

# PERFORMATIVE URBANISM

SCENOGRAPHIES, CHOREOGRAPHIES AND THE CHANGE OF URBAN ECOLOGIES

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# PERFORMATIVE URBANISM

- \* A research perspective for a re-emergence of the city
- \* Pedagogic practice - and an elective course at Performance Design, Roskilde University

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# TRANSDISCIPLINARITY

URBAN STUDIES AND PLANNING / PERFORMANCE DESIGN

“We wish to give an introduction to the various arenas for performance practices and urban planning - from the invited spaces of the planning authorities and cultural institutions to the every day arenas of urban commons.

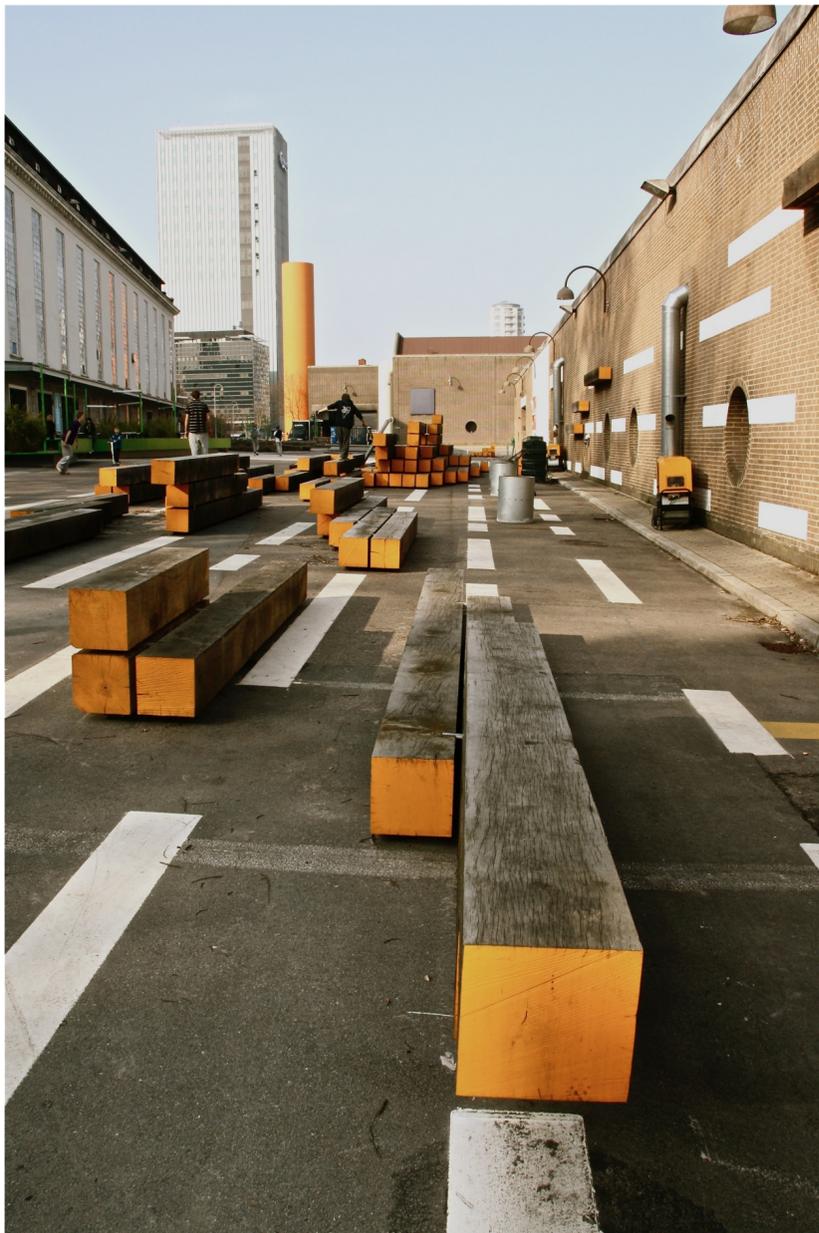
Focusing on the conditions for urban participation and the rights to the city, the course explores the aesthetics, ethics and politics related to contemporary design, art and urban planning”. (From the course syllabus, 2013)

# PERSPECTIVES ON PERFORMATIVE URBANISM

#1 PERFORMATIVE URBAN DESIGN

#2 URBAN SCENOGRAPHY AND CHOREOGRAPHY

#3 ACTIVISM AND URBAN COMMONS



# **PERFORMATIVE URBAN DESIGN**

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In urban development, temporary spaces and spectacular architecture are part of planning to attract creative middle class citizens. The Carlsberg city, temporary urban design, Copenhagen 2012-2015.

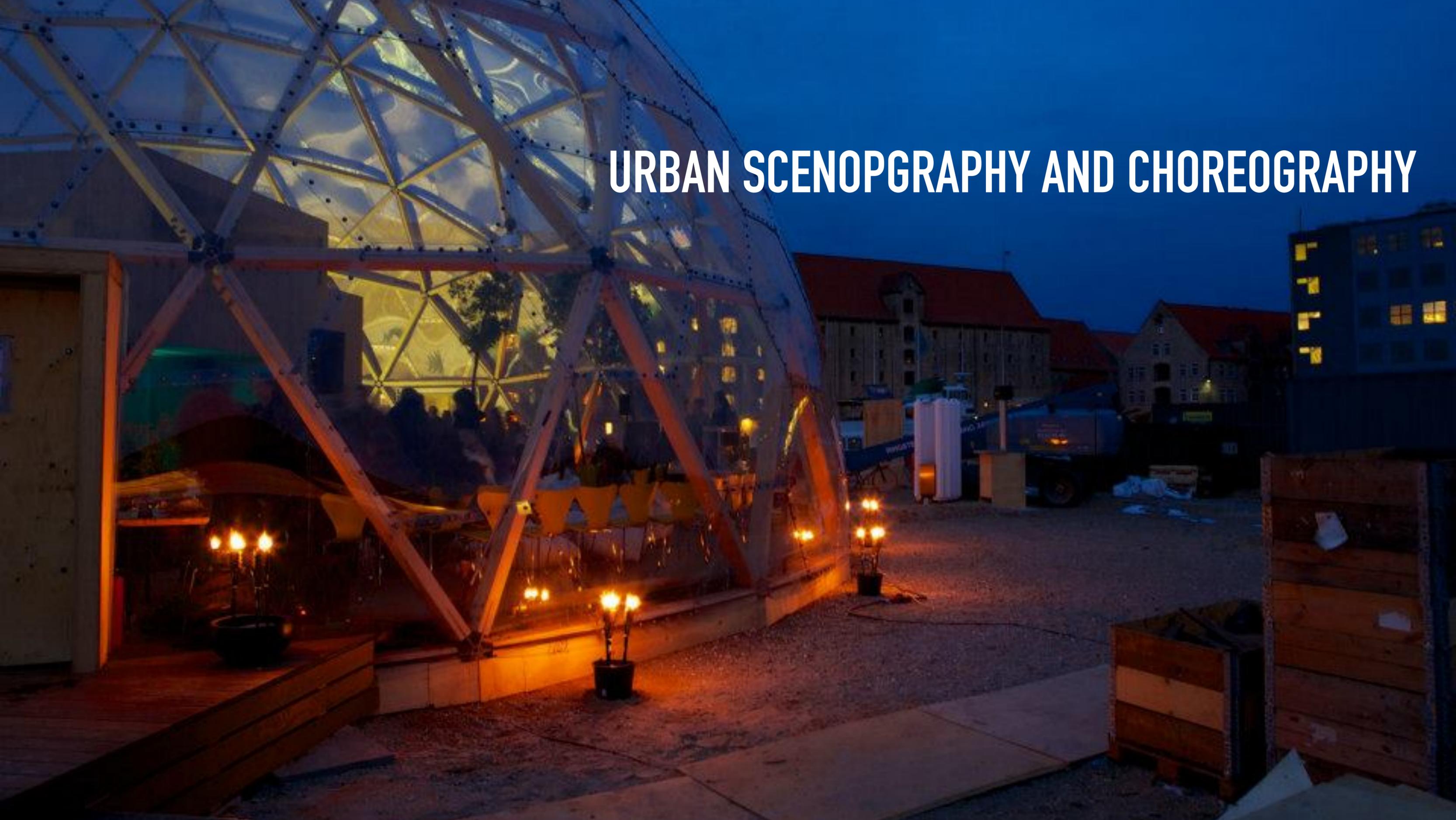
# **URBAN SCENOPGRAPHY AND CHOREOGRAPHY**



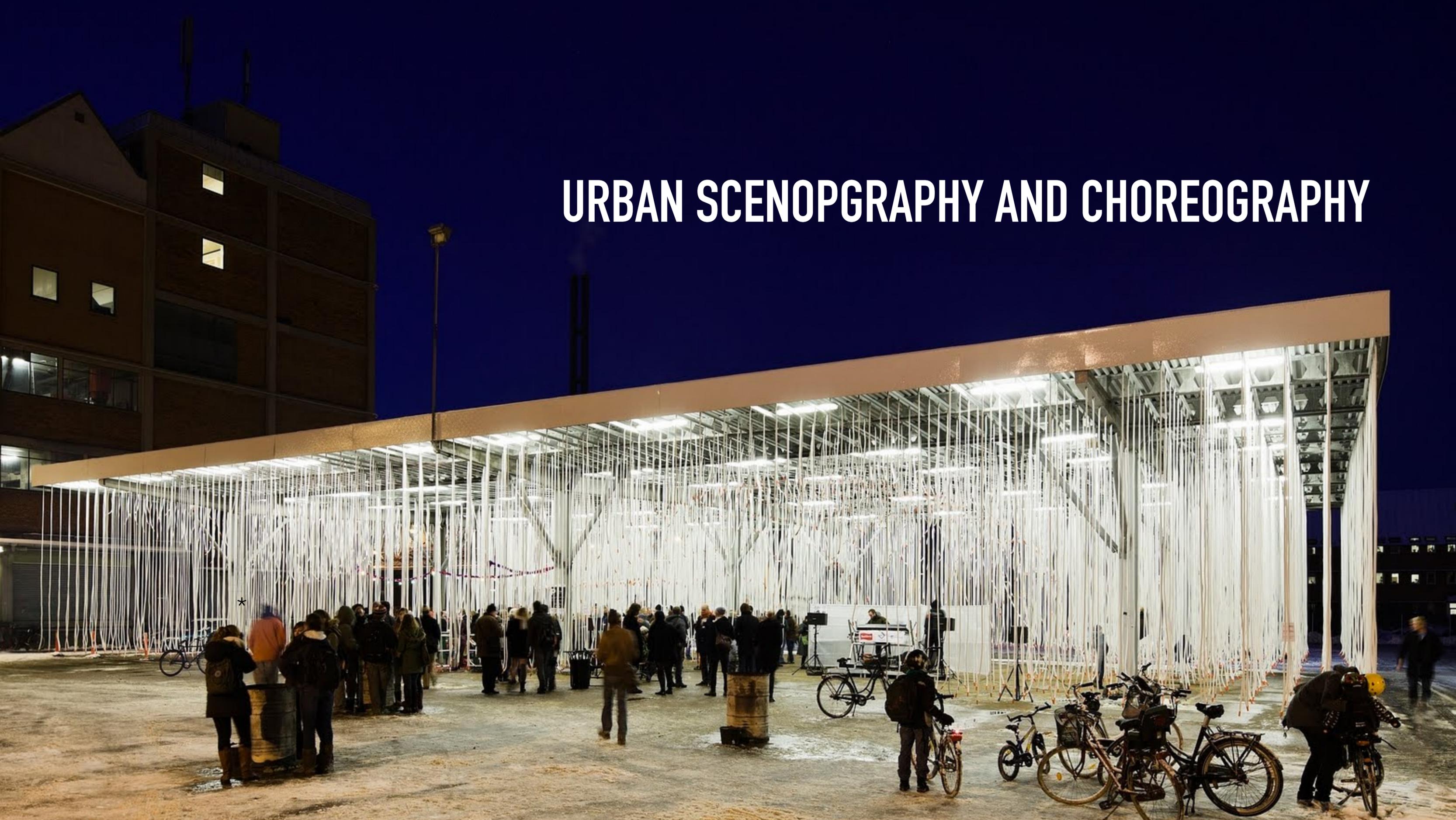
Art and culture increasingly leave the institutions and partake in urban planning processes in public space. Metropolis Performance Biennial, Copenhagen 2010.



# URBAN SCENOGRAPHY AND CHOREOGRAPHY



# URBAN SCENOGRAPHY AND CHOREOGRAPHY



# URBAN SCENOGRAPHY AND CHOREOGRAPHY

Raumlabor: Kitchen Monument

# **ACTIVISM AND URBAN COMMONS**



Activism, Performance interventions and how they create new urban and mediated publics. Occupy Gezi 2013 in Istanbul.



*Standing Man* - an performnce intervention at Taksim square in Istanbul during Occupy Gezi 2013

POLITICAL  
[ACTIVIST] FIELD  
SOCIAL  
ART





Spatial activism in Sao Paulo by Muda Coletivo: Bolha Imobiliária - the real estate bubble.  
Visiting activist, Marcella Arruda.

# ACTIVISM AND URBAN COMMONS



# ACTIVISM AND URBAN COMMONS



# THE DOINGS AND EMBODIMENTS OF PERFORMATIVE URBANISM

A critical and analytical perspective - embedded and embodied.

Workshops and lectures situated in urban thresholds (situated knowledges, negotiations, action research and visual, material and bodily engaged ethnographies)

Site-specific and situated exams open for urban publics

## **Performative architecture and performative urban design**

Bodily engagement and on site explorations of Superkilen, ethnographies of movement and rest.

## **Urban scenography and choreography**

Site specific teaching on the theatre island, Refshaleøen, choreographies at Nørrebro station, performance presentations in Dome of visions

## **Activism and urban commons**

exhibiting in the candy factory, action research where our situated embodied practice potentially transforms the urban environment - for good or bad!

# PERFORMATIVE URBANISM - EMBODIMENTS



Embodying mental .borders - autumn 2017



**Sometimes Making Something leads to Nothing** -A collective re-enactment of Francis Alÿs' videoperformance





The exhaustion in doing something that leads to nothing- who will take care of an melting ice cube?



The bargain



Choreographies of movement and rest - critical and embodied exploration of performative urban design - Superkilen Park, cph



On Hold: Sound intervention at Nørrebro Station exam, autumn 2017



Mirror walk - Performative Urbanism: autumn 2017





“The emergence of a collective body” autumn 2017

# PERFORMATIVE URBANISM AS RESEARCH METHODOLOGY



A 4 hour long butoh inspired non-performance crossing Knippelsbro bridge, cph.

# PERFORMATIVE URBANISM AS A RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

”dance in the age of performance already expresses its singularity: to generate charged and vital problematic fields on which pressing and urgent political, corporeal, affective, and social problems are made visible and gather — not to find a solution, but to further the movement of problematization.”

André Lepecki *Singularities, Dance in the Age of Performance*, 2016, p. 8.

# PERFORMATIVE URBANISM AS A RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

THE ART COLLECTIVE JAMBOY: SELAM SELAM - WHEN STRANGERS MOVE IN



# PERFORMATIVE URBANISM AS A RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

SELAM SELAM - WHEN STRANGERS MOVE IN



desire, becoming and migration...

# RESEARCH ON URBAN ECOLOGIES

## SOCIAL, ENVIRONMENTAL, MENTAL



# URBAN ECOLOGIES

Félix Guattari: **Three Ecologies** proposes an “eco-sophy”

**Social ecologies** how we engage with each other, organise communities, meet in public, social relations.

**Environmental ecologies**: how we treat nature and our environment, how we design cities, ex. housing and architecture can establish an environmental ecology relating people to nature and propose alternative social ecologies.

**Mental ecologies** relate to the production of subjectivity, how we perceive the world. Art and culture, music, aesthetic experiences have the potential to change the refrains of existing sign systems and intervene in our mental ecologies.

# URBAN ECOLOGIES

According to Isabelle Stengers, an ecology is processual, relating to the “production of values, to the proposal of new modes of evaluation, new meanings” (Isabelle Stengers, *Cosmopolitics*, 2010: 32)

In an ecology “new relations are added to a situation already produced by a multiplicity of relations” (2010: 33)

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# URBAN ECOLOGIES

The city is how mental, social and environmental ecologies constantly intersect and affect one another.

Nigel Thrift uses the term infrastructure and how urban infrastructures relate to the anthropocene:

“cities are built by optimizing the selfishness of one species at the expense in blood and pain of many others. Sharing is not on this urban agenda.” (Thrift 2017)

# ECO-LOGIC QUESTIONS

How does existing social, mental and environmental urban ecologies sustain and relate to one another?

How can existing urban ecologies and infrastructures be changed?

In particular, changing **social** and **environmental** ecologies in the city emphasizing how they relate to **mental** ecologies...

# THE ECOLOGIES OF GELLERUP

modernist social housing <=> the ghetto discourse <=> urban regeneration <=> performative architecture <=> participatory art and theatre <=> spatial and cultural colonialism <=> empowerment and performing citizenship <=> feminist practices



# PERFORMATIVE URBANISM



# PERFORMATIVE URBANISM

## PROPOSING AN EMBODIED METHODOLOGY

**Embodiments** to rethink urban ecologies and change the refrains of our own mental ecologies.

**Situated knowledge** and the critical capacities of scenography and choreography as situated and embodied knowledge practices.

“**refrains for moving bodies** and changing these refrains by reworking time-spaces (McGormack 2013) working with **felt experience and situated methodologies** beyond proceduralism (Springay & Truman 2017)

**Performative urban methodologies *could be...***

“a commitment to methods in which experience gives way to experimentation, where it “becomes a field of variations in which to experiment with the questions of how felt difference might register in thinking” (McCormack, 2013, p. 11, Springay & Truman).

*A felt difference* that holds the capacity to change our -(citizens, architects and planners alike) mental ecologies and doings in the city.

# PERFORMATIVE URBANISM AND THE RE-EMERGENCE OF THE CITY

