



CANDIDATE for AT-LARGE DIRECTOR (3-year term)

Catherine Hamel, University of Calgary

Candidate Statement

Architecture, in its education and practice deals with complex design requirements assimilating changing processes, contexts and tools of production. History, inequity, the environment, oppression and youth, are telling a crucial story. They are asking the world, and architects, to do the ethical work to listen and translate their knowledge into action as a form of practice. The agency of design and its practice is never just a business, but an ethical discipline. It is a time to question assumptions and confirm architecture's role as one of capacity building. Architects are challenged to be fully present in a complicated world to learn to think in systems as well as discreet material objects. The shift in scale from a call for justice by building activism to the pleasure of building, does not make them incompatible.

Beirut, a city of hope and despair, is where I grew up. The space of the city was experienced before, during and after a fifteen-year civil war, if any war can be called civil. The built and natural environment is never a neutral by stander, regardless of whether the value or cause is social or political. While comfortable in being poured back and forth between different cultures, sides, and languages an adjustment of perspective is never received as one of disregard. It is an adaptation and a necessary resilience. My own work focuses on forced displacement and the role of the built environment in mitigating adaptation. This fluctuation trains one's attitude to focus and select what each context offers and not reject what falls outside the habitual framework to stay in the prescribed and familiar.

Given the opportunity, I would be honored to working with the ACSA team in its leading role to develop the continuous exchange between architectural education and practice as it shifts to operate within a more inclusive global community. The current strategic initiatives of the ACSA include a critical appraisal of cultural perspectives, assumptions, values, and norms by retracing designed authority and exploring the ways in which authority is distributed throughout the design process. It is adaptive leadership that strives with consideration, discipline, responsibility. The accountable architect has an account of complexities and uncertainties to embrace creative ways to practice towards relevant and desired objectives in the field. It is a time to recognize the forces of change; to act within a generous and expansive perspective; to create social arrangements and to create the options where the unimaginable becomes ordinary.





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Abbreviated Curriculum Vitae

The University of Calgary. School of Architecture, Planning and Landscape
Associate Dean Academic, Architecture (2020) Associate Professor, Architecture

EDUCATION

Master of Architecture (History and Theory), McGill University. Canada	1993
Bachelor of Architecture, Pennsylvania State University. USA	1989
Bachelor of Science, Interior Design, California State University. USA	1985

SELECTED AFFILIATIONS

CCUSA Canadian Council of University Schools of Architecture (member)	2020 -
AAA Alberta Association of Architects Council (member)	2020 -
Architecture Humanities Research Association (member)	2007 -

SELECTED SERVICE

Diversity & Equity Advisory Network, University of Calgary	2017, 2020 -
Harm Reduction Sub-committee, University of Calgary	2016

RESEARCH THEMES + TEACHING AREAS

Cultural and Political landscapes; Social Stewardship; Leadership in Architecture; Design Activism, Post war Reconstruction; Architectural Design and Theory; Visual Communication.

SELECTED COURSES (graduate)

Architecture and Leadership: Building Activism

Social Ecologies Studio

1. Re-settlement Collaborations measured twice: Once for Inclusion, Once for Exclusion
2. Disobedient Structures in Hackable Buildings
3. Inverse Archeology: The Architect as Facilitator

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS. EXHIBITIONS. PRESENTATIONS

2020	Tracing Shifting Thresholds. Refugee & Newcomer Women's Emotional Wellness. The Immigrant Education Social Conference, Canada
2019	An Ethics of Persistence, Education, Design and Practice. Understanding Skills in a Complex World. Amps Stevens Institute of Technology, New York.
2019	Measure Twice: Social Justice in Public Space (Keynote Lecture) & Policy as a Tool of Productive Resistance (Workshop), Shift Equity Planning Conference, Halifax, Canada
2017-19	Water: Creation & Capture. Alberta Foundation for The Arts Travelling Exhibit.
2016	Theatres of Observation: Scripts for Lingerings. Presenting the Theatrical Past, International Federation of Theatre Research International Conference, Stockholm, Sweden.
2016	The Drawn-Out Identity of Forced Displacement. Hybrid Communities, Societies, Spaces, and Subjectivities. Congress for the Humanities and Social Sciences, Alberta, Canada.
2015	Measure Twice: Once for Exclusion, Once for Inclusion. A Vision of Revolution: Exile and Deportation in Global Perspective Conable Conference. Rochester New York.
2014	Repurposing with A Vengeance, A Dance of Restrained Acts Towards Justice. Architecture and Justice: Judicial Meanings in the Public Realm, Simon, J. Temple, S & R. Tobe, Ashgate Press, London, UK.

LANGUAGES

English, French, Arabic