“The urban space as a place of creation and expression of collective intelligences needs to be stimulated as proposed by this award so that the projects multiply, become increasingly visible and exemplary. In a continuous and dynamic process this initiative encourages the most important collective patrimony of a city: its creative imagination.”

CRISTINA FREIRE
The sixth edition of the Deutsche Bank Urban Age Award, created to encourage initiatives that improve the quality of life in urban environments, received 170 applications from the metropolitan region of Rio de Janeiro. Launched in Mumbai in 2007, the Award was followed by São Paulo (2008), Istanbul (2009), Mexico City (2010) and Cape Town (2012).

This award has been initiated to recognise and celebrate creative solutions to the problems and opportunities that face over half of the world’s population living in cities today. For this reason, the award focuses on projects that benefit communities and local residents by improving their urban environments. It is designed to encourage citizens, policy-makers, private businesses and non-governmental organisations to take a proactive role in forging shared responsibilities in cities in the 21st century – mankind’s first truly “urban” age.

After an open application process, an independent international jury awards the prize, which is worth 100,000 USD, to the winning project. The award is organised by the Deutsche Bank’s Alfred Herrhausen Society in association with the LSE Cities at the London School of Economics and Political Science.

This publication provides the reader with an overview on the previous award cities, focusing on the city of Rio de Janeiro. It illustrates the distribution of initiatives on the city map, suggesting a rich reservoir of community initiatives that currently improve urban space and residents lives at the local scale, making use of available resources with a hands-on approach. It also describes the process of organisation of the award on the ground that, since São Paulo, has developed into a platform of research that maps and organises initiatives systematically. And it lists the four finalists from the Metropolitan Region of Rio de Janeiro, as introduced by this year’s jury members.

We all carry a great deal of responsibility for the success of our cities, for securing an urban future. With the Deutsche Bank Urban Age Award, we aim to encourage people to work together to take responsibility for their cities.

We want to make the invisible visible, we want to show the potential there is in the slums, townships, barrios, gecekondu, or favelas of this world, we want to help constitute a lobby for those whose voices are often not heard.

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**Editorial**

**Ute Elisabeth Weiland** has been the Deputy Director of the Alfred Herrhausen Society, Deutsche Bank’s international forum since 2007, a member of the Executive Board of the Urban Age conference series at the London School of Economics since 2004, and since 1 January 2010, a member of the Governing Board of LSE Cities.
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DEUTSCHE BANK URBAN AGE AWARD 2013 RIO

Organized by
Alfred Herrhausen Society
The International Forum of Deutsche Bank

In association with

LSE Cities
MACDP, University of London
The non-profit Alfred Herrhausen Society is the international forum of Deutsche Bank. Its work focuses on new forms of governance as a response to the challenges of the 21st century.

The Alfred Herrhausen Society seeks traces of the future in the present, and conceptualises relevant themes for analysis and debate. It works with international partners across a range of fields, including policy, academia and business, to organise forums for discussion worldwide. It forges international networks and builds temporary institutions to help find better solutions to global challenges. It targets future decision-makers, but also attempts to make its work accessible to a wide public audience.

The Society is dedicated to the legacy of Alfred Herrhausen, former spokesman of the Deutsche Bank board of directors, who advocated responsible leadership, corporate social responsibility and good governance in an exemplary manner until his assassination by terrorists in 1989. The Alfred Herrhausen Society is an expression of Deutsche Bank’s worldwide commitment to civil society.

Could you briefly explain why the Deutsche Bank Urban Age Award has been created to recognise alliances that address pressing challenges in cities?

In forty years, two thirds of the world’s population will live in cities. In 2020, a predicted 1.4 billion people will be living in slums. And problems become more concentrated in urban areas. In that scenario cities become a great challenge while also being a driving force behind human development. After Mumbai, Sao Paulo, Istanbul, Mexico City and Cape Town, we presented the Deutsche Bank Urban Age Award in Rio this year. The award honours alliances that are dedicated to improving the quality of life in cities, and encourages residents to become active participants in urban life. Cities are also a social and cultural construct, we shape our cities and are shaped by them.

Which partnerships are you talking about?

The award celebrates partnerships that share responsibility between residents, companies, NGO’s, universities, public bodies etc.

Based on the previous editions of the Award, could one say that it is about focusing on people building their cities?

The award focused on how alliances can make possible transformation in the lives of people as well as the urban space they live in. The activities developed by groups often related to the topic of culture and the city, as well as education and leisure. That is also valid for Rio. Many of the initiatives that applied are carried out by local residents in their own neighbourhoods or communities, with their own hands and means. It starts with residents recognising a problem, followed by the active implementation of an idea to solve that immediate issue. In that sense, they become responsible for
improving their own cities, while becoming involved in its making.

In your view, what does the DBUA Award achieve?

In Rio, we received 170 applications for the award, which is an impressive demonstration of citizens who are not waiting for help but use their own creativity to overcome the problems of their daily lives. The creativity we have encountered here in Rio unveils a network that already helps the citizens to overcome their present problems. This network, which is structured by local initiatives, has enormous potential while being complementary to the network represented by the top-down planning tradition.

Overall, how important do you think culture and cultural initiatives are in cities that are growing, such as Rio, especially in less favoured neighbourhoods?

If you look at culture, we have to see it in a wider context. Culture is not just the arts in a classical sense. Culture is what ties people, the spirit, the creativity, the humanity together. Since ancient times, culture is what makes the essence of urban civilisation. And it is important that not only the physical needs of people in big cities are being satisfied, but also that their intellectual, creative and civilisational needs. So this is where culture is an excellent tool to be brought in. We saw in Rio some very concrete examples of that, for instance, in space which was freed from the former grip of mafia-like structures, a vacuum appeared. And if this vacuum is filled out with cultural activities, it makes these communities worthwhile to live in and it will tie communities much closer together than any other form of formal structure.

Do you see these small scale initiatives as facilitators between the city and governments? Are they making politics themselves?

Politics is the polis, it is the city where citizens interact with each other and where citizens try together to improve the lives of everybody. So I think what we are trying to do is highly political. We just have to see that it is political in a constructive sense and that this is not used as tools to increase the differences which exist and to set up one group of people against another. But striving together for better solutions of living in the city, this is politics in the purest and highest sense, and I think the DBUA Award can deliver an active contribution.

Several initiatives in Rio started with young entrepreneurs.

Do you think young leadership is important for the development of cities?

Wherever people are trying to do something together, it is important that they have the right sort of leadership. By that I do not mean a top down approach, but inspired individuals who put the wellbeing of the community before their own. In that sense, we have seen
some very encouraging examples in Rio. Leadership has to be always contested and to prove itself in the real environment. Errors will be made, errors are made, but errors will be corrected if this all happens in a proper democratic way, whereby I mean democracy, the rule of the people in its original and pure sense.

Based on these three points – culture, politics and leadership – and their connection to “making” (who makes city), what might be a possible vision of the award and related projects for the future?
I think there are so many interesting and good projects that one cannot award all of them. But what we can do is to set an example, to underline, to give a signal and to honour an endeavour which might lead the way also for others. But what is important is that from bottom up, people get actively involved in their common worlds, in their communities to really create the future for the people together. I hope that this network will serve as an encouragement not only in Rio, but all over Brazil. They deliver good examples of collective engagement fostering better solutions based on their own experiences.

Ambassador Thomas Matussek had a career in the Diplomatic Service of 37 years. He served inter alia as Minister in Washington, Ambassador in London, to the U.N. in New York and in India. He had, as Director General for Political Affairs, responsibility for Germany’s relationship with Brazil from 1999-2002. He joined Deutsche Bank in 2011 and became Head of the Alfred Herrhausen Society in 2013.
LSE cities is an international centre at the London School of Economics and Political Science supported by Deutsche Bank that carries out research, education and outreach activities in London and abroad. Its mission is to study how people and cities interact in a rapidly urbanizing world, focusing on how the design of cities impacts on society, culture and the environment. Through research, conferences, teaching and projects, the centre aims to shape new thinking and practice on how to make cities fairer and more sustainable for the next generation of urban dwellers, who will make up over 70 per cent of the global population by 2050.

In your view, what do the projects associated with the DBUA Award achieve? What similarities and differences stood out between the projects in different cities?

At the Urban Age, we have been observing since 2005 a number of major cities that are undergoing seismic levels of change across the globe. We have been looking at them at a “Google” level, from a certain distance. We describe and capture patterns of population and economic growth, migration, income and inequality distribution, social and ethnic diversity, and energy and pollution levels – all at a metropolitan scale. But we felt we needed to drill down to a different scale that is more human; close to the individual, the family, and the local community. The projects associated with the Deutsche Bank Urban Age award are about getting under the skin of what is happening in the city. The common thread that runs through hundreds of projects we have reviewed as part of the award process is that relatively small changes in space can have a major impact on the quality of life of urban residents, especially those at the bottom end of the social scale. They have maximum effect with minimum means. Many projects offer people the dignity of having a decent, clean and safe place, while others reveal the power of associational life in the city, especially for those who are left out of the formal systems of power and democratic accountability.

Overall, do you think these initiatives have been successful? If so, what key lessons might we learn from them?

When we started the award, we didn’t know what we would find. Over the last five years, we have found evidence of real ingenuity on the ground. In the face of the most difficult circumstances – including lack of infrastructure, money, or political voice – there is a remarkable level of resilience among urban populations. The range of initiatives uncovered by the award process gives a sense of optimism based on the realization that individual actions actually do make a massive difference. In Cape Town, for example, an ex-gangster was able to use his notorious authority to turn young men around, taking them from the violence of the streets and using their energies to build a factory for making clothes for school children, and a beautiful garden...
for the community. It contributed to a sense of self-worth of the individuals and helped create jobs for local people. What these projects have in common is a sense of purpose and a sense of dignity for the individuals or groups involved, which is facilitated and reinforced through a spatial intervention.

We are therefore able to conclude that design is as important a social act as sanitation, education, and nutrition. It is important to think about social issues in spatial ways. Space matters and is as integral as social capital and human capacity building in cities. In some ways, these projects make us rethink what we need to learn. They teach us something about collaboration and its importance in establishing a common ground, both literally and metaphorically.

How do you see the potential for the development of such projects impacting cities in the future? Cities today are being made and re-made at a faster pace and at a larger scale than ever before.

And everyday urban realities are often being shaped by a set of informal processes and actors. According to UN Habitat, a third of the total global urban population lives in “slum-like conditions”. Given the intensity of urban churn being experienced in much of the global South, such projects have enormous potential to impact cities in the future. These projects demonstrate how people inhabit and adapt to new urban realities. They lead to social integration and democratic engagement of socially excluded urban residents. They succeed in bringing people and communities together. There is immense potential.

Are they scalable and/or replicable?
Many of these projects have been driven by creative and powerful individuals who are able to energize and galvanize the local community and other stakeholders. It could appear that success for these projects is a one-off and not replicable elsewhere. So we have taken great care to ensure that the prize winners offer models that can be followed and implemented by others. This is their potential. At the same time, I have mixed views about scaling up. No city is exactly the same and every city has its own strengths and weaknesses. We can't take one project and just replicate the exact same thing in other cities. A solution that fixes problems in one city may not necessarily work in another, or even in other parts of the same city. There are lessons to be learned from these local projects that can be brought back to municipal and even central governance as positive exemplars of what can be achieved. It is the capacity-building side that can be scaled up in more interesting ways.

Can you envision future scenarios resulting from the pioneerism displayed in these projects? Every city should have a department that looks at these sorts of grassroots initiatives, to identify, reward, and nurture local potential. This doesn't in any way mean that we should do away with planning or
planners who concern themselves with large-scale visions and long-term objectives. Indeed, we need to move beyond the old “bottom-up versus top-down” debate. These projects call for a more nuanced understanding of urban accretion and rupture. To my mind, it is this multiscalar approach that can deliver sustainable urban change. It is the interaction between different scales and types of urban form and infrastructure: the macro and the micro, the metropolitan and the local, the neighborhood and the street level; and their response to the real needs of residents as well as their adaptability to sociocultural environments that will lead to better future scenarios.

**Ricky Burdett** is Professor of Urban Studies at the London School of Economics and Political Science and Director of LSE Cities and the Urban Age program. He is also Global Distinguished Professor at New York University and a member of the Royal College of Art. He was Chief Adviser on Architecture and Urbanism for the London 2012 Olympics and formerly architectural adviser to the Mayor of London. He has served on the Deutsche Bank Urban Age Award Jury over the last five years and was chair of the jury in Mumbai, São Paulo, and Istanbul.
“The DBUAA project attributes most worthy of emulation involve bottom-up project development; focus on results; appropriate relationship with government authorities; and, attention to real needs rather than abstract ambitions.”

ANTHONY WILLIAMS
Situated on the western coast of India, in the Ulhas River estuary, Mumbai is India’s leading commercial and cultural centre. The city, which is home to the country’s film industry and stock exchange, pays almost 40% of the nation’s taxes. Chronic overcrowding and urban poverty is nonetheless a commonplace feature of everyday life in Mumbai. More than half of Mumbai’s population live in slum settlements occupying a mere 10% of the city’s land. The city’s largest slum, Dharavi, has population densities of 82,000 people per km². Mumbai’s slums fall into two categories: authorised slums, which are serviced with basic infrastructure, and the far more numerous (60%) illegal settlements, which no power or water and are subject to demolition. The inaugural Urban Age Award was presented to two transformative projects that demonstrated how Mumbai citizens had improved the lives of local residents and the quality of their urban environment through innovative partnerships.

**Winners**

**Triratna Prerana Mandal (TPM)**

Founded in 1985 by a group of young men who met at a cricket club in Mumbai’s Santa Cruz neighbourhood, this non-profit community-based organisation oversees a broad range of
activities with partners in local government. It was singled out for an innovative slum sanitation programme, which increased the availability of public toilets for Mumbai residents. A partnership with the World Bank-funded Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai, which constructed the new toilets, TPM used these toilets as key nodal points to create dynamic spaces offering computer classes, English-language tuition, child-care services and women’s self-help and skills groups. TPM is also active in solid waste management and administers a programme that teaches residents waste collection, classification and composting skills.

**Mumbai Waterfronts Centre**

Historically, Mumbai’s 34km-long western waterfront was ravaged by indiscriminate waste disposal and unplanned development. Frustrated by the state of the city’s waterfront, a group of local Bandra residents joined forces to improve and reclaim a 7km stretch of shoreline, including the Bandra Carter Road promenade, Bandra Bandstand promenade, Bandra Land’s End and Juhu Beach. The project created an open public space that is accessible to all sections of Mumbai’s crowded population. Significantly, the restoration project, which is maintained by residents, helped spur a larger citywide initiative the western waterfront. MWC has been involved in a similar project at the Dadar-Prabhadevi beach area, a 4km-long public area that includes two municipal gardens.

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**Special mention**

**Urban Design Research Institute (UDRI)**

Established as a trust to enrich public understanding of Mumbai’s historic Fort district, UDRI’s work has led to increased awareness about the city’s history and architectural heritage. Its lobbying resulted in the passing of a landmark urban heritage preservation law, and prompted the restoration of Elphinstone College, one of the oldest colleges of the University of Mumbai, which is housed in a Romanesque Transitional style building. UDRI has worked with neighbourhood associations and local government to secure the restoration and regeneration of the Fort district, a tangible symbol of India’s collective memory and heritage used by millions of commuters daily.
SÃO PAULO 2008

NUMBER OF ENTRIES 133

WINNER
Do Cortiço da Rua Solón ao Edificio União

SPECIAL MENTION
Cooperativa Nova Esperança, BioUrban, Instituto ACAIA

THE SÃO PAULO 2008 JURY

TATA AMARAL
Film director, writer, producer and actor.

RICKY BURDETT, CHAIR
Academic and researcher; professor of urban studies at London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE); director of LSE Cities and the Urban Age programme.

LISETTE LAGNADO
Art critic, curator and historian; professor at Faculdade Santa Marcelina, São Paulo; chief-curator of the 27th São Paulo Biennial, 2006.

FERNANDO DE MELLO FRANCO
Architect and academic; founder MMBB architects; professor in architecture at Universidade São Judas Tadeu, São Paulo.

ENRIQUE NORTEN
Architect and academic; founder of TEN Arquitectos & Miller; chair of architecture at University of Pennsylvania.

RAÍ SOUZA VIEIRA DE OLIVEIRA
Footballer and social activist; founder and director of the Foundation Gol de Letra, a UNESCO worldwide model for supporting at-risk children.

ANTHONY WILLIAMS
Businessman and city politician; former mayor of Washington DC and CEO of Primum Public Realty Trust.

Founded in 1554, São Paulo achieved city status in 1711. Booming exports and immigration in the late 1800s significantly increased its economic prosperity, indelibly changing its character. Described as the classic second city, São Paulo has managed to avoid the boom and bust cycle of similar noncapitals – Manchester, Chicago, Shanghai – and is currently Brazil’s preeminent economic powerhouse. São Paulo’s GDP is in excess of $10,000 per capita. The city’s pronounced wealth – it is home to 30,000 dollarbased millionaires – is matched by high levels of urban poverty, UN-Habitat categorising 30% of its citizens as “poor”. While living conditions in São Paulo are not comparable to those of slums of Nairobi or Mumbai, it is estimated that more than four million citizens live in slum dwellings, on the streets or in un-regularised, sub-standard housing, often situated on the urban periphery. São Paulo’s erratic urban development is marked by a pronounced centre-periphery dichotomy, based on its urban.

Winner

Do Cortiço da Rua Solón ao Edificio União

Abandoned buildings are common in many Brazilian cities. In 2007, 619,915 vacant but habitable housing units existed in urban São Paulo. Built in the 1970s, 934 Rua Solón is a partially completed concrete-frame multi-storey structure close to São Paulo’s central district. Squatter families occupied it in the 1980s and relied on a precarious system of electrical and water supply. Working with a variety of partners, São Paulo’s Faculty of Architecture initiated a
project to “de-densify” the building. Over 30 of the 73 families squeezed into the building were re-housed. The site was cleaned, new kitchens and bathrooms were fitted, a collective power grid installed, and the exterior of the was awarded because of the way it established a method for interaction between the social and the physical, between the built and the lived, right in the heart of the city next to jobs, schools and social amenities.

Special mention

Cooperativa Nova Esperança

It is not uncommon for residents of poorly serviced favelas to throw their waste into ditches and streams that flow into the city’s main river, Rio Tietê. This recycling initiative aimed to reduce the volume of waste deposited in streams and on public roads, while also generating income for its waste collector participants. A collector-run initiative, the project was piloted by the Company for Housing and Urban Development of the State of São Paulo and developed under the Integrated Programme of Urbanization of the Pantanal Slum.

BioUrban

Pioneered by the young sociology student Jeff Anderson in the Mauro favela, a crumbling inner city area in São Paulo, this project helped implement a series of aesthetic measures that have transformed the spatial quality of the neighbourhood within a short period of time. They include the cleaning up of small spaces and areas in front of peoples’ homes, creating flowerbeds in place of concrete kerbs, using colour and recycled materials to humanise the facades of buildings and exposed infrastructures, creating public artworks and the staging of collective activities such as painting sessions. All materials used in the project come from waste and garbage found in the neighbourhood.

Instituto ACAIA

Established in 1998, this project began with the establishment of a spacious arts and crafts workshop with extensive training facilities open to deprived children from the surrounding favelas. The success of the initiative prompted ACAIA to expand their activities into the favelas themselves. Working closely with residents’ associations, which they helped form, ACAIA in 2006 initiated strategic development plans and made spatial improvements in Vila Leopoldina, a slum settlement next to the city’s wholesale food market that houses 960 families. In addition to the construction of a new sewage system and paved streets, the initiative created a new public space with play equipment and “art-cabin” that is used extensively by local children.
Turkey’s leading city, Istanbul has been described as the “hip city on the Horn” and “one of the coolest cities in the world”. It is also one of 23 global cities expected to reach 10-million-plus inhabitants by 2015. “The city hasn't grown – it has exploded, overrun by a surge of poor immigrants from Anatolia in eastern Turkey and the Black Sea region,” reported Spiegel in 2007. Migrant workers often resort to living in makeshift houses known as gecekondus, many on Istanbul’s fringes. Although illegal they are tolerated by a city government struggling to engage the city’s mounting exclusionary dynamics. “Insufficient welfare state structures alongside the collapse of informal and identity-based incorporation mechanisms in the city have created exclusionary dynamics that operate on a much larger scale than ever before,” writes Asu Aksoy in Living in the Endless City (2011), an Urban Age publication. Many of the projects addressed some of the critical problems faced by Istanbul’s most fragile communities – new immigrants, isolated women, disadvantaged children, and disabled and homeless young men – while others focused on the spatial inadequacies of this rapidly growing city: traffic congestion, lack of open space and restoration of the city’s heritage.

**Winner**

**Music for Peace**

This project in Edirnekapi, one of Istanbul's most disadvantaged inner-city neighbourhoods, offers free musical education to local school children between the ages...
of 7 and 14. The project allows young boys and girls to spend time with dedicated volunteer musicians. By creatively adapting the unused basement of the local state school into a bright and airy space where children spend afterschool hours playing accordions, learning composition, repairing instruments, performing and eating together, the initiative performs an important social.

Apart from its obvious social impact on the children and their families, many of them recent immigrants from poorer regions in Turkey, the project represents a commitment to an inner-city area suffering from disinvestment and increasing deprivation. The project is an innovative investment in human and social capital, which uses arts and culture in a highly pragmatic and unsentimental way to promote urban regeneration.

**Special mention**

**The Foundation for Support of Women’s Work**

Located in Nurtepe, a mixed and socially fragmented area with a high proportion of deprived immigrant families, the Women and Children Centre provides child-care and education facilities designed to empower local women. Run on a volunteer basis by the First Step Women’s Environment, Culture and Enterprise Co-operative, the centre offers classes on leadership, entrepreneurship and domestic violence, as well as networking opportunities for women from all backgrounds to help them overcome marginalisation and social exclusion.

**Children of Hope Foundation – Bakirköy Youth House**

Young Turkish women and men are no longer eligible for state support if they become marginalised and homeless after the age of 18. This citywide initiative provides a safe haven for the chiefly young men involved in family violence, crime and drug-addiction with nowhere else to go. The Bakirkoy House for young people provides clean and safe, short-term accommodations for the underprivileged, where they receive health and social advice, and vocational training, which help them re-integrate themselves into society.
In the 1970s, demographers predicted that Mexico City would reach 30-million inhabitants by the 2000, a prognosis that never transpired. The city’s population has peaked at just under 20-million, this as migrants search for better opportunities in other cities such as Guadalajara and Monterey, according to UN-HABITAT.

Despite some congested historic areas in the city centre experiencing residential decline, Mexico City faces a number of urban problems. Sprawl has highlighted the city’s growing infrastructural incapacity, while high crime has resulted in a widespread fear culture. Environmental factors, such as earthquakes and air pollution – the latter exacerbated by the city’s high altitude and mountains – are also problems.

Emanating from a range of social and geographical backgrounds, the 193 entries for the fourth cycle of the award suggested the existence of strong and diverse alliances aimed at improving the urban environment and quality of life. The support of universities, local authorities and government programmes, as well as the cooperation of different community organizations, has been an important factor in the success of these projects.

Winner

Miravalle Community Council

Founded in the borough of Iztapalapa – a historically poor neighbourhood in the east of the city – by indigenous people from different ethnic backgrounds who recently migrated into the city, Miravalle is a community-based project that facilitates partnerships between local and metropolitan
organisations and local individuals. It supervises a solid waste management project involving the collection and recycling of twotonnes of PET plastic per week, which generates employment for 30 young people. It also oversees a cultivation project that provides fresh produce, in particular vegetables, for a low-budget lunchroom, ensuring healthy nutrition. A comprehensive project, Miravelle also offers a wide variety of sport and cultural services – art workshops, dance classes, a skateboarding park – as well as an education programme aimed at helping residents overcome the technological gap. They have also turned a former garbage dump into a public space for social interaction.

### Special mention

**CODECO, Culture Centre**  
**Consejo Agrarista**

Founded in 1990 by 30 gangs from Iztapalapa, this project variously addresses the problems of marginalization, drugs, crime, violence and discrimination against youth, women and poor people. The project’s founders, who acknowledge the existence of gangs as a legitimate means of collective identity, created sport facilities, working spaces, artistic workshops and a library. They provide skills training to broaden the employment opportunities of participants and promote legal graffiti and artistic work as an alternative to drugs, crime and violence. They have undertaken several cultural and sports initiatives to foster community integration. Their work in Iztapalapa has contributed to changing perceptions of the borough, once deemed a ‘no-go zone’.

### Recovering Spaces for Life

Located in Santa Fe, an area of marked socioeconomic disparity in the west of the city, this project focuses on the recovery of public spaces through a variety of initiatives. A partnership between the Iberoamericana University and members of the local community, the project includes environmental education, technological literacy and skills training. The Iberoamericana University offers advice on implementing projects and also facilitates introductions that enable local community members to find jobs in Santa Fe, one of Mexico City’s major business districts. Additional projects include a workshop in psychosocial risk prevention, which is offered at various schools in the area.
Founded in 1652 as a refreshment station for passing ships, Cape Town is a highly differentiated and malleable city; its peculiar urban character is a visceral aftermath of apartheid spatial planning and social engineering. Up to a quarter of its citizens live in comfortable, full-service neighbourhoods in one of the most picturesque cities in the world, while, at the opposite end of the scale, as much as 25% of its inhabitants face routine struggles, including limited sanitation, precarious shelter, intermittent access to basic services and the constant indignity of grinding poverty associated with unemployment. As many as one million Capetonians live in highly inadequate shelter – backyards, freestanding informal dwellings, overcrowded public housing – often on the urban periphery, this sprawl adding to the city’s infrastructural and social challenges.

The organisations that entered the 2012 Urban Age Award suggests that the future of the city is being imagined and defined by citizens, as much as by policymakers. This can be perceived in the diversity and calibre of the citizen groups engaged in addressing the city’s diverse urban challenges.

**Winner**

Mothers Unite

This project in Lavender Hill, a low-income neighbourhood southeast of the city centre with high unemployment and gang activity, demonstrates the power of “urban acupuncture”. Founded in 2007 in a private home, it offers a refuge from social insecurity, gang culture and violence for children aged between three and 15. Now based in an infrastructure village
made up of shipping containers in the grounds of a city multi-purpose hall, Mothers Unite caters to 120 children, offering meals three afternoons a week, as well as a variety of educational and creative activities in partnership with various developmental and educational institutions. These include computer literacy, food cultivation and first aid skills.

The project infrastructure has grown to encompass a library, kitchen, food gardens, yoga/training room, playground and administration office. An oasis in its surroundings, the project’s primary aim is to restore the sanctity of the family unit.

Special mention

Rocklands Urban Abundance Centre

Located on the grounds of Rocklands Primary School in Mitchell’s Plain, this educational permaculture garden oasis responds to the complex socioeconomic challenges – jobs, food security, education, green issues – facing this peripheral community. Run by SEED, a small public benefits organisation, and staffed by seven full-time employees, the centre is a practical demonstration of postcarbon living, earth sensitive building and renewable energy and resilient and replicable urban agriculture models. It has grown into a springboard and laboratory for various community activities.

The centre, which houses a genetic base of productive plants, supports home food gardens in the area through subsidised seedling and manure sales; it also offers ongoing training and support in cultivation and permaculture. Tree planting days aim to inculcate pride in this desolate neighbourhood.

Thrive Recycling

Based at the Hout Bay Drop-off, a city waste facility on the border of Hout Bay village and Imizamo Yethu slum settlement, this wastemanagement project revolves around innovative residential recycling initiatives. Established in 2009, it enables participants to earn an income by becoming a part of the waste management cycle. Collected waste is delivered to a co-operative staffed by 11 members, who retrieve useable items, sort the balance and resell recyclables on for further handling.

In parallel, Thrive also runs a recycling scheme that rewards residents of Imizamo Yethu for bringing waste to the co-op by issuing them with vouchers redeemable at local informal shops and service-providers. Economic upliftment aside, the project has great environmental benefits by helping to reduce landfill waste and litter. The project’s holistic approach also sees them offering waste-management education programmes at schools.
RIO DE JANEIRO
2013

NUMBER OF ENTRIES 170

WINNERS
Plano Popular Vila Autódromo, Pontilhão Cultural.

SPECIAL MENTION
Censo Maré, Agência de Redes para a Juventude.

THE RIO 2013 JURY
The jury, composed of a range of international urban experts and local figures with knowledge of the city’s diverse urban communities, met in Rio de Janeiro on 25 to 27 September 2013.

RICKY BURDETT, CHAIR
Director of LSE Cities and the Urban Age programme, Professor of Urban Studies and Head of the Department of Sociology, London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE).

PAOLA BERENSTEIN JACQUES
Architect and urbanist. Professor, Program in Visual Arts, Federal University of Bahia.

LÍVIA FLORES
Artist and Professor at the Communication School and at the Pós-Graduation Program in Visual Arts, Federal University of Rio de Janeiro.

CRISTINA FREIRE
Vice-director, Curator and Associate Professor at the Museum for Contemporary Art of the University of São Paulo.

ANNA KATHARINA HERRHAUSEN
Head of internal and external communication, Allianz4Good, Allianz SE, Munich.

FABIANA IZAGA
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ANTHONY WILLIAMS
MAPPING INITIATIVES

Distribution of initiatives on Rio’s metropolitan area

1 Plano popular Vila Autódromo
2 Pontilhão Cultural
3 Censo Maré
4 Agência de Redes para a Juventude
The “Plano Popular” developed by the community of Vila Autódromo alongside planning experts from the Universidade Federal da Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ) and the Universidade Federal Fluminense (UFF) sets an example of partnership between different constituencies to provide a comprehensive vision of how their community can be adapted to improve living standards for all residents. Vila Autódromo occupies a delicate space on the edges of the Olympic Park site in Barra de Tijuca and has been the subject of on-going discussions with the public authorities regarding the part-retention and possible demolition of a number of housing units to make way for roads and other Olympics facilities.

The dynamics of the Plano Popular are designed to both act as a platform for dialogue between the community, the university and the city authorities and also to provide a forum for discussion of what facilities are most needed to raise the quality of the environment and the sustainability of the neighbourhood. The jury was impressed by the fact that the initiative had been in place for two years and, despite a number of setbacks, seemed keen to build on the successes achieved in a constructive and proactive way.

The well-developed Plan identified a number of projects and initiatives which, if realised, would improve the dynamics of everyday urban living for local residents of all ages. In particular, the jury recognised the benefits that would accrue to the community with the implementation of a crèche for young children.

The jury commended the project for establishing a process of working between different actors in the city, and identifying the core spatial needs for a vulnerable and fragile community, and strongly endorsed the construction of the crèche as a first step in the consolidation of the next stage of the project.

Associação de Moradores, Pescadores e Amigos da Vila Autódromo
www.facebook.com/vivaavilaautodromo
Pontilhão Cultural

Located in the Maré community, the Pontilhão Cultural is run by a local collective and makes creative use of a “found space” at the heart of a dense piece of city which offers little respite to its younger residents. The space is beneath a busy urban motorway – the Yellow Line and very close to the Red Line – in a very important motorway junction of the city with no space for pedestrian use and enjoyment. The initiative has successfully turned this unloved territory, close to the Canal do Fundão, into a haven for artistic and cultural events, which is used by groups of young people at different times of day and the week to engage in safe and well-organised leisure and learning activities including skateboarding, concerts, painting and other artistic practices.

Formerly used as a rubbish dump, the Pontilhão Cultural has become a successful resource for collective activities open to residents, neighbourhood associations, NGOs, arts and cultural groups. The project is run from Lona Cultural, a nearby municipal facility which manages a library, collective kitchen and theatre events, and the project is organised by two enthusiastic and committed young local residents whose activities go well beyond their everyday duties.

The location of the project not only uses space in an imaginative way but also acts as an integrating space between different communities, turning a boundary into a meeting place. The Maré collective includes musicians, producers and cultural activists who regularly organize open events, performances, workshops, video screenings, lectures, games, skating and other sports and leisure activities. All events are free and respond to local demands and desires. Efforts are in place to improve the quality of the environment with lighting, planting, skating facilities and a playground space.

The jury commended the project for working across partnerships and making a place that fosters social cohesion in Rio and endorses the need for further investment in equipment, facilities and materials to extend its activities for the very different communities of Maré.

Coletivo Maré
www.facebook.com/ColetivoMare
Censo Maré

Located in the Maré community since 2010, the project revolves around the creation and implementation of a survey which describes the social demographic reality of local residents whose existence is not otherwise captured by official statistics gathered by the public authorities. Organised in partnership with the Redes da Maré, other institutions and local residents, the survey permits the identification of the community’s core social demands and then promotes the formulation of policies and proposals that can improve the quality of public services.

A by-product of the survey is the development of a street guide for Maré which, literally, puts people on the map and provides families with an identifiable postal address. This has led to the erection of “proper” street signs which signify the history and presence of the community and its people.

The Jury commended the project for its effectiveness in marking the spatial presence of sometimes forgotten communities and finding ways of articulating their needs, recognising that the initiative is a first important step in understanding what is required and taking concrete actions to make things happen.

Associação Redes de Desenvolvimento da Maré
www.redesdamare.org.br
The initiative addresses the urgent need to promote entrepreneurship amongst young residents in deprived areas to allow them the opportunity to make the most of their lives and connect to wider social and economic realities. Developed with the Osservatorio de Favelas and a network of universities, the Agencia provides training and access for young people to foster innovation and develop the necessary skills to turn ideas into realities.

Agencia recognises that young grassroots communities are the repository of creative energy amongst young people whose lives have often been rendered fragile and vulnerable by external factors. The network operates in more deprived communities of the city, strengthening social networks and fostering the creation of collaborative networks by empowered individuals.

The jury commended the project for its ability to promote capacity building amongst young people in Rio, recognising and optimising the potential of the residents of Rio’s favelas to make more of their lives.

Avenida Brasil Instituto de Criatividade
www.agenciarj.org
FIELD WORK

MARCOS L. ROSA
Urban planner, coordinated the Deutsche Bank Urban Age Award in Rio and carried out the field work with the designer Bruna Montuori.

Following the launch of the sixth Deutsche Bank Urban Age Award in May 2013, an extensive press and internet campaign followed by site visits and a collaborative mapping, 170 applications were received by the August deadline.

The submissions came from the whole of Rio’s metropolitan area, with initiatives from well known areas such as the communities on the hills of the south zone to the areas of Complexo do Alemão and Maré, and areas on the north and west zone with conglomerates of several slums on mostly flat areas that concentrate some of the biggest urban challenges of Rio.

The bulk of submissions is similar to the previous Deutsche Bank Urban Age Award in Mumbai and São Paulo – which related to the lack of basic infrastructure like sewers, public toilets, social and cultural equipment – issues approached through social entrepreneurship and collective action from which results a network of cultural, educational and leisure activities that reveal new ways of making better use of the existing spaces in the city. This action characterised many of the grassroots initiatives developed by civic groups, local organizations, NGOs and local government bodies.

The award, a platform for research

Every year, for the implementation of the Award, a local researcher (from the field of political science, architecture, or urban planning) is assigned for the fieldwork in each city. Earlier this year, we started the design of a network of different actors who contributed to the communication of the award, as well as to identify initiatives that were in line with the eligibility criteria. We have been tracing projects on the ground, being in constant contact with those initiatives, learning about their ways of operating, their goals, visiting their sites, and documenting their work.

This work drafts a platform for networks of different societal parts that are active in shaping the urban environment. These platforms were designed to mobilize the civil society of the respective city as well as to circulate the call for initiatives. We sought contact with individuals, residents associations, organized social movements, governmental and non-governmental institutions, educational institutions, media representants, among others, in order to inform about the award for a wide audience. We had the support of higher education institutions, laboratories and cultural institutes, who collaborated in the communication of award in their networks, and professors and researchers who have put us in touch with local initiatives. We have also counted with the support of Secretariats who acted as facilitators of contact with numerous local groups active in their communities. We also counted with the support of programs that encourage entrepreneurship in Rio de Janeiro. The award
These images showcase some of the other initiatives that applied in Rio de Janeiro. They illustrate a much broader range of projects of similar nature, practicing different activities and suggesting further commonalities between community initiative practices in the metropolitan region.
Field work was also widely advertised in various communication media (television, radio, newspaper and online platforms).

In March of 2013, we initiated a mapping in Rio de Janeiro, with the goal of finding initiatives that fit the awards criteria. We split the metropolitan area in its administrative areas, located and contacted in each one local actors, associations and active groups. These individuals and groups provided information that facilitated access, and identified initiatives operating at the local scale.

In parallel to this work, we organized a platform for collaborative mapping, online and available on our website, open to adding projects, initiatives and situations that fulfill the award’s criteria.

Based on this mapping, we organized a series of site visits to several areas that were home to identified initiatives. These visits allowed for a better comprehension of the practices each initiative organizes. Moreover, the direct contact with community initiatives has lead to other less known local initiatives, often unknown outside of their communities, yet performing important work at the local scale.

Based on both the communication plan and the mapping, we articulated and invited initiatives to participate in the award, which supplemented our initial list of projects.

This work, which is carried out on the ground, forges direct contact with a network of local actors involved in collective practices. The whole process of organizing the award provides an enormous potential for field research, as it allows exploring a number of projects in the urban local sphere. By the immediate observation of these initiatives, and by the contact with local leadership immersed in their realities, the researcher no longer contemplates the world passively; he or she rather starts to experience it actively through the contact with people active in their own environment.

The theory of moments and the construction of situations

A reflection from the International Situationist on Henri Lefebvre’s Theory of Moments, from 1960s, speculates a network of creative practices taking place throughout the city, envisioned in the construction of situations based on instant and temporary chances offered by the everyday life. This theory focuses the human and on its action, articulation with the environment inhabited.

“At the level of everyday life, this intervention would be translated as a better allocation of its elements and its instants as “moments,” so as to intensify the vital productivity of everydayness, its capacity for communication, for information, and also and above all for pleasure in natural and social life.” (Henri Lefebvre, La Somme et le Reste)

Through the site visits in Rio, we experienced several initiatives that are proactive on the local scale, but which apparently
take place as temporary events, instantly constructed and dissolved. The situations that we encountered reveal the urban tissue as a porous substract open for human action, based on collective organization. They also reveal the capacity city spaces have for receiving new articulation, therefore hosting new activities and fostering human contact.

We are talking about initiatives that face gently some of the most critical problems in Rio’s most fragile communities – lack of quality educational services, limited access to culture and leisure activities – which are organized through diverse partnerships by the communities. Examples of these constructed situations are the workshops at the streets, producing common goods and urban street art, presentations of theater, music, dance, cooking and eating together, open air cinema, art and performance presentations and sports activities, all of which have a temporary character that is present in the experience of Rio’s everyday life. As instant manifestations, they often have well organized structures on the background, which eventually achieve as well physical improvements in the urban environment.

At the other hand, and less often, we observed other initiatives focused on the spatial inadequacies of its territory – lack of basic infrastructure, quality open space, urbanization programs and alternative transportation modes – providing creative answers from the available resources with the aim to positively impacting the urban space itself. Their approach also reveals a focus in the human scale, and in the quality of everyday life based on the offered urban space.

**Revealing potential, creating chances for another planning**

The organization of a systemic mapping, which is subsequently related to the dimensions of the city as a whole are part of an intensive investigation which unveils a great amount of information gather on the ground. The mapping is an opportunity to reveal practices, to pinpoint fields of opportunity for actions, and to highlight their importance to the construction of the city, as well as to document and to share it. What is the potential unveiled here? Which chances does it create? The visualization of a map which indicates local practices reveals a network characterized by bottom-up practices. The sort of grassroots projects we are looking at provide urban change carried out by local residents in their own neighborhoods or communities, with their own hands and means. It starts with the residents recognizing a problem, followed by the active realization of an idea to solve that immediate issue. Community initiatives evolve from those active gestures and support the citizen’s active participation at the local scale. Their acts recognize chances in challenges, make creative use of existing resources, and forge partnerships and relationships
to achieve predefined goals that address their daily needs and, eventually, ensure an improved quality of life for communities. This bottom-up network, which has a stark relationship to the local space has a great potential to complement the efforts employed in the traditional top-down practices, responsible for implementing large infrastructural plans, for instance, planned for the long run.

In the overlapping of these two networks lies a true chance for changing the way that building urban space is carried out. Concrete chances lie in a questioning of the way we currently focus our research, practical and teaching activities with eyes at a hands-on approach for the urban practice.

The construction of such networks relates to something Bruno Latour describes as the sharing of responsibility and participatory politics, made on the ground and by people. Richard Sennett recently also developed the theme of the “maker’, referring to the empowerment of the craftsman and the impact of community building in urban spaces. Those thoughts point to the idea of allocating funding on a small scale, often to self-driven projects providing new platforms that allow for the city to develop differently, based on a multiplicity of small scale, self-organized actions rooted in social networks that ultimately create and manage improved urban sites.

How innovative communities are currently developing deserves more attention from the civil society, from planners and from politics and shall influence even more the way we live and build our space in the near future. The consolidation of this process still is full of possibilities and opportunities to build the common good.

Marcos L. Rosa, born in São Paulo, is an architect and urban planner (FAU USP), PhD Candidate (TUM). Author of Microplanning: urban creative practices (São Paulo, 2011) and editor of Handmade Urbanism (Berlin, 2013). He has taught at TUM, Escola da Cidade and ETH and currently practices in São Paulo. He conceptualized and coordinated a platform for collective mapping of community initiatives in Rio along with curating the Deutsche Bank Urban Age Award in 2013.
“The Deutsche Bank Urban Age Award is an award that involves an extensive research process – of the utmost importance at this time, in this city – because it gives visibility to numerous initiatives that are inventing ways of life and of language valuable to thought and action in our urban era.”

LIVIA FLORES
Efficient or sociable cities?
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IMAGES

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PP. 16–17 Mumbai, Archive Alfred Herrhausen Society: Robert Weiland, Olaf Jacobs;

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PP. 38–39 Dona Marta, Marcos L. Rosa
“The projects associated with the Deutsche Bank Urban Age Award are about getting under the skin of what is happening in the city (...) relatively small changes in space can have a major impact on the quality of life of urban residents, especially those at the bottom end of social scale.”

RICKY BURDETT