

## LONDON / HATFIELD / VIRTUAL



# Urban Assemblage : The City as Architecture, Media, AI and Big Data

### Keynote Panel:

Stefano Paicchi – Architecture. Zaha Hadid Architects

Professor Peter Richardson – Media. University of London.

Professor Diana Kurkovsky West – Politics. Auburn University

Professor Susan Parham – Society. University of Hertfordshire

The panel will be chaired by Professor Ljubomir Jankovic, University of Hertfordshire

## Information for Authors:

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## Call:

*The role of computers in the design, control and making of the public life [and space] is increasingly dominant, their presence pervasive, and their relationship with people characterised by a growing complexity.*

Batty, Michael. *Cities and complexity: understanding cities with cellular automata, agent-based models, and fractals*. The MIT press, 2007.

The scenario described by Batty is underpinned by a plethora of phenomena. It includes the Internet of Things, ubiquitous computing, computer-led infrastructure, big data and AI. In essence, the built environment has become a site for the production, processing and sharing of information daily through the software interlaced with it. It is also a place designed, envisaged and increasingly built through data based digital architecture, planning and construction. Advanced parametric modelling envisages data in both building design and city management. Augmented reality mediates our experience of the city with layers of information. Digital infrastructure interconnects our city and building services. The result is a series of complex interactions of people, place and data and the establishment of the 'digital city', 'smart buildings' and 'intelligent' urbanism.

This new polemic agency of the machine to generate, analyse and distribute data is not limited to the built environment however. It also informs the creative industries. A plethora of films in recent decades have built on the imagery it offers: *The Matrix*, *Ex Machina*, *Her*, *Minority Report* to name but a few. In the arts, data is increasingly used as both a tool and motive for artworks. David McCandless' founding of the platform *Information Is Beautiful*, and Aaron Koblin's establishment of Google's Data Arts Team are typical examples. Landscape and projection artists use the digital recalibration of data into imagery to create spaces and representations of our cities daily.

Today then, the potential for technology and data to alter how we design, live and experience our cities is obvious and everywhere. However, there are concerns. GIS, Google Maps and Facebook all offer interconnected information on urban life. They are also conduits for the collation of personal data and its misuse. The assumption of digital access for all leads some to worry about issues of social exclusion. Sociologists highlight the dangers of the digital dependency of future generations. 3D printed buildings threaten job losses in the construction industry. The idea of parametric urbanism is an anathema to many for whom city is a place of interpersonal interaction.

Batty's understanding of the role of computers in the design, control and making of the public realm then, is not just ubiquitous, it is cross disciplinary, complex and expanding.

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## Themes and Disciplines:

Based on an interdisciplinary reading of the built environment as architecture, data, technology, digital innovation, artistic creation and urban design, this conference will be organised in subject areas including:

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### **ARCHITECTURE & URBAN**

**DESIGN | AI, DATA & TECHNOLOGY | MEDIA & COMMUNICATIONS | ART, DESIGN  
& FILM | SOCIOLOGY & POLITICS**

Participants in each area are invited to propose 'lead themes'. Reflecting the expertise of the University of Hertfordshire, the first of these lead themes is "Artificial Intelligence and Urban Assemblages". [Read More](#)

Other proposed strands and themes include: computational design, the digital city, smart buildings, data driven urbanism, parametric architecture, art-film-photography and the city, digital accessibility, participatory technology and planning, sociology of the city, and more.

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## Formats:

The conference offers both virtual and in-person options:

**Pre-recorded film:** Delegates can make pre-recorded films/videos of their presentations. These will be published on the [AMPS YouTube channel](#) and will be available permanently after the conference.

**Screenings:** In addition to presentations by academics, the conference welcomes short films (narrative or otherwise) from filmmakers.

**Zoom:** Also reflecting the virtual and mediated theme of the event, delegates are encouraged to present via Zoom.

**In-person:** In addition to seeking filmic and the virtual presentations, delegates are also welcome to attend the event in person and present directly.

**Written papers:** In all cases, delegates can present full written papers for inclusion in all associated conference publications.

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## Key dates:

01 Dec 2020: Abstract Submissions (Round One) 30 December 2020: Abstract Feedback | 01 Jan 2021: Conference Registration opens | **01 April 2021: Abstract Submissions** (Round Two) | 25 April 2021: Abstract Feedback

### **Conference: 28-30th June, 2021**

20 Aug 2021: Full Paper Submissions (where applicable) | 15 October 2021: Feedback for publication | 30 November 2021: Full Paper re-submission | March 2022: Publication