



## GLOBAL TAIWAN LECTURE SERIES

# *Urban Data as Public Space*

TUESDAY,  
APRIL 23, 2019  
4:00 - 6:00 PM

Room 108N - North House,  
Munk School of Global Affairs  
& Public Policy,  
1 Devonshire Place

### SPEAKER

#### **Christian von Borries**

Musician and film director; Visiting  
Professor at the School of Inter-  
Media Art, China Academy of Art  
in Hangzhou

### CHAIR

#### **Tong Lam**

Academic Director, Global Taiwan  
Studies Initiative; Associate Professor,  
Department of Historical Studies,  
Graduate Department of History

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At this year's World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, Internet companies applied their online knowledge to the analogue world for the first time. Facebook, Palantir, Microsoft and Google tried to impress the business elite with three-storey-high temporary buildings at the most central spots in Davos, and Google revealed its ambition to build an entire suburb of Toronto.

In this talk Von Borries argues that Google's "Sidewalk City Lab" applies reinforced learning, a branch of Artificial Intelligence (AI), to the real world. This has implications for architecture and more importantly for the relationship between people (especially minorities, notoriously overlooked by code based on statistics), as well as social relations, and the private sector.

In this new setting, city planning and architectural design are sourced through machine learning algorithms fed by the big data collected from anyone involved — be they future tenants or critics. Ultimately, we all become unconscious architects as our digital lives are exploited as data. The Taiwanese architect Hsieh Ying-Chun has another approach to collaboration. He considers architecture and town-planning a collective endeavor and a participatory effort.

Smart city algorithms lead to the disappearance of the architect. This lecture aims to highlight how "Urban Data as Public Space" is actually working and how it is different from supposedly similar developments on China's New Silk Road.

### REGISTRATION

<https://uoft.me/UrbanDataPublicSpace>

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