

PUBLIC LECTURE
Vorhoelzer Forum, Arcisstr. 21, TUM
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18:30-20:00

STARCHITECTURE AND THE CITY
Current issues in transnational architecture and urbanism

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photograph by Michele Nastasi

Internationally renowned architects have been at center stage in public debates, not only with reference to designing esthetically striking artifacts, but also for urban regeneration programs and city branding. Since the 1990s urban policy-makers and stakeholders have apparently been competing in collecting spectacular or branded buildings such as museums, corporate skyscrapers or luxury residential towers and hotels. For different reasons this has recently attracted the attention of architecture, planning and geography scholars as well, though we still have limited understanding about the urban implications of most critical issues of starchitecture.

Drawing on concrete case studies in different cities of the world - such as New York, Paris, Barcelona, Milan, Abu Dhabi, Doha, Singapore - this lecture concentrates on the spectacularization of architecture and the built environment, the roles of star architects and financial interests in urban policy-making and the circulation of similar branded buildings and master plans.

On the basis of the results of a long-term research, Davide Ponzini will argue that - despite what mainstream narratives say - starchitecture is often used by urban policy-makers, local and transnational coalitions in order to drive political consensus, maximize media exposure and cover economic and real estate interests, potentially inducing paradoxical and even perverse urban effects which deserve further evaluation and public attention.

Bio

Davide Ponzini received his PhD (cum laude) in Urban Planning from Politecnico di Milano, where he is currently Associate Professor of Urban Planning. His research activity focuses on planning theory, policy tool analysis, urban and cultural policy, heritage preservation, spectacularization of contemporary architecture and the urban environment. In 2004 he was Research Affiliate at Yale University, in 2006 International Fellow in Urban Studies at Johns Hopkins University, in 2008 Visiting Scholar at Columbia University, and in 2010 Visiting Researcher at Sciences Po, Paris. He has been an advisor of both urban and cultural policy to local governments and other public and private entities.

He has been recipient of several scholarships and research grants, issued by Universities, Foundations and Public Institutions (Compagnia di San Paolo, Agnelli Foundation and UniCredit Private Banking, European Cultural Foundation and Riksbankens Jubileumsfond, and others).

His research work has been published in international scientific journals (*Cities, Urban Studies, Planning Theory and Practice, Environment and Planning C: Government and Policy, European Planning Studies, International Journal of Heritage Studies*, and others) and in edited books, and it has been presented in international congresses, and seminars. His publications are widely cited and used as reference for education in European and American Universities. He occasionally contributes to architecture and planning magazines (*Domus, Abitare, Giornale dell'Architettura* and others).

Besides teaching at Politecnico di Milano, he has held lectures, seminars and workshops in several universities in Europe and the U.S.A. (Architectural Association School of Architecture-London, Columbia University, IUAV, Johns Hopkins University, KU Leuven, Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa, Yale University, University of Amsterdam, and others).

He is the author of the book: *Il territorio dei beni culturali*, (Carocci, Rome, 2008); coauthor (with Pier Carlo Palermo) of the book: *Spatial Planning and Urban Development: Critical Perspectives* (Springer, Dordrecht and New York, 2010) and of the book *Place-making and Urban Development: New Challenges for Planning and Design* (Routledge, London, 2015); and coauthor (with the photographer Michele Nastasi) of the book: *Starchitecture. Scenes, Actors and Spectacles in Contemporary Cities* (Allemandi, Turin, 2011, which was awarded the Silver Medal of the 2015 World Triennial of Architecture; second edition forthcoming, Monacelli Press, New York).