

1	PHIL WOOD Reclaiming Public Space (PECHA KUCHA)
2	Public space in our cities is something people once fought and died for. Now we're losing it – to the motor car, to security and surveillance, to commerce and privatisation. We even praise people who speed it up.
3	Here's the brilliant inventor Howard Stapleton. He created the Mosquito which ignores adults but inflicts audible pain on teenagers who have the cheek to hang outside corner shops of an evening.
4	But now we're seeing a fight back. People who know that public space only means something if we're ready to keep on using it, sharing it and defending it. Some people use rather obvious techniques.
5	I'm going to tell you about some of the more creative things people are doing that I've seen around the world. Like Improv Everywhere who, without telling anybody set up this lectern in the middle of a square in New York, and then stood back to see what would happen.
6	There was just one piece of advice. 'Say Something Nice'. The rest they left up to the New Yorkers to work out for themselves. And they did. Don't you just love the look on this guy's face?
7	Here we're still in New York – where Broadway joins Times Square. A traffic mayhem. Except one morning when Broadway was cordoned off with barriers. And inside someone had set out a load of cheap deck chairs. But nobody knew who – or why.
8	But being New Yorkers they adapted and made it their own. This semi-official experiment lasted until all the chairs wore out – and then Broadway returned to being a race track.
9	In California, where parking space exceeds public space in many places, the Rebar group of artists set out to bend and subvert the rules. They started by paying a 2 hour parking meter fee and rolling out a lawn.
10	Their idea of a special day when parking spaces should be turned into something else has now spread around the world. The idea has really taken off and people really go to town.
11	Back in England, of course, we do things a little more whimsically. A few years ago lots of these tiny little gardens started to appear around London. It was the Pothole Gardener. He began incognito like Banksy but he's now come out and actually become rather mainstream
12	But there is still a wild and unruly conspiracy of Britons determined to undermine society through Guerrilla Gardening, who will go to incredible lengths – like Seed Bombing – to reclaim dead urban spaces for nature.

13	It's all a bit of fun. But in some parts of the world it's also a matter of life and death. Mexico City is so dominated by traffic that many highways have no pavements or crossings. This is really bad for poor car-less people who have to get to the rich areas to work as cleaners and gardeners.
14	Many are killed trying to cross the road. Salvador Ramirez is a true pedestrians freedom fighter. He showed me this zebra crossing which he painted in the middle of the night. I asked him happens when the paint fades. The City Council now repainst it. I call that a result.
15	In Brussels the artist Emilio Lopez worried the city was being segregated into rich and poor, black and white either side of the Albert Canal. I watched him one night as he started building something on the bridge.
16	Next morning people woke up to find Checkpoint Charlie in their city. With Lopez in full uniform asking them for their papers. A powerful point about segregation and it really hit home.
17	These are my friends in Zagreb from the Right to the City movement. They're up against seriously corrupt and violent politicians and businessmen who are privatising the city's public space. There's only time to tell you one of many brilliant stunts they pulled to raise public awareness of the theft of their city.
18	A local oligarch got planning permission to build a hotel on a public area on condition the surroundings became a public park. Instead he turned it into a private mansion. So they all turned up in a coach with their luggage and tried to book accommodation. It drove him mad.
19	In some countries it's unheard of to stage public protest. I met the Shiroti na Ran group in Tokyo whose main beef is with the rampant consumerism of Japanese society.
20	They started opening pop-up second hand shops – an unbelievably radical thing to do in Japan. They now hold hit and run guerrilla parties outside railway stations, always staying one step ahead of the authorities.
21	But for all my travels I have to say that one of the most soulless public spaces I've ever seen is this one. Yes here in Huddersfield – it's the Civic Centre Square. I have a packet of seeds here. Do I see any volunteers for a spot of Guerrilla Gardening?