THE LA FORUM PRESENTS SUMMER EXHIBITIONS ON MICRO-SCALE UNITS AND DESIGN VS. DEVELOPMENT FOR URBAN HOUSING

(May 21, 2013, Los Angeles) In 2010, according to the U.S. census, the City of Los Angeles contained over 1.4 million housing units. Housing remains a hot-button issue for the Southern California region, as high-rise residential towers are proposed for Hollywood, transit-oriented developments with housing are rapidly sprouting along new rail corridors, and the urban population continues to rise. The Los Angeles Forum for Architecture and Urban Design presents two timely exhibitions this summer: How Small is Too Small and BY-Right/BY-Design that turn attention to housing in Los Angeles. The exhibitions run concurrently from May 31 to August 4 at LA Forum Events @ WUHO Gallery in Hollywood. The gallery is open Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, noon to 5 p.m. The exhibitions open with a public reception on Friday, May 31, 7 to 10 p.m.

By supporting these two exhibitions, the LA Forum is seeking to engage the city on the future of its housing, projecting opportunities for future development approaches into the public realm for consideration and discussion. As opposed to offering a traditional survey of residential architecture in the region, the Forum offers a full-size micro-unit prototype unit, as well as a critical framework for how such a prototype fits within the overall market and culture of Los Angeles housing.

Katrina Stoll Szabo and Takako Tajima, with Daina Swagerty, present an investigation into the potential for so-called micro-unit housing in Los Angeles, asking with their exhibition title: How Small is Too Small? Szabo and Tajima are constructing a full-sized 300-square-foot dwelling in the Forum’s gallery space, allowing visitors the opportunity to understand what it would feel like living in a micro-unit. The installation will feature a double bed, kitchen, living area, and storage, replicating the bare essentials of a typical micro-unit. The two designers seek to engage the public on what the proliferation of micro-units would do to the vitality of surrounding neighborhoods, as well as to notions of contemporary domesticity.

Generally, micro-unit apartments are defined as dwelling units with living spaces that range from 150 and 300 square feet. Interest in such units has gained traction in cities like New York, Boston, Seattle, Chicago, and San Francisco as city governments have adopted policies that support smaller units to increase density and affordability. Locally, Santa Monica has adopted guidelines that regulate the number of micro-units allowed in new developments. The interest in micro-units also reflects the growing proportion of single-person households, which in 2010 represented nearly 28 percent of households nationwide compared to only 9.5 percent in 1950.
Accompanying this installation is a second exhibition, **BY-Right/BY-Design**, which explores the differences between market development and so-called *high design* for multi-family housing in Los Angeles. Created by Liz Falletta, the exhibition pairs common, basic residential types by builders and real estate developers with examples of projects designed by noted architects working at similar scales, times, and locations. The pairings are then linked to contemporary examples that bridge lessons from the past with ideas for how L.A. can further densify and develop to meet new challenges.

Falletta investigated each project from the perspectives of real estate development, urban planning, and design, using market analyses and proformas, regulatory plans and codes, and analytical drawings and diagrams to develop an understanding of L.A. housing from multiple viewpoints. She considers this to be more inclusive, as she views housing projects as fundamentally collaborative and, thus, difficult to reduce to a single motivating factor like design or economics. The framework of the show pits those projects developed BY-Right, built to current planning, building, and zoning codes, and those that are BY-Design, which adjust codes and restrictions through design interventions. Falletta sees this as a continuum between the two extremes, leveling the critical playing field of L.A. housing.


**How Small is too Small?**
Katrina Stoll Szabo and Takako Tajima, with Daina Swagerty
This exhibition has been made possible with the generous support of Specialized Construction, Interior Experts, General Builders Inc., Michael P. Johnson Fine Woods, Killefer Flammang Architects, Hard Media Inc., Woodbury University School of Architecture, and the LA Forum.

**BY-Right/BY-Design**
Liz Falletta
This exhibition has been made possible with the generous support of the USC Sol Price School of Public Policy, the USC School of Architecture, Woodbury School of Architecture, and the LA Forum.

May 31 to August 4
Opening Reception: Friday May 31, **7 to 10 p.m.**
LA Forum Events @ WUHO Gallery
6518 Hollywood Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90028

Gallery Hours: Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, noon to 5 p.m

**About the LA Forum for Architecture and Urban Design** ([www.laforum.org](http://www.laforum.org))

The Los Angeles Forum for Architecture and Urban Design is a non-profit organization that provides a framework for design professionals and members of the general public to explore, evaluate, and impact the development of architecture in Los Angeles. Throughout its 25 years of operation, the Forum has brought together young designers, seasoned professionals, critics, urban theorists, artists, students, and people interested in their physical environment in a diverse series of activities. The Forum seeks to reach out beyond the confines of professional organizations, schools and established groups and does not limit itself to one approach to design or theory. It provokes discussion, seeks out places and designs unseen or unnoticed by the general public, publicizes architectural investigation and commentary, and promotes the serious exploration of strategies to influence the development of Los Angeles and the Southern California region.

**HOW SMALL IS TOO SMALL?**

**THE MICRO-UNIT IN LOS ANGELES**

opening reception
may 31 2013
fri 7-10 pm

exhibition
may 31-august 4 2013
fri-sun 12-5 pm

la forum events b w ho
6518 hollywood blvd
los angeles ca 90028

organized by
Katrina Stoll Szabo and Takako Tajima with Daina Swagerty

sponsorship
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