

**SUPER  
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**STUDIO  
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STUDIO  
THE BRIEF**



**20-27 JULY**

**SONA**



Australian  
Institute of  
Architects

**alspec**  
EVERYTHING ALUMINIUM  
& HARDWARE

<p><b>THEME</b></p>	<p><b>Reorient:</b> Reimagining ‘Third Places’ toward community and environmental resilience.</p>
<p><b>PREAMBLE</b></p>	<p>In our rapidly evolving world, characterised by the challenges of rapid urbanisation, digitalization and artificial intelligence - where virtual connections are becoming increasingly prevalent, the importance of physical 'third places' in fostering authentic community interactions has never been greater.</p> <p>‘Third places’, as coined by sociologist Ray Oldenburg, are vital spaces where people converge, connect, and gather beyond the confines of their homes and workplaces. These spaces encompass a diverse range of environments, including porches, front gardens, streetscapes, bus stops, transport routes, schoolyards, cafes, and urban ground-level interfaces. They possess the inherent power to foster informal conversations, bridge social divides, promote inclusivity, and serve as the living room of society.</p> <p>However, these essential physical places and experiences are facing growing threats. On the one hand, digitalisation and the prevalence of virtual social networks are altering the dynamics of human interaction, leading to a decrease in face-to-face engagement. The allure of online connectivity has transformed how we connect, replacing the richness of in-person encounters with a virtual substitute. On the other hand, the neoliberal shift in the value of space has further exacerbated these challenges. Inflated costs of material and labour, coupled with economic considerations, have led to a prioritising of financial returns over community and social benefits in the design of our buildings and cities. This shift overshadows the creation of spaces that foster collective wellbeing, community participation, and self-productive practices. Even public spaces, once envisioned as shared gathering grounds, are increasingly guided by concerns of risk, safety, and litigation rather than environmental and social resilience.</p> <p>As architects we strive to find agency within larger systems, and to provide purpose. However, before we can enact and facilitate change, we must first understand our own immediate context, and our position, to identify the necessary transformations and determine who, or what will be impacted by them.</p> <p>To ‘reorient’ is to set or arrange ourselves in a new or different determinate position, to feel grounded, to understand where we stand, to decide where to take the next step, to take stock of what is around us – and to look toward the horizon.</p> <p>Bruno Latour advocates reorienting as a tool to ground oneself in the world, on the ground which connects every human and non-human – in response to a sometimes confused role between the local and the globalised world.</p>

## PROVOCATION

The profound impact of these shifts on social connections and community well-being is difficult to quantify but cannot be ignored.

Fortunately, as designers, through the act of designing, we have the ability to constantly reorient ourselves within a problem by observing, speculating on solutions, and exploring the outcomes.

In the face of the challenges presented above, how might we reevaluate these 'third spaces' – to breathe new life into the vital spaces that shape our communities?

By reclaiming and reimagining these spaces, we can strengthen social bonds, foster inclusivity, and cultivate resilient, flourishing societies.

This Super Studio brief provocation invites you to explore innovative solutions that address the imaginative rethinking of 'third places.'

Through your proposals, we seek to counterbalance the diminishing significance of physical spaces, harness the potential of emerging technologies, and create environments that prioritise human connection, community, inclusion and interaction, comfort, and a sense of belonging.

## PROGRAM

You are invited to speculate on design interventions that make 'third places' thrive, bridging the gaps between individuals and promoting social cohesion.

1. **Selecting a Target Space:** Choose a specific space within your community that you are familiar with or see as having the potential for positive change. This could include streetscapes, parks, community centres, marketplaces, libraries, or any other public spaces where social interactions can be encouraged.
2. **Observing Human Behaviour:** Observe the existing patterns of human behaviour within the chosen space, noting the level of public life, social interactions, and the presence of equity and empowerment. Identify the shortcomings and opportunities for improvement that can inform your design intervention. How might we support diverse needs – ensuring universal accessibility, dignified ageing in place, and fostering inclusivity within the chosen space?
3. **Envisioning Design Interventions:** Based on your observations, envision design strategies that address one or several of the following focus areas:
  - a. Reimagining Physical Spaces: Explore design strategies to transform existing physical spaces or create new ones as vibrant third places. Consider the touch points, thresholds, interfaces,

and means of transport. Envision revitalisation approaches that encourage community engagement, inclusivity, and resilience through community-led initiatives.

- b. Fostering Inclusivity and Equity: Develop design interventions that promote inclusivity, bridge social divides, and ensure equitable access for people of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds. Consider the diverse needs and experiences of different user groups within the community, striving to create spaces that empower and celebrate diversity
- c. Encouraging Social Interaction: Devise design strategies that stimulate informal conversations, cultural exchange, and participation within third places. Explore spatial arrangements, seating configurations, and interactive elements that encourage face-to-face interactions, collaboration, and the formation of social bonds. Integrate technology thoughtfully to enhance, rather than replace, human connections
- d. Finding Harmony Between Social and Climate Regeneration: Beyond architectural gestures, explore landscape measures that might have the power to alter human social behaviour and improve comfort whilst also contributing to the regeneration of the natural environment. Explore new ways to integrate sustainable practices into the urban environment, to cultivate a self sufficient, community-led space.

**SUBMISSION &  
PRESENTATION**

To be eligible to participate in the local Super Studio competition and for the chance to progress to the national level of judging, teams must fulfil each of the following requirements:

- Digital submission by 9.00am AEST (WA 7.00am, NT & SA 8.30am) Thursday 27 July 2023. (See 'Digital submission requirements' below.)
- 5-minute presentation of submission to the state/territory jury on Thursday, 27 July. Click [here](#) to view the presentation day program in your state or territory.

**Digital submission requirements:**

Must be submitted as one PDF document A3 landscape, less than 20MB, that includes:

1. 2 x Illustrated A3 landscape panels
2. An additional page with all sources referenced and documented appropriately (if applicable).
3. An additional page with a 300 (maximum) word description of your design intent and proposal.

**Important considerations for your digital submission & presentation:**

- Submissions will be downloaded by the Super Studio coordinator in each state & territory and provided back to participants to be used for the presentation. No additional materials will be permitted to be used for the presentation stage.
- Should your team progress to national judging, your digital submission will be used by the national jury to determine the national winner.
- Final ideas and submission must be original. Refer to judging criteria on 'Uniqueness and Innovation'.

**Additional Submission**

To promote your project on socials and for consideration in the student zine [de-PICT](#) you will also be asked to submit:

- 2 x original images that best represent your concept  
Accepted file types: PNG & JPG/JPEG  
Size: 1080x1080pixels

[SUBMIT HERE](#)

## SUBMISSION GUIDANCE

We invite you to consider the following when determining your visual conventions:

- How does your intervention connect with its urban context? How does it connect with existing circulation networks, and the rhythms and grains of its existing urban fabric?
- It may be relevant to explore fine details of parts of your intervention i.e. materiality, scale, texture, tactility etc.
- Conversely, it may also be relevant to zoom out, considering the intervention from afar, highlighting the extent of the proposal in its community context.
- Consider user experience if appropriate to your proposal - perhaps this may be through images/collages/renders.
- Master plans, sections, axonometrics, collages and hand illustrations are all examples of conventions that could be applied (but not limited to). Consider what you are trying to communicate, and then determine how this is best conveyed through drawing convention.

We invite you to consider the following when composing your 300 word description:

- What are your design intentions?
- How do you achieve this through your design proposal?
- What is your design proposal?

## JUDGING CRITERIA

All submissions will be assessed on the following criteria:

1. **Response to the Brief** The design proposition responds creatively to the theme of Reimagining 'Third Places' in the context of resilient, connected communities.
2. **Design Approach** The design proposition adopts a clear and identifiable approach.
3. **Uniqueness and Innovation** The design proposition offers a unique and innovative vision to the challenge. All ideas and submitted work is the student's own, and not taken, or re-used from past work or other sources.
4. **Reorienting with Sustainability** The design proposition creatively seeks to 'make the most with what we've got' in relation to physical and/or social infrastructures.
5. **Communication and Expression of Submission Components** The design proposition is communicated and expressed clearly and concisely across all its conceptual, visual and written components.



## RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

### Projects

- A New Normal, Finding Infinity: <https://www.normalise.it/the-full-story>
- Parckfarm, Brussels: <https://architectureau.com/articles/parckfarm/>
- Testing Grounds, These Are The Projects We Make: <https://www.theprojects.com.au/>
- Burial Belt, Other Architects: <https://otherarchitects.com/project/burial-belt/>
- The Pop-up Monument & Floating University, Raumlabor: <https://raumlabor.net/popup-monument/>  
<https://raumlabor.net/floating-university-berlin-an-offshore-campus-for-cities-in-transformation/>
- Leftunder, OFFICE: <https://office.org.au/project/leftunder/>
- Bus shelters, Noosa & Sunshine Coast, Majstorovic architecture <https://noosatoday.com.au/stories/08-07-2016/bus-shelters-on-route-to-win/>
- MVRDV, Urbanism: <https://www.mvrdv.com/themes/9/urbanism>
- OMA, Infrastructure: <https://www.oma.com/projects?tags=infrastructure>

### Readings

- Making Cities Better with Vacant Spaces and Meanwhile, Mel Dodd, <https://assemblepapers.com.au/2022/05/25/making-cities-better-with-vacant-spaces-and-meanwhile-use/>
- The Interface between public and private interfaces, Jan Gehl, 1979, <https://www.dropbox.com/s/ruzhu6bbxmwxce/Gehl%20Book%20interface.pdf?dl=0>
- Behaviorology, Atelier Bow-wow, 2010
- Rebel Cities: From the Right to the City to the Urban Revolution, David Harvey, 2019

### Resources

- One Planet Living <https://www.bioregional.com/one-planet-living>
- Commons & Communities <https://www.commonities.org/>
- The European Prize for Public space <https://www.publicspace.org/the-prize>
- 20 Minute Neighbourhoods <https://www.planning.vic.gov.au/guides-and-resources/strategies-and-initiatives/20-minute-neighbourhoods>
- Climate Adaptation in Australia <https://www.dcceew.gov.au/climate-change/policy/adaptation>
- Super Studio 2023 Acumen note pack <https://acumen.architecture.com.au/notepacks/student-sona/super-studio-2023/>

## DESIGN TALKS

The Design Talks are an opportunity to dive deeper into the themes of the brief, spark creativity and connect with design professionals and other students participating in Super Studio.

### **Provisional infrastructures and live projects will Mille Cattlin**

Tuesday 25 July, 5.30 pm AEST

[Connect here](#)

This presentation will include an overview of three key projects by [These Are The Projects We Do Together](#) and will look specifically at how these projects have invited participation and engagement. As a practice we have worked with these places through different roles including caretaking, operations, programming and design, and through this we offer an expanded definition of our agency as architects in the city.

### **Space for others with David Neustein**

Pre-recorded presentation

[View the recording](#)

Architecture is a fundamentally (anti)social act. It delimits what can and cannot take place within a given space, and who and what is included and excluded. In this short talk, David Neustein will consider how architecture can make space for people and activities at the margins. A conversation between Other Architects and LIAN will follow the talk.

## BRIEF WRITERS

**Kathryn Neale** | SONA Vice President (Competitions and Events) | Final year Master of Architecture Student at the University of Western Australia

**Lisa Garner RAIA** | Architect and Co-Founder Lian

**Andrej Vodstrcil RAIA** | Architect and Co-Founder Lian

Lian is a Melbourne-based architecture practice exploring responses to Australia's necessary urban transitions - primarily in housing.

[lian.com.au](http://lian.com.au)

## SPONSOR

SONA would like to acknowledge the generous support of [Alspec](#) for their sponsorship of Super Studio 2023.

