

MAKING CITY 5th IABR 2012

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5th IABR: *Making City* draws to a close, but the work continues

132,600 visitors visited the fifth edition of the International Architecture Biennale Rotterdam

The festive closure of the exhibition *Making City Istanbul*, on 12 December in Istanbul, marks the official end of the fifth edition of the International Architecture Biennale Rotterdam, the 5th IABR.

The exhibitions and other programmes in the Netherlands, Turkey and Brazil attracted 132,600 visitors. Almost 3 million people watched and listened to the TV and radio programs broadcast as part of 'Leve de Stad', a collaborative project of the IABR and the Dutch broadcaster VPRO.

IABR has started preparations for the 6th edition, *URBANbyNATURE*, which opens in May 2014.

Taking up the challenge

The 5th IABR was a call to all stakeholders – administrators, policymakers, politicians, designers and cities – to start new alliances and take constructive, sustainable action. By the middle of this century, the number of people living in the world's cities will have more than doubled. Cities will produce over 90% of the world's wealth. This development urged the 5th IABR: *Making City* to pose questions about city-making strategies. How can we address the challenge of making city for such vast numbers? Do we really know how to design and manage cities more effectively? Can the city become a more sustainable environment for continued prosperity, with equal opportunities for billions of urban dwellers?

IABR took up its own challenge, entering into temporary partnerships with local parties and municipalities to develop and implement projects in Rotterdam Central District, an urban park and an eco-corridor in Istanbul, and a strategic action plan for the north eastern area of São Paulo. It also embarked on seven major spatial projects in the Netherlands in partnership with the Dutch Ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment.

Concrete results

As a result of this approach, the 5th edition of IABR leaves a more concrete legacy than previous editions:

- The pilot projects developed by the *IABR Atelier Istanbul* (a collaboration between IABR and the Municipality of Arnavutköy in Istanbul) have been hailed as an unqualified success. Flood protection will be built along a section of the flood-prone Bollluça River, simultaneously creating an urban park and an 'eco-corridor'. Led by the Dutch H+N+S Landscape Architects, the Belgian design office 51N4E and Grontmij Turkey, Dutch hydraulic expertise and eco-engineering will unite to shape a more

sustainable future for Istanbul. Two other municipalities have now approached the IABR to co-develop similar trajectories.

- Fernando de Mello Franco, one of the curators of the 5th IABR and in charge of the *IABR Atelier São Paulo* that developed plans for the northern periphery of the metropolis where tropical rainforest is under threat from encroaching informal housing, has been appointed the city's Secretary of Urban Development as of 1 January 2013. The appointment presents opportunities for stepping up the alliance between the IABR and the city of São Paulo, which has been active since 2007.
- ZUS firm of architects, and curators of the *IABR Test Site Rotterdam*, has permanently revitalized the area around Schieblock, in Rotterdam Central District. Now, after installing the first section of the elevated timber walkway the Luchtsingel, on 13 July, Rotterdam north is reconnected with Rotterdam centre. The project won the first Rotterdam Stadsinitiatief and garnered enormous media coverage. Two other projects, the Biergarten, a pop-up bar and event location and the rooftop market garden DakAkker have also become lasting additions to the city. Another section of the Luchtsingel will be realised in 2013.
- *Making Projects*, the working method developed with the Dutch Ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment will become an integral part of cabinet policy on 1 January 2013. Over the next four years, the results of *Atelier Making Projects* will be presented at the 6th and 7th editions of the IABR. Furthermore, as a lead partner of the Ministry, IABR will set up project ateliers to foster the power of design to be deployed in local and regional projects.

Statistics

Six exhibitions opened in April of this year: five in Rotterdam and one in Almere. The exhibition *Making City São Paulo* followed on 19 June in Brazil. On 10 October, the exhibition *Making City Istanbul* opened in the Istanbul Modern (Museum for Modern Art) as part of the first Istanbul Design Biennial.

The popular roster of events included some 150 lectures, debates, presentations, workshops and other activities. Among the highlights were the packed opening weekend and the successful seminar about the future of Istanbul, organised by the IABR at the Istanbul Modern.

6th IABR

The organisation has started preparations for the next edition, the 6th IABR, which opens in May 2014 with the title *URBANbyNATURE*. Landscape architect Dirk Sijmons has been appointed curator. Sijmons holds that to resolve the world's ecological problems we first need to resolve the problems facing our cities. The key to a sustainable future lies in improving the design, planning and governance of our urban environment.

The 6th IABR will focus on the 'natural' character of the city as human biotope. By looking at the city through the lens of landscape architecture and by exploring it as nature, as a metabolism, the 6th IABR sets out to analyse its material flows – fresh water, energy, data, food, waste, cargo, and others – and identify new steering guides to designing and planning sustainable urban infrastructures.

Note for editors:

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