

EXD'11 LISBOA

28 SEPTEMBER - 27 NOVEMBER

USELESS

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OPENING WEEK
28 SEPT-2 OCT

EMERGING THEMES IN DESIGN PRACTICE UNDER SCRUTINY IN LISBON—OPEN TALKS AT THE EXD'11/LISBOA DESIGN BIENNALE

From September 28 to October 2, innovative and established practitioners of design reunite in Lisbon for the Open Talks, a highlight of the EXD'11/LISBOA design biennale's opening week. In a cycle of four different sessions taking place throughout the course of the opening week, the Open Talks reunite thinkers, curators, practitioners and a specialized audience in incisive, engaging debate around emerging themes in the design practice. Participants represent different design fields and generations, and include such luminaries as Italian designer Enzo Mari, Serpentine Gallery director Hans Ulrich Obrist, Dutch multimedia-turned-book designer Joost Grootens and Austrian design studio Mischler"Traxler.

Art Institute of Chicago curator of design Zoë Ryan hosts the first Open Talk on September 29, leading discussion with American interactive designer Eric Rodenbeck, conceptual designers Mischler"Traxler, and designer Joost Grootens—recently named one of the top 20 designers for the future by Alice Rawsthorn and Paola Antonelli in Rolling Stone magazine. Titled "Information Exchange," the talk will centre on the way digital information changes our built environment, and how public and private spaces accommodate the progressive data flows that run through them. "Rather than static formats, the most inventive projects encourage animated conditions," Zoë Ryan says, "in which time and space are no longer fixed states but continuously transform and adapt in relation to new and updated information."

On September 30, Portuguese architect and curator Pedro Gadanho hosts "Use-less Architecture," with American architecture critic and writer Alexandra Lange, Architecture for Humanity's Senior Program Manager Gretchen Mokry, and German architect Folke Köbberling. "To produce relevant architecture, do we really need the various legitimations of *visibility*?" Gadanho asks, to participants who operate in the peripheral spaces of the architecture practice, advocating new boundaries and outcomes for the field. Discussion will focus on contemporary architectural culture and its varying degrees of useful and uselessness.

Serpentine Galley director Hans Ulrich Obrist leads discussion on "Do-it-yourself Design" on October 1, with Italian designer Enzo Mari, author of the seminal 1974 project *Autoprogettazione*, Belgian designer Thomas Lommée, designer of Open Structures, and Brazilian conceptual artist Waltércio Caldas. With participants spanning two generations, debate will expand on the emerging trend of open and DIY design, a pragmatic and utopian field whose resourceful, subversive and spontaneous productions have steadily been making their way into the spotlight.

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On October 2, “Ex-Muros” will close the Open Talk cycle by debating four areas of design—studios, companies, museums and schools—and the ways in which they interconnect in contemporary design practice. Hosts Ed Annink and Hans Maier Aichen will elaborate on how these relationships push the limits of the design practice, creating new terrains for exploration.

The Open Talks take place in the Lounging Space, an eclectic venue that serves as the central hub of the EXD'11/LISBOA design biennale. This year, the Lounging Space occupies the Antigo Tribunal da Boa-Hora, a 17th century building in the center of Lisbon that has served as a convent, headquarters to the national guard and the city's most important courthouse for most of the 20th century. An impressive, multifaceted space, the building features remarkable Portuguese tilework all over, as well as a striking courtyard.

EXD'11/LISBOA takes place from September 28 to November 27 in the Portuguese capital, promoting debate and reflection around the theme *Useless*. In the Opening Week of September 28—October 2, the sixth edition of the design biennale keeps with its international and experimental nature hosting exhibitions, lectures, talks and urban interventions. The complete programme also includes the Lisbon Lectures, a Film Cycle and other Special Projects, in a total of 21 events.

EXD is an international biennale dedicated to design, architecture and creativity, a forward-thinking platform that cultivates and analyses contemporary culture through discussion and reflection. Focusing on people and ideas, the biennale's programme is designed to provide insight and incentive to both a specialized audience and the public at large, disseminating information and provoking debate.

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