

Aalborg Universitet



Catalyst Architecture

New York Copenhagen Tokyo Rio de Janeiro

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NEW YORK COPENHAGEN TOKYO RIO DE JANEIRO

CATALYST ARCHITECTURE



CATALYST ARCHITECTURE
NEW YORK COPENHAGEN TOKYO RIO DE JANEIRO

Exhibition

Utzon Center December 3rd 2014 - March 8th 2015

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in Cooperation with

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Architect Professor Gitte Marling and
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Museum of Image and Sound
Photo: Diller Scofidio + Renfro

Back Page

Shibaura House
Photo: Shibaura House

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NEW YORK COPENHAGEN TOKYO RIO DE JANEIRO

CATALYST ARCHITECTURE

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CATALYST ARCHITECTURE

NEW YORK COPENHAGEN TOKYO RIO DE JANEIRO

How can architecture promote the enriching experiences of the tolerant, the democratic, and the learning city - a city worth living in, worth supporting and worth investing in?

Catalyst Architecture comprises architectural projects, which, by virtue of their location, context and their combination of programs, have a role in mediating positive social and/or cultural development. In this sense, we talk about architecture as a catalyst for:

- sustainable adaptation of the city's infrastructure
- appropriate renovation of dilapidated urban districts
- strengthening of social cohesiveness in the city
- development of a more inclusive urban life, and
- development of environments of cultural diversity and learning

The exhibition takes us to some of the fastest growing metropolises on four continents: New York, Copenhagen Tokyo, and Rio de Janeiro. The projects in the exhibition all have a powerful, social narrative that invites and opens a dialogue about new welfare goals within urban politics. They take their point of departure in people's daily activities in the city, thereby providing possibilities for the average person to participate in the development of a more open society, while making the welfare concept meaningful for everyone.

The exhibited works are designed by SANAA, Diller Scofidio + Renfro, James Corner Field Operation, JBMC Arquitetura e Urbanismo, Atelier Bow-Wow, Ateliers Jean Nouvel, COBE, Transform, BIG, Topotek1, Superflex, and by visual artist Jane Maria Petersen.



Photo: Atelier Jean Nouvel

NEW YORK – RECLAIMING URBAN SPACE

New York has adjusted its urban development strategy. The city has implemented a large number of park projects along the edge of the Hudson and East Rivers, on both sides of Manhattan, and in Queens and in Brooklyn and established hundreds of kilometers of new bike lanes on city streets and along the waterfronts. The exhibition focuses on the reclamation of urban space, which Jane Jacobs argued for back in the 1960s. Today, the focus is not exclusively on replacing obsolete and neglected buildings with modern skyscrapers, but rather on a more refined approach that mixes new and old buildings. The intention is to increase density while maintaining the building scale.

The exhibition shows two conversion projects. One is the HIGH LINE, where a previously closed freight railroad has been converted to a new bridge park. The HIGH LINE was implemented under an open conversion strategy, which re-interprets the qualities of the bridge construction and blends old and new urban districts.

The second project in the exhibition is JANE'S CAROUSEL in Brooklyn. Here a small, delicate monument has been created in a new harbor park, which gives the city's waterfront back to the residents of the city.



Photo: Hans Klib

RIO DE JANEIRO – BRIDGE BUILDING ARCHITECTURE

Over the past decade, Rio de Janeiro has implemented several urban interventions in an attempt to reduce the city's large social inequalities. One of the goals is to improve security and sanitation in the favelas and to link wealthy and poor neighborhoods. The Favela-Bairro (slum to neighborhood) Program and the Program of Growth Acceleration, initiated by the government, represent some of the most successful urban interventions to emerge from this initiative.

The exhibition displays the project CANTAGALO ELEVATOR, which consists of a metro station, a public service center, and, not least, an urban elevator that together create access and connection between the fashionable district of Ipanema and the informal settlements of the Cantagalo favela.

The healing of the segregated city also includes larger urban and cultural projects. The exhibition presents the new MUSEUM OF IMAGE AND SOUND, which is under construction and faces Copacabana Beach. In addition to exhibitions and music performances, the cultural project offers free facilities for workshops and access to film showings on the roof of the building.



Photo: Hans Kiib

TOKYO – NEW POCKET PUBLIC

Tokyo, the largest metropolis in the world, has developed into a modern, high-tech city with a dense and efficient transport and communication grid. Tokyo can be characterized as “the liquid city,” dominated by a constant movement of people and products.

One of the city’s challenges, however, is a lack of public urban spaces and leisure areas. Urban spaces, as we know them in the West, are sparse in Tokyo, and there are generally no urban spatial policies to support public urban life.

The exhibition has chosen to focus on the segment of urban life that is restricted to the city’s pores – that is, urban life as it unfolds undetected in street spaces, back yards, parking lots and residual landscapes in relation to the city’s overpowering mobility structure. MIYASHITA PARK in the Shibuya district is an example of a new ‘Pocket Public’ – a modest urban space that offers scope for development to young people in the street and to vulnerable homeless people of the neighborhood. The second example is SHIBAURA HOUSE, a privately financed and managed project. It is an open place for the residents of the district and for visiting artist and architects.



Photo: Iwan Baan

COPENHAGEN - REINVENTING THE WELFARE CITY

Copenhagen is reinventing itself as a welfare city in a number of ways. In this exhibition, the focus is on the cultural welfare city and on the development of urban spaces and bicycle infrastructure.

In the cultural welfare city, hybrid projects are established that connect sophisticated cultural programs with programs from the daily life of the general population. As an exponent of this approach, the exhibition presents BIBLIOTEKET + KULTURHUSET in the Nordvest district of Nørrebro.

In addition, several performative urban spaces for bodily expression are being developed in the new welfare city where socially inclusive urban spaces and public domains are the focus. Parallel to and integrated with these developments, a comprehensive bicycle infrastructure has been implemented throughout the city. The emphasis of this infrastructure is on learning and experience as well as the environment, health, freedom, and comfort. This approach places new demands on architects and urban designers. SUPERKILEN, which is shown in the exhibition, represents a new urban typology – an urban bikescape that combines sustainable mobility with performative and socially inclusive urban spaces.



THE HIGH LINE – A NEW ARCHITECTURAL TYPOLOGY

FACTS:

High Line, West Manhattan, New York

Initial program: Initially constructed as an elevated freight railroad, inaugurated in 1934. Closed as railroad in 1981.

New program: Elevated park space with footpath, recreational areas, viewing platforms

Architects: Restoration and new design: James Corner Field Operation Diller Scofidio + Renfro, Piet Oudolf 2007-2015

Client: New York City with support from Friends of the High Line and several private sponsors

Opened to the public: 1st and 2nd sections were opened to the public 2008 -2011, while the 3rd section was opened in 2014

Operation and maintenance: New York City Department of Parks & Recreation

Cost: 300 million USD/ 242 million EUR

At just over 10 meters above street level, the High Line extends three kilometers through three districts of Southwestern Manhattan in New York. It consists of simple steel construction, and previously served as an elevated rail line connection between Penn Station on 34th Street and the many factories and warehouses on Gansevoort Street. Today the High Line is a beautiful park covered with new tiles, viewing platforms and smaller recreational areas. The park bridge has simple, uniform, urban fittings and features a variety of flowering plants, grasses, shrubs and trees from around the world.

The High Line project has been carried out as part of an open conversion strategy. The result is a remarkable urban architectural project, which works as a catalyst for the urban development of Western Manhattan. The greater project includes the restoration and reuse of many old industrial buildings in close proximity to the park bridge and new projects being added to fit the context. The outcome is a conglomeration of non-contemporary urban activities along the High Line, where mechanical workshops, small wholesale stores. etc. mix with new exclusive residential buildings, eminent cafés, and galleries. With the High Line, a new urban architectural typology has been created that is aesthetically enriching and sets new standards for urban transformation and urban life.



JANE'S CAROUSEL – A SMALL DELICATE MONUMENT

FACTS:

Jane's Carousel, Brooklyn Bridge Park, DUMBO, New York

Measurements: 72x72x72 feet

The carousel: Constructed in 1922 by Philadelphia Toboggan Company and restored by artist Jane Walentas in 2011

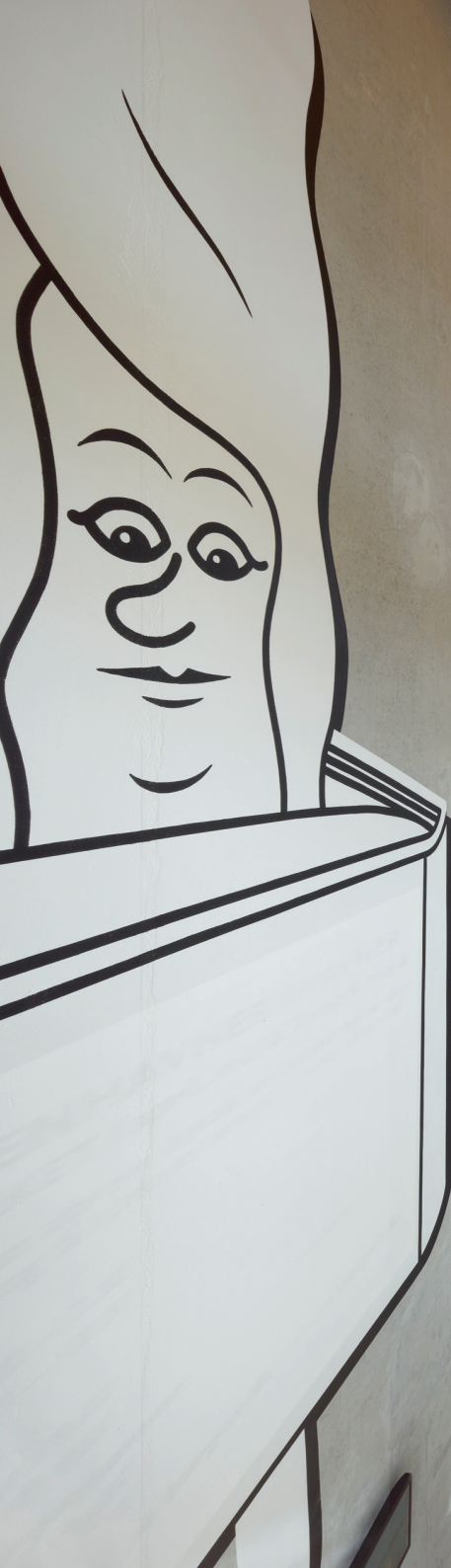
Pavilion: Designed by Ateliers Jean Nouvel

Inaugurated: September 16th 2011

Operation and maintenance of the monument: New York City Department of Parks & Recreation

In the DUMBO historic district between the Brooklyn Bridge and Manhattan Bridge – part of Brooklyn's new waterfront – an old, beautifully restored carousel has been placed on an elevated concrete foundation in a transparent pavilion. Directly above the carousel is a circular window in the pavilion's ceiling, which otherwise consists of polished aluminum strips. The roof is supported in each corner by four large, cylindrical steel columns, which are drawn 6 ½ feet back from the façade. The façades facing east and west consist of seven fixed panels of self-supporting acrylic sheets. The façades facing north and south can be folded out and opened completely.

Jean Nouvel calls his small building a 'jewel box' and a 'delicate small monument' in a city that is otherwise full of large, monumental buildings. The pavilion is of significant branding value for the DUMBO area's transformation from harbor industry to a creative cultural growth area. Today, Jane's Carousel functions as a popular meeting place, a magnet that attracts people from Manhattan across to Brooklyn, thereby creating a connection between the two boroughs across the East River. The area around the carousel has become a new dynamic activity space, a public domain where different groups relax and observe each other's celebrations, lunches, and leisure activities.



BIBLIOTEK + KULTURHUS

- THE DISTRICT'S NEW PUBLIC LIVING ROOM

FACTS

Bibliotek + Kulturhus, Rentemestervej 76, Nordvest in Copenhagen

Size: Rebuilt section 1,150 m² and new building 2,000 m²

Contains: Library, workshops, office for the local neighborhood committee, multi-use hall and café

Architects: COBE and Transform in collaboration with landscape architects Schönherr, engineering company Wessberg, and building contractor Brd. A. & B. Andersen

Client: The Municipality of Copenhagen

Inaugurated: 2011

Cost: 42 million DKK/ 5,6 million EUR/ 7 million USD

The new hybrid culture house in the district of Nordvest sits high above the flat Copenhagen landscape on the hill above Bispebjerg. The building complex consists of a previously renovated culture house, which is linked to a new building via a glass-covered interior street. While the old building has a polished grey façade, the façade of the new building has a cladding of gilded expanded metal (aluminum) that sparkles in the sun and lights up the district's mass of grey buildings even on a rainy day. The old building contains a café on the ground floor and workshops, offices, etc. on the floors above, while the new building is home to a library on the three lowest floors (children's library, library for young people, and adult library) and a multi-use hall above. The details, the materials, and the spatial appearance address the senses and are carefully considered in relation to the many different user groups.

The Bibliotek + Kulturhus has become the new meeting place in the neighborhood – a public domain and space for cultural interaction for the residents of the most multi-ethnic district in Copenhagen. Here one meets artists, children get help with their homework, and adults get advice and guidance. Visitors can relax with their children, read the newspaper, and buy an inexpensive, tasty meal.



SUPERKILEN – BEYOND BEING NICE

FACTS

Superkilen, Nørrebro, Copenhagen

Area: 27,000 m²/ 750 meter long public square

Contains: Bicycle lane, series of urban spaces, picnic areas, outdoor fitness space, playgrounds, concert areas, chess tables, fountains, space for ball games, etc.

Design: Architectural firm BIG, landscape architects Topotek1, the artist group SUPERFLEX in collaboration with Lemming Eriksson, Help PR & Communication

Client: The Municipality of Copenhagen with financial support from Realdania

Inauguration: Officially inaugurated June 22nd 2012

Cost: 59 million DKK/ 8 million EUR/ 10 million USD

Superkilen is Copenhagen's new international urban space. It encompasses the landscaping of a previous freight railroad area on Outer Nørrebro. The urban furniture comprises 100 different colorful objects: benches, slides, play sculptures, boxing rings, sound systems, signs and symbols, well covers, fountains, lamps, etc. These items originate from more than 50 different countries; each has a story and a relation to the district's diverse population. The objects create mental connections to places outside Denmark and together they re-tell the story of Nørrebro in a new, socially inclusive way.

A bicycle lane and a pedestrian path run through the middle of the area, connecting and linking poorer Nørrebro with the more affluent northern and western districts of the city. The framework of the paths and the design of Superkilen contrast with each other in such a way that a truly visual and aesthetic drama arises as one moves through the area on foot or by bicycle.

While the rail line previously acted as a barrier in the city, Superkilen opens the city socially and culturally. The former 'back sides' of buildings have been turned into 'front sides' and the design enhances the diversity of urban life. Here, numerous commuters on bicycles meet local inhabitants – and local residents meet one another. The design appeals to the senses, evokes memories, and encourages reflection: Architect Bjarke Ingels (BIG) himself uses the concept 'inclusivism' to describe the architectural project Superkilen.



MIYASHITA PARK – PLACES OF BEHAVIOUR

FACTS

Miyashita Park, immediately north of Shibuya Station, Tokyo

Size: 14,000 m² in a narrow strip, which is 400 meters long and 20 to 40 meters wide.

Contains: Fields and areas for football, skating, dancing, climbing, picnics, and other recreational activities

Architects: Redesign of existing park: Atelier Bow-Wow, Tokyo

Engineers: Kanebako Structural Engineers

Inventory and lighting: Studio Lamp and Bonbori Lighting Architect & Associates, Inc.

Landscape Architect: TOKUZOU

Client: Public Works under Tokyo Metropolitan Administration

Inauguration after restoration: 2011

Cost: 470 million JPY/ 3,2 million EUR/ 4 million USD

Miyashita Park is a small pocket park placed on top of two existing parking complexes that date back to 1964. It is located in Shibuya, just 100 meters from Tokyo's largest mobility inferno; elevated railway lines and four-lane roads with heavy traffic surround the park on all sides. Immediately next to the parking house façade, approximately 40 homeless people have settled in shacks made from steel scaffolding and plastic sheeting.

The new design has improved transparency and access, and the two sections of the park have been connected with bridges. As available funds did not allow for the renewal of the existing construction, work had to start from the existing deck's design and carrying capacity. The final design of the park became a series of active spaces with long benches for recreation around the edges.

Bow-Wow has invested significant time in discussions with different groups (particularly young people) in the area, talking about the programs and creating an informal ownership of the new design without removing the homeless people and the existing users of the parking complex. This strategy has been successful. The previously unappreciated park with simple materials of concrete, gravel, tarmac, grass, and tall trees now provides the framework for a diverse urban life with various users, 24 hours a day.



SHIBAURA HOUSE – REFLECTIONS OF EVERYDAY LIFE

FACTS

Shibaura House, district of Shibaura in central Tokyo

Size: 1,176 m². Site area 14x14 meters. Six floors.

Contains: Private office & space with public access for families with children, events, workshops, etc.

Architect: Kazuyo Sejima from SANAA

Client: Printing Company Kohkohu Seihan, Inc.

Inaugurated: 2011

Shibaura House is situated in the Shibaura district of central Tokyo. The building was designed by Kazuyo Sejima of the drawing office SANAA. She has attempted to create a building that stands out markedly in the district's townscape, with its steel structure and minimalistic and transparent expression.

The building's six floors have varying floor heights that allow space for two mezzanines and two outdoor terraces. The floors have different designs and a variation of stair connections, which make moving through the building on the inner and outer staircases a spatial experience.

The building includes a private office section on the fourth floor, while the other floors generously offer a mix of public programs, financed and administered by private funds. The building is used frequently for cooking classes, yoga, gymnastics, dance, amateur painting, courses for young mothers, and local events. It is, however, also a building that provides space for educational activities and arrangements, run by non-profit organizations, schools, and universities as well as by private people for a relatively low rental fee. The design supports the client's intention to create a space that works as a small 'public niche' in the whirling, changeable cityscape of market driven activities.



MUSEUM OF IMAGE AND SOUND

– A NEW URBAN NARRATIVE

FACTS

Museum of Image and Sound, Copacabana Beach, Rio de Janeiro

Size: 10,000 m²

Contains: Exhibition halls, workshop areas, area for film showings, educational facilities, café, and public spaces

Architects: Diller Scofidio + Renfro, New York: Architect Ben Gilmartin

Client: Museum of Image and Sound Foundation and the City of Rio de Janeiro

Inauguration: Completion expected in 2016

The Museum of Image and Sound is under construction on Avenida Atlântica, Copacabana Beach in Rio de Janeiro. The building is a hybrid cultural project and consists of a museum, performance facilities, and a free urban space with public access.

The architecture is inspired by the beach, which is the most public and democratic space in the neighborhood. Here rich and poor meet to play, relax, celebrate carnival, and protest. The architectural strategy is to fold Roberto Burle Marx's black and white patterned pavements in a flowing movement up onto the façade towards the open public space on the building's roof.

The building's aesthetics are those of movement, which characterize the visual expression of the building seen from outside and the bodily experience of the building within.

The concrete façade appears in bands of inclined, sometimes steep, ascents. The bands unfold in rolling curves, similar to the surfers' zigzag movements on the large Atlantic Ocean waves, gradually increasing in size before they finally break and flatten.

Three concepts fuse the project: folding of programs, transparency, and cinematics. With the Museum of Image and Sound, Diller Scofidio + Renfro truly emphasize their ability to create new architectural concepts, which in this case borders on the iconic.



CANTAGALO ELEVATOR - VERTICAL CONNECTIONS

FACTS

Cantagalo Elevator, Ipanema, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Size: The entire complex is 3,099 m². The largest tower is 73.15 meters high. A metro station provides an additional 4,569 m² of space.

Contains: A metro station, a building for public services (including police and health), and two towers that contain elevators, metal staircases, and two observatories with a panoramic view

Architects: JBMC Arquitetura e Urbanismo

Clients: The Municipality of Rio de Janeiro and the State of Rio de Janeiro

Inauguration: 2008

Cost: 40 million BRL/ 13 million EUR/ 16 million USD

The towers of the Cantagalo Elevator complex consist of prism-shaped metal frames with three concrete cylinders in the supporting structure. The elevators are located inside the prism-shaped skeleton, which has been clad with transparent glass down one side and 'brise-soleils' down the other two. The function of the brise-soleils is to protect the inner space and the staircases from rain and excessive sunlight, while allowing breezes from the city to penetrate the environment, thereby promoting natural ventilation. Concrete retaining walls have been built into the rocky hillside as a way to prevent landslides and a new set of staircases has been built along the slope. In addition to reinforcing the slopes, they provide a fine and well-lit emergency exit to the street level.

The Cantagalo Elevator is an architectural landmark for Rio's new urban politics that attempts to connect the socially segregated city. With its characteristic blue and green towers, elevators, walkways, and platforms, the complex creates physical connections as well as social relations. The wealthy district of Ipanema with its shops, schools, health facilities, public transport, etc. is linked to the poor favela of Cantagalo where residents have had to organize the local infrastructures themselves. The project has initiated a process that, in spite of gentrification tendencies, contributes to the important social and economic development of Rio de Janeiro.



Photo: Magnus Højlung Norraaari



Photo: Hans Kiib



Photo: Hans Kiib



Photo: COBE



Photo: Hans Kiib



Photo: Hans Kiib



Photo: Gitte Marling



Photo: Joosten



Photo: Bow-Wow



Photo: Gitte Marling



Photo: Joosten



Photo: Hans Kiib

