CITIES IN A CHANGING WORLD:
QUESTIONS OF CULTURE, CLIMATE AND DESIGN

• Paper / Proposal Title:
Architectural Democracy: a framework for mapping the relationships between architecture and democracy by showcasing one case study of the city of Helsinki.

• Author(s) Name:
Pedro AIBÉO, Vishal SINGH; Günther H. FILZ

• University or Company Affiliation:
Aalto University, ENG | Department of Civil Engineering Aalto University, ARTS | Department of Architecture, Finland
Centre for Product Design and Manufacturing, Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore

• Abstract (300 words):
Architectural Democracy is an ongoing doctoral research at Aalto University proposing a conceptual framework for a structured exploration of the relationship between Architecture (exemplified as the life cycle of a building) and Democracy (defined here as the assurance of every person’s rights and freedoms, that every person can access information and is able to use one’s voice in the process of decision making). It aims to create a common ground for diverse stakeholders to better understand the complexity of cities and to participate more actively in the urban planning processes.

For concept development and testing the usefulness of the proposed framework, three characteristics for both Architecture and Democracy are crisscrossed as being the minimal possible ones to characterize both, in order to reduce the complexity of the matrix and thus guarantee the readability for the user. For architecture these characteristics are its birth (acquisition, design and construction), life (operations) and
death (recycling or renovation). For democracy the main characteristics are the civil rights and liberties, informed citizens and participation. By crisscrossing these, a 3 by 3 matrix arises, in which bilateral questions are asked. These questions are answered by the stakeholders affected.

The authors argue that this framework evaluates the quality of both architecture and democracy as it provides a reference on how to measure a standard, not by its similarities but by contextualizing its societal outreach. This paper highlights the relevance of this research by showcasing one case study of the city of Helsinki.

• Author(s) Biography (200 words each):

Pedro Aibéo is an internationally awarded Architect (M.Sc., Dipl. Ing., TU Darmstadt, Germany) and Civil Engineer (M.Sc., Licenciatura, FEUP, Porto) with over 50 buildings designed and built in 18 countries, currently practicing at the Gamified Cohousing Oy, which he is the CEO of. Aibéo is also a Kone Säätiö Research Fellow, a Visiting Associate Professor at UNAM University, Mexico and at Wuhan University of Technology, China, and a Doctoral Candidate at Aalto University, Finland on its research of Architectural Democracy. In arts and the public understanding of science, Aibéo is the founder and Artistic Director of Cidadania theatre group and of the World Music School Helsinki, with written and directed theater plays at the United Nations on urban slavery and astronomy. His latest book is a graphic novel bestseller in Portugal about mathematics. In politics, he is the Vice-Chairman of “Perpetuum Mobile” in its decade long work of offering protection to artists at risk. In 2017 Aibéo ran as a candidate for the Helsinki Municipal elections under the Left Alliance List, but independent in terms of political affiliation.

Vishal Singh is an Associate Professor in the Centre for Product Design and Manufacturing at the Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru. He has multidisciplinary research interests in the areas of design thinking, systems thinking and computational thinking, adopting a socio-technical perspective on the interaction between products, processes and people, especially in the context of the built environment. His recent research and teaching has mostly revolved around construction informatics, especially looking at Building Information Modelling and Product Lifecycle Management (PLM) approaches. This focus on informatics is complemented by his research background in design methodology, collaborative design, and collaborative work.

Prof. Günther H. Filz is an architect and engineer at the intersection of sustainable, architectural design, lightweight structures & geometry. His interest has been on the profound changes that self-organizing forms and processes instigate in the way architecture is thought, designed and built. His “fat-free-design” approach results in innovative and sustainable lightweight architecture. He has been Professor of Structures
and Architecture, at ARTS, the School of Arts, Design and Architecture and ENG, the School of Civil Engineering, at Aalto University, Helsinki, Finland and Professor of Lightweight Architecture at the University of Innsbruck, Austria. He received his Diploma degree (2000) in Architecture with distinction from the University of Innsbruck and worked amongst others for Eisenman Architects, NYC. Günther completed his Doctorate in Architecture with distinction from the University of Innsbruck and was appointed Assistant Professor in 2010. He also holds a Master degree in Engineering (M.Eng. 2015) with distinction from the Bauhaus University Dessau, Germany. Günther H. Filz has been internationally invited Visiting Professor, lecturer and workshop instructor. Besides his studio work, his numerous research pavilions and other scientific/artistic achievements have been widely published, exhibited and awarded. Günther H. Filz is editor and author of innumerable scientific papers, articles and books, and he has curated, contributed and consulted exhibitions, such as “The Nature of Form : Properties of Imagination” at Fortezza, Italy, 2016-2017, and the consulting at “Nordic Pavilion : Another Generosity” for the Venice Biennale Architettura 2018 curated by Lundén Architecture Company, Finland.