LIGA INTERLUDES 17:
MICHIGAN | MELLON SYMPOSIUM 1_On the Egalitarian Metropolis
Saturday April 11, 2015
LIGA Interludes 17: INTERACTIVE LIVE STREAM OF THE SYMPOSIUM- Egalitarianism and the Metropolis
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Interactive live stream broadcast of the inaugural Symposium for the The Michigan/Mellon Project on Egalitarianism and the Metropolis. An academic and research initiative focused on architecture, urbanism and humanities research in Detroit, Mexico City and Rio de Janeiro.

The symposium brought together leading scholars and designers to think about new paradigms for urbanism in contemporary cities. The symposium was held simultaneously at LIGA in Mexico City and at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, Michigan via an interactive live stream broadcast.

*How does one make an egalitarian city?*

One has to start with informed critiques of modernist orthodoxies and privatization that are complicit in forming the neoliberal city. But one must not end there. Contemporary thinking on egalitarianism has rightfully focused on the flattening of social hierarchies, the altering of systemic obstacles to equality, radical transformations of institutions that uphold exclusive access to collective resources, and critiques of market capitalism. The conditions under which people are living are directly at odds with social justice, racial justice and aspirations for diminished inequality. The visceral conditions of urban and collective life are also connected to virtual contexts in which the mass media projects images of peoples and communities for global consumption. The symposium brings leading scholars and designers to think about new paradigms for urbanism in Detroit, Rio de Janeiro and Mexico City - transformations that move speculative thinking into plausible realities through sustained aesthetic and political actions.
Michigan / Mellon Symposium 1
The Egalitarian Metropolis

Michigan / Michigan Mellon “El igualitarismo y el Metrópolis”

At the inaugural Michigan/Mellon Michigan-Mellon Project on Egalitarianism and the Metropolis Symposium 1 at University of Michigan on April 11, 2015, a group of international scholars and designers met to share their work and build a research network. Drawing on research conducted in Detroit, Mexico City, and Rio de Janeiro, the Symposium aimed to investigate how to balance rights and privileges in an urban metropolitan context. The public symposium was organized into four panels, each focusing on a different overarching theme of the Michigan-Mellon Project (a 4-year, $1.3 million initiative funded by the A. W. Mellon Foundation) and a constellation of related questions.

Session 1_Rethinking Modernist Orthodoxies
Presenters: Milton S. F. Curry, Johana Londono, Ronald A. Judy, Wallace Turbeville

The symposium's first panel explored critiques of modernism utilizing case studies as diverse as the Puerto Rican barrio, the Tunisian Revolution, and the modern financial market. Some of the questions explored included what the problems and possibilities of the contact between modernist aesthetics and more localized traditions within Latino social spaces are; how cities enable the production of certain types of humanity, sociality, and intelligence; and possibilities for new, viable, intervention financial models in the aftermath of the recent Great Recession.

Session 2_Privatization and the Commons
Presenters: Derek B. Collins, Arturo Ortiz Struck, Nanda Eskes, Jose Castillo, Gustavo Lipkau

Panelists in the second session discussed different relationships and conceptions of space, both public and private. Freely moving between the philosophical and the practical, case studies in Mexico City and Brazil exposed the ways in which privatization shaped cities and ways in which privatization has been resisted by cities and citizens.

Session 3_Capital and Justice
Presenters: Sarah Mineko Ichioka, Toni L. Griffin, Paloma Vera, Erika Robb Larkins

Discussion in the third session raised questions on philosophies of urbanism and justice and methodologies and approaches to creating just urban environments. Panelists' approaches and case studies drew from a broad field, including social impact design and tactical urbanism in London, conceptions of the Just City in New York, participatory economics in Mexico City, and gentrification of favelas in Rio de Janeiro.

Session 4_Political Spaces of Media
Presenters: Matthew Biro, Reighan A. Gillam, Anya Sirotta, Fernanda Canales, Livia Corona Benjamin

The fourth session of the symposium produced a conversation surrounding the ascendency of social practice as a contemporary design aspiration. The panel also addressed the impact of representation on the instrumentalization of social practice. A grassroots sitcom from Rio, photography of Mexico City's suburban sprawl, a spaceship launch in Detroit served as a few examples of new ways of imaging social interventions in the city.

The symposium was hosted by the University of Michigan A. Alfred Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning and College of Literature, Science, & Arts. Partial funding provided by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.
LIGA | SPACE FOR ARCHITECTURE | MEXICO CITY

LIGA, Space for Architecture, Mexico City is an independent pioneering platform for architectural exhibitions, conferences, and workshops based in Mexico City. Founded in January 2011 by the partners of the architecture studio PRODUCTORA: Abel Perles, Carlos Bedoya, Victor Jaime, Wonne Ickx and Ruth Estévez curator and art critic, its aim is to promote the exchange of ideas and research around contemporary architectural practices.

There is a set program for its exhibitions, which take place every three months. Parallel to this, LIGA Interludes is a program where different agents from a multiplicity of disciplines are invited to deliver lectures, workshops and screenings that complement the exhibition program and address the role of architecture in its multiple aspects.

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