

David Smith ~ Johannesburg's Ponte City: 'The Tallest And Grandest Urban Slum In The World' - A History Of Cities In 50 Buildings, Day 33

“On the 13th and 14th floor you could get anything from a blow-job to an acid trip in a few minutes. Essentially, the building was hijacked.”

In his penthouse apartment on the 52nd floor, Mike Luptak is talking about the bad old days when Ponte, the tallest residential building in the southern hemisphere, fell into the hands of drug dealers, gangsters, pimps and prostitutes. The inner core of this 173-metre high concrete cylinder became a giant rubbish tip piled up as far as the fifth floor. Among the refuse and junk were, so legend has it, the bodies of residents who took a suicidal leap.

A great deal has changed since then. Featured in newspaper articles, photography exhibitions, documentaries and movies, Ponte has come to symbolise the rise and fall and rise again of South Africa's commercial capital. It is part of an inner-city renaissance in recent years that has seen previous no-go areas turned into gourmet food markets, artists' studios and trendy apartments.

Read more: <http://www.theguardian.com/ponte-city>

Al Jazeera ~ Riaan Hendricks ~ Working On Water



Nigerian architect *Kunle Adeyemi* is pioneering floating buildings to solve the issues of flooding and land occupation that affect hundreds of thousands in African coastal cities, including the 85,000 residents of the Makoko slum in Nigeria's capital Lagos.

Adeyemi envisages a city of floating buildings that, safe from rising tides, would allow the slum's residents to remain within their community, while at the same time improving the quality of their lives.

His studio has come up with an easy-to-build, low-cost sustainable prototype for a floating building, one of which is already being coveted by an overcrowded local school.

Read & see: <http://www.aljazeera.com/working-water>

Meet Alfredo Brillembourg Of Urban-Think Tank



Alfredo Brillembourg

Meet Alfredo Brillembourg, a Venezuelan architect and founder of [Urban-Think Tank \(U-TT\)](http://Urban-Think Tank (U-TT)), a company described as “.. *an interdisciplinary design practice dedicated to high-level research and design on a variety of subjects, concerned with contemporary architecture and urbanism.*”. The U-TT operates with offices in Caracas, São Paulo, New York, and Zürich - its positioned to serve clients and work on projects all over the world.

Read & see: <http://futurecapetown.com/alfredo-brillembourg>

Richard Florida ~ What A Creative Neighborhood Looks Like

Table 2. Summary of neighbourhood characteristics

Characteristics	'Creative' neighbourhoods	'Science' neighbourhoods
Firm location	Edge of core	Suburban
Office rents	Medium-high	Low-medium
Firm structure	Micro-small	Medium-large
Anchors	Venues; institutions	Large firms; institutions
Workforce location	Overlapping	Adjacent
Transportation	Public; walk; bike	Private (cars)
Density	Very high	Low-medium
Land use	Mixed	Mono
Building types	Varied; adapted reuse	New; purpose built
Bars, restaurants, cafes	Dense; authentic	Sparse; inauthentic
Change/ evolution	Gentrification	Sprawl
Social dynamics	Larger social networks; inter-firm (?)	Smaller social networks; intra-firm (?)

Innovation and creativity are the basic engines of economic development in cities, regions and nations. But what makes some places more innovative than others? How do certain neighborhoods come to specialize in different types of creativity?

A new study published in the journal *Regional Studies* by my Martin Prosperity Institute (MPI) and University of Toronto colleague Greg Spencer takes a detailed look at the kinds of neighborhoods that are home to high-tech industries versus those that foster vibrant arts, cultural and music scenes. He focuses on Canada's big three city-regions: Toronto, Vancouver and Montreal. Spencer defines high-tech or "science-based" industries as spanning computer, software, pharmaceuticals and medicine, as well as research and development, while "creative" industries include film and video, music, radio and television, and design, as well as independent artists, writers and performers.

Read more: <http://www.citylab.com/creative-neighborhood>

Housing Problems (1935)

<https://vimeo.com/67797911>

Dirección: Arthur Elton y Edgar Anstey

Duración: 17 mins.

Producción: Arthur Elton, E.H. Anstey

Compañía Productora: British Commercial Gas Association

Fotografía: John Taylor

El film explora el movimiento de familias desde tugurios urbanos a viviendas sociales consolidadas, y constituye una de las cintas claves del género documental de todos los tiempos, ya que fue la primera en mostrar a personas hablando directamente a la cámara acerca de sus problemas cotidianos. A través de dichos relatos, los directores construyen un argumento de denuncia y a la vez de esperanza, muy acorde al espíritu británico moderno del entre-guerras.

“Housing problems” | London, 1935 | Production Arthur Elton, E.H. Anstey, for the B.C.G.A.

Photography John Taylor, Recording York Scarlett |15 minutes, b/n, sound

“Made by Arthur Elton and Edgard Anstey in 1935 for the British Commercial Gas Association. Housing Problems was produced to draw attention to the state housing programmes. According to Erik Barnouw, the author of Documentary. A history of non-fiction film (1993), it was Grierson, one of the more renowned English documentary makers, who convinced the gas company of the importance of making the film: ‘...the demolition of derelict slums and their replacement by government-financing housing - a key demand of the socialist Labour party - would inevitably bring modernization and increased use of gas. Thus the company financed a film of blunt and moving protest”

by L. Ciacci, ‘Movies’ Column, Planum. The Journal of Urbanism planum.net

The Guardian ~ Cheap Solar Lamps Help Villagers Keep Their Health, And Cut Emissions



MwangaBora lamps are distributed to women's groups to sell on, and they use income generated to set up small businesses Photograph: PR

In Kenya, where less than a quarter of the 45-million population has access to electricity, a solar lamp project is helping rural communities save money on expensive and harmful fuel while reducing carbon emissions. The Use Solar, Save Lives initiative was set up in 2004 by Evans Wadongo, 29, an engineer who experienced the dangerous effects of kerosene lamps growing up in a western Kenyan village. Studying close to an open flame, he was exposed to kerosene smoke, notorious for provoking breathing and vision defects, which left him with permanent eye problems.

Read more: <http://www.theguardian.com/solar-mwangabora>