



January 2015

Inaugural Bus Tour Program a Big Hit

By Isaac MacDonald '15

Under the leadership of new Program Director Dietrich Neumann and DUG leaders Andrew Brown and Jenna Klorfein, the Urban Studies department is championing a number of new initiatives. The most notable of these is the Urban Studies Bus Tours, which began in the Fall Semester and will continue in the coming months. The tours, led by Urban Studies faculty, are a chance for the theory of the classroom to be applied to the surrounding urban environment.

With the trips open to the public, the buses are typically a mélange of students, faculty and Providence locals. The Friday afternoon trips have been largely well received, both by members of the Brown community who feel they have an opportunity to see another side of Providence, and by residents, who enjoy the rare chance to access the knowledge of Brown's faculty.

Three trips occurred in the Fall Semester. The first tour, led by Visiting Associate Professor and Providence Director of Current Planning Robert Azar, showcased the Providence Waterfront. This encapsulated everything from restoration efforts along the Woonasquatucket River to the relocated and revitalized Downtown Area.

The second tour, led by Professor Stefano Bloch, explored the world of Providence graffiti, beginning with a drive-by viewing of derelict buildings on the West side that have become a hub for street art. The tour culminated with a live viewing of an artist at work on a mural on the outside of Marks of Identity, a local paint shop.

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Department Relocating to Maxcy Hall

By Maggie Livingstone '16

In preparation for the demolition of 29 Manning Walk, current home of the Urban Studies program, faculty and staff offices will relocate to Maxcy Hall on Simmons Quadrangle by the onset of the fall 2015 semester. Maxcy, which sits behind Wilson Hall and across the Quadrangle from Lyman Hall, is the current home of the University's Sociology department.



29 Manning Walk, current home of the Urban Studies Department. The space will be torn down later this year.

The move is a result of the expansion of Barus and Holley, which will include a new engineering building and surrounding green space, slated for completion by 2018.

Unfortunately, the project necessitates tearing down 29 Manning, in addition to three other buildings along the Walk, to accommodate the planned green space.

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Study Focuses on Relationship Between Graffiti and Violent Crime

In December the Urban Studies building was steeped in the smell of pizza, Blue State coffee, and locally-brewed root beer as professors Stefano Bloch and Yesim Sungu-Eryilmaz trained over 40 students on how to spot, identify, and systematically record incidents of graffiti in neighborhoods from College Hill to Olneyville.

The tentatively titled "Providence graffiti/crime correlation study" began with assistance from several urban studies concentrators and undergraduates from across campus and enrolled in Professor Bloch's popular "Crime and the City" course.

For this study, Bloch and Sungu-Eryilmaz are looking at the correlation between violent crime rates and the presence of graffiti throughout several Providence census tracts. The research aims to identify the spatial relationship between the two forms of criminal activity, with an overarching hypothesis that there is a negative correlation between where violent crimes such as homicide and assault occur and where non-gang graffiti is concentrated. If the hypothesis is proven correct, Bloch and Sungu-Eryilmaz's study would challenge the "Broken Windows" theory that suggests that small quality of life crimes, such as graffiti, significantly contribute to increases in larger and more violent crimes at the scale of the neighborhood.

The popular assumption and implementation of the Broken Windows theory by Boston, New York, and Los Angeles police chief William Bratton has justified billions of dollars being spent in US cities since the early 1990s on graffiti eradication, abatement, and criminalization in a perhaps misguided effort to thwart violent criminal activity.

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A Note From Program Director Dietrich Neumann

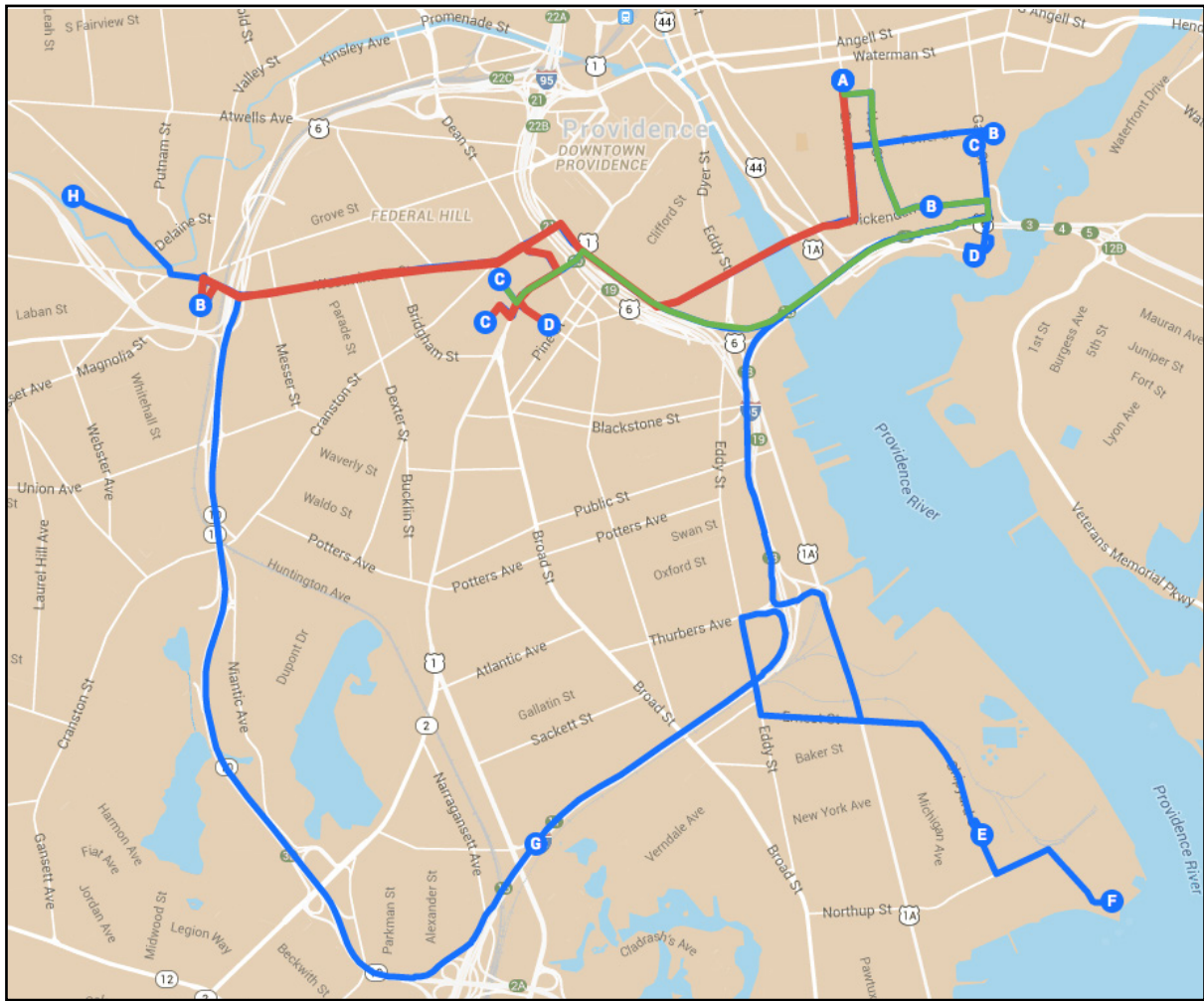
At a time when half of the world's population lives - for the first time in its history - in cities, and when scientists urgently remind us that 50 % of the world's energy consumption (and the environmental effects that come with it) goes towards the creation and maintenance of our built environment, Urban Studies is clearly one of the most important fields of inquiry any university can offer. The multitude of global challenges that come with rapid urbanization can only be understood and addressed if many disciplines work together.

Brown's Urban Studies Program has a long history of being one of the most interdisciplinary programs on our campus. Our faculty comes from departments as diverse as Political Science, Economics, History, English, Sociology, Anthropology and the History of Art and Architecture. Building on ideas that our previous director, Hilary Silver, had already begun to put into motion, we are in the process of reorganizing and growing the program. We are engaging with the community and with the faculty at the Rhode Island School of Design through a number of lectures, a panel discussion and a major conference planned for this spring. Isaac Macdonald ('15) the editor-in-chief of our newsletter has enlarged its format and changed it from an annual to a bi-annual publication, to appear in January and May. He is also working on a new Urban Studies Journal with essays by students and faculty.

This fall, we have introduced the "Urban Studies Bus Tours" through Providence, each led by a faculty member, who presents the city as he or she sees it (see report on p. 1). We are most grateful for the generosity of the Goldberg Family which has made these tours possible. The first three tours have been a smashing success, turning a sold-out 54 seater bus into a classroom shared by students, faculty and Providence residents. Each 1 1/2 hour long trip concluded in the Urban Studies Department with more discussions over cider donuts, cookies and coffee, brought from Smithfield by Meredith Paine, our wonderful manager. Three more to come in the spring!

We have begun talking about the possibilities of a future 5th year Master's program in Urban Studies, and have moved forward with three new classes for the spring semester 2015 that introduce students to practical skills for urban and architectural planning and design, about visualization and representation (Prof. Hogben), about urban planning and design (Prof. Martinez) and a double credit introduction to architectural design (Prof. Baldwin and myself). The last one is part of an upcoming new undergraduate major that will prepare students for "advanced standing" in selected architecture graduate schools (such as RISD), which comes with a shortened path of 2 years vs. the normal 3 years towards their MArch. This new concentration will be launched next academic year and introduced at a major conference on April 24/25: "Architecture, Urbanism and the Humanities." Urban planner and architect Bernard Tschumi, long time dean at Columbia will deliver the keynote lecture on Friday, April 24, and on Saturday deans of several American and European architecture schools will discuss the future of the humanities in the education of architects and urban planners. We will provide more details soon.

These exciting times at Urban Studies coincide with our move to Maxcy Hall next summer, bringing us right to the heart of campus – perhaps appropriate for a program that seeks to address some of the central issues the world faces today.



Stefano Bloch

- A Urban Studies Building
- B Derelict Buildings at 200 Brook St.
- C Storefront Graffiti at 42 Rice St.
- D Marks of Identity

Robert Azar

- A Urban Studies Building
- B Gano Park/Seekonk River
- C Roger Williams Landing
- D India Point Park

Ken Wong

- E Johnson & Wales Harborside
- F Save the Bay
- G Roger Williams Park
- H Riverside Park on the Woonasquatucket
- A Urban Studies Building
- B Vartan Gregorian Elementary
- C Providence Career & Technical Academy

The final tour of the semester, led by Professor Ken Wong and Professor Holly Harriel, Director of Education Outreach, focused on education in Providence. Highlights included a tour of the Providence Career and Technical Academy, where tour participants had a conversation with Principal Ramon Torres about the successes and challenges the Academy, which opened in 2008.

The bus tours have been very popular among students and residents alike. The three tours planned for the Spring Semester, led by Professors Baum-Snow, Neumann and Sungu-Eryilmaz, have already sold out. Contact Meredith Paine for spots on the waiting list.



Professor Bloch talks with local graffiti artist during the tour.

Faculty Update

The Urban Studies Faculty spans a wide variety of Departments and areas of expertise. Here's some of what they've been up to!

During the Fall Semester, **Nathaniel Baum-Snow** was very active in presenting his research all around North America. He presented his work about why wage inequality has increased more rapidly in larger cities at McGill, the University of Toronto, Simon Fraser University and the Housing-Urban-Labor-Macro Conference. This paper has been cited by renowned urbanist Richard Florida in his column for the Atlantic magazine. Baum-Snow also completed a draft of the new paper: "Transport Infrastructure, Urban Growth and Market Access in China" which he presented at the World Bank sponsored Urbanization and Poverty Reduction Research Conference, the Urban Economics Association meetings and the American Economic Association Meetings. Baum-Snow also gave a talk about highways and urban employment decentralization in the United States at the University of California, Berkeley. In addition, he taught a graduate course in urban economics.

While teaching "Crime and the City" and working on a book-length project on the topic of "bottom-up urbanism" Professor **Stefano Bloch** has delved into a few ancillary research projects focusing broadly on urban subcultures and crime. He submitted the first of these projects for peer review and publication, the second will appear in the forthcoming Sage Handbook of Street Art and Graffiti (ed. by Jeffrey Ross), and the third focuses on Providence's violent crime and graffiti incident rates and is co-authored with colleague Yesim Sungu-Eryilmaz. During the fall Professor Bloch is hosting a spring Brown-RISD Institutional Collaboration Grant-funded panel on "Innovating Urban Districts" with Alexis Canter and to present his research on conducting place-based interviews with graffiti writers at the Association of American Geographers conference in Chicago.

Perhaps most importantly, he spent the summer comparing lattes in Paris, New York, Boston, in his hometown of Los Angeles, and in Providence with his partner and three kids. To his surprise it was a little cafe in Providence that won the challenge.

Professor **Howard Chudacoff** has completed a new book to be titled, "Changing the Game Plan: How Power, Profit, and Politics Transformed College Sports." The book will be published by the University of Illinois Press in the fall of 2015. He also is presenting the keynote address at the annual conference of The Association for the Study of Play in March in San Antonio.

This fall Professor **Tamar Katz** taught the introductory-level Urban Studies class, City Novels. She also worked on several writing projects. The first is an article on the essayist Joseph Mitchell, who wrote for the New Yorker magazine in the mid-twentieth century (the essay, entitled "Anecdotal History: the New Yorker, Joseph Mitchell, and Literary Journalism," is scheduled to appear in the journal American Literary History this summer). She also wrote an essay that will appear in the Wiley-Blackwell Companion to Virginia Woolf entitled "Woolf's Urban Rhythms." Finally, Professor Katz worked on two shorter papers about writers of the Harlem Renaissance, Nella Larsen and Claude McKay, and presented both at the Modern Language Association conference this January.

Patrick Malone, although officially retired, still has a desk in the John Nicholas Brown Center and is continuing to do research and writing. Last semester, he finished several projects for the National Park Service: a study of the historic Chain Forge at the Boston Naval Shipyard and an evaluation of interpretive programs at the Lowell National Historical Park. He is now working on an article about steam power in the textile industry of New Bedford, MA.

Dietrich Neumann took over as the new director of urban studies (see more on the new initiatives in his letter on p.2). He taught his "City and Cinema" class and a seminar about Brown's architecture in which the students worked on the 2.0 edition of the iPhone App "Brown Facades" (free for Apple and Android devices). There was a field trip to Walden Pond, the old Manse and the battlefield of Concord and the Wellesley Campus.

Prof. Neumann gave a lecture on architecture and artificial light at a conference at the Architecture Academy in Mendrisio Switzerland, and another lecture on the Ford Foundation in New York at the American Academy in Rome.

His latest book came out in December, a collection of essays about the global history of urban illumination, edited with two colleagues: "Cities of Light" (Routledge, 2014).

While on sabbatical leave Professor **Marion Orr** has traveled to Detroit and Washington DC gathering data for a new book project focusing on Detroit. He has also launched a new project on Latino Mayors.

Hilary Silver was a Visiting Professor at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales in Paris in May-June and spent the fall semester at the Columbia Population Research Center where she has been studying variation in health across neighborhoods of New York City. One publication from the project is

"Neighborhood Social Capital and the Disadvantaged: A Case Study in New York City." Pp 115-146 in Social Capital and Economics: Social Values, Power, and Social Identity, ed. Asimina Christoforou and John B. Davis (Routledge 2014). Her new film on homelessness in Rhode Island is currently in previews. She also edited Comparing Cities (Routledge), a collection of original articles on the methods and strategies of comparative urban studies.

Professor **Kenneth Wong** was invited to give a keynote presentation at a forum organized by the Victorian Department of Premier and Cabinet, Australia, and the Forum of Federations, a global network on federation and devolved governance in December. At this Melbourne forum, Professor Wong presented his research on state and local implementation of federal education reform initiatives in the U.S. The Australian policy audience was interested to learn about the intergovernmental collaboration and tension in a decentralized education system such as the U.S. Further, at the American Political Science Association annual meeting in Washington DC in September, Professor Wong presented findings from his research project on the politics of policy waivers in education. Finally, as the City of Providence transitions from Mayor Angel Taveras to Mayor Gorge Elorza, Professor Wong continues to serve on the mayoral-appointed School Board Nominating Commission.

DEPARTMENT RELOCATION [CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1]

The new home of the department will be located on the first floor of Maxcy, and will also occupy the basement as a “kitchen and event space,” said Dietrich Neumann, Urban Studies Department chair. In addition to the basement space the department’s new home will comprise two shared faculty offices, permanent offices for the departmental manager and the director, and a new seminar room.



Maxcy Hall on Simmons Quadrangle, where the department will move come fall 2015.

“We will perhaps have a little less sense of coherence than our current building,” Neumann said, adding that Maxcy renovations in preparation for the move will occur this summer. It is possible that the move to Maxcy will be temporary, Neumann added, explaining that the department will keep an eye out for vacancies in other campus buildings, especially those in which Urban Studies could be the sole occupier.

The loss of 29 Manning was met with considerable controversy, as it was a leading example of Rhode Island modernism when built. The building was constructed and designed in 1938 by Margaret and Peter Geddes, the latter of which would use the building as an architectural studio for several years with partner Albert Harkness. It was in 29 Manning that they designed several prominent local buildings including Classical High School. However, despite opposition from groups including the Providence Preservation Society, the construction plan is going ahead and the department will be relocating to Maxcy.

Neumann, however, remains optimistic about the department’s move, though the situation is not “ideal.” He recalls a quote by former University President Henry Wriston on Maxcy Hall, about how “nothing that could be done would make [it] beautiful.” But with the opportunity for summer renovations of the department’s new home, the chance for the space to shine may be on the horizon.

“Now we’re working with architects to make it beautiful after all” Neumann said.

GRAFFITI AND VIOLENCE [CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1]

The fieldwork, conducted during the relatively warm reading period of the fall semester, consisted of students combing assigned block groups and painstakingly geo-coding each and every incident of graffiti applied to surfaces from roof tops and street signs to light poles and alley walls with markers, spray paint, and even stickers by local graffiti writers, gang members, and street artists. Students categorized each type of graffiti (gang related or non-gang related) and indicated the style of graffiti (tag, throw-up, piece, slap tag) present on each type of surface.

The next stage of the research will be to overlay the student-generated map of graffiti atop the Providence crime map and look for a relationship. The research will be written up and submitted for consideration for publication in an urban studies-related journal in the coming academic year.



Graffiti Mural on the West Side of Providence

Four Seniors Pursue Honors Theses

Under the direction of their respective thesis advisors, four Urban Studies concentrators are pursuing Honors Theses.

Andrew Brown is exploring the role of transportation in affecting access to opportunity based on the specific differences between suburbia and the inner city. As American cities have increased in popularity, poverty has become an increasingly suburban challenge. His thesis engages with this issue using GIS analysis.

Isaac MacDonald is writing his thesis on the relationship between violence, space and power in Medellin Colombia. He traveled to Medellin this summer with the help of the department's Goldberg Fellowship, where he researched the effect of aerial metrocab transit lines on peripheral urban communities. Medellin's transformation from deadliest place on earth to urban planning capital of South America has recieved a lot of attention from urban studies professionals as well as the general public. This project attempts to understand the role of the metrocabes in facilitating this change as well as to put Medellin's current progress in historical and theoretical context.

Erin Schwartz is writing about uniting ontologies of space that are oriented towards materiality with ontologies oriented towards subjectivity. She wants to propose a new practice of spatial theory that decenters the human subject and calls for a complex understanding of the intersections between space, body, and discourse.



Metrocable Cars in Medellin, Colombia

Thomas Schubert is exploring how the Chicago River was represented in different written publications from the nineteenth century. The river, which was, among other things, an economic asset and a sanitary hazard, symbolized Chicago's highly fraught process of early growth. By exploring how it was described in newspapers, history books, and business publications from the period, Thomas hopes to better understand the river's function within public discourse about growth, pride, and environmental degradation in the young, industrial city.

All four concentrators are set to graduate in May and are enrolled this semester in a seminar and writing group led by Professor Sandy Zipp.

Alumni Spotlight

Adam Maynard graduated from Brown in 2011 and has spent the past two and a half years at the U.S. Green Building Council working to improve sustainable urban development practice through the LEED for Neighborhood Development (LEED ND) rating system. While his role on the team has shifted during his time at the organization, he currently manages a portfolio of 223 registered LEED ND projects around the world. Adam helps these teams navigate the requirements of the rating system and certification process within the context of local land use and urban development practice. He also aids in the technical development of the rating system criteria itself, which is based generally on the principles of smart growth, new urbanism, and green building. Adam draws on the strong land use practice and planning theory he learned as an Urban Studies concentrator in his everyday work at USGBC.

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New Courses Offered Within Urban Studies

HIAA 1850H Berlin: Architecture, Politics and Memory
W 3-5:30pm

Professor Dietrich Neumann

This course deals with the architecture and urbanism of the German capital and the way the city's traditions of commemoration in different phases of its history and under different political regimes. Students will research historic structures and sites of the 19th through 21st Centuries and engage with the intense German debate about historic preservation and commemoration.

URBN 1240 In Search of the Global Black Metropolis
TTh 9-10:20am

Assistant Professor, Rebecca Carter

This course is an interdisciplinary exploration of the 'black metropolis.' Beginning with the significance of this term in the U.S., students explore black urban life in places such as Philadelphia, Bronzeville, and Harlem. The course then broadens to frame the 'global black metropolis,' given migration, diaspora, transnationalism and the span and diversity of black urban life around the world.

URBN 1870F Housing and Homelessness W 3-5:30pm
Professor Hilary Silver

This seminar aims to acquaint students with the history, conception, scale, composition, and causes of the local and worldwide problem of homelessness. It also surveys the rights and subsidized housing programs that can address it. Students conduct original research and so, should have completed some methodological training. Enrollment limited to 20 students.

URBN 1870T Transportation: an Urban Planning Perspective
Th 4-6:30pm

Robert Azar, Director of Planning, City of Providence

This seminar explores how urban planners in the U.S. plan for and around various transportation networks. We will examine how these networks are designed and funded, which modes get priority over others, and ultimately how transportation shapes the built environment. Realworld examples of plans and projects from Providence and Rhode Island are used throughout the course.

URBN 1910 Drawing and Creating in 2d, 3d and CAD for Architecture and Urban Design T 4-6:30pm

Gavin Hogben, Visiting Lecturer

This class equips students with an array of techniques for developing and recording ideas in architecture and urban design. Geometric techniques, such as orthogonal plans, section cuts, elevations, axonometric projections and simple perspective systems, are introduced along with procedures for exploring qualitative and time-based factors.

URBN 1920 Introduction to Urban Design and Planning:
The City as System M 6-8:30pm

Enrique Martinez, Visiting Lecturer

This seminar will examine the role of urban design and planning in shaping the systemic city of the 21st century. Our conversations about current theories and practices of urban design, planning and urban systems will be accompanied by a hands-on design exercise to experience how the future of cities is planned in the present.

Alumni Spotlight

Ceara O'Leary graduated from Brown in 2006 and went on to earn Masters degrees in Architecture and City & Regional Planning at the University of California, Berkeley. From 2010-2011, Ceara was the inaugural Public Design Intern at the Gulf Coast Community Design Studio in Biloxi, Mississippi, where she worked on community design and development projects in collaboration with local stakeholders along the Mississippi Gulf Coast. She subsequently worked as a Community Designer with bcWORKSHOP, setting up an office in the Lower Rio Grande Valley and contributing to a community-based planning project in colonias across Hidalgo and Cameron Counties. Ceara is now a Senior Project Manager at the Detroit Collaborative Design Center (DCDC), where she held the Enterprise Rose Architectural Fellowship from 2012-2014. At DCDC, Ceara has worked on a range of community design and development projects, including citywide planning processes, neighborhood-scale ecodistricts, corridor revitalization projects and community gathering spaces.

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Upcoming Events

Friday February 20th 15:00-16:30: Bus Tour with Prof. Nate Baum-Snow
"Neighborhood Change in Providence since the 1950s"

Thursday February 26th, 18:00-20:00: Lecture (BERT 130)
"Innovating Urban Districts: place making in the "Creative Capital"
with Dr. Stefano Bloch, Cogut Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow and Alexis Landes, RISD.

Friday March 6th 15:00-16:30: Bus Tour with Prof. Dietrich Neumann
"Providence: A Modern City"

Friday April 3rd 15:00-16:30: Bus Tour with Prof. Yesim Sungu-Eryilmaz
"Can Urban and Agriculture coexist?"

Monday, April 20th 18:00: Lecture by Prof. Lukasz Stanek (List 120)
Lecture on urban theorist Henri Lefebvre

Friday April 24th & Saturday April 25th: Conference
Architecture, Urbanism and the Humanities

Friday 18:00: Keynote speech by Prof. Bernard Tschumi (RISD Auditorium)
Architect, urban planner, longtime dean of the Columbia Graduate School of Architecture,
Planning and Preservation

Saturday: Lectures by Profs. Stan Allen (Princeton), Amale Andraos (Columbia), Meejin
Yoon (MIT), Kent Kleinman (Cornell), Irene Sunwoo (Architectural Association, London),
Matthias Sauerbruch (Academy of Arts, Berlin).

May: Spring Newsletter