"THE MAKING OF BEYOĞLU" INTERPRETATION PACK

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION TO SALT

SALT explores critical and timely issues in visual and material culture, and cultivates innovative programs for research and experimental thinking. Assuming an open attitude and establishing itself as a site of learning and debate, SALT aims to challenge, excite and provoke its visitors by encouraging them to offer critique and response. SALT hosts exhibitions, conferences and public programs; engages in interdisciplinary research projects; and maintains a library and archive of recent art, architecture, design, urbanism, and social and economic histories to make them available for research and public use.

An essential part of SALT's programming is developing ongoing, collaborative partnerships with schools, community and civic organizations through its Interpretation Program. SALT Interpretation is free, and seeks to engage young people through exhibition tours, moving image programs and artist-led collaborative projects. SALT also creates online curriculum guides (Interpretation Packs) for schools and youth organizations, which feature discussion topics, activities and educational resources to accompany each exhibition.

SALT's activities are distributed between two landmark buildings located in walking distance to each other, and also shared via www.saltonline. org. The first building, SALT Beyoğlu, whose program and circulation interiors are dedicated to exhibition and event spaces, opened April 9 on Istiklal Avenue. The second building, SALT Galata, is the former 19th century Imperial Ottoman Bank headquarters designed by Alexandre Vallaury. SALT Galata will open November 2011.

"THE MAKING OF BEYOĞLU"

The Making Of Beyoğlu is a series of workshops examining specific case studies in the district of Beyoğlu, İstanbul. A collaboration between SALT and Bureau Venhuizen, the project uses the principle of play to open the door to a more cultural kind of spatial planning, dubbed "game urbanism." Participants in the SALT Beyoğlu space – which may include students, researchers, urban design and architectural professionals, policy-makers and community members – will be challenged to analyze current planning issues and to propose ideas, raise objections, debate and lobby for solutions. Using a game matrix, well-designed process and concept manager, the project aims to simplify complex situations; to reveal the wishes and interests of parties involved in decision-making; and to embrace curiosity, insight and enthusiasm throughout uncertain processes of change.

Bureau Venhuizen is a project management and research bureau working in the field of culture-based planning. Focusing on settlement and planning processes in spatial planning, it takes culture as a point of departure. In this context, culture is broadly understood as cultural history, heritage, architecture and art, but also as the ensemble of contemporary culture among a region's residents. Bureau Venhuizen investigates the possibilities for culture to play a role in the design of space. The bureau's methodology is based on the re-use of existing landscape-related and cultural qualities and translating these into a contemporary context to achieve a marriage of past, present and future. In this manner, new (cultural) landscapes and urban areas in our constantly changing environment can develop an identity that is not contrived, but drawn from a more natural continuum.

"The Making Of" at 'Maak ons Land', Netherlands Architecture Institute, Rotterdam, October 2008. (Photo: Maarten Laupman)

TO EDUCATORS

HOW TO USE THESE MATERIALS

This SALT Interpretation Pack has been designed as a resource for you and your students as you explore the themes of *The Making Of Beyoğlu* exhibition. It is our hope that — as a resource with the objective of stimulating dialogue — the following materials will not act as an authority on the concepts they introduce, but rather will encourage students towards further exploration and study, towards active discussion, and towards critical thinking about the exhibition and its themes.

Included in this Interpretation Pack are:

— *Opening Discussion: What is Spatial Planning?*
— *Game Urbanism*
— *Closing Discussion: The Concept Manager*
— *Additional Resources*

Each unit includes classroom activities, multi-media resources, terminology and opportunities for discussion; we encourage you to adapt, shape and build upon these materials to best meet the needs of your students and teaching curriculum.
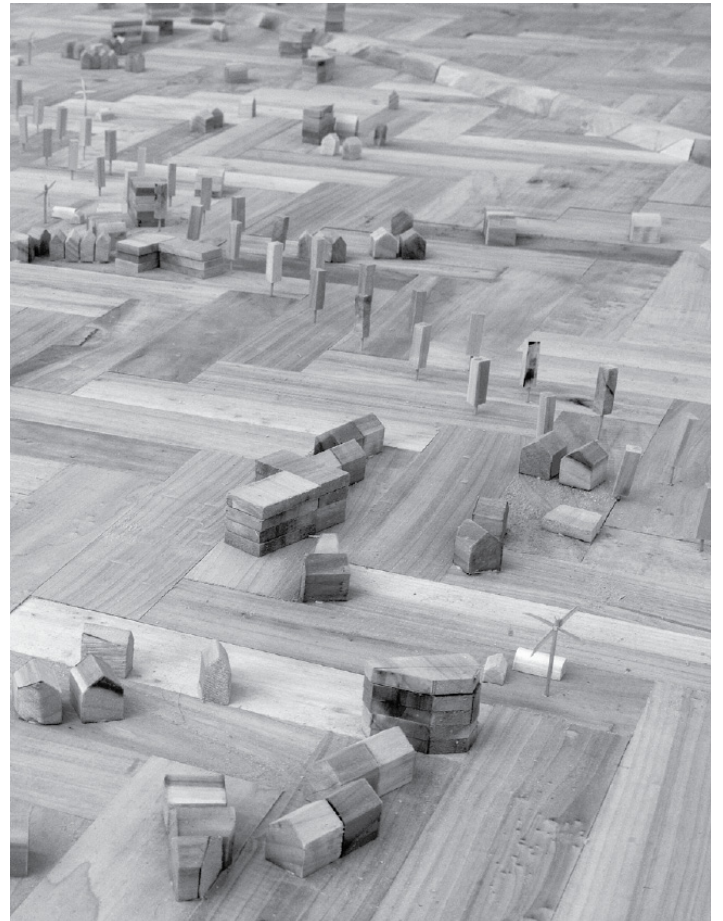
From *Game Urbanism*

OPENING DISCUSSION: WHAT IS SPATIAL PLANNING?

The spatial planning process applied in "The Making Of" consists of three main phases:

1. THE IDEA PHASE
In the idea phase, as much information as possible is gathered about a specific situation. Information can be collected through independent research, one-on-one or group interviews, surveys and community meetings. Ideas emerging from this process become the outcomes and ambitions that do or could play a role in initiating and shaping change.

2. THE CONCEPT PHASE
Information collected in the idea phase is organized by content and theme, and filtered to identify "ambitions" and "phenomena".

AMBITIONS – Necessary or desired initiatives (those things we want or need to happen). Ambitions can be more houses, sidewalks or bicycle lanes; better roads; or a change in mentality about how often we use cars vs. public transportation. Ambitions stimulate future change.

PHENOMENA – Things that give color, direction and leadership to change. An important phenomenon, for example, is the cultural history of the land. Phenomena do not bring change in and of themselves, but must nevertheless be taken into account during processes of decision-making.

Ambitions and phenomena are arranged on opposing sides of a matrix. (For an example of a matrix, see "The Making Of Mheenpark" to the right.) "The Making Of" workshops begin when participants explore ambitions and phenomena in various combinations, discussing how pairings of these elements might impact a given situation. In studying the relationship between ambitions and phenomena, the possibilities for giving direction to change come to the surface.

The Making Of Beyoğlu design

Matrix for "The Making of Mheenpark" (Collage: Matrin Leclercq)

3. THE PLANNING PHASE
The planning phase involves creating a brief – a design statement – for a proposed change based on the information, opinions and resources collected during the concept phase. The design statement summarizes the combination of ambitions and phenomena participants believe will spark the spatial planning solution that will best satisfy the needs and desires of involved parties.

Spatial planning can involve anything from changes to a public space, to the restructuring of a neighborhood, to an urban area's search for identity. In addition to Beyoğlu, "The Making Of" workshops have been played in multiple cities and contexts, giving both professionals and non-professionals the chance take part in a dialogue around changes to their urban environment. In contrast to today's typical spatial planning process, in which ideas are framed around an attractive "end-picture," "The Making Of" seeks to initiate a discussion around changes that takes into account all parties and all possible solutions.

As an entry point for students to explore the themes of *The Making Of Beyoğlu*, we suggest leading a discussion around spatial planning, challenging students to identify ambitions and phenomena in their own communities. To illustrate to students the difference between ambitions and phenomena, the following example, cited in Hans Venhuzien's *Game Urbanism* publication, may be helpful.

The tree pictured to the right has ambitions, and is subject to phenomena. Rough winds on Utsira Island, where this picture was taken, mean that trees are rare. This tree managed to take root behind a local church only because the building protected the tree from the wind and made it possible for it to grow. As the tree grew higher, however, and its branches rose above the church's roof, the wind began to reach it, ultimately preventing further growth. No leaves could grow beyond the edge of the roof and, in the course of time, the tree gradually took on the shape of the church.

What are the ambitions and phenomena in this situation? First, the tree's ambition (what it wants to happen) is to grow. And what shapes the tree's growth? The wind and the church are phenomena.

A tree with a pitched roof on Utsira Island, Norway

1. Use a projector to show students the three phases of "The Making Of," or print copies of p.6 and distribute.

2. Discuss with students the difference between ambitions and phenomena, citing the example of the tree on Utsira Island.

3. Can students think of ambitions and phenomena in the context of their own environments? As a group, ask students to first brainstorm ambitions. What are the things that they, their families or their neighbors want to happen in the city's urban spaces? Write these on one side of the board. Next, ask students to name phenomena – the factors with the potential to shape these changes. By the end of this discussion, half the board should be filled with ambitions, the other half with phenomena.

4. Now that students have identified ambitions and phenomena, together review the concept phase of "The Making Of," in which Bureau Venhuizen creates a matrix to visualize relationships between ambitions and phenomena. Selecting four ambitions and four phenomena from the board, students will create their own matrices. (Ambitions should be arranged on one axis, and phenomena on the other.)

5. Ask students to share with the class which combinations of ambitions and phenomena they think can create the most innovative changes in their urban spaces. Can they identify a phenomenon on their matrices that would help shape an innovative solution for a particular ambition?

DISCUSSION
— *Do you know who makes the decisions that lead to major changes in your community? How transparent is the process that leads to change? (For example, are you or your family aware of changes before they happen, or asked to contribute ideas or feedback?)*
— *Has there ever been a major change proposed in your city that was met with resistance? How did decision-makers respond to negative feedback? Did community feedback impact the direction of the project?*
— *How did brainstorming ambitions and phenomena as a class help you create a more complete picture of spatial planning issues in your city? If more people were to contribute to the making of your class' list, who would you invite in order to get the widest collection of perspectives possible?*

TERMINOLOGY
Transparency — the quality of being characterized by visibility or accessibility of information, especially concerning business practices
Spatial Planning — how space is created within the time and place of a given set of actions.
Urban Design — concerns the arrangement, appearance and functionality of towns and cities, and in particular the shaping and uses of urban public space.

GAME URBANISM

INTRODUCTION

Whether they grew up with board games, video games, sports or role-playing, students are no doubt familiar with the simple act of play. Most childhood games share a common structure: there are players, there are rules, and there is – often, most importantly - the objective to "win". Exploring processes of spatial planning through a technique dubbed "game urbanism," Bureau Venhuizen's "The Making Of" examines the well-known structure of game playing – and applies it to spatial planning and collective decision-making processes.

As outlined in OPENING DISCUSSION: WHAT IS SPATIAL PLANNING?, participants join "The Making Of" workshops during the concept phase, when they are invited to combine ambitions and phenomena to create new possibilities for change. This process is structured as a game, with participants becoming its players. Emphasizing that game playing and the seriousness required for decision-making in no way exclude one another, Bureau Venhuizen argues that, where game playing and seriousness do become separated, the openness of outlook and the curiosity that are so essential to the cultural character of spatial planning disappear. Game playing has the potential to provide us with new insight, enabling us, for a moment, to conceive our own concept for the process of change in question.

In PLAYING THE GAME: SESSION 1, students will explore how the games they are most familiar with can be used to collect information, exchange ideas and – ultimately – contribute to the deconstruction of a specific problem. In PLAYING THE GAME: SESSION 2, with a current social, political or environmental issue in mind, students will devise their own games, with the objective of engaging potential participants in critical thinking, debate and the realization of a creative solution.

From *Game Urbanism* (Photo: Dieuwertje Komen)

OBJECTIVES
— *To use game playing as a tool to deconstruct a problem*
— *To seek creative solutions to conflicts with multiple stakeholders*
— *To gain a greater understanding of community decision-making as a process*

TERMINOLOGY

Community Development — a broad term applied to the practices and academic disciplines of civic leaders, activists, involved citizens and professionals to improve various aspects of local communities

Stakeholder — one who is involved in or affected by a course of action

Urban Planning — integrates land use planning and transportation planning to improve the built, economic and social environments of communities

Playground on 't Hoffstraat, Hilversum, Netherlands. *Game Urbanism* (Photo: Jannes Linders)

1. To launch this activity, ask students which games they played as children (or which they still play), and write them on the board. Whether they are board games, video games or sports, what basic characteristics do games share?

2. Now, ask students which of these games they think could be adapted to stimulate discussion around, raise awareness of, and (potentially) solve real-life urban problems. If they are not on the board already, add Monopoly, The Game of Life and SimCity to your class' list of games. How do these games, in particular, provide an interactive means of shaping built and social environments?

3. Divide your class into groups of five.

4. Each group will choose one game from the board. Groups will have 30 minutes to adapt that game so that it can be used in a real-life context to engage participants and initiate change. (As an example, if students choose Monopoly, they might adapt the game to address the problem of a lack of public spaces, with each player acting as a different stakeholder in the community. Stakeholders can include real estate developers, community members, small business owners or city council members. Before houses or hotels can be built on purchased properties, players must come to consensus about how the space will be used – i.e. as public, residential or commercial space – with each decision preceded by a "community meeting" and vote.)

5. Each group will present their newly-adapted game to the class, answering the following questions:
a) What problem or issue does this game now address?
b) Who are the participants?
c) How is this game now stimulating dialogue – and how does it have the potential to initiate change?

Monopoly: Dünya Şehirleri [Monopoly: World Cities], İstanbul Edition

DISCUSSION
— *What are the advantages or disadvantages of using game structures to deconstruct problems? Why is it important to include all involved parties in the game process?*
— *Of the games your classmates adapted, which did you find the most interesting? Which do you believe was most successful in engaging participants and stimulating positive change?*
— *Besides urban planning and community development, in which other fields do you think game playing can be used to bring people together and address serious issues?*

PLAYING THE GAME
SESSION 2

MATERIALS: computers with Internet access, projector (optional)

Now that students have explored the adaptation of their childhood games for use in urban design and community development, it is time to create their own games – with the objective of engaging participants around a specific social, political or environmental problem.

1. Keeping students in the same groups as the previous activity, ask each group to choose a local issue currently affecting their families or communities. Examples may include lack of accessible buildings for the disabled, an inefficient transportation system, or poor supply of affordable fresh produce.

2. Each group will devise a game structure that brings together people in their communities and provides a forum to exchange ideas and propose solutions. Encourage students to be creative in their game design and to make sure they allow for the involvement and input of all interested parties. (In the case of inaccessible buildings for the disabled, for example, interested parties would include the disabled and their families, building developers, business owners, policy-makers responsible for creating and enforcing building standards, and local advocacy organizations.)
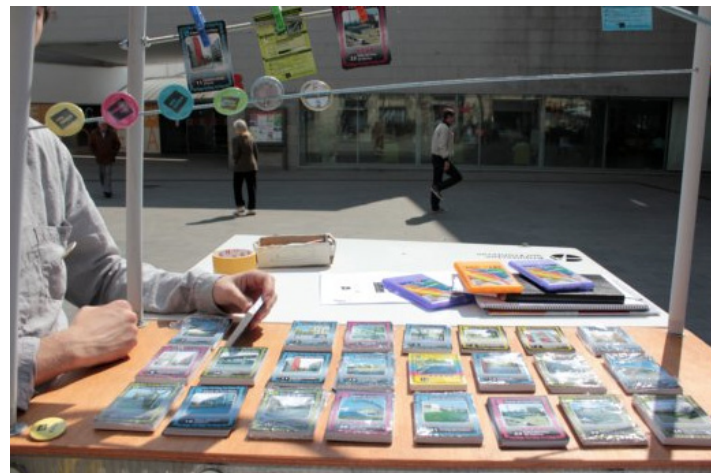
Fort Pienc Public Space Trading Cards, El Carrito, Barcelona, Spain

3. Groups will present game proposals to the class. Each proposal should include the following:
a) Explanation of problem the game seeks to address
b) Who will play the game? Which participants are needed so that the game involves all parties and points of view?
c) Detailed description of game:
— Format (for example, board game, role-play activity or interactive workshop)
— Location
— Length
— Materials required
d) How will this game stimulate dialogue around the problem? How will it contribute to positive change?

4. As an extension of this activity, groups may wish to develop and realize their games, preparing a formal proposal and inviting interested parties to participate in the conversation around this important community issue.

DISCUSSION

— *Have you seen any initiatives in your community already targeting the problem your group's game seeks to address? How do you think games and the principle of play can enhance these existing structures?*
— *Of your classmates' game proposals, which do you think - if realized - would be the most effective in starting a constructive conversation?*
— *If your group decided to actually develop its game, what do you think would be the greatest challenge in terms of attracting participants of differing interests and points of view? How would your game acknowledge and take advantage of these differences?*


Parquette in Museum De Paviljoens in Almere, Netherlands, 2008 (Photo: Gert Jan van Rooij)

CLOSING DISCUSSION: THE CONCEPT MANAGER

After visiting *The Making Of Beyoğlu* exhibition at SALT Beyoğlu and engaging in some of the supplemental discussions and activities included in this Interpretation Pack, your students have seen how games can bring people together as they explore avenues to change; examined the importance of designing processes of change as opposed to making comforting "end-pictures"; and learned to turn current problems into future possibilities. However, with all these elements in place, even the best intentions depend on somebody to implement them. This is the job of a concept manager.

The concept manager dons a variety of hats. First, he or she formulates the assignment. In *The Making Of Beyoğlu*, for example, Bureau Venhuizen assembles research on a specific topic, learns all aspects of the problem, and analyzes how potential solutions can be developed and adjusted over time. No single landscape is stable and predictable; for this reason, a good concept is not inflexible: it moves with developments and contains a strategy of presence. The concept manager is positioned to constantly formulate content on the basis of information and discussions, to select participants and to oversee the implementation of their ideas. His or her involvement does not end once a good plan has been formulated. Above all, the role of the concept manager demands a well-developed curiosity about a whole host of issues that shape the built environment and their effects.
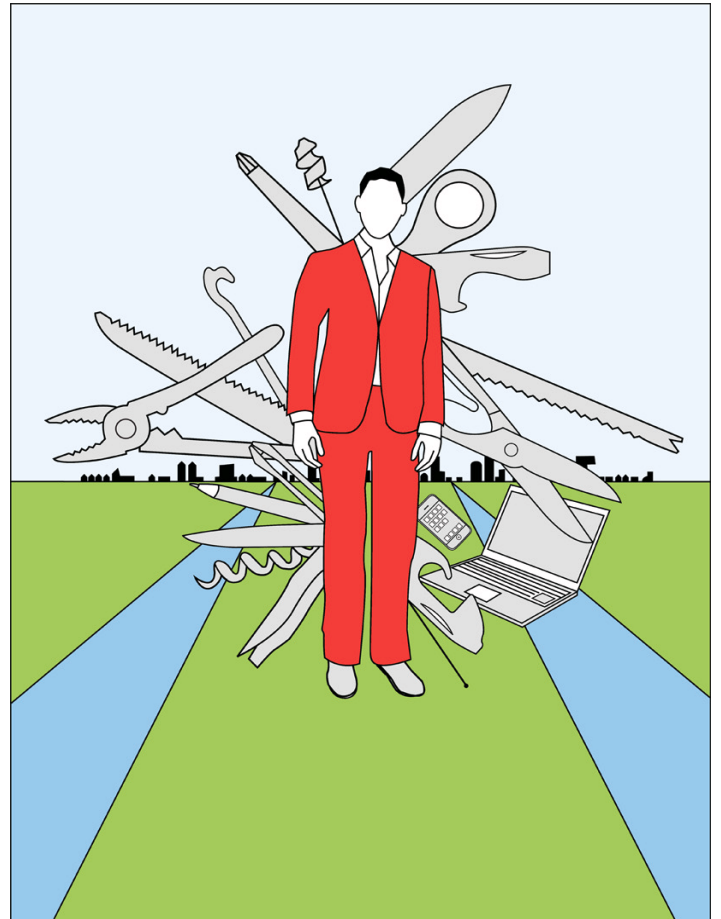
"The Concept Manager," *Game Urbanism*

DISCUSSION

— *After visiting* The Making Of Beyoğlu, *how would you describe the role of the concept manager? If you participated in the workshop, what were the advantages of having a moderator?*
— *What do you believe are the most important qualities a concept manager in a project of this nature can possess?*
— *Did your group's game proposal in the previous activity include the use of a moderator? Why or why not?*

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

WEB RESOURCES

Bureau Venhuizen | bureauvenhuizen.com

SALT Online | saltonline.org

BOOKS & ARTICLES

Game Urbanism (2010)
Hans Venhuizen

The Death and Life of Great American Cities (1961)
Jane Jacobs

ORGANIZATIONS & PROJECTS

Center for Urban Pedagogy
anothercupdevelopment.org

El Carrito Public Space Trading Cards