



# SPEAKER BIOS

DAY 1 AND 2

Wednesday, November 13, 8:30 – 5:30pm  
Thursday, November 14, 10:30am – 4:00pm



## ALEXANDRA HINIKER

*Program Director, Mayor's Office for International Affairs*

Alexandra Hiniker is responsible for highlighting the connections between local and global sustainability using the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals. Before joining the Mayor's Office, she was the PAX Representative to the United Nations, focusing on the protection of civilians in Syria, Iraq, and South Sudan. She has 15 years of international development, policy, and advocacy experience working in 18 countries. This included implementing pandemic preparedness projects in Africa, Asia, and Eastern Europe. Alexandra has a B.A. from the University of Chicago, an M.A. from Uniwersytet Jagiellonski in Krakow, Poland, and an M.S. in Urban Policy and Leadership from Hunter College.



## JACQUELINE KLOPP

*Center for Sustainable Urban Development (CSUD) The Earth Institute*

Jaqueline M. Klopp is Co-Director of the Center for Sustainable Urban Development. Her research focuses on the intersection of sustainable mobility, land use, air pollution, climate and accountability. She is a founder of the Digital Matatus project that mapped out and created open data for minibus routes in Nairobi and is collaborating with AFD, WRI, MIT, the World Bank and others on building collaborative open transport data platforms for cities in Africa ("DigitalTransport4Africa") and Latin America (DATUM). Dr. Klopp received her B.A. from Harvard and her Ph.D. from McGill University. Formerly, she was an Assistant Professor at SIPA and Director of the Economic and Political Development Concentration.



## DON WEINREICH

*FAIA, LEED AP Management Partner Ennead Architects*

Don Weinreich is a Management Partner at Ennead Architects. His experience is broad, particularly with academic, cultural and research institutions. Don is currently leading an Ennead Lab research project Rethinking Refugee Communities, in collaboration with the with UNHCR, Stanford University and other institutions, to develop a new methodology for the design of refugee settlements. Don is an expert in organizing the collective efforts of complex project teams. In addition to his work on specific projects, Don plays a leadership role in Ennead Lab, the firm's research arm and is responsible for the office's technology development, leading the implementation of new ways in which architectural computing can advance the firm's practice.



## **HAYES SLADE**

*Principal Slade Architecture & President, AIA NY*

Hayes Slade is a founding partner at Slade Architecture. Their work has been recognized with national and international design awards, publications and exhibitions including the Venice Biennale and the Architectural League of NY's Emerging Voices program and several hundred magazines, books, and newspapers. Slade Architecture has been included in the NYC Design Excellence Program for over twelve years. In addition, Hayes is currently President of the NY Chapter of the American Institute of Architects. She has also taught graduate and undergraduate design at Parsons School of Design/The New School and Syracuse University School of Architecture. She is a mother of four.



## **TOM KENNEDY**

*Principal, Arup*

Tom Kennedy currently leads Arup's Civil Engineering Practice and the Circular Economy business for the Americas region. He brings 30 years of experience in a wide range of engineering projects and site development worldwide. Tom's cross-disciplinary knowledge of structural, civil and utilities allows for a flexible approach to a variety of project types covering private and public clients. His extensive project list includes planning and delivery in education, residential, commercial, government, security, airports, general transportation, as well as public open space design. He was the Principal in Charge and project leader for the Hunters Point South Waterfront Project in Queens. Prior to moving to the US, Tom spent time working and residing in Middle East, Far East, Russia and Europe.



## **TOM WRIGHT**

*President and CEO, Regional Plan Association*

Tom Wright is President and CEO of Regional Plan Association, the nation's oldest independent metropolitan research, planning, and advocacy organization. RPA works to improve the prosperity, infrastructure, sustainability, health and quality of life of the NY-NJ-CT metropolitan region. In 2017, RPA's Fourth Regional Plan was released under Tom's direction which proposes to reform public sector institutions, modernize our transportation systems, address the challenge of climate change, and provide affordable and livable communities for the region's residents. Tom has a master's in urban planning from Columbia University and a bachelor's in history and a certificate in American Studies from Princeton University.



## **HARRIET HARRISS**

*Creative Blocks / @annlong*

Harriet Harriss is Dean of the Pratt School of Architecture. Her teaching, research and writing focus upon pioneering new pedagogic models for design education, as captured in *Radical Pedagogies: Architectural Education & the British Tradition*, and for widening participation in architecture to ensure it remains as diverse as the society it seeks to serve, a subject she interrogates in her book, *A Gendered Profession*. A qualified architect, Harriss has won various awards for teaching excellence and is a recognized advocate for design education. She was nominated by Dezeen as a champion for women in architecture and design in 2019.



## **KAJA KÜHL**

*Urban Design Program , GSAPP and Founder, youarethecity*

Kaja Kühl founded youarethecity in 2008. A research, design and planning practice, youarethecity collaborates with cities, institutions, and community-based organizations to produce maps, diagrams, writings, designs, websites, events and exhibitions about urban spaces. Prior to founding youarethecity Kaja worked for the New York City Department of City Planning. She is Adjunct Associate Professor at Columbia University, where she coordinates the Fall Urban Design Studio and leads the Hudson Valley Initiative, an applied research initiative focused on cities and landscapes in the region. Kaja has a Diploma in Architecture from Karlsruhe, Germany and a MSc in Urban Planning from Columbia University.



## **SAM LONI**

*Global Coordinator, SDSN Youth*

Sam is a young global leader working in sustainable development, climate change, and human rights. He is based at the Secretariat of the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network in NYC – an initiative launched by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to mobilize global expertise around the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Sam founded and currently leads SDSN Youth, an organization that empowers youth globally to create sustainable development solutions. Sam is also the Partnerships Manager of SDSN's Financing for Sustainable Development initiative – where he helps coordinate efforts to mobilize global funding and resources to close the SDG financing gap in low-income-developing-countries.



## **SHAWN CONNELL**

*GrowNYC Teaching Garden*

Shawn is the co-founder of GrowNYC's Teaching Garden, a one-acre urban farm and environmental sustainability demonstration space that engages with over 18,000 New York City public school students and members of the public each year. In 2010 Shawn founded the Community Farm at Sandy Spring Friends School, a community-run educational and working farm. He has over a decade of experience as an educator and activist working on transformative, community-driven solutions to local and global environmental challenges. He has an M.A. in Sustainable Development and is a certified Master Gardener.



## **JOSÉ MIGUEL ARMIÑO**

*Perkins Eastman*

José Miguel is a Chilean Architect who holds a Master's Degree in Architecture from UC Chile. His thesis titled Structural Skin, focused on high-rise and parametric façade prototypes according to performance variables such as structural topological optimization, solar radiation and urban occlusion. His professional experience includes working at Perkins Eastman Architects in both New York and Dubai, as well as lead founder of the DATA UNIT, aiming to enhance the firm's design and efficiency through scripting, data analytics and digital literacy. José Miguel's digital fabrication skills were featured in the 2014 MoMA exhibition Latin America in Construction: Architecture 1955-1980. He was a top 15 finalist for NASA 3D Printed Mars Habitat Challenge.



## **ARTHUR LERNER-LAM, PH.D.**

*Deputy Director, Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory, Columbia University*

Arthur Lerner-Lam is the Deputy Director of the Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory of Columbia University. A seismologist, he has led scientific expeditions in the Middle East, Europe, Central and South Asia, the Southwest Pacific, and throughout the United States. Over the last 20 years, he has lectured and written widely on natural hazard risk identification, assessment and management. He has consulted on natural hazard resilience for the governments of Haiti, the Dominican Republic, Chile, India, China, Thailand, Turkey and Venezuela, as well as the World Bank. He has testified before the U.S. Congress on preparedness for natural disasters.



## **JUSTIN GARRETT MOORE**

*Executive Director, New York City Public Design Commission*

Justin Garrett Moore is an urban designer and the executive director of the New York City Public Design Commission. He has extensive experience in urban planning and design—from large-scale urban systems, policies, and projects to grassroots and community-based planning, design, and arts initiatives. At the Public Design Commission, his work focuses on prioritizing quality and excellence for the public realm and fostering accessibility, diversity, and inclusion in New York's public buildings, landscapes, and art. He is a member of the American Planning Association's AICP Commission, the Urban Design Forum, and BlackSpace. He is also an adjunct faculty member at Columbia University and co-founder of Urban Patch.



## **MARK A. WILLIS**

*Furman Centre, NYU*

Mark A. Willis is the Senior Policy Fellow at NYU's Furman Center for Real Estate and Urban Policy. Prior experience: Visiting Scholar at the Ford Foundation; EVP at JPMorgan Chase for community development; positions with the City of New York in housing, economic development, and tax policy; and urban economist at the Federal Reserve Bank of NY. He speaks and writes frequently on such topics as affordable housing, national housing finance reform, and the Community Reinvestment Act. Mr. Willis has a J.D. from Harvard Law and a Ph.D. in economics from Yale.



## **LAUREN ZULLO**

*Jonathon Rose Companies*

Lauren Zullo joined Jonathan Rose Companies in 2017 as Director of Environmental Impact, where she is responsible for overseeing environmental and healthy building design, retrofit, certification, and reporting initiatives across all the firm's business practices. Prior to joining Jonathan Rose Companies, she worked for the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), where she led initiatives to scale up market-based strategies to improve the environmental performance of large buildings. Lauren previously held roles in development, property management and sustainability for the commercial real estate firm Greenebaum & Rose Associates in Washington, DC. Lauren received her A.B. from Bowdoin College.





## **RAMIN JAHROMI**

*Director, Cox Architecture*

Ramin is a Director with COX Architecture who has held key roles for more than 20 years in the practice, and has specialised in delivery of residential and complex mixed use projects. He has a passion for mixed tenure housing developments and is currently the project director for the master plan of a number of Sydney's mixed use residential housing development including Ivanhoe Housing Estate as part of the New South Wales' Communities Plus program. In addition to housing projects, he has lead a wide range of projects in Australia and internationally across master planning, hotel, commercial, education, research planning and urban design and transport infrastructure. Elsewhere, Ramin has lead Master Studios in the integration of practice and academia, and plays an active role and link between the universities and COX Architecture through the initiation of scholarships at respective tertiary institutions.



## **STEPHEN FORNERIS**

*Principal and Board Director at Perkins Eastman*

Stephen Forneris is a principal and board director at Perkins Eastman. He manages the firm's Guayaquil office and Latin American practice. An authority on building and construction practices in Latin America, he contributed to drafting the 2008 Ecuadorian building code. In 2011 he published a guide to building an earthquake resistant house in Spanish and English that used drawings as well as references to the latest seismic resistant codes. Published later as a book, in French and English, it serves as a test of concept that safe buildings do not cost more money than unsafe buildings. He has taught at Yale School of Architecture.



## **AMY LEITCH**

*MEM LEED AP BD+C Senior Consultant, Integrated Planning, Arup*

Amy is a Senior Consultant with Arup's Integrated Planning team in New York, focused on accelerating human-centered planning to influence the future development of cities, ensuring their livability, sustainability and resilience. She leads the North American city engagement for the City Resilience Index on behalf of Arup and The Rockefeller Foundation, supporting cities to operationalize the urban resilience agenda and measure and monitor the impact of their planning and investment programs. Amy has over a decade's experience working on large-scale urban planning projects in North America, Europe, Asia, and Africa. She holds a Master of Environmental Management from Duke University.



## **OLIVER SCHAPER**

*Design Principal and Northeast Regional Leader, Gensler*

As a design principal and Northeast Regional Leader of Gensler's Cities and Urban Design practice, Oliver spearheads and oversees planning and urban design projects, strategies, and communication tools for varying scale projects including master plans, environmental systems, commercial and institutional headquarters, mixed-use campuses, and residential developments. With an expertise in developing holistic, civic-minded, and sustainable places, Oliver focuses on shaping a design practice that draws from the insights of interdisciplinary conversations. Oliver is a visiting assistant professor at Pratt Institute's Graduate School for Architecture and Urban Design and a fellow at the Urban Design Forum.



## STEPHEN ZACKS

### *Journalist*

Stephen Zacks is a journalist, architecture critic, urbanist, and arts organizer. A New School Liberal Studies graduate, he founded Flint Public Art Project in 2011 and serves as president of Amplifier Inc., a platform for socially engaged art and design in under-served cities. He has published in the New York Times, Village Voice, Art in America, Abitare, L'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui, the Architectural Review, Oculus, Landscape Architecture Magazine, Architectural Record, the Architect's Newspaper, Brownstoner, Curbed, and previously served as an editor at Metropolis. A highly awarded writer, he is currently writing a mid-to-late 20th century cultural history of New York City.



## ALAINNA LYNCH

### *Senior Research Manager, SDSN*

Alainna Lynch is a Senior Research Manager at the Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN), where she considers the question: What will it take to achieve the SDGs in the United States? Alainna's research interests also include understanding how poverty and inequality become entrenched in social systems, and how to prevent harm when designing policy and programs. Prior to SDSN, Alainna worked with Overseas Development Institute (ODI) on the Leave No One Behind Agenda. Alainna has a degree in Sociology from the University of Chicago and a Master's degree in Evidence-Based Social Intervention from Oxford University.



## ELLIOTT SCLAR

### *Co-Director CSUD, The Earth Institute, Columbia University*

Elliott Sclar is an economist who has written extensively about the strengths and limitations of markets as mechanisms for effective public policy implementation. An international expert on urban development, he was co-coordinator of the Taskforce on Improving the Lives of Slum Dwellers, one of the ten taskforces set up by the UN Millennium Project to help guide the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals. In recent years he has been a leading figure in a scholarly movement to reconnect the work of population health experts and urban planners in creating healthier cities. Sclar is Professor emeritus of Urban Planning at Columbia University's Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation.



## ROBERTA BRANDES GRATZ

### *Journalist and Urban Critic*

An award-winning journalist and urbanist, Roberta Brandes Gratz has been observing and writing about cities – how they grow, fall apart, recover – for more than 40 years. NYC born and raised, Roberta started her journalism career as a reporter for the New York Post under Dolly Schiff. She left when Rupert Murdoch bought the paper and went on to write five books on urban change. Her writing has also appeared in the Nation, New York Magazine, New York Times Magazine and The Wall Street Journal. She served on the New York Landmarks Preservation Commission and the Sustainability Advisory Board for NYC under Mayor Michael Bloomberg. In 2004, Roberta, with author/urbanist Jane Jacobs, founded The Center For the Living City [centerforthelivingcity.org](http://centerforthelivingcity.org) to build on Jacobs' ground-breaking work.

# BREAKOUT LEADERS

Wednesday, November 13th, 12:45pm

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## SREOSHY BANERJEA

*New York City Economic Development Corporation*

Sreoshy Banerjea leads Urban Design at The New York City Economic Development Corporation where she guides urban design strategy, and manages consultants on visionary master planning efforts. She was a Forefront Fellow with the Urban Design Forum working on equitable housing models for new arrivals. Prior to her time at EDC, she has been a project architect at Dattner Architects, as well as a designer with Rafael Vinoly and Dominique Perrault. She has a masters in Urban Design from MIT and a B'Arch from RPI.



## SONAL BERI

*Anant National University, India*

Sonal Beri is an Architect and Urban Designer with 20 years of experience in a wide range of project types and scales from city planning, super tall towers, institutional buildings to exhibition design and robotics. In her practice, she has focused on the intersection of technology and culture, using technology to design environments that are driven by notions of performance (solar, wind, structural, thermal, etc.). She is an adviser and a core faculty at Anant National University in India (India's first Design University)



## WILLIAM CHAN

*Urban Designer, Cox Architecture and Local Pathways Fellow, UN SDSN*

William Chan is an urban designer from Cox Architecture in Sydney, Australia. William co-founded an initiative to help refugee youth develop skills in sustainability, innovation and the circular economy, which was presented at the High Level Meeting on Social Business, Youth and Technology during the 2018 UN General Assembly. In 2009 he contributed to Global Studio in South Africa, an action-research program to improve the lives of the urban poor. He assisted the 2013-2015 CSUD-Global Studio People Building Better Cities: Participation and Inclusive Urbanization traveling exhibition, and is contributing to the CSUD project Accelerating the SDGs.



## CANDY CHANG AND JAMES A. REEVES

*Project Leaders, A Monument for the Anxious and Hopeful*

Candy Chang and James A. Reeves collaborate on participatory installations that envision the future of ritual in public life. A Monument for the Anxious and Hopeful served as a living catalogue of the ways we relate to uncertainty and collected over 50,000 reflections from visitors to the Rubin Museum of Art in New York City. Their latest work, Light the Barricades, reimagines the wall as a site for contemplating our inner obstructions and is now on view at the Annenberg Space for Photography in Los Angeles.



## **ANNESHA CHOWDHURY**

*Program Associate, Asia Initiatives*

Annesha Chowdhury, is a Program Associate at Asia Initiatives, NYC and a PhD scholar at the Academy for Conservation Sciences and Sustainability Studies at Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and the Environment (ATREE, Bangalore, India). Her research uses on-ground ecological, remote sensing and sociology data to understand how human-dominated landscapes can be managed for biodiversity conservation and human wellbeing, targeting SDGs 5,3, 15 and 16. At the Urban Thinkers Campus, Annesha will be discussing how AI's India project on Social Capital Credits enables health and education of young adolescent girls and thereby attempts to enhance SDGs 3,4,5,6,10,11,17.



## **JAMES FRANCISCO**

*Senior Urban Designer and Planner, Arup*

James Francisco is a Senior Urban Designer and Planner and a graduate in Architecture from the University of Sydney. In 9 years at Arup, he has helped shape New York City's public realm. Harnessing international expertise and leading a wide range of masterplanning and urban design projects including city centers and downtowns, transportation corridors, airport cities, sponge cities, and institutional and cultural precincts. He has extensive experience in the design and implementation of public space including streetscapes, urban parks and plazas. His aim is to create an enhanced urban environment and user experience for people to connect and belong.



## **CHRISTIAN GAETH**

*Founder, NGO 'Project Mako e.V.'*

Christian studies architecture and political economics in New York and Paris. His work focuses on housing development in West Africa and emphasizes sustainability and affordability. After working as a schoolteacher in Senegal, Christian founded the NGO 'Project Mako e.V.' to demonstrate sustainable and participatory design solutions in communal projects. Currently, he is working with an urbanizing community in Senegal on a project that reconsiders vernacular typologies and building materials for urban housing solutions.



## **SPENCER HARBO**

*GrowNYC*

Spencer Harbo manages community garden projects for GrowNYC's Garden Program. With backgrounds in community organizing and environmental psychology, he works with community members, city agencies, and other stakeholders to build gardens within vacant lots and other public spaces. He previously worked in public health research, studying the impact of urban stressors on children and families. He received master's degrees in Social Work and Natural Resource Management from the University of Michigan.





## **FLORENCIA LIBRIZZI**

*Head of Program and Partnerships, SDG Academy*

Florencia Librizzi is a sustainability and education professional and international attorney, licensed to practice law in Argentina and New York. As Head of Program and Partnerships, she leads the SDG Academy, flagship education initiative of SDSN. Previously, she devoted over 6 years to build the PRME initiative, UN Global Compact. She also served as a research consultant for the International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ) advising on issues of post-conflict societies and human rights violations. Florencia practiced law since 2006 advising clients on a wide range of legal and sustainability issues. She received her Juris Doctor (J.D.) magna cum laude from Universidad Nacional de Cordoba and her Masters of Laws (LL.M.) at NYU School of Law.



## **LEONEL LIMA PONCE**

*Acting Academic Coordinator, Pratt Institute*

Leonel Lima Ponce is Acting Academic Coordinator at Pratt Institute's M.Sc. in Sustainable Environmental Systems, in the Graduate Center for Planning and the Environment. With a focus on sustainable infrastructure, Leonel teaches an international knowledge exchange to Brazil, the Demonstration of Professional Competence, interdisciplinary studios, and sustainable design at Pratt. As a Registered Architect in New York, he's managed institutional, restoration and rehabilitation projects. Leonel is a founding member of Operation Resilient Living and Innovation Plus (ORLI+), a participatory research and design consultancy dedicated to the development and implementation of inclusive, climate adaptive and resilient planning, design, and policy processes and projects.



## **KRATMA SAINI**

*Asia Initiatives*

Kratma is an urban designer/architect who received her MS of Architecture and Urban Design from GSAPP Columbia University. Prior to founding KS Atelier LLC, she worked with Pritzker winner B.V. Doshi and Davis Brody Bond on several prestigious and award winning NY projects including the 9/11 Memorial Museum. Kratma has led a wide variety of complex projects around the globe utilizing her multi-disciplinary experience in the realization of urban design, planning and architectural solutions with a focus on innovative approaches to public space and urban issues.



## **ALEXANDRIA VILLASEÑOR**

*Youth Climate Activist*

Alexandria Villaseñor is a climate activist in NYC. On 23 September 2019, Villaseñor, along with 15 other youth activists including Greta Thunberg, Catarina Lorenzo, and Carl Smith, filed a legal complaint with the United Nations accusing five countries, namely France, Germany, Brazil, Argentina, and Turkey of failing to uphold their reduction targets to which they committed in their Paris Agreement pledges.

# LOCAL PROJECT CHALLENGE



PROJECT DIRECTOR: ANNA RUBBO, CSUD, THE EARTH INSTITUTE

Email: [anna.rubbo@columbia.edu](mailto:anna.rubbo@columbia.edu)

Accelerating the SDGs is a three stage project (2018–20) to increase awareness and take-up of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the New Urban Agenda (NUA). Stage 1, ASK + learn explored how the SDGs are traveling among City Makers in education, the professions and civil society. Analysis of the 1000+ responses to the Survey is available online. Stage 2, ACT + learn, invited local projects in these same categories that respond to one or more SDGs. Stage 3, SHARE + learn will disseminate outcomes. [Localprojectchallenge.org](http://Localprojectchallenge.org) shares 100+ projects from 30 countries.

## LOCAL PROJECT TEAM



### **Amanda Abrom**

Amanda Abrom is a current Master's student at Columbia SIPA. She is a former Fulbright Scholar and a current UN Conference on Trade and Development Youth Delegate. In the past, she has been involved in projects with the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network (Youth) as a Global Schools Ambassador and has presented their work at the Vatican Youth Symposium in Vatican City. Previously, Amanda worked on the US Department of State's Exchange Programs as a university Peer Mentor for students from over 13 countries.



### **Bruno Mendonça**

Bruno Mendonça graduated in Architecture and Urbanism (Bennett Institute – Brazil) with a Master of Science Degree in Architecture (UFRJ, Brazil) and a Professional Master in Urban Engineering (UFRJ – Brazil). He has experience in different fields, like urban landscape morphology and urban design. His research focuses on the relationship between the open spaces and the landscape configuration in Rio de Janeiro's suburbs. Mendonça is associated with the ProLUGAR/UFRJ (Places and Landscape Research Group), has worked in collaboration with Brazilian and international researchers and participated in different projects focusing on the importance of urban areas.



### **Maria Palomares Samper**

Maria is currently a designer at SCAPE Landscape Architecture with a background in architecture, urban planning and urban design. In the past, Maria worked for Bogota's Planning Department where she coordinated projects with national and local agencies for the city's downtown area. She holds a Masters in Science in Architecture and Urban Design from Columbia University and Bachelor of Architecture, from Universidad de los Andes in Bogota, Colombia. At Columbia, Maria was a teaching assistant and has used the SDGs as guidelines to study different American landscapes.



### **Silvia Vercher**

Architect Silvia Vercher specializes in urban design with 10 years of experience. She is a designer at Perkins Eastman in NYC. Silvia's work on local and international projects include an ambitious masterplan in Brooklyn, NYC, together at SCAPE; a winning design competition entry and construction of the Rike Park in Tbilisi, Georgia, together with CMD; and the collaboration of the Zurich tower in Mexico City with FR-EE. With Anna Rubbo, she co-organized events at Habitat III in Ecuador, and World Urban Forum 9 in Malaysia. Silvia holds a Master of Architecture and Urban Design from Columbia and a Master of Urban Planning from the University of South Australia.

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