

# Margaret Rhodes - Voluntary Ghettos: A Radical Idea For Reclaiming Urban Space



French architect Stéphane Malka lives in Paris, where climbing real estate prices are pushing people further outside the city and leading to social inequality. STÉPHANE MALKA ARCHITECTUR

*wired.com. December 2014.* What do Burning Man, Israeli kibbutzim, and neighborhood block parties have in common? “They are fascinating examples of how people can appropriate a territory for themselves and reclaim it,” says architect Stéphane Malka, in response to his own question. “It’s the idealistic essence of the society.”

Malka lives in Paris, a city that, like New York and San Francisco, faces growing inequality created by climbing real estate prices. So as Malka sees it, Parisians need a way to “reclaim” the city. His idea is a modular micro-city consisting of rooms that attach to scaffolding built around existing infrastructure, like barnacles clinging to a ship. He calls it the P9 Mobile-Ghetto, and has imagined them here hanging off the side of the Pont Neuf bridge in Paris.

Read more: <http://www.wired.com/voluntary-ghettos>

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# David Thorpe - How To Save Millions On Air Conditioning By Designing Passively Cooled Buildings

*sustainablecitiescollective.com. December 2014.* Air conditioning is by far the greatest consumer of electricity in buildings in hot countries, but it needn't be so.

Back in the warm days of August (at least in my part of the world) I wrote about how buildings in sunbelt countries could save millions by using active solar cooling. But architects designing buildings for regions that otherwise would require air conditioning can also use passive solar techniques to keep them cool, and in many cases successfully eliminate the need for expensive air conditioning.

✘ *A design for a mosque using passive solar and evaporative cooling.*

Passive solar cooling operates in two stages:

1. Do your best to prevent the sun from reaching the building or gaining the interior of the building during the periods when it is in danger of overheating.
2. Then employ passive techniques to remove unwanted hot air.

Different techniques are available depending upon the climate, i.e. whether it is dry or humid.

Read more: <http://sustainablecitiescollective.com/david-thorpe>

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# Adele Peters - Can 3-D Printed Homes Help Solve Homelessness?



Image: Contour Crafting

The best way of solving homelessness, many advocates argue, is just to give people homes. Though it sounds simplistic—and expensive — a “housing first” policy in places like Utah and Boston actually saves the government money. Now a U.K. company hopes to help make the process cheaper by building homes with a 3-D printer.

“3-D print homes speed up the construction process,” says Fabian Jean-Baptiste, owner of CNSTRCTN, a London-based development company, now launching a new project to start printing homes for charity. “It’s proven to be able to build a house per day.”

Read more: <http://www.fastcoexist.com/can-3-d-printed-homes>

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## The Economist - A Planet Of Suburbs

Global population, bn

Rural  
Urban

1950



Source: United Nations Population Forecasts

Thirty kilometres south of central Chennai, just out of earshot of the honking, hand-painted lorries roaring up Old Mahabalipuram Road, you seem to have reached rural India. The earth road buckles and heaves. Farmers dressed in Madras-checked dhotis rest outside huts roofed with palm leaves. Goats wander about. Then you turn a corner, go through a gate, and arrive in California.

Lakewood Enclave is a new development of 28 large two-storey houses, wedged tightly together. The houses are advertised as “Balinese-style”, although in truth they are hard to tell apart from any number of suburban homes around the world. Outside, the houses are painted a pale pinkish-brown; inside, the walls are white, the floors are stone and the design is open-plan. They each have three bedrooms (middle-class Tamil families are small these days) and a covered driveway to protect a car from the melting sun. Just one detail makes them distinctively Indian: a cupboard near the door for Hindu gods.

A quarter of a century ago your correspondent taught in a school not far from these houses. It was a rural area; bonnet macaques would sometimes invade his shower. Now farmers are selling their small parcels of land to housebuilders for sums beyond previous imagining. Commuters are rushing in so that, every morning, they can rush out again. Chengalpattu, the district where Lakewood lies (see map on next page—where the new development is also pictured), now contains more than half a million people. Lakewood looks likely to be the rule, not the exception. “The force of human nature means it will happen,” says Balaji Narasimhan of SSPDL, its developer. “You can’t stop it.”

Read more: <http://www.economist.com/suburbs>

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# Rural Landscapes Journal



Rural Landscapes  
Society Environment History

*Rural Landscapes* is a peer-reviewed academic journal dedicated to interdisciplinary landscape research. Focussing on the key topics of society, environment and history, the aim of the journal is to be a forum for empirically grounded and theoretically informed studies of past and present processes of change in rural landscapes, in all parts of the world.

The journal is interdisciplinary in scope, and open for contributions from a broad range of research fields, such as historical ecology, political ecology, rural development, landscape ecology, historical geography, palaeo-ecology and landscape studies etc. A specific aim is to promote theoretical, conceptual, methodological and empirical exchange and insights between studies of past landscapes and present processes. Contributions on prehistoric, historic and contemporary landscape processes or all combined as well as local, regional and global perspectives are all equally welcome.

The academic study of rural landscapes is a diverse research field, spanning a broad range of academic disciplines, as well as thematic, methodological and theoretical concerns and interests. Building on the long-standing practice of interdisciplinary collaboration in landscape research and recognition of the many critical insights gained through diachronic studies and dialogue across disciplines, the journal *Rural Landscapes* aims to be a leading academic forum for the blending, contrasting and bridging of historical and contemporary landscape studies and environmental and societal perspectives on rural landscape change.

*Rural Landscapes* is foremost a journal for publication of research findings (research articles), but short comments and communications of relevance to the contents of the journal are also welcome.

See: <http://www.rurallandscapesjournal.com/>

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# Jeremy Cook - A Street-Legal Castle

*December, 2014.* A “tiny house” is pretty much what it sounds like, and many could almost be described as a DIY RVs. Nearly all of this class of dwelling strive to make use of every inch of real estate available to them, but the “house truck” seen in the video is a masterpiece of space usage.

*Read more:* <http://makezine.com/2014/12/02/a-street-legal-castle/>