shack Dwellers International Alliance and their member organizations.



Adaptive Design
© Tebogo Ramatlo



Site Analysis
© Tebogo Ramatlo



Thorsten Deckler

is a Johannesburg based architect and co-founder, together with Anne Graupner, of 26'10 south Architects. The practice works across architecture, urban design, and knowledge management with the aim to create spaces in which people can thrive. Besides building key infrastructure and housing projects, 26'10 has conducted long-term research on informal urbanism, culminating in the „Informal Studio“ run in partnership with the University of Johannesburg and Goethe-Institut. 26'10 has received local and international recognition and has been selected as best emerging practice in South Africa (Backstage Award Venice 2012).



Tebogo Ramatlo

is an architect, lecturer, maker, and performing arts choreographer based in Johannesburg, South Africa. He was a participant in the InformalStudio Marlboro South, and he frequently collaborates with 26'10 south Architects. In his master's thesis, he uses stop-frame animation to narrate an urban future in which migrant women with children help build the city in which they seek shelter. He has participated in and run workshops in Peru, Turkey, South Africa, and Brazil, and in 2018, he collaborated with architect Nadia Tromp on an installation for the Venice Architecture Biennale, positioning the topic of migration as part of a global architectural discourse.



Peace is yours – Mural by Lydia Emily and Showzart
© Michael Jaffe

AMERIKA IST EIN HÖLLENVORBILD

Mieten steigen, Haushalte müssen immer mehr von ihrem Einkommen für Wohnungen aufwenden, selbst Angehörige der Mittelschicht sind inzwischen teils von Wohnungslosigkeit bedroht. Die Soziologin Jutta Allmendinger forscht in Deutschland und in den USA zu Wohnungsnot und Obdachlosigkeit, im kommenden Jahr soll ihr Buch zum Thema Wohnungsarmut erscheinen – ein Konzept, dass die Armutsforschung bisher nicht beachtet hat. Allmendinger sagt, Politik und Sozialforschung müssten das Thema dringend priorisieren, denn unsere Gesellschaft drohe, daran zu zerbrechen. Am Ende stehe unsere gesamte Demokratie auf dem Spiel. Dieses Interview erschien in der ZEIT Online als Teil des Schwerpunkts "Mieten am Limit".

Jutta Allmendinger interviewt von Simone Gaul und Ileana Grabitz

ZO Frau Allmendinger, Sie beschäftigen sich zurzeit intensiv mit Wohnungslosigkeit. Wie kam das?

JA Es ist etwa ein Jahr her, dass ich als Fellow für vier Monate nach Los Angeles zog, um dort am Thomas-Mann-Haus zu forschen. Eines Morgens fuhr ich an den Strand und sah dort Obdachlose. Das Bild kennt man ja, etwas aber war anders: Ich beobachtete, dass einige sich ein Jackett anzogen, sich einen Spiegel vors Gesicht hielten und sich kämten. Ich war perplex und fragte sie, was sie da taten. Sie antworteten: Wir machen uns fertig für die Arbeit. Ich dachte spontan an Kurse für Arbeitslose. Aber nein: Es waren ausgebildete Lehrer! Sie verdienten nur so wenig, dass sie sich von ihrem Gehalt keine Wohnung in der Nähe ihrer Arbeitsstelle leisten konnten. Deshalb schliefen sie in ihren Autos oder in Zelten.

Ich war erschrocken über mich selbst, über die Pyramide meiner Vorurteile. Ich hatte diese gut ausgebildeten Menschen als *Outlaws* betrachtet. Das hat mir einen regelrechten Schock verpasst. Und ich habe mich entschieden, über diese erwerbstätigen Obdachlosen zu forschen. Seither habe ich viel gelernt über Obdachlosigkeit in L.A., aber auch in Deutschland.

ZO Was ist in Los Angeles anders als zum Beispiel in Berlin?

JA In L.A. sind diese Menschen sichtbarer. Sie leben oft in regelrechten Zeltstädten innerhalb der Großstädte. Hier bei uns gibt es so etwas ja kaum. In den USA setzen die Städte weniger auf Notunterkünfte, die Obdachlosen werden dort aber auch nicht so entschlossen aus den Innenstädten verbannt. In Midtown L.A. beispielsweise findet man die Zelte direkt neben dem Theater District



JUTTA ALLMENDINGER

Nach Stationen am Max-Planck-Institut in Berlin und an der Harvard University (USA) war Jutta Allmendinger zunächst Professorin für Soziologie in München. Nach einer Etappe als Direktorin des Instituts für Arbeitsmarkt und Berufsforschung (IAB) in Nürnberg wechselte sie 2007 als Präsidentin an das Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung. Allmendinger ist zudem Mitglied im Herausgeberberrat der ZEIT.

oder der Philharmonie. Ich dachte, dass diese Sichtbarkeit Nähe und Identifikation schafft, die Hilfsbereitschaft erhöht. Aber auch diese Annahme erwies sich als völlig falsch. Viele Leute sind dort zwar sehr dafür, dass mehr für Obdachlose getan wird – aber nur, damit sie aus ihrem Umfeld verschwinden.

Anders als die meisten Städte in Deutschland ist L.A. aber immerhin bereits seit Langem bemüht, die Obdachlosen zu zählen. Da schwirren in einer Nacht schon mal 2.000 Freiwillige aus und versuchen, eine Zahl so genau wie möglich zu erheben. In Deutschland haben wir grobe Schätzungen zur Obdachlosigkeit, aber nur wenige Zählungen. Dabei brauchen wir diese Daten dringend.

VORURTEILE ÜBER OBdachLOSE HINTERFRAGEN

ZO Warum gibt es sie nicht?

JA Das Problem hat uns zu lange überhaupt nicht interessiert. Ich komme selbst aus der Armutsforschung und muss das selbstkritisch so sagen. Die verbreitete Ansicht war: Die trinken halt, die sind krank und wollen nicht arbeiten. Diesen Menschen fehlt jede Motivation, warum sollten wir uns um die kümmern? Sie können ja

ins Krankenhaus gehen, zur Bahnhofsmision oder in die Notunterkünfte. Aber wenn sie lieber auf der Straße leben – *why should we care?* Mein Erlebnis am Strand in L.A. ist das beste Beispiel, dass man diese Vorannahmen hinterfragen muss. Aber selbst wenn all das zutreffen würde – ein Grund, das Thema Wohnen nicht systematisch an die Armutsforschung anzubinden, ist es sicherlich nicht. Im Gegenteil.

ZO Sozialverbände warnen seit Jahren vor steigender Obdachlosigkeit, gerade angesichts der hohen Mieten. Auch immer mehr Familien seien von Wohnungslosigkeit bedroht und eben auch Berufstätige. Wer sind diese neuen Wohnungslosen?

JA Grundsätzlich sollte man zwischen Wohnungslosigkeit und Obdachlosigkeit unterscheiden. Sprechen wir von Menschen, die ohne Dach über dem Kopf auf der Straße leben oder von jenen, die bei Freunden auf der Couch unterkommen? Wir wissen über beide Gruppen relativ wenig, es sind unterschiedliche Personen betroffen: junge Menschen, die aus ihrem Elternhaus ausziehen, aber kein Einkommen haben, das eine Wohnung trägt; Personen, die nach einer Trennung den Haushalt verlassen; Menschen, die aufgrund von Mietschulden ihre Wohnung räumen mussten; und natürlich sind auch Menschen darunter, die ihre Arbeit verloren haben und mehr konsumieren, als sie sich leisten können – die sich irgendwann vielleicht fast aufgeben, weil sie keine Perspektive mehr sehen.

ZO Und wenn wir speziell auf die Berufstätigen blicken?

JA In Deutschland sind das geschätzt knapp zehn Prozent der Wohnungslosen. Viel wissen wir nicht über diese Menschen. In den USA sind besonders oft Menschen betroffen, die wegen eines Jobs umziehen. Nur: Wer bei McDonalds oder Starbucks anfängt, bekommt zu wenig Geld, um sich eine Wohnung leisten zu können. Das geht nur mit Zweit- oder Drittjob. Diese Situation ist inzwischen auch bei uns keine Seltenheit mehr. Die Menschen verdienen einfach nicht genug, um sich die teuren Mieten leisten zu können.

LETZTENDLICH STEHT DIE DEMOKRATIE AUF DEM SPIEL

ZO Ist die Wohnungsnot in der Mittelschicht angekommen?

JA Absolut. In den USA sagen Angehörige der Mittelschicht schon länger: Obdachlosigkeit? Kann uns auch passieren. Sie sei *one pay cheque away* – also eine Gehaltszahlung entfernt. Was sie meinen: Viele Leute verdienen zwar sehr ordentlich, haben aber auch riesige Kosten, etwa Ratenzahlungen für Hypotheken. Oft bleibt dann vom Monatsgehalt nicht mehr viel übrig, gerade in diesen teuren Gegenden in Los Angeles. Und wenn dann eine Zahlung ausbleibt, bricht das gesamte Konstrukt zusammen. Auch aus diesem Grund sieht man in diesen Vierteln relativ viele “Zu verkaufen”-Schilder an den Häusern. Ich kenne aber auch Fälle, die sich nach einiger Zeit wieder in diese Villenviertel einkaufen. Dieses *in and out* besser zu verstehen wäre wichtig.

In Deutschland ist das noch anders. Wenige Mittelschichtsangehörige fürchten, dass sie wohnungslos werden könnten. Das hat natürlich auch mit unserem Sozialstaat zu tun, der ab einem bestimmten Punkt über Arbeitslosengeld und Wohngeld abfedert. Und trotzdem: In den vergangenen eineinhalb Jahren hat sich die Lage sehr verändert.

ZO Inwiefern?

JA Wenn 40 Prozent der Haushalte in deutschen Großstädten mittlerweile mehr als 30 Prozent ihres Einkommens für die Miete aufbringen, dann kommen wir langsam in eine schwierige Lage. Bei einem Einkommen von 2.000 Euro sind schon mal 600 Euro weg. Früher lag der Anteil für die Miete bei nicht mehr als 20 bis 25 Prozent.

Weil die Mieten immer weiter steigen, rechnen also

mehr und mehr Menschen damit, dass sie ihre Wohnung unter Umständen nicht mehr halten können. Zu der Unsicherheit, die heutzutage viele bezüglich der Verlässlichkeit ihrer Einkommen haben, kommt also die Sorge: Kann ich mir meine Wohnung morgen noch leisten? Muss ich vielleicht wegziehen? Viele Städte haben einfach nicht mehr genug bezahlbare Wohnungen. Allein in Berlin fehlen 310.000. Diese Akkumulation von Verunsicherungen kann man als dramatisch bezeichnen.

Zugleich nimmt die soziale Spaltung zu. Es gibt dicke rote Flecken auf der Landkarte, wo nur noch Wohngeldbezieher leben. Andererseits Viertel mit einem überproportional hohen Anteil von Immobilienbesitzern und Beziehern hoher Einkommen. Dabei brauchen wir durchmischte Wohnviertel. Sonst findet keine Begegnung mehr statt. In dieser Hinsicht ist Amerika ein Höllenvorbild.

ZO Welche Gefahr birgt diese Entwicklung für unsere Gesellschaft?

JA Letztendlich steht die Demokratie auf dem Spiel. Weil eine Demokratie immer davon abhängt, dass sich Menschen zuehörig fühlen. Dass die kleinen Wirs der Familien miteinander verbunden sind und sich als Teil von großen Wirs fühlen. Dass das partikulare Vertrauen in Einzelne zu einem generalisierten Vertrauen in die Mitmenschen wird. Das aber setzt voraus, dass es Orte der Begegnung gibt. Die müssen wir wieder schaffen. Begegnungen sind die einzige Möglichkeit, ein Übermaß an Stereotypisierungen und Stigmatisierungen zu überwinden, unter denen unsere Gesellschaft zunehmend leidet. Ich glaube, es kann keine demokratische Gesellschaft geben, wenn bestimmte Gruppen langfristig ausgeschlossen sind. Aber genau das geschieht gerade.

Ein Recht auf Wohnen im Grundgesetz

ZO Was kann man tun? Wenn es der Markt allein nicht richten kann, ist dann der Staat gefragt?

JA Ja, das ist eine politische Aufgabe. Und sie wird immer wichtiger. Wir brauchen bezahlbaren Wohnraum, wir brauchen ein Recht auf Wohnen, das im Grundgesetz verankert ist. Wir brauchen eine präventive und eine reparierende Wohnungspolitik.

ZO Sie haben vor 20 Jahren schon einmal einen neuen Begriff in die Armutsforschung eingebracht, den der Bildungsarmut. Analog dazu haben Sie nun den Begriff der Wohnungsarmut erarbeitet. Was genau ist Wohnungsarmut?

JA Mir geht es darum, das Thema Wohnen systematisch in die Armutsforschung einzubringen. Genauso wie damals bei der Bildung. Wir müssen über Bildung sprechen, wenn wir über Armut sprechen. Fehlende Bildung schließt Menschen in so vielen Bereichen von der Gesellschaft aus. Das gilt selbst für Leute, die erwerbstätig sind.

Das gleiche Ziel habe ich jetzt beim Thema Wohnen. Hierfür brauchen wir Informationen über die Höhe der Wohnungsarmut, über die Gruppen, die davon betroffen sind, über die Zeit, die die Menschen ohne Wohnung leben. Wir brauchen eine Unterscheidung zwischen absoluter und relativer Wohnungsarmut.

ZO Was ist der Unterschied?

JA Absolute Wohnungsarmut besteht dann, wenn jemand gar keinen Zugang zu einem eigenen Dach über dem Kopf hat, analog zur absoluten Armut, die bedeutet, dass die Mittel fehlen, um sich selbst zu ernähren. Relative Armut betrifft jene, die weniger als 60 Prozent vom Median verdienen. Übertragen auf die Wohnungsarmut geht es hier also darum, wie viele Menschen weit weniger Wohnfläche als der Durchschnitt der Menschen zur Verfügung hat.

Wie bewegt man die Witwe, die auf 180 m² wohnt, zum Wohnungstausch?

ZO Ist eine Familie, die mit drei Personen in einer 60 Quadratmeter großen Zweizimmerwohnung lebt, wohnungsarm?

JA Ich habe die Berechnungen noch nicht abgeschlossen. Wenn es drei Erwachsene sind und wir das Konzept der relativen Wohnungsarmut heranziehen, wahrscheinlich schon. Was ich mir von der Unterscheidung zur absoluten Wohnungsarmut erhoffe, sind daran ansetzende Leistungen. Eine Anpassung des Wohngelds, ein höherer Mindestlohn, mehr sozialer Wohnungsbau. Und auch mit Wohnungsreichtum müssen wir uns auseinandersetzen; schließlich auch mit fehlenden Passungen aufgrund der gestiegenen Mieten: Wenn eine Witwe allein auf 180 Quadratmetern wohnt und sich nebenan eine vierköpfige Familie 50 Quadratmeter teilen muss, wie lösen wir das? Viele Senioren würden gern in kleineren Wohnungen leben, aber die anzumieten ist oft teurer, als in der großen zu bleiben. Wir müssen also über Mobilität über Wohnungsgrößen hinweg sprechen.

ZO Wie lässt sich diese Mobilität erreichen?

JA Dazu brauchen wir auch hier zuallererst Daten. Wer lebt eigentlich wo und wie? Wenn man einen Überblick hat, kann man Matching-Verfahren anwenden. Der Witwe beispielsweise müsste man helfen, ihr konkrete Wohnungsangebote machen. Dafür brauchen wir so etwas wie Wohnungsmakler, die kommen und sagen: “Wir hätten eine Wohnung für Sie nicht weit entfernt. Wir renovieren sie für Sie. Könnten Sie sich vorstellen umzuziehen?” Heutzutage überlassen wir diese Suche den Menschen selbst, und die sind überfordert.

ZO Aber selbst wenn Mieter zum Tausch bereit sind, scheitert es am Ende ja meist daran, dass mit neuen Verträgen beide Wohnungen teurer wären.

JA Das ist genau der Mechanismus, an dem Berlin gerade knabbert. Das Problem muss man unter Kontrolle bekommen, durch eine Art Mieterhöhungsregulierung.

ZO Wie der Mietendeckel, über den Berlin gerade streitet?

JA Zum Mietendeckel kann ich mich nicht äußern, die rechtlichen Fragen sind noch nicht geklärt. Aber eines ist klar: Irgendeine Form der Regulierung muss es auf jeden Fall geben.

ZO Und wer würde das Matching der Kandidaten für einen Wohnungstausch übernehmen? Ist das Ihrer Vorstellung nach eine Art städtische Agentur?

JA Idealerweise würden diese Matchers die Organisation gleich verbinden mit der Frage des selbstständigen Wohnens im Alter. Wir müssen in eine Mietpolitik einsteigen, die alle assoziierten Fragen, etwa die Durchmischung von Stadtteilen, von Anfang an mitdenkt. Wien zum Beispiel ist da ein gutes Vorbild. Wohnen muss auch bei uns eine der zentralen Kategorien der Politik werden. Und für die Durchmischung wiederum spielen auch Schulen eine große Rolle. So lässt sich zum Beispiel beobachten, dass die Segregation in dem Moment, in dem eine gute Schule in ein eigentlich heruntergekommenes Gebiet kommt, gebremst wird. Dann wandern weniger der gut situierten Menschen in andere Bezirke ab. Durch eine gute Infrastruktur können wir ganz viel beeinflussen.

ZO Berlin will ja nun immerhin eine erste Obdachlosenstatistik erstellen. Mit einem ähnlichen Verfahren, wie Sie es aus L.A. geschildert haben.

JA Ja. Freiwillige werden in einer Nacht im Januar die Stadt durchkämmen und die Obdachlosen zählen. In einem Onlineportal kann man sich eintragen, ich werde selbst auch dabei sein. Langsam kommt Berlin nach vorn. Einerseits, weil die Stadt an einer engen Abstimmung des Umgangs mit Obdachlosen und Wohnungslosen über die einzelnen Stadtteile hinweg arbeitet, andererseits weil erstmals substanziell über Prekarität diskutiert wird. Hoffentlich wird bald auch das größer werdende Problem der Zwangsräumungen angegangen. Finanzielle Armut, Bildungsarmut und Wohnungsarmut fallen oft zusammen oder gehen ineinander über. Es ist dringend notwendig, alle Stränge zusammen zu betrachten.

THE HOME AND HOMELESSNESS

by Hilary Silver

What comes to mind when you think of “home”? “Home” conjures up so many warm and positive connotations that, even if we leave home, it remains a touchstone for our lives. It is ours, the place of our family, community, origins, where we belong. Home meets human needs for safety, security, privacy, attachment, and when it does not, it is no longer home. To be homeless, then, is a form of social dislocation, to move alone in the world, a refugee in search of shelter. It is painful to contemplate the loss of a home. The term “homeless” is emotionally evocative, as well as descriptive of those who lack physical shelter. No wonder there are so many novels, films, and ethnographies of homelessness! There is the thriving media of homeless street newspapers publishing poetry and articles by people experiencing the condition. Although social scientists and governments around the world have devised various ways to define, measure, and count homelessness (Van Dam 2019; DuPont 2000; Zufferey & Yu 2017; Tipple & Speak 2009), perhaps only a cultural or humanistic approach can adequately render how it feels.

Home and Homeless

The idea of “home” is found in virtually all societies. To be sure, the meaning of home varies over time and place (Rybczynski 1986; Somerville 1992). Although Ghana lacks an explicit word for homelessness, it officially refers to “only the most destitute, without any form of shelter or roof, and without kin or friends anywhere, however remote, to take responsibility for them” (Speak and Tipple 2006, p. 174). The common connotations of the term “home” contribute to understanding what those experiencing homelessness have lost. Consider first the association of home with warmth, family, and social security. One becomes human through social attachments. Home is a site of acceptance, solidarity, and inclusion. Some scholars of the home maintain that there is an inherent human need for “ontological security” that can only be fully attained in the home (Saunders 1989). Indicators of ontological security include constancy, daily routines, privacy, and having a secure base for identity

construction. Mentally ill homeless adults who received Housing First identified their subjective meaning of “home” in these terms, even as they were anxious and insecure about “what’s next” (Padgett 2007).

Home is also a place where individuals can exercise personal autonomy. Household members control the home and the activities within it. The legal ban on “search and seizure” excludes the State from intrusion and surveillance. And excluding others from the home affords a sense of protection and security during vulnerable moments such as sleep.

Home is the site of private life. Liberal societies usually guarantee a right to privacy, a sphere of life protected from the gaze of others. Part of the “Civilizing Process” (Elias 1969) and the rise of possessive individualism (MacPherson 1962) entails permission to exclude all or most people from observing certain acts. Defecation, urination, dressing, lovemaking, and so on are quarantined from public exposure. Admission is limited to one’s intimates. Privacy is thus preferential. But the homeless are often forced by necessity to conduct private life in public (Waldron 1991).

Home offers a sense of place identity, a “home town” and a “homeland”. Where one lives conveys information to others about the self. How people live, their “habitus” (Bourdieu 1977), displays their distinctive values and ways of life, their habits, skills, dispositions, and perceptions, patterns of thinking, and placing one’s body.



Hilary Silver

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“Leaving home” is a declaration of independence. Migration establishes one’s own home and way of life. Thus, “home” implies permanence and belonging, their “home base.”

When viewed through a class lens, home is a “retreat” from market exploitation, a place of calm, respite, and physical ease. We arrange our homes for comfort and coziness, “nesting” in a private place removed from worldly concerns. It is a site of consumption. Conveniences like indoor heating, water, and toilets contributed to now taken-for-granted creature comforts of home that few of today’s homeless enjoy (Rybczynski 1986).

Home is the site of domestic life and thereby, carries some gendered freight. Sometimes it is assumed that the home is only a place of leisure, rest, consumption, and reproduction, but it is also a site of production, especially for women. In some places and at certain times, domestic work contributed to making the home a sex-segregated domain, with a gendered division of labor and inequality. Homelessness is everywhere concentrated among men.

Yet, having a home should not be confused with homeownership. There are those who point to the additional benefits of owning one’s home – property rights that bestow control over the use and disposition of the dwelling, continuity of tenure, and the possibility of accruing wealth (Saunders 1989; McCabe 2016). Homeownership is often a misnomer, though. People purchase homes with loans from banks that then own part of the property. Mortgage debt can actually impose external discipline, surveillance, and immobility. Many of the personal and social benefits associated with homeownership come from residential stability that rent regulations offer tenants as well.

Nor should one exaggerate the stability of home. There is variation in “tenure,” and eviction is common. The State can recognize usufruct rights of a longstanding tent city or encampment. Improvements to one’s dwelling have been used to establish an officially recognized settlement or “slum” with protection to remain in place. Increasingly, international organizations are committing to end



An informal stall from where food and houses are sold in Diepsloot, a post-Apartheid settlement with 75% informal households
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housing insecurity, upgrade slums, and ensure a “right to the city.”

Somerville (1999) offers a good summary of the contrasts between home and homelessness. He enumerated many meanings of “home” – security, shelter, hearth, heart, privacy, roots, abode, and paradise – and juxtaposed them to meanings of “homelessness” – insecurity, material deprivation, and physical exposure or rooflessness, coldness, heartlessness, instability, lack of privacy, vulnerability, rootlessness, placelessness, and even purgatory.

Homeless with a Home

Understanding homelessness with reference to the home nevertheless rests upon a negative definition, delineating what people lack. The focus on deficits obscures the fact that – in the sociological sense of home, as a place where one belongs socially – many people currently without shelter do have a “home.”

For example, people lacking shelter have a home or house somewhere else (Dupont 2000). Pavement dwellers in India and China may be recent urban migrants who will readily acknowledge they have a “home” back in their family village. Runaway youth and victims of domestic violence can be said to have a “home,” but one that is nevertheless untenable. People who live in recreational vehicles (RVs) are in fact homeowners, but they often lack rights to the land where they can park (Deener 2012; Sullivan 2018). Even if periodically displaced, people living in tents and shanties still return “home,” personalizing and beautifying their abodes and identifying their unofficial address through landmarks and intersections.

The social fixing of one’s home in space is also a function of neighbors. Home is not only an individual abode, but also a place in a community. How far that community extends beyond walls and into the street differs across cultures, but even when people who have experienced homelessness receive an apartment, some return to their familiar neighborhood and established social relations on the street.

Conclusion

The terminology of “homelessness” is thus imprecise in many ways. Nevertheless, it serves as a contemporary euphemism preferable to older stigmatized labels like “bums,” “tramps,” “vagrants,” and “hobos.” Given people’s positive emotions towards, and shared attachments to home, the term “homelessness” can create public empathy with the plight of those whose dwelling places exclude them from mainstream society. It is a discourse that can promote the support needed for housing policies that bring people into the warmth of home.

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VIVENCIAS PRECARIAS Y DESIGUALDADES URBANAS EN BOLIVIA Y LAS FILIPINAS

por Cristina Cielo

En sus recientes protestas contra las medidas de austeridad, las clases trabajadoras y desposeídas de Ecuador, Haití, Irán, Francia y otros lugares, desafían las políticas económicas neoliberales que les perjudican. En Ecuador, por ejemplo, las movilizaciones de octubre 2019 protestaron la reducción de los subsidios a los combustibles, política que incrementó súbitamente los precios de los alimentos básicos: de la noche a la mañana, un quintal de maíz subió de USD \$18 a \$40, los guisantes de \$20 a \$40 y las cebollas de \$14 a \$26¹.

Las personas que viven en situaciones precarias –en las calles o en condiciones inseguras y marginales– conocen de primera mano las estructuras desiguales que dificultan sus vidas. Pero ¿cómo comprenden lo que pueden hacer para oponerse a estas injusticias? ¿Cómo se constituyen sus experiencias vitales de las desigualdades y sus posibilidades políticas para desafiarlas?

Gran parte del trabajo y de la vivienda de los pobladores urbanos de escasos recursos se considera informal, a veces ilegal, más no siempre ilegítima. Según las formas en las que los ciudadanos precarizados se organizan para satisfacer sus necesidades, sus posiciones materiales, subjetivas y políticas pueden variar mucho. Vemos estas diferencias al comparar experiencias en barrios marginales de Cochabamba, Bolivia y Manila, Filipinas. Las diversas experiencias de las desigualdades se deben, en parte, a la constitución histórica de las visiones de desarrollo y de la economía del suelo urbano en cada país.

VISIONES DEL DESARROLLO Y ESTRUCTURAS DE LA ECONOMÍA

Tanto Bolivia como Filipinas se consideran países de ingresos medio-bajos. En 2018, el ingreso per cápita de los filipinos era de USD \$3.830 USD anuales y el de los bolivianos \$3.370². En ambos países, más de la mitad de sus ciudadanos habitan viviendas precarias³.

Los residentes más pobres de Cochabamba viven en la Zona Sur de la ciudad, sector que creció a partir de las migraciones inducidas por las políticas de ajuste estructural de los años 80. A las partes más alejadas, áridas e inhóspitas de esta zona siguen llegando familias sin otras opciones de vivienda. En grupos, instalan sus carpas sobre las duras tierras, para eventualmente ir construyendo chozas de adobe. Queda lejos aún el acceso al agua o alcantarillado, caminos, transporte o electricidad.

Rara vez compran los terrenos que ocupan, menos aún poseen títulos de propiedad. Pero a medida que persisten en trabajar juntos para habitar la zona, comienzan a afirmar su derecho a permanecer allí. Consideran que su sudor, su tenaz y agotador trabajo para mejorar la tierra, constituyen un “pago” legítimo por su ocupación de sus terrenos, tal y como nos dice una vecina: “Hemos sufrido, nos ha costado tanto trabajo... Todo esto lo hemos hecho



Así participamos © Centro Vicente Cañas archives, 2008



Contraportada © Centro Vicente Cañas archives, 2008



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nosotros mismos. Me ha costado mucho”⁴. Sus reclamos no solo son de propiedad, sino también territoriales.

Los grupos indígenas latinoamericanos comenzaron a coordinar sus luchas por sus territorios en la década de los ochenta. En Bolivia, las comunidades indígenas bolivianas exigieron el reconocimiento formal de su ocupación territorial con la Marcha por la Dignidad y el Territorio de 1990. Los residentes de los barrios periféricos de Cochabamba se inspiran en estas luchas indígenas, así como en las reformas agrarias latinoamericanas, en las que se afirma que “la tierra es de quien la trabaja”.

En Manila, al contrario, los filipinos precarizados enfrentan enormes dificultades para presentar cualquier tipo de reivindicación alternativa de propiedad. La política económica filipina está fuertemente influenciada por el marco neoclásico angloamericano, en el que un mercado libre autorregulado depende de la clara definición y regulación de la propiedad privada.

Manila se ha posicionado como una ciudad global para atraer inversiones extranjeras, con una amplia reurbanización y el aumento del valor del suelo. En este contexto, los residentes urbanos de escasos recursos han sido cada vez más incapaces de acceder a las viviendas formales. A medida que la inversión privada para el desarrollo urbano de Manila ha aumentado, también han incrementado sus asentamientos informales, tanto en términos absolutos como porcentuales⁵.

La integración de las economías locales en los flujos globales del comercio e inversión concede un rol central al suelo urbano como recurso de poder, impidiendo que asentadores informales proclamen la legitimidad de su ocupación frente a la propiedad titulada. Y la privatización de la planificación⁶ impide la intervención de los residentes informales en las políticas que les afectan.

LA ORGANIZACIÓN SOCIOPOLÍTICA DE LOS SECTORES URBANO-POPULARES

Así las cosas, los filipinos de escasos recursos en Manila carecen del poder político que reclaman los sectores populares bolivianos.

Incluso la terminología es reveladora: los *squatters* o *urban poor* –como comúnmente se llaman sectores informales y marginados en las Filipinas y otros lugares– se autodenominan en América Latina los “sectores populares” o “urbano-populares,” términos que resaltan su derecho mayoritario a la ciudad.

Por supuesto, los movimientos sociales filipinos también han resistido la desposesión, famosamente en el *People Power Revolution* de 1986. Tras la destitución del dictador Marcos, el nuevo gobierno filipino y sus simpatizantes internacionales buscaron construir un Estado y sociedad civil liberal. Fomentaron las Organizaciones No Gubernamentales (ONGs) y los filipinos marginados

comenzaron a ver en ellas una posibilidad de canalizar sus demandas, una alternativa a la política tradicional de patronazgo.

El término “sociedad civil” en las Filipinas suele referirse sobre todo a los actores y a las acciones de las ONGs, reconocidas internacionalmente por su dinamismo excepcional*, y cuyo papel se institucionalizó en la Constitución de 1987, el Código de Gobierno Local de 1991 y otras políticas y planes de desarrollo nacionales⁷. Hasta hoy, las poblaciones más pobres de las Filipinas rara vez participan directamente en la conformación de políticas municipales. Son representadas por ONGs; su dirección por activistas profesionales y de clase media debilita la participación política directa de los sectores urbano-marginales.

Las ONGs también trabajan en toda América Latina, pero allí no son los más importantes mediadores entre las poblaciones precarizadas y las políticas institucionales, sino que comparten ese lugar con los movimientos sociales, indígenas y sindicalistas. La amplia influencia de los sindicatos en Bolivia se puede atribuir a la centralidad económica de la minería en el país y a los sindicatos mineros que allí existen desde los años 40.

El poder del discurso y de la experiencia sindical ha dado forma concreta a la unidad y a las prácticas organizativas de los barrios periféricos de Cochabamba. En muchos de estos barrios, los vecinos están obligados a asistir a grandes asambleas semanales e integradoras, bajo pena de multa. También se requiere su incorporación al trabajo comunal y a las movilizaciones y protestas. Hay asentamientos en las que se buscan títulos colectivos de propiedad de tierra en lugar de títulos individuales.

Esta participación corporativa crea un sentido de pertenencia desde lo colectivo, proporcionando una experiencia alternativa a la ciudadanía individualizada del modelo liberal. Un líder comunitario describe “la concepción andina de libertad que no es individual sino colectiva. La gente que piensa de forma individual dice, yo decido... Pero nosotros decimos que quien no participa está perjudicando al grupo”.

El poder de los movimientos populares en América del Sur en las últimas décadas surge de estos tipos de reivindicaciones colectivas y del protagonismo de las poblaciones urbano-marginales. En países como las Filipinas, en cambio, la importancia de las inversiones privadas y los modelos representativos de participación ha atenuado la participación política de sus sectores urbanos precarizados.

Las desigualdades urbanas van en aumento. El 75% de las ciudades del mundo tienen mayores desigualdades de ingresos que hace veinte años⁸. Para cambiar el rumbo de esta tendencia, no sólo requerimos políticas que aborden las necesidades básicas de los sectores más necesitados. Es también imprescindible el fortalecimiento de las posibilidades políticas de poblaciones precarizadas para impugnar las condiciones estructurales que les marginan.

ONE LAST PERSONAL NOTE

by Charles Porter

My name is Charles Porter. I have worked in the Skid Row area of Downtown Los Angeles, for more than 20 years, with United Coalition East Prevention Project (UCEPP), a program of Social Model Recovery Systems. UCEPP is a prevention program that targets factors contributing to substance abuse and its related problems. Our work is grounded in community assessment, organizing, and mobilization for change. My comments on homelessness are shaped by the experiential wisdom gained from participating in this process partnering with unhoused allies, colleagues, and friends.

In Los Angeles, homelessness does not affect everyone equally, and Black people are at the greatest risk. This has been consistently documented by the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) annual homeless count, which aligns with national trends. This disparity is a concrete measure of institutional racism that resulted in the formation of LAHSA’s ad-hoc committee on Black People Experiencing Homelessness, which issued a timely report earlier this year (2019). Skid Row is a predominantly Black neighborhood and the experiences of community members are rooted in historical trauma that spans back 400 years. Many argue, it was Jamestown, VA, in 1619, where the foundation of institutional racism in North America was laid. Racism is one of the root causes of homelessness in Skid Row, along with poverty, inaccessible and inadequate housing, and the lack of health and safety protections.

Poor people do not have the luxury of privacy, and the lives of our unhoused neighbors are lived publicly. This makes them vulnerable to being profiled as addicts and criminals, and related exploitation and harassment. This results in practices and policies that often criminalize the unhoused and fuels a narrative that dehumanizes unhoused neighbors as threats to safety and public health. The reality is that there is rampant drug usage, both legal and illegal, by varying segments of society in this country. Additionally, mental illness in our community is usually the result of the negative societal experiences and traumas. This directly correlates to other failed systems with similar racial disparities; criminal justice and child welfare. Successful community engagement efforts to prevent substance abuse and improve the neighborhood, also positively impact mental health and challenge the narrative that Skid Row is a lawless open-air asylum.

Remedial interventions must address the following essential needs: community connectedness/sense of purpose, agency/autonomy, shelter/safety, and wellness/healing. A strong sense of community connectedness helps to meet many psycho-socio needs and facilitates the sharing of resources. This also helps to foster a sense of ownership, attachment, care, and accountability. It also validates one’s humanity and sense of purpose. Agency and autonomy speak to the power of choice and self-determination, including efforts to make sure those with lived experience inform the development and implementation of policies and procedures designed to assist them. There were two major battles for inclusion and civic participation “on our own terms” related to the formation of a Skid Row Neighborhood Council. Our efforts were unsuccessful, but the community continues to advocate for autonomy and representation in the face of inequitable development and gentrification. Another example centers around efforts to create and expand employment opportunities in Skid Row while simultaneously addressing immediate local needs. The Skid Row Community ReFresh Spot was designed in 2017, by the Skid Row Community Improvement Coalition, to address years

of neglect and related horrific public health conditions. Community vision coupled with City resources resulted in a project that created dozens of living-wage jobs for currently and formerly unhoused neighbors, and provides essential resources and access to public toilets, showers, laundry services, and drinking water 24 hours a day. In its busiest month, resources were accessed more than 22,000 times (averaging 700 per day). The project incorporates peer connection, culture and serves as a respite for unhoused neighbors. It has been so successful, due to its grassroots beginning, envisioned and designed by the impacted community.

Shelter and safety are interrelated, and encampments/informal settlements address some of these concerns by forming communities of mutual support. Law enforcement and security are often threats to the unhoused and exacerbate institutional trauma. Strengthening peer connections and engaging the community through positive activities has been an effective approach to expanding safety and accountability. We have seen safety consistently demonstrated at large community events and festivals in Skid Row via engagement and mutual respect.

Lastly, I would like to discuss wellness and healing in Skid Row. Statistics show that living on the streets greatly shortens life expectancy. Despite this, there have been profound efforts to expand wellness, healing, and quality of life. Culturally-tailored interventions must be paramount in any approach seeking to expand long-term wellness in the context of institutional racism. To this end, spirituality, music, dance, philosophy, indigenous thought, and performance permeate all facets of public life in Skid Row. We celebrate this rich heritage, including the diversity of the African diaspora. We also acknowledge Skid Row as a *recovery community*, where people find purpose, safety, and essential support and services.

We cannot discuss ending homelessness without a commitment to expanding access to affordable and accessible housing, and meeting people where they are with compassion and concern. We should not force integration into institutional systems that do not support their existence, well-being, and sense of agency. We must utilize the valuable experiential wisdom of those with lived experience in addressing the issues that confront them, including project/facility design, policy development, and expanding opportunities for employment. The Skid Row that I know is wise, caring, vibrant, and resilient. Our unhoused neighbors are powerful advocates for long-term community change, safety, and recovery from addiction and mental illness. We must continue to ask ourselves what we can do *with* them and not *for* them.



Charles Porter

is the Prevention Coordinator for United Coalition East Prevention Project, a program of Social Model Recovery Systems. His efforts are also focused on expanding neighborhood wellness and safety by connecting grassroots vision/approaches to needed resources.

1 Vanessa Silva, “Precios en el Mercado Mayorista de Quito se alteran”, *El Comercio* (6 octubre 2019).
2 World Bank Data, <https://data.worldbank.org/income-level/lower-middle-income> (consultado 20 oct 2019).
3 UN Habitat, *The State of the World Cities Report 2012/13* (New York: United Nations, 2013).
4 Citas y trabajo de campo en Bolivia son de Cristina Cielo, *The City Effect: Urban Institutions, Peripheries and Political Participation in Bolivia* (UC Berkeley tesis doctoral, 2010).
5 Gavin Shatkin, *Collective action and urban poverty alleviation: Community organizations and the struggle for shelter in Manila* (New York: Routledge, 2016).
6 Jana Kleibert “Exclusive Development(s): Special Economic Zones and Enclave Urbanism in the Philippines,” *Critical Sociology* 44, no 3 (2017): 471–485.
7 Mary Racelis “Civil Society, Populist Politics and the State - Philippine Democracy Today.” Presentado en la Universidad de Humboldt, el Instituto para las Relaciones Internacionales Culturales y la Unversidad de Hamburg (Alemania, abril del 2005).
8 UN Habitat, “Widening urban divide” capítulo 4 en *World Cities Report 2016* (New York: United Nations, 2016).

ARTISTS 2019

FESTIVAL FOR ALL SKID ROW ARTISTS

The 10th Festival for all Skid Row Artists took place on October 26 & 27, 2019 in Gladys Park, Los Angeles.
Say What! TENCth Annual –can you believe it! How Time Flies! How a community vitally sustains itself! You better believe it!
Here is the Artist List of 2019

GARY ANDERSON
YVONNE MICHELLE AUTRY
STEPHANIE BELL
GARY BROWN
WALTER FEARS
AUSTIN HINES
LEE MAUPIN
MATT MIYAHARA
PATTI BERMAN
KANIAH CHAPMAN
ANDREW KANG
UNKAL BEAN
CHELLA COLEMAN
CLANCEY CORNEL
MIKE MAHANEY
CHARLES PORTER
LYRICAL STORM
LEEAV SOFER
MACK FLOYD
KEITH JOHNSON
ALFI A. PRICE
BROTHER JOSEPH WARREN
GERALD ALEXANDER
KALEB HAVENS
CRUSHOW HERRING
JAMES NEWMAN
MARK PHILLIPS
OLUSHEYI BANJO
RITA BARRER
JAMES BIRDSONG
BLAC BLOSSOM
JEFF CHILDS

TIFFANY CHUNG
DARRELL DENNIS
MARCEL DEVON
SALVADOR DILLANUEVA
DARIUS DOBSON
FRANCE EMMANUEL
STEPHEN FOLDS
CAROL GERARD
OSCAR E GOMEZ
VIJAY GUPTA
LARONDA HARTFIELD
DANIE HILL
MATT HORNS
MARY JACOBS
L JONES
DARNELL KILLBURN
ESSILFIE KOBİ
ART LOPEZ
DANIEL MARTINEZ
LEYLA MARTINEZ
WILLIAM MAYS
PERAL MERD
BRITTANEE MICHELLE
BRENT W. MILLER
REBECCA MOLINERE
LOVE ONE
REGINA "CLOUIS" PATTERSON
CASSIUS PAXTON
ALICE PING
DIANE PROZELLER
RAYMOND RIDENFS [SP?]
BIBI ROSALIA

MARIA ROSAS
DIEGO RUVALCABA
CHARLES SCHIAVO
DUSTIN SEO
SARAH SIMMONS
OLIVIA ST JOHN
TAR
ADRIAN TUMAGE
DEARLINE VICTORIA
MICHEAL – WATERMAN HUBMAN
DEMETRA WILSON
KENNEDY WROSE
DEVON
FUSIONA
TBONE
ELZIE ALEXANDER
GERALDO DIAZ
MYSON CARNES
GERALDINE HUGHES
THOMAS EVANS
KENNEDY WROSE
BOBBY BUCK
EMANUEL-OG MAN-COMPITO
ANGELINA HARPER
CHARLES JACKSON
MELVIN JOHNSON
RICCARLO PORTER
ANTHONY E STALLWORTH
QUEEN MAMA TABIA
ANTHONY TAYLOR
LEILANI (SASHAE) ZACKERY



Crushow Herring, aka Showzart

is a virtuoso artist born in Kansas City, MO, where he first attributes his passion for community and making a difference to his mother, Sherita J. Herring of the Kreative Images Foundation; in which she instilled early in his life that it's important to inspire and support others. Secondly, he credits his father Gerrie E. Herring, also an artist, with his illustrative abilities. Actively working from the streets of Skid Row in Downtown LA, to sitting in the boardrooms of City Hall, Crushow has consistently been instrumental in fighting for equal rights for everyone and creating programs and services that aid not only the disenfranchised but creates opportunities for all races, religions, and nationalities.
See p. 13



Fabian Debora

was mentored by many Chicano artists and muralists and was introduced to creative expressions of all forms, from graffiti and murals to sketching and fine art painting. He has served as a counselor and the Director of Substance Abuses Services & Programming as well as a mentor at Homeboy Industries in Los Angeles for a decade, as Community Connection Director at Arts for Incarcerated Youth Network. He is currently a teaching artist for ACTA Alliance of traditional Arts; bringing the arts to adult correctional facilities, and leading Somos LA Arte- Homeboy art academy perusing and developing his vision to continue to serve the greater Los Angeles area and abroad.
See p. 16

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