

A Message From the Dean:

I'm pleased to announce the first "Community Read" at the Spitzer School of Architecture. This project is an effort to pull the entire architecture school community together as we restart the Mumford Lecture and Seminar. Until a few years ago, each spring, the Spitzer School of Architecture and its Urban Design Program presented the Lewis Mumford Lecture and seminar.

Named for writer, architecture critic, and urbanist [Lewis Mumford](#), who attended City College, the series invites distinguished architects and urbanists to speak freely and publicly about the future of cities and the social purposes of architecture. This series was initiated by the late [Michael Sorkin](#), distinguished professor of architecture and director of the Urban Design Program at the Spitzer School, and curated by him for eleven years.

This year's Mumford Lecture will be delivered by the renowned architect, [Yasmeen Lari](#), on Thursday, April 7th, at 6:00 pm EDT.

Mrs. Lari, Pakistan's first female architect, carries particular significance to Spitzer, especially in these difficult times. In many ways, the trajectory of Lari's work reflects larger trends in 20th-century architectural history: from her social housing project Anguri Bagh in Lahore, Pakistan, in the '70s; to large postmodern commercial projects, such as the Karachi Finance and Trade Center, in the following decades; to low-carbon building today, which she labels Barefoot Social Architecture. Through documenting the past, as she did in her heritage conservation work, Lari shows that looking to historic building types is an essential component of innovation.

A deadly earthquake in Pakistan in 2005 marked a turning point in Lari's career, shifting her attention towards providing ethical, low-cost design solutions in areas suffering from natural disasters. To this day, even throughout the COVID pandemic, Lari helps train low-income communities in sustainable and resilient building techniques, using local materials such as bamboo, mud, and lime.

To learn more about Mrs. Lari, I invite you to join me in reading these interviews with her. They were conducted by Prof. [Kishwar Rizvi](#), who will convene the Mumford Lecture on April 7, 2022, 6:00 pm EDT. A head's up that both interviews are published in English and Urdu.


Yasmeen Lari and Kishwar Rizvi, "[Towards Barefoot Social Architecture, Part 1](#)," Platform, Aug 9, 2021.

Yasmeen Lari and Kishwar Rizvi, "[Towards Barefoot Social Architecture, Part 2](#)," Platform, Aug 16, 2021.

The Mumford Lecture, delivered via Zoom on Thursday, April 7th, at 6:00 pm EDT is free and open to the public; please [register here](#). It is supported by the Spitzer Architecture Fund.

Mrs. Lari is featured in the exhibit, [The Project of Independence](#), on view at the Museum of Modern Art through July 2. CUNY students and employees are admitted to MoMA free of charge.

Sincerely,



Marta Gutman  
*Interim Dean*