

# UNSETTLED Urban routines, temporalities and contestations

Conference Call

**International Urban Conference, 29th/30th March 2017, Vienna, Austria**

**Host Institution:** Interdisciplinary Centre for Urban Culture and Public Space, Department of Spatial Planning, Faculty of Architecture and Planning, TU Wien (<http://skuor.tuwien.ac.at>), Karlsgasse 13/2, 1040 Wien

**Conference Venue:** TU Wien Sky Lounge, 11<sup>th</sup> Floor, Getreidemarkt 9, 1060 Wien

## 1. Outline

The Interdisciplinary Centre for Urban Culture and Public Space (<http://skuor.tuwien.ac.at>) at the Faculty of Architecture and Planning, TU Wien, invites participation in the conference *Unsettled: urban routines, temporalities and contestations*. The conference aims to explore conditions and conceptions of the unsettled. Urban life is characterized by diverse manifestations of instability which continuously stretch or redefine the social order and/or critical/community infrastructures of cities: everyday struggles related to the capitalist system of production, revolutions in political life and political system overthrows, quests for dominance and their oppositions in political, social, economic, ecological or cultural domains. These unsettling practices simultaneously challenge and nourish a variety of idea(l)s of the city as an inclusive place of liberation, cooperation, equal opportunities and shared (better) futures. The goal of the conference is thus to (1) understand the uncertainties, disturbances, inconsistencies, residuals and blind fields which constitute the urban both as lived space and the political idea(l), and (2) foster an inquiry into the socio-political potentialities of unsettling and re-settling urban routines, temporalities and contestations.

The conference explores different notions of unsettled, and thus invites contributions reflecting one or more of the following aspects:

- *unsettled* as a condition or pre-requisite for urban change, where established political practices are challenged by (voices aiming at) incremental or more radical change;
- *unsettled* in the sense of the uneven making of public space through contrasting relations of power across daily routines and transformative urban strategies;
- *unsettled* as a state of mind which results from practices of unsettling which affect individuals and groups in both constructive and destructive ways;
- the acceptance of *unsettled* as a description of urban realities which are socially produced in and of material space – such as where people are displaced from their homes through warfare or economic and urban restructuring;
- and finally, of *unsettled* as a paradox, where the city is understood as both a place of settlement of buildings and populations while also a site of unsettlement through trajectories of constant change.

We look forward to original contributions that examine these dimensions considering the past, present or future of the city, urban societies and urbanization processes. During the conference we will discuss such urban realities in the context of unsettled places, conditions, structures, actors, collectives, populations, routines, realms and situations of the city.

Embedded in the City of Vienna Visiting Professorship Programme at TU Wien, the conference works across urban practice and urban theory. In this context, the conference will emphasise urban culture and public space as areas for intersecting research and action which explores notions of the unsettled in contemporary cities. We invite interdisciplinary public from universities, research institutes, offices, public authorities, activists, consultancies, and others to present critical, subversive, reflexive, interventionist, activist and visionary research, ideas and practices concerning notions of the unsettled.

### Registration

To register for the conference please send an email to [unsettled@skuor.tuwien.ac.at](mailto:unsettled@skuor.tuwien.ac.at), stating your name and affiliation. The conference registration fee is 50 EUR. Fee is waived for students providing a proof of matriculation with their registration request.

### Abstract submission

Abstract of paper proposals (300 words) should take up and speak to at least one of the dimensions of unsettled delineated in the call for papers. Speakers are asked to submit a short biography (50 words) and should indicate the theme that their contribution could connect to (1<sup>st</sup> choice, 2<sup>nd</sup> choice). Please send your proposal to [unsettled@skuor.tuwien.ac.at](mailto:unsettled@skuor.tuwien.ac.at).

### Important dates

Deadline for paper proposal submissions: 15 October 2016

Notification of paper acceptance: 15 December 2016

Deadline for conference registration: 1 February 2017

## 2. Themes

The conference is organized into three themes:

### I. URBAN ROUTINES

*Session Chairs: Sybille Frank and Tihomir Viderman*

This theme puts urban routines centre stage for their intertwinement with both (settled) urban social order and (unsettling) revolutionary or subversive moments. Urban routines are constituted, conceived of, celebrated, contested, dismissed and curbed with regard to an infinite range of their respective material occurrences: from the ordinariness of everyday life, such as kids skateboarding in front of town halls, to grand historical events, such as disruptions of political celebrations by civil opponents. They are sets of doings, sayings, tasks and projects through which individuals, collectives and institutions tacitly or purposefully engage in the unsettled urban conditions. Urban routines also emerge as thought-through and consciously produced (institutional) practices. We may think of routines of how a city is governed and administered, how economies are organized and performed, or how performative acts shape public places. Urban routines could also be considered in respect of involved practices of arts producers, strategies and tactics of political activists or means of how the city is imagined,

conceptualized and planned by professionals. All of these routinized practices may be unsettled. If unsettled, routines become reflexive. Acknowledging that routines are commonly established under reoccurring and reliable (thus settled) conditions, but can also be an adequate answer to continuous unsettlement (e.g. as routines of war or financial crisis), we invite contributions that investigate how urban routines are being unsettled, reintroduced or invented anew in conditions of unsettled.

## II. URBAN TEMPORALITIES

*Session Chairs: Sabine Knierbein and Ed Wall*

The second theme will focus on relations between notions of unsettled and urban temporalities. In the contexts of constant construction and cyclical rhythms of redevelopment and everyday life in contemporary cities - accelerated, disruptive and faltering on one side, and stabilizing, routinizing and socialising on the other, we aim to explore narratives, conceptions and visions of what urban temporalities entail. Urban design, which aims to realise new plans, frequently dismantles historic forms and displaces activities. Ambitions to complete architectural spaces can be understood to restrict the necessary temporal conditions of public spaces as sites of contested discourse and action. In contrast, practices of unsettling can also open up moments for innovative ideas, spaces and ways of life to emerge. They can be employed to question existing power structures and nostalgic claims of urban order, territorial divisions and political hierarchies. Unsettling can provide the foundation of migrant narratives, departures, journeys and shared trajectories entwined with hopes for more stable futures. Yet unsettling through the use of the politics of time can be a tool for disruption, displacement and dispossession. We welcome contributions, which highlight the critical concerns for what is lost or gained through practices of unsettling that work with different, sometimes colliding, versions of speed, velocity, acceleration, break, pause, periodization and time in general.

## III. URBAN CONTESTATIONS

*Session Chairs: Elina Kränzle and Nikolai Roskamm*

The city is a place of conflict and contestation, and as such, it constantly enters into conflictual and ambiguous - or unsettled - relations with its institutional form. It is in the city, that unsettled publics have continued to contest power relations and hegemonic rule demanding economic, social and environmental equality, across various political spectres and scales. In the context of the economic crisis, urban movements called for their right to the city, against the imposition of the state's austerity policies. City governments and citizens alike contest the rise of nationalist and racist sentiments that have come to the surface in recent national elections. In cities around the world, urban dwellers and citizens contest the on-going mega-development of increasingly segregated urban neighbourhoods in their struggle against displacement. Contestation, by definition political, emerges out of changing urban realities and opens the field of the possible. It may help to overcome latent crises and challenges hierarchies, centres of power, and static forms of bureaucratization. Looking at cities as the contact points for social and political transformations, the theme discusses the role of conflict in cities, and the continued negotiating and (un)settling of social order. In this third session we aim to stress forms of critical and reflexive contestation. Both, theoretical approaches (for instance, concepts of antagonism, agonism, violence, conflict, spontaneity) and reports from contested urban realities are welcome.

### 3. Format

The venue offers space for approx. 150 people at the Getreidemarkt Campus, TU Sky Lounge. We have an additional room available that may be used for conference partners to present themselves through visual material (e.g. poster exhibition). The 2-days conference features a third day (Fri, 31<sup>st</sup> March 17) where interested local partners can offer self-organized workshops or excursions. A second call to volunteer for these events will be launched in September 2016. For further information on how to become a volunteer or volunteering organisation, please contact Elina Kränzle ([elina.kraenzle@skuor.tuwien.ac.at](mailto:elina.kraenzle@skuor.tuwien.ac.at)). These partners (max. 2 per event) will be granted free conference access on all days. The third day will include workshops (9-11am) and excursions (11:30am-2:30pm, including lunch break on site).

### 4. Time plan

WEDNESDAY, 29 <sup>th</sup> March 17		THURSDAY, 30 <sup>th</sup> March 17		FRIDAY, 31 <sup>st</sup> March 17	
09:00 - 09:30	Registration			Add-on Program	
09:30 - 10:00	Opening	09:30 - 11:00	Theme 1: 3 papers	09:00 - 11:00	Workshops
10:00 - 11:00	Keynote	11:00 - 11:30	Coffee break	11:30 - 14:30	Excursions
11:00 - 11:30	Coffee break	11:30 - 13:00	Theme 2: 3 papers		
11.30 - 13:00	Theme 1: Intro and 2 Papers				
	Lunch Break		Lunch Break		
14:00 - 15:30	Theme 2: Intro and 2 Papers	14:00 - 15:30	Theme 3: 3 papers		
15:30 - 16:00	Coffee Break	15:30 - 16:00	Coffee break		
16:00 - 17:30	Theme 3: Intro and 2 papers	16:00 - 17:00	Keynote and		
		Wrap-up			
		17.00 - 17.15	Closing		
19:00	Formal Evening Reception	17:30	Informal Farewell		

### 5. Networks

The Association of European Schools of Planning's [Thematic Group Public Spaces and Urban Cultures](#) and the [Future LAB Öffentlicher Raum](#) have stated their interests in organizing networking meetings. A second call to volunteer for these events will be launched in September 2016 (see above).

## 6. Scientific Committee

**Sybille Frank** – Prof. Dr. for Urban Sociology and the Sociology of Space, TU Darmstadt, Germany, City of Vienna Visiting Professor 2016, TU Wien

**Sabine Knierbein** – Ass. Prof. Dr., TU Wien; Head of the Interdisciplinary Centre for Urban Culture and Public Space, TU Wien

**Elina Kränzle** – Univ. Ass. MSc BSc, TU Wien

**Nikolai Roskamm** – Prof. Dr. phil. habil. for Planning Theory, Urban Design History and Sustainable Urbanism, FH Erfurt, Germany, City of Vienna Visiting Professor 2015, TU Wien

**Tihomir Viderman** – Univ. Ass. Dipl-Ing MSc, TU Wien

**Ed Wall** – Academic Leader Landscape, MUP, University of Greenwich, UK; Designated City of Vienna Visiting Professor 2017, TU Wien

## 7. Sponsoring and Partners

City of Vienna (Visiting Professorship Programme), Vice Rectorate for Research and Innovation, TU Wien; Faculty for Architecture and Planning, TU Wien