

On-Your-Own: Micro-Urbanisms and Young Pedestrians

Instructors: *Dana Cuff and Yang Yang*



This capstone asks the question: How might the city bend toward spatial justice when urban humanists engage in small-scale urban transformations? We will explore the idea of humanistic micro-urbanism in the context of Los Angeles and its youngest independent pedestrians. Our research, engagement, and proposed interventions will be shared with counterparts studying micro-urbanisms in China, where we will also exhibit our work at the Shanghai Biennale (Shanghai Urban Space Art Season).

When you grow up in Los Angeles around La Fayette Park, there comes a day when you go out on your own –to school, on an errand, to visit a friend, to catch a bus. We’ve walked with some of these kids, 11-15-year-olds who go to an after-school program in that neighborhood. Some feel threatened, others walk directly to get from here to there, some are disgusted by the trash, some worry about people they meet on the streets, and some delight in walking with friends.

We have learned that these kids and their city-spaces have been abandoned. This capstone will look for ways to uplift their city, their sidewalks, and their commutes through small-scale projects that could range from guerilla sticker campaigns to public acknowledgment of community identity, street beautification, and public art installations.

Taught by Dr. Yang Yang and Professor Dana Cuff, On-Your-Own will be a collaborative capstone research undertaking between students and faculty. We will produce conceptual projects as well as projects that we implement, both of which will be documented for exhibition in the fall in Shanghai. Interested students will have the opportunity to travel to Shanghai and take part in a 10-day to two-week workshop at Tongji University with architecture grad students and faculty.