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CIUDADLAB
CIUDADLAB was founded in 2004 as a multidisciplinary research platform focused in investigating, through analytical and critical inquiry, the imaginary of contemporary cities across the globe. By insisting in understanding the contemporary apparatus and mechanisms that shape cities, we are not dismissing or avoiding their historical complexities, on the contrary, by critically looking at their actual conditions we insert historical perspective to comprehend their inherent challenges and problematics. Ciudad stands for city in Spanish and since the platform was founded originally in Puerto Rico (based now in New York), I decided to formulate it with this language as a way to acknowledge the increasing majority of the global Spanish-speaking community. The naming of the platform does no intend to limit its research agenda to a Spanish-speaking audience or locations, on the contrary, it serves as tool to incorporate issues of communication, migration, mobility and circulation in a world marked by global exchange. As platform, it was initially supported on the principle of the “laboratory,” a place for testing hypothesis through systematic inquiry, where the city itself was conceived as the place and space where past or current hypotheses have been tested. In 2012 and for the purpose of understanding the genealogy of the “architectural lab” and in many cases a “city lab,” I developed a project with two colleagues in which we traced the sources for what became almost a standard mode of operation for research about architecture and the city in this new century. Some of the questions driving the research were, what is the subject of research of an architectural lab? Can a lab exist outside of a contained physical space and be taken out to, for example, the city? The results showed multiple channels of action and even considered detours to science and technology (like Bruno Latour’s Laboratory Life). Four different paths were identified and were grouped in what we called the: “Scientific Lab,” “Design Lab,” “All-Inclusive Lab,” and “Urban Lab.” Some of these categories were originated in the Soviet Vkhutemas, the Architecture Machine Group, or the Architectural Association Design Research Lab and because of their variety, the groups were defined to clarify their motivations and genealogies. A critical point was marked with Columbia University’s C-Lab in 2005 (Columbia Laboratory for Architectural Broadcasting), by serving as juncture to the tens of “labs” that were inaugurated worldwide after that date, including the ambitious Columbia University’s GSAPP Studio-X Network in 2008, as well as the BMW Guggenheim Lab in 2011, among many other academic and cultural institutions initiatives. Retroactively, this research fortified my understanding and scope of the strong capacities of a “lab,” even more as an acquired knowledge by our own experience and travels. Ten years later, with dozens of collaborators and having researched and studied cities across the world, my intuitions and motivations proved to be a shared concern among many disciplines and institutions alike who support these type of analytical research practice.

Through the investigations we have engaged with multidisciplinary teams in places such as Orlando, Moscow, Rio de Janeiro, Sao Paulo, Brasilia, Santiago (Chile) and Berlin, creating a global network of researchers concerned with the various issues pressing the production of cities in each location. Each project has been created as a response to an urgent or emerging condition palpable in...
each visited place, not as a premonition, but as a sign of critical drivers. We have avoided the research of more “known” conditions of cities in order to investigate less considered issues of our contemporaneity.

CIUDADLAB have worked in close collaboration with academic and cultural institutions where the projects have been developed as courses or workshops. A critical step in each project is to travel to each destination to contest, confront or reshape the hypotheses made through a first distant research. These projects range from investigating and visiting specific buildings, urban conditions, as well as social or cultural phenomena. Some examples, included in this booklet, are the Narkomfin housing building in Moscow (Moisei Ginzburg, 1928-32), one of the few examples of architecture derived from Constructivism in Soviet Russia and a built experiment for collective living in opposition to the current making of Russia’s metropolis; to Lucio Costa’s and Oscar Niemeyer’s Brasilia and their role as symbol of progress and Modernity within Brazil’s increasing role as key global player in energy production; to the impact of Chile’s political history and how transportation, centrality and inequality are also informed by its geography; among other examples related to migration or memory. It has been a productive strategy to address each research project through very specific lens for inquiry. For example, when working with Moscow, the lens of an: Ideological City, Unfinished City or Imaginary City framed each larger preoccupation with clear parameters. For Brazil, inquiring the Informal City was key to approach a large and significant part of their urban environment; and for our first project ten years ago, framing San Juan through a Consumer City and a Suburban City proved to be revealing nowadays in a situation of financial decline highly manifested in the city’s current decay.

With these projects we have produced evidence and made findings for various cases and situations such as: locating the contrast within the collective against the individualist body in today’s Moscow, visiting and identifying the multiple “forms” for political, social and architectural desire in Brazil, inhabiting the imaginary of Disney that informed the migration of a population who was moved by fantasy, or to confirm how geography can support and manifest social inequality in Chile’s capital. In an effort to expose all these evidences and findings we have develop a working scheme in which as a culmination of each project the work is exposed. Many of these projects concluded with a public exhibition, showing the research through video-documentaries, infographics, manipulated aerial photographs, booklets, and photographic documentation. Besides just a teaser found here, the videos and some related material can be seen in ciudadlab.com.

We work as a platform for expanding responsible and provocative conversations about the production of cities in an inevitable contested world. As such, this research practice does not intend to provide definitive design solutions, but to offer the evidences for collective and multifaceted tools for action and an expanded conversations about how to reimagine our cities from within them.

Marcelo López-Dinardi
After its return to democracy in the last decade of the past century, Chile has seen an expansion on various matters, and architecture has not been the exception, however, we wanted to investigate the larger infrastructure where that architecture is placed. Chile had a strong presence in the media in 2010 and then in 2011; its turmoils, labor negligences and students uprisings turned it into center stage of the world media. Yet before that, Chile had established a firm place inside the global landscape; and architecture and the city revealed a valuable work, but also the problems, of a country that has a close relationship with its physical and at the same time, political geography.

Research findings noted the particularities of how the city's geography is also the based for its evident inequality. Chile, concentrated in Santiago, exhibits the development of a country's booming economy where, at the same time, social inequality is spread top to bottom.

The investigation counted with the collaboration of local professors (Fernando Péres Oyarzún, Rodrigo Tisi and Horacio Torrent) at the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile in Santiago.
CONGESTED SPATIAL TEMPORAL TYPOLOGIES (2010)

Considering the city of São Paulo’s magnitude in scale and huge densities, it is almost impossible to review or generate a synthetic approach of the multiplicity of events and phenomena that transpire in this vast territory. In that same fashion, and with this in mind, the themes of this investigation share this diversity. After the process of de-industrialization initiated in certain neighborhoods, São Paulo began to transform these abandoned spaces with a series of complex and multifaceted strategies. At the same time, the Paulista Avenue, the economic and financial hub of São Paulo, is a place where typologies are configured and converge to generate an open dialogue between internal functions and the public space that surrounds it; including its topography. The elimination of limits, the extension of the public sphere and big scale events are some of the qualities that make this avenue the new Paulistano center. The rich and regenerative cultural programming of SESC Pompeia, among others, serves as evidence of the collective will of the city.
SAO PAULO / RESEARCH

- Typical Day Trip Itinerary
- Population Density
- Museum of Modern Art, Lina B.B.
- Sculpture Museum P. Melides D.R.
MONUMENTAL VOID (2010)

Dreamed since its colonization, Brasilia began construction in 1956 under the direction of President Juscelino Kubitschek. Planned under Lúcio Costa and Oscar Niemeyer, the city acquires a monumental character marked by the Plano Piloto’s emptiness as the representation of the Nation’s power. The great distances along the monumental axis difficult social encounters, instead, small activities and urban catalyzers nurtured by spontaneity and the ephemerality of the everyday life of the city, reign. As such, Brasilia’s monumentality is not ascribed to an object, building or zone, it is instead part of the entire tissue of the city. Brasilia, the capital of desire, the image of progress, was formulated and continues to be projected as the world’s most modern city. Even though it is now declared a world heritage site, its importance was already proclaimed since before its construction; the mere act of drawing an axis on the soil, was understood as a triumph for the modern project. Years later, heterotopic conditions can be identified in the dense satellites that surround the ideal city as well as in between the superblocks’ interstices.
In Rio de Janeiro, the beach has a crucial role in the life of its citizens who utilize its nearly 4 km. of coastline for exercise and recreation; turning the beach into its main public sphere. In a society where outdoor leisure lies so embedded in the city and in which the body’s exposition is an everyday matter, all sorts of measures are taken to keep up their shape within the highest standards of beauty. This turns Rio into a huge marketplace and an international tourist destination for body cult beyond extreme swimwear, like plastic surgeries. In contrast to the financial capital that is invested on the body lies another side of Rio, which is represented mainly by the favela; the mythical Brazilian slum. Even though it has a tainted image of violence, drug trafficking and lack of “order,” some favelas are vibrant and highly organized communities with an important commercial activity and a self-governance model for making schools, public infrastructure and to keep a radio and TV program of their own. Rio’s sensuous geography seems to inform an ideal setting for the individual cult of bodies but also to the collective body of their marginal communities.
UTOPIA IN MOSCOW (2008)

As with every research project, we pick a different destination in an attempt to broaden the frame of reference from which we imagine the city. During the year 2008, choosing Moscow seemed to sense Russia’s renewed presence in the geopolitical game as we experienced the beginning of a renewed “Cold War.” Beyond Moscow’s exoticism with respect to a Western minded group, three theoretical frameworks established possible lines of comparison and analysis: Imagined City, Ideological City and Unfinished City. Through site visits, documentation and interviews, we looked to a heavily ideological city, and the traces of an unfinished imaginary world. The clash of the individual body against the collective was evident in the construction of the new capitalist Russia.

The investigation counted with the intellectual support of Anna Bronovitskaya, Assistant Professor at the Moscow Architecture Institute (MARKHI), who gave a seminar at ArqPoli during the months of preparation prior to the trip.
MOSCOW / RESEARCH

BMW Ad Over Kremlin Walls

Narkomfin Housing, M. Ginzburg

Zuev Workers Club, Ilya Golosov

Olympics Boycott, USSR 1980 / US 1984

Population Migration After 1989

Trip Itinerary and Routes
PUERTO RICO IN ORLANDO (2007)

On this occasion, the migration from Puerto Ricans to Orlando was taken as a subject of study. Greatly inspired by the ordinary and the everyday, we embarked to study the massive diaspora of Puerto Ricans to Central Florida. The exodus to mainland U.S. has been a recurrent condition of our colonial society. Historically, it has included cities like New York and Chicago, but contrary to those other migrations, Orlando’s has been framed by an apparent cultural continuity that minimizes the rupture effect that relocations usually provoke.

Our main objective was to decipher the relationship between fantastic desires and the ways in which the contemporary city is imagined in Puerto Rico, in contraposition to the daily banality of an undifferentiated landscape governed by the car. Migration is, on one side, a cultural extension of the recurrent longing of the need to escape and begin again, but it also is a reencounter with a form of generic urbanity that is evermore common in Puerto Rico. If fantasy stimulates the original escape, the result of the relocation is a return to the familiar.
THE PRACTICE OF EVERYDAY SAN JUAN (2005)

The research related to the city of San Juan, Puerto Rico, which appropriates Michel de Certeau’s concept of the Practice of Everyday Life, was realized utilizing the banal and the everyday as armature to understand the Island’s capital. Departing from analyzing the recently inaugurated Tren Urbano (Urban Train), a single-line mass transit system, the purpose was to generate a discussion based on the critical observation of the quotidien, in order to generate new readings to the city’s urban context created by the new infrastructure. The structure of the investigation was based on three main research lenses: Imagined City, Consumer City and Suburban City.

Findings showed the pervasiveness of a strong suburban type of culture spreading by a consumer imaginary where the objects of consumption can vary from a new incoherent mass transit system than a working infrastructure, to public art as a desperate measure to promote culture, or the denial of seeing the city’s –an island– connection to water bodies.
El Estuario de San Juan apoya el área portuaria de mayor envergadura en el Caribe.

70% de la cuenca del estuario se encuentra urbanizada.
GEOGRAPHY AND POWER (2011)

CIUDADLAB traveled to Chile to conduct a series of site visits and interviews in the cities of Santiago, San Pedro de Atacama and Valparaíso. The findings were varied. However, the most significant one was the fact that in Chile, the dictatorship power was not clearly enacted through the territory in a visible, much less monumental manner. It was unscrupulously hidden. We were faced with a city that orchestrates power in an invisible way within its multiple and varied environs –natural or constructed. We examined how power is and was infiltrated throughout Chile in its capital city, its main port city and the northern desert. A four decades old laboratory of the neoliberal canon, the fissures and contradictions of this model are becoming ever more evident in the scenery of struggles that make up the city. The result is a country that simultaneously registers its cultural and political attachments and dissociations by means of a delicate arrangement between geography and power.

Laboratorio de Artes Binarios Gallery Space
1206 Ponce de León Av.
Santurce, Puerto Rico
December 2011
THE FORM OF DESIRE (2010)

After researching the cities of Rio de Janeiro, Brasilia and São Paulo in Brazil we identified leisure, void, security, industry, body, tourism and monumentality as drivers of the forms of desire. With an ever expanding economy, Brazil has become the world’s eighth economy and the destination for countless local and international events. The research was organized through three analytical lenses - the Imagined City, the Ideological City and the Informal City - and worked with the hypothesis that in Brazil the imaginary of desire is employed to promulgate the worshipping of the body, the architectural object and the staging of both within the diverse urban and natural contexts of the country.

This destination of great social and cultural contrasts - like emptiness and monumentality in Brasilia, the geographical fragmentation of Rio de Janeiro as well as the self governance model that occurs in its favelas, or the congestion and cultural/typological hybridity in São Paulo - proved to be a great challenge in order to investigate Brazil as container and producer of a Form of Desire.

Old Armory of the Spanish Navy of Puerto Rico’s National Gallery
Old San Juan, Puerto Rico
August 2010
BRAZIL / EXHIBITION
UTOPIA IN MOSCOW (2008)

The exhibition titled “CIUDADLAB: Utopia in Moscow” exposes viewers to the ambiguities of a place whose social and political path has left signs of magnificence and tragedy in the city’s architecture, which is renewing itself amid a galloping economy (2008). The subsequent historical legacies of Moscow’s architecture accumulate chaotically, with more or less visibility, in the urban scenario. This condition is not strange to the body (now more individualized or self-conscious) in which a sociopolitical transformation suddenly changed the way Russians conceive and expose their bodies in the city.

Radical changes can be perceived from what Soviet cinema showed in the early 20th century, a collective body mobilized for an apparent collective will, to the city’s explosion of icons and the proliferation of the fashion industry, are the evidence of the construction of a new, not-collective, individual subject.

Puerto Rico’s Architects and Landscape Architects Association
Santurce, Puerto Rico
September 2008
Marcelo López-Dinardi
A researcher, educator and trained architect, studied one year of architecture in his birthplace in Chile, and later obtained his B.Arch. from the School of Architecture of the Polytechnic University of Puerto Rico (PUPR), Cum Laude. Co-founded the contemporary city research platform CIUDADLAB in 2004, was Assistant Professor of design studio, research and representation at the PUPR, where he directed the 2009-2010 Lectures Series Sense Recession: What Comes Next?, and also directed the Roundtable Discussion Series for four years where he addressed the complexities of the production of contemporary architecture and the city. From 2008-2011 edited the architecture journal Polimorfo, which he also co-founded. Has written for Entorno, Domus, Planning Perspectives, CCGSAPP, Buell Center at GSAPP, invited critic at the UPR, GSAPP, Barnard + Columbia College, Pratt Institute, Parsons, University of Pennsylvania and NJIT, lectured at Cooper Union, University of Michigan and Princeton University and his architectural design work has been awarded several times. After relocating to New York, he developed the thesis Destructive Knowledge: Tools for Learning to Un-Dō with a renewed discussion about discipline and knowledge around the work of Gordon Matta-Clark, obtaining an M.S. in Critical, Curatorial and Conceptual Practices in Architecture of the GSAPP at Columbia University. He recently co-edited the book Promiscuous Encounters for GSAPP Books. He is a partner of A(n) Office, based in New York, an Adjunct Faculty at the School of Architecture of the New Jersey Institute of Technology, and an Adjunct Assistant Professor at the Architecture Department at Barnard College, Columbia University.

Oscar Oliver-Didier
Editor, Senior Urban Designer at the NYC Department of City Planning (Bronx Borough Office) and former Assistant Professor at ArqPoli School of Architecture at the Polytechnic University of Puerto Rico (2007-2014) where he taught urban design, first and second year architectural design studio, history, theory and research courses and where he directed the 2008 lecture series entitled: “Revisiting the Rhetorical Masters of the Architectural Neo-Avant-Garde”. He is currently also Associate Review Editor for Latin America of Planning Perspectives and from 2011-2014 served as Editor of ENTORNO, the official publication of the Puerto Rico Association of Architects and Landscape Architects. From 2008-2010 he served as Editor and founder of the journal Polimorfo, a multidisciplinary publication on architecture and its multiple cultural roles. He has published numerous articles in Revista Cruce, Planning Perspectives, and Archivos de Arquitectura Antillana, and has lectured at Cooper Union, University of Puerto Rico, Catholic University in Ponce and Keio University in Tokyo. Since 2004 he serves as Director of CIUDADLAB and formerly directed the Laboratory for Housing, Planning and Urban Studies at the Polytechnic University of Puerto Rico (2013-2014). He was a former urban policy maker and Auxiliary Adviser to the Governor of Puerto Rico (2006-2007) and holds a Master of Architecture in Urban Design from Harvard University (2006) and a Bachelors in Architecture from ArqPoli School of Architecture, with distinction (2004). In 2012 he was awarded the Héctor R. Arce Quintero Award of the Puerto Rico Association of Architects: a recognition of the work of an individual that promotes the city through practice, academia and/or the public sector. He recently served as a consultant to the Puerto Rico Planning Board and the Center for a New Economy.
Javier Arbona-Homar
Researches military landscapes and the production of heritage, memory, and space. Chancellor's Postdoctoral Fellow in American Studies at the University of California, Davis, working under the mentorship of Caren Kaplan. Currently working on a book manuscript based on his dissertation. His study looks at the landscapes for memorializing the 1944 Port Chicago explosion in the San Francisco Bay Area and the subsequent African American work strike to resist segregation in the military. Holds a PhD in Geography from the University of California at Berkeley, completed with the support of a Ford Foundation Fellowship and a Bancroft Library Award. Also has experience and training as an oral historian. Collaborated on archival research and interviews with the University of California's Bancroft Library Regional Oral History Office, Rosie the Riveter World War II National Home Front project. Holds an undergraduate degree from Cornell University in architecture—a discipline that continues to shape his spatial inquiries and ideas. Also attained a master degree in architecture and urbanism at MIT, working on questions of nature and militarism in Vieques, Puerto Rico under the guidance of Anne Spirn and committee members Mark Jarzombek and Bill Porter. Has several years of experience in architectural education, criticism, and design. In 2010, he co-founded an experimental landscape collective called Demilit along with Bryan Finoki and Nick Sowers. They guide tours, organize events, and produce sound and visual art pieces. They have completed works for—among others—the Headlands Center for the Arts, Deutschlandradio (Germany), and the 2012 New City Reader at the Istanbul Design Biennial. Recent articles published together include a piece for Volume (architecture periodical) and a design fiction that was featured in the exhibition Timing is Everything at the UCSD University Art Gallery. Also frequently collaborates on educational programs with Beta-Local, a not-for-profit art space in San Juan, Puerto Rico. Demilit is currently developing experimental projects on surveillance, sounds, and spatial traces.

Andrea Bauzá-Hernández
Graduated of a Master in Architecture, Art and Ephemeral Space at the Polytechnic University of Catalonia. Holds a BArch from the Polytechnic University of Puerto Rico. While in Barcelona, she worked for the urban design firm Ciudades Para Todos, where she worked on urban design improvements of cities in Spain, Argentina and Romania. She also worked for the exhibition design firm, Espai-Visual in Esparraguera, Catalonia. In 2012 She worked as exhibition designer for the 3rd Trienal Poligráfica de San Juan, The Hive. She also teaches 4th year and graduate design studio at the School of Architecture of the University of Puerto Rico. Among other projects, she created and organized Galería-Espacio Temporal (GET), a design-build competition hosted by The Institute of Puerto Rican Culture. She coordinated the design competition Bici-Rack in collaboration with Caribbean Green Bikes. Served as project coordinator and curator for the design fair, Feria de arte y diseño (FAD) celebrated in San Juan’s National Gallery. Around her interests about urbanism she has founded UrbanoActivo, an open design collective for the study and action of creative uses of public space. From August-November 2012, Urbano Activo was featured on the USA pavilion exhibition, “Spontaneous Interventions” in the 13th Venice Biennale of Architecture.
Melissa Fernández-Arrigoitia
Research Officer at LSE London where she carries out investigations to do with the capital’s social, economic and political life, particularly around housing issues. She is a lecturer in Birkbeck’s ‘Culture Diaspora Ethnicity’ MA and has taught gender and politics at Queen Mary University. She completed a PhD on the political, material and symbolic co-productions of public housing in Puerto Rico (LSE, Sociology-Cities), has and MSc in Gender and International Development and a BA in Philosophy and Women’s Studies. She is interested in the links between housing displacement, urban development and activism; interdisciplinary approaches to processes of urban ‘othering’ including the imports of gender, race and postcolonial theories to cultural and urban studies; and in critical geographies of home. Her research in the Caribbean and Latin America has been concerned with post-colonial forms of urban belonging and exclusion, which she has explored in relation to social housing histories and demolitions, and contemporary evictions and relocations. Over the past three years, she has investigated the socio-material development of co-housing in London, the urban politics and economics surrounding the UK’s housing crisis and co-edited the book Social Housing in Europe (2014, Wiley). As part of her wider interest in transnational urban scholarship, she is the Special Features Editor of the academic/activist journal City: analysis of urban trends, culture, theory, policy, action; has co-edited the independent collection Writing Cities Volume 1 (Harvard-MIT-LSE); and is part of an on-going investigation about the links between migrant construction and urbanisation in South Asia. She has previously worked in the field of international human rights in the UK, U.S., and Puerto Rico.

Érika Fontánez-Torres
Professor at the University of Puerto Rico Law School where she teaches since 2004. Fontánez-Torres has a Bachelor Degree in Arts (B.A.) from the Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Puerto Rico (1996) and a Juris Doctor (J.D.) from the same university (1999). She completed a Master in Laws (LL.M.) in 2002 at the London School of Economics and Political Sciences (LSE), University of London. She is an attorney in public interest law cases representing poor communities and environmental groups in collaboration with the Legal Aid Clinic at the University of Puerto Rico. Fontánez-Torres teaches Legal Theory, Theory of Obligations and Contracts, Property Law and seminars on Theory of Justice, Law and Democracy and Legal Philosophy. She is currently working on Hannah Arendt’s political thought and the Law. Her research fields are Legal and Political Theory and among her publications are Derecho y ambigüedad (Editora Educación Emergente, 2012) and Derecho al derecho: intersticios y grietas del poder judicial en Puerto Rico, (Editora Educación Emergente: Cabo Rojo, 2012) (with Hiram Meléndez Juarbe). She is a member of SELA (Seminario Latinoamericano en Teoría Política y Constitucional, sponsored by Yale Law School), the Latin-American Studies Association (LASA), the International Sociological Association, the American Bar Association and the Puerto Rico Bar Association. She has coordinated the UPR Law School’s Pro Bono Program, volunteers as a legal counsellor for the Caño Martín Peña Land Trust, and has served as a mentor of the internationally recognized student organization National Environmental Law Association (ANDA). Before teaching, Fontánez-Torres clerked at the Puerto Rico Court of Appeals and worked as a legal assistant to the Secretary of Environmental and Natural Resources.
Deepak Lamba-Nieves  
A Postdoctoral Fellow at the Watson Institute for International Studies at Brown University, and the Churchill G. Carey Jr. Chair in Economic Development Research at the Center for the New Economy (CNE) in San Juan, Puerto Rico. He received his PhD in Planning and International Development from MIT’s Department of Urban Studies and Planning, and holds a Masters in City Planning from UC Berkeley. Prior to his doctoral studies, he spent close to seven years as research director at the CNE, working on numerous projects focused on the revitalization of the Puerto Rican economy. While at the Center, he also taught Geography and Planning courses at the University of Puerto Rico, and at the Polytechnic University’s School of Architecture. Deepak’s work has been published in peer-reviewed journals and other academic publications, and his expert opinion has been quoted in numerous international and national media outlets. His current research interests focus on international development and migration in Caribbean societies. His doctoral dissertation takes a critical approach towards the migration-development nexus, and focuses on how transnational community development is defined, negotiated and practiced over time, by three Dominican hometown associations (HTAs). His research attempts to shift the emphasis within scholarly debates, from measuring how much development occurs, to what kinds of development processes emerge in communities impacted by transnational migration. For the past six years, he has been conducting multi-sited fieldwork in Boston, New York City and in the southern region of the Dominican Republic. He also collaborates on several projects and initiatives focused on: migration, civic engagement, improving social services provision, and promoting policy innovations in the public sector.

Past Collaborators:
PUBLIC DISCUSSION

EXHIBITION
(Fall)

FINDINGS PROCESSING
(Summer)

ALTERNATIVE OF SUMMER WORKSHOP

TRIP TO RESEARCH LOCATION
(Spring/Summer)

RESEARCH PROJECT/WORKSHOP
(Winter/Spring)

ALTERNATIVE OF SHORT WORKSHOP

INSTITUTIONAL AGREEMENT

RESEARCH & DESTINATION PROPOSAL
(Grant Search)

TOPIC DISCUSSION BY CIUDADLAB

RESEARCH STRUCTURE
CIUDADLAB is a research and exhibition driven platform for examining and revealing the critical or emergent issues formulating the contemporary production of cities. One of the key questions that has guided our work from the outset departing from an architectural background is, how is it possible, today, not to understand and shape architectural and urban thought through an expanded disciplinary framework? With this analytical lens, we believe one is better prepared to confront the complexities inherent to the production of architecture and the city by incorporating the intricate social and political –consensual or antagonistic– relations that most of the time are not fully apprehended within the field of architecture and are embraced by the disciplines deciding the city as active or passive agents.

By developing research, mapping, ethnographic documentation, public forums, readings, workshops, courses, exhibition and publications, we work as a platform for expanding the conversations about the built environment, offering analytical knowledge as a tool to further articulate the many-times hidden catalysts of the city. We investigate cities across the world always identifying pressing issues of their role within a local or global scenario; social and economical inequality, migration, urban imaginaries, urban growth, geography, power, surveillance, biopolitics and memory have been critical themes in previous projects.

CIUDADLAB* was founded in 2004 in San Juan, Puerto Rico by Marcelo López-Dinardi and Oscar Oliver-Didier. Is based in New York since 2012 with collaborators in Berkeley, London, Rhode Island and San Juan. It works with academic and cultural institutions; from 2005-2012 collaborated with ArqPoli, the School of Architecture of the Polytechnic University of Puerto Rico, where it offered an annual research study-abroad course.

* It is registered as a non-profit professional organization for research and education under the Department of Treasury of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico and in process of acquiring a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt nonprofit organization status by the United States Internal Revenue Code (26 U.S.C. § 501(c)).