

A person wearing a white hospital gown, a white head covering, and a white face mask is sitting on a metal bench in a hospital corridor. They are looking down at a smartphone in their hands. The corridor has a tiled floor and metal railings. The entire image is overlaid with a blue tint.

# PANDEMIC SOCIETY

## May-Aug 2020

THEME ZERO

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# ISSUES OF TOMORROW

Our world is changing fast, while ambitions and challenges match in importance. In this context design can play a huge role. How do we imagine the world to be? What range of possibilities we haven't discovered yet? What's a Non Architecture for a World in crisis? In 2020 we started a second phase of competitions to address the **issues of tomorrow**.

In line with our style we propose 9+1 themes – ten critical topics to work on, but this time they come with a framework to make sure that each theme is explored from different design angles. Rather than a program, a **research ecosystem** composed of various competitions running in parallel and exploring the same theme from different perspectives.

Our exploration journey will start from a theme zero, a special step in our research program: **Pandemic Society**.

# THEME ZERO: PANDEMIC SOCIETY

The outbreak of COVID-19 turned out to be one of the biggest global emergencies of our recent history and the dramatic number of victims will not be the only major consequence ahead. The world population was forced into quarantine and social distancing, with incredibly heavy load on healthcare systems and the horizon of an economic crisis ahead. It seems to be clear for all that there will be no easy fix to the emergency. Considered the current developments in China, Hong Kong and South Korea, we are likely to transition through different degrees of isolation while a vaccine, effective treatment or herd immunity are achieved. That could take months, if not years.

Throughout history, how we design and inhabit physical space has been a primary defense against epidemics. For thousands of years, humans have looked to physical space to treat and cure sickness. People have redesigned cities, infrastructure, architecture, and interiors all in the name of minimizing the risk of infectious diseases. Meanwhile, enterprising business people have capitalized on the fear of germs to sell products and services that supposedly stopped the rumored causes of illness.

It's only recently – with advancements in virology, bacteriology, epidemiology, and medicine mostly in the 19th

and 20th centuries – that antibiotics and immunizations have been on the frontlines of infectious diseases. Now, with new diseases emerging, like COVID-19, and no vaccines or cures to fight them, one of the most effective solutions is to go back to the physical: social distancing, quarantine, isolation, and, perhaps, adaptations to our cities, neighborhoods, and homes.

We are now returning to this kind of medieval spatial response to disease control, which means that architecture and urban design suddenly become medical. It is time to use the built environment as a way to control epidemic spread.

The word quarantine means restricting the movement of people or goods, but quarantine is a spatial and a temporal buffer. Space, as it relates to infectious disease epidemics, isn't just about quarantine; it's also a design problem. If you look around most neighborhoods today – in cities and suburbs – you'll see evidences of how humans have responded to infectious diseases by redesigning our physical spaces: from the creation of the sanitary reform movement, which created drinking water and sewage infrastructure, to the creation of open spaces to become the lungs of the city, due to the belief in the medicinal qualities of green spaces, it was viewed as a healthier alternative to city life.





# 30 KEYWORDS

The future remains uncertain, and as the pandemic continues to spread, more questions will undoubtedly arise. This condition opens a new scenario for humanity. We are promptly questioning our lifestyle and the framework designed to support it. Non Architecture and its partners want to play their part by involving the design community in a series of explorative initiatives. By reflecting upon specific topics, we aim at generating dialogue and mutual inspiration on ideas to mitigate the current crisis.

In particular, Non Architecture and all the supporting organizations collaborated in identifying a range of 30 design issues related to the theme of Pandemic Society.

In relation to **Healthcare System**:

1. Emergency Hospitals,
2. Smart Diagnostic,
3. Hygiene & Preventing Contamination,
4. Transferring Patients,
5. Medical Supplies,
6. Smart Medical Devices,
7. Home Treatments,
8. Protecting Healthcare Workers

In relation to **Home Isolation**:

9. Household Organization,
10. Loneliness,
11. Homeless,
12. Personal Growth,

13. Co-habitation & Relationships,
14. Protected Social Interactions,
15. E-learning,
16. Child Care,
17. Work from Home,
18. Mental & physical health

In relation to **Economy**:

19. Small businesses,
20. Tourism & Food industry,
21. Entertainment,
22. Fashion Industry
23. Food Supplies

In relation to **Cities**:

24. Public Space Sanitation,
25. Delivery & Logistics,
26. Alternative technologies,
27. Urban Mobility,
28. Nature & Environment,
29. Domestic & Wild Animals,
30. New Lifestyles

For more insights on these topics you can subscribe to our [newsletter](#) or visit our [online journal](#).

Designers can address one or more of the aforementioned topics through 3 different competitions. Each competition frames a specific design approach. The Non Architecture Competitions for the theme of Pandemic Society are the following:

- **48h Floorplan Battle** – COVID-19 Super Market
- **Healing** – Alternative Designs for Quarantine Cities
- **Social Distancing Housing Block**

# 48h Floorplan Battle – COVID-19 Super Market

Participants of the first 48h Floorplan Battle are asked to design a building where people can safely shop for groceries, considering the current pandemic situation. What kind of supermarket layout can keep costumers protected and at the same time provide them with retail services? Besides the required social distance when shopping, what other aspects could we consider in a new layout plan?

The “48h Floor Plan Battle” is a design competition developed to explore the creative potential of architectural design through one of the most basic architectural drawings: the floor plan. Participants have 48 hours to develop a proposal that responds to the program contained in the extended contest brief, which will only be available when the battle starts.

The theme of the 48h Floorplan Battle will be released only on 2 May 2020. Till then, it has to stay confidential.

Timeline:

Registration Period: 4 April – 2 May 2020

48h battle: 2–3 May 2020

Winners Announcement: 25–29 May 2020

[More info](#)



# Healing – Alternative Designs for (post) Quarantine Cities

In this competition we encourage participants to come up with visionary concepts for alternative urban life in relation to the COVID-19 emergency – Only 3 drawings, absolute freedom of scale, site or program. Participants are asked to propose conceptual ideas to mitigate the effects of the current crisis, either by supporting the healthcare system or helping people coping with isolation, by reducing the social and economic impact of the emergency or by exploring the effects of this new normality on our living environment.

HEALING is part of the “Cities of Tomorrow” competition series, developed to reimagine urban life through a variety of creative design concepts and ideas. What kind of role can we play as designers in reimagining urban life? How can we produce new inspiring visions to trigger a discussion around alternative models of urban living?

Timeline:

Registration Period: 1 May - 22 August 2020

Submission Deadline: 22 August 2020

Winners Announcement: 25-29 September 2020

# Social Distancing Housing Block

Housing has become the front-line defense against the Covid-19 outbreak. During quarantine, homes designed for a limited range of functions suddenly became the place where we spend almost all our time. Considering a quarantine situation, how can we introduce a valuable change in the established model, to disrupt the real estate market and benefit dwellers, the environment and the city?

SOCIAL DISTANCING HOUSING BLOCK is part of the “Future Living” Competition series, developed to imagine new dwelling models through a variety of creative architectural designs and feasible innovation. Designers are asked to answer the questions posed by the brief following specific guidelines on site, program organization and building envelope.

Timeline:

Registration Period: 1 May – 29 August 2020

Submission Deadline: 30 August 2020

Winners Announcement: 25–29 September 2020

# CURATOR

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## RESEARCH PARTNERS

**KooZA/rch**  
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**TRUST**  
Transdisciplinarity for Urban Sustainability Transition

**Rhinoceros**  
modeling tools for designers

European Urban  
Knowledge Network



**METABOLISM  
OF CITIES**

**UTH**

## COMPETITION PARTNERS



SUPRA ORDER



**AROP**

show it  
**better.**

**ACT OF  
MAPPING**



**beta**

**AOP**  
architectural olympics



## CONTACTS

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