César Reyes Nájera
Architect. PhD in Bio-climatic Construction Systems and Materials. Co-founder of
[dpr-barcelona](#). His work seeks a thermodynamic approach to architecture focusing
on social issues and the exchange of matter and information in urban
environments. He also researches the development and application of biomaterials
in architecture. Co-curator of Think Space 2013-2104 Cycle in Zagreb and the
Adhocracy ATHENS 2015 exhibition for the Onassis Cultural Center.

Pelin Tan
Pelin Tan is a sociologist and art historian. She concluded her PhD on socially
engaged art in urban space and her post-doc on methodology of artistic research at
MIT. Tan researched artist run spaces and urban justice in Europe (2004), Asia and
Japan (2012, 2015). With Anton Vidokle, she is the co-director of sci-fi film episodes
2084 about the future of art. She is a member of video collectives
Artıkişler/videoccupy and bak.ma an open digital media archive of political
movements in Turkey. Tan is an associate professor at the Architecture Faculty,
Mardin Artuklu University, Turkey. Her forthcoming publication is ARAZİ (Sternberg
Press, Berlin, 2015).

Valentina Karga
Valentina Karga, born in Chalkidiki, Greece, is an artist with a background in
architecture, based in Berlin. After she got her degree in architecture from the
University of Thessaly, she has been a fellow at the Graduate school, University of
the Arts Berlin (UdK). Often through collaborative actions, her work addresses issues
such as autonomy, education, sustainability, communication, the DIY and the
commons. Valentina's projects encourage engagement and participation, some
times ending up imagining alternatives for societal structures, such as economy and
pedagogic institutions. Among her projects is the "Summer school for Applied
Autonomy" in Berlin, a research initiative interested in capturing the technical know-
how but also the social, political and affective aspects involved in autonomous living.
She is also a founding member of Collective Disaster. She has shown her work at the
National Museum of Contemporary Art in Athens, the Athens Biennial and in a major
exhibition curated by Whitechapel Gallery. At the moment, together with Pieterjan
Grandry, they are the artists in residence for the Vilém Flusser program for artistic
research in Berlin.

Applying autonomy in a world of contradictions
Language is our vehicle for shaping our thoughts, communicating and thus
constructing reality. There are constructions that make us imagine the world through
money and constructions that try to challenge their dominant role by building a
more fair reality based on different values. Which reality are we going to choose to
reinforce, the one of financialization or the one of the commons?
However, 'commons' is a contested term and horizon. Its use is becoming the more
and more prominent and the proliferation of literature about it is growing. We agree
with some of our friends saying that: to think about a common(s) is to interrogate
fundamental institutions and basic categories of human existence in the early 21st
century: nation, state, public, people, private, property, law, money, culture, nature,

history just to name a few. So, if commons is an ongoing critique and shift from all the fundamental concepts that formed modern western culture, we should indeed consider words as part of something we should rethink and reinvent. We cannot move on if we don't change our language and we cannot build a culture of the commons without a new language. Language is a fundamental practice of relation with the world and between us.

The presentation, which is based on an ongoing discussion and collaboration with Laura Lovatel, will include examples such as the Temple of Holy Shit and the Summer School for Applied Autonomy that are part of the exhibition, but also introduce a new project which seeks links between the practice of compost and feminist theory for an application in the city of Athens. With this long-term project we would like to investigate the concept of waste and the implications it brings into our daily relationship with (the material and immaterial) world. We would like to reflect on it collectively asking how to revoke this concept in a culture of the commons.

Alessandro Petti

Alessandro Petti is an architect and researcher in urbanism, founding member and co-director of DAAR, an architectural office and an artistic residency program that combines conceptual speculations and architectural interventions (www.decolonizing.ps). Alongside research and practice, Petti is engaged in critical pedagogy, he is the founding member of *Campus in Camps* an experimental educational program hosted in Dheisheh refugee camp Bethlehem (www.campusincamps.ps). Petti has written on the emerging spatial order dictated by the paradigm of security and control in *Archipelagos and enclaves* (Bruno Mondadori, Milan 2007) and more recently he co-authored the book *Architecture after Revolution* (Sternberg, Berlin 2014) an invitation to rethink today's struggles for justice and equality not only from the historical perspective of revolution, but also from that of a continued struggle for decolonization.

Al-Masha or the Space of the Common

In Western political thought, the notion of public space is often associated with a "collective interest", a "common good". However, in other cultural contexts, such as in Arab countries, the notion of public space is seen as suspicious. In years of colonial direct domination, the public has never denoted the "collective interest" of the local population; rather it expressed the arrogant, violent and exploitative power of the white European élite. In the name of the public, state colonial authorities expropriated what people shared in common.

I would like to propose for the Athens Symposium a critical understanding of the contemporary notion of the public by re- imagining the notion of the common. Rather than the term "commons," more familiar in the Anglo-Saxon tradition, we prefer to use "common" in order to refer to its Latin origin communi. The latin communem is composed of com=cum "together "and mòinis, originally meaning "obliged to participate". This fundamental aspect of the common, a demand for active participation, is also present in the Arabic term al mashaa', which refers to communal land equally distributed among farmers. This form of "common land use" was not fully recognized under Ottoman laws – for this reason, masha was not acknowledged under a written title in the Ottoman Code – and was dismissed by

colonial authorities for its supposed economical inefficiency. Colonial regimes, interested in territorial control, see in masha land a collective dimension beyond state control. Consequently, masha have been transformed into state land and therefore fall under the control of public land managed by state apparatus. Masha is shared land, which was recognized through practice in the Islamic world. It emerged as a combination of Islamic property conceptions and customary practices of communal or tribal land. Masha could only exits if people decided to cultivate the land together. The moment they stop cultivating it, they loose its possession. It is possession through a common use. Thus what appears to be fundamental is that, in order for this category to exist, it must be activated by common uses. Today we may ask if it is possible to reactivate the common cultivation, expanding the meaning of cultivation to other human activities that imply the common taking care of life (cultivation from Latin colere=taking care of life).

Dimitris Papalexopoulos
Dimitris Papalexopoulos (b. 1953) is an architect, PhD, Professor at the School of Architecture, National Technical University of Athens (NTUA); Director of Architectural Technology Research Unit (ATRU) (http://atru.arch.ntua.gr/); and Director of FabLab Athens (http://fablabathens.gr/). He researches on interaction design, parametric design and building knowledge management. His post-graduate course on "Architecture and Information Technology" (since 1998) won prizes at international competitions and participated in international exhibitions and conferences. A redefinition of locality through IT is researched. At Archsign, his architectural work (www.archsign.gr) includes renovations and new buildings projects in the private and public sector. He is author of articles on architecture and IT, co-author (with Eleni Kalafati) of *Takis Zenetos, Visioni digitali, architetture construite* (EdilStampa, 2006) and author of *Digital Regionalism* (Libro, 2008). www.ntua.gr/archtech

Digital Design Commons
Can *digital design commons*, based on distributed intelligence, help us structure a response to the actual crisis through a *low tech – knowledge intensive collaborative perspective*? The presentation proposes to reconsider notions related to distributed partial design through a *digital commons* point of view.
Digital design overflows the limits of isolated works and, through the implementation of open source algorithms, declares its continuous deterritorializations and reterritorializations in a series of projects.
It tends to be ubiquitous and forms a code flow circulating among all possible situated architectural proposals.
Design acquires thus a *common* character.
Digital Design Commons are pools of a multitude of micro- architecture problem solutions, a multitude of micro- syntaxes covering partial aspects of design, waiting to be actualized in larger design schemes.
They also deny the unique and ultimate "form" in favor of a network's syntax. They tend to substitute the object's design with the design of networked multiplicities.
Finally, they question the ubiquity of design as an end of work process, linking it to the (local) use value production.

Ben Vickers
Ben Vickers is a curator, writer, explorer, technologist and luddite. Currently Curator of Digital at the Serpentine Galleries, is CoDirector of LIMAZULU Project Space, a Near Now Fellow and facilitator for the opensource development of unMonastery, a new civically minded social space prototyped in Matera, Southern Italy during 2014 and now set to replicate throughout Europe 2015/16. During his spare time he contributes to EdgeRyders, coruns the nomadic talks programme "The Thought Menu and host's Open Funerals".

Propositions, Fragments and Learnings from unMonastery
"When it comes to work it is increasingly difficult to reconcile making money with making sense. People do work to make a living. Others do work to make meaning. But the two works are not the same work. "
We accept at this point in history that retreat is as legitimate as growth; that models of collective effort indicate a path of optimal low-consumption for human development; that a synthesis of urban and regional survival strategies might provide a platform for future life; that 'frugal abundance' can be an attractive strategic goal that provides significant emotional satisfaction. In respect to these conclusions the unMonastery initiative aims to develop a new kind of social space, akin to co-living and co-working spaces, drawing influence from both the traditions of Monasticism and open source culture of Hackspaces, at the core of the unMonastery concept is a desire to recreate the best social functions of the traditional monastery. This talk from Ben Vickers, one of the unMonastery's facilitators, will weave a route through the fragments of recent and past activity, presenting a selection of propositions divined from distributed group work that have yet to be realised and layout the peculiar cultural artifacts the experiment has so far generated.