



Carnegie Mellon University

School of Architecture  
College of Fine Arts, CFA 201  
Carnegie Mellon University  
Pittsburgh, PA 15213



*Community event*

## 48-705: Urban Design Studio 1: Urban Places

Units: 18

Instructor: Stefani Danes

As the first semester of the design studio sequence in the Master of Urban Design program, the Urban Places Studio introduces students to the fundamentals of urban design with a particular focus on the nature and making of urban places within an ecological systems thinking framework. The course builds on the various disciplines the class brings from undergraduate studies, as well as introduces new skills in urban design, leadership, and teamwork. We take a broad approach to the public realm, understanding it as the synthesis of built form, natural environment, and the social and physical processes that shape it. Each year, the semester-long design project re-envision places in an urban community, exploring ways to enhance their identity and coherence, deepen their historical and cultural meanings, restore their ecological vitality, and integrate them into the urban fabric of the community.

Through a process of socially engaged design, we work closely with community development organizations, public officials, and local citizens. To embed their design proposals in an in-depth understanding of the community, students conduct interviews, surveys, and other research; organize workshops; make public presentations; and participate in community events. The studio has designed new mixed-use districts, re-imagined urban gateways and centers, and introduced catalytic concepts for housing and parks. The projects have served their client groups by informing expectations of developers, evaluating zoning and other public policies, and framing dialogue among competing interest groups.