



**INTERNATIONAL  
ARCHITECTURE  
BIENNALE  
ROTTERDAM**

## **MAKING CITY**

5<sup>th</sup> International Architecture Biennale Rotterdam

April 2012

## **CALL FOR PROJECTS**

**The 5th IABR calls for submissions of projects that advance innovative responses to today's most pressing urban challenges. Municipal, metropolitan and national governments, cultural organizations, researchers, designers, and other parties are invited to submit design projects that rethink the existing interaction between politics, planning and design.**

### **International Architecture Biennale Rotterdam**

The International Architecture Biennale Rotterdam (IABR) engages the fields of architecture, landscape architecture, and urbanism in research, design, public dialogue, and multi-media presentation. Conceived as a research biennale, each edition of the IABR is based on an urgent social agenda, and is motivated by the conviction that architecture can and must contribute to solving some of our society's most complex problems. The Biennale's exhibitions, publications, conferences and seminars provide a platform for innovation and exchange between professionals, policy makers and citizens - of Dutch as well as international expertise.

### *5th IABR: Making City*

The basic assumption of the 5th IABR, entitled *Making City*, is that massive worldwide urbanisation is inevitably forcing us to rethink the way we govern, plan and design our cities. As a consequence of continuing urbanization, 'city making' is presenting itself as one of the most effective, hands-on (political) instruments for responding to social challenges. However, as they have been conceived within the administrative context of the nation state, the existing planning principles and procedures are often failing to respond to current socio-economical, ecological and other challenges. Cities, metropolitan regions, and national planning authorities are therefore increasingly questioning these institutionalized planning recipes, while looking for and speculating on more effective principles for 'city making'.

The 5<sup>th</sup> IABR: *Making City* is therefore focusing on 'spatio-political innovation projects' that rethink this established relationship and interaction between politics, planning and design, in order to develop more effective ways of responding to urban challenges. In this context, design is not just seen as a problem-solving device, to be deployed at the closing stages of the planning process, but as a guiding principle for conceiving and developing alternative political and planning principles. By short-circuiting urban challenges, political decision and design, the 5<sup>th</sup> IABR aims at stimulating more adequate constellations of alliances, design principles and governance.

### **Emblematic Test Sites and CounterSites**

In close collaboration with municipal authorities and other partners, the IABR itself is initiating and coordinating three innovative projects for three "Test Sites", respectively in Rotterdam, Istanbul and São Paulo. These Test Sites are exemplary for three significant, recurring evolutions and challenges that necessitate a rethink of our planning system.

Parallel to this, the 5th IABR launches this call for projects to identify a series of completed, ongoing or planned processes and projects which share the biennale's objective of rethinking the existing relationship between (urban) politics, planning and design: CounterSites. In doing so, Making City aims to provide a platform for a broader exchange and a shared development of knowledge between politicians, planning services and agencies, researchers, designers and other parties.

### **What is a CounterSite?**

A CounterSite can be a planning process, an urban study or research to inspire metropolitan politics or governance, design studies and all other innovation projects and processes which:

- Aim at fine-tuning or rethinking the established relationship and interaction between politics, planning and design, in order to develop more appropriate responses to one of three main challenges (see Making City below);
- Start from an actual urban transformation, evolution, challenge and/or site;
- Attribute a guiding role to professional design offices (preferably in collaboration with experts from other field), as well as to design itself;
- Go beyond the development of ideas as the aim is to test innovative design principles and challenge current conditions for city making (legislative, political, governance, etcetera);
- Consider the public presentation and public debate to be an integral part of the process, including the production of the necessary elements to do this (models, perspectives, film, etc).

### **What does participation as a CounterSite imply in practice?**

Participating as a CounterSite (CS) in the 5th IABR means that the CS project will be integrated into the Biennale's overall research and development process and its presentation in the Spring of 2012.

However, the development of the CounterSite project remains the sole responsibility of the parties submitting.

The participation in the 5th IABR implies a.o.:

- Invitation to participate in and present at one or more occasions for knowledge exchange and development where Test Sites and selected CounterSites will jointly present and exchange on the central theme and the three central planning issues (see below 5th IABR: Making City);
- Invitation to participate in the 5th IABR's main exhibition, Making City, opening on April 13, 2012 at the Netherlands Architecture Institute (NAi) in Rotterdam.
- CounterSites will be featured in the 5th IABR catalogue.
- Selected CounterSites might also feature in presentations of a different type, such as publications or the opening conference.

### **Procedure and planning**

- A provisional procedure and schedule for the collaboration between IABR and the selected CounterSites is laid out below. Depending on the typical dynamics of a biennale's development, certain elements may be added, altered or cancelled.
- 1 April 2011, 12:00 CET: deadline for submission of CounterSite applications;

- The 5th IABR Curator Team makes a selection of CounterSites and by 22 April 2011 at the latest, selected CounterSites will receive a letter containing further information, including specific conditions and guidelines;
- In the autumn of 2011 the IABR will organise one or more meeting for knowledge exchange and development. CounterSites are invited to take part in these exchanges between politicians, town planners, researchers and designers.
- IABR will inform the CS in due time of the format and parameters of the exhibition concept and of the timetable for delivery of the materials for the various types of output (exhibition, publication, communication, etc).
- Ultimate arrival date of exhibition entries in Rotterdam: 1 March 2012

The IABR will be solely and exclusively responsible for the organization and production of meeting(s)/workshop(s), publication(s) and the exhibition. The CounterSites will be responsible for the production of all exhibition material, and all travel, transport and travel related costs to Rotterdam.

A detailed description of the conditions for participation, including the participant's responsibilities, will be sent to the CounterSites upon selection.

### **How to submit?**

In order to be considered as a CounterSite, send us, **before April 1<sup>st</sup> 2011 12:00 CET**, a dossier consisting of 3 A4 pages maximum, if necessary supplemented by appendices, containing at least the following data:

- Name and concise description of the project or the planning process, indicating the current state of affairs (finished, ongoing, to be initiated);
- Its position relative to the basic principle of *Making City* and to one of the three major challenges identified by IABR regarding planning;
- Description of the process, the methodology, the role of design and designer, and the envisaged end result (including the schedule);
- Description of the alliance managing the planning process (including the contact person's name);
- Mention of any designers and design agencies already involved in the project or who will become involved at some point;
- A list of existing or planned physical and digital output and products (models, films, website, etc.) related to the CounterSite project;
- All relevant contact information, including a mail address, of the person responsible for the application on behalf of all parties involved.

### **Practical information**

Deadline: 1 April 2011— 12:00 CET

Send your documents to: CounterSites@iabrn.nl

Contact person: for questions on procedure contact Vivian Zuidhof at vivian@iabrn.nl

Response: on April 22<sup>nd</sup> 2011 at the latest, all selected CounterSites will receive a *letter* containing more information

## 5<sup>th</sup> IABR: *Making City*

### **International Architecture Biennale Rotterdam (IABR)**

The International Architecture Biennale Rotterdam (IABR) is an international urban research biennale founded in 2001 on the conviction that architecture is a public concern.

The IABR's main objectives stem from this conviction:

- As a bi-annual platform the IABR promotes the notion that architecture can and should be prepared to contribute to the solution of a number of social issues;
- As a research biennale the IABR combines and connects serious, long term research with actual current planning agendas - both in Holland as well as abroad;
- As a cultural entrepreneur the IABR enhances and supports, wherever possible, the actual realisation of national and international projects to the research and promotion of which it has contributed.

### **Background information 5th IABR: *Making City***

Building on two previous, thematic biennales focusing on the city, *POWER—Producing the Contemporary City* (2007) and *Open City: Designing Coexistence* (2009), *Making City* (2012) is concentrating on the innovations required for 'city making', from design aspects to political considerations.

The fact that this world is urbanizing at a headlong pace is well known, especially to specialists in the field. Ongoing urbanisation processes in Southeast-Asia, Africa and Latin America are most often referred to in this context, despite the fact that the European continent has already become a practically completely urbanised territory. In their own specific way, all of these different developments contribute significantly to the well-known statistics: over 50% of the world's population is now living in cities, and by 2050 this percentage will have crossed the 75% threshold. Over 90% of the world's welfare is generated on not even 3% of its territory. These are enormous shifts, yet seldom considered to be urgent reasons to rethink the way our societies are organised and governed. Economically speaking, cities are becoming more and more important relative to nation states, while on a political, administrative and town planning level, the perspectives of the nation state have nevertheless ruled for centuries resulting in the same, unchanging bureaucratic frame for organising increasingly urban societies.

The 5<sup>th</sup> IABR argues that political thinking and acting will inevitably need to change in order to respond to social challenges, which (will) manifest themselves more and more as urban challenges. In other words: as social issues are 'urbanising' our politics, urban planning and design will simultaneously have to adapt accordingly. It is in our cities that the main contemporary issues are first being felt (social divide, ecology, economy, energy, etc.). Hence the IABR underlines the importance of cities and 'city making' (a qualitative approach: the city as motor for 'coexistence') as necessary elements of a response to these problems. Current generic planning procedures and recipes are too far removed from this urban reality and its specific set of challenges - the 'solutions' they proffer are ineffective. The linear, hierarchical principle of planning - leading from political decision-making via its translation into an administrative planning frame, to a definition, a description and finally to the design of a project, too often produces urban transformations that sidestep urban reality, rather than respond to it.

### **Three crucial planning challenges, three Test Sites**

The 5<sup>th</sup> IABR is more than just a theoretical exercise, as it is actively involving itself in city making. In collaboration with local stakeholders and partners, IABR is planning and coordinating three projects on three emblematic "Test Sites" in Rotterdam, Istanbul en São Paulo. The Test Sites in each of these cities are exemplary for three of the main evolutions and challenges that make a rethink of the planning system an

absolute necessity. Both the IABR and the local stakeholders are starting from an actual challenge or issue, and all parties involved are intent on further developing, implementing and realising the ensuing propositions, on a basis of pilot projects.

Each of the Test Sites represents one of three important motives for rethinking the current generic planning system:

- *We cannot build cities, we can only change them.*

As an urban project next to an important international transport hub, the Rotterdam Central District is a symbol for the need to rethink the 'urban design project' or 'local area development'. Over the last decades, all over the world, completely new urban areas have been conceived and constructed within the predefined contours of the project area. These sites turn out to be urban islands, donned with a volumetric extrusion of the real estate potential produced by an international transport hub (cars and/or public transport). In order to allow such metropolitan projects to become part of the city and in order to design some new development models to suit the post- real estate crisis situation, the 'blueprint model of planning' has to be abandoned. We'll have to accept that we cannot and should no longer design and build entire parts of the city: we can only transform and intensify the city. To this end, we have to develop new policies, planning and design principles.

- *From massive but random urbanisation towards a cohesive city.*

The worldwide growth of urban populations has caused the scale of cities to increase significantly. This would not be a problem, if this urban sprawl or 'metropolisation' had produced high quality urban areas, in a cohesive relation with adjacent urban components and metropolitan functions. But the urban growth surrounding city centres with a formal consistency, presents itself as a juxtaposition of industrial, logistical and commercial programs, dwellings, public services and infrastructure. As is the case in Cabuçu de Cima, in São Paulo, a major challenge will be the development of planning and design principles in such a way as to promote cohesion and interconnectivity between these diverse components: to make more city with the ingredients at hand.

- *Integrating productive landscape and urbanisation.*

Just about everywhere in the world the division between urban areas and rural or natural landscape is a basic principle of planning. But the reality of Europe's urbanised territory as well as of cities confronted with an explosive growth is that the productive landscape is becoming ever more closely intertwined with urbanisation. The delimitation of urban areas in master plans and regional plans clearly has but a transient restricting effect, because it goes against the grain of the logic of urban systems. In cooperation with its partner Arnavutköy, one of the northernmost municipalities of Istanbul, the Biennale intends to develop a number of alternative, more efficient planning principles conducive to enhancing the relationship between productive landscape and urbanisation.

### **CounterSites**

In relation to the main issues and the Test Sites the IABR is coordinating, *Making City* will be selecting and presenting 'spatio-political innovation projects': *CounterSites*. *Test Sites* and *CounterSites* are projects that leave the generic, linear, hierarchic planning system behind, and short-circuit the urban challenge and design studies (instead of finishing a planning process with the design stage). Being very concrete and specific, such design propositions may disclose unexpected potentials, and advance new forms of territorial cohesion and novel planning principles. On the basis of a range of very real, actual projects that formulate and present answers to the three central questions at hand, the 5<sup>th</sup> IABR intends to visualise its main statement in a clear and tangible manner. *Making City* wants to be both a platform for politicians, city authorities, cultural organisations and researchers from different regions of the world, seeking for more effective, appropriate

planning principles and methods, *as well as* an actor in the field, initiating and managing innovation projects with three partner cities.

### **Towards a public manifestation**

'City making' is a crucial political tool for addressing social issues: this is the central premise and statement that the 5<sup>th</sup> IABR will advocate in its main exhibition as well as in the main conference and in associated publications. Therefore the 5<sup>th</sup> *International Architecture Biennale Rotterdam* wants to attract both professional visitors as well as a wider lay audience to a wide-ranging and engaging exhibition of contemporary projects and concrete challenges.

For the production of its main exhibition *Making City* the IABR collaborates with the Netherlands Architecture Institute and its Chief Curator, Linda Vlassenrood.

### **5<sup>th</sup> IABR: International Curator Team**

The international Curator Team of the 5<sup>th</sup> IABR forges the Test Sites, CounterSites and other projects into one coherent statement on city making.

The International Curator Team is chaired by **George Brugmans**, director of the IABR since 2004, and consists of:

- **Henk Ovink**: director of National Spatial Planning for the Dutch Ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment (I&M). He is responsible for the new *Architecture Policy on Architecture and Spatial Design: A Design-Based Culture*, the new Spatial Planning Act (WRO), several long-term plans and studies including the *Randstad 2040 Structural Vision* and the *New Future Agenda on Spatial Planning*, the R&D agenda on Spatial Planning, two academic chairs at the University of Utrecht (Planning Studies) and the Delft University of Technology (Design and Politics), and the Dutch spatial Olympic strategy (Plan for the Olympics 2028). Ovink teaches (and has taught) at Harvard GSD, Columbia GSAPP, University of Kentucky, TU Delft, and the Design Academy Eindhoven. Ovink has published several articles on change of government, governance and planning as well as on the specific relationship between design and politics.
- **Joachim Declerck** (main exhibition curator) is co-founder and the program director of the Architecture Workroom (Brussels), and project leader at the Berlage Institute (Rotterdam). The Architecture Workroom partners with public authorities and/or private parties to conceive and coordinate prospective design studies that advance innovative responses to architectural and urban challenges. It aims to contribute to the international exchange and development of design knowledge and practice through publications, conferences, exhibitions and a residency program. Declerck directed the professional development program at the Berlage Institute from 2008 to 2010 and was assistant curator when, in 2007, the Berlage Institute curated the 3<sup>rd</sup> IABR, *Power – Producing the Contemporary City*.
- **ZUS** (curator Test Site Rotterdam): was founded in Rotterdam in 2001, by **Elma van Boxel** and **Kristian Koreman**. Working as a duo they produced solicited and unsolicited designs and research studies in the fields of architecture, urbanism and landscape design. Realized projects include the landscape design of the Dutch Pavilion for the World Expo 2010 in Shanghai, the Central park on the World Expo, the Parc Printemps à Grand Bigard Brussels and the exhibition pavilion Spiegelzee at the Dutch coast. ZUS has produced various books and articles on their critical research and also curated research exhibitions such as *My Public Space* for the Netherlands Architecture Institute (2008), and *Unbuilt Rotterdam* for the Historical Museum Rotterdam (2010). Van Boxel and Koreman both teach and lecture at universities and school in the Netherlands and abroad.

- **MMBB** (curator Test Site Sao Paulo): MMBB Architects, based in São Paulo, Brazil, came about in 1991 as a result of the association of the architects **Fernando de Mello Franco**, **Marta Moreira** and **Milton Braga**. Their professional performance has stood out by the development of public and institutional designs in the area of building and urbanism, such as favela upgrading, social housing, and transport system facilities. Their works have been presented in exhibitions throughout Brazil and abroad, such as: “The informal city of the XXI century”, MCB São Paulo (2010); “Dirty Works”, GSD Harvard Boston (2008); “Global Cities”, Tate Modern London (2007); “Collective”, ETH Zurich (2007), and at the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> International Architecture Biennale Rotterdam (2007 and 2009). MMBB’s work has been published in books, exhibition catalogues and international magazines such as: *Abitare*, *Arch+*, *Architectural Record*, *AU*, *Casabella*, *GA*, *Hoch Parterre*, *L’Architecture D’Aujourd’Hui*, *On Site*, *XXI*. All partners teach and have taught at universities in Brazil and abroad.
- **Asu Aksoy** (curator Test Site Istanbul): is a researcher and a lecturer, working at Istanbul Bilgi University, Communications Faculty. Over many years of research, she has carried out a diversity of projects based in British and Turkish universities, specifically focusing on urban and cultural transformation in the context of migrations, globalization and policy change. She has published widely on these topics, addressing the impact of global migrations on the cultural capital of cities in Western Europe. She has also written extensively about the transformation of Istanbul in the context of the globalization of the city. Presently, Asu Aksoy is managing a project on the cultural economy of Istanbul funded by the Istanbul 2010 European Capital of Culture Agency. The aim of this mapping and measuring project is to develop policy recommendations concerning the direction that the city should take as it embraces the creative city agenda. Asu Aksoy worked on the founding of Santralistanbul, an international arts and culture centre initiated by Istanbul Bilgi University.