
SHRINKING CITIES

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INTRODUCTION

Between 1950 and 2000, more than 350 large cities (over 100.000 inhabitants) lost a significant share of their inhabitants, among them 61 cities in the US. While international urban discourse focuses exclusively on the growing megalopolises and agglomerations, zones of shrinkage have been forming at the same time, and are generally ignored even so the share of shrinking cities is continuously growing.

Since 2002, "Shrinking Cities" - a project of the German Federal Cultural Foundation [Kulturstiftung des Bundes] - has investigated the worldwide phenomenon of urban shrinkage focusing four urban regions: Detroit (USA), Halle/Leipzig (Germany), Manchester/Liverpool (Britain), and Ivanovo (Russia). In a second phase of the project, ideas for alternative models of action and intervention were developed. A network of more than 200 artists, architects, academics and local initiatives participated in four years of investigations. The results were presented in two exhibitions, several books, digital publications, and numerous public events. Now, the Shrinking Cities exhibition, recently represented in the Italian Pavillon of the Venice Architecture Biennale, is shown in New York and Detroit as the start of an international tour.

With a combined exhibition space of 4,000 square feet, Pratt Manhattan Gallery and Van Alen Institute will simultaneously host "Shrinking Cities" in New York. The exhibition includes 32 contributions by artists, architects, filmmakers, journalists, and researchers including Nikolaus Brade, Sergei Bratkov, Mitch Cope, John Davies, interboro/CUP, Cedric Price, Bas Princen, Isa Rosenberger, Christoph Schäfer, O.M. Ungers, and Ingo Vetter.

Chief curator: Philipp Oswalt

Co-curator: William Menking (Pratt Institute)/ Adi Shamir, Executive Director (Van Alen Institute)

Assistant curator: Anke Hagemann

Exhibition design: Freecell, New York

Graphic design (exhibition): Tanja Wesse and 1kilo, Berlin

Project management: Project Office Philipp Oswalt, Berlin: Anke Hagemann, Peter Boragno, Nicole Minten with Anita Kaspar and Füsün Türetken/Freecell, New York/Pratt Manhattan Gallery: Nick Battis with Michelle Westmark und Karen E. Jones/ Van Alen Institute: Jamie Hand with Ori Topaz

The Shrinking Cities Project

"Shrinking Cities" is a project of the Kulturstiftung des Bundes (German Federal Cultural Foundation) in cooperation with the Project Office Philipp Oswalt, the Museum of Contemporary Art Leipzig, the Bauhaus Dessau Foundation, and the magazine archplus.

The results of the project (2002-2006) were first presented in exhibitions at the KW Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin (fall 2004); the Zentrum für zeitgenössische Kunst (ZfzK), Halle-Neustadt; and the Galerie für Zeitgenössische Kunst Leipzig (Museum of Contemporary Art Leipzig; winter 2005/06). They also were published in several books and digital publications.

International tour

Following the New York exhibition, "Shrinking Cities" will be jointly hosted by the Museum of Contemporary Art in Detroit and the Cranbrook Art Museum in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan from February 3, 2007 - April 1, 2007.

Between the fall of 2006 and the summer of 2008, the Shrinking Cities project will also present its work at seven further venues: Rousse, Bulgaria; Tokyo, Japan; Liverpool, U.K.; Saarbrücken, Frankfurt and Dortmund, Germany; St. Petersburg, Russia. The international tour is funded by the German Federal Cultural Foundation.

EXHIBITION 1 – INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH

Van Alen Institute will host part one of the exhibition, "Shrinking Cities, International Research", which examines the phenomenon of urban decline. The four focus cities Halle/Leipzig, Manchester/Liverpool, Detroit and Ivanovo are explored and represented in diverse forms of documentation by artists, architects, filmmakers, journalists, and researchers. Themes include a worldwide study of shrinking cities, the change of urban landscapes, everyday practices, and political conflicts under the conditions of urban decline.

The topics range from neglect and the appropriation of spaces through changed forms of work to the development of innovative subcultures and criticism of existing planning cultures. The resulting cross-references, which reveal what is common to shrinking cities as well as their individual characteristics, placed regional practices in the course of urban shrinkage within a superordinated context and emphasized that urban shrinkage is a global problem and an opportunity for cultural renewal.

INVESTIGATED REGIONS

Suburbanization: Detroit (Michigan, USA)

Population loss: -51% (1950-2004)

Detroit is a moving city: As the city of Detroit is shrinking, metropolitan Detroit is expanding. Detroit is a city founded on the concept of mobility, but mobility is also its downfall. Racism was one of the driving forces for the shrinkage of the city. The constant growth away from the city has fragmented the region into black and white, rich and poor, urban and suburban, resulting in one of the most segregated cities in the United States.

Detroit became the icon of the failure of the modern metropolis in the American consciousness, and thereby a projection screen for the apocalyptic fantasies of mass media and pop cultures.

Recently, there is renewed development in Detroit's city center with new casinos, sports arenas, restaurants, night clubs, strip joints, chain stores, expensive condominiums and lofts, catering to suburbanites while the surrounding neighborhoods are still being bulldozed and forgotten and tens of thousands still leave the city each year. Those fleeing Detroit regard their city as an undesirable and dangerous place, beyond repair. Those who live in Detroit have discovered the art of survival, building a culture isolated from the mainstream, creating a unique way of living and a new kind of city. Ironically, this same isolated ingenuity and creativity has significantly influenced and enriched international popular culture.

Deindustrialization: Manchester/Liverpool (North West, UK)

Population loss: -44.9% Manchester (1930-2002)

Population loss: -48.5% Liverpool (1930-2002)

After decades of decline, Manchester and Liverpool have become known in the last 10 to 15 years as prime examples of successful regeneration. With their prestige projects, re-invigorated city cores and ever increasing house prices, both cities should be inspirational for any shrinking city that turn-around is still possible. This remarkable transformation in Liverpool and Manchester was initiated through the emergence of a new musical subculture that made use of vacant buildings. The cities' image shifted from being depressed post-industrial towns to being cities of culture at the cutting edge of urban cool. Both city administrations and savvy

developers opportunistically took a proactive role in using this potential to instigate public-private partnerships that created a feverish rate of building projects in and around the core of each city. As well as this process of re-definition, the de-industrialization of the region gave rise to new post-Fordian types of employment such as the call centre industry, which is typified by insecurity, over-flexibility and low pay. A heightening of social tension within inner neighborhoods has resulted in an increased desire for security. Much attention is paid to defensibility when designing new residential developments, and existing buildings are equipped with entire arsenals of security devices. This discrepancy between the branded image of the city and more local conditions reveals that the current status of each city remains fragile; the revitalization of the city core has been accompanied by a continuing crisis in the outer inner city areas that are characterized by high unemployment, abandonment, and continued population loss. Areas of growth lie adjacent to areas of intense deprivation – unfortunately the often promised “trickle down effect” has simply not occurred. To this extent the urban landscape of both these cities and the region itself is polarized; success and failure lie side by side.

Peripherization: Halle/Leipzig (Saxony-Anhalt/Saxony, Germany)

Population loss: -25.4% Halle (1989–2003)

Population loss: -17.6% Leipzig (1989–2003)

After the German reunification in 1990 a dramatic shrinkage of the population in eastern German cities occurred. The rapid de-industrialization of eastern Germany, which was not just due to the poor condition of facilities, but had also to do with serious economic policy mistakes and western German influence and interests, led to long-term unemployment of 20 percent. In view of the poor prospects at hand more than one million people moved to the old (West German) federal states. Massive, publicly funded suburbanization policies led to an increased thinning out of the cities, which already had 350,000 vacant flats in old buildings before the wall came down. There are now 1.3 million vacant flats and the prognosis for 2030 puts the number at two million. By 2050 the population of eastern Germany could be half of what it once was.

In spite of the trillions of marks and euros in subsidies, the promised *Aufschwung Ost* (Eastern Recovery) never occurred. The funds did little more than buy a period of social peace, which is now quite fragile due to the current economic austerity measures. After a phase of general urban shrinkage, relative winners and losers have developed in the past few years: While several cities such as Leipzig, Jena and Weimar were able to be stabilized, former mono-industrial areas such as Bitterfeld-Wolfen and Hoyerswerda and the peripheral rural regions in the north and along the Polish border find themselves in an unrestrained period of decline. The gulf in the standards of living between eastern and western Germany continues to grow. The new federal states are turning into the economic periphery of the prosperous economic areas in western and southern Germany.

Postsocialism: Ivanovo (Ivanovo Oblast, Russian Federation)

Population loss: -6.8% (1990–2002)

In the textile region northeast of Moscow the economic structures collapsed with the end of socialism and the Soviet Union, and the industrial production sank to a fifth of what it was. The number of births fell dramatically since 1989 and life expectancy declined significantly. Particularly young people with a better education left Ivanovo in search of work.

The project of Soviet modernization and urbanization of the territory remained incomplete. Small communities still exist today without basic infrastructure, and large construction projects were abandoned. Central planning has been replaced by small architectural undertakings of individual interventions.

SHRINKING CITIES

Here globalization is a synonym for the ruptures in the economic network and internationalism, and for the decline in technology and in the modern division of labor. Machines were dismantled, the airport was closed. The city life adapted itself to the rhythms of agrarian production cycles, since many city residents were forced to revert to subsistence farming on the lots of their dachas or gardens. Pre-modern and post-industrial practices overlap and develop new lifestyles. The ideology of the collective identities of factory and party has been eroded. It has been replaced by the flood of information through globalization, a universal individualization and a cultural cosmopolitanism of Barbie, Nike, and Coca Cola. At the same time, local traditions are being called upon to bolster identity. With the de-industrialization, the factory lost its central function in cultural and public life – no comparable structures have been developed. The modern regime of factory labor has yielded to a postmodern patchwork of individual arrangements and initiatives on the basis of a finely woven social network.

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Contributions by: Robert Anderson, USA; Nikolaus Brade, D; Sergei Bratkov, RUS; Mitch Cope, USA; John Davies, GB; Jeremy Deller, GB; Detroit Collaborative Design Center (DCDC), USA; Laura Horelli, D; Jody Huellmantel, USA; Konrad Knebel, D; Alexei Kononenko, RUS; Ines Lasch, D; Savva and Sergei Miturich, RUS; Toni Mocerri, USA; Kelly Parker, USA; Bas Princen, NL; Project Office Philipp Oswald (Anke Hagemann, Tim Rieniets et al.), D; Vera Samorodova, RUS; Albrecht Schäfer, D; Christoph Schäfer, D; Alexander Sverdlov, RUS; Boris Spiridonov, RUS; Kathrin Wildner, D.

Van Alen Institute

Over the course of the past century, Van Alen Institute has consistently cultivated a fellowship of architecture and design practitioners and scholars, awarded excellence in design, and fostered dialogue about architecture as a public practice. Today, as conventionally defined fields of knowledge give way to new disciplines and alternative methodologies, Van Alen Institute reclaims its legacy as an architectural institute that is dedicated to critical inquiry surrounding contemporary forms of public space and new configurations of spatial practice.

**Van Alen Institute
Shrinking Cities, International Research**

December 8, 2006 – January 21, 2007
Opening Reception: 5:30 – 7:30 PM, Thursday, December 7
Gallery: Monday – Friday, 10 AM – 6 PM
30 West 22nd Street, 6th floor
New York, NY 10010
212.924.7000
www.vanalen.org

EXHIBITION 2 – INTERVENTIONS

Pratt Manhattan Gallery will host part two of the exhibition, "Shrinking Cities, Interventions", which presents strategies for action. It is divided into five areas: "Negotiating Inequality", "Self-Governance", "Creating Images", "Organizing Retreat", and "Occupying Space". Commissioned projects range from artistic interventions and self-empowerment strategies through architectural, landscape, media and performance interventions, to new legal regulations and utopian visions. To initiate strategies for action, the architectural magazine "archplus" staged an idea competition, while the Bauhaus Dessau Foundation made direct commissions and the Gallery for Contemporary Art Leipzig awarded artists grants. The majority of the projects were developed in close cooperation with citizens, local groups, and institutions.

CONCEPTS OF ACTION

Negotiating Inequality

Social ideals and images of space in the Modern period bore the stamp of equality. Equal opportunities regarding living standards are to this day the proclaimed aim of federal republican regional planning policies in Germany. Yet until this point, with the onset of shrinking processes, it has become clear that spatial equality is no longer a realistic target. On the contrary: the negotiation of inequality is today on the political and social agendas. To what extent can spatial inequality be productively conceived? What chances for experimentation does it offer? Does inequality offer scope for diversity or are social divisions inherent in it?

Self-Governance

The crises of state organization and economic development have put inhabitants' self-organization in the spotlight. They are expected to take the matter of economic, social, cultural and urban developments in hand. Cutbacks in the welfare state and the deterioration of public infrastructure and social services are generally accompanied by the notion that society's responsibility for equal opportunities and support should fall on the individual citizen who, however, is provided neither with the necessary resources nor the authority to make decisions. The other side of the coin is that the "gaps" made available by state withdrawal offer possibilities in shrinking cities for the development of social and cultural initiatives of a liberationist nature, which can give rise to viable, socially integrative and culturally ambitious activities.

Creating Images

In today's media dominated society, a city's image plays as essential a role as do the so-called "hard-tools", namely economics and planning. Images mold perceptions of a city, be these the insider perspective of its inhabitants or the views held by people from elsewhere. Precise marketing budgets, cliché-ridden reports in the media, artistic image production or personal memories are only a few amongst the many cornerstones on which an overall image is constructed, negotiated and discussed. Shrinking cities in particular endeavor to overcome the negative effects of urban crisis on their reputation by investing heavily in creating a positive image; and by either strengthening or inventing local highlights in order to boost their economic, social or cultural standing.

Organizing Retreat

Shrinking means the dissolution and degeneration of traditional urban structures. It is impossible to completely halt these processes. The task of architects and urban planners is thus restricted to regulating and elaborating these processes. They are faced, in this regard, with a wholly new task for which nothing in their previous experience has prepared them. Dealing with the demands of architecture and infrastructure in shrinking cities thus requires architects and urban planners to remain open, both to new methods and experiments and to innovative ideas about what a city and its planning can be.

Occupying Space

The capitalist logic of extracting the optimal surplus value from everything runs up against a wall in shrinking cities. Foreclosure sales and bankruptcy are the order of the day, private investors few and far between. The spatial vacuum and its attendant weak economy demand new financing and trade concepts. Usual modes of utilization must be extended to include temporary, ephemeral, non-bureaucratic and self-organized models that both exploit the potential of the space available in shrinking cities and give local protagonists the chance to take on disused land or property and use these in unconventional ways.

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Contributions by: Center for Urban Pedagogy (Damon Rich, Rosten Woo) and Interboro (Tobias Armbrorst, Daniel D’Oca, Georgeen Theodore, Christine Williams), USA; project group Claiming Land (Stefanie Bremer, Dirk E. Haas, Päivi Kataikko, Henrik Sander, Andreas Schulze Bäing, Boris Sieverts) with Bas Princen, D/NL; complizen Planungsbüro, D; project group COW – the udder way (Gareth Morris, Heidi Rustgaard, Eike Sindlinger, Ulrike Steven, Susanne Thomas), GB; fiedler.tornquist, A; Tammy Lynn Evans, USA; Tyree Guyton, USA; Pierre Huyghe, F; OMA/AMO, NL; Cedric Price, GB; Raumlabor, D; Isa Rosenberger, A; Oswald Mathias Ungers, D; Ingo Vetter, D.

Pratt Manhattan Gallery

Pratt Manhattan Gallery is a public art gallery affiliated with Pratt Institute. The goals of the gallery are to present significant innovative and intellectually challenging work in the fields of art, architecture, fashion, and design from around the world and to provide a range of educational initiatives to help viewers relate contemporary art to their lives in a meaningful way.

**Pratt Manhattan Gallery
Shrinking Cities, Interventions**

December 8, 2006 – February 17, 2007
Opening Reception:
6:30 – 8:30 PM, Thursday, December 7
Gallery: Tuesday – Saturday, 11 AM – 6 PM
144 West 14th Street, 2nd floor
New York, NY 10011
212.647.7778
www.pratt.edu/exhibitions

PUBLIC TALKS/FILM SCREENINGS IN NEW YORK CITY

Friday, December 8, 6:30 PM, film

Occupying Space: Experimental Projects in (East) Germany

Two films show innovative activities in shrinking urban environments: Daniel Kunle, Holger Lauinger: "no more | not yet", Germany 2004, 82 min; introduction by Daniel Kunle; complizen, Connie Klar: "Sportification", Germany 2003, 3 min Philipp Oswald and Anke Hagemann will be present for Q&A

Center for Architecture, 536 LaGuardia Place, New York, New York 10012,
Tel. 212.683.0023 www.aiany.org/centerforarchitecture

Saturday, December 9, 3:00 PM, conference

Shrinking Cities: Negotiating Inequality

Shrinking Cities are no singular or exceptional phenomenon, they are just the other, less noticed, side of growth and concentration - the "losers of globalisation". Processes that can be witnessed in booming New York stand in direct relation to population loss and economic decline in other regions. Growth means that shrinkage is happening elsewhere: From the global to the local scale, growth and shrinking always make a joint appearance - sociospatial polarisation processes and the competition between places are increasing within cities, regions and beyond. Hence, shrinking cities will become an ever more present phenomenon that we have to deal with.

Speakers will include Phillip Oswald, curator; Johannes Fiedler, contributor; Damon Rich, RostenWoo, Center for Urban Pedagogy, contributors; and Neil Smith, Center for Place, Culture and Politics, CUNY; Peter Marcuse, Columbia University, New York

Center for Architecture

Tuesday, December 12, 6:30-7:30 PM, in conversation

The Bronx: Shrinking?

Adolfo Carrion, Jr., Bronx Borough President; Michael Sorkin, director, the Graduate Urban Design Program, City College of New York and principal, Michael Sorkin Studio.

Van Alen Institute, 30 W. 22nd Street, 6th Floor, New York, New York 10010,
Tel: 212.924.7000 www.vanalen.org

Friday, January 5, 6:30 PM, film

Self Governance: Urban Agriculture

Two films on the phenomenon of farming and gardening in shrinking cities - for subsistence and as a means of social engagement: Boris Gerrets: "Garden Stories", 51 min, english/russian with english subtitles; documentary on urban farming in the US and Russia [tbc]. Annette Weisser and Ingo Vetter: "I Am Farming Humanity", 2001, 16 min; an interview with Lee Burns, retired engineer and co-founder of the Detroit Agriculture Network

Center for Architecture

PUBLICATIONS

Shrinking Cities, Volume 1: International Research

Ed. Philipp Oswalt, 736 pages, more than 500 illustrations
(most in color)

Hatje Cantz, Ostfildern, 2005

ISBN-13 9783775716826, \$ 55

Citing concrete examples from Manchester and Liverpool in Great Britain, Detroit in the United States, Ivanovo in Russia, and Halle and Leipzig in Germany, this volume compares living conditions and cultural change in shrinking urban regions. Artistic intercessions help sensitize the public to a global phenomenon that poses a new social challenge. (Essays by Robert Fishman, Linda Grant, Dave Haslam, Susanne Hauser, Klaus Müller, Klaus Ronneberger, Thomas J. Sugrue, Kevin Ward, and many more. Photos by Stan Douglas, John Ganis, Ken Grant, Bas Princen, Tom Wood, and many more.)

Shrinking Cities, Volume 2: Interventions

Ed. Philipp Oswalt, 864 pages, more than 450 illustrations
(most in color)

Hatje Cantz, Ostfildern, 2006

ISBN-13 9783775717113, \$ 55

This book provides an international overview and critical discussion of concepts and strategies for shrinking cities from the fields of architecture, landscape design, urban planning, the media, performance, and art. The approaches discussed range from artistic responses and selfempowerment projects to architectural and landscape interventions, strategies of media communication, and city marketing, to new legal regulations and utopian designs. A series of essays critically discusses current projects in North America, Europe, and Japan, as well as important historical positions in architecture and art. (Essays by Ash Amin, Regina Bittner, Wolfgang Engler, Robert Fishman, Dan Graham, David Harvey, Juan Herreros, Bart Lootsma, and many more. Projects by Will Alsop, Ruedi Baur, Florian Beigel, Chaos Computer Club, Crimson, Jeremy Deller, M. J. Ginzburg, Gordon MattaClark, muf, Hidetoshi Ohno, OMA, Cedric Price, Andreas Siekmann, Robert Smithson, Superflex, Oswald Mathias Ungers, and many more.)

Atlas of Shrinking Cities

Ed. Philipp Oswalt and Tim Rieniets, 160 pages, with
numerous color maps, English/Germany

Hatje Cantz, Ostfildern, 2006

ISBN-13 9783775717144, \$ 55

Which cities shrink? Where are these cities? What processes lie behind shrinkage? *Atlas of Shrinking Cities* has approximately 30 world maps, 50 diagrams, 40 city portraits, 15 lexical essays, and an index of cities to document this global phenomenon and make it comprehensible visually by means of an innovative graphic presentation.

Cities—Complete Works Vols. 1 + 2

In addition, the digital publications *Shrinking Cities—Complete Works Vols. 1 + 2*, which include numerous film and audio contributions and extensive research material, are available from Arch+ Verlag Aachen. www.archplus.net.

