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**Shrinking Cities x fibercity @ akihabara**

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**January 28 (Sun) – February 18, 2007 (Sun)**

**AKIBA SQUARE, Akihabara UDX, 2F**

Mon–Thurs 11 am – 8 pm

Fri 11 am – 9 pm, Sat, Sun, + Hol. 11 am – 7 pm

[www.akiba-square.jp](http://www.akiba-square.jp)

Entry free

The exhibition *Shrinking Cities x fibercity @ akihabara* unites two expositions – “Shrinking Cities”, which was received with great interest in Europe and the USA, and “Fibercity”, in which Hidetoshi OHNO presents a vision of the future of shrinking metropolises, using the example of Tokyo. Models, films, animations, plans, diagrams, photographs, and texts will be shown. But the project is not limited to a presentation of exhibits; rather, a site for discussions is created at the same time. “Talk ins” will be carried out in the exhibition; there, architects and urban builders, students and representatives from administration, companies, and communities can bring their own ideas and present them to a broad audience.

**International Symposium: Is there a future beyond shrinking?**

February 11, 2007 (Sun), 1:30 – 6:30 pm

Philipp Oswalt, Curator of the exhibition “Shrinking Cities”, and city planner Hidetoshi Ohno, with his vision of the future of the capital region Tokyo, discuss the phenomenon of “shrinkage” with city planner Kei Minohara and Prof. Riichi Miyake.

The University of Tokyo, Hongo Campus

New Faculty of Engineering Bldg. 2

7-3-1 Hongo, Bunkyo-ku, Tokyo

Participation fee: 1,000 Yen

## Talk Ins

On the weekends, nine rounds of talks on the future of shrinking cities will be held at the exhibition:

January 28 (Sun)

*"Designing Time"*

Jin HIDAHA & Satoru YAMASHIRO (The University of Tokyo)

February 2 (Fri)

*"Ideas of the Future of the Cities"*

Takeru KITAZAWA (The University of Tokyo)

February 3 (Sat)

*"Long-Lasting Architecture"*

Masataka BABA (Architect)

February 4 (Sun)

*"Residence and Community"*

Youko KINOSHITA (Nihon University)

February 9 (Fri)

*"Information design and its communal roots"*

Yasushi WATANABE (Collaborative Knowledge Laboratory)

February 10 (Sat)

*"Forest and Water"*

Toru MITANI (Chiba University)

February 16 (Fri)

*"Residents and Urban Renewal"*

Masami KOBAYASHI (Meiji University)

February 17 (Sat)

*"Mobilizing regional Energies"*

Motomu UNO (Chiba University)

February 18 (Sun)

*"Service for a pleasant city"*

Hiroshi OHTA (The University of Tokyo)

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### All Talk Ins:

Fri 5 - 8:30 pm, Sat, Sun 2 - 5:30 pm

AKIBA SQUARE, Akihabara UDX, 2F

Single ticket 1,000 Yen, Pass (for any number of events\*) 3,000 Yen

\*registration nonetheless necessary

### Registration for all events:

S x F @ A Organization office

E-Mail: [info@sfa-exhibition.com](mailto:info@sfa-exhibition.com)

Fax: +81 (3) 5467-2646

[www.akiba-square.jp](http://www.akiba-square.jp)

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## INTRODUCTION

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For two centuries global urbanization has progressed at a rapid pace. Around 1800, 2% of a billion people worldwide lived in cities. In 2000 it was just under 50% of approximately 6.5 billion people. It is estimated that by 2050 it will be about 75% of some 8.5 billion people. But not all cities are growing. Between 1950 and 2000 more than 350 large cities experienced, at least temporarily, significant declines in population. In the 1990s more than a quarter of large cities worldwide shrank. The number of shrinking cities is continually increasing, even though urban growth will continue to dominate in coming decades. An end is in sight, however: around 2070–2100, the world population will reach its zenith and the process of urbanization will largely come to an end. Then processes of growth and shrinkage will reach a balance, and urban shrinkage will be a process as common as it was before industrialization began.

This is difficult to imagine from the perspective of people in developed industrialized nations, because for generations they have experienced all but continuous growth in many areas of society. From a global perspective, growth processes have dominated thus far. Nevertheless, this growth is increasingly unevenly distributed geographically, and many places are already experiencing serious shrinkage. In a series of countries, moreover, the urban population as a whole is declining. Drastically increasing prices for oil and raw materials and climatic warming caused by human activities demonstrate economic limits on growth.

Thus urban development makes it possible to perceive and experience fundamental, epochal change. The modern period of growth is a very brief span relative to human history as a whole: not even three centuries. Hints of the end of this era have been around for decades, and the first signs of it are unmistakable in the older industrialized nations of both West and East.

Shrinkage leads, as expansion once did, to fundamental shocks, which with the ensuing changes in models, modes of action, and methods result in societal reorientation. The phenomenon of urban shrinkage is based on several processes of transformation. Within the context of established developed countries, which in past decades have experienced the brunt of shrinkage processes, the essential causes have been suburbanization, deindustrialization, demographic shrinkage, and postsocialist change. For the Shrinking Cities project, an exemplary urban region was selected for each of these processes in order to facilitate analysis and documentation. Detroit, the "Motor City," is an example of shrinkage due to the process of sub-urbanization, the textile region of Ivanovo (Russian Federation) is an example of shrinkage as part of postsocialist change, and the former industrial region of Manchester/Liverpool (Great Britain) is an example of shrinkage through deindustrialization. All three of these processes are reflected in the fourth example: the Halle/Leipzig region (Germany). The Japanese city of Hakodate was recently added to the project as an example of demographic change.

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## THE SHRINKING CITIES PROJECT

*Shrinking Cities* is a project of the Kulturstiftung des Bundes (German Federal Cultural Foundation) in cooperation with the Project Office Philipp Oswald, the Museum of Contemporary Art Leipzig, the Bauhaus Dessau Foundation, and the magazine *archplus*.

The first phase of the research and exhibition project directed by Philipp Oswald focused on the international investigation of processes of shrinkage. For more than four years, more than a hundred artists, architects, urban planners, journalists, and scientists worked together to analyze and document the urban regions of Detroit (USA), Manchester/Liverpool (Great Britain), Ivanovo (Russian Federation), and Halle/Leipzig (Germany). In the second phase of the project, which focused on the search for possible interventions, an international competition was held and grants and direct commissions were awarded. The resulting 34 projects by artists, architects, scientists, and local initiatives from ten countries range from artistic interventions and self-empowerment projects to architectural, landscape, and media interventions, all the way to new legal regulations and utopian designs. The majority of the projects were developed in close cooperation with citizens, local groups, and institutions. Between the fall of 2006 and the summer of 2008, the Shrinking Cities project is presenting its work in Bulgaria, Germany, Great Britain, Japan, Russia, and USA with a traveling exhibition.

The exhibition *Shrinking Cities x fibercity @ akihabara* in Tokyo is a joint venture of the Shrinking Cities Project, Germany and Ohno Laboratory, Tokyo. Fiber City is a project developed by Ohno Laboratory 2003 – 2006, which is proposing a concept for smart shrinkage taking the city of Tokyo as an example.

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## PUBLICATIONS

### **Shrinking Cities, Volume 1: International Research**

Ed. Philipp Oswald, 736 pages,  
Hatje Cantz, Ostfildern, 2005  
ISBN-13 978-3-7757-1682-6, \$ 55

Citing concrete examples from Manchester and Liverpool in Great Britain, Detroit in the United States, Ivanovo in Russia, and Halle and Leipzig in Germany, this volume compares living conditions and cultural change in shrinking urban regions. Artistic intercessions help sensitize the public to a global phenomenon that poses a new social challenge.

Photos by Stan Douglas, John Ganis, Ken Grant, Bas Princen, Yuji Saiga, Tom Wood, and many more.

### **Shrinking Cities, Volume 2: Interventions**

Ed. Philipp Oswald, 864 pages,  
Hatje Cantz, Ostfildern, 2006  
ISBN-13 978-3-7757-1711-3, \$ 55

In dealing with shrinking cities, urban design and classical city planning reach their limits. In the face of this new challenge, new paths are taken: the "hard" tools of construction and deconstruction are joined with the "soft" tools of political, social, cultural, and communicative interventions. This book provides an international overview and critical discussion of concepts and strategies for shrinking cities from the fields of architecture, landscape design, urban

planning, the media, performance, and art. The approaches discussed range from artistic responses and self-empowerment projects to architectural and landscape interventions, strategies of media communication, and city marketing, to new legal regulations and utopian designs. A series of essays critically discusses current projects in North America, Europe, and Japan, as well as important historical positions in architecture and art.

With Projects by Will Alsop, Ruedi Baur, Florian Beigel, Chaos Computer Club, Crimson, Jeremy Deller, M. J. Ginzburg, Gordon Matta-Clark, muf, Hidetoshi Ohno, OMA, Cedric Price, Andreas Siekmann, Robert Smithson, Superflex, Oswald Mathias Ungers, and many more.

### **Atlas of Shrinking Cities**

Ed. Philipp Oswalt and Tim Rieniets, 160 pages

Hatje Cantz, Ostfildern, 2006

ISBN-13 978-3-7757-1714-4, \$ 55

Which cities shrink? Where are these cities? What processes lie behind shrinkage? Atlas of Shrinking Cities has approximately 30 world maps, 50 diagrams, 40 city portraits, 15 lexical essays, and an index of cities to document this global phenomenon and make it comprehensible visually by means of an innovative graphic presentation.

An English Edition of the Exhibition Newspaper is available at the Exhibition Space Akihabara Square.

The digital publication "Shrinking Cities: Japan" (English/ Japanese), Berlin/ Tokyo 2007 presenting the projects investigation of Japan can be downloaded from [www.shrinkingcities.com](http://www.shrinkingcities.com)

### **For Fiber City following publications are available:**

*Hidetoshi Ohno: Towards the Fiber City. An Investigation of Sustainable City Form*, Tokyo 2004 (English/ Japanese), MPF Press, ISBN -0-9725752-1-9 (not for sale)

*Ohno laboratory, The University of Tokyo: FIBER CITY Tokyo 2050*, Urban Design Strategies for the Shrinking Cities (Japanese), Shinken-chiku June, 2006, 2000 yen

*Hidetoshi Ohno: Tokyo 2050 Fibercity* (English/Japanese), Japan Architect, No 63, Autumn 2006 Yen 2500

Website: [www.fibercity2050.net](http://www.fibercity2050.net) (English/Japanese)

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*Shrinking Cities* is an initiative project of the Kulturstiftung des Bundes (German Federal Cultural Foundation) in cooperation with the Project Office Philipp Oswalt, the Gallery for Contemporary Art Leipzig, the Bauhaus Dessau Foundation and the magazine *archplus*.