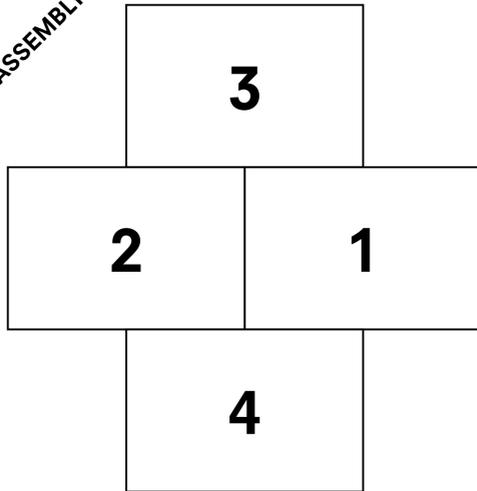


A Newspaper Of
Public Space

Reader

JANUARY 14, 2011

FOR WALL ASSEMBLY...



The New City Reader is a newspaper on architecture, public space and the city, published as part of "The Last Newspaper," an exhibition running at the New Museum of Contemporary Art from October 6, 2010–January 9, 2011. Conceived by executive editors Joseph Grima and Kazys Varnelis, the newspaper's content centers on the spatial implications of epochal shifts in technology, economy and society today. The New City Reader will consist of one edition published over the course of the project, with a new section produced weekly from within the museum's gallery space, each led by a different guest editorial team of architects, theorists and research groups. These sections will be available free at the New Museum and—in emulation of a practice common in the nineteenth-century American city and still popular in China and other parts of the world today—will be posted in public on walls throughout the city for collective reading.

The New City Reader

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LOCAL
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"The Last Newspaper" is curated by Richard Flood and Benjamin Godsill. For more information please visit newmuseum.org

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This project was made possible thanks to generous support from the New Museum of Contemporary Art, Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation, Joe and Nina Day, Anonymous Donors, and the Willametta K. Day Foundation. Special thanks to: Elian Stefa; Lisa Phillips, Director, the New Museum; Linco Printing.

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Open-Source Urbanism

by Saskia Sassen

Where change is perceptible, rapid change makes change itself even more visible. Velocity becomes a concrete condition, not just a measure of speed. Rapid change in cities has highly legible moments—the material reality of buildings, transport systems, re-placements of modest shops with luxury shops and of middle classes with the rich professional class, a bike path where there was none—and they can be both good and not so good. Further, when rapid transformation happens simultaneously in several cities with at least some comparable conditions, it also makes visible how diverse the spatial outcomes can be even when the underlying dynamics might be quite similar.

All of this brings to the fore the differing degrees of openness of cities. I prefer thinking of this as the incompleteness of cities, which means that they can constantly be remade, for better or for worse. It is this incompleteness that has allowed some of the world's great old cities to outlast kingdoms, empires, nation-states and powerful firms.

Let me take the imagery of incompleteness further. Powerful actors can remake cities in their image. But cities talk back. They do not take it sitting. Sometimes it may take decades, and sometimes it is immediate—see for instance the thousands of Stuttgart residents who staged protests in August 2010 to stop the demolition of part of their old train station and the felling of hundreds of 200-year-old trees in the Schlossgarten to build a new high-speed transit hub. They succeeded. Yes, it is only part of the station and none of this is going to turn back the powerful forces of gentrification there. But it is a way in which the city can talk back.

We can think of the multiple ways in which the city talks back as a type of open-source urbanism: the city as partly made through a myriad of interventions and little changes

from the ground up. Each of these multiple small interventions may not look like much, but together they give added meaning to the notion of the incompleteness of cities and that this incompleteness gives cities their long lives, thereby outlasting other more powerful entities.

In sharp contrast, I think that the model of “intelligent cities” as propounded by the telepresence efforts of Cisco Systems misses this opportunity to urbanize the technologies they mobilize and futilely seeks to eliminate incompleteness. The planners of intelligent cities, notably Songdo in South Korea, actually make these technologies invisible and hence put them in command rather than in dialogue with users. One effect is that intelligent cities represent closed systems, and that is a pity. It will cut their lives short. They will become obsolete sooner.

Beyond the imagery of open-source urbanisms, can we strengthen this positive scenario of the city's incompleteness by actually deploying open-source technologies in a variety of urban contexts? Can we urbanize open-source technology?

As a technological practice of innovation, Open Source has not quite been about cities but about the technology. Yet it resonates with what cities have and are at ground level,

Here the appropriate technology is more akin to developing an urban Wikileaks—vertical institutions that begin to leak and enable citizens to work with some of what is useful in those leaks in the ways they see fit.

where its users are. The park is made not only with the hardware of trees and ponds, but also with the software of people's practices. How can we forget the turnaround of New York's Riverside Park from being a no-go zone to being a park for all those who wanted to use it in part because dog owners started to walk their dogs in large numbers. Having a dog was itself a function of feeling insecure in a city of high murder rates and much mugging. But the city allowed people to talk back: get a dog, walk your dog, go in groups and you recover the territory of the park. The proliferation of farmers' markets was also not a top-down decision. It resulted from a mix of conditions, primarily the desire of city residents to have access to fresh produce. Here we see that a thousand individual decisions created a possibility for viable farmers markets.

There are many diverse initiatives that produce these kinds of “third space.” With a very different aim, yet part of the same structural possibility, is the “Take Back the Night” movement initiated by women fighting to make streets safe from rape and sexual assault. As is that of women in Guatemala City who initiated a movement to take back the city, to reduce armed conflicts among the military, gangs and criminals on the streets. What all of these examples share is that individuals can find a thousand ways of connecting to a network by initiating something, taking a step.

I find the opposite—the implications of the failure to urbanize—well captured in Eric Klinnensberg's book “Heat Wave.” He argued that one of the reasons more than 700 people died in the very hot Chicago summer of 1995 was that they were afraid to leave their apartments because of the risks of murders and muggings outside. So they stayed in their apartments and died of heat.

How would urbanizing the actual technology of Open Source and its cognates affect these sorts of events whereby hundreds of people react to a condition in a similar way to produce perceptible civic outcomes: buying dogs and recovering the park, or wanting fresh produce and creating farmers' markets. And how can this open sourcing be used to better predict and avoid negative outcomes?

How can we urbanize the actual technology? In many ways, cities tend to urbanize technologies semi-autonomously, since it is still not quite feasible to simply plop down a new technology in urban space. It requires modifications, mediations. Major advances in building and other technologies have left a massive imprint on urban space. This is perhaps most visible in the sharp increases in density and networked systems that the new technologies have made possible.

But a closer look suggests that these modifications have to do with overcoming rigidities and risks, especially risks catalogued by insurance companies. This mode is then only vaguely one of urbanizing the technology.

Technologists, urbanists and artists are beginning to “urbanize” technology (see the Network Architecture Lab at Columbia, the Sensible City Lab at MIT and much of the work gathered at the “Design and the Elastic Mind” exhibit at Museum of Modern Art). When this happens, the city becomes a heuristic space: it talks to the average resident or passer-by. It can make the most advanced applied technologies that can be used in cities visible. The city also makes visible the diversity of spatial forms through which these technological applications work, becoming legible even to the passer-by. I have long thought that all the major infrastructures, from sewage to elec-

City

tricity and broadband, should be covered by transparent walls and floors, so if you are waiting for the bus, you can actually see how the city all works and begin to get engaged. Today, when walls are pregnant with software capabilities, why not make this transparent? All our computerized systems should become transparent. It creates its own public shared domain.

Yet Open Source is different from those technologies and technological applications. I see in Open Source a DNA that resonates strongly with how people make the city theirs or urbanize what might be an individual initiative. And yet, it stays so far away from the city. I think that it will require making. We need to push this urbanizing of technologies to strengthen horizontal practices and initiatives.

Leading urban civic institutions tend to verticalize this work of making the urban. But they do matter. Here the appropriate technology is more akin to developing an urban Wikileaks—vertical institutions that begin to leak and thereby enable citizens to work with at least some of what is useful in those leaks in the ways they see fit. This is akin to horizontalizing what is now vertical, imposed by top-down authority.

There is much work to be done. Recovering the incompleteness of cities means recovering a space where the work of open-sourcing the urban can thrive. Developing an urban Wikileaks would take cities in a very different direction from the intelligent city model—and for the better.

Sentient City Survival Kit

by Mark Shepard

As computing leaves the desktop and spills out onto the sidewalks, streets and public spaces of the city, information processing becomes embedded in and distributed throughout the material fabric of everyday urban space. Ubiquitous computing evangelists herald a coming age of urban information systems capable of sensing and responding to the events and activities transpiring around them. Imbued with the capacity to remember, correlate and anticipate, this “sentient” city is envisioned as being capable of reflexively monitoring our behavior within it and becoming an active agent in the organization of our daily lives. The Sentient City Survival Kit is a design research project that probes the social, cultural and political implications of ubiquitous computing for urban environments.

This kit is variably deployed in the face of the variable expressions that the sentient city presents us. Few may quibble about “smart” traffic light control systems that more efficiently manage the ebbs and flows of trucks, cars and buses on our city streets. Some may be irritated when discount coupons for their favorite espresso drink are beamed to their mobile phone as they pass by Starbucks. Many are likely to protest when they are denied passage through a subway turnstile because the system “senses” that their purchasing habits, mobility patterns and current galvanic skin response (GSR) reading happens to match the profile of a terrorist.

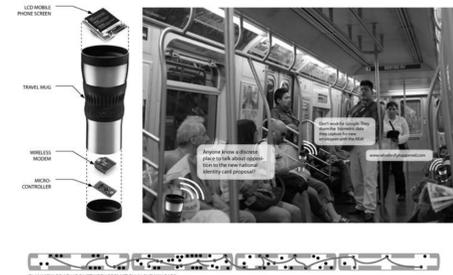
The project investigates the darker side of this urban imaginary. Conceived as an archaeology of the near future, it also posits a set of playful and ironic techno-social artifacts that explore the implications for privacy, autonomy, trust and serendipity of this increasingly observant, ever-more efficient and over-coded city. Less of an attempt to predict future trends in mobile media, pervasive computing or embedded information systems, the project focuses more on prototyping concrete artifacts in the present in order to facilitate a discussion around just what kind of future we might, and might not, want.



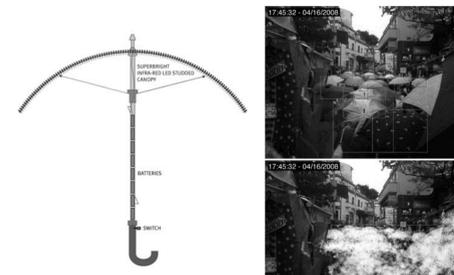
GPS Serendipitor
In the near future, finding our way from point A to point B will not be the problem. Maintaining consciousness of what happens along the way might be more difficult. The GPS Serendipitor is an alternative GPS navigation software application for mobile phones that determines a route to a destination that the user has not previously taken, designed to facilitate finding something by looking for something else.



RFID under(a)ware
In the near-future sentient shopping center, item-level tagging and discrete data-sniffing are both common retail culture and popular criminal activities. This popular product line consists of his and hers underwear designed to sense hidden Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) tag readers and alert the wearer to their presence, rendering pervasive electronic scanning a pleasurable experience by activating small vibrators sewn into bras and boxer shorts in strategic locations.



Ad-hoc Dark (Roast) Travel Mug
In an environment where all network traffic is monitored via “smart” filters, where access privileges are dynamically granted and denied on the fly based on one's credit card transaction history and where bandwidth is a function of market capitalization, standard commuter gear will include this travel mug designed for creating ad-hoc “dark” communication networks. Caffeinated commuters share short messages tapped out in Morse code on the side of the mug and picked up by a capacitance sensor.



CCD-me-not Umbrella
When human vision is no longer the only game in town, don't leave home without this umbrella studded with infrared LEDs. Visible only to CCD surveillance cameras, this LED array baffles object-detection algorithms used in computer vision surveillance systems. Use in pairs with a friend to train these systems to recognize nonhuman shapes and patterns more common to dreams and hallucinations than the average city street.

Don't Shit Where You Eat

by Robert Sumrell

At the height of postmodernism, the concept of the “other” wasn't just a construct meant to draw attention to post-colonial diversity; it was also fetish. By the 1960s, America's white hegemonic culture was crumbling. Social proximity and the slow racial integration brought about since the emancipation of the slaves hit radical velocity after President Harry Truman signed an executive order integrating the Armed Forces in 1948, which retrospectively granted minority soldiers access to the 1944 GI Bill of Rights, creating the possibility of government-protected integration both at war and home.

War exposed a previously unseen percentage of the population to global travel throughout the mid-twentieth century. Soldiers of all races returning from World War II and Korea brought with them a craving for and experience of many exotic tastes including music, food and flesh. Taken outside of the rules of polite society and familial interest and very much looking at the possibility of dying at any moment, soldiers were able to step into new roles and reconsider things other to them and their known experiences.

Norms slowly expanded as these men learned that feeding strange desires did not bring about disaster. Food, music and photo albums became ways for returning soldiers to share their experiences and make sense of what they had endured. Meals at home could resemble meals abroad, and helped reinforce the positive memories of calm moments rather than those of conflict and MRE rations.

Beyond food and drink, some soldiers also brought back young women they had fallen for overseas. Others, who did not, would later feel a loss, creating the phenomenon of the sometimes happy and sometimes exploited mail-order bride. In both cases, racial intermarriage broke sexual taboos and helped pave the way for greater equality, contributing to the Civil Rights struggle and homosexual rights.

Throughout the late 1970s and 80s, businessmen followed the paths of these soldiers and transitioned the lands once scarred by war into new areas of cheap outsourced factory labor and rebuilding contracts. As in war, food and sex became ritualized and intertwined with business culture. Extravagant traditional meals showed a country's greatness while offering respect for a guest. Sushi, rare meats, tropical fruits and imported liquors became the centerpieces of meals, with platings exquisite and extensive enough to drive corporate icons mad with desire. A hint of sex was always served alongside, as waitresses, stewardesses and foreign guides were idealized and inserted into whatever roles would seal the deal.

The increased interaction of the postmodern experience expanded tastes while shrinking the need to travel to indulge them. Growing demand for imported goods throughout the 1980s spurred both UPS and FedEx to begin offering international rapid shipping services.

Thirty years later, we have begun to notice the heartburn brought about by overconsumption. Airplane traffic contributes significantly to the air pollution at airports, as do the vehicles bringing people and goods to and from their destination. But with manufacturing stateside in short supply and global economies largely dependent on tourism and international business, there seems little to be done about the problem. Imported goods are an accepted part of the fashion and technology markets and somehow seem untouchable, but food, possibly because it is not just consumed but ingested, acts as an index for the health of our environment and falls under increased scrutiny.

Food shortages and price increases are increasingly apparent. The scarcity of certain tunas brought about by a global taste for sushi, the tropical deforestation caused by banana farming and lack of oversight in many kinds of genetic and chemical engineering used at factory farms to increase production has given many palettes pause to ponder.

In an attempt to escape the consequences of this global condition, a quid pro quo has been enacted and now, in a flash, local food has become exotic. Largely driven by hipsters priced out of the urban core and young families looking to validate their new attachment to school districts and real estate values, local food has taken on an almost religious fervor. Yes, it should be conceded that heads of lettuce shouldn't have to travel thousands of miles to arrive at dinner and that foods grown in the ground are more pleasant than those grown in a lab. The problem is simply that the argument is almost exclusively focused on consumption and prestige, beyond which it has almost no real meaning.

Perhaps only in local farming communities does local food have some heft behind it. I can go to the market and buy a steak made from the cow grazing outside, and if I run over to the swap meet, the broccoli I buy has been grown by a neighbor. But these examples are rare. Farmers' markets, restaurants and grocery stores have added local to their list of descriptives without any real qualifiers and often purchase their goods in bulk from larger farms, feeding a romantic notion of what one wants without really offering much of significance. Even Wal-Mart, in its attempt to brand itself as responsible, has begun making the assertion that it will double the percentage of local produce sold in its stores over the next five years. But currently only

about 4.5% of its offerings meet that criteria, meaning that even in 2016, the total will still not reach 10%. Further, the reality is that Wal-Mart considers something to be local so long as it is grown within the state in which it is sold.

Local foods are limited by climate and the availability of land, and many foods simply can't be grown in every region. For instance, urban populations and large-scale farmland rarely mix, but when they do, they often lead to horrifying proposals like MVRDV's Pig City, which proposes to urbanize 15 million swine. In order for local vendors to sell in big box outlets they have to meet cut-rate prices, delivering goods at the same cost or less than they could be provided from out-of-state sources. In a souring economy, most consumers care more about the price of their goods than where they come from.

So why are urbanites different? Why do they insist on local food and why are they willing to pay a premium for it? The answer seems to be as much about consumers' need for exclusivity as their nutritional health. Where before, the “other” of post-modernism was something outside of your experience that could enrich your life, now the “other” are people just like you in nearby neighborhoods competing for the status of the most desirable place to live. Local food becomes a marker suggesting a more gourmet palette and superior lifestyle.

Food and sex, more than fashion and technology, are means of overcoming difference through desire.

Hence, the concept of local is full of crap. While we can do and should do whatever possible to limit wasting of resources while feeding the world, we cannot afford to justify the artificial value of luxury as and idealized norm that enables closed communities. Food and sex, more than fashion and technology, are a means of overcoming difference through desire. Whenever tempted to turn local food into a mark of economic and geographic elitism we should fight back. Terms like “local” and “green” are empty qualifiers that let us feel better about ourselves and our current behaviors without forcing significant changes to our lifestyle. Let's banish the term local and the sap-ily sweet romance it allows for something more useful: Don't Shit Where You Eat.

Food is sensual and should not be homogenized. What we eat and how we eat it is a means of reaching out to others and sharing a common experience. Turning food grown locally into a mark of regional protectionism misses the point and turns the dinner table into a place of cultural and often even racial exclusivity. As a term, Don't Shit Where You Eat covers both a requirement that food be produced and prepared in a healthy and responsible environment and that it should be consumed and disposed of responsibly as well, drawing attention to environmental damage—both through garbage and sewage—brought about after the meal is finished. Not everyone can afford to have access to the best a field has to offer. Food is a living thing full of variations of quality from week to week. Locally grown food may or may not taste better than imported goods and may not have a better nutritional value. It should simply mean that it was produced nearby and has not been shipped a great distance. We should remove the value-added connotations from local food and adopt a more balanced approach to eating. When we can't share the same table, we can't share the same world. Until we strip ego from our experience, the idea of local food will continue to be capitalized upon as a means of selling luxury goods to a local elite.

The Myth of the Local

by Ana María León

Strictly speaking, there is no such thing as the local, but rather a gradient of assimilation of outside influences. Rice, a traditional staple in most South and Central American countries, is not native to the continent but was imported from Asia and Africa through European and African migrants. Global migration and trade is part of the history of our planet, but the current ubiquity of the Internet tends to distract us from older forms of globalization. Then as well as now, these global networks are based on the interaction between different levels of permanence and mobility. The local has always been defined by different levels of porosity, resistance or access to the global. Increasingly, a country's approach to its trade regulations has more to do with what it considers local than actual weather and landscape. As much as local identity is constructed through indigenous food, materials and culture—or rather, those perceived as indigenous—it is also affected by the filters applied to outside goods. Smaller economies, however, can be helpful in outlining alternative trade models that negotiate the tension between local and global.

Ecuador—a country slightly smaller than the state of Nevada—has implemented a policy of tight barriers for agricultural goods and increased tariffs on luxury imports in order to keep food staples inside the country. At the same time, the border fences are lower—so to speak—so manufactured goods flow in and out more easily: forged movies, clothing and other counterfeit items are more easily accessible there than in the United States or Europe. The combination of these conditions can be visually disconcerting—the anonymity of hastily reproduced media contrasts with the diversity and quality of produce, exceeding that of a luxury organic market in the First World. At the same time, simple manufactured goods take on the status of luxurious objects. While the country strives to construct its own identity for outside consumption, the locally grown and the generically reproduced are often at odds.

The anxiety to emulate outside models feeds a demand for both luxury goods and cheap reproductions. As in other places around the world, cheap imports flood the country in waves—a few years ago it was Korean cars; now they are all Chinese. Ecuador's export markets are usually distant—the biggest exports are oil, bananas, cut flowers, shrimp, cacao and coffee—items that are abundant enough in the region—but limited trade agreements have increased exchanges with neighboring countries. This increasing commitment to regional production has allowed select local goods to thrive and keep distant imports under control.

Economies such as Ecuador's offer alternative models of production and distribution to the dependency on diversity and quantity of First World markets. Tighter trade control have allowed local products to compete with international brands, offering reduced costs to both producer and consumer. The merging of global and local characteristics has reinvented traditional handicrafts with new materials and allowed small businesses to compete with global franchises. If the economic downturn and diminishing oil resources continue to favor reduced distances between production and consumption, it might be useful to look at these economies as small-scale manufacturing and trade models, an alternative between mass-produced items distributed at a global scale and boutique, high-priced, “local” goods.

The Local Life

by Melanie Shelor

At St. Francis in central Phoenix, Arizona, you can enjoy a seasonal menu of offerings ranging from green chile stew to cardoon and turnips to sticky pudding. The space is open and airy; the bar is indoor-outdoor, with a glass garage door that can be closed during the cooler winter months in Phoenix, when daytime highs reach only into the low 60s. Renovated from a disused mid-century office building, Wendell Burnette's design is more about a process of subtraction than addition, save the careful insertion of thin steel hardware and cables that provide structural retrofitting to undersized wood joists. It is located only three blocks from a major stop on the new light rail system that weaves its way downtown, terminating nearly 20 miles away. The atmosphere is fresh, warm and inviting—a place where *Phoenix Magazine* claimed that “you're likely to see your CPA, lawyer or plastic surgeon enjoying drinks and dinner.”

St. Francis is one of the myriad new restaurants that caters to the locavore/artisanal-cuisine aficionado while positioning itself as a neighborhood gathering place. It is part of an emerging scene in North American cities that touts farm-to-table fare and is located in largely walkable urban settings. While pricing at St. Francis is comparable or even less expensive than most chain restaurant offerings, its atmosphere is suggestive of a very different clientele.

If the personal spending boom of the past decade taught us anything, it is that through the deliberate cultivation of and experimentation with taste, a new class could emerge that consumed upwardly into new categories through sudden cognizance of the coarse consumption of the “masses,” (i.e. anyone who shops at Wal-mart, and lest we resort to reactionary qualifiers, I know you know what I'm talking about). What began many years ago in a youthful, upwardly mobile middle class as occasional forays into territories of foie gras and veal has culminated in a full-blown array of complex tastes, with erudite palates able to detect the metallic content of Suzuki sashimi or the meteorological conditions during the ripening phase of a Siberian garlic used in pelmini dumplings.

When the Great Recession began in 2008, this class, the vaunted “creative class,” was left with an intricate neuronal latticework of preferences that could no longer be sustained through global travel and consumption. The concept of the “local” as the psycho-geographic source of gastronomy and identity emerged as their mobility declined. The practice of absorbing a city through its food, its crowds and its soundscapes (as well as having the city absorb you, popular among the younger hipster set) evolved into a new mode of cultural colonization: the city was theirs.

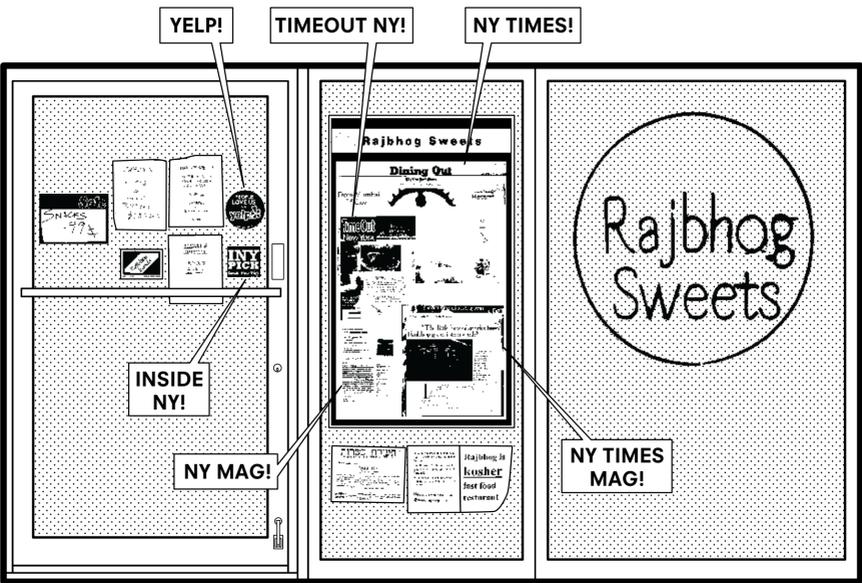
For the creative class, this new engagement with the local—as differentiated from “place,” which Marc Augé defines in “Non-Places: Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity” as “relational, historical and concerned with identity”—is in large part about the consumption of space as an aesthetic experience. With its neighborhood bars, patio cafes and farmers' markets, it is fashioned in such a way so that socialization primarily occurs in sites of pleasure. Nary a black-clad gang member is discovered trolling the streets, no children with uneven skin tone are disciplined in public and no overweight women in too-tight spandex are overheard screaming at their live-in boyfriends. No, not where community gardens proliferate, where chicken coops filled with Auracanas are not an uncommon sight. Life is good—acceptable, at the very least—as long as the Argentinian Malbec continues to flow.

In this brand of localism, space crystallizes and wraps individual behaviors back into the socially coded values of aesthetic pleasure—fine wine, good friends and an emphasis on “the natural.” The local is a mindset that consciously turns its back on those structures, such as the Interstate Highway System, that are no longer understood or appreciated as a significant peripheral of contemporary life. It is a reaction against the demand for the interminably effervescent attitude that is required of individuals defined by American economic culture. It appears to have a basis in an idea of life as a pleasure-driven experiential phenomenon that can only be produced within—or invoked by—a carefully crafted setting. While this may seem obvious, it is a departure from both the modern narrative of heroically defining one's own destiny and the emotionally fragmented, postmodern subject.

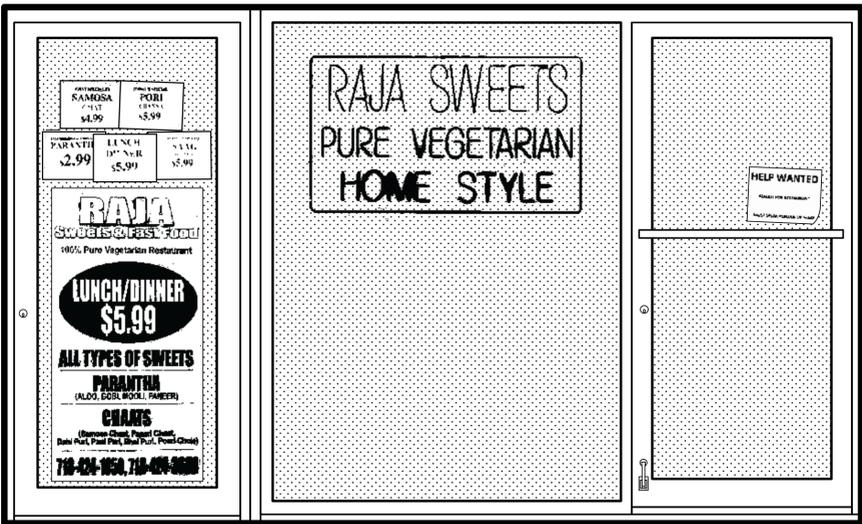
The local is indicative of Raoul Eshelman's performatist aesthetics, which reframes things that are “already existing in order to transcend or radically renew them.” The spaces in the new local “bring back beauty, good [and] wholeness . . . but only under very special, singular conditions.” In the wake of centuries-long human and asset displacement that capitalism has wrought upon the globe, communities that are fortunate enough to coalesce from a critical mass of like-minded consumers often derive an initial conception of themselves from an enhancement of the most basic of human interactions: eating and socializing. To put it another way, in Eshelman's words, “we feel the presence of an epoch whose contours are just barely visible and in which we can perceive only simplicity or simple-mindedness.”

The local is insular and exclusionary, cognizant of its less-aesthetically attuned, frequently immigrant, neighbors in the newer subdivisions, but uninterested in them. Working for global conglomerates—a ConAgra slaughterhouse or Lockheed Martin defense plant—these “others,” of course, are not local.

They haven't made it there yet.



7227 37th Ave, Jackson Heights, Queens, NY



7231 37th Ave, Jackson Heights, Queens, NY

New Local Explorers

by Leigha Dennis

As an outsider traveling to Jackson Heights, Queens, for a taste of traditional Indian food, stepping off the train at Roosevelt Avenue requires a moment to reorient to the grid and then another to absorb the neighborhood's particular density, scale and culture. While most of the establishments between Broadway and 37th Avenue could sufficiently eclipse any amateur expectations, a quick Google search will highlight and locate the most notable restaurants, providing a sense of ease and comfort to the anxious in the face of many options.

In one example, two shops which sell similar items, Rajbhog Sweets and Raja Sweets, are adjacent to each other. The entrance to Rajbhog, which has been widely featured as a Jackson Heights destination, is decorated with articles from the *New York Times*, *New York Magazine*, *Timeout New York*, and *Yelp!*, acting as indicators of credibility for the casual or hesitant passerby. The young boys behind the counter instinctively know what will be ordered, because they too have read the articles and because many others have ordered the same. Next door, at Raja Sweets, there are no Zagat or Yelp! stickers, only local and handmade signs describing the food and pricing. The interior is noticeably more informal and disorderly, yet there are considerably more customers—most seeming to be regulars dining with their co-workers or families. Meanwhile, the older women preparing the food speak just enough English to take the orders, although not without a little confusion.

In both cases, to the globalized citizen with a developing palette the food is unquestionably authentic. The overall experiences, however, vary in such ways that one wonders how certain

levels of online publicity and media exposure could alter authenticity as the result of an expanded network. Does Raja Sweets have a more “local” existence simply because there are more local patrons, and did Rajbhog once have a similar clientele?

New methods for navigating the city have generated a new category of roving citizen: the local tourist in search of authenticity. These are tourists that are actually residents as well. With the help of easily accessible internet content, crowd-sourced ratings and reviews, top-ten lists and customized maps, knowledge of the best restaurants and bars across the city is no longer exclusive to those somehow “in the know,” that elusive status previously bestowed upon a given neighborhood's residents. Today, all parts of the city are open for exploration. With mobile devices at hand, anyone can venture into an unfamiliar neighborhood with the basic knowledge of a local—experiencing what is perceived to be authentic after a few minutes of preliminary research. Why take the risk of trying a restaurant that might turn out disappointing when you can find one that has been inspected and approved by many others?

As mobile culture proliferates parallel to online tools for navigating the city, the relationship between locality and the particularities of place will continue to reconcile. What is considered local may no longer be restricted to its location, but rather to a growing community of online and word-of-mouth connections. Local establishments will gain popularity, their networks expanding beyond the borders of their neighborhoods. The café down the street may not always feel so familiar, especially when the wait for a coffee extends to thirty minutes. Meanwhile, like many region-specific cookbooks, the recent “New Brooklyn Cookbook” suggests that a part of this trendy food borough can be recreated in any home, anywhere.

In the pursuit of a truly local authenticity, the very qualities that merit recognition are those that diminish with increased exposure, perpetuating the need to search harder. Fortunately, the methods for discovery are easy, accessible and constantly updated—because for this reason, the search must go on.

The New

Who's/e New York City?

by Luca Farinelli

New Yorkers: a particular species of individuals. They move quickly, talk fast, act in a neurotic fashion. Both sure and erratic in their movements, like flies they move with absolute conviction in one direction before deciding, with equal conviction, that their direction must suddenly change. Their eyes block out all peripheral vision, focusing only on those two steps of asphalt ahead. Efficiency seems to guide their conversations, and their senses have become accustomed to sounds and smells that most humans would consider unbearable. They are hardened by the surrounding concrete—the skin thickens where the environment is harsh.

On the same streets, though mostly unnoticed by New Yorkers, walks another kind of individual: the Foreigner. Occupying the same space, yet somehow in a parallel dimension, they too can be spotted easily. Whether from the nearby shores of New Jersey or a distant village in India, their behavior in the urban environment differs radically from that of the New Yorker. Overwhelmed by the concrete and glass mountains surrounding them, their eyes wander, ready to pick up all the city has to offer. Their movements too are erratic, but without the same control that distinguishes the first group of individuals; they seem lost in the sensory overload of the city.

While at a first glance the difference between the Foreigner and the New Yorker could not be any more obvious, strangely enough they are both locals in New York City.

EXPORTED IMAGES, IMPORTED IMAGINARIES

New York is easily the most media-portrayed city in the globe; countless movies and novels have been dedicated to its streets. Images of the city are exported continuously, so it is not surprising that the Foreigner, in return, imports an image of his or her own. New York becomes an extension of foreign localities. Its personality belongs to the global imaginary, a hardscaped screen for the constant projection of a myriad of personal and foreign images.

The image of the city is therefore undefined, or rather, infinitely redefined. In this way, what is local is created as much abroad as in situ. Just as the New Yorker walks with a mission, eyes straight ahead, the Foreigner pursues, with absolute certainty, the idea of the city received, interpreted and recombined constructed back home. We are all locals in New York.

The creation of so many—and such precise—mental images is to be attributed to various sources in the global media. Depending on the source of information, different segments of that source's audience will share certain images of what is local in New York. I have seen how New York has a different meaning for different people. But never have I seen anyone without a preconceived image of this city already inhabiting his or her mind upon arrival.

Articles tracking the latest trends born in the city are produced incessantly. News of a particular restaurant, an exhibition opening or a theatrical performance is broadcast worldwide. New York's local-ness is a highly imported good. Search-based media from different countries are continuously offering a broad view into New York's local fashions. Within each country however, the focus of the media and the local image of New York it offers, seems to be shared and more focused. Groups of foreigners of the same nationality will find they share a similar, pre-produced image of the city. They will move through similar trajectories to each other, occupy specific places of which they understand the local-ness already and together solidify the idea of the local they have imported.

Especially powerful in exporting specific images of New York has been television. Shows such as "Friends," "Seinfeld," "The Sopranos," "Sex & the City" and "Gossip Girl" have broadcast New York's local worldwide. In TV shows, where we are often brought in contact with daily, intimate situations in the lives of the stars, the familiarity of the settings is everything. To feel closer to the character, we have to feel like we know the spaces they inhabit. And so, when one finally finds the actual location where the shooting took place, a kind of déjà vu occurs; it's more than having seen the place before, its like having lived in it already; having known it and its peculiarities for an extended period of time.

There is no one authentic local experience—only infinite extensions of experiences whose localness begins somewhere else. A fractured map is constructed by each one of us; these maps sometimes coincide, sometimes depart, yet they are all equally intimate, local and foreign at once. Not a local universality, sterile and alienating, but a universal locality. Not a group of villages, but rather the unitary projection of a myriad of villages.

The exportation of well-defined images of itself, a constant operation of re-branding, is what allows New York City to exist as a global capital. In the conversations between Marco Polo and the Kublai Khan imagined by Italo Calvino in his "Invisible Cities," Polo cautions the great Khan—and us—that names are misleading. The same name may carry completely different significance to different individuals. The local reality is not produced by the name, but by the images it evokes. It is constantly projected onto the idea of a city. Reflecting on the imagined city of Pyrrha, Polo says:

"My mind goes on containing a great number of cities I have never seen and will never see, names that bear with them a figure or a fragment or glimmer of an imagined figure...[The imagined city is still there] but I can no longer call it by a name, nor remember how I could ever have given it a name that means something entirely different."

The map pin points the shooting locations of episodes of New York-based TV shows "Friends" and "Gossip Girl," as well as some of Woody Allen's classic films. These are some of the sites within the city which are familiar to visitors from experiencing them remotely.

These locations are overlaid on a map of the most tourist-photographed sites in New York City, extracted from a series titled "Locals and Tourists" by Eric Fischer. In the series, Fischer mapped geotagging data from photosharing websites Flickr and Picasa, enabling him to determine the exact location where each picture was shot. If the pictures taken by each user in the New York area were shot within a month or less, they were

considered to be photographs by tourists. If the same user had taken pictures for a period of time longer than one month, he/she was considered local.

The superimposition of the two data sets is a visualization of the relationship between exported images and imported imaginaries.

Film and TV show locations from Google Maps
 "Gossip Girl": <http://bit.ly/fHphuR>
 "Friends": <http://bit.ly/e3IYj6>
 Woody Allen: <http://bit.ly/gizwRA>

"Locals and Tourists #2: New York" by Eric Fischer
<http://www.flickr.com/photos/walkingsf/4671594023/in/set-72157624209158632/>

 "Gossip Girl"	 Woody Allen Films	 "Friends"	
1. Columbia University	1. Thalia Cinema ("Annie Hall," 1977)	1. American Museum of Natural History	30. John's Pizza
2. Constance Billard and St. Jude's School for Boys	2. Pomander Walk ("Hannah and Her Sisters," 1986)	2. Iridium Restaurant	31. Phoebe Buffay's apartment
3. Blair's Apartment	3. Elaine's Restaurant ("Manhattan," 1979)	3. Unitel Video Studio 55	32. Mexican Village Restaurant
4. The Met	4. Green Restaurant ("Crimes and Misdemeanors," 1989)	4. San Domenico's	33. Monte's restaurant
5. Bethesda Fountain	5. The Langham ("Hannah and Her Sisters," 1986)	5. Benihana of Tokyo	34. Circle in the Square theatre
6. Wollman Ice Skating Rink	6. Annie Hall's apartment ("Annie Hall," 1977)	6. Chandler Bing's office building	35. Washington Square Park
7. The Pond in Central Park	7. 68th Street Playhouse ("Husbands and Wives," 1992)	7. Le Chantilly	36. Department of Anthropology at NYU
8. Pulitzer Fountain	8. Beekman Theatre ("Annie Hall," 1977)	8. Bloomingdale's	37. The Public Theatre
9. Dylan's Candy Bar	9. New Yorker Hotel ("Bullets Over Broadway," 1994)	9. Healing Hands Inc.	38. Cooper Union Engineering Building
10. Geisha	10. Belasco Theatre ("Bullets Over Broadway," 1994)	10. Celestine Customs Tailor	39. FDNY Engine Company 5
11. Henri Bendel Inc.	11. 21 Club ("Manhattan Murder Mystery," 1993)	11. Pulse Ensemble Theater	40. Beth Israel Medical Center
12. Salon de Ning at The Peninsula	12. Carnegie Deli ("Broadway Danny Rose," 1984)	12. Becco	41. Moondance Diner
13. Gilt Restaurant & Bar	13. The St. Regis New York ("Hannah and Her Sisters," 1986)	13. Estelle Leonard Talent Agency	42. City of New York Department of Health Services
14. Van der Woodsen's apartment	14. Waldorf Astoria Hotel ("Crimes and Misdemeanors," 1989)	14. Saks 5th Avenue	43. Police: 5th Precinct
15. The Campbell apartment	15. Riverview Terrace ("Manhattan," 1979)	15. Madison Square Garden	44. Bank
16. Grand Central Terminal	16. Hotel Waldron ("Manhattan Murder Mystery," 1993)	16. Fashion Tower	45. Pete Becker's office
17. Marquee Night Club	17. John's Pizzeria ("Manhattan," 1979)	17. New York City Library	
18. Communitea	18. Bleecker Street Cinema ("Crimes and Misdemeanors," 1989)	18. Ross Geller's divorce attorney	
19. Kiss on the Lips Party	19. Central Bar ("Hannah and Her Sisters," 1986)	19. Pier 59 studios	
20. Silvercup Studios	20. Dean & DeLuca Café ("Husbands and Wives," 1992)	20. Mattress King	
21. New York University		21. Silvercup Studios	
22. Victrola		22. St. Vincent's Hospital	
23. Bedford Avenue Gallery		23. Riff's Bar	
24. Babycakes NYC		24. Halloween Adventure	
25. The Humphrey's Brooklyn Loft		25. Lucille Lortel Theatre	
		26. Village Cigars	
		27. D'Agostino supermarket	
		28. Apartment of Monica Geller and Rachel Green, Chandler Bing and Joey Tribbiani	
		29. Cherry Lane Theater	

