

# PhD course constructing criticism

## Methods for Studying what Spatial Design *does*

In recent years, we can observe an increased interest in the performative capabilities of spatial design work; how it affects users and usages, and the ways it transforms existing territorial conditions. Relational studies of what spatial design 'does' are increasingly informing strategic planning, as well as architectural, urban and landscape design. New methods, investigative techniques and forms of representation are being developed to account for these complex performative qualities of spatial design. Moreover, explorations of the performative capabilities of architecture, landscape architecture, urban design and planning offer a potentially rich field of criticism. Representations of what design 'does' problematise simplistic readings of a design project as sheer physical form. Models, drawings and texts have the capacity to shed light on the complex dynamism between urban practices and material realities, and thereby place the design work in a new frame of reference.

This 5-day PhD course brings together international experts and PhD students to explore new methods for studying what spatial design 'does'. The course will draw on two influential theoretical frameworks for relational studies; performance theory from art and cultural studies and actor-network theory from the field of science and technology studies. These new theoretical frameworks not only offer new value systems from which design work can be assessed, but also invite us to critically reflect upon the ways that we construct criticism.

International experts will introduce theoretical frameworks and methods for conducting relational studies of spatial design work. PhD students will receive feedback on a design critique in relation to their own PhD research (abstract before course, feedback during course, and finalization after course). In a design-driven, experimental workshop convened by architect and researcher Rana Haddad from the American University of Beirut, we will collaboratively carry out a relational study on an internationally acclaimed new urban space: Superkilen in Copenhagen (by BIG, SUPERFLEX and Topotek1). The results of the workshop will be exhibited at the end of the PhD course and we aim at publishing a selection of the workshop results in a peer-reviewed journal.

### PROGRAMME/

Day 1: keynote lectures (1+2), paper session (1)  
Day 2: keynote lectures (3), paper session (2+3)  
Day 3: workshop  
Day 4: workshop  
Day 5: concluding session/exhibition

### KEYNOTES/

TOM AVERMAETE, Velux Visiting Professor at UCPH, Professor of Architecture, Technical University Delft  
LAURA LIETO, Professor of Urban Planning, University "Federico II" Napoli  
KRISTINE SAMSON, Associate Professor of Visual Culture and Performance Design, Roskilde University

**WHEN/** 22-26 August 2016

**WHERE/** Rolighedsvej 23, DK-1958 Frederiksberg

**HOST/** Section for Landscape Architecture and Planning

**ECTS/** 5

**WORKLOAD/** Reading literature and writing papers 100 hours, participation 40 hours

**COURSE FEE/** DKK 1.000 (€ 140) to cover lunches and one dinner

### SIGN UP/

Please submit an abstract of your planned paper presentation (max. 300 words) and a short CV by sending an Email to Anne Tietjen, [atie@ign.ku.dk](mailto:atie@ign.ku.dk), before May 15, 2016. We will select 12-16 students to achieve a balance between design fields.

### DATES/

May 15: Deadline for submission of paper abstract and short CV  
June 1: Notification of acceptance  
June 30: Course material will be sent to the participants

