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Mobile shade

June 1st, 2016 / By: [Katherine Carlson](#) / [Case Studies](#)

The People's Canopy brings sun and weather protection to the people.

Imagine a massive bright red, two-story canopy heading toward you on multiple bicycles. Sound like something out of the movies? Well, it's no fantasy. Called the People's Canopy, the structure was commissioned by the city of Preston in the United Kingdom, working with In Certain Places, an art program for urban intervention and events, as a way to revitalize the city's historic but neglected center.

Created by People's Architecture Office, Beijing, China, the design was influenced by expandable canopies used by small businesses in southern China to temporarily expand their spaces into parking lots and public sidewalks. Set on bicycle wheels that can seat up to 10 cyclists, the canopy can collapse to the size of a double-decker bus so it can be pedaled from one location to another. When parked, it can open like an accordion to 12 meters in length at a span of 10 meters, instantly turning an unused area—even an entire street—into an event space.



More than a dozen canopies were designed and fabricated in Beijing. They were also featured at the 2015 Bi-city Biennale of Urbanism/Architecture in Hong Kong, where they were cycled to different locations and used as event spaces for various activities. For more details, visit www.peoples-architecture.com.

Katherine Carlson is a freelance writer from St. Paul, Minn.



The mobile People's Canopy not only defines an event—it becomes an event in itself. Photo: ICP





The mobile People's Canopy not only defines an event—it becomes an event in itself. Photo: Lain Lynn Pics



The mobile People's Canopy not only defines an event—it becomes an event in itself. Photo: ICP



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