

# IDEAS CITY

**NEW**  
235 BOWERY  
NEW YORK NY  
10002 USA  
**MUSEUM**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
April 16, 2015

**MEDIA CONTACTS**  
Gabriel Einsohn, Senior Communications Director  
Hyatt Mannix, Press & Social Media Manager  
212.219.1222 x209  
press@newmuseum.org  
Andrea Schwan, Andrea Schwan Inc.  
info@andreaschwan.com

## **New Museum's IDEAS CITY Festival, Exploring the Future of the City, to Take Over the Bowery Neighborhood May 28–30, 2015**

### **Third Edition of the Festival Will Explore The Invisible City**

“Cities, like dreams, are made of desires and fears, even if the thread of their discourse is secret, their rules are absurd, their perspectives deceitful, and everything conceals something else.”

—Italo Calvino, *Invisible Cities*, 1972

New York, NY...The New Museum and the IDEAS CITY Executive Committee today announced further details about the third edition of the biennial IDEAS CITY Festival from **May 28 to 30, 2015**, which will take place in the Bowery neighborhood of downtown Manhattan. IDEAS CITY explores the future of cities around the globe with culture as a driving force. Founded by the New Museum in 2011, it is a major collaborative initiative between hundreds of arts, education, and civic organizations centered on the belief that culture is fundamentally and inextricably vital to urban growth and innovation. The Festival builds on the New Museum's mission of “New Art, New Ideas” by expanding the Museum beyond its walls into the civic realm.



2013 IDEAS CITY StreetFest in Sara D. Roosevelt Park. Photo: Benoit Palley

The theme of this year's Festival is **The Invisible City**. During three days of conferences, debates, workshops, performances, and architectural and artistic interventions, IDEAS CITY will explore questions of transparency and surveillance, citizenship and representation, expression and suppression, and the enduring quest for visibility in the city. The Festival will reconfigure the Bowery neighborhood into a multi-platform incubator that asks a collective public to explore issues faced by the city, propose solutions, and seed concrete actions.

“The intangible, seething energy that the legendary Bowery neighborhood is steeped in will once again become visible as we peel back the surface of the streets to take a closer look at the lives that surround us every day, in our own neighborhood and beyond, to expose, examine, and question the numerous cultural, social, political, and technological transformations we are undergoing as a society,” said Joseph Grima, Director of IDEAS CITY.

## Schedule & Programming Highlights

### CONFERENCE

Thursday, May 28

The Festival kicks off with a series of **talks, panels, discussions, and short films at the Great Hall at Cooper Union**. Speakers will include some of the world's most forward-thinking visionaries, who will discuss key civic issues and formulate action for the city of tomorrow. Panels will examine the following topics and questions:

- Within the city, an increasing number of people—such as the homeless, elderly, and undocumented immigrants—are disappearing from sight. Is there a cartography to identify those who have wandered or been driven from the center?
- The designers shaping the cities of the future must engage with an increasingly challenging set of hypothetical conditions—scenarios that often remain invisible to their inhabitants. How do urbanists, architects, and activists create habitats that anticipate drastic future change such as overcrowding and climate reversals?
- We are increasingly dependent on global-network infrastructures that are as invisible as they are vast. How can networks and processes be made more transparent, accessible, and empowering? What role do they play in guaranteeing accountability? Can art be the connective membrane in this process?
- A vast proportion of our lives exist as an invisible online record of our identities, interests, and affiliations. What role does data and privacy play in the perpetuation of democracy in the twenty-first century?

Select participants include:

**Lawrence Lessig**, Director of the Edmond J. Safra Center for Ethics, Harvard University, advocates for the open-spectrum movement and the need for a Second Constitutional Congress.

**Bjarke Ingels**, an architect renowned for his innovative approach to sustainable development and renewable energy, is conceptualizing a park to protect New York City from rising water surges and is designing Google's new campus in Palo Alto, California.

**Trevor Paglen** created the term "Experimental Geography" and uses his work as an artist to shed light on the erosion of privacy.

**Micah White**, Cocreator of Occupy Wall Street and Founder of the Boutique Activist Consultancy specializing in "impossible campaigns" and the handshake between capitalism and activism.

**Jillian York**, Director for International Freedom of Expression at the Electronic Frontier Foundation, specializes in free expression in the Arab world.

**Christopher Soghoian**, principal technologist at the American Civil Liberties Union, is an expert in the role played by third-party service providers in easing law enforcement surveillance of their customers.

### ACTIONS

Friday, May 29

On the second day, IDEAS CITY upends typical formulas of conference-making by replacing talks and panels with a day of private workshops and an **evening of performative actions**. This inspiring circus of

activity will animate a basilica, gym, and a neighborhood street, illuminating invisible undercurrents in our city. Programming includes:

- The next best design idea at **Pitching the City, organized by Architizer and Municipal Art Society**, will showcase the newest city-building projects. Voting is open to the public.
- Artist Jordi Jorba will **repurpose an inoperative hot-air balloon inside a gymnasium** to create colorful, temporary structures that house performances.
- BattleFest, curated by Kareem Baptiste, bridges the underground and commercial mainstream dance worlds for **one-on-one dance battles**.
- For the **2015 Poetic Address to the Nation**, Bob Holman, founder of the Bowery Poetry Club, has organized ten poets to contribute sonnets on the state of our union.
- 2013 IDEAS CITY: São Paulo participant Daniel Lima will present an **audiovisual experience with a live score by Brazilian and Harlem-based musicians**, infused with interviews by displaced residents of Harlem, São Paulo, Rio, Havana, and Berlin.
- Danny Hoch will perform an excerpt from Taking Over, **a play about gentrification** and feelings of displacement in New York City, taking on the character of a taxi dispatcher.
- Penny Arcade will perform Longing Lasts Longer, a passionate rumination on love, longing, and the **loss of New York's cultural identity**, set to a rollicking live-mixed soundscape.
- Ursula Scherrer will present afloat, v. 2, a durational **installation animated by a multiple-projection video environment** and a live soundtrack.

### THE STREET

**Saturday, May 30**

One hundred cultural and community groups will transform the streetscape around the Bowery neighborhood into a **temporary city of ideas**, redefining public space through participatory programming and unexpected structures for gathering, several of which will be constructed from normally invisible commercial materials. Free and open to the public, all ages. Highlights include:

- Using US waste products as construction material, the **ETH Zurich Pavilion at the First Street Garden** will redefine waste, acknowledging its capacity as a substance from which to construct new cities. In collaboration with New York City Parks and Recreation and First Street Green.
- The Center for Genomic Gastronomy with Edible Geography uses **egg foams to harvest air pollution and make smog meringues** from different locations to allow urban atmospheres to be tasted and compared. Presented by the Finnish Cultural Institute.
- Join artist Marjetica Potrč's **The Invisible Lunch Discussions** with incognito speakers to address affordable housing and food at a **one hundred-foot-long table stretching the length of Rivington Street**.
- The Hester Street Fair will bring together favorite local fare for a **mini food festival** on Rivington Street.
- Genspace, a citizen science biotech lab, and scientist Christine Marizzi from the DNA Learning Center will offer a **hands-on bacteria-printing workshop**, making New York City's microbiome visible and accessible.
- The Institute For Aesthetics's **Mayan Ball Game Tournament** will mash the ancient Mesoamerican sport with New York City street basketball.

- **NEW INC**, the New Museum's incubator for art, design, and technology, and cyberfeminist research collective **Deep Lab's week-long residency** will explore privacy, security, surveillance, anonymity, and data aggregation, culminating in performances and workshops.
- Explore the Institute for Public Architecture's proposals for **public and below-market housing** in New York City, created in response to Mayor de Blasio's "total reset" for housing.
- **The Living Theatre** presents *No Place to Hide*, an experimental and participatory theater experience about hiding and the human condition.
- Cooper Square Committee will lead a **Tenants' Rights Walking Tour**, designed to both highlight tenant-organizing victories and the present-day struggles tenants face on the Lower East Side.
- The **Circus for Construction** and Austin + Mergold investigates building insulation—a ubiquitous, but invisible, construction material—in an exhibition presented on this traveling event space on the back of a truck.
- Join the Manny Cantor Center for a **senior citizen-led walking tour of the Lower East Side** suffused with personal stories of our ever-changing neighborhood.
- **A Pigeon's Perspective**, organized by the Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle de Paris, is a walking tour that will explain the presence of pigeons on the Lower East Side scientifically, historically, and culturally.
- The Greenpoint Bioremediation Project with the Urban Soils Institute at Brooklyn College will perform **free personal onsite soil testing**.

A full schedule of events and ticketing information will be announced in the coming weeks.

#### **IDEAS CITY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE & CORE TEAM**

Lisa Phillips, *Toby Devan Lewis Director*, New Museum; Karen Wong, Deputy Director, New Museum; Rosalie Genevro, Director, the Architectural League of New York; Bob Holman, Founder and Proprietor, Bowery Poetry Club; Elizabeth O'Donnell, Acting Dean, School of Architecture, Cooper Union; Brett Littman, Director, the Drawing Center; and Eva Franch i Gilabert, Director and Chief Curator, Storefront for Art and Architecture.

Joseph Grima is Director of the New Museum's IDEAS CITY team, which includes Corinne Erni, Senior Producer; Richard Flood, Director of Special Projects and Curator at Large; and Annie Sultan, Director of Marketing and Community Networks.

#### **ABOUT IDEAS CITY**

When IDEAS CITY was cofounded by the New Museum's Lisa Phillips, *Toby Devan Lewis Director*, and Karen Wong, Deputy Director, in 2011, there were few conferences on urban futures and none sponsored by a museum. During its relatively short life span, IDEAS CITY has grown into a unique and robust platform, partnering with like-minded cities that believe culture is fundamental to urban growth and innovation. In 2012, IDEAS CITY held its first global conference in Istanbul. In 2013, the Festival was reprised in New York City and explored the theme of Untapped Capital. That same year, a second global conference was held in São Paulo. Upcoming 2015/2016 conferences are currently being planned for Detroit and Athens.

#### **SUPPORT**

Founding support for IDEAS CITY: NY is provided by a generous grant from Goldman Sachs Gives made at the recommendation of David B. Heller & Hermine Riegerl Heller.

Lead supporters: Rockefeller Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts.

Supporting partner: ETH Zürich.

Additional support provided by Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer, New York City Department of Parks & Recreation, and TD Charitable Foundation. Volunteer support is made possible through Goldman Sachs Community TeamWorks. Media partner: *New York* magazine. Hotel partners: The James Hotel and The Bowery Hotel. Special thanks to Anomaly, BFA.com, Clemente Soto Vélez Cultural & Educational Center, David Diamond, Empire Entertainment, FAB Café, First Street Green, Neo Neo, St. Patrick's Old Cathedral, The They Co., Tiger Beer, and Whole Foods Market.

###