

PARASITIC CITIES

Workshop for students of architecture

10-4pm, October 11, Friday
at School of Architecture and Planning, Chennai

INTRODUCTION

Equipped with near no resources; with no legal rights to the land you occupy; squeezed into a space nobody would miss; hoping to go unnoticed. If these were your circumstances, what sort of shelter would you build yourself?

Indian cities, especially the older ones, are largely saturated around within city limits. For people without the resources to buy or rent homes, the primary means to shelter is squatting. What if this process is formalized through design? What can we contribute towards creating well designed habitats?

Urban Design Collective (UDC) is conducting a workshop to study the possibilities posed by the above problem, analyze them on the basis of various parameters, and finally build a model of such a habitat using scavenged material, in any location on campus.

STUDY

EXISTING SLUMS

Slums in India make up what they lack in resources, with ingenuity. Spaces are densified, shared, modified, divided and expanded; in a way that traditional models of ownership would never allow. It grows and subdivides within itself much like an organism would when provided with restrictions. We will study a few examples of Shantytowns and how they function.

MATERIAL

An important aspect of shanties is what material they use to build - fabric from old hoardings, discarded construction debris, tin sheets, plastic, you name it - one man's garbage is another man's building material. Taking this to another level, what if the material possibilities are endless? What non-traditional building materials can be used to build these structures?

BIOMIMETIC DESIGNS

We can gain much inspiration from the study of parasitic/symbiotic systems in nature; how they respond to a given environment, it's opportunities and dangers. We will attempt to understand what a successful, long-lasting system might consist of, in case of a micro-habitat within a city.

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

As an occupant, there is no legality in your position. Politically, you might be able to secure an extended stay, but there is no guarantee of this. Will this fact make you want to build light and easy to move? Somewhere unobtrusive so you don't aren't easily noticed? Or do you plan to invade in as permanent a manner as possible so as to stake your claim on this space later? As a designer, what theoretical basis would you chose for your habitat? Would the emphasis be on innovative material, spatial modelling, new technologies; or would it be based on a type of system such as resource sharing?

What qualities would you want to impart to your habitat?

Do you have a specific occupant in mind?

Using these criteria and more, we will attempt to construct a working habitat during the course of this workshop.

WORKSHOP FACULTY:

Neha Krishnan, Architect- Urban Design Collective

Note: Maximum registrations for the workshop is 30 students.

For any queries, write to info@urbandesigncollective.org with the subject line- 'Queries- Parasitic Cities Workshop'

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



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