

Roundtable: Informal Public Demands

February 17, 2016, 4:00- 6:00pm

Perloff Hall, Decafé, UCLA



Dajabón Market, Dominican Republic

Photo: Melisa Vargas

Today, urban informality has become key to balancing the ecosystem of a globalised world. While part of everyday life for billions of people, official political engagement with informality is often contradictory, obscuring and repressive – from the World Bank’s warning of a “drag on growth” to informal trade being denounced as criminal and notorious by monopolist organisations.

The contributions to the two-volume publication *Informal Market Worlds* aim to challenge the hegemonic stance about informality as subordinate: In the Atlas, 72 accounts of informal market places worldwide map out the breadth of current economic transformation, from the absorptive function of post-conflict and border markets to the liberal aura of metropolitan hipster markets. Assembling seminal voices in the field of global and urban studies, from Keith Hart to Ananya Roy to Saskia Sassen to AbdouMaliq Simone amongst others, the Reader connects crucial analyses of the conceptual and historical trajectories of informality with a multiplicity of perspectives on the urgencies posed by today’s informal realities.

This roundtable will reflect on what Teddy Cruz and Fonna Forman - together with Peter Mörtenböck and Helge Mooshammer editors of *Informal Market Worlds* - have termed "**informal public demands**", i.e. the changes in urban policies and planning practices required to engage with informality in a productive and fair manner. The discussion between the editors and contributors Ananya Roy and Matias Viegner will relate these demands to the ongoing physical transformation of Southern California and its embeddedness in global processes of informalisation, be it in the realm of finance, urban development or social relations.

Participants:

Editors Teddy Cruz, Fonna Forman, Peter Mörtenböck and Helge Mooshammer, urban scholar Ananya Roy, and artist and writer Matias Viegner

Chair:

Dana Cuff

This event is organized on the occasion of the launch of *Informal Market Worlds – The Architecture of Economic Pressure. Atlas & Reader*, ed. Teddy Cruz, Fonna Forman, Peter Mörtenböck and Helge Mooshammer

Name of the books:

Informal Market Worlds – Atlas
The Architecture of Economic Pressure
&
Informal Market Worlds – Reader
The Architecture of Economic Pressure

Editors:

Peter Mörtenböck, Helge Mooshammer
Teddy Cruz, Fonna Forman

About the books:

Informal markets arise on the fault lines inscribed by global alliances of money and power: wars and humanitarian crises, national and infrastructural borders, the worldwide trade in waste and the marginal spaces of urban transformation. They act as globalization’s safety valve while also providing livelihoods for millions of people trading in the streets of cities around the world.

These books track the powers, currents and actors driving informal trade. They document the growing influence informal economies are having on human coexistence on a planetary scale. Informal markets may have turned into key urban economic frontiers, but can they also produce positive social and political change?

Bringing into focus the contested spaces at the bottom of the world economy, the *Informal Market Worlds Atlas* presents 72 case studies of informal marketplaces around the world—from Kabul’s post-conflict Bush Bazaar to Casablanca’s counterfeit markets, from street vending in Bangkok’s “red zones” to cross-border trade between Haiti and the Dominican Republic, and from the 7th Kilometre container market in Odessa to New York’s booming hipster markets.

Exploring the conflicted realities of informal market worlds, the *Informal Market Worlds Reader* brings together texts on urban informality, global struggle and design activism by the editors as well as by eminent scholars and practitioners, including Alejandro Echeverri, Keith Hart, Jiang Jun, Lawrence Liang, Vyjayanthi Rao, Ananya Roy, Saskia Sassen, AbdouMalik Simone, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Ignacio Valero, Jean-Philippe Vassal, Matias Viegner and many others.

About the participants:

Teddy Cruz is a Professor of Public Culture and Urbanization in the Department of Visual Arts at the University of California, San Diego. He is known internationally for his urban research on the Tijuana/San Diego border, advancing border neighborhoods as sites of cultural production from which to rethink urban policy, affordable housing, and civic infrastructure. Recipient of the Rome Prize in Architecture in 1991, his honors include representing the US in the 2008 Venice Architecture Biennale, the Ford Foundation Visionaries Award in 2011, and the 2013 Architecture Award from the US Academy of Arts and Letters.

Fonna Forman is a Professor of Political Theory at the University of California, San Diego and founding Director of the UCSD Center on Global Justice. She is best known for her revisionist work on Adam Smith, recuperating the ethical, social, spatial and public dimensions of his political economy. Current work focuses on climate justice in cities, on human rights at the urban scale, and civic participation as a strategy of equitable urbanization. She presently consults on climate justice for the California Carbon Neutrality Initiative, and serves on the Global Citizenship Commission, for her expertise on social and economic rights.

Cruz & Forman direct the UCSD Cross-Border Initiative, and are principals in Estudio Teddy Cruz + Forman, a research-based political and architectural practice in San Diego. Their work emphasizes urban conflict and informality as sites of intervention for rethinking public policy and civic infrastructure, with a special emphasis on Latin American cities. From 2012-13 they served as special advisors on Civic and Urban Initiatives for the City of San Diego and led the development of its Civic Innovation Lab. They are presently co-investigating a Ford Foundation-funded study on citizenship culture in the San Diego-Tijuana border region, in collaboration with Antanas Mockus and the Bogota-based NGO, Corpovisionarios.

Peter Mörtenböck is Professor of Visual Culture at the Vienna University of Technology and visiting researcher at Goldsmiths College, University of London, where he has initiated the Networked Cultures project (www.networkedcultures.org), a platform for global research on collaborative art and architecture practices. His current work explores the interaction of such practices with resource politics, global economies and urban transformation.

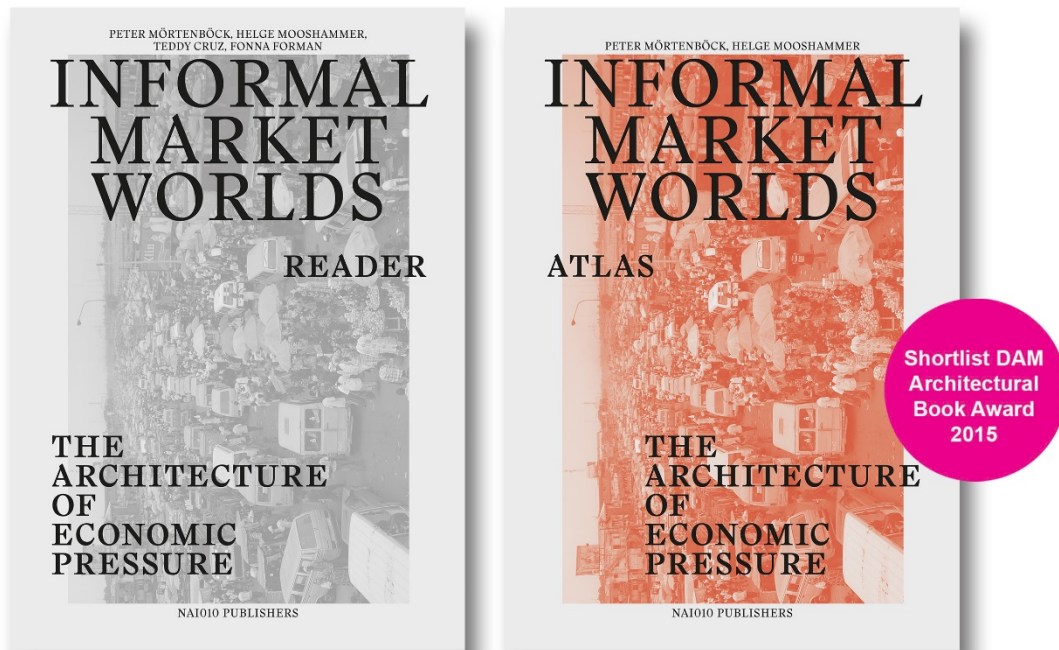
Helge Mooshammer is director of the international research projects Relational Architecture and Other Markets (www.othermarkets.org) at the School of Architecture and Planning, Vienna University of Technology. He is currently a Research Fellow in the Department of Visual Cultures at Goldsmiths College, University of London. His research is concerned with changing forms of urban sociality arising from processes of transnationalization, capital movements, informal economies, and newly emerging regimes of governance.

Mörtenböck & Mooshammer have published numerous essays on contemporary art, bottom-up urbanism and collaborative forms of spatial production, including in *Grey Room*, *Architectural Research Quarterly* and *Third Text*. Venues where their research and curatorial work has been presented include the Whitechapel Gallery London, the Netherlands Architecture Institute Rotterdam, Storefront for Art and Architecture New York, Proekt Fabrika Moscow, Santral Istanbul, Ellen Gallery Montreal, and the Venice Architecture Biennale. Their recent books include *Visual Cultures as Opportunity* (2015), *Occupy: Räume des Protests* (2012), *Space (Re) Solutions: Intervention and Research in Visual Culture* (2011), and *Networked Cultures: Parallel Architectures and the Politics of Space* (2008). www.thinkarchitecture.net

Ananya Roy is Professor of Urban Planning and Social Welfare and inaugural Director of The Institute on Inequality and Democracy at UCLA Luskin. She holds The Meyer and Renee Luskin Chair in Inequality and Democracy. Previously she was on the faculty at the University of California, Berkeley, where she held the Distinguished Chair in Global Poverty and Practice and prior to that, the Friesen Chair in Urban Studies.

Her research and scholarship are concerned with global urbanisms, urban poverty and inequality, and the politics of international development. Her books include *Poverty Capital: Microfinance and the Making of Development* (2010) and the co-edited volume, *Territories of Poverty: Rethinking North and South* (2015).

Matias Viegner is a writer, artist and critic who lives in Los Angeles and teaches at CalArts. His critical focus ranges from drones and surveillance, to public space, food, participatory art, gender and text. His work has been exhibited at LACMA, Yerba Buena Center, Ars Electronica, ARCO Madrid, the Whitney, Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions, Machine Project, MOCA Los Angeles, MOCA San Diego, and internationally in Mexico, Colombia, Germany, and Austria. He is the author of *2500 Random Things About Me Too*, and editor of forthcoming *I'm Very Into You*, the correspondence of Kathy Acker and McKenzie Wark. His work has been written about in *The New Yorker*, *salon.com*, *The New York Times*, *Art in America*, *Frieze*, *Art:21*, *The Los Angeles Times*, *Hyperallergic*, and *The Huffington Post*, and he is a 2013 Creative Capital award recipient.



Publisher: nai010 publishers, Rotterdam, 2015

Atlas: 512 pages, 850 full color images; ISBN 9789462081949

Reader: 272 pages, 75 b/w images; ISBN 9789462081956

17 x 24 cm, paperback

Publication supported by FWF – Austrian Science Fund [P 22809-G17]

This event is made possible thanks to the support of
cityLAB-UCLA

UCLA Luskin, Center on Inequality and Democracy