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Curb-scale Hong Kong

Narratives of Infrastructure

Sony Devabhaktuni

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Territory	World excluding USA, Canada, Australasia, China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, South Korea, and Japan
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- The large-format book includes richly detailed drawings that put forward an engaging visual description of the urban ground. These will be of interest for architects, urbanists, artists, and a general audience that looks to drawing for ideas and perspectives on the world around them
- ***Curb-scale Hong Kong*** engages with contemporary critical discourses on infrastructure from the social sciences and the humanities. The book speaks to the expanded field of infrastructural studies through its argument for curb-scale objects in the civic realm
- The book speaks of the recent upheavals in Hong Kong and the way protest is bound to the materiality of the civic realm: both conditioned by urban infrastructures and generative of it
- Makes visible the entangled infrastructural objects that comprise the street and argues for their relevance as conveyors of narrative and protagonists of the civic realm

Curb-scale Hong Kong is about the infrastructural objects that constitute the street in Hong Kong. Through drawing and text, the book renders these objects visible and argues for their relevance as story tellers and civic protagonists. The book opens an alternative imagination of infrastructure and asserts the importance of the ground to Hong Kong's urban realm.

The book is structured around measured plan drawings of five streets in Hong Kong. The drawings represent stopping points in a desire to draw everything. This impossible task resulted in documents suspended between narrative and a stilled, abstract distance. Details of growth, error, decay, undoing, and repair provide a register of happenings and becomings. Each drawing speaks of an entanglement between the objects and agencies of Hong Kong's urban realm. A second axonometric index names and examines these objects, registering more closely the material and technical decisions that give them their qualities. Texts that accompany the drawings are coincident descriptions; they thicken the street plans and index. Longer-form opening and closing essays situate the curb-scale within architecture's contemporary engagement with infrastructure and with the practice of architectural drawing.

Sony Devabhaktuni is an assistant professor of design in the department of architecture at the University of Hong Kong (HKU). His research and teaching focuses on collaborative processes in architectural design and urban infrastructure.

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