

POLITICAL MATTERS : SPATIAL THINKING OF THE ALTERNATIVE

Interstices 2019 : Under Construction Symposium

POLITICAL MATTERS

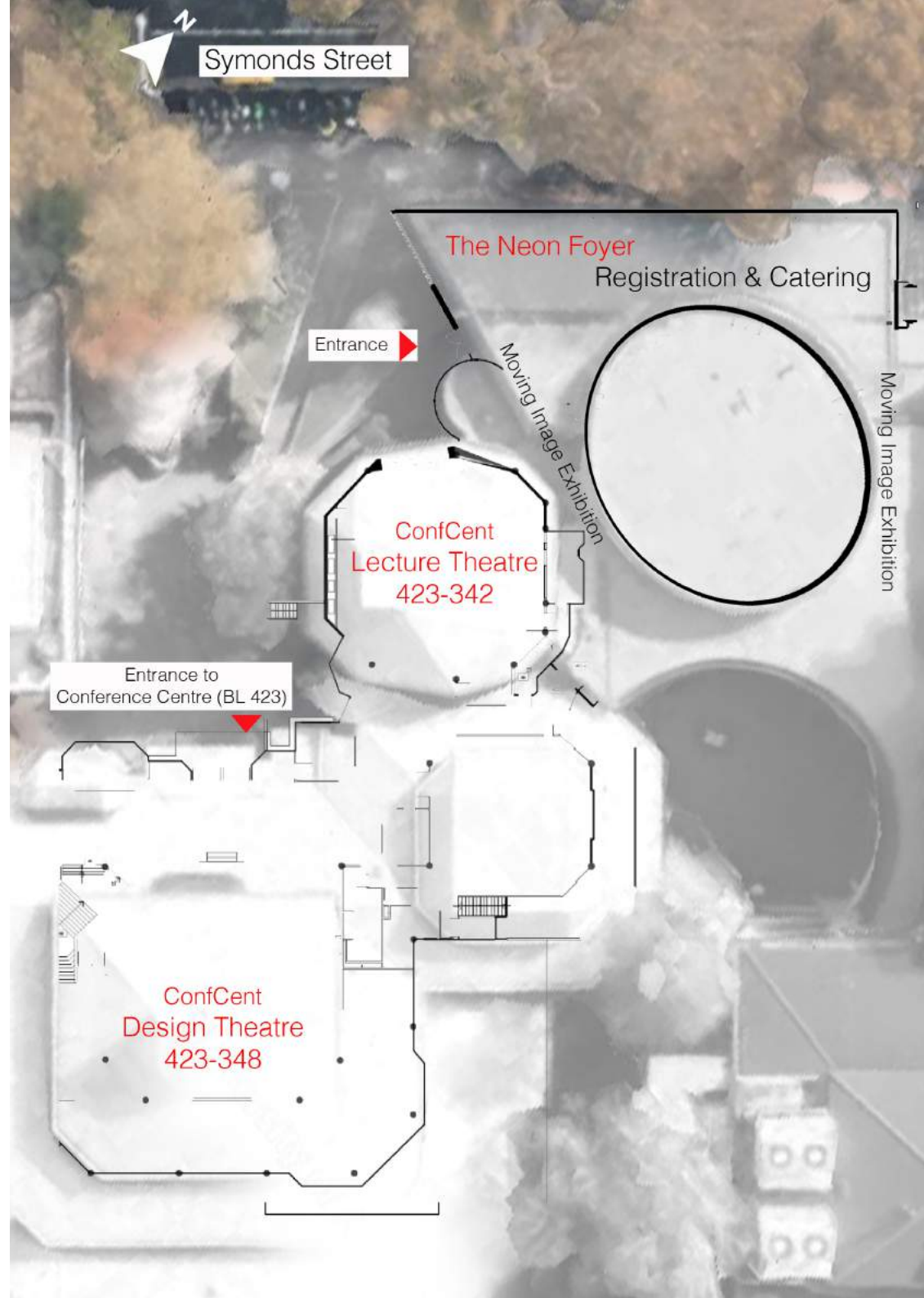
SPATIAL THINKING OF THE ALTERNATIVE

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> Political Matters: Spatial Thinking of the Alternative

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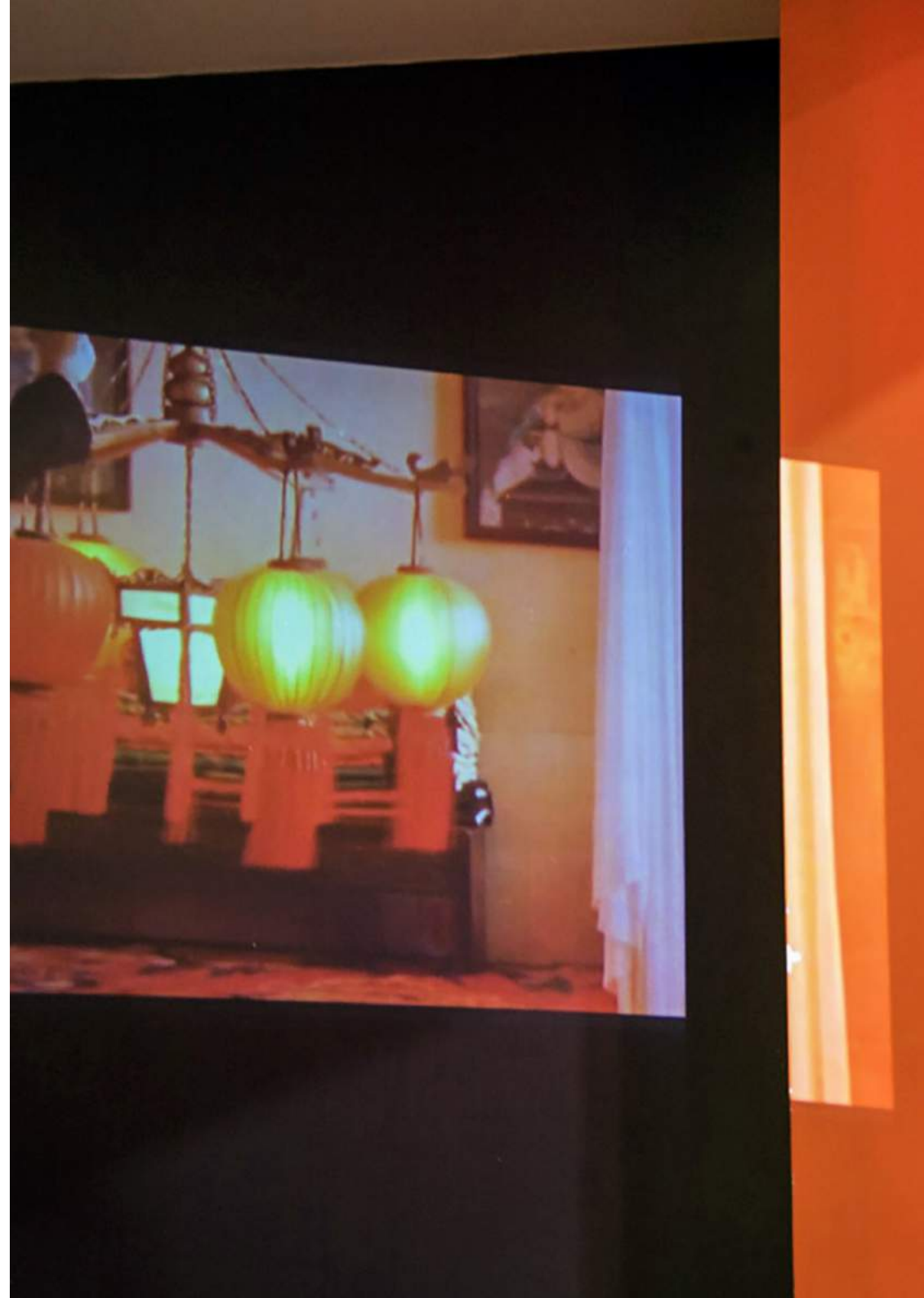
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POLITICAL MATTERS: SPATIAL THINKING OF THE ALTERNATIVE

approaches architecture beyond academic and aesthetic analysis, and more than a mere branch of traditional art history or a civilisation's will to form¹; this symposium addresses the relation between architecture and the political. Indeed, the focus is on the reflection and analysis of the disciplinary and oppressive regimes accommodated by architectures at different levels—individual, social, cultural, environmental, economic or legal. The multidisciplinary of ideas of architecture and spatial orientations with the political is found at the intersection of fields as diverse as philosophy, sociology and literature, media, arts, architecture, urbanism and human geography.

Following Hannah Ardent's celebration of the political action, including that political questions are far too serious to be left to the politicians²; drawing upon Chantal Mouffe's concept of agonism and the impossibility of a final reconciliation in thinking the political³; and, by emphasising Michel Foucault's reconceptualisation of power as being productive rather than oppressive⁴, we ask what does it mean for architecture to be political beyond being only an expression of hegemonic orders? Architecture has been used as an instrument of power and control; Albert Speer's design of Nazi party's rally grounds in Nuremberg, Germany is certainly a notable example of this type of instrumentalisation. However, our contemporary condition is characterised by different modes through which power is exercised and permeated.

We live amidst increasing border control, permanent security, aestheticized threat, human rights violations, displacement and spatial violence. Today, it seems to be more important than ever before to theorise the nexus between politics and space; increasing death of refugees trying to get to Fortress Europe, Australia's Manus Island detention centre imprisoning asylum seekers, migrants' detention centres at US-Mexico border separating children from their parents, or continuous terrorist attacks, all highlight the urgency of theorising the links between politics and space. We need to explore ways of engaging with questions of conflict, security and territorial stability, however, not at the expense of dehumanising the Other. We also need to address the rights to territory and ownership, however, without denying the rights of people to access or dwell in that space. All of these are crucial contemporary themes that architects and urban designers alongside sociologists, human geographers, political philosophers or lawyers can and should attend to.

The relation between space and the political can be examined at two scales. At a micro scale, it can be analysed in terms of spatial techniques through which power relations permeate into human flesh, desire and action; whilst at a macro scale, the focus can be on exploring architectural alterity arising at peripheries or in transitional contexts and with disavowed or occluded histories relative to identity reconstruction. Moreover, the implication of these explorations for architectural pedagogy remains a fruitful discussion that our symposium is keen to engage with.

Lastly, and perhaps most importantly, the sessions in this symposium seek to formulate the hopeful, active and productive role architecture may have in the formation of social movements and in transformations of everyday contemporary life. Precisely, the papers address the possibilities for alternatives; architecture with new rationales and where thinking otherwise to the currently known is implicit with thinking beyond scenographic, ready-made or exploitative solutions in the interest of market economies.

¹ Sanford, Kwinter. *Architectures of Time: Toward a Theory of the Event in Modernist Culture*. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 2001.

² Arendt, Hannah. *Men in Dark Times*. London: Cape, 1970.

³ Mouffe, Chantal. *Agonistics: Thinking the World Politically*. London: Verso, 2013.

⁴ Foucault, Michel. "Truth and Power." In *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977*, edited by Colin Gordon, 109-33. New York: Vintage Books, 1980. Originally published in 1977 entitled *Vérité et pouvoir*.

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Elham Bahmanteymouri (UoA)
Katharine Bartsch (UoAdelaide)
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Goran Vodicka (Sheffield Hallam)
Simon Weir (USYD)
Katharine Willis (Univerity of Plymouth)

INTRODUCTIONARY REMARKS
REVIEWS : WITH THANKS TO
PROGRAMME

> 04 - 05 <
> 06 <
> 08 - 11 <

THURSDAY, 18.07.2019

MOVING IMAGE EXHIBITION : THE SILENT UPRISING, VALENTINA ESPINOZA CACERES
KEYNOTE 01 : SOCIETY OF CONTROL (REVISITED), IAN BUCHANAN
session 01 : POWER AND POLITICAL (W)HOLES
session 02 : MEMORIES, MOURNING AND IDENTITY
session 03 : THE SPECTACLE AND THE SCREEN
session 04 : HOUSING AND URBAN COMMONS

> 12 - 13 <
> 14 - 15 <
> 16 - 21 <
> 22 - 27 <
> 28 - 33 <
> 34 - 39 <

FRIDAY, 19.07.2019

KEYNOTE 02 : A STRAIGHTER KIND OF HIP, FELICITY D. SCOTT
session 05 : STRUCTURES, RUPTURES AND FLOWS
session 06 : EVENT, PUBLIC SPACE AND THE SOCIAL
session 07 : OTHER SPACES
session 08 : MAPPING MARGINALITY

> 40 - 41 <
> 42 - 47 <
> 48 - 53 <
> 54 - 59 <
> 60 - 65 <

08.45 – 09.30 : REGISTRATION / COFFEE [Neon Foyer]
MOVING IMAGE EXHIBITION OPENING : THE SILENT UPRISING
Valentina Espinoza Caceres

09.30 – 10.00 :
OPENING PLENARY: Welcome, Mihi - Michael Steedman, Kaiarataki
Opening Remarks - Andrew Douglas
(ConfCentre/423-342)

10:00 – 11:30 :
KEYNOTE 01: SOCIETY OF CONTROL [REVISITED]
IAN BUCHANAN
Professor of Cultural Studies, University of Wollongong, Australia.
Location : ConfCentre/Lecture Theatre 423-342

11.30 – 12.00 : MORNING TEA [Neon Foyer]

12:00 – 13.15 : 2 PARALLEL SESSIONS

session 01 : POWER AND POLITICAL (W)HOLES

> 16 - 21 <

Location : ConfCentre/Lecture Theatre 423-342
Session Chair : Jan Smitheram

Joanne Choueiri / Zuzana Kovar / Karine Doupre: PhD Candidate / Lecturer / A.Professor, Griffith University, AUS
Finding political holes in the urban fabric

Daniel Grincerì : Architect and P/T Lecturer, Western Australia Uni, Perth, AUS
Wendy Brown: Waxing walls

Nicholas Coetzer: A.Professor, University of Cape Town, SA
Langa, Cape Town's first township: Model architecture, ideology and the spatiality of power

session 02 : MEMORIES, MOURNING AND IDENTITY

> 22 - 27 <

Location : ConfCentre/Design Theatre 423-348
Session Chair : Ian Buchanan

Jenny Omblèr : Researcher, University of Otago, Wellington, NZ
Emancipating space from the conditions of violence: "Inaugurated mourning" in architectural intervention

Kieran Richards : PhD Candidate, USYD, AUS

Collective memory and deported truths: Interpretations of a Parisian Memorial

Matt Ritani : Independent Researcher, Wellington, NZ

Remnants of power: The military architecture of Wellington and Whanganui 1840-1860

13.15 – 14.15: LUNCH [Neon Foyer]

14.15 – 15.30 : 2 PARALLEL SESSIONS

session 03 : THE SPECTACLE AND THE SCREEN

> 28 - 33 <

Location : ConfCentre/Lecture Theatre 423-342
Session Chair : Felicity D. Scott

Endriana Audisho : Lecturer, UTS, AUS

Screen Conflicts: Truth and Image in Architecture Post 1990

Jan Smitheram : Lecturer, Victoria University of Wellington, NZ

BIG

Henry Dickson : MArch Graduate, Victoria University of Wellington, NZ

The time in which nothing happened: Reflections upon the life and work of Paul Virilio

session 04 : HOUSING AND URBAN COMMONS

> 34 - 39 <

Location : ConfCentre/Design Theatre 423-348
Session Chair : Andrew Douglas

Kate Linzey : PhD Candidate, University of Queensland, AUS

Architecture in an Aesthetics of Maintenance: Two cases in Wellington's social housing

Katie Braatvedt : MArch (Prof), UoA, NZ

Home in Flux: When housing has failed us, and the house has been infiltrated by capital, what is home and how can it be (re)made?

Manfredo Manfredini : Senior Lecturer, UoA, NZ and Honorary Professor, Hunan University, China
Translocalisation, transduction and hybridisation and the resilience of urban commons

09.00 – 09.30 : REGISTRATION / COFFEE [Neon Foyer]

09.30 – 11.00 :
KEYNOTE 02: A STRAIGHTER KIND OF HIP
FELICITY D. SCOTT
Professor of Architecture, Director of the PhD program in Architecture (History and Theory), and Co-Director of the program in Critical, Curatorial and Conceptual Practices in Architecture (CCCP), Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation, Columbia University.
Location : ConfCentre/Lecture Theatre 423-342

11.00 – 11.30 : MORNING TEA [Neon Foyer]

11:30 – 12.45 : 2 PARALLEL SESSIONS

session 05 : STRUCTURES, RUPTURES AND FLOWS

> 42 - 47 <

Location : ConfCentre/Lecture Theatre 423-342
Session Chair : Sanja Rodeš

Heather Breeze : MArch, Ryerson University, Canada

Manifesting civic-ness: Constructing spaces for citizen participation in government

Loren Adams : Architect and Robotics Lab Coordinator, The University of Melbourne, AUS

Five Heists: architecture Grand Tour meets Grand Theft Auto

Paco Mejias Villatoro : A.Professor, Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University, China [video call]

Political control and erotic rebellion: liminal spaces and situations against the restrictions of propriety

session 06 : EVENT, PUBLIC SPACE AND THE SOCIAL

> 48 - 53 <

Location : ConfCentre/Design Theatre 423-348
Session Chair : Daniel Grincerì

Christina Deluchi : Lecturer, UTS, AUS

The Parque Biblioteca España: The politics of social architecture in Medellín

Avram Alpert : Lecturer, Princeton University, US

The praxis of public space: Rethinking architecture and critical theory with Saul Alinsky

Keefer Dunn : Architect, Chicago, US [video call]

Theories of change: Labor against solutionism

12.45 – 13.45 : LUNCH [Neon Foyer]

13:45 – 15:30 : 2 PARALLEL SESSIONS

session 07 : OTHER SPACES

> 54 - 59 <

Location : ConfCentre/Lecture Theatre 423-342
Session Chair : Susan Hedges

Kavita Sharma / Farzaneh Haghighi : MArch (Prof) / Lecturer, UoA, NZ

Foucault and the City: Formation of the 'Other'

Jianjia Zhou : PhD Candidate, Tongji University, China / Lecturer, University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong

New New Village

Abdallah Alyan : MArch (Prof), UoA, NZ

Heterotopia and worship

session 08 : MAPPING MARGINALITY

> 60 - 65 <

Location : ConfCentre/Design Theatre 423-348
Session Chair : Nicholas Coetzer

Sim Hinman Wan : PhD Candidate, University of Illinois-Chicago, US

Middle-class monuments for underclass control: Architecture of philanthropic sites in Seventeenth-Century Amsterdam and Batavia

Sanja Rodeš / Mirjana Lozanovska : Lecturer / A.Professor, Deakin University, AUS

Politics of visual: Immigrant architecture and hegemonic culture

Ali Heidari / Zahra Khaniki : Architects, Iran [video call]

Political Ambivalence: A study of immigrants' spatial identity in postcolonial London

15.30 – 16.00 : AFTERNOON TEA [Neon Foyer]

16:00 - 17:30 : POLITICAL MATTERS: ROUNDTABLE CONVERSATION / Q+A

Location : ConfCentre/Lecture Theatre 423-342

19.30 : CONFERENCE DINNER: Vivace on 85 Fort Street, Auckland

THE SILENT UPRISING

VALENTINA ESPINOZA CACERES

Valentina is a graduate of the University of Auckland's School of Architecture and Planning. A born native of Santiago, Chile, Valentina grew up and resides in Auckland, New Zealand where she is currently completing her Masters degree. She is particularly passionate about the intersections of Cinema and Architecture, and how architecture can be conceptualised from studying pre-existing narratives and historical contexts as viewed through moving image. Currently she is working on her thesis focusing on Jean-Luc Godard's 1965 film *Alphaville*, whilst reimagining the Modernist architectural representations of a futuristic metropolis as evident in the film.

How can cinema, as moving image, capture the multitude of facets of political perspective of a personal resonance? How do our own societal perceptions inform the way in which we view the architectural contexts around us? By raising such questions, this installation presents a series of filmic fragments, to explore how politics can be deeply embedded into our culture.

Whilst each original work can be perceived in its own original frame, through a process of overlay and superimposition a new composition is enabled. Superimposing a series of images is call for discovery, for the new. I encourage the public to walk through the installation, to experience each projection in such a way to grasp the potential of that which is original/new, past/present, and architectural/political.

The selection of moving image works is inclusive of cinematically renowned and some local student works yet to be vibrantly released for the public from their relative unearth. Their distinction will not be apparent to those unfamiliar with film; all portray an incredible insight into where politics and architecture inevitably connect through the fabric of the individual human narrative. It is THE SILENT UPRISING.

Clips selected for the exhibition are from: *Night and Fog* (Alain Resnais, 1955), *Raise the Red lantern* (Zhang Yimou, 1991), *Battleship Potemkin* (Sergei Eisenstein, 1925), *Andrei Rublev* (Andrei Tarkovsky, 1966), *The Conformist* (Bernardo Bertolucci, 1971), *The Colour of Pomegranates* (Sergei Parajanov, 1969), *Koyaanisqatsi* (Godfrey Reggio, 1981), *D'Est / From the East* (Chantal Akerman, 1993), *Majesty* (Pon Torthienchai, 2018), *Lime Burners* (Sholto Buck, Lila Bullen-Smith, Ardit Hoxha and Lily Worrall, 2018), *Shaping Tamaki Together* (Joshua Grandall, Felix Wang, Hans Hong, Todd Min, John Woo, Christopher Choi, 2018), *Forensic Architecture* (Jingyuan Huang, Scott Ma, Todd Min, John Woo, Harry Tse, Chris Choi, Angela Lai, Dennis Byun, 2018).

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> keynote 01 : SOCIETY OF CONTROL [Revisited]

Location : ConfCentre/Lecture Theatre 423-342

IAN BUCHANAN

Ian Buchanan is Professor of Cultural Studies at the University of Wollongong, Australia. He is the author of the *Dictionary of Critical Theory* (OUP, 2018) and the forthcoming *Assemblage Theory and Method* (Bloomsbury). He is also the founding editor of the journal of *Deleuze and Guattari*.

How are we to make sense of the present times? Has critical thinking ever had a more important task than this? In his short paper "Postscript on Control Societies" (*Post-Scriptum sur les Sociétés des Contrôle*), published towards the end of his life, perhaps indicating a new direction in his work which sadly he did not live to carry out, Deleuze mapped in the span of a handful of pages one of the most searing diagnoses of contemporary society critical theory has produced. His argument is that during the course of the 20th Century the world entered a new epoch, one that is differently organised to the world Foucault mapped in his work on disciplinary society. There has been considerable but I think rather needless debate as to whether we have left disciplinary society behind completely or not. The debate is needless because Deleuze never claims that the machinery of disciplinary society has disappeared altogether; he claims only that it has broken down and been superseded by new machineries of control. That this is the case is manifestly obvious. While no one can dispute that surveillance technology continues to dominate 21st Century life, as Foucault said it did in the centuries preceding our own, it is also true that surveillance today operates in ways that were not technologically possible prior to the invention of the computer. Not only that, its very modality has changed too. Today surveillance is focused on controlling individuals (not individuals), restricting their movement, limiting their access to credit and capital, determining where and how they can spend their money, and not, as was the case with disciplinary society, in shaping and forming them as particular social types (soldiers, doctors, teachers, and so on). Discipline concerned the correct training and placement of individuals, whereas control is concerned with the maximum exploitation of individuals (nameless, faceless, data points) regardless of their formation or placement. It is clear too that control society regards humans as replaceable – the machines of today do not merely extend or enhance human capabilities, they substitute for them, and in many cases do the job better than any human could.

> session 01 : POWER AND POLITICAL (W)HOLES

Location : ConfCentre/Lecture Theatre 423-342
Session Chair : Jan Smitheram

Joanne Choueiri / Zuzana Kovar / Karine Doupre: PhD Candidate / Lecturer / A.Professor, Griffith University, AUS
[Finding political holes in the urban fabric](#)

Daniel Grincerì : Architect and P/T Lecturer, Western Australia Uni, Perth, AUS
[Wendy Brown: Waxing walls](#)

Nicholas Coetzer: A.Professor, University of Cape Town, SA
[Langa, Cape Town's first township: Model architecture, ideology and the spatiality of power](#)



Finding political holes in the urban fabric

Joanne Choueiri
Zuzana Kovar
Karine Doupre

Joanne Choueiri is an Architect/Interior Architect and Researcher from Beirut, Lebanon. Her trans-disciplinary training allows her to work at the cross section between art, architecture, and research. Her research focuses on possible speculative narratives of space, interiors, and the city. With her work, she has participated in several exhibitions in Milan, London, and Rotterdam. Before moving to Australia, Joanne was a Lecturer at the Lebanese American University of Beirut. Currently, she is a PhD Candidate and Lecturer of Architecture and Interior Design at Griffith University, Australia.

Zuzana Kovar is a Lecturer at Griffith University, where she teaches Architectural Design and History/Theory. She is also the Co-Director of the architectural practice ZUZANA&NICHOLAS architects, which was named the Houses Magazine Emerging Practice of in 2018. Her research focuses on conversations around bodies and spaces within the fields of architecture, philosophy, art, and film. Her research includes both creative and written outputs, and in 2017 she published her first monograph titled *Architecture in Abjection: Bodies, Spaces and their Relations*.

A/Prof Karine Dupre is an enthusiast of cross-disciplinary approaches and partnerships, and has developed and strengthened these aspects both as a researcher and a teacher. She mostly teaches Architecture Studio and Urban Design Theory and History. She is currently Program Director at Griffith Architecture, Australia.

Urbicide, as defined by Coward in 2008, is destructive violence aimed at buildings, architecture, and the urban fabric. While the reasons behind urbicide can be attributed to war, gentrification, or militarisation of the city, this research proposes the notion of *political holes* as another form of violence. A *political hole* is to be understood as a physical and psychological hole, which comes into existence when a building is demolished as a result of an intentional, seemingly unethical, and political decision exercised by specific actors with a given socio-political status. The demolitions result in a change of people's experience, memory, and understanding of their city. Based on Foucault's 1984 concept of *heterotopia*, the research seeks to identify *political holes* as *other* spaces by investigating how unethical political holes are created and the reasons behind them. Drawing from Casati and Varzi's 1994 ontological examination of the hole, and Foucauldian heterotopia, the research proposes to frame and identify *political holes* in the urban fabric, by focusing on the study of demolitions that occurred in Beirut (1983-1994) and Brisbane (1968-1987). Through these case studies, the research intends to bring forth the political holes as an important part of the city's architectural and political history. This is achieved through mapping and photographic documentation that rely on artistic *œuvres* using subtraction as a method to represent holes as perforations. A new spatial reading of the city and its architecture is proposed, unveiling a part of history that is either forgotten by older generations or completely unknown by future ones. The ultimate goal is to provide a new way to look at the city's spatial history and its representation and to discuss whether this new perspective can unveil some of the hidden stigma of spatial violence.

Wendy Brown: Waxing walls

Daniel Grincerì

¹ Baudrillard, Jean. *Simulacra and Simulation*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press 1994, 143.

² Brown, Wendy. *Walled States, Waning Sovereignty*. New York: Zone Books, 2010, 26.

Daniel Grincerì is a Practising Architect and a P/T Lecturer in Architectural History and Theory at UWA. He completed a Bachelor of Architecture (Hons) at Curtin University in 2000 and a PhD at UWA in 2012. In 2016, he published a book with Routledge entitled: *Architecture as Cultural and Political Discourse: Case Studies of Conceptual Norms and Aesthetic Practices*. His research focuses on issues of immigration, in particular, discursive forms of identity politics and how they inform certain types of spaces for the inclusion and exclusion of various kinds of people. Some case studies include the Christmas Island detention centre and offshore 'Processing Centres' such as Nauru and Manus Island, as well as seemingly benign spaces that may be transformed into spaces of marginalisation.

This paper examines the proliferation of border walls in the context of Wendy Brown's formulation of declining nation-state sovereignty and casts doubt on the legitimacy of calling a state of emergency as justification for their erection. According to Brown, traditional views of sovereignty have been eroded over the past half century due to the rise of neoliberalism which has relegated the nation-state to the role of "entrepreneurial decision maker". In an attempt to maintain its grip on sovereignty, the nation-state has placed increasing emphasis on the demarcation of territory, strict border control, and the exclusion of those defined as a threat to its perceived 'way of life'. Walls are symbolic of the nation-state's declining power, producing what Brown describes as the "theological remainder", a merger of Schmitt's "state of exception" and Baudrillard's notion of the "remainder", whereby, the 'remainder' has no "autonomous reality, nor its own place: it is what partition, circumscription, exclusion designate".¹ The 'theological remainder' thus maintains power through repression, which is legitimised by the law, creating a state of exception, or extraordinary legal and decisional power to declare a state of emergency. This is evident in the United States, by which the declaration of a state of emergency could trigger exceptional presidential powers to fund and build the southern border wall despite governmental opposition. Walls do not result in a more secure and safer environment as those who seek to legitimise them claim; rather, they highlight the nation-state's declining authority in lieu of the ever-increasing economic control of multi-national corporations. For Brown, "[w]alls thus bear the irony of being mute, material, and prosaic, yet potentially generative of theological awe largely unrelated to their quotidian functions or failures".² This paper contends that border walls are more than architectural apparatuses of division: they are legitimised violence through the suspension of law and the abrogation of accountability whereby their recent proliferation is symbolic of the nation-state's failure to guarantee the rights of those within its confines.

Langa, Cape Town's first township: Model architecture, ideology, and the spatiality of power

Nicholas Coetzer

Langa, initially developed in the 1920s, provides ample evidence of architecture as an instrument of power and control – not through symbolic gestures of monuments or axes but rather through the articulation of space itself. This is most clearly evident in the panopticon design of the barracks for some 2,000 migrant labourers but it is more subtly found in the insistent making of Langa as a (failed) garden suburb intended to continue the 'civilising mission' of English colonialists. This ambition of social-spatial engineering points to the moral and disciplining instrumentalising ambition of Modernism with genealogical origins in the Arts and Crafts movement's elevating of beauty as a correcting elixir for urban social ills.

Langa in its current form today shows the loosening of administrative regimes of power and *space as power* in post-apartheid Cape Town. Through the case study of Langa, this paper proposes that architecture, as a concretised ideological model, *can* have a fundamental impact on people's lives and their liberty, but *only* when supported by a coherent ideological and administrative regime. The argument is made that space is (not quite) the machine that Hillier and Hanson propose. While this might be the case, space and its articulation through architectural conditions such as walls, boundaries, and property lines, is nevertheless an intransigent force set up under earlier ideological models that people must overcome as they go about their lives in the 'freedom' enjoyed in post-apartheid South Africa. Furthermore, as we zoom out through architectural scales we could arrive at the position that no matter the spatial articulation of individual dwelling units or their relationship within a defined urban / suburban locale, the dislocation of people from opportunities of economic activity entraps them in a ghetto that architecture as a concretised ideological model arguably has little impact on.

Nicholas Coetzer has over eighteen years experience in academia, teaching extensively in Architectural History, Theory, and Design at the University of Cape Town. He has a PhD in the History and Theory of Architecture from the Bartlett School of Architecture. He has numerous peer-reviewed publications and published *Building Apartheid* in 2013 through Ashgate/Routledge.



> session 02 : MEMORY, MOURNING AND IDENTITY

Location : ConfCentre/Design Theatre 423-348

Session Chair : Ian Buchanan

Jenny Ombler : Researcher, Otago Uni, Wellington, NZ

Emancipating space from the conditions of violence: "Inaugurated mourning" in architectural intervention

Kieran Richards : PhD Candidate, USYD, AUS

Collective memory and deported truths: Interpretations of a Parisian Memorial

Matt Ritani : Independent Researcher, Wellington, NZ

Remnants of power: The military architecture of Wellington and Whanganui 1840-1860



Emancipating space from the conditions of violence: *Inaugurated mourning in architectural intervention*

Jenny Ombler

Decolonisation infers a shift from a situation of oppression to emancipation. Yet there is potential for replication of the structures of violence, in which the spatial ordering of the city and its politics renew oppressive dynamics. I argue an approach to emancipating the spaces of violence, to mourn their architectural injustice, and thus to find a way to integrate acknowledgement of suffering into the processes of renewal. Through this approach, the trauma of the past is 'worked through', and the spaces of violence are transformed from their oppressive functions and memory, without forgetting.¹ I explore this approach through a proposition by *Decolonising Architecture Art Residency*, a collective based in Beit Sahour, Palestine. The *Oush Grab Military Base/Shdema Outpost* propositions seek to renew the land and buildings of a military base in Occupied Palestine, to break from a cycle in which they are being swung back and forth between settlers, the Israeli military, and the Palestinian locals. By renewing without demolishing, the propositions reflect an approach to spatial reckoning that works towards *inaugurated mourning*.² Inaugurated mourning, a concept developed by theorist Gillian Rose, is a political work of mourning that calls for an understanding of how suffering is distributed and reproduced in relation to the structures that uphold differential distribution and reproduction of violence. This differs from an aberrated response to trauma which refuses to reflect. In this paper, I work towards a theoretical underpinning for architectural responses in the wake of violence that heeds the impulse for liberation and emancipation, but simultaneously reckons with the past, and works to incorporate its lessons through and into the built environment.

¹Schick, Kate, "Acting out and working through." *Review of International Studies* 37, no. 4 (2011): 1837-1855.

²Rose, Gillian. *Mourning Becomes the Law: Philosophy and Representation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

Jenny Ombler is a Research Fellow in He Kainga Oranga / Housing and Health research group, and the New Zealand Centre for Sustainable Cities, at the University of Otago, Wellington. Her research focuses around issues of social and environmental justice in the built and socio-political environments. Her Master's thesis, for which she won the Sir Desmond Todd Award for the best thesis in Political Science and International Relations, developed a theory of spatial emancipation in the wake of violence.

Collective memory and deported truths: Interpretations of a Parisian memorial

Kieran Richards

If a central function of commemorative architecture consists in perpetuating a collective consciousness of an event from one generation to another, then, insofar as it does so, it also offers a material for an enquiry into the nature of the collective consciousness that it inevitably articulates. In other words, commemorative architecture participates in both the production and the perpetuation of collective consciousness. In this sense, a given memorial reveals or betrays the unique combination of forces required to produce and perpetuate collective consciousness of a given event. But how do social groups frame the unpalatable, the vile, or the malignant events that befall them? What happens when the need for reconciliation outweighs the need for repression? No longer in the domain of obelisk-trophies, we find ourselves in the domain of edified scars that are oftentimes situated within a healing process that is still taking place.

In light of the dynamic and expanding historiography of the Vichy regime and occupied France, this paper explores the manner in which architecture participates in the production and perpetuation of social consciousness through Georges-Henri Pingusson's *Mémorial des martyrs de la déportation*. Commissioned in 1954 and inaugurated in 1962, with the intention of commemorating French deportees, the Memorial was developed at a moment in French history marred by what some scholars now call the "Vichy syndrome", a form of collective repression operating on the level of national memory. Insofar as the Vichy regime was involved in the deportations, the Memorial was created on the symbolic centre of a nation whose former government was at least partially responsible for the same events it was commemorating. By way of the Memorial, this paper sets out to illustrate this state of affairs and reflect on the underlying state of forces that were necessary for its articulation.

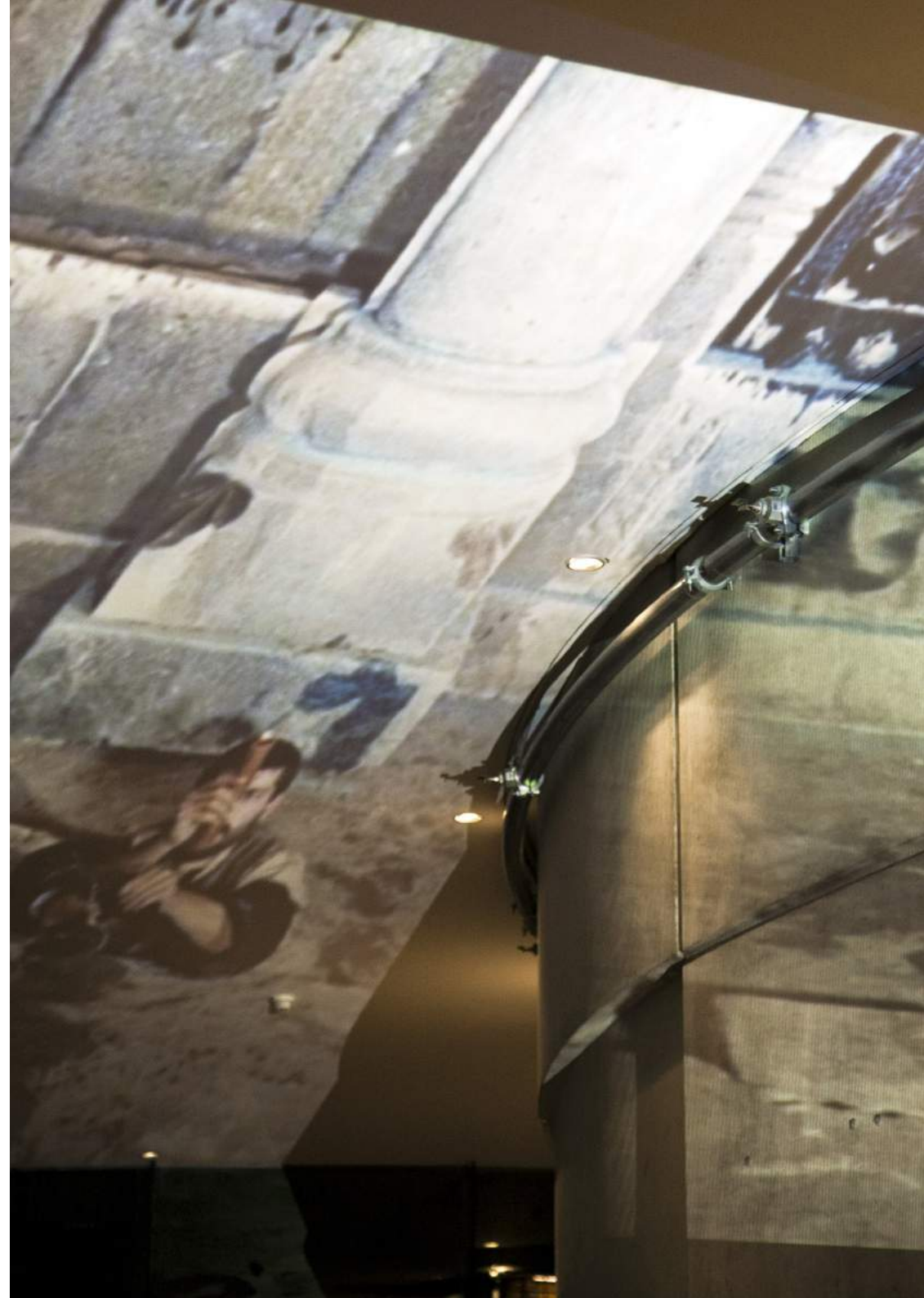
Kieran Richards is a Sessional Academic and a PhD Candidate at the University of Sydney - School of Architecture, Design, and Planning. Under the supervision of Associate Professor Chris L. Smith, his research is situated at the nexus of continental philosophy, textuality, and architectural theory and criticism. His dissertation project explores Gilles Deleuze's encounters with the literature of Henry Miller. He also teaches Design, and Architectural History and Theory at the Sydney School.

Remnants of power: The military architecture of Wellington and Whanganui 1840-1860

Matt Ritani

This paper investigates the colonial influence of British military stockades in the lower central North Island of New Zealand in the period of 1840-1860. It will focus particularly on the Wallaceville Stockade in the Hutt Valley and the Rutland Stockade in Pukenua Queens Park, Whanganui. The development of this region was typical of how of urban centres in Aotearoa (New Zealand) developed during the colonial period. These architectures are useful case studies in understanding how architecture is reflective of the colonial political intent of the time. This paper will seek to using archival documentation of these military architectures, given that there are very few physical examples remaining to analyse the architecture of these structures. Reviewing archival photography, newspaper clippings, drawings, and recorded descriptions of these buildings, the paper will appraise these military architectures and the political conditions of their creation. Assessing both the structures and their wider intent with the conflicts of the time, the paper will utilise both Tikanga Māori and post-modern theoretical frameworks to critically understand how these architectures influenced the lived experience of the community around them – both Maori and Pakeha. The paper draws on the writing of Maori scholars, Linda Tuhiwai Smith (*Decolonizing Methodologies*) and Leonie Pihama and their critiques of colonialism. It will also draw on Western postmodern theorists including Michel Foucault (*Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*), Eyal Weizman (*Hollow Land*), and Paul Virilio (*Bunker Archeology*), providing examples of assessments of state-military architecture as crystallisations of empire. Reflecting on the political agency of these buildings evidenced by the historical records and the insight from the supporting writers, the paper will seek to understand how the mechanisms of power in these nascent buildings propagate this power into future development and how this power is represented in the contemporary urban paradigm.

Matt Ritani is an independent Researcher with Ngati Toa Rangatira, Ngati Kahungunu, Ngati Koata and Irish heritage living and working in Te Whanganui-a-tara / Wellington. Matt works within architecture, sculpture, and drawing. He graduated from the Enspiral Dev Academy Web Development Bootcamp in 2018 and Victoria University of Wellington, School of Architecture and Design's MArch (Prof) programme in 2015. Recent projects include "The Stone Serjeant: Architecture, Materiality and Colonisation" presented at the The 35th SAHANZ Conference - Historiographies of Technology and Architecture and "The House we Built", an exhibition shown at play_station space in Te Whanganui-a-tara exploring wealth inequality in Aotearoa.



> session 03 : THE SPECTACLE AND THE SCREEN

Location : ConfCentre/Lecture Theatre 423-342

Session Chair : Felicity D. Scott

Endriana Audisho : Lecturer, UTS, AUS

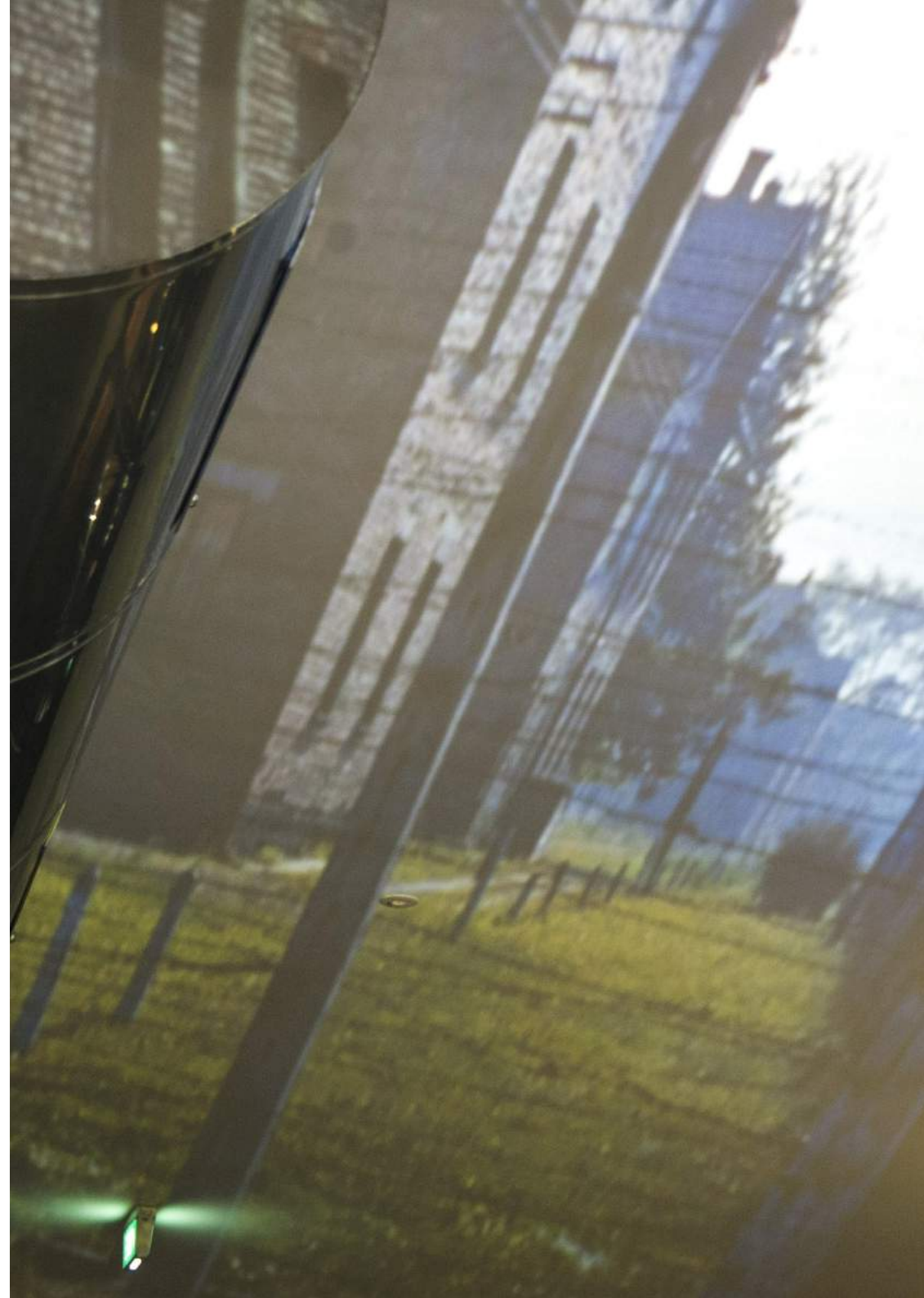
Screen Conflicts: Truth and Image in Architecture Post 1990

Jan Smitheram : Lecturer, Victoria University of Wellington, NZ

BIG

Henry Dickson : Master of Architecture Graduate, Victoria University of Wellington, NZ

The time in which nothing happened: Reflections upon the life and work of Paul Virilio



Screen conflicts: Truth and image in architecture post 1990

Endriana Audisho

Endriana Audisho is a Lecturer and Electives Course Director in the School of Architecture at the University of Technology Sydney (UTS). She teaches across Architectural Design, History and Theory, and Architectural Communication. She is currently completing a PhD which investigates the transformation of journalistic accounts of the Middle East and their relationship to architectural discourse since the 1990s. Part of this research was exhibited in the inaugural Chicago Architecture Biennial in 2015. During her studies, Endriana received the Object Gallery Award for Design Excellence and was nominated for the Australian Institute of Architects Design Medal for her project *Climate Conflict* under studio instructor Adrian Lahoud. She is currently a recipient of the New South Wales Architects Registration Board's Byera Hadley Travel Scholarship. This grant supports her travel to New York in February 2019 to report on 1990s architectural education and practice on the east coast of the US.

The aestheticisation of conflict, through the digital screen, has radically transformed architectural image production since 1990. From Cable News Network's (CNN) 24-hour live coverage of the Gulf War in 1991, to the more recent Arab Spring of 2010-12, the mediation of conflict through the screen has challenged representations of architecture and the city. CNN's live coverage of the Gulf War saw the screen materialise the city of Baghdad through the language of resolution. Veiling the city with a grainy phosphor-green night-vision filter, the images possessed what The New Yorker described as an "eerie, remote control quality", making it difficult to distinguish between reality and its simulated representation of the city. More recently, the rise of social media in the Arab Spring has seen multi-screens construct a continuous, yet conflicting, fiction of the city. Ironically, the increase in screens and resolution has not produced truth in the image. These screen conflicts have become the very site of political contestation as they raise questions of objectivity in architecture.

Architecture has flirted heavily with questions of objectivity both in pedagogy and in practice since 1990. The early 1990s marked a period where operations through the screen, specifically with the introduction of the computer in the Paperless Studios at Columbia University's Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation (GSAPP), saw architects explore 'truth' in the digital model. Moreover, the screen was literally being used as an object in architectural installations to explore the mediation of bodies in space. More recently, the emergence of Forensic Architecture, led by Eyal Weizman, has redefined the state of image making in post-conflict zones.

In a post-truth context, it is urgent to question what role different formats of image production and display play in shaping our experience of architecture and the city. Using the screen as a rhetorical device, this paper proposes to trace the role of conflict in re-calibrating architectural production, both materially and discursively, since 1990. It will use the case studies of the Paperless Studios and Forensic Architecture to unpack larger questions regarding the production of truth in architecture.

BIG

Jan Smitheram

Architectural media can operate to orientate our bodies through a temporal present, a vitality, which we experience viscerally. This paper considers how the power of architectural media, as a spatial and visceral technique, permeates human flesh, desire, and action. To explore this, the paper looks at images created by the architectural firm BIG. BIG's images are designed to be evocative; they are staged to make us feel, to make us stop and to reposition ourselves towards them. We orientate towards these images because they offer us the promise of transformation through architecture, but these images are also powerful in that they operate through affect and to change the way we feel. The firm's images imply that affect is more important than content and meaning. This paper explores how the success of these images is in how they create a sense of attachment through the sensory effect of the images. To evaluate the affective logic of BIG's images, I look at how BIG's practice is presented through a range of media, from film through to their web presence and published material. To explore this, I draw on Sarah Ahmed's framing of affect as sticky. This paper will focus on BIG's use of film to convey an architectural future by playing off the liveness of film – to create a sense of presence. What is made evident through an analysis of their images, both still and moving, is how composition, colour, and expression of affective atmospheres have been used to heighten and amplify the affective logic of the images the firm creates. BIG offers us a future built environment that intentionally includes the sentient – a life of flows, happy and vital, which intersect with the explicit and implicit ideals of these spaces. The success of these images is not in the meanings that they hold but how they make us feel.

Jan Smitheram is a Senior Lecturer in the School of Architecture at Victoria University of Wellington where she teaches undergraduate and postgraduate students. Extending work from her PhD, she looks at the relationship between performance, performativity, and affect within the context of architecture. Her recent research looks at architectural practice through the lens of performativity and affect. Her work has been published in international journals, anthologies, and conference proceedings.

The time in which nothing happened: Reflections upon the work and life of Paul Virilio

Henry Dickson

The loss of Paul Virilio should remind the architectural community, and society at large, of the need to look back – to consider not just his life and the work that he left behind but equally our individual and collective relationships to the past. This paper intends to resituate the urgency of Virilio's theoretical discourse and in doing so hopes to alter the way in which architects collectively consider the role of architecture as a facilitator of time. Taking on the form of a Eulogy to Virilio, everything will begin through the positioning of his perspective. A perspective defined equally by the nature of Virilio's education, humanistic aspirations, and personal experience of war.

It is hoped that this positioning will provide the necessary precursor required to understand what Virilio has termed "Picnolepsy" – a condition which recognises that individuals perceive time as filtered and subconsciously reformatted, because of the otherwise overwhelming stimulation of the physical environment. The inherent malice of this environment becomes exposed when considered in terms of the violence Virilio himself experienced as a consequence of the mass disassociation from reality which led to the Second World War.

Intrinsically linked to this nuanced act of forgetting, is the unparalleled speed which the emergence of the digital reality has enabled – a speed which Virilio argues is responsible for aggravating Picnolepsy and in doing so, for relegating the perception of architecture into an intangible order. In opposition to this view, however, this paper intends to conclude by using the built architecture of Virilio against the arguments of its designer, suggesting that while architecture may no longer be perceived in the way that it was traditionally thought of, its physical presence remains unburdened. It exists in a defiant sobriety, applying the friction of the past to a society poised to forget.

Henry Dickson started a Master's Thesis at Victoria University in 2017, working in the History and Theory stream, under the supervision of Professor Peter Wood. After weeks of filtering through theory which constantly related to war and the perception of time rather than architecture, Dickson concluded that the project must integrate these elements. The intention of the thesis, therefore, became to design a memorial to the Battle of Verdun and further research beyond just Virilio went into the responsibility of architecture as a means of remembrance. Since graduating, Henry has continued independent research into this topic looking into the fields of art, philosophy, and literature.



> session 04 : HOUSING AND URBAN COMMONS

Location : ConfCentre/Design Theatre 423-348

Session Chair : Andrew Douglas

Kate Linzey : PhD Candidate, University of Queensland, AUS

Architecture in an Aesthetics of Maintenance: Two cases in Wellington's social housing

Katie Braatvedt : MArch (Prof), UoA, NZ

Home in Flux: When housing has failed us, and the house has been infiltrated by capital, what is home and how can it be (re)made?

Manfredo Manfredini : Senior Lecturer, UoA, NZ and Honorary Professor, Hunan University, China

Translocalisation, transduction and hybridisation and the resilience of urban commons



Architecture in an aesthetics of maintenance: Two cases in Wellington's social housing

Kate Linzey

¹ Sheppard, Cassim. *Citymakers: The Culture and Craft of Practical Urbanism*. New York: Monacelli Press, 2017, 205.

² Sample, Hilary. *Maintenance Architecture*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2016, 4 and 14.

Kate Linzey is an Independent Scholar. In 2002, she graduated from The University of Auckland, School of Architecture, and has since then been a PhD candidate at the University of Queensland, School of Architecture, supervised by Dr John Macarthur and Dr Nicole Sully. Kate has taught at Massey University College of Creative Arts and Wellington Institute of Technology. The proposed paper elaborates conclusions drawn from her current PhD research into public art and the architecturally scaled proposals of artist Len Lye.

Cassim Sheppard suggests that "management, maintenance, and use in both the short and long term" are "non-design issues" in architecture.¹ By contrast Hilary Sample argues that maintenance is "really the thing that brings us close and keeps us close" to architecture and goes further, suggesting that in between preservation and cleaning, maintenance "open[s] up a new way of thinking whereby architecture is not fixed once a building is complete".² Following Sample, this paper argues that the traditional division of the arts into spatial and temporal genres has been used to suppress the definition of maintenance within architecture. Judgements made in terms of the production of ideal and enduring forms in space perpetuates the definition of architecture's objects as inert exchange commodities, and its audience as passive subjects. The paper suggests that despite interest in duration, movement, and adaptability in architecture throughout the twentieth century, emphasis has remained on the architect's authority to imagine a complete building. As such, modifications by occupants are seen as uncreative, degenerations of the architectural image. Two events are considered in respect to the maintenance of social housing architecture. The first is the discovery of a Wellington City Council Housing tenant in 2011, who was believed to have died in his apartment fourteen months previously. The second occurred the following May, when the 115 tenants of Housing New Zealand's Gordon Wilson Flats (1959) were issued with a seven-day eviction notice on the grounds that the building's facade was no longer safe due to just discovered 'concrete rot'. The discovery of tenant's body revealed that though the estate was social, there was no active community within the Newtown Park Flats. Similarly, the decision to evict the Gordon Wilson Flats tenants denied the existence of any community. In these cases, the occupants were treated, and acted, as a passive audience. The subsequent successful renovation of Newtown Park Flats demonstrates that architecture can be the means of building community but, it will be argued, its continued success will demand an aesthetic of maintenance.

Home in Flux: When housing has failed us, and the house has been infiltrated by capital, what is home and how can it be (re)made?

Katie Braatvedt

¹ Ferguson, Gael. *Building the New Zealand Dream*. Palmerston North, N.Z.: Dunmore Press, 1994.

² Howden-Chapman, Phillipa. *Home Truths: Confronting New Zealand's Housing Crisis*. Auckland: BWB, 2015.

³ Agamben, Giorgio. "We Refugees." *Symposium* 49, no. 2. Summer (1995): 114-119.

Katie Braatvedt is a fifth year Architecture student at The University of Auckland, supervised by Dr Dorita Hannah. She has a Bachelor of Architectural Studies from The University of Auckland and has previously worked as an architectural graduate at 31/44 Architects in London and as a spatial designer for WSDIA in New York.

Successive twentieth-century New Zealand Governments promoted the detached single-family house on a quarter acre section as the basic unit of town planning, and the nuclear family as foundational to our society.¹ This normative suburban vision persists as a popular collective aspiration, despite its practical failure. We find ourselves in a housing crisis, with increased levels of homelessness and overcrowding, alongside declining rates of home ownership and rent affordability.² Those who do not already own property are progressively more vulnerable to sudden changes in address. Such precarity – previously reserved for the marginalised and displaced – is now the millennial generation's new normal. For refugees and millennials alike, home is increasingly dispersed as a series of sites and objects scattered across physical and digital space.

This paper outlines a design research project that adopts Giorgio Agamben's notion of "permanent transience" and his call for a complete reimagination of the systems that created exclusions in the first place.³ Taking an Auckland site in transition, where 82 state houses are being sold and relocated to make way for a private development, I explore the political and ideological foundations upon which these houses were built, along with the pressures contributing to their imminent unbuilding. Rather than a radical rejection of the old, I adopt a durational approach to domestic occupation that enables multiple ideals to coexist. Avoiding a *tabula rasa* approach – both architecturally and ideologically – I ask what vestiges of state housing remain useful and relevant. Built in and from the residue of a garden suburb, are a series of domestic spaces scattered through private, commercial, and communal space. Considered as an experimental housing development funded by Housing New Zealand, the project celebrates the houses as enduring icons while challenging their ideological foundations. The proposition designs specifically for transience, fragmentation, and distributed home making, but acknowledges nostalgia, familiarity, and DIY culture as enduring *homely* values.

Translocalisation, transduction and hybridisation, and the resilience of urban commons

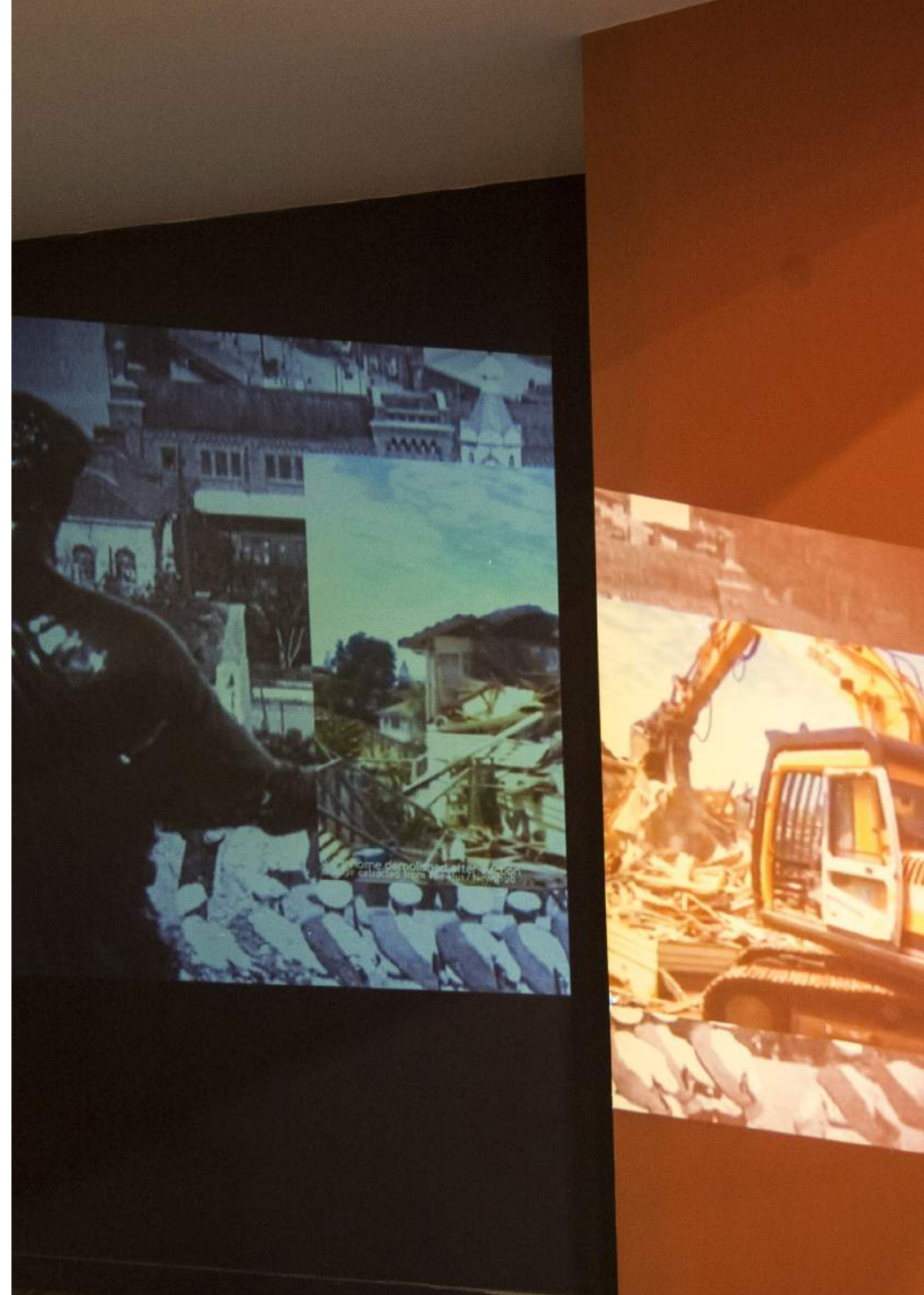
Manfredo Manfredini

Engaging with the discourse on the crisis of inclusionary urban commons as a challenge to resilience building, this paper discusses a novel spatialisation pattern of engagement of urban communities that has been found in transformative and metastable environments of the contemporary city. This pattern sustains the reassembling of the sociospatial fabric of the communities and the reconstitution of their commons after these were colonised, financialised and displaced by private hegemonic forces. The combination of translocalism and digital networking in contemporary urban communities has created robust and supple associative networks with a novel type of commons that support their relational redundancy. This is analysed by adopting the critical urbanism tradition, particularly focusing on spatial implications of the 'right to the city' question. The Lefebvrian approach on spatial production guides this scrutiny. This informs an interpretation that is centred on spatial conflicts emerging from changing relationships between two antagonist forces: the abstractive spectacle of exclusionary domination and the differential commoning of inclusionary reappropriation.

The paper also offers empirical validation of recent research on the main semi-public spaces in Auckland, NZ. Evidence found in the emerging metropolitan centres dominated by advanced shopping and lifestyle enclosures shows the existence and stabilisation of the new mobile, dynamic, and hybrid commons. Yet, it also unveils the high vulnerability of these institutions due to their dependence on a critical trade-off: since the translocal communities thrive in the most relationally active and digitally transductive technospheres.

Concluding notes claim that the found transformations and vulnerabilities of the inclusionary commons require a reframing of the question of their crisis and a redefinition of their resilience concept to allow architecture and urbanism to contribute to the 'right to difference' via democratic, cohesive and autonomous development of urban communities.

Manfredo Manfredini is a Senior Lecturer at the School of Architecture and Planning, The University of Auckland, Auckland, New Zealand; and, Honorary Professor at Hunan University, Changsha, China.





> keynote 02 : A STRAIGHTER KIND OF HIP

Location : ConfCentre/Lecture Theatre 423-342

FELICITY D. SCOTT

Felicity D. Scott is Professor of Architecture, Director of the PhD program in Architecture (History and Theory), and Co-Director of the program in Critical, Curatorial and Conceptual Practices in Architecture (CCCCP) at the Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation, Columbia University. Her books include *Architecture or Techno-Utopia: Politics After Modernism* (MIT Press, 2007), *Ant Farm* (ACTAR, 2008), *Outlaw Territories: Environments of Insecurity /Architectures of Counter-Insurgency* (Zone Books, 2016), and *Disorientations: Bernard Rudofsky in the Empire of Signs* (Sternberg Press, 2016).

In the wake of Haight-Ashbury's legendary Summer of Love in 1967 and the People's Park movement in Berkeley a few years later, and in the midst of the ongoing US-led war in Indochina, disenchanted California hippies did not only head back-to-the-land when seeking to experiment with alternative environments and forms of life. Led by a disillusioned architect, in June 1970 a group rented a vacant six-story industrial warehouse in downtown San Francisco and founded Project One as an urban commune of architects, artists, filmmakers, musicians, craftspeople, and, in turn, video and media collectives and computer programmers. Like other aspects of the California counterculture, Project One was haunted both by war and technologies born of the Space Race, and it served as an intense environment for negotiating communal ways of life and the networks to which they gave rise. Focusing on the computer programmers of Resource One—a group of computer programmers within the commune, who remarkably acquired an SDS940 computer—along with the media collective Optic Nerve and their 1972 video, Project One, this lecture will trace how Project One served, for a short while, as a key node within the emerging communication networks of the 1970s. Moreover, it will put this late moment of the alternative culture of the 1960s into a dialog with British critic Reyner Banham who in 1971, and with typical lyrical flair, incisively revealed the limitations of ideals of alternative networks and emergent models of participation in architecture.

> session 05 : STRUCTURES, RUPTURES AND FLOWS

Location : ConfCentre/Lecture Theatre 423-342

Session Chair : Sanja Rodeš

Heather Breeze : MArch, Ryerson University, Canada

Manifesting civic-ness: Constructing spaces for citizen participation in government

Loren Adams : Architect and Robotics Lab Coordinator, The University of Melbourne, AUS

Five Heists: architecture Grand Tour meets Grand Theft Auto

Paco Mejias Villatoro : A.Professor, Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University, China *[video call]*

Political control and erotic rebellion: liminal spaces and situations against the restrictions of propriety



Manifesting civic-ness: Constructing spaces for citizen participation in government

Heather Breeze

As the concept of citizenship continually evolves, methods by which citizens practise civics also change. This paper outlines foundational concepts of citizenship such as those of Aristotle, Locke, and Hobbes, followed by a discussion on those who have critiqued pertinent portions of these authors within a contemporary framework, making clear the relationship between civic theory and spatial practice. This is particularly exemplified in James Holston's work; his succinct summary of the transformation of locational/formal to intentional/substantive citizenship inspires a revised architectural approach. While examples of citizen-led systems of local participatory democracies inspired by theories such as Holston's do exist, further investigation reveals they typically function either programmatically or spatially, but rarely combine both approaches.

Moving towards a specific context in which to explore possible responses to this crucial gap, this paper finds that the conceptual shift of citizenship is especially noticeable in Toronto, Canada, a uniquely globally recognised but young city with a constant flow of people and a large, diverse immigrant population. Reviewing Toronto's recently modified municipal structure identifies several distinctions of functioning civic space. However, there is a clear lack of operating space that could encourage participatory democracy as a specific example of citizens' civic practice. Rather than maintaining the status quo of highly institutionalised government-centric architecture, this city's situation offers an opportunity to speculate on alternative types of architecture that place the local citizenry at their core. Ultimately, this paper proposes to examine how Toronto could accommodate and greatly benefit from alternative, citizen-oriented civic architecture, combining key programmatic and spatial elements that contribute to a healthy participatory democracy.

Heather Breeze is a second-year Master of Architecture candidate at Ryerson University, returning from several years of working professionally in Toronto after completing an undergraduate degree in Ryerson's Architectural Science program. Her work centres around the intersection of public policy and architectural design, with an emphasis on urban civic spaces for citizen-oriented democratic practice. Heather has been both a Graduate and Research Assistant for a variety of courses and supervisors over the duration of her graduate career and is involved in a number of organisations within the university's Department of Architectural Science, most notably directing and coordinating the annual Graduate Symposium in early 2018.

Five heists: Architecture Grand Tour meets Grand Theft Auto

Loren Adams

The cross-continental connections and flows that link cities worldwide also offer us opportunities for infiltration, protest, and subterfuge. A heist, for example, is an attempt to instrumentalise the coordinated movement of artefacts, property, ideas, and power from one space to another. In a heist, clearly defined possessions and spatial understandings are radically revised, walls cease to be barriers, and topography becomes a tool. The heist scenario also provides a unique scaffold for pedagogical experimentation, prompting students within and adjacent to built environment disciplines to interrogate the ethical limits of ownership in a contemporary global context. During an intensive travelling design studio, students of architecture, urban design, and landscape architecture from an Australian institution were invited to plan a heist in the City of Los Angeles, California – a site of contention, contradiction, and possibility. Students undertook a series of structured, multi-modal city tours and were prompted to consider how a transgressive event – like those in classic LA heist films – might become a formal generator or disruptor of spatial hegemonies. Think: Bernard Tschumi meets Heat; Die Hard with a formal agenda; The Thomas Crown Affair in the town square; or Architecture Grand Tour meets Grand Theft Auto. The purpose of this studio agenda was not to fetishise the transgressive – rather, it was an attempt to examine the ways in which geopolitical and multilateral actors are complicit in the commodification of our planetary urban infrastructures. This paper draws upon literature, student design outcomes, and fieldwork observations to unpack five speculative heist scenarios. Through a rigorous examination of the logistic, spatial, and material ramifications of these coordinated urban assaults, it is possible to uncover novel alternatives for the design of our buildings, our cities, and our politics.

Loren Adams is an Australian Architect and Robotist. She is the inaugural Coordinator of the Melbourne School of Design Robotics Lab at The University of Melbourne, where she commands a small army of industrial robots. Her specialty is advanced computational design and non-standard fabrication for the built environment. With a graduate degree in sustainability and climate policy, her recent studio teaching explores how advanced technologies – when augmented by novel approaches to making, thinking, and storytelling – might offer us new opportunities for sustainable form- and place-making.

Political control and erotic rebellion: Liminal spaces and situations against the restrictions of propriety

Paco Mejias Villatoro

¹ Kipnis, Jeffrey & Maymind, Alexander. *A Question of Qualities: Essays in Architecture*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press. 2013, 42.

² Sennet, Richard. *Flesh and Stone: The Body and the City in Western Civilization*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company. 1996, 46.

³ Ibid, 33.

⁴ Foucault, Michel. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. New York: Vintage Books. 1995; Agamben, Giorgio. *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*. Stanford: Stanford University Press. 1998.

Paco Mejias Villatoro, PhD (Madrid Polytechnic School of Architecture) is a registered Architect in Spain. Currently, he is Associate Professor of Practice at the Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University in Suzhou. He has international teaching experience since 1997. He has conducted workshops internationally, including the Venice Biennale and the Alfa European University Training Network for Sustainable Urban Development (AURORA). As an award-winning practitioner, he worked for Zaha Hadid Office in London, before opening an Architectural Practice in Spain. He is Co-Director of 'Estudio Abierto/Open Studio', a collaborative think-and-do tank, operating at the intersection between Architecture and Urbanism (<https://www.thisstudioisopen.org>).

"...the erotic and the political – are but front and back of the one mirror we see ourselves in".¹

When Athens lost the Peloponnesian war in 404 BC, a fundamental shift occurred in Western civilization, which took more than two thousand years to revert. The defeat of the democratic and open Athens by the militarised and oligarchic Sparta represented a radical change in the understanding of the relationship between the political and the erotic. The Athenian gymnasium was an institution devoted to training young men, completely naked. The training intertwined wrestling and discussion in an indivisible way to teach how to be political and an individual of the polis. In this way, the Athenians understood that their body belonged to the city, but also that the city belonged to them; both facts reflected in an exhibition of nakedness in the political space.² The depiction of a naked body in the polis of ancient Greece was a declaration of a civilised and solid person.³

When democracy came back into the Western context at the beginning of the Eighteenth Century, it was curiously accompanied by a progressive regression in public displays of intimacy and nudity. The control of the right of property and the restrictions of propriety are parallel mechanisms of a strategy of dispersion. This paper focuses on the latter as a manifestation of the way in which individuals are controlled through the uniformisation of their bodies in the public scene and by extension, the homogenisation of their lives by the sovereign establishment that operates implicitly.⁴ The history of this process weakens the individual, which happens in proportion to the loss of their political power. Special attention is given to the liminal spaces and situations where these restrictions are suspended, transforming the perception of the community and public spaces, and key to the coming revolution against the current societies of control.



> session 06 : EVENT, PUBLIC SPACE AND THE SOCIAL

Location : ConfCentre/Design Theatre 423-348

Session Chair : Daniel Grincerì

Christina Deluchi : Lecturer, UTS, AUS

The Parque Biblioteca España: The politics of social architecture in Medellín

Avram Alpert : Lecturer, Princeton University, US

The praxis of public space: Rethinking architecture and critical theory with Saul Alinsky

Keefer Dunn : Architect, Chicago, US *[video call]*

Theories of change: Labor against solutionism



The Parque Biblioteca España: The politics of social architecture in Medellín

Christina Deluchi

Christina Deluchi is a Lecturer in Interior Architecture, in the School of Design at the University of Technology, Sydney (UTS). Christina's research is situated in the expanded field of architecture between the intersection of operational spatial logics, the politics of urban infrastructure, urban interiors, visual culture, and media. Her current research project 'A Tale of New Cities: Medellín', questions the radical transformation of Medellín, Colombia, by tracing the commonalities and discontinuities in the urban strategies shaping the city since the 1970s. She has most recently published a chapter on her research in *Interiority* (2018) that explores the political instrumentality of Medellín's interior space through techniques of securitisation and devices of control. The research is also part of a collaborative work with Fake Industries, "Indo-pacific Atlas" – a 12m collage exhibited at the inaugural Chicago Architecture Biennial, 2015. Alongside her work at UTS, Christina has also worked in practice with artist Hany Armanious on 'Pavilion', a large-scale public work for the city of Sydney Public Art Cross Street Project.

In Medellín, Colombia, political actors have facilitated and/or compelled important political shifts through architecture. More recently, urban transformation has helped to establish political agency, territorial governance, and violence prevention in marginalised neighbourhoods. This transformation has been attributed to Major Sergio Fajardo's "Social Urbanism" project of 2004 by The Architectural Review's *Special Issue on Colombia*, Architectural Design's *Latin America at the Crossroads*, Harvard Design Magazine's *Architectures of Latin America*, and Justin McGuirk's *Radical Cities*. By focusing on specific architectural projects, these readings have established a binary image of the city that comprises the violence of the Narco Wars and Medellín's urban transformation and rehabilitation. The juxtaposition of these two urban realities creates a tension and differentiates Medellín's violent past from its progressive future.

This paper uses the case study of Parque Biblioteca España Santo Domingo – The Spanish Library – to demonstrate how architecture is co-opted into the narrative of violence in Medellín and its image of transformation. Alejandro Echeverri's reading of Fajardo's "Social Urbanism" is used to identify the structural changes brought on by the library's material and mediatic appearance. One of Fajardo's state-of-the-art social projects, the library comprises three black geometric shapes that loom over the city in a constant reminder of violence overcome – a representation of political will in the service of the city. This paper analyses how the library's appearance is inherently linked to the city's historic traumas by associating architecture's spatial and symbolic characteristics with Medellín's socio-cultural and political ambitions. Finally, Medellín's binary is dismantled – through the examination of the library – to reveal how architecture has redirected perceptions of the city by aligning its new urban image to political ideology.

The praxis of public Space: Rethinking architecture and critical theory with Saul Alinsky

Avram Alpert

Avram Alpert is a Lecturer in the Writing Program at Princeton University and has completed postdoctoral fellowships at Rutgers University and the Federal University of Bahia (Brazil). His first book, *Global Origins of the Modern Self*, from Montaigne to Suzuki, will be published by SUNY Press in 2019. With Sreshta Premnath, he is an editor of *Shifter Magazine*, with Meleko Mokgosi he runs the Interdisciplinary Art and Theory Program at Jack Shainman Gallery (New York), and with Daniel Snelson and Mashinka Firunts he is a member of the lecture-performance group, Research Service.graduate career and is involved in a number of organisations within the university's Department of Architectural Science, most notably directing and coordinating the annual Graduate Symposium in early 2018.

The politics of space has had a singular role in the formation of critical theory over the past half century. From Foucault's interrogation of panoptic social vision to Butler's recent work on public embodiment, social theory has inescapably asked questions on how to develop architectural and social spaces responsive to the demands of both difference and emancipation. Missing from these crucial conversations has often been a tarrying with what Raymond Geuss calls "real politics", that is, the actual (and often very mundane ways) in which public decisions are made. As practising architects are all too aware, the gaps between vision, institutional, and client demands, and the experience of social users are massive. While these gaps are constitutive of any social process and cannot be overcome, they could become more centralised in our thinking about the critical theory of space. Along these lines, this paper proposes perhaps an unlikely source for developing such a theory: the community organiser and public philosopher Saul Alinsky. Though little-known today, Alinsky was once considered among the most controversial political actors in the United States (and with some global influence in Italy, France, and Canada, most notably). In his book *Rules for Radicals*, he argued that community organisers were the "creative architect[s]" of social change. He theorised (and put into practice) the organiser as someone who would re-imagine social space by empowering communities to have a say in their own development. This paper will reconstruct Alinsky's theory of community organising with specific reference to his transformative work in the Back of the Yards neighbourhood of Chicago in the 1930s. It will show why Alinsky's work on community organising as the means of remaking public space is a lost tool of effective political action that can help reorient the critical theory of space and politics towards a true praxis.

Theories of change: Labour against solutionism

Keefer Dunn

It is a relative commonplace now among conscientious architects that architecture is “always political.” This statement, on its face, seems revelatory given the dearth of thought and action aimed at political and social matters in the architectural profession. The reality masked by this phrase is of course that everything is political. The more pertinent question is how architecture does or does not become an active participant in doing politics. In today’s world, architects often answer this question by viewing themselves through a solutionist framework that sees architecture and design thinking as a tool for solving social problems in a broken society. This view is misplaced.

Over the last several years, I have had been an activist and leader in the Architecture Lobby, a US-based 300+ member organisation of architectural workers that is equal parts research collective, activist formation, proto-union, and mutual-aid society. In this paper, I would like to present an operative history of our organisation, explaining how our experiences have helped us understand the limits of architecture and design as a political practice and instead focus on new avenues for making change.

Counter to the solutionist framework, we have come to see the majority of architectural productions as predetermined by developers, banks, insurance companies, and speculators. Crucially, for these agents the system is far from broken, rendering the solutionist framework little more than palliative at best and a pipe dream at worst. In other words, for the people with power (the patrons of most “capital ‘A’” architecture) there are very few problems to be solved.

Instead, it may be more effective to locate the political agency of architecture in labour rather than buildings – particularly in the context of a profession that is both hemmed in by structural constraints and rapidly proletarianising. I will draw from historical examples of activists that have preceded the Architecture Lobby and our own work to show that architectural labour (as opposed to the things we design) is the locus of architecture’s political agency.

Keefer Dunn is an Architect and Co-Founder of the Chicago-based architecture firm ‘Pigeon Studio’. He is a Lecturer at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and an advocate for labour reform in architecture and beyond as a member and the former national organiser of The Architecture Lobby. He hosts a radio show and podcast about politics and architecture called *Buildings on Air* on WLPN-LP Lumpen Radio.



> session 07 : OTHER SPACES

Location : ConfCentre/Lecture Theatre 423-342

Session Chair : Susan Hedges

Kavita Sharma / Farzaneh Haghighi : MArch (Prof) / Lecturer, UoA, NZ

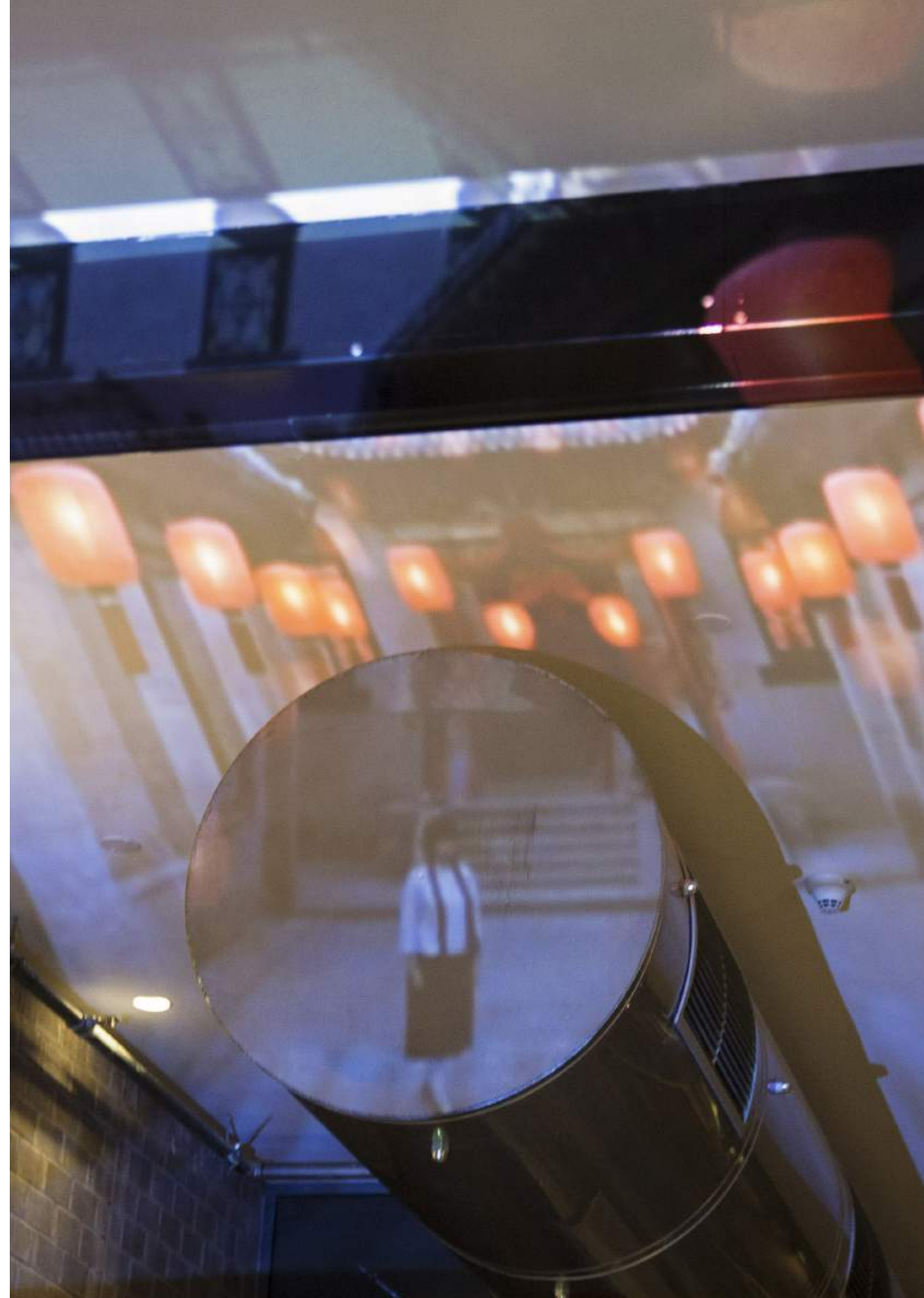
Foucault and the City: Formation of the 'Other'

Jianjia Zhou : PhD Candidate, Tongji University, China / Lecturer, University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong

New New Village

Abdallah Alyan : MArch (Prof), UoA, NZ

Heterotopia and worship



Foucault and the city: Formation of the 'Other'

Kavita Sharma
Farzaneh Haghighi

Kavita Sharma is a 5th year (Masters) Architecture student at the School of Architecture and Planning at The University of Auckland, New Zealand. Her research is focused on developing our understanding of the relationship between people and space, and the potential of multidisciplinary (sociology, philosophy, politics) frameworks to bring novel interpretations of this relationship. In particular, she is interested in how space and architecture become a stage for the formation of identity, notably the construction of marginalised and counter-hegemonic subjects.

Farzaneh Haghighi is a Lecturer in Architecture (History, Theory, and Criticism) at the School of Architecture and Planning, The University of Auckland, New Zealand. She holds a PhD in Architecture from The University of Sydney, Australia. Her research is concerned with the intersection of political philosophy, architecture, and urbanism and her first book *Is the Tehran Bazaar Dead? Foucault, Politics, and Architecture* (2018) was published by Cambridge Scholars Publishing. Her research seeks new avenues to enrich our creative analysis of complex built environments through investigating the implications of critical and cultural theory for architectural knowledge.

The city is a space of complexity where power and space intersect in a multitude of ways and, as Michel Foucault identifies, producing a multitude of results. Thus, when the urban fabric is restructured to meet hegemonic ideals, less visible city dwellers come to the fore. This presentation explores the mechanism of power relations in construction of the 'Other' by analysing the statehouse communities undergoing gentrification in Glen Innes in Auckland, New Zealand.

In this paper we will only focus on the Foucauldian notion of subject and argue that spatial configurations facilitate the formation of sense-of-self, or as Foucault calls it, subjectivity. This philosophical concept was important for Foucault specifically in the 1970s-80s. In *Discipline and Punish* (1975) and the *History of Sexuality, Vol I* (1976), he examines the emergence of the modern subject in relation to disciplinary power and later in the lecture course *The Hermeneutics of the Subject* (1980-1981), he highlights that subjectivity is an act, a performance that is informed by truth and power relations. We will focus on these texts to first describe the notion of *assujettissement* (translated as subjectivation, subjection, or subjugation) and second to show its application in the analysis of the role of architecture and the urban environment in the construction of the 'Other'.

Notably, the literature makes visible the role of hegemonic mechanisms of power in the construction of the Other within the city. In fact, the Other is primarily a socially excluded phenomenon; its otherness is subsequently stabilised by spatial configurations. This socio-spatial segregation highlights how the Other is trapped in the discourse of binary oppositions. Foucault, however, suggests that these binaries can be challenged because the 'oppressed' are opportunely placed to resist. By asking "What are the ways through which spatial configurations facilitate the construction of the Other as a marginalised subject and how can that marginal condition become a creative site for resisting the hegemonic/dominant norms?", the paper hopes to understand how urban and spatial relations contributed to the construction of the highly marginalised suburb of Glenn Innes, and the ways through which this community reconstructs itself.

New New Village

Jianjia Zhou

The founding of People's Republic of China in 1949 marked a major turning point in Chinese urban development. In the urban-industrial environment of cities like Shanghai, the Communist Party of China organised the cities through the urban workplace, and 'New Village' became the fundamental social and spatial unit of China under socialism, especially between the 1950s-1990s. New Village is a generic term referring to a large-scale housing compound and the activities it encompassed. It was simultaneously the spatial building block, the locus of daily life, and the mainspring of social identity in the Chinese socialist city, with an ordered, encircled spatial form providing its members with protection and a collective identity. In sum, New Village was the space that reflected the exercise of power and social control during communism, based on a 'totalising' framework and leaving traces on the urban form.

Decades of economic reform have greatly diminished New Village's significance in Chinese cities, but the spatial form persists. Since the 1990s, accompanying the decline of industry and the collapse of the workers' class in Shanghai, the original residents gradually moved out and sublet their units to new migrants, forming the 'new workers' class' and a new collective life. Being adjacent to Lujiazui Area, Laoshan New Village's urban structure was forced to open and reverse during the drastic urban transitions in Pudong district. Taking Laoshan New Village, the first worker's new village ever implemented in Pudong District as an example, this research aims to reinvestigate New Village and its current condition in contemporary China. It then maps out the shift in *collective life* during two political periods — under socialism and neoliberalism.

Jianjia Zhou is currently a PhD Candidate in the College of Architecture and Urban Planning, Tongji University. She received her MArch II from The Cooper Union and BArch from Tongji University. Besides teaching in Hong Kong University, she is also the Principal Architect and founder of YEAS. Over the last three years, she has led several researches on new villages in Shanghai, including Tongji New Village and Laoshan Village.

Heterotopia and Worship: Bishop Selwyn Chapel as a contemporary manifestation of heterotopic architecture

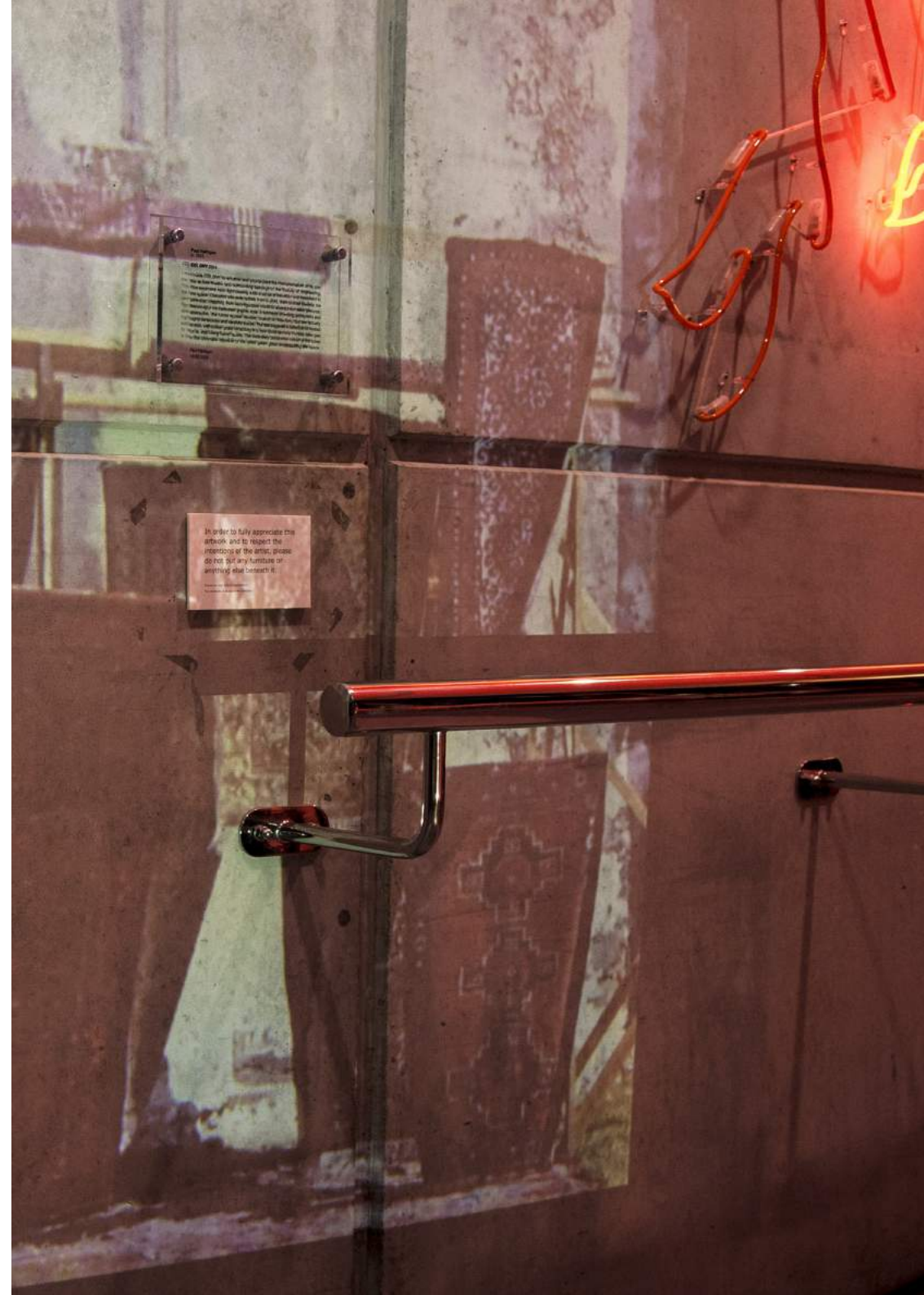
Abdallah Alayan

Acknowledging Bishop Selwyn Chapel (Auckland, NZ) as an outstanding example of local architecture and a bold contribution to the ecclesiastical avant-garde, the commentary surrounding the visually stunning and undoubtedly world-class pavilion is both limited in quantity and perspective. This investigation aims firstly to define, dissect, and discuss Michel Foucault's concept of heterotopia with an architectural lens and secondly, to apply these findings to the in-depth analysis of Parnell's Bishop Selwyn Chapel from a philosophical and political perspective.

Translating to 'other spaces', heterotopia is a concept which aids in the characterisation of spaces which exist in digression to an overall context while often manifesting political significance. Within this investigation, Foucault's six founding principles of heterotopia are explored directly from their source *Of Other Spaces*. Certain principles offer meaningful and definite characteristics of heterotopia whilst others remain generic to most spaces and do not help to guide the differentiation between heterotopic and non-heterotopic spaces. Within this inquiry, these findings are layered amongst more contemporary resources discussing heterotopia as well as relevant architectural conversations which aid in the examination of Bishop Selwyn Chapel.

Designed by Fearon Hay Architects, the iridescent project expresses creativity at the most granular level, yet also serves a greater urban purpose given its position within the cluttered Holy Trinity Cathedral site. The investigation into the chapel's heterotopic sensibilities begins firstly at an urban scale and proceeds to zoom inwards towards the architectural and tectonic scales to analyse the various levels at which heterotopia may or may not be evoked. Given the chapel's provocative relationship with the adjoining Holy Trinity Cathedral, Foucault's principles of juxtaposition and time-distortion are particularly applicable and contribute to an eye-opening investigation into the political and philosophical significance of an otherwise narrowly examined building.

Abdallah Alayan is based between Christchurch and Auckland and is completing his Master's thesis in Architecture at the University of Auckland while managing his eponymous practice 'Alayan'. Specialising in both spatial and architectural design and visualisation, Abdallah's wide scope of interests between sustainability, politics, and design manifest within his university endeavours and commissioned projects.



> session 08 : MAPPING MARGINALITY

Location: ConfCentre/Design Theatre 423-348

Session Chair: Nicholas Coetzer

Sim Hinman Wan : PhD Candidate, University of Illinois-Chicago, US

Middle-class monuments for underclass control: Architecture of philanthropic sites in
Seventeenth-Century Amsterdam and Batavia

Sanja Rodeš / Mirjana Lozanovska : Lecturer / A.Professor, Deakin University, AUS

Politics of visual: Immigrant architecture and hegemonic culture

Ali Heidari / Zahra Khaniki : Architects, Iran [*video call*]

Political Ambivalence: A study of immigrants' spatial identity in postcolonial London



Middle-class monuments for underclass control: Architecture of philanthropic sites in seventeenth-century Amsterdam and Batavia

Sim Hinman Wan

Renowned for their innovative feats in cartography and engineering during the seventeenth century, the Dutch favoured depicting their rapidly urbanising settlements as fortified objects of human order, perched upon an equally controlled but ostensibly natural landscape of polders, dikes, and canals. Consequently, even the most elaborate maps have understated the level of development in the suburban neighbourhoods, where migrants resided immediately beyond the municipal order without tax burdens. Travelling across a Dutch urban centre's fortification was a visually engaging occasion, since the built environment shifted dramatically from a self-organising arrangement of vernacular houses on the outside to a geometrically coherent layout of spacious roads and fashionable architecture on the inside. Among the array of monumental civic structures introduced during the early modern centuries, the Dutch reserved almshouses, hospices, and orphanages for the peripheral territories. This paper is focused on the political instrumentality of these architectural products and how they were translated from the Dutch domestic capital of Amsterdam to the overseas capital of Batavia (present-day Jakarta). As the most prominent landmarks near the fortification entryways that celebrated the secular middle-class authority's triumph over the unproductive indigent population, sites of organised philanthropy destabilised the contradiction between an early modern city's privileged core and its unspectacular fringes. More importantly, the buildings were Janus-faced emblems of a merchant society's wealth and poverty that complicated the dichotomy of power versus disempowerment by architecturally expressing the former through the latter. Theories of *trialectical spatiality*, as an extension of the Hegelian-Marxist dialectic, elucidate a particular condition of in-between alterity that distinguishes Dutch philanthropic sites of the seventeenth century from other publicly targeted projects with political undertones. Lefebvre, Soja, Bhabha, and Acheraiou are the key intellectual figures consulted in this analysis to present a historical case of appropriating an urban fabric's marginalised fragments for reinforcing hegemonic interests.

Sim Hinman Wan is a PhD Candidate at the University of Illinois-Chicago. His dissertation project, titled 'Third-Space Colonial Architecture: Dutch and Chinese Philanthropic Establishments in the Urbanization of VOC Indonesia, 1640-1740', is supported by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. He is the recipient of the Social Science Research Council's International Dissertation Research Fellowship and the Council on Library and Information Resources Fellowship for Dissertation Research in Original Sources. At the University of Washington in Seattle and the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, he has taught courses on the Global History of Architecture, Design, and Urbanism.

Politics of visual: Immigrant architecture and hegemonic culture

Sanja Rodeš
Mirjana Lozanovska

Sanja Rodeš is a Lecturer in the School of Architecture and Built Environment at Deakin University, Geelong, Australia. She teaches Architectural History, Theory, and Criticism of the late Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries. She completed her PhD in 2016 *After the Event: Architecture and the Image at the Turn of the Twenty-first Century*, and has published on the relationships between contemporary architecture, media, and image.

Mirjana Lozanovska is Associate Professor in the School of Architecture and Built Environment at Deakin University, Geelong, Australia. She is the editor for the anthology, *Ethno-Architecture and the Politics of Migration* (Routledge 2016), and editor of the architecture history journal, *Fabrications*.

This paper investigates immigrant architecture in Australia and argues that the reception of the *architecture of the other* is mediated by the visual appearance of architecture. The image mediates the political relationship because it is the interface between identity and culture contextualised by mainstream narratives of national identity and what it represents about the content and inhabitants within the architecture. We argue architecture is perceived as appearance rather than a building in its materiality and its image is loaded with political sentiment. However, the positive perception of ethnic streets in Melbourne (Lygon Street, Victoria Street), indeed as reference to the plurality of Australia, and the negativity towards the ethnic community architecture, such as mosques, immigrant houses, ethnic clubs, or non-anglo-celtic churches, speaks of the different effects of architecture as image. To examine this different effect, this paper looks into the politics of multiculturalism and migration in Australia. Ethnic streets and the variety of restaurants and food displayed forms what anthropologist Ghassan Hage has called "cosmopolitan multiculturalism", rather than the home-made multiculturalism linked directly to migrant lives. In contrast, the architecture of mosques, houses, and non-anglo-celtic churches is not accommodated by cosmopolitanism and instead presents the enduring existence of migrant communities and migrant households as *foreign and other*. Two different receptions of the image of these immigrant architectures are related to the collision of the two different images of Australia as a nation – the first being the image of Australia as hegemonic and related to white, British culture, and the second, the image of Australian culture as multicultural, diverse, and in flux. By investigating the role of the visual of architecture, the paper aims to expand the understanding of immigrant architecture in Australia and to expand the perception of Australian cultural identity.

Political ambivalence: A study of immigrants' spatial identity in postcolonial London

Ali Heidari
Zahra Khaniki

Ali Mohammad Heidari received his BSc (2005) in Architectural Engineering from Shahid Beheshti University, Tehran, Iran and has an MBA certificate (2008) from Industrial Management Organisation, Iran. He later received his MA (2011) on Architecture, Cultural Identity, and Globalisation from the University of Westminster, London, UK. His research work includes a focus on the relation between politics and subcultures, and between power and space. He worked as an architect on large scale projects in Tehran between 2005 and 2010. Since then, he has focused on his interest of developing research-based design by co-founding Studio63: Spatial Design Solution, and is working on the design process of multi-scale projects.

Zahra Khaniki received her BSc (2008) in Architectural Engineering from Shahid Beheshti University, Tehran, Iran, and later studied at The Bartlett School of Architecture, UCL, London, UK, where she received her MSc (2011) in Advanced Architectural Studies. She is the co-founder of Studio63: Spatial Design Solution, where she works as an architect and designer on multi scale design projects. Her interests include approaching architecture as a multidisciplinary field, studying the interaction between architecture and culture, society and the economy, and the effect of space and built environment on behaviour. She has won multiple architectural and international design awards and is now actively involved in research-based innovative design projects in her firm.

This postcolonial study criticises the unfair and unequal share of power, not only through the rereading of the history, but also, and more importantly, by showing the uneven share in the contemporary balance of power. Focusing on the ideas of ambivalence and identity in postcolonial studies, this paper explores the ambivalent nature of political decisions surrounding different subcultures, ethnicities, and minority groups, the way their community and their identity are made, and their spatial manifestation in their host community. Studying the cosmopolitan city of London as the sample, this paper investigates the binary of the spatial identity of 'the minority others', specifically immigrants, and the political structure of the built environment. The study was conducted through three different scales: Scale 1: The external references – (1:125,000+) investigating the theoretical basis of postcolonial theory and the necessity of redefining migrant identities in a new context after they have left their home countries, focusing on the term "ambivalence" as discussed by Homi K. Bhabha. Scale 2: In-betweenness (1:125) – exploring the building regulations of London specifically the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and Article 4 directly, to determine how built environment rules facilitate subcultures to create their own spatial identity. Scale 3: The intimate (1:1) – drifting, examining, and mapping along a selected route in central London, from The Mall towards Trafalgar Square, Leicester Square, and China Town during 2011, to investigate this issue in the built environment.

Although people living and working across different locations of the studied area are divergent, the direct observations showed the homogeneity of the surrounding built environment and urban space. That is to say, the buildings are not as diverse and abundant in style as the subcultures living among them. On the one hand, the ambivalence shows itself in conflict with the desire to represent London as a multicultural and global metropolis absorbing a migrant workforce. On the other hand, it is argued that ambivalence keeps its own style in its built environment and resists the place identity of subcultures in their new residence. The study shows that cultural identity is spatialised in the city but this is very skin deep; the simultaneous integration and rejection of minority groups by the structure of power enables these relations.

