

Tree roots at the Sitio Burle Marx, Brazil



H+U+D Initiative at Penn Annual Report | 2014-15



Renovations at Pedregulho, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil



Underground sewers, Paris, France



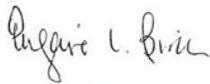
Message from Co-Directors

As you will see in the pages that come, we have had a fruitful year with Penn's Mellon Foundation-sponsored Humanities, Urbanism and Design (aka H+U+D) initiative. The planned activities are "up and humming." But what this report cannot fully communicate are the intangible results of the effort. Words can barely convey how this opportunity is widening our horizons, especially in nurturing new intellectual partnerships and scholarly exchanges that simply would not have occurred without it. We know that H+U+D will continue to yield exciting results -- classes and research -- in the years to come.

Let us share some observations. When the H+U+D Colloquium, the bi-weekly gathering of faculty and post-doctoral fellows from the School of Arts and Sciences and the School of Design began last year, meeting in a lovely seminar room in the Jaffe History of Art Building, we watched the inaugural members, who did not know each other very well, dutifully enter the room, politely exchange greetings, look somewhat skeptically at a large tray of sandwiches, and listen politely to our first day's presentation. On that first afternoon, we did a lot of the talking.

Now fast forward a year. Here is what we see: Our colleagues eagerly run into the room, quickly help themselves to lunch and then begin to talk—catching up with each other about a class they are teaching or something they have read that they know others will want to hear about, sharing a new bit of research, and talking about current and future collaborations. In fact, we can't get a word in edgewise! All sorts of productive arrangements are occurring. Through the colloquium, two "city seminars" emerged whose instructors had never worked together before. One course traveled to Paris and the other to Rio. Two other faculty members have put together a conference that they told us never would have happened save for their introduction through H+U+D.

This is only a small taste of the H+U+ D initiative "magic." As you read the annual report, remember that underlining each entry is a story of new relationships and enormous instructional and research breakthroughs benefitting the whole Penn community.



Eugenie Birch
Nussdorf Chair
Department of City and Regional Planning
School of Design
Chair, Graduate Group in City Planning
Co-Director, Penn Institute for Urban Research
elbirch@design.upenn.edu



David B. Brownlee
Shapiro-Weitzenhoffer Chair
Department of History of Art
School of Arts and Sciences
Chair, Graduate Group in History of Art
Penn IUR Faculty Fellow Executive Council
dbrownle@sas.upenn.edu

Mission

The Humanities +Urbanism + Design Initiative, sponsored by the Mellon Foundation, is a groundbreaking five-year collaboration by the School of Design, School of Arts and Sciences, and Penn Institute for Urban Research that brings together students and faculty to explore cities — past, present and future — examining them at the intersection of the humanities and design disciplines and sharing research through teaching, conference participation, and publication.

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Introduction

In FY 2014-2015, the Humanities, Urbanism and Design Initiative comprised five components: the H+U+D Colloquium, course support, student research awards, public lectures and conference support, and the recruitment of Junior Fellows for 2015-2016. (See Appendix A for a financial statement.) The report below describes them in detail.

Activities

I. H+U+D Faculty Colloquium

The H+U+D Colloquium is the centerpiece Penn's initiative. Its twenty members, drawn from the humanities and design faculties, meet two times a month to explore mutual interests. See Appendix B for Membership. This year we focused on several member-selected themes (Impact, Memorialization, Representation, Resilience and Cities around the World).¹ The meetings consist of members' presentations, field trips, and invited lectures.

The schedule for the year was:

Fall Semester	
September 19	Genie Birch, "War on Poverty at 50"
October 17	Domenic Vitiello: "Immigrants and their Receiving Communities"
October 31	Genie Birch: "Global Urbanization and Cities around the World"
November 14	Daniel Barber: "The Modern Solar House; or, the Use Value of History"
November 21	David Brownlee: "Making Architectural History 'Historic' in Philadelphia"

¹ The Colloquium Members outlined the themes in their final meeting in 2014 as follows:

1. **Impact** *What is the impact of the humanities and design in our society today? How can we mutually energize the relationship?*
2. **Memorialization:** *What are the appropriate memorial forms and memorializing processes in contemporary cities? How are the associated design practices and social processes changing?"*
3. **Representation:** *How do representational practices influence our understanding and experiencing the urban environment?*
4. **Resilience:** *What is resilience? How is it different from sustainability?*
5. **Cities around the world:** *How do the humanities and design contribute to the current discussions of global urbanization?*

- December 10 “Paul Strand: Master of Modern Photography,” excursion to view the exhibition at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, and discussion with Amanda Bock, Assistant Curator of Photography
- December 12 Student Research Award, recipient presentations
- Jesse Smith (History and Sociology of Science): Cruise ships and canned vegetables: Building a new Port of Miami, 1920-1969
- Alon Tam (Near East Languages and Civilization) Coffeehouse as an Urban Site of Cosmopolitanism in Cairo during the late 19th and early 20th centuries
- Spring Semester
- January 23 Conor Lucey: “Building Houses, Selling Homes”
- February 13 Chris Marcinkoski: “The City That Never Was”
- February 27 Table reading of Junior Fellows applications
- March 20 Reports from the classroom: International “City Seminars”
Paris (Genie Birch and Andrea Goulet)
Rio de Janeiro (Daniel Barber and John Tresch)
- March 27 Randy Mason: “Alternative (conservation) Histories of Urban Design, or Urbanism as if the Inherited Environment Mattered”
- April 10 Tsitsi Jaji: (cancelled due to illness)
- April 24 Student Research Award recipient presentations
Elizabeth Dyer (History) Little Theatre in Mombasa and Liberty Theatre and Tufangamano Hall in Nairobi
- Thuy Le (Architecture/Urban Studies) Social Uses of Augmented Reality
- Afuah Frimpong (Urban Studies) Mural Art in Philadelphia and the Miami
- May 8 “Latin America in Construction: Architecture 1955–1980,” excursion to view the exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, and discussion with Patricio del Real, Assistant Curator of Architecture

II. Course support

As planned, the initiative produced several new courses at the graduate and undergraduate levels. They include two types of City Seminars for undergraduates

that feature travel components and a problematics seminar for graduate students. In addition, the initiative is funding faculty to develop new courses. The initiative also developed a program to introduce humanities scholars into design juries.. The list below illustrates this year's work.

City Seminars

Three undergraduate "city seminars" were sponsored (with travel support):

URBS 210/HIST 210 The City-Baltimore, Spring 2015

Through reading sociological, historical, theoretical, and primary texts, maps and photographs, and through ethnographic explorations and tours of the city, this course explored the presence of the past in the city of Baltimore. It examined the evolution of social, spatial and physical systems, different kinds of urban and suburban places, and the encoding of wealth and power as well as inequality and poverty on the urban landscape. Co-taught by Professors Eric Schneider, History, and Michael Nairn, Urban Studies

SHST 314/ARCH 314- Rio de Janeiro: Cosmopolitan Urbanism in the Twenty First Century, Spring 2015



The city of Rio de Janeiro has been an important site for the development of a range of urban and architectural strategies across the 20th century. This course explored the recent history of urban change in the city as means to understand the multiple and contingent pressures placed on metropolitan centers in the 21st century, as well as the ways in which specific

sites have been seen to anchor national, global, and universal processes and imaginaries. Students traveled to Rio de Janeiro over spring break. Co-taught by Professors Daniel Barber, Architecture, and John Tresch, History and Sociology of Science

CPLN 300/FREN 300- Making Modern Paris, Spring 2015

Paris, Ville-Lumiere, has long been renowned for its urbanity, architecture, and city design. This class traced the people, ideas, and projects that contributed to this reputation, through an exploration of the city's built environment as expressed in literature and urban planning projects of the 19th and 20th

centuries. The class examined literary readings, including texts by Hugo, Baudelaire, and Zola, in conjunction with visual materials ranging from works by Viollet-le-Duc to Napoleon III and Haussmann to Mitterrand and



Sarkozy. The class traveled to Paris where it engaged in site visits to special exhibits on Viollet-le-Duc and imaginary Paris, Haussmann-inspired neighborhoods and monuments, underground quarries, postwar public housing and the Grand Projets. Co-taught by Professors Eugenie Birch, City and Regional Planning, and Andrea Goulet, Romance Languages

Graduate “Problematics” Seminar

COML 603/ARTH 781-Does Architectural Theory Define Architectural Practice? Fall 2014

This seminar links architectural and aesthetic theory with practice. Through a review of writings by academics and practitioners, students identified distinct theories and evaluated their influence on practice. Co-taught by Professors Jonathan Barnett, City and Regional Planning and Liliane Weissberg, Germanic Languages and Literatures

Course Development Awards

Course development funds were awarded to two faculty members. Ken Lum, Fine Arts, will use the funds to develop a course that examines the past, present and future design of Paris. Elaine Simon, Urban Studies, will work with the co-directors of the H+U+D initiative and Mark Stern to develop a General Education course on the city.

Humanities Faculty in Design Studios

In the fall 2014 semester, David Brownlee (History of Art) participated in the final review of Scott Erdy’s ARCH 601, and David Kim (History of Art)

attended the review for ARCH 501, taught by Andrew Saunders. Scheduling of participation in spring studios is now being planned.

II. Student Research Awards

H+U+D disseminated a request for student research proposals among undergraduate and graduate students in Spring 2014. The colloquium research grant review committee awarded five research grants for work during 2014-2015.

Elizabeth Dyer (graduate- History) is studying theatre construction in Kenya. She traveled to Kenya in the summer and explored the Little Theatre in Mombasa and Liberty Theatre and Tufangamano Hall in Nairobi.

Thuy Le (undergraduate-Architecture/Urban Studies) used the research award to discover social uses of augmented reality and investigate its potential to shape the understanding of the city through façade architecture.

Jesse Smith (graduate-History and Sociology of Science) is uncovering the relationship between environment, technology, design, and the city through an exploration of the historic and contemporary US cruise ship industry in Miami.

Alon Tam (graduate- Near East Languages and Civilization) is considering the role of the coffeehouse as an urban site of cosmopolitanism in Cairo during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. His research examines the role coffeehouses played in the construction of the cosmopolitan identity through the many revolutionaries, intellectuals, writers and others who made it a central meeting place in the city.

Afuah Frimpong (undergraduate- Urban Studies) is documenting mural art in Philadelphia and Miami. She is comparing murals in Haiti with those painted by Haitian immigrants in Philadelphia and Miami.

IV. Public Lectures and Conference Support

In an effort to spread the H+U+D “magic” beyond the seminar room (and beyond Philadelphia), the initiative presents and co-sponsors lectures for the wider university community at Penn. It also sponsors workshops and other presentations at the annual conferences of the major professional organizations in the humanities and design disciplines. At the workshops, we share the important lessons and debates of our colloquium program and widen the discussion.

Public Lectures

Graham Harmon (Distinguished University Professor, American University in Cairo), “Weird Formalism” (co-sponsored) September 22

Graham Harman is the author of numerous books, most recently *Bells and Whistles: More Speculative Realism* (2013) and *Bruno Latour: Reassembling the Political* (2014). He also serves as editor of the Speculative Realism book series at Edinburgh University Press. In 2013, he and his Speculative Realist

colleagues were ranked among the 100 most powerful forces in the contemporary art world by *ArtReview* magazine.

Basile Baudez (Assistant Professor, University of Paris- Sorbonne) "The Decor of an Opera Built Yesterday- Saint Petersburg's River Panorama" November 20

Founded in 1703 on the Neva River delta to provide Russia with a port to serve its Baltic ambitions, Saint-Petersburg was aggressive in its bid to be read as a modern, European capital. The first prints representing the city adopted a panoramic format that focused on the Neva, its width, and the magnificent new façades erected along its shores. Visitors understood the river landscape, however, as an insurmountable obstacle to proper urban development. For them, the Neva conveyed the hostility of nature, while the buildings, forever to be seen from too great a distance, appeared unreal, ready to vanish into the flat horizon.



Other Events

September 12-13 HAIKU Arts and Culture conference organized by H+U+D Steering Committee Member, Karen Beckman

October 2 Blagovesta Momchedjikova (editor of *Captured by the City: New Perspectives in Urban Culture Studies*), book talk with select authors: Michael M. Samuelian, Vice President, Related Companies; Josef Luciano, film instructor, City University of New York; Jake Sudderth, Director of Research, CTC (City Town Country) Research; and Anne Rivers, Senior Vice President and Director of Brand Strategy, BAV Consulting, panel discussion co-sponsored with Penn Institute of Urban Research (IUR)

November 20 H+U+D Open House- Special event for Penn faculty to learn about H+U+D initiative colloquium and other programs

Conference Workshops

H+U+D hosted roundtable/workshop discussions at three national scholarly conferences, at which Penn faculty joined colleagues from other universities to consider the relationship between the humanities and design in today's academic culture.

October 10, 2014- Urban History Association (UHA), annual meeting in Philadelphia: Roundtable on Mellon H+U+D Initiative, Penn participants Genie Birch and Domenic Vitiello joined Alison Isenberg (Princeton)

November 1, 2014- Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning (ACSP) annual meeting in Philadelphia: Roundtable on Mellon H+U+D Initiative: Penn participants: Genie Birch, Francesca Ammon, Jonathan Barnett, and Stefan AI



April 16, 2015- Society of Architectural Historians (SAH) annual meeting in Chicago: David Brownlee and Daniel Barber from Penn joined Dianne Harris (University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign), Clare Lyster (University of Illinois-Chicago) in a roundtable discussion entitled "What good is history for architects?" Event "sold out" with fifty registrants.

V. Junior Fellows

During the Fall Semester, the H+U+D initiative invited applications for two one-year junior fellowships. Prospective fellows were required to have completed their doctoral work. The call encouraged a wide range of applicants from the humanities and design disciplines. The application materials included a research plan and a proposal for an undergraduate course.

Thirty-five very strong applications were received and reviewed by a selection committee of Colloquium members. The committee, with advice from the full Colloquium, selected Dr. Christina Svendsen, Comparative Literature (Harvard) and Dr. Helen Gyger, Architecture (Columbia). Dr. Gyger will be hosted by the Department of History, and Dr. Svendsen will be hosted by Architecture, placing each in regular contact with scholars from outside their usual disciplinary "homes." The two Fellows will participate in the H+U+D Colloquium and in the activities of their host departments, in addition to teaching undergraduate seminars.

Looking Forward

As this year winds down, plans are already underway for 2015-16. We shall solicit (and welcome) a new group of faculty members to the Colloquium, where they will be joined by our two Junior Fellows. The new members will continue to expand the themes undertaken by the previous and group and propose new topics for exploration.

APPENDIX A: Financial Statement

Now in its second year, the H+U+D initiative has launched all of its programmed components. The table below reports expenditures in the major programming categories discussed above. The *H+U+D Colloquium* line includes both the research funds for faculty participants and the cost of its meetings and events. *Course support* includes the costs of both domestic and international city seminars as well as allocations from the course development fund. *Public lectures and conferences* contains the expenses of guest speakers, co-sponsored events and the sponsorship of round tables at scholarly conferences. *Student research awards* began to be made in the second year. Finally, *project management* includes the costs of course replacement allocations and support staff.

	FY2013-2014	FY2014-2015	2-year total
H+U+D Colloquium	\$79,980	\$79,980	\$159,960
Course Support	\$39,000	\$91,000	\$138,000
Student Research Awards	0	\$8,000	\$8,000
Public Lectures and Conference	\$2,000	\$12,000	\$14,000
Project Management	\$37,160	\$37,160	\$74,320
Total	\$158,140	\$228,140	\$386,280

APPENDIX B: Colloquium 2014-2015 Members and their Research Projects

Faculty Participants

Stefan Al, Associate Professor of Urban Design, City and Regional Planning, School of Design

Research Project- *The Strip: Las Vegas Architecture and America*; the only comprehensive history that links the evolution of Las Vegas architecture to cultural, economic, and economic trends in America.

Francesca Russello Ammon, Assistant Professor, City and Regional Planning, School of Design,

Research Project- the history of the bulldozer in the post-World War II United States.

Daniel Barber, Assistant Professor and Associate Chair, Architecture, School of Design

Research Project- *The Nature of the Image: Architecture, Climate, and Media*; currently under advance contract with Princeton University Press.

David Barnes, Associate Professor, History and Sociology of Science, School of Arts and Sciences

Research Project- *Lazaretto Ghosts: Immigration, Epidemics, and Quarantine in the Nineteenth-Century City*- an exploration of the ways in which the institution of maritime quarantine was integrated into the fabric of urban life throughout the nineteenth century

Nancy Davenport, Assistant Professor, Photography, Fine Arts, School of Design,

Research Project- Filming and editing at United Nations Headquarters in New York

Andrea Goulet, Associate Professor of Romance Languages, Undergraduate Chair of Comparative Literature, French, School of Arts and Sciences,

Research Project: 19th-century press culture, urban mysteries, and the serial fiction of Gaston Leroux, Jules Claretie, and Maurice Leblanc

Tsitsi Jaji, Assistant Professor, English, School of Arts and Sciences,

Research Project- Representations of women as groundbreaking innovators in urban settings through close readings of *Bingo* magazine, the first Francophone African glossy magazine

David Young Kim, Assistant Professor, History of Art, School of Arts and Sciences,

Research Project- Utopian ideals and exploitation of the environment in colonial Brazilian cities

Ken Lum, Professor and Director of the Fine Arts Undergraduate Program, Fine Arts, School of Design

Research Projects- Exploratory ideas for public art works, and *Monument Lab* project

Christopher Marcinkoski, Assistant Professor, Landscape Architecture, School of Design, Research Project- *Speculative Urbanization in Sub-Saharan Africa*

Randy Mason, Associate Professor and Chair, Historic Preservation, School of Design, Research Project- The role of heritage conservation in contemporary urbanism, focusing on cases in the rapidly urbanizing Global South (East Asia and Africa).

Mark Stern, Kenneth L. M. Pray Professor of Social Policy, Co-director Urban Studies Program, Co-Director of Urban Studies, Social Policy, School of Social Policy and Practice

Research Project- Cultural engagement, neighborhood revitalization & social wellbeing in NYC

Domenic Vitiello, Associate Professor, City and Regional Planning, School of Design, Research Projects- *The Planned Destruction of Chinatowns in 15 US and Canadian Cities since c.1900* (archival research), *Immigrant Integration and Urban Agriculture in Three US Cities* (interviews) and *Comparing Urban Agriculture's Community and Economic Development Impacts around the World* (literature review)

Naomi Waltham-Smith, Assistant Professor, Music, School of Arts and Sciences, Research Project- *Urban Street Sound in London and Paris*.

Aaron Wunsch, Assistant Professor, Landscape Architecture, School of Design, Research Project: *Palazzos of Power*, the generating plants of the Philadelphia Electric Company

Ex-Officio Members

Jeffrey Kallberg, Associate Dean for Arts & Letters and Professor, Music, School of Arts and Sciences

Marilyn Taylor, Dean and Paley Professor, Architecture, Urban Design, School of Design

Visiting Scholars

Elisa Dainese, Marie Curie Postdoctoral Fellow and Visiting Scholar, History of Art, School of Arts and Sciences

Conor Lucey, Marie Curie Postdoctoral Fellow and Visiting Scholar, History of Art, School of Arts and Sciences

Initiative Co-Directors

Eugenie L. Birch, Lawrence C. Nussdorf Professor of Urban Research, co-Director, Penn Institute for Urban Research, City and Regional Planning, School of Design

David Brownlee, Frances Shapiro-Weitzenhoffer Professor, Chair of the Graduate Group, History of Art, School of Arts and Sciences

Project Manager

Mary Rocco, PhD Student, Graduate Group in City and Regional Planning, City and Regional Planning, School of Design