

Contested Terrain: A Lecture With Eyal Weizman

Can architecture be a form of political intervention? This question is central to the work of Eyal Weizman, a writer, architect, and director of the Centre for Research Architecture at Goldsmiths, University of London. For this talk, Weizman discusses his approach to architecture as a research-led collaborative practice. Often working with an interdisciplinary team—artists, urbanists, forensic scientists, archaeologists, human rights advocates—he analyzes vacated buildings, maps, satellite imagery, and other spatial artifacts to unravel the contested politics in sites of conflict and violence, including Palestine, the Former Yugoslavia, and Guatemala, among others.

This lecture is presented in conjunction with Sacred Space/Contested Terrain, an interdisciplinary exhibition organized by the University of Minnesota's Katherine E. Nash Gallery, School of Architecture, Department of Art, and Program in Religious Studies in collaboration with the Walker.

Weizman directs the European Research Council-funded project Forensic Architecture. He is one of the cofounders of the architectural collective DAAR—Decolonizing Architecture Art Residency—in Beit Sahour, Palestine. His books include *The Least of all Possible Evils* (2012), *Mengele's Skull* (with Tom Keenan, 2012) *Hollow Land* (2007), and *A Civilian Occupation* (2003). Weizman is a regular contributor and an editorial board member for several journals and magazines, including *Humanity*, *Cabinet*, and *Inflexions*, and has lectured extensively around the world.

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Plotting A Better Life In Ugandan Slums

This film explores how Uganda's National Slum Dwellers Federation (NSDF) is working with local NGO ACTogether to mobilise slum communities in Kampala. It focuses on the informal settlement of Kibuye, one of Kampala's 63 slums, capturing everyday life and documenting how technology is helping the community participate in decisions that affect their quality of life.

Historically, the Kampala Capital City Authority has had little information about the make-up of the city's slums — and what it did have was outdated. ACTogether and the NSDF have engaged the residents of the slums, helping them to map their own neighbourhoods, and detailing both the demographics and the locations of physical structures such as toilets.

ACTogether set up forums in which residents and other stakeholders, including city authority officials, use the knowledge gained from mapping to discuss issues affecting the community, empowering residents to start taking control of life

within the slums.

ACTogether is also keen to increase the involvement of academics in the slums' future planning. It initiated the "Urban Studio" project a partnership with Makerere University in which students spent time interacting with residents and learning first-hand about life in the slums — something that was missing from their academic courses.

Zeynep Tufekci ~ How The Internet Has Made Social Change Easy To Organize, Hard To Win

Today the speed at which we spread information is so fast that a single email can launch a worldwide awareness campaign, as with the Occupy movement. Yet as techno-sociologist Zeynep Tufekci seeks to show, the ease of social media can actually hurt social change in the long run. From Gezi to the Arab Spring to Ukraine to Hong Kong, she shows how today's movements can miss out on the benefits of doing things the hard (and slow) way.

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Read more: [Zeynep Tufekci - Social Movements and Governments in the Digital](#)

Fatima Hassan ~ The Link Between Functioning Toilets And Justice

In Khayelitsha, an informal settlement on the outskirts of Cape Town, residents play near toilets that are crumbling, clogged, and dirty. This lack of access to proper sanitation is not just a health hazard—it's a crucial issue for development, safety, access to justice, and human rights.

The South African constitution guarantees the right to equality and dignity, and also an extensive list of socioeconomic rights, the realization of which is frustrated by a lack of access to basic sanitation facilities. Millions of South Africans still lack access to basic sanitation, including at least 500,000 in Cape Town.

Read more: <http://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/>

Stefanie Spear - Transitioning To Urban Resilience

If current trends continue, by 2050 70 percent of the world's population will live in cities, according to the [Action4Climate video competition](#) film Rotterdam—The Transition to Urban Resilience. Filmmaker Lieke 't Gilde says it's time to

recognize the city as a natural ecosystem in order to meet human needs now and in the future. Gilde says that “nature-based and innovative solutions are essential for a sustainable future for cities all over the planet.”

The film takes place in Rotterdam, the second-largest city in the Netherlands and one of the largest ports in the world. It introduces the URBES project—Urban Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services—which is a partnership that develops ideas, tools and knowledge that are shared and co-created with cities in Europe.

Check out this inspiring film to learn about the sustainability projects that are transitioning Rotterdam to a resilient city.

Read more: <http://ecowatch.com/2014/10/29/transitioning-urban-resilience/>