How can design enable dialogue in contested public spaces? This ArchiteXX-lead design action will address the public-private interface of the last remaining abortion clinic in Mississippi. Design is a powerful, effective and often under-utilized tool in addressing the complexities of contested spaces. A contested space in this project is an abortion clinic, specifically the last remaining clinic in Mississippi, where fierce protesting is a daily occurrence. ArchiteXX calls you to collaborate with us in a practice of active citizenship through design. We believe design must engage challenging social and political dimensions of the built environment, such as access to reproductive health care, in order to make improvements at all scales for all people. Knee-jerk reactions to these issues are prevalent in mainstream media. We invite the public to think more broadly and deeply about the role design can play in dialogue with such complicated and multi-layered issues. ArchiteXX identified an opportunity to re-envision how to treat this public-private interface along the fence. The material objective of our design action is to construct an installation at the Jackson Women's Health Organization, JWHO, in Jackson, MS which will provide safe and respectful access to the clinic while retaining required emergency clearances from the clinic's front doors. The public-private threshold of an abortion clinic is a highly nuanced interface of strong personal sentiments. Our design action takes the discomfort head-on, illuminating the spatial implications of access to reproductive health care and the role design can play in expanding the conversation. Critical of the exploitative nature of conventional design competitions, the project is framed as an open-collaborative think-tank. ArchiteXX initiated this design action to put our values regarding the profession of architecture into practice. The design action promotes dialogue and collaboration rather than competition to execute its goal. Through this mode of activism we seek to transform the profession. It is an iterative and lived practice outside the norms of the conventional office. Private Choices, Public Spaces is our first attempt, and we invite you to work with us.

http://architexx.org/action/design-action/pcps/

curated and organized by ArchiteXX, Lori A. Brown and Kimberley Tate
designed by Michelle Gorman, Ashley Simone, Irinia Schneid, and Lisa Mauine
Private Choices Public Spaces exhibition


curated and organized by ArchiteXX, Lori A. Brown and Kimbrenyi Tate
designed by Michelle Gorman, Ashley Simone, Irinia Schreid, and Lisa Maurice
photography by Ashley Simone