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# NORDIC URBAN LAB ATHENS 09-11.10.2020



Psirri area © madhattersnyc



## NORDIC URBAN LAB – ATHENS 2020 - 2021

### NORDIC URBAN LAB: STUDIO 9-11 OCTOBER 2020

The 4th Nordic Urban Lab is taking place in Athens as a Greek-Nordic dialogue on cities and the role of culture and the arts in healing, energizing and creating our cities through experiences and practices we can learn from.

Nordic Urban Lab is a platform for artists and designers working in the public realm, architects and planners interested in alternative integrated approaches to urban development/re-generation, researchers, activists and community representatives.

Nordic Urban Lab ATHENS 2020-21 will be a two-step programme due to continued restrictions on international travel.

We are now confirming an ONLINE Lab 9-11 October with two intense days led by 36 Nordic and Greek speakers on Friday 9 and Saturday 10. On Sunday 11 you can follow 12 Greek artists / urbanists streaming from different sites in Athens and commenting on their own practice in this amazing and complex city.

**All sessions are free.**

**If you wish to participate, please use this registration link [nulathens2020.eventbrite.com](https://nulathens2020.eventbrite.com)**

We will send you the ZOOM link to the Lab 24 hrs. before. Please ensure to download the Zoom application on your device.

### NORDIC URBAN LAB ATHENS PROGRAMME

We have chosen 4 main themes. They are in some ways obvious but on the other hand they also reflect areas where there are different experiences in the hope that these experiences will challenge and inspire. It is believed that this albeit superficial 'mapping of the urban condition' will be useful not alone as an interesting perspective, but also as knowledge and dialogue that can continue and be translated into collaborative projects which look at specific situations in Athens.

Common for all themes is that we are linking the theoretical with the investigatory and with practice, well aware that innovative practice is often flawed and also needs to be upscaled to offer any 'solutions'.

It is here, however, we feel that new hybrid typologies of action-based research need to be formulated, tested and tried. Newly-formed alliances between the artists, cities and citizens are crucial in this. The themes invite to a reflection but also to develop new practices on the overlapping of the urban as seen from the arts and as seen from planning of the urban.

*The Voyages - Compagnie XY © Samuel Buton*



**FRIDAY 9 OCTOBER / 10.00-14.15 -  
THEME 1: CULTURE AND URBANISM**

The opening session will take the form of an overview as an urban critique of the planning and management of contemporary city and urban society as the given context. It will touch on the signs of a growing understanding of the need for a socially and culturally based urban perspective. This goes one step further than event-based attractions and iconic architecture alone, and is also rooted in our relationship with the city on individual and community levels, the networked city and the creative city, which offer dynamic and relational models. We also look at the notion of cultural planning.

**INTRODUCTORY SPEECHES 10.00-10.45**

**Klavs A. Holm (DK)**

Ambassador of Denmark, official opening speech

**Monica Tsiliberdi (GR)**

Head of the Directorate for the Development of Contemporary Creation, Hellenic Ministry of Culture and Sports. Opening remarks on national policies and strategies in the context of current challenges and agendas

**Trevor Davies (DK)**

Artistic director Metropolis, founder Nordic Urban Lab, will set the scene for NUL in the context of contemporary urban agendas, cultural trends and emerging artistic practices.

**NORDIC KEYNOTES 10.45-12.50**

**Ari-Veikko Anttiroiko (FI)**

Professor, University of Tampere. Recent books include New Urban Management 2011, The Rise of Participatory Innovation Platforms in Finnish Cities 2016, Wellness City 2018. Anttiroiko specialises in urban dynamics in a global context and will relate to the culture-urban dichotomy.

**Magdalena Malm (SE)**

Swedish Ministry of Culture, former Director of Swedish Public Art Agency 2012-2020, the most well developed public platform for public art in the Nordic countries, pushing the boundaries for art in public space to take on social, urban and cultural issues.

**Tina Saaby (DK)**

Architect, Chief Architect City of Gladsaxe Council (2020-) and former City Architect of Copenhagen 2011-2019. Saaby will focus on the key role of public space in relation to changing the identity, social inclusion and urban dynamics of the contemporary city.

**GREEK KEYNOTES 12.45-14.15**

**Poka-Yio**

Artist and curator, co-founder and director Athens Biennale.

**Andreas Giacumacatos**

Professor of Architecture, Athens School of Fine Arts. He is focusing on observations on the aesthetic character and syntax structure of modern metropolis.

**Panayotis Tournikiotis**

Dean of School of Architecture, Professor of Architectural theory and the Director of the History and Theory Laboratory at the NTUA. His presentation will focus on the place between building and the urban space as a connector in the city

**Maria Papaioannou**

British council will present key solutions from the report "Athens Resilient city through culture" 2018

**Commentators:**

**Vasilis Avdikos (GR)**

Assistant Professor, Department of Economic and Regional Development, Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences.

**Liva Kreislere (LV)**

Architect/urbanist/designer

**FRIDAY 9 OCTOBER / 15.00-18.00 -  
THEME 2: CITIES AND CITIZENSHIP**

This session will focus on how cities are looking to changing notions of citizenship. The question of the right to the city is the starting point for how to open up formal, representative democratic frameworks to include far more and question how power sharing in cities is taking place. Formal representative democracy is being replaced by action-based and participatory models and also by a surge of do-it-yourself initiatives and resource sharing on micro-scales outside the formal frameworks driven by activism and artivism and a sense of shared responsibility.

The sub theme of inclusive cities will be included here. The theme of inclusion is becoming more and more of a concern as social divisions are often compounding. Marginalization thrives in market-driven urbanism, and the public sector is challenged to define new models of how to “include” and how to support higher levels of social innovation and social sustainability.

**NORDIC KEYNOTES 15-00-16.30**

**Matti Lucie Arentz (NO)**

Design and Architecture Norway, Artist and Senior Advisor Architecture and Urban Planning &

**Ingvil Aarholt Hegna (NO)**

Design and Architecture Norway, Architect and Senior Advisor Architecture and Urban Planning

They will be presenting “Citizen`s Tracks – a National Tool for Participation in Urban Planning”.

**Kirsi Verkka (FI)**

Head of Helsinki Public Participation Unit, City of Helsinki, will present Helsinki’s strategy of citizens’ involvement and co-creation.

**Pasi Mäenpää (FI)**

Professor, University of Helsinki, will present a unique research programme “urban civic activism as resources for the metropolis - solutions for the governance of self-organising urban communities”.

**GREEK KEYNOTES 16.30-18.00**

**Amalia Zepou**

Vice mayor for civil society and innovation from 2014 to 2019 at the Municipality of Athens. In 2013, she created an award-winning civil society platform “synAthina” which later helped establish a sector for social innovation in the Athens administration. She is presently conducting a senior visiting appointment at LSE Cities with a Bloomberg Philanthropies fellowship.

**Haris Biskos**

Architect and urbanist, head of "synAthina" collective. Founding member of the project "Curing the Limbo".

**Commentators:**

**Eleni Myrivili (GR)**

Atlantic Council Senior Fellow, AARF Resilience Center | Athens Chief Resilience Officer | Ass. Professor, University of the Aegean

**Kathrine Winkelhorn (DK)**

Chair of Metropolis, researcher at Malmö University

**SATURDAY 10 OCTOBER / 10.00-13.00**  
**THEME 3: REVIVING COMMUNITIES AND NEIGHBOURHOODS**

In many ways, the local has re-asserted itself as the building block of the city, the natural stage for urban transformation where questions of local identity, local resources and local narratives are key. This key perspective of re-focusing the urban narrative questions issues of identity and also of strengthening engagement based on “a sense of place” as something everyone contributes to. Artists and creatives can of course have immense impact and play a key role in the re-configuration of the everyday.

At the core of many of these strategies and approaches are the public space and the public realm. From having been seen as spaces between buildings, the public space is now often seen as the turning point to create new and common realities of/in the city. Opening the public space as “free space” is a key factor for cities to visitors and citizens alike, the new cultural “space” where identities can be renegotiated and new relations built.

**NORDIC KEYNOTES 10.00-11.45**

**Rikke Lequick Larsen (DK)**

Architect, Copenhagen Dpt. Planning, former Head of Strategy Unit, which has developed over many years a strong neighbourhood regeneration platform, engaging citizens as active partners and taking cultural perspectives.

**Alexandra Szymanska (PL)**

Director, Gdansk City Culture Centre, which has developed a pioneer role with an urban and cultural mandate to engage in challenged neighbourhoods.

**Michail Galanakis (FI)**

Researcher with MA in Architecture, MA Design and Phd in spatial design, specializing in the urban space in an intercultural context which will be the focus for his presentation.

**GREEK KEYNOTES 11.45-13.00**

**Costas Ouggrinis**

Director of the Transformable Intelligent Environments Laboratory (TIE Lab), Associate Professor, School of Architectural Engineering, Technical University of Crete

**Elena Lamprou**

Lead of Impact Hub Athens' 'Impact Making Unit'. She is responsible for the overall design and delivery of a wide array of awareness, capacity building, incubation and acceleration programmes run by Impact Hub in Athens.

**Stavros Alifragkis**

Adjunct Lecturer, Hellenic Open University, filmic representation of architecture and the urban landscape. He will present Athens City Lab an interdisciplinary platform for mapping Athens in relation to selected themes which touch on social, cultural and physical characteristics and issues in neighbourhoods of Athens as an urban analytical approach to site based design processes.

**SATURDAY 10 OCTOBER / 14.00-19.30**  
**THEME 4: ARTISTIC PRACTICE IN THE URBAN CONTEXT**

Artistic practice in the context of urban processes has been profiled increasingly since the 90s. The Cultural Capitals of Europe is just one of many interpretations of this approach. On a European level, the increasing cross-pollination between the performing arts, the visual arts, architecture and urbanism but also the potential of the digital has given a freedom of approach. This allows artists to work with methods that are often transgressing the realm of the arts and intruding into social and urban realities, often confronting and counterpointing reality and fiction but also offering an alternative with this cultural acupuncture approach. We look at how these changing perspectives open up for a new contract between the arts and society revolving around the urban. Here, we sense the city in all its layered emotional reality.

**NORDIC PRESENTATIONS 14.00-16.30**

**Kjeld Khamina (SE)**

Professor in Art History, Gothenburg University, will outline artistic practices from 'Public Art Research Report in the Nordic Countries'.

**Christof Mayer (NO)**

Prof. APP/DAV Bergen School of Architecture, member of the iconic urban collective Raumlabor, Berlin, on curating alternative performative urban strategies.

**Liva Kreislere (LV)**

Architect/Urbanist/Designer, currently advising the Baltic Interreg project 'URBcultural planning' from which she will outline and present two examples of independent DIY urbanism initiatives in Riga.

**Vivian Madsen (DK)**

Bureau Detours/Institute for X, based in Aarhus, the largest independent collective of alternative place makers in the Nordic countries, focusing on their interventionist approach.

**Gry Worre Hallberg (DK)**

Artistic director of Sisters Hope (2007-), a performance collective based on the proposition of a "sensuous society" and with a radical transformative agenda and practice.

**Karoline H. Larsen / Collective Strings (DK)**

Visual artist, working primarily in public space with participatory collective creative processes in both temporary and permanent art works.

**Kenneth Balfelt (DK)**

Visual artist, working in socially conflictual contexts with inclusive art-driven processes where fragile human relationships are key factors.

**Maja Nydal Eriksen (DK)**

Visual artist & curator of 100% Foreign?, a three-year investigation into questions of multiple identities based on 250 interviews and staged photography in the public realm with former refugees.

**GREEK PRESENTATIONS 17.00-19.30**

**Eva Kekou**

Art historian, cultural theorist and curator. She will illustrate the cultural and art scene in the Mediterranean using the example of Athens as a case in point

**Xenia Kalpaktsoglou and Peggy Zali**

Curator and architect/ artist accordingly, co-founding members Laboratory for the Urban Commons, Athens

**Maria-Thalia Carras**

Cofounder & codirector of locus athens & TAVROS

**Jenny Marketou**

Greek multidisciplinary artist, lecturer, and author noted for her interventions and technology-based projects (Athens-New York)

**Filia Milidaki**

Curator of Eye's Walk Digital Festival in Syros island, contemporary dancer and founder of Social Cooperative Enterprise "Cinesthesia".



**SUNDAY 11 OCTOBER - 11.00-20.00**  
**WALKING ATHENS**

Programme of walks in selected neighbourhoods. Greek hosts share insights on challenges and solutions focusing on the potential for culturally led urban transformation.

**Live-streaming (10-20 min.) from selected sites every hour and on the hour 11.00-20.00.**

The walks will be structured as walks of dialogue and observation with potential interactions.

**You can follow on our Facebook page [www.facebook.com/nulathens2020](https://www.facebook.com/nulathens2020)**

The following artists are invited:

**Nikos Tranos**

Rector of Athens School of Fine Arts, a major figure in contemporary Greek art will navigate **Thodoris Tsatsos**, Psychologist and Co Founder of Reading for the others

**Christos Alefantis**

Founder and Editor in Chief of 'shedia' newspaper that supports homeless people. Initiator of "Invisible Tours" social project, a city tour guided by a Shedia homeless vendor

**Ftopea (Ilia Bebi)**

A flexible & transforming open platform of experimental architecture. European Architecture Students Assembly local contact

**UrbanDig Project (George Sahinis, Nadia Siokou)**

A journey in space and time in UrbanDig Performances at Exarcheia and their footprint in the city

**Konstantina Douka**

PhD candidate in Urban and Regional Planning, National Technical University of Athens-Visitor researcher Università IUAV di Venezia - Co-founder Oculus, Association Urban Creativity for people, Friuli Venezia Giulia, Italy

**Urban Layers**

**(Polyna Xiradakis, Emmanuela Kyriakopoulou)**

Community for the 'survival' of the thoughts ideas and anxieties of society depicted upon the city's walls.

**Alexandra Fyka** Cultural manager &  
**Eftychia Kiourtidou** Artist-political scientist

**Plato's Museum Design Team**

**(Aggeliki Konstantinidi, Tina Zoubou, Evgenia Stavraki)**  
Architects (1,2), Museologist (3), founders of DotsLinesStories

**Recompulsive Behaviour**

**(Myrto Sarma, Dimitra Trousa)**

Artist collective. Compulsively defending equal privileges, diversity and communal coexistence, they combine art production, activism, education and research towards social justice and the reclamation of the commons.

**Victoria Square Project**

**(Niovi Zarampouka-Chatzimanou, Dorothea Kritikou)**

Working with various community, initiatives, local businesses, institutions, the municipality, artists and other individuals and groups, Victoria Square Project seeks to elevate the cultural and historical assets of this vital crossroads in Athens.

## BACKGROUND

The Nordic Urban Lab is a forum for interdisciplinary perspectives around the issues of developing a more human and culturally rooted urban understanding and practice. After Nordic Labs in Copenhagen, Helsinki, Gothenburg and Kiel, NUL is now a loose network of some 400 architects, planners, anthropologists, designers, visual and performance artists, activists, researchers, community organisers and local authority representatives.

We are thrilled to have the opportunity to create a Greek-Nordic NUL in Athens, structured as a dialogue

on many of the current challenges of the urban reality seen from a cultural and artistic perspective.

In the evolving dialogue between “cities, citizens and culture”, the rebalancing and renegotiating key aspects of our urban community are in many ways similar in all cities. But given local, national and regional historic, cultural and political realities, there are highly individual and contextualized experiences and challenges as well as different dynamics, protagonists and initiatives in each city.

## ORGANISATION

NUL is initiated by Trevor Davies and is managed and curated by Metropolis – Københavns Internationale Teater, Denmark, with the support of The Danish Arts Council and The City of Copenhagen - [www.metropolis.dk](http://www.metropolis.dk)

NUL ATHENS is organised by HeterArt, Athens, in collaboration with Serafio Complex, synAthina, School of Applied Arts Hellenic Open University, KROMA

International Contemporary Arts & Culture Platform, and Athens Digital Lab.

NUL ATHENS is supported by Nordic Culture Fund, Greek Ministry of Culture, City of Athens, and Nordic Embassies in Greece.

**metropolis** art and performance  
in public space



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