

# Against Urbanism

Franco La Cecla • Translated by Mairin O'Mahony

After demolishing the myth of the rock star architect with his book *Against Architecture*, Franco La Cecla now explores the decisive challenges that cities are going to have to confront in the near future. Urban planning and development has become increasingly inadequate in response to the daily realities of life in our cities. Human, economic, ethnic, and environmental factors are systematically overlooked in city planning and housing development, and anachronistic, sterile, and formalistic architecture almost invariably prevails. Meanwhile, our cities grow out of internal impulses, not only in slums and favelas but through the pressing needs for public spaces which have sprung forth in great events and movements such as Istanbul's Gezi Park and Occupy Wall Street. Never more than today has democracy played itself out in public spaces, sidewalks, and streets. Urban planners and developers, however, are still prisoners of an obsolete vision of passivity which betrays actual city needs and demands. A new urban science is required which can, first of all, guarantee a civil, dignified life for all—urban development which ensures the right to a humane mode of daily living, which has been and still is completely ignored.

"Accustomed as we are to thinking that changes take place online or on a global scale, we sense that they are not made of human bodies in urban spaces and that the mere presence in the square of people claiming their right to the city is a political fact, explosive in nature."

—Franco La Cecla (from *Against Urbanism*)

## ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTORS

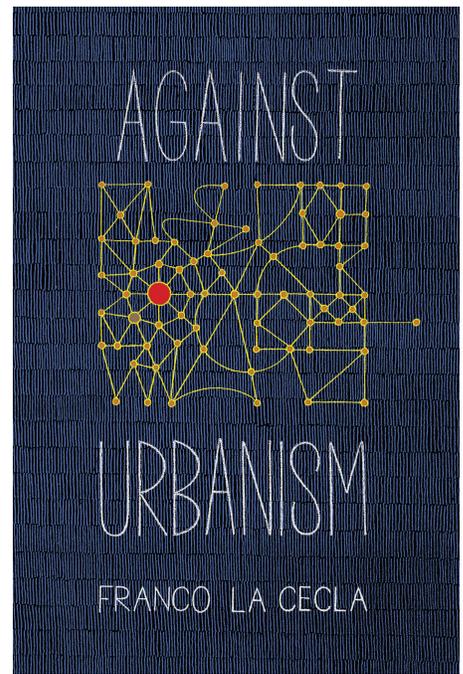
Born in Palermo in 1950, **Franco La Cecla** is a renowned anthropologist and architect. He has taught anthropology in many European and Italian cities such as Palermo, Venice, Verona, Paris, and Barcelona. He has worked as a consultant for the Renzo Piano Building Workshop and for Barcelona Regional. In 2005 he founded the Architecture Social Impact Assessment, ASIA, an agency that evaluates the social impact of architectural and city planning projects. In addition he has created several documentaries, one of which, *In Altro Mare* (In Another Sea) won the Best Coastal Culture Film award at the 2010 San Francisco Ocean Film Festival. His book *Against Architecture* is an international bestseller.

**Mairin O'Mahony** was born in London where she worked as an editor for thirteen years before moving to San Francisco. Her experience includes a wide variety of copywriting on subjects ranging from agriculture to finance to travel. She is a passionate Italophile, dividing her time between San Francisco and Italy.

## ACCOLADES

"La Cecla's tract against urbanism is a eulogy for the city."

—Renzo Piano



### SUBJECT CATEGORY

Urban Studies/Architecture

### PRICE

\$14.95

### ISBN

978-1-62963-235-3

### PAGE COUNT

144

### SIZE

7.5x5

### FORMAT

Paperback

### PUBLICATION DATE

03/17

### DISTRIBUTED BY

Independent Publishers Group  
(312) 337-0747  
www.ipgbook.com

### DISTRIBUTED IN THE UK/EUROPE BY

Turnaround Publisher Services Ltd  
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orders@turnaround-uk.com

### ◆ PM PRESS ◆

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