



Leftover space under train tracks. © Photo by Chong Keng Hua

The design of the pavilion is generated through the subtraction of a rectangular volume, giving rise to a series of void spaces that await interventions while allowing visitors to flow through. Lattices made of the ubiquitous bamboo poles found in every public housing block represent the basic building blocks of city and high-rise structures. The folded aluminum composite panels that hug the lattice surfaces showcase eight strategies, each one dealing with one or more of the pressing issues mentioned above.

Through the confluence of environment, people, and technology, diverse yet targeted experiments are applied to put their limits to the test. With these white spaces, we envision Singapore becoming a prototype for the world.

Sydney  
Spatial Frameworks: City Strategy in the  
Twenty-First Century

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TERROIR

Office of the NSW Government Architect

The Seoul Biennale curators suggest that a new cosmology and new cosmopolitics are required in this age of the Anthropocene—a claim that demands a response and perhaps also a strategy for engagement from the discipline of architecture. If we accept Pier Vittorio Aureli's duality—that a political project is also spatial, while a spatial project is also political—it follows that the new cosmology and cosmopolitics cannot be brought into existence without significant rethinking of the relationship between resources (commons) and their situation in space.

There is no question of the discipline's capacity to make a profound contribution to this remaking of the world; rather, the dilem-



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ma is whether there is an inclination to participate. The issues the curators raise are not in themselves new, but they can be understood as increasing in urgency. Despite this, the architectural profession continues to focus its disciplinary self-image on the production of objects, while a political project of this scale must be met with a spatial engagement that operates at a scale larger than any particular building.

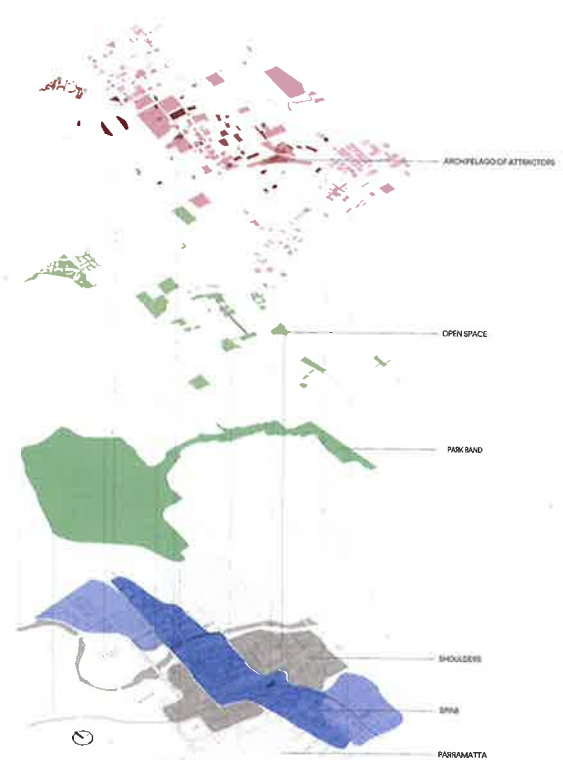
The philosopher Andrew Benjamin, in *Towards a Relational Ontology*, provides a conceptual framework that can assist architecture in addressing its potential in this regard. Benjamin tracks the concept of a relational ontology as a fundamental premise through the history of philosophy: "Relationality describes a state of affairs that is ontological. It is not just that being is relational, but that what exists fundamentally is a relation."<sup>10</sup> The singular, in this sense, cannot exist by itself, for "singulars are always already in relation such that singularities are the after-effect of relationality."<sup>11</sup>

The "object to network" repositioning suggested by Benjamin immediately talks to the unrealized power of the discipline as a spatial practice, which fundamentally deals in the projection of possible outcomes through reorganizing relations in space. The relations we talk of may be broad in scope and can be understood and implemented at multiple scales, enabling future projections of the world where a redistribution of commons may be possible. David Cunningham is in accord with this proposed reorientation, noting: "On a planet housing seven billion people, forms of mediation, abstraction, and impersonality are not only ineliminable, but are necessary to the construction of new social relations and modes of collective transformation of our increasingly urbanised world."

But this transformation is not just a matter of reorienting the discipline's self-image. The question of the client-driven nature of professional practice also arises, as does how society may be served by a different professional formation of architectural practice, focused on

something other than the hero-author. Another inevitable question: How might architecture engage with the state, and what is the role of the state in this new cosmopolitics? As David Harvey bluntly puts it, while revolution is quite properly opposed to prevailing notions of the republic of property, the presumption that the world's seven billion people can be fed, warmed, clothed, housed and cleaned without any hierarchical form of governance, and outside the reach of monetization or markets, is dubious in the extreme. The question is far too huge to be left to the horizontal self-organization of autonomous beings.

Concerns regarding the capacity of government to truly redirect resources in the age of neoliberal managerialism, and the current impossibility of reaching large-scale consensus on key issues such as climate change, leave city-scale governance as perhaps the most viable arena for consequential action. A "city architect" thus becomes, subject to the configuration of that role and its independence to give advice, an actor who may sit at



10. Andrew Benjamin, *Towards a Relational Ontology* (Albany: State University of New York Press) 2015. Kindle ebook loc 407.

11. Ibid. loc 420.

the confluence of the disciplinary and political leverage necessary to effect change.

This installation provides a window into the development of one such scenario: a collaboration between the Government Architect's office of New South Wales and private architectural practice. Together with the profession, the Government Architect is developing a design-led methodology for place-based spatial strategies that organize people, resources, and space at the scale of the precinct. A key opportunity of the work is the embedding of these strategies and resultant logics into political processes and planning systems through a document known as a Spatial Framework.

*Spatial Frameworks* attempts a synthesis of spatial intelligence with substantial engagement processes across the political and bureaucratic realms in order to foster the equitable distribution of commons. This model holds the possibility of the reorganization of relations—and thus the enactment of a new cosmology and cosmopolitics—through an alignment between a political project and a specific spatial context. The political agency of the Spatial Framework document thus exists not only in what is proposed, but in the

after-effects of the process itself. A change in the subjectivity of those who govern is of course the first move necessary if we are to seriously address the age of the anthropocene.

Tehran  
Cultivating Tehran

Amin Tadjsoleiman

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Not very long ago, Tehran was a small village surrounded by gardens, watered by the seven ravines passing through the city from the northern mountains. Fast modernization has changed the city's relationship to its rural land and food production chains. The growing city has erased most of its lands and gardens; however, this valuable agriculture infrastructure is still there. Tehran has some of the highest average precipitation among the major cities of Iran, and it has a network of streams and aqueducts running under and through the city. Simultaneously with a cultural shift regarding urban farming, an emerging social group of newcomer farmers is developing in the city. By including the skills of this



Implementing farming/housing unit in Tehran's leftover spaces © Amin Tadjsoleiman