

Placemaking Manifesto

Letter to the Editor of ArchDaily | March 1, 2018

Placemaking: Movement, Manifesto, Tool, Buzzword—or What?

www.archdaily.com/886275/placemaking-movement-manifesto-tool-buzzword-or-what

Thank you for responding to the issuing of our Placemaking Manifesto on ArchDaily. As co-authors we appreciate the opportunity to continue our dialogue. Zoya Gul Hasan, in her January 2, 2018 article, [Placemaking: Movement, Manifesto, Tool, Buzzword—or What?](#), pointed out the need for definitions. We concur and are, indeed, well-aware that placemaking needs to be better “understood and defined clearly enough for it to be a useful tool for urbanists.” The Placemaking Manifesto is written as a brief, one-page overview, more in the form of a *poem*, to get to the heart of what we consider essential.

The Placemaking Manifesto –<https://www.architects.org/sites/default/files/Placemaking%20Manifesto.pdf> – represents our take-away following 10 years of an ongoing **interdisciplinary** exchange and dialogue approaching 100 Placemaking Network workshops with 6,000+ attendees coming together at Boston Society of Architects-hosted meetings and conferences (archived at <https://www.architects.org/committees/placemaking-network>). Not mentioned by Ms. Hasan: our principles and core findings related to Placemaking in our Manifesto within the strengthening Movement, which

- offers an unprecedented opportunity for interdisciplinary discourse concerning the places we live in.
- champions human comfort, cultural expression and local identity.
- expands the discussion about and responsibility for *public places* beyond the traditional boundaries of architecture and urban planning.
- spurs collaboration and inclusively centers on what matters to ALL of us: livable public places that express our most common and collective need for comfortable, shared places.
- opposes gentrification and sees a need for **placekeeping** within existing neighborhoods.
- acts as a catalyst to process the needs and desires during public process to address issues that may not have been addressed by agencies or developers employing traditional, non-inclusive architecture or urban planning processes and practices.

The Placemaking movement, having grown exponentially, is so popular it already is experiencing a backlash that exposes an old issue: architectural design and urban planning as a field reserved for architects, planners and/or investors. We, the authors of the manifesto, represent individuals with different professional backgrounds who embrace and wholeheartedly recommend more interdisciplinary discourse under the umbrella of architecture and urban design. We’re loving it and our work has greatly benefited from it.

Sincerely yours,

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cc: James Brasuell. “Reexamining Notions of Placemaking.” *Placetizen*, Jan. 15, 2018.
www.planetizen.com/news/2018/01/96713-reexamining-notions-placemaking