

# Refugee Housing in Portland – Regenerative Design



## SYLLABUS

**RE-GENERATIVE DESIGN:** In this fall's re-generative studio we will look at refugee housing in the US and try to find solutions to housing and integration including live-work. Re-Generative Design in this context means first of all to renew the life of refugees who went through hardships and need support and recovery, but it also means a chance to renew the life of the city.

**THE LARGER PROBLEM:** The United Nations estimates that there are about 250 million migrants in the world and 65 million refugees. This means that one in every 113 people alive today are now displaced by war, violence, and persecution, and other kinds of disasters, and the severity of the situation only continues to increase. In Europe and in the US, migration issues are divisive and at the fore of public debate and protest. How the world responds to this global crisis will arguably impact the trajectory of peace and well-being on this planet for generations to come.

**ARRIVAL CITY AND DAILY LIFE:** In this studio we will look at this difficult situation from the point of view of daily life in the arrival city. The concept of the 'arrival city' is based on a book by the Canadian journalist Doug Saunders, in which parts of cities can play an important role in welcoming migrants and refugees, and help them to assimilate into cultures they are not familiar with. The studio will involve the design of prototypical housing, some of it combined with workplaces, and common facilities for refugees after a year or two of arrival, when they have begun to assimilate in the new place.

**The site will be in Portland, in a place suitable for residential uses and support functions. We will work together with Professor Davis' studio that specifically deals with living and working in the city.**

The program will include several components:

- housing for refugees who have made a decision to stay, and who may become long-term residents of the city
- a few workplaces connected to the dwellings, and providing a means for people to start and operate their own small businesses
- common support facilities that aid in the process of arrival and assimilation.
- inclusion of host country families and people who might help with support and integration
- urban context design in terms of volume, open space, street and sidewalk design, and green

The number of housing units for families and communal housing for singles will likely be about 30-40 in total, but this may change somewhat when a site is chosen.

**STUDIO:** The studio will accentuate several issues: the use and transformation of housing/site typologies, based on historic and modern precedents, that are suitable to the program/site; the particular circumstances of forced migrants, their vulnerabilities, their economic needs, their aspirations and dreams, and their relationships both to their home country and their new country; finally, the material/construction development of dwellings—including space, light, materials and details—that can support people's lives in humane ways, are relevant for the refugee housing design. The studio will be conducted in a penetrating and professional way, including weekly pinups and clearly defined goals, integrating design and research. A range of scales and modes of representation will be part of the ongoing studio design.

**NOTES:** Students will visit the site in Portland early in the quarter, Friday Sept 28. To study site and context. During October 4-7 we will have opportunities to work with students from our exchange University Meiji in Tokyo on the same site and same topic in a studio workshop in Portland (for students who have the time). Students will also have an opportunity to visit the 'PUARL 10 Year Anniversary Conference' that deals with issues of migration, refugees, housing etc, October 26-28. . (<https://refugee.uoregon.edu>)



**NOTES:** A migrant urban and housing project for refugees is also planned for the Rome Summer Program 2019, that students can join.

The Lyceum Competition for an immigration memorial in San Francisco will be open for participation during fall 2018 the and the winter quarter 2019 ([www.lyceum-fellowship.org](http://www.lyceum-fellowship.org)).

### **Program for Refugee Studio in Portland Fall 2018 (and site visit in Portland 9-28-18)**

After we together visited two sites on the Eastside of Portland and selected the final site location, next to Alder and 12<sup>th</sup> street, we now have enough understanding of program elements for our site. Here is my summary of the main points we discussed. Within this program you should have ample options of making the program more specific and personal for your specific refugee population

- 30-35 housing units for refugee families with two children
- 25-35 individual refugees
- 20% work-live (possibly on 1<sup>st</sup> floor) about 6 units
- Housing is free of charge until refugees get a job and can pay for affordable housing
- Shops on first floor especially toward 12<sup>th</sup> Ave
- One Restaurant run by refugees
- Housing office with support functions
- office of refugee advisor
- Basement for technical support and storage, possibly including other functions
- Buildings should be 3-5 stories high (not including basements)
- There should be ample open and beautiful spaces between buildings
- Street design of Alder that works with the refugee building
- There should be at least one or more program functions of your own
- Consider the connection to Howard Davis site on the West side of 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue in terms of live-work emphasis



The site is located between Alder and Morrison and 12<sup>th</sup> street in Portland, Oregon

### **Charrette with Meiji University in Portland (October 4-7 in Portland, Whitestag)**

For the charrette with visiting Meiji university students from Japan, we will use the same program and the same site that we selected and worked on in the first week. Key questions for the charrette are: **What is refugee housing compared to regular affordable or low cost housing?**

Students learned how to come to results in a short period of time by working in groups in a cooperative way and with ongoing guidance by professors. It is precisely the cooperative and international work that was emphasized in this charrette.



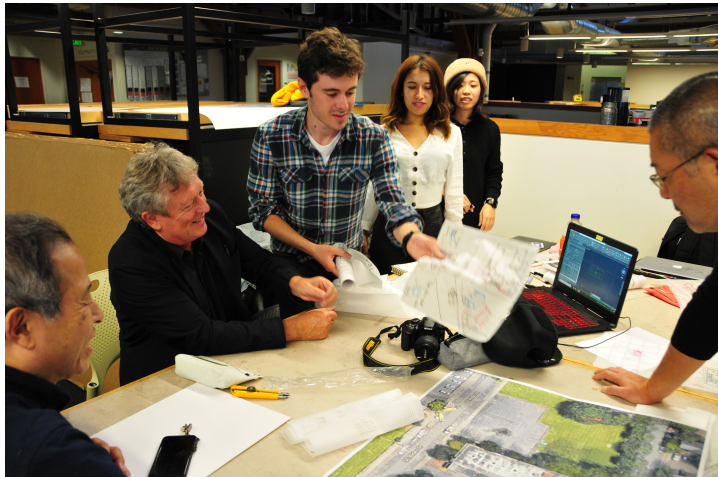
**MID-Review October 27, 2018 in Portland as part of the International Conference on 'Migration, Refugees, and Patterns,' organized by Hajo Neis at the Whitestag facilities in Portland**

(<https://blogs.uoregon.edu/puarl2018/>)

Students are requested to present their designs in front of an international audience in 'power-point or keynote.' After the video presentation students will discuss their work with one or two national or international conference participants. Students will learn how to present their work in AV format.

**The Instructor: Professor Hajo Neis**

Dr. Hajo Neis is the Director of Portland Urban Architecture Research Lab (PUARL) ([puarl.uoregon.edu](http://puarl.uoregon.edu)). He is interested in the structure and design of the city and its constituent parts, that is buildings, open spaces, patterns and building types. He is also a co-director of the 'Collaborative for Inclusive Urbanism CIU' ([www.inclusiveurbanism.edu](http://www.inclusiveurbanism.edu)) that deals with diversity and inclusion in the city. He conducts yearly conferences on Pattern and Pattern Languages. This academic year he is conducting research on the refugee crisis in Europe and the Middle East. He is also a licensed architect with his office Hajo Neis Atelier HNA. He has designed more than 100 buildings and built more than 50, mostly in Europe, Asia, and the US, some of them with prizes and honors. For questions please contact [hajoneis@uoregon.edu](mailto:hajoneis@uoregon.edu).



Students and professors at the Charrette design with UofO and Meiji University Tokyo, October 2018

**Selected Literature:**

Alexander, C., Ishikawa, S., Silverstein, M., Jacobson, M., Fiksdahl-King, I., & Angel, S. (1977). *A pattern language: Towns, buildings, construction*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Darling, J. (2017). Forced migration and the city: Irregularity, informality, and the politics of presence. *Progress in Human Geography*, 41(2), 178-198.

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Schmal, P. C., Elser, O., & Scheuermann, A. (2016). *Making Heimat: Germany, arrival country*. Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz Verlag GmbH & Co Kg.

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*Living in a New Land – Dwellings for Refugees and Immigrants in Portland and Germany*. Edited by: Craig Speck, Dan Quin, Noah Roesler, Tim Walsh. Architecture Design Studio Winter and Spring 2018. Department of Architecture. School of Architecture and Environment. College of Design. University of Oregon, 2018

PUARL website: <https://refugee.uoregon.edu/>

#### NOTES:

(Blue Book for Refugee Housing : include)

(Housing Atlas : include)