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## Digital-Cultural Ecology and the Medium-Sized City

Conference: 01-03 April 2016

Place: Bristol, UK

Organisers: Architecture\_MPS, CMIR, UWE

Venue: Arnolfini Centre for Contemporary Arts

<http://architecturemps.com/bristol-uk/>

In every country in the world medium-sized cities outnumber capital cities in both quantity and gross population. They are however, historically overlooked. In Europe medium-sized cities have a long history. In China, the history of these places is even older and, in some cases, non-existent – as new urban centres spring up almost overnight. In Australasia and North America, this history lies somewhere in-between. In a digital and interconnected age these cities have the potential to by-pass capitals and challenge the hegemony of central economic and political organisations. They can form networks vastly more complex, intricate and numerous than the now standard group of connected ‘global cities’; can become self-sustained economically and culturally; forge forward with new ideas in their specialist fields; and be test beds for globally applicable innovations.

In the city in which this conference is held, Bristol UK, the industry sector that underwrites its culture and economy is that of the moving image and the digital. It is a medium sized city with a history and an active present at the intersection of the physical conurbation, moving image research, and the cultural, economic and social implications of their coalescence. As with many medium sized cities however, it has an infrastructure from the industrial age. In this context, the present conference and related activities, focus on how the medium sized cities from across the world are adapting to the economies, practices and infrastructures of the digital age; how the interaction and communication of the digital message is reframing life in these cities, whether new or old; and how the digitization of the urban arena is changing the reality of the representation of city life.

### Topics:

Led by the *Centre for Moving Image Research* and the scholarly journal *Architecture\_MPS*, this conference is interested in the exploring the still latent possibilities of the internet in urban, social and cultural contexts; the development of citizen led ‘hybrid cities’ in which new technologies foster new behaviours; new ethnographic interpretations of the city and its peoples; and changing representations of the city in new and old formats: photography, film, animation, augmented and virtual realities.

The questions it asks include, but are not limited to: how can old urban infrastructures incorporate the possibilities of new technologies; how do these technologies affect design, participation, experience and representation in the city; will new modes of communication and visualisation alter the ‘culture’ and ‘economy’ of these places and their peoples; will passive city consumption be replaced by active engagement; how will inhabitants of these cities interact with each other, across boundaries and with their respective levers of power. In short, what are the implications and possibilities of the digital times in which we live, on the civic, cultural, aesthetic, economic, urban and architectural forum of medium-sized city.

It welcomes the participation of architects, planners, activists, artists, technologists, animators, filmmakers, cultural studies experts, programmers, gamers and more. It particularly welcomes those engaged in smaller cities or those in larger cities with a view to their own periphery. It welcomes multiple formats of presentation and interaction.

### Key Dates:

01st Nov 2015: Abstract deadline  
15th Nov 2015: Abstract Feedback  
01st March 2016: Full Paper Submission  
20th March 2016: Registration Closes  
**01-03 April 2016: CONFERENCE**  
01st May 2016: Full Paper Feedback  
01st July 2016: Begin publication of Full Papers

### Formats:

The conference welcomes case studies; product launches, design proposals, research projects, investigative papers and theoretical considerations in various formats:

Conference Presentations (20 minutes)

Written Papers (3,000 words) \*

Alternative Proposals Films; photo essays, workshops, e-exhibition.

In-person and virtual presentations (via Skype, etc.) are welcome.

Delegates are given the option to present their work at conference either with or without an accompanying full written paper.

### Publications:

\* 3,000 word papers will be published online and later in an e-book. Subject to review, selected authors will be invited to develop longer versions of their papers for Special Issues of the Architecture\_MPS journal.

Selected authors will also be invited to participate in a post-conference book as part of the Mediated City book series developed by AMPS and Intellect Books.

Books to come out of previous Mediated City conferences include:

*Digital Futures and the City of Today – New Technologies and Physical Spaces*  
*Filming the City—urban documents, design practices & social criticism through the lens*  
*Imaging the City – art, creative practices and media speculation*

### Submission and Registration:

Registration Delegeate fee: £250 | Free to unwaged

Audience fee: Free to Students | Free to unwaged | £30 per day (waged)

For abstract submission forms, visit: <http://architectureemps.com/bristol-uk/>

For more information: [conference@architectureemps.com](mailto:conference@architectureemps.com)

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This event is organised by the interdisciplinary research group AMPS (Architecture, Media, Politics, Society), its associated journal Architecture\_MPS, the University of Western England, the Centre for Moving Image Research (CMIR) and Intellect Books. It forms part of the AMPS program of events, The Mediated City.

For more details. Visit: <http://architectureemps.com/the-mediated-city/>

