

Joshua Adam Comaroff

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Social Sciences (Urban Studies)
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Education

University of California Los Angeles
Los Angeles, CA
PhD, Geography, November 2009
thesis: "Vulgarity and Enchantment: Religions Movements
and the Space of the State"

Harvard University
Cambridge, MA
Master of Architecture (with distinction), June 2000
Master of Landscape Architecture, March 2001

Amherst College
Amherst, MA
Bachelor of Arts in English Literature, *magna cum laude*, June 1995

Teaching

Assistant Professor, NUS Department of Architecture, 2024-.

Assistant Professor, Urban Studies, Yale-NUS College, 2019-2024.

Assistant Professor, Architecture and Sustainable Design, Singapore University of
Technology and Design (SUTD), 2016 - 2019.

Part-time Tutor in Architecture, Second Year Core Curriculum, *National University of
Singapore*, 2010

Publications

Comaroff, Joshua. *Spectropolis: Ghostly Capital and Ecologies of Disturbance in
Singapore*. University of Minnesota Press (under contract, Fall 2025 publication).

Comaroff, Joshua and Ker-Shing Ong. *Horror in Architecture, reprint edition*. University of
Minnesota Press (January 2024).

Comaroff, Joshua. 2020. "After the State, the Garden: Eco-Governance and Futurity in
Singapore". (In review, IJUR).

Comaroff, Joshua. 2017. On the Materialities of Air. *CITY*: Vol 21, No. 5.

Comaroff, Joshua. 2017. "Patina Non Grata", in *ArchiPrint 11: Patina* (Eindhoven), Vol 6.

Comaroff, Joshua. 2016. Fearful Asymmetry: Insurgency and the Architectures of Terror.
Harvard Design Magazine 42.

Comaroff, Joshua. 2015. Built on Sand: Singapore and the New State of Risk. *Harvard
Design Magazine* 39.

Comaroff, Joshua and Ker-Shing Ong. *Horror in Architecture*. ORO Editions, 2013.

Comaroff, Joshua. 2007. Terror and territory: Guantánamo as a space of contradiction. *Public Culture* 52: 381-405.

Comaroff, Joshua. 2007. Ghostly topographies: landscape and biopower in modern Singapore. *Cultural Geographies* 14: 56-73.

Comaroff, Joshua. 2001. Lagos. In *Mutations*, ed. Rem Koolhaas and Stefano Boeri, with Harvard Project on the City. Rotterdam: Netherlands Architecture Institute (NAI).

Presentations

"A General Theory of Islands," Sessions on Territory, ETH Zurich/Harvard Graduate School of Design, online, March 2021.

"Coastlines of the Self: Body and Geobody in Singapore," RMIT, Melbourne, *Superterrestrial*, September 2020.

"Inclusive Design," talk at Design Lab, Apple Orchard Road, June 2019.

Panel Chair, "Social Class," *Situating Domesticities in Architecture: Tracing Emerging Trajectories*, NUS, December 2017

"The Garden of Ghosts: Landscape and Recollection in Singapore", University of Technology Sydney, Department of Landscape Architecture visiting lecture series, May 2017

"Islands and Reclamation," *The Geopolitical and the Biophysical: A Structured Conversation on Art and Southeast Asia in Context II*, NTU CCA, June 2016

"Paramilitary Gardening", paper presented at City Axioms: Urban (In)security, Department of Social Anthropology, Stockholm University, Sweden, April 2012

"On the Materiality of Air" Paper presented at *Constructing Asia: Materiality, Labour, and Capital in the Making of an Urbanizing Landscape*, Asia Research Institute (ARI) Singapore, May 2016

"Unnatural Ecologies", design research into architecture as an environmental operator, presented with Ong Ker-Shing at Arcasia Design Research Forum, November, 2015

"Architecture and the Academy: Designing a Campus for the Liberal Arts at Yale-NUS College" (panel discussion), October 2015

"Poor Form", paper presented at *The Life of Forms*, a workshop of the Johannesburg Workshop of Theory and Criticism (JWTC) at the Wits Institute of Social and Economic Research (WISER) in Johannesburg, South Africa, July, 2013.

"Paramilitary Gardening", paper presented at City Axioms: Urban (In)security, Department of Social Anthropology, Stockholm University, Sweden, April 2012

"Shanghai Micro-geographies," paper presented with Ong Ker-Shing at University of California Humanities Research Institute (UCHRI) SECT IV workshop in Shanghai, P.R.C., August, 2009.

"The Futurity of Bubbles," Paper presented at Utopias and Futures, a special workshop of the Wits Institute of Social and Economic Research (WISER) in Johannesburg, South Africa, July, 2008.

"Making and Un-making the Secular Public," Geographies of the Secular Public I/II, Annual Meeting of the Association of American Geographers (AAG) in Boston, MA, April 2008 (session co-chair).

"The Meaning of Greening," paper presented with Ong Ker-Shing at Emerging Design Practices in Asia, Singapore Institute of Architects, Singapore, September 2007.

"Hell Money," paper presented at the *Faith/Space* workshop at the Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles, CA, May 2007.

"Islands of the Sovereign Fantastic: Discontinuity and Power in the National Imaginary," paper presented in *The Production of Penal Spaces*, Annual Meeting of the Association of American Geographers (AAG) in San Francisco, CA, April 2007.

"Terror and Territory: Guantánamo as a Space of Contradiction," paper presented in *Geographic Issues of Terrorism in the Post 9/11 World*, Annual Meeting of the Association of American Geographers (AAG) in Chicago, IL, March 2006.

"Fringes of a Nation: Space and Social Regulation in Singapore," paper presented in *Symbolic Landscapes and Contested Sovereignty II*, Annual Meeting of the Association of American Geographers (AAG) in Denver, CO, April 2005

Other study and research opportunities

With Lekker Architects, and commissioned by Lien Foundation, a research and design project on adapting small home environments to support care at home for persons with dementia, resulting in *HACK CARE*, 2020.

With Lekker Architects, appointed as part of a multi-disciplinary research and design team on the L2NIC research project "Innovative Planning and Design of Age-Friendly Neighbourhoods in Singapore." July 2016 – 2019

With Lekker Architects, appointed to conduct architectural design research in conjunction with the L2NIC research project "Designing Future-Ready and Sustainable Nursing Homes for Person-Centric Care Models in Communities." June- October 2017.

With Lekker Architects, a research and design proposal exploring purpose-built free-standing pre-school buildings in overlooked but ubiquitous sites in Singapore, resulting in "A Different Class: Preschool Spaces Redefined" publication, 2013-2014.

With Lekker Architects, a research and design proposal entitled "Unnatural Ecologies," exploring the border relation of the architectural to the natural in the context of the equatorial Singapore urban ecology, proposing miniscule architectures to address a dis-function in the Singapore landscape. Presented as a paper at the Arcasia forum 18, Ayutthaya, Thailand, 2015.

Awards

Design of the Year, SIA Architectural Design Awards, 2020, for Quiet Room

Design of the Year, President's Design Awards, 2015, Caterpillar's Cove Pre-School

URA Architectural Heritage Award for Lorong 24A Geylang project, 2013

Arthur J. Wheelwright Traveling Fellowship, Harvard University, 2005-6

Exhibitions

Venice Biennale of Architecture Singapore Pavilion, Venice, 2023.

Designing Our Age-Friendly City, exhibition at URA Centre, October 2019-January 2020.

Wallpaper Handmade: Passion, Singapore Design Week, Singapore and Salone del Mobile, Milan, 2019. Selected as 1 of 7 Singaporean designers to contribute original works in 2019.

Venice Biennale of Architecture Singapore Pavilion, Venice and Singapore, 2008 and 2018

Fifty Years of Design, National Design Centre, Singapore, 2018

OUE Artling ArchiPavilion Exhibition of Winning Designs, National Design Centre, Singapore, 2015.

Building x Body, Archifest, Singapore, October 2013: Curation of collaborative work between architects and fashion designers.

Ordos 100: Cultural Negotiations when Building a City in the 21st Century,

ART Basel, June 2009. Exhibition of Villa 81, designed for the Ordos 100 project in Inner Mongolia, PRC.

Singapore Biennale, Singapore, September 2006: Design of spaces for the exhibition of art and installations.

Project features

"Lekker Architects Chart the New Field of Inclusive Design," DesignSingapore, 2023

"Lekker Architects offers a Fresh Approach to Inclusive Design," Metropolis, 2023.

"Shaping Age-Friendly Neighbourhoods." URA Skyline Issue 14. 2021.

"Spectrum: TOOLKIT Clarifying Care." Metropolis Magazine, March/April 2021.

"Awards: 19th SIA Architectural Design Awards – The Quiet Room." The Singapore Architect, Issue 19, December 2020 – February 2021.

"Designing for Dementia – In Numbers." FRAMΞ, Issue 138, January – February 2021.

"Hack Care" feature, Dezeen, 2020

"Designing for Inclusivity and the NMS Quiet Room" 22 May 2020.

Issue 18: Designing Experience, 2020. The Singapore Architect, Singapore.

"Dream Spaces – Series 1 Episode 1: Dream Spaces: Homes to Hybrid Living" Channel News Asia documentary. 28 February 2021.

"骇客看护指南 - 照顾失智者更得心应手." 早报周刊zbW, 13.09.2020.

"Life hacks for caregivers: Living with dementia – a guide to a better home." The Straits Times, September 19, 2020.

Kim, Suki and Catalina Imizcoz, ed. "MaytoDay: May 18 Democratization Movement 40th Anniversary Exhibition MaytoDay." Gwangju Biennale Foundation, 2020.

"The Quiet Room." The Singapore Architect, Issue 18, March 2020 - June 2020.

"Case Studies: Toward Inclusivity – The Quiet Room." CUBES, Issue #99 – June/July/August 2020.

"Shaping the Environment through Imagination and Invention: Ong Ker Shing" curatededition.com 15 October 2019.

T Magazine Singapore. Profile in Style. July 2019.

"A Park of Place and Time: Cemetery Park by Lekker Architects." Issue 14: Faith, 2019. The Singapore Architect, Singapore.

Lekker Architects: Interview. Issue 13: Small, 2018. The Singapore Architect, Singapore. 104-113.

年轻建筑师打造老少皆宜空间与热带花园建筑. 16 December 2017. zLifestyle/ Culture, Lian He Zao Bao, Singapore.

Maison & Objet Asia 2016. 2016 Edition 2. Metropolitan Home, Malaysia Edition, Malaysia. 64.

打造让孩童调皮的空间. 6 May 2016. zbNOW, Lian He Zao Bao, Singapore.

The Culture of Landscape. January 2016 Issue 77. Cubes, Singapore. 138-145.

School of Thought. December January 2014/2015/ Issue 71. Cubes, Singapore. 116-125.

Unit 15: Lekker Design. Issue 63. Cubes, Singapore. 92-97.

The New Conservators: Lorong 24A Geylang Shophouse series. Issue 273, 2013. Singapore Architect, Singapore.

创意人出轨：出书记录与探讨本地创意工业. 28 June 2013. zbNOW, Lian He Zao Bao, Singapore.

Oh, the horror! 22 April 2013. Arts & Design, TODAY, Singapore.

Shophouse art: Lorong 24A Shophouse Series. 8-9 September 2012. Design, The Business Times Weekend. L2-3.

Lekker Design: Communicating a Surplus of Emotion from Architecture. 2012. Creative Cultures:

The Singapore Showcase. Underscore Special Edition, Singapore. 30-32.

Built Edge. May 2011. Wallpaper, London, UK. 18.

Rising stars: Lekker Design. September 2009. Monocle, London UK.

I.D. Talented 40: Lekker Design. February 2009. I.D. Magazine, NYC, New York.

Anything that is good is called Lekker. 2008-9. MARK Magazine 17, Amsterdam, The Netherlands.