

We_Brazil (version 9.5.2013)

We_Brazil will be the German contribution to the 2013 International Architecture Biennial in São Paulo. The project is part of '*Weltstadt – Stadtwelten*' - a larger collaboration between the Goethe Institute and the German Federal Ministry of Transport, Building and Urban Development (BMVBS), curated by Matthias Böttger, Angelika Fitz, and Tim Rieniets.

'Weltstadt – Stadtwelten': Who creates the city? Who shapes the city?

Major global challenges, such as globalized economic growth and financial crises, migration and demographic changes, social polarization and climate change fundamentally question and formulate the possible futures of cities. '*Weltstadt – Stadtwelten*' will explore the rising presence of new actors and public participation in urban planning processes, and how these might influence experts, administrations, politicians and investors when failing to fully respond to pressing challenges. More specifically, we intend this project to explore how new groups and organisations take initiative, and where urban planning, as a once centralized, now an increasingly diversified affair, is being supplemented, infiltrated, or even partially replaced by these new players and processes.

Local cultures of 'city-making' around the globe

Through '*Weltstadt – Stadtwelten*' we aim at identifying, supporting, and promoting local cultures of 'city-making' around the world. This "city-making" spectrum ranges from upgrading informal settlements in Johannesburg and Seoul, to cultural activation in Belgrade and Riga. It also expands from complex processes of modernisation in India, to new forms of collaboration and sharing in crisis-ridden cities across South-West Europe and to new forms of citizenship in Brazilian cities challenged by a period of boom-transformation.

Guided by the question "Who creates the city?", these local processes will be observed, challenged, and documented by the actors themselves, local curators, international correspondents, and guest scholars. A website and a series of newspapers will create links between the different projects as well as highlight underlying themes that go beyond local relevance. This general attitude towards collaboration is based on "learning with" - where we aspire to facilitate progressive frameworks, let's say, that activists from Seoul learn with Porto Alegre, and a local government in Stuttgart learn with Curitiba. Ultimately, '*Weltstadt – Stadtwelten*' will create a cross-referential platform presenting all the different processes and results, making the material accessible to the participants, to other cities in the *Weltstadt* as well as to an international audiences.

We_Brazil: Curitiba, Porto Alegre, Salvador

While in Brazil, the workshops will take place in Curitiba, Porto Alegre, and Salvador during August of 2013. In cooperation with the respective Goethe-Institute *Weltstadt*-Curator Matthias Böttger and invited artist/architect Luis Berríos-Negrón will set-up, in each city, a local version of the *Y-Table*, a concept originally conceived by the Berlin-based collective “The Anxious Prop”. The table serves both as a tool as well as a manual for specific discourses and processes conducted in each city. Here, an invited, local curator/moderator will intervene at the Y-Table to conduct a three-day workshop in Portuguese along with about 15 participants. These workshops intend to facilitate unlikely engagements between different local actors, from community based to public and private agencies, hoping to develop unexpected, future narratives specific to each city. Most importantly, through We_Brazil we would like to learn more about the present and future role of a growing “new middle-class” in previously unseen economic and urban growth, where the chances of a new type of citizenship increasingly emerges, one that nurtures greater acceptance with, influence on, and access to their neighborhood, to their communities.

In Porto Alegre, Márcio Rosa D'Avila will launch the workshop series with a debate about the history of “*orçamento participativo*”, which seems to be conflicting with current efforts towards economic growth. In order to exemplify the issue, he will focus on *Vila Liberdade*, a community in Porto Alegre’s northern fringe, and *Vila Planetario* found in the city core. Next, continuing in Curitiba, Sergio Póvoa Pires will look to optimize the city’s renowned planning approach by including new thinkers and more diverse perspectives to consider the city’s outward growth that is bleeding into the surrounding municipalities. The third workshop will then be in Salvador, where Icaro Vilaca will engage neighbourhood associations and local planners in an activists’ approach towards tackling the issue of the ‘right to the city’ by examining the neighbourhoods of *Dois de Julho* and *Alagados*.

Parallel to the workshops Matthias Böttger, Luis Berríos Négron, and local partners will conduct interviews with participants and additional voices, while using the Y-Table as apparatus and catalyser. A camera mounted on the table will give the same perspective in every city, and will thereby create a shared imagery. All recordings and ideas generated will then be quickly transferred to the *Weltstadt* editors in Berlin. Michael Marten, Ludwig Engel, and Leona Lynen will edit and filter the content and will consequently prepare content for the website and newspaper for the presentation in São Paulo and in all of the other *Stadtwelten*. The finalised PDFs will be sent back to Brazil for printing.

At the International Architecture Biennial in São Paulo

In order to draw further connections between the participating cities, one surface of each local Y-Table will be brought to São Paulo in order to build one composite Y-Table that represents workshop dialogues and traces produced in each, respective city. This composite Y-Table, with wings from Porto Alegre, Curitiba and Salvador, and an enhanced hexagonal core, will be set-up in Sao Paulo for the opening of the Biennale on September 28th. The core of the table will include touchpads with access to the *Weltstadt – Stadtwelten* website and

database, while the newspapers in English and Portuguese will be available for takeaway and sent to all participating cities.

During the Biennale, more talks and workshops will take place at the Y-Table. Matthias Böttger will invite guests to reflect upon the findings made in the aforementioned Brazilian cities, with special emphasis on the role of the so-called “new middle-class”. What will the city of this “middle-class” look like? And, are these notions comparable to the German concept(s) of a middle-class, which are crucial to the idea, and making, of the European city? Ultimately, the talks and workshops will be linked to the findings of other *Weltstadt* projects, aspiring to become a comprehensive, yet comparative resource to interested audiences both at the São Paulo Biennial, and around the world.