English

INSITE
COMMONPLACES
THE SEDIMENTARY EFFECT

El Sitio:
A Timeless Way of Building

Program

May 18, 19, and 20, 2023

Conversations · Commissions ·
Visits to Sites in and Around Mexicali

El Sitio

Centro Comunitario UNICOM
Av. Nueva Zelanda s/n, entre calles España y Rep. Dominicana
Col. Conjunto Urbano Orizaba, Mexicali, Mexico

El Sitio: A Timeless Way of Building is a three-day public event that takes as a point of departure El Sitio—an experimental social housing complex built by renowned architect Christopher Alexander in Mexicali, B.C. between 1975 and 1976. The event includes Conversations with artists, architects, urban planners, and specialists from the region and beyond discussing Alexander's influential and ultimately controversial ideas. At the same time, Pastizal Zamudio, an artist who was born at El Sitio and has had access to their former house to carry out research since the beginning of 2022, will present a new Commission that reimagines the central courtyard of Alexander's project. The Conversations will take place in a temporary pavilion—a Commission with local architecture offices Veintedoce and Localista, in collaboration with UABC students. In addition to architect-led visits to sites in Mexicali, the event will feature screenings of two documentaries focused on Alexander.

El Sitio: A Timeless Way of Building is the first public manifestation of "A Timeless Way of Building," one of several chapters of *The Sedimentary Effect*, the **INSITE Commonplaces** project conceived by editor-curator Andrea Torreblanca unfolding in Baja California (MX) and San Diego County (US) over the next three years.

A collaboration between INSITE and the Universidad Autónoma de Baja California: Coordinación General de Extensión de la Cultura y Divulgación de la Ciencia de la UABC; Centro Comunitario UNICOM, Facultad de Enfermería de la UABC; Facultad de Arquitectura de la UABC.

Participants

Conversations

Rudy Argote; Gina Cebey; Estudio Teddy Cruz + Fonna Forman;
CRO Studio: Adriana Cuellar + Marcel Sánchez; Alejandro D’Acosta;
Howard Davis; A J Kim, Michael Mehaffy; Felipe Orensanz;
Alejandro Peimbert; Andrea Torreblanca; Lorenia Urbalejo

Artist commission

Pastizal Zamudio

Pavilion Commission

Giancarlo Reyes (Localista) and Beatriz Villlegas & Angel Verduzco (Veintedoce)

All Conversations will be simultaneously translated in English and Spanish.

Thursday May 18, 2023

The Production of Houses

May 18 will be dedicated to discussing forms of vernacular and “craft” architecture and their implications in the production of housing and social spaces, as well as reimagining models for communal living.

4:30 p.m.	Walk-through of El Sitio and talk with architects **Alejandro Peimbert** (Director of the Faculty of Design and Architecture, UABC) and **Felipe Orensanz** (architect, researcher, and coeditor of a forthcoming book on El Sitio).
5:00 p.m.	Conversation **Alejandro D’Acosta** (architect, TAC, Taller de Arquitectura Contextual) and **CRO Studio**: **Adriana Cuellar** + **Marcel Sánchez** (collaborative research and architecture firm, Tijuana/San Diego). Moderator: **Rudy Argote** (architect, RA+, Founder of SALAA, Tijuana/San Diego).
6:15 p.m.	Break with Refreshments
7:00 p.m.	Dialogue **Howard Davis** (writer, professor, and coauthor of *The Production of Houses* with Christopher Alexander) and **Felipe Orensanz**. Moderator: **Andrea Torreblanca** (Director of Curatorial Projects, INSITE).
8:15 p.m.	Refreshments

Friday May 19, 2023

The Nature of Order

May 19 will focus on the possibility of architecture as an ecosystem, in which the liveliness and complexity of the social, political, cultural, and spiritual fabric of places define the morphology of their inhabitants and their future.

4:30 p.m. Walk-through and talk

Artist **Pastizal Zamudio** presents INSITE's new commissioned work at El Sitio with **Andrea Torreblanca**.

5:00 p.m. Screening of *Life in Buildings*, 2018

Director: Michael Mehaffy (Executive Director of Sustasis Foundation)
Duration 1hr, 23 mins

6:15 p.m. Break with Refreshments

7:00 p.m. Dialogue

Michael Mehaffy (urbanist, architectural theorist, urban philosopher, researcher, educator, and Executive Director of Sustasis Foundation. Former colleague of Christopher Alexander). Moderator: **Andrea Torreblanca**.

8:15 p.m. Refreshments

Saturday May 20, 2023

The City Is Not a Tree

May 20 will be centered around public space as a receptacle for civic and urban life, where accelerated construction, scarcity, and the recycling of architecture affect housing policies, social justice, and the dynamics of inhabiting and circulating in the city.

4:30 p.m. Walk-through and talk with architects **Giancarlo Reyes** (Localista) and **Beatriz Villegas** & **Angel Verduzco** (Veintedoce) through Pavilion commissioned by INSITE.

5:00 p.m. Conversation

A J Kim (Associate Professor of City Planning in the School Public Affairs at SDSU), **Lorenia Urbalejo** (doctorate, anthropology and master's, human geography, UABC, Mexicali). **Gina Cebey** (researcher and architectural historian, UNAM). Moderator: **Alejandro Peimbert**.

6:15 p.m. Break with Refreshments

7:00 p.m. Dialogue

Teddy Cruz + **Fonna Forman** (research-based political and architectural practice, SD) and **Andrea Torreblanca**.

8:15 p.m. Refreshments

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