

**Spring 2012 Public Lecture Series**

**Topic: The Subject of Megalopolis**

Date and Time: 28 February 2012 (Tuesday), 6:30pm – 8:00pm
Venue: Room MWT6, Meng Wah Complex, The University of Hong Kong

**Bio of the Speaker**
Albert Pope is an architect and author living in Houston Texas. He is a graduate of Southern California Institute of Architecture and Princeton University. He is the author of Ladders (Princeton Architectural Press) and of numerous essays concerning the problem of contemporary urban form. He has won awards for his design work including AIA National and PA Design Awards. He is the Gus Sessions Wortham Professor of Architecture at Rice University School of Architecture. He is presently the principal investigator at zoneresearch.net.

**Lecture Synopsis**
Eighty percent of the urban environment in North America has been built in the past fifty years. Prevailing wisdom tells us that this urbanism — the urbanism of megalopolitan sprawl — is a complete and utter failure. We are told by architects, critics, journalists and politicians that Megalopolis fails to produce a coherent urban form, it fails to produce viable public or social identity, and it fails to produce the qualities of architecture and urban space that we have come to expect from cities. In short, Megalopolis is a sub-standard sub-urbanism that cannot stand up to the past. The work of zoneresearch seeks to refute these reported failures of Megalopolis and produce, for once, an objective assessment of the city that is now more than fifty years in construction. More importantly, we argue that prevailing urban forms — forms that we actively produce — define our social identity. By discrediting this urbanism, we discredit the image of ourselves as it is presently projected into built urban form. Focusing on contemporary urban form and the subject that it produces, zoneresearch identifies Megalopolis as the one and only site upon which an alternate urban identity can be be constructed.