



# ISISA

## Newsletter

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### EDITORIAL

ISISA Newsletter is here once again. This newsletter includes the new strategic plan for ISISA under the leadership of our new President – Prof Godfrey Baldacchino. It also includes the Penghu Declaration & photos from the last Islands of the World Conference, and various interesting articles on island related issues. This newsletter is what you make it, so please keep the contributions coming. Photos, articles, forthcoming publications, upcoming conferences, book reviews and news on ‘research in progress’ are more than welcome.

**Contributions for the July 2015 issue are to reach me at [abaldacchino59@gmail.com](mailto:abaldacchino59@gmail.com) by not later than June 15, 2015.**

Read and Enjoy. Suggestions for improvement and feedback are always appreciated.

Wishing you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

*Anna Baldacchino*  
Newsletter Editor

Disclaimer: The views and opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of their respective authors and are not necessarily endorsed by ISISA.

## Where it all began: a look back at *Islands '86*

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As somebody who had by then been interested in islands for several years, I recall being intrigued in 1985 to learn that there was to be a conference dedicated to islands the following year. I had never come across anything like that before. Only hindsight now allows the readers of the ISISA Newsletter to recognise that this conference, *Islands '86*, held in May 1986 at Victoria, Vancouver Island off the west coast of Canada, was to be the forerunner of the Islands of the World Series, now between its 13<sup>th</sup> (Penghu Islands 2014) and 14<sup>th</sup> (Lesvos 2016) iterations. It might be of interest to revisit this misty, near 30 year old, progenitor of our now regular, vibrant meetings. This can be done, for in a moment of tiredness in my office recently, I decided to engage in something which did not require cerebral activity and cleared out some files that had remained untouched for decades and I came across the literature relating to *Islands '86*. To investigate the conference required the

# Island Cities and Urban Archipelagos

Islands comprise cities and cities comprise islands--in some instances. Urban centres such as Stockholm, New York, Cairo, and Hong Kong all include many islands, making them perfect for examining aspects of island studies, urban studies, their intersections, and critiques thereof.

We did that at the [Island Dynamics](#) conference '[Island Cities and Urban Archipelagos 2014](#)', held from 21-25 October 2014 in the island city of Copenhagen. Around 80 delegates from 30 countries enjoyed the programme at the World Culture Centre on the island of Sjælland/Zealand, Denmark's largest island (apart from Greenland).

The variety of disciplines and of non-disciplinary ideas was inspiring! Photos from dozens of countries were used in the slides with themes ranging from city walls to island government administration. Architects and planners discussed visions and realities for island city locations. In one session, a political scientist analysed disaster data from tropical islands while an archaeologist presented Arctic excavations.

Walking tours and social events helped us to relish in Copenhagen, including a reading of Singaporean poetry. While no one would admit to partaking in the typical wares of the micronation of Freetown Christiania, we had a useful discussion--purely scholarly--on the history, merits, and concerns of this unique island within an island city. Tivoli Gardens yielded intense intellectual engagement amongst the ice cream, roller coasters, cotton candy, carnival games, and Hallowe'en décor. An island unto itself.

We were fortunate to meet inhabitants of residential islands of the city, providing local perspectives--especially through the enthusiastic, local tour guide Paul Hartvigson--on the meaning of islandness within an urban conurbation. Within the conference venue, a Chinese music performance, a talk on Taiwanese immigration to Denmark, and a presentation of Greenlandic culture complemented the field trips.

Island Dynamics always takes an innovative approach to conferences, integrating the location and on-site interests with the international, academic discussions. The conferences are friendly and intimate, with plenty of time left for questions and discussions--ideal for early careerists presenting for the first time along with seasoned keynotes. In Copenhagen, that provided the opportunity to create an agenda for island-urban interaction in research, policy, and practice. We will be taking this agenda forward in academic publications emerging from the conference and in further research, policy, and practice venues.

The foremost of the latter would be to join us in Hong Kong for the next [Island Cities and Urban Archipelagos](#) conference, from 7-11 March 2016 at the University of Hong Kong.

There will be fewer bicycles and less rain, but even more fun and work, than our week in Copenhagen.

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Tivoli Gardens in the island city of Copenhagen. *Photos: Ilan Kelman*

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## Bellesounds

What? Imagine a very large musical instrument. Double it. Then double it again and again. Now picture a very large stage. Double it – again and again. Before you appears the largest instrument in the world, on the world’s largest stage. This is our goal. The stage – the island of Gotland, in the Baltic Sea. The musical instrument – all the church bells in the island!

The island of Gotland, in the Baltic Sea, probably has the world’s greatest density of churches, of which around one hundred are of medieval origin. Most churches have one or two bells, some have three or more.

A Very Large Concert will use all the church bells in the island, well over 200, as if they were one instrument, presumably the world’s largest. The musical tone of every bell have been meticulously measured and different ways of playing on them has been practiced.