



# Architectural History MA

Programme Information Sheet

This document provides details of the structure and content of this programme.

## Programme context and history

Established in 1981, Architectural History MA at The Bartlett is the UK's longest-running and most prestigious Master's course in the historical, theoretical and critical interpretation of architecture, cities, urban spaces, creative practices and of their representations.

Over the past 35 years, the course has developed to prioritise the exploration of new and existing methodologies and critical theories as they might be applied to the study of architecture and cities. Rather than dealing with architecture exclusively through the work of famous individuals, landmark buildings, stylistic classification or normative categories, the course locates architecture within social, ideological, creative, political, material and technological, theoretical and urban processes. In doing so, it explores the boundaries of what might be regarded as constitutes legitimate architectural objects of study, and the effects of different modes of historical interpretations upon the discipline and beyond.

## Programme structure

The programme is normally taught over a twelve-month period, during which students must complete and pass 180 credits. 120 credits are completed in approved taught modules, and 60 credits are gained from the dissertation module. Where relevant, students may replace 30 credits with another UCL department's graduate module, with the permission of the Programme Director and the respective department.

Teaching modes: Seminars are the leading teaching mode (usually in groups of 15 students), together with lectures, one-to-one tutorials, group-working, writing workshops, research seminars, film screenings, reviews of student-work by staff and visiting researchers, building and gallery visits in London and further afield, and an annual field trip. Modules use advanced-level teaching approaches to encourage innovative student-led work. The final dissertation provides students with an opportunity to conduct their own original research into a specific subject of their own choosing.

## Programme modules

### Core modules

(Term 1: each 30 credits, assessment coursework term 1)

### Critical Methodologies of Architectural History

This module reviews the range of methods and approaches open to the architectural or urban historian, critic and theorist, as well as the traditions from which each derives, and the controversies around them. Through a weekly lecture and seminar, students read and discuss works by a variety of architectural historians, e.g. Alberti, Banham, Colomina, Evans, Giedion, Forty, Hayden, Jacobs, Picon and Wölfflin. Texts by authors including, Braidotti, Douglas, Foucault, Freud, Latour, Said, Spivak and Thompson on theories of history, aesthetics, materialism, subjectivity and technology are also studied. Seminars, readings and discussions therefore consider architectural history in relation to epistemologies, such as, biopolitics, semiology, psychoanalysis and postcolonialism.

### **Research and Dissemination of Architectural History**

This module complements the more theoretical and historical modules of the programme by examining some of the more practical aspects of research, development and application. The module investigates a variety of ways of working with, researching and communicating architectural history in order to allow different kinds of information, MA Architectural History 2017 5 interpretations and audiences to be addressed. A series of weekly lectures and assignments explores alternative methods of researching (archives, photographs and imagery, oral history, internet and digital sources) and communicating (teaching courses, journalism, exhibitions, policy, sound and media broadcasting).

### **Optional modules**

(Term 2: each 30 credits, assessment coursework term 2)

### **Architecture in Britain since the 17th Century**

This module examines a range of built work in London and Oxford, and asks what kinds of historical and critical judgements can be developed from encounters with buildings. Each week the pattern consists of lengthy fieldwork visits followed by seminars in which the case studies are analysed in detail. Works studied in any one year might include such projects as: St Paul's Cathedral, Chiswick House, Regent's Park, Barry's Reform Club, Butterfield's All Saint's Margaret Street, Unwin's Hampstead Garden Suburb, Tecton's Finsbury Health Centre, Camden Council's Alexandra Road Estate, Denys Lasdun's Royal College of Physicians, and Jacobsen's St Catherine's College Oxford. The module benefits from input by members of the world-renowned Survey of London team, now part of The Bartlett School of Architecture. Students on the module will gain a specific knowledge of particular buildings and of the wider historical context in which they have been produced and interpreted. Students also gain greater awareness of the challenges and opportunities presented to architectural history by looking at the actual built fabric, as distinct from other available forms of evidence.

### **Representations of Cities**

This module reviews the variety of ways in which cities have been conceptualised in recent urban and cultural theory. It introduces how the city and urban spaces can be understood as a set of differing cultural experiences: experiences of time, space, social identity, artistic interventions etc. Methodologically, the module introduces some of the main architectural and critical theories - such as the work of Castells, Debord, Hooks, Jacobs, Koolhaas, Le Corbusier, Lefebvre, Picon, Sassen, Simmel, Thrift, Whyte, Wirth and Zukin - relating to the experience of the city. In particular, the category of social space is introduced as an important concept which mediates between different disciplines, and links thinkers who have considered the intersection of buildings, cities and people. Topics range from architectural and urban modernism to Situationist practices, urban design, ghettos, globalization, sexualities and informational & digital cities. The module also makes extensive use of different modes of film to explore these ideas and issues, from Berlin: Symphony of a Great City and A Man With a Movie Camera to The Pruitt-Igoe Myth, The Fountainhead and Looking for Langston.

### **Theorising Practices: Site Writing**

Through discussions of and engagements with different texts and projects, and the production of a piece of site-writing in the form of an installation

and/or artist's book, this module examines the relationships between critical spatial practices and theories through a transdisciplinary perspective. Using seminar, workshop and presentation formats, this module introduces a wide range of critical spatial practices, from the work of conceptual fine artists such as Robert Smithson and Roni Horn, to the projects of urban designers such as Muf, alongside a diverse selection of critical spatial theories from Mieke Bal's concept of 'focalisation' to Walter Benjamin's 'dialectical image', from the literature of Italo Calvino and Gloria Anzaldúa to the performance poetry of Caroline Bergvall. By referring to a particular set of texts alongside examples of practice – historical and contemporary – this module encourages a consideration of the differing ways theory and practice relate – through analogy, analysis, application, dialectics, deconstruction, reflection, relation, speculation – wondering collectively how we might write architecture and the urban realm differently.

### **History and Theory of Digital Design**

This module assesses the present state of computer-based design by situating today's digital turn within the long duration of the history of cultural technologies. It describes the technical logics of hand-making, mechanical reproductions, and digital making, highlighting the differences between digital variability, manual and artisanal variations, and the mechanical mass-production of identical copies. Examples discussed include: MA Architectural History 2017 6 identical reproductions that were crucial in architectural history, and particularly on the early modern invention of architectural notations and of architectural authorship (the rise of the 'Albertian paradigm' in the Renaissance), and on the modernist principle of standardisation in the 20th century. A brief history of the digital turn and of its theoretical and technological premises is then outlined: from Post-Modernism and Deconstructivism and the Deleuzian 'Fold' to the spline-dominated environment of the 1990s; from free-form, topology and digital formalism to mass-customisation, non-standard seriality to more recent developments in digital interactivity, participatory making and building information modeling (BIM). Lastly, it discusses the present state of digital design theory, particularly the issue of Big Data, its cultural and epistemological implications, and its consequences for the making of form (theories of emergence, self-organising systems, form-finding, material computation, complexity, and discretisation).

### **Materialist Ecological Architecture**

This module examines the history and theory of materialist and ecological architectures from the Early Modern period to the present day, with reference to architectural, philosophical, aesthetic and ecological sources. It begins by examining concepts of matter, nature, biology and culture including: 17th century and 18th century European aesthetics and empiricism (Locke, Kant, Spinoza). Students then discuss 19th century materialism, together with early 20th century scientific texts on biological materialism (Darwin, Marx, Howard, Thompson, von Uexküll). The module then explores post-war cybernetic, scientific and landscape practices from the 1950s-70s (Bateson, Buckminster Fuller, Carson, Banham). Finally, the module examines ecological history and theory from the 1970s to our current context of climate-change politics, including: feminist eco-politics, theories of transversality and ecosophy; biopolitical theories of human-nature, and anthropocenic or posthuman ethics (Haraway, Braidotti, Guattari, Bennett, Latour, Sloterdijk).

### **Multiple Modernities Architecture**

This module questions conventional modernist historiography by exploring architectural encounters with modernity outside its dominant geographical, theoretical and professional territories. Students begin by situating current global modernist perspectives within a wider context, using the example of the West's encounter with China and Japan from the 18th century to examine the artistic and architectural consequences for East and West. Seminars focus on specific sites of architectural production and urban development including: Russia's initial attempt to open Manchuria; post-Meiji era Japan (the first non-Western country to modernise); Japan's creation of Manchukuo in the 1930s; and the pursuit of a national architecture in pre-Communist China. In the second part of the term, students then explore examples that possess modern characteristics but have been overlooked by conventional modernist readings owing to their cultural condition, geographical setting or their professional approach. Case studies include: the enduring global modernity of Shanghai; pre-and postcolonial modernisms in Africa and questions of modernist heritage; peripheral modernisms in Europe through the cities, such as Gdynia and Tel Aviv, and alternative modernisms in Britain through the architecture of Charles Holden and McMorran & Whitby.

### **Practices of Criticism**

This module explores interdisciplinary theories of criticism and the practice of criticism within architecture and its related disciplines. Students examine how these approaches inform writing/practicing architectural historiography today. The module begins by addressing the intersection of architectural theory and history with the history of architectural criticism in the 'modern' to 'high modern' periods (1940-1980) including: post-war Modernism within the British architectural press; the aesthetic, political and ideological motivations in architectural journal production through the work of Pigeon, Pevsner, Nairn, Nash, Piper, de Cronin Hastings. It then addresses Marxist criticism, Structuralism, semiology and phenomenology within the architectural criticism of late modernism, including, Banham, Colquhoun, Frampton, Rowe, Evans. The second part of the module focuses on the postmodern turn, 'deconstruction' and the contemporary period including the impact of architectural criticism, and the relationships of word and image across print and digital formats in the late 20th and 21st centuries, and evolutions MA Architectural History 2017 7 in critical theory, space and aesthetics from the 1970s to the present. It studies the impact of neo-Marxist, post structuralist, semiotic methods within practices of criticism (including Jameson, Krauss, Lyotard, Macrae-Gibson, Marin), and the critique of spatial practices as allegory, aesthetic, political unconscious, utopics. It concludes with recent reassessments of criticality in contemporary architectural and art criticism (e.g. Dovey, Foster, Heynen, Rendell, Stead): a so-called 'crisis of criticism'. N.B. All option modules have limited enrolment: please contact Professor Peg Rawes, Programme Director, for further information.

### Dissertation module

(Term 3 and summer vacation: 60 credits, assessment Dissertation)

#### Architectural History Dissertation with Oral Examination

This module requires students following MA Architectural History to submit a 10,000- word dissertation on a subject agreed with the teaching staff. Students choose a subject lying within the scope of the syllabus, making use of the techniques and methods taught in the course. During this module, students also participate in the programme's field trip, dissertation review seminars with invited international critics, and develop their study into a publication for the programme's end of year public research conference. The field trip takes place in mid-May, which all students are invited to join (not compulsory). This is normally to an EU city with significant architectural, urban, institutional and collaborator sights/visits.

Examples of recent dissertation topics include:

- A critique of the Mexican Pueblos Mágicos tourist campaign
- Architectural Implications of Turkish Republican Politics in Florya, 1935-1960
- Birmingham: the architecture of two ecologies
- Family, leisure, and labour in Cedric Price's Housing Research, 1966-1973
- From Thames Town to Kew Trust in cyborg architecture: Dialogues of domesticity, subjectivity and control with smart technology
- Generative Architecture Manifesto: Investigating the agency of the architect in digital architecture
- La Grande Brasserie du Levant: Beverage industry, drinking sociality, and recent gentrification in Beirut
- Reinventing the Prison: HMP Holloway, 1968-1978
- Rubble of Warsaw, 1939-1949: Histories of architectural remains in the annihilated city
- Situating the New Acropolis Museum in the Athenian context
- Social freedom and the elastic envelope in gender- specific spaces of Dubai
- The Architecture of the Internet: Discovering the aesthetics of London's data centres
- The failed BRECAST project in 1970s Britain and Chile

### Student testimonials

#### Nick Beech

Lecturer in History of London, School of History, Queen Mary University of London, Andrew W. Mellon Researcher (2014–2016) Canadian Centre for Architecture, Montreal

I was a student on the MSc Architectural History part-time from 2004–6. The number of students was, from memory, about 15 (mixture of full-time and part-time), and my tutors at that time were Iain Borden, Adrian Forty, Barbara Penner, Peg Rawes, and Jane Rendell. It changed my life. I went in an enthusiastic student of architecture who was ill-disciplined, lacking focus or direction, and suffering insecurities. I came out able to pull a sentence

together and identify my concerns as shared with others. My confidence had developed through understanding some of the basic scholarship in the field. I had made contact in some form or other with most of the key architectural historians working in Britain at the time, as well as many of the major theorists in the field. I had an understanding of the applications to which architectural history and theory could be made (conservation and heritage, design practice, journalism and popular media, as well as academic historiography and research). I secured very dear friendships and collegial relationships with fellow students and teaching staff who are academics, independent scholars, architects, journalists, artists and curators around the world. In the most serious sense the Masters allowed me to see, listen, speak and write architecture.

### **Tom Dyckhoff**

Historian, writer, broadcaster: Architecture, cities, design & places

Studying architectural history at The Bartlett didn't teach me what such-and-such architect was building in 1867 and 1868, or whether rococo followed mannerism or vice-versa. You learn that along the way, and, in any case, that's what books and archives are for. No, instead, what is so inspirational and what was so pioneering about the course is that it teaches you a way of thinking about architecture and the built landscape. It teaches you to question. It teaches you not just to confront questions and buildings, but to look at them from other angles. It teaches you to be critical. As you go on through your career, whatever path you might take, developing this attitude to and way of thinking about architecture is far more important than simply knowing facts. Architecture here is not just about the physical object - although there are infinite and fascinating stories you'll explore and unearth about the landscapes we live in as they grow, develop and decay; it is a whole body and culture of knowledge.

### **Thomas Weaver**

Editor, AA Files: AA School of Architecture, London

I completed The Bartlett's MA in Modern Architectural History over 20 years ago, although in many ways everything I have done since has been an attempt to prolong my experiences of it, even to the extent that I often delude myself now into thinking that I am still actually on the course. I had enrolled immediately after doing The Bartlett's undergraduate architecture degree, which had confirmed to me that I was much better and more interested in architecture's histories than in its design. And so the sudden invitation to read and write and talk about architecture rather than endlessly try and define my own project came as a huge relief. The course then was directed by Adrian Forty, who more than anyone else before or after has influenced the way I think and work. And from Adrian I learned two fundamental things - that architecture is at its most interesting in its pluralism, and that in understanding this architecture we should look equally at concrete things and abstract ideas. There was no correct sequence to these twin intelligences; we simply learned to love the rituals of physically looking at something or meeting someone, and also comprehending and contextualising these things through an avalanche of architectural, art historical, philosophical, cultural or political ideas. All of my academic and editorial work since has tried to maintain these dual paradigms, so much so that the journal I now edit, AA Files, is really just a wistful prospectus of The Bartlett's MA in modern architectural history.

### **Helen Castle**

Editor of Architectural Design (AD) and Executive Editor of Global Architecture at Wiley Publishing

The Bartlett MA offers an exceptional range of opportunities. It is unique as a History and Theory postgraduate course set in one of the world's leading architecture schools. There are countless chances to attend open lectures and a constant glut of events going on in London. It is, however, the excellence of the teaching and the seminar format that are transformative. You learn not only from the seminar leaders but also from what a smart and internationally diverse group of students bring to the discussion. This challenges your thinking and level of contribution. I undertook the course part-time after I had been working in architectural publishing for several years, it directed and brought a new focus to my understanding of modern architecture. Seventeen years on, it remains a constant touchstone for my learning.

### **Jon Astbury**

Deputy Architecture Editor, Architects' Journal

I often felt the title 'Architectural History' was an understatement to this programme. In a field as wonderfully amorphous as architecture, this programme draws upon all manner of cultural and spatial practice, with a student cohort from diverse backgrounds. While it is at times unnerving to study a discipline that is so variable, it is exactly this quality which made the teaching and seminars so dynamic and far-reaching, and gave the work we each achieved a genuine sense of purpose.

### **Tom Keeley**

Architectural Historian

The MA in Architectural History at The Bartlett is one of the best things I have ever done. No question. It was hard, transformative, rigorous. It shifted and extended my thinking not only in how I practice and research architectural history, but also in how I see the world every day. The course gives you the time and space to indulge your curiosity. The breadth of interests within both the cohort and the faculty are its strength. There's isn't a one size fits all approach, quite the opposite. The teaching staff nudge and challenge you to understand the context within which you are working, and push you to find your own position in it. The course doesn't mould you so much as give you the tools to mould yourself. For me the MA didn't tell me how to date a building or architectural detail as you might imagine. Rather than telling you what a feature, era, or artefact of architectural history is, at The Bartlett the MA asks you to begin a step earlier. It gives you the tools and critical methodologies to find out for yourself, a way of seeing the world with fresh eyes. I wish I could do it all over again!

### **Sarah Jackson**

Architect and Heritage Consultant, Alan Baxter and Associates, London, UK

I decided to do the History of Modern Architecture masters as I wanted to the change the direction of my career, from a practising architect to something I didn't then quite know what. The course did everything I wanted it to; it made me think about architecture in a different way, and it gave me the skills – and confidence – to explore and express complex ideas. Perhaps more

importantly, it allowed me the time to think, a commodity that is painfully absent in the commercial world. The combination of the practical aspects of being an architect and the academic qualities of an architectural historian has been extremely useful in my subsequent career. Since completing the Masters, I have worked as a Conservation Architect on extraordinary buildings such as the De La Warr Pavilion and CR Mackintosh's 78 Derngate, and I also spent 8 years at CABE, running the Design Review programme. I am now a Heritage Consultant at Alan Baxter and Associates, providing heritage advice to major projects. Key to these roles are research skills, the ability to write with clarity and intellectual curiosity; all qualities that are brought out in the Masters course.

### **Dr Eva Branscome**

Postdoctoral Research Fellow at Museum Abteiberg (Gerda Henkel Stiftung), Germany. Teaching Fellow in Architectural History and Theory (UCL and Queen Mary University)

I came to the UK to enrol in The Bartlett School of Architecture's Master's degree course in History of Modern Architecture (as it was then still called) in 1997. This particular course stood out from other schools' as it started its investigation of architecture in the recent past and then looked at how the respective situations had emerged by means of a critical historical investigation. This included politics, gender and ideology and opened up my thinking about architecture as being a complicated cultural phenomenon and much more than simply a discussion of physical manifestation or aesthetics. Upon my graduation, I worked in heritage as an expert for C20 architecture and my work has led to the inclusion of more than 50 buildings and urban environments on the statutory list of historic buildings in England and Scotland such as the Barbican, Lloyds and the University of East Anglia. My passion has always been for research and teaching and I subsequently pursued doctoral research on a rethinking of Postmodernism through the work of Hans Hollein (also at The Bartlett School of Architecture) and postdoctoral research on the interface and interaction of Hans Hollein's architecture and contemporary art practice. The interdisciplinary and cross-cultural approach to the history of architecture which has been such an important part of my thinking since the Master's degree continues to inform my teaching of architecture within the History Department at Queen Mary University and the History of Art Department at UCL.

### **Isabelle Priest**

Writer and journalist, UK and Europe

As an architectural journalist and researcher, I use the skills I learned on the MA Architectural History course on a daily basis. The course challenged me to develop intellectually, understand theory and have a far greater knowledge of architecture and cities subject matter – I am better able to contextualise buildings, notice trends and vary my writing towards different audiences. It has given me the confidence to approach new topics in architectural discourse, as well as find interesting angles to write about projects for use in magazines, newspapers, websites, blogs and books. It made me think innovatively about how architectural content can be disseminated and implied more widely. Writing my dissertation on Le Corbusier particularly helped me to develop my professional identity, as so much intrigue surrounds him and it can be a great conversation starter!

### **Natasha Ghani**

Architect, Pakistan

The unique course content of UCL's MA Architectural History was what attracted me to the programme. The course studies architecture through seminars, lectures, building and gallery visits and one-to-one tutorials. It examines different processes; urban, social, ideological, political and theoretical. This non-conventional approach revealed a new way of interpreting architecture; one that I had not been exposed to during my previous architectural practice. The course provided an excellent platform to discuss different themes which strengthened my analytical and research skills. This was further enhanced by the physical interpretations and ideas we experienced with the numerous field trips taken during the course. The skills acquired through this course played a great role in the development of my architectural career. I learnt how to incorporate the critical spatial theories within the more practical demands of my design practice. This academic exposure also enabled me to pursue teaching a theory and history course at an architectural university, enriching my career opportunities. The tutors were most supportive and patient, nurturing my growth through debates and discussions. While the environment was challenging, my advisors helped make it stimulating and exciting too. Studying in London as an international student at such a renowned institution was an experience that taught me almost as much as the course did, as did the experience of working with other international peers with whom we explored and discovered London together. Most of all, the vitality and dynamism of the city itself made it the perfect backdrop to this course.

### **Jimena Hogrebe**

Architect, Mexico City

Being part of the MA Architectural History programme was an amazing experience. From a personal point of view, I had the opportunity to be in touch with kind and interesting people from whom I learned to see the world with different eyes. As an international student, living in London enriched my undergoing given the cultural offer, the connection with different ways of thinking and living, the chance to stroll around its streets, and the possibility of finding friends from other parts of the world. From a professional point of view, the programme gave me a set of tools that have been useful in my later work. I could say that the most important one, the one that I have been able to implement in a broader scope of the architectural discipline, is the critical thinking and its application possibilities. Through this, I have been able to explore different practices, to find new opportunities and to achieve better results. I consider that in consequence of the programme and the experience living away from home, I developed a series of skills that have allowed me to approach architecture through teaching, writing in journals, being part of research projects and art grants, as well as developing independent design work. Thus, I consider the MA Architectural History not only offers the obvious, but it prepares you to transport the knowledge and methodologies into any professional area you choose.

### **Ishita U. Shah**

Master of Arts in Architectural History, UCL (London) Bachelor in Interior Design, CEPT University (Ahmedabad)

Being enrolled on the MA Architectural History programme (2012-13) has been one of my best educational experiences. Interdisciplinary approaches and critical writing were the two most significant abilities that I picked up during my coursework, and have reshaped the way I see the built environment today. Furthermore, the wide-ranging interactions with professors and colleagues from diverse walks of life, instilled a very unique understanding about architectural education. Thereby, the time spent at The Bartlett was not just about attaining another degree; rather it manifested into real-life endeavours, including being a research assistant to the Director of Collections at the RIBA, contributing to the UCL Methodologies as one of the many curators and being a member of the editorial team for our year-end publication, exhibited and released in the postgraduate show at the close of the course. The structure of the pedagogy at MA Architectural History helped in questioning my views and concerns about the built environment in relation to history and with reference to development in different parts of the world. Thus, at every step the seminars, exercises and other academic or non-academic activities, trained me to find my own niche. Now I have been offered the opportunity to help establish India's first architectural archive. I owe it to both my high and low moments on The Bartlett's MA Architectural History Programme. All in all, I had a wonderful time at The Bartlett because of a very warm and global environment within the community, the blurred boundaries between the programmes and a most supportive infrastructure: all of these which aided me extensively during my time away from home.

### **Dissertation Showcase**

#### **Miranda Critchley, 2016**

#### **Reinventing the Prison: HMP Holloway, 1968-1978**

In November 2015, George Osborne unveiled a new wave of prison reform in England and Wales. 'Old Victorian prisons' in cities – deemed unsuitable for 'rehabilitating prisoners' – would be sold; the 'long term savings' from these sales would free up 'over a billion pounds' to spend on building nine 'new modern' institutions (Osborne 2015). In his statement, Osborne mentioned one prison by name: HMP Holloway, on Parkhurst Road in north London. 'I can tell the House that Holloway Prison – the biggest women's jail in Western Europe – will close,' he announced. 'In the future, women prisoners will serve their sentences in more humane conditions better designed to keep them away from crime' (Osborne 2015).

Osborne's idea wasn't new. Unlike Islington's other prison, Pentonville, Holloway isn't an old Victorian building: it was redeveloped in the 1970s with the intention of designing a better environment for women. The need to provide more humane prisons has been invoked since the 18th century. Osborne's announcement suggests that the process isn't often successful in the long term. Most reform organisations welcome the closure of a prison, but

there is also fear of the policy 'merry-go-round': the same ideas return in cycles and nothing changes (Roberts & Cain 2015). Claims for new, progressive regimes and transformative humane environments need to be properly scrutinised. What changes occur? Or does rebuilding just repackage old ideas and structures of power? These questions are not only relevant to penal architecture, but to ideas of progress as they apply to cities more generally. As the extensive literature on housing, urban regeneration and displacement suggests, narratives of redevelopment need to be closely examined. The rhetoric that endorses change through architecture cannot be left unchallenged.

The first Holloway redevelopment was presented as a progressive modernisation of the women's penal system. In place of an 'out of date, gaunt and deteriorating ensemble of prison buildings' there would 'rise a modern, hospital-type institution' – a product, supposedly, of 'forward-looking policies,' 'social progress,' and 'higher moral standards' (Kelley 1970). The new Holloway would be a prison of which Islington could be proud. It would provide 'treatment' for women and design 'new ways of life' for both inmates and staff (Faulkner 1971).

These aims have been interpreted as the result of an idealistic consensus that women prisoners required psychiatric help rather than punishment (Rock 1996). But the redevelopment was also deeply concerned with architecture. The old prison was labelled inflexible – its design was described as an 'obstacle to progress' – but the regime at the old Holloway and the use of the buildings had changed significantly over the course of the 20th century in ways that suggested the architecture was adaptable and could accommodate new policies. By the late 1960s, women wore their own clothes rather than prison uniforms. The hospital wing had been 'modernised' in 1964. Cells were knocked together to create a library and inmates painted murals on the walls.

The problem with the old Holloway was that it didn't look like a progressive institution. J. B. Bunning, the City Architect, had designed the original structure, which was completed in 1852. Its radial wings were modelled on Pentonville, but the prison gatehouse was inspired by Warwick Castle. Stone griffins either side of the gate held keys in their claws; the castellated tower was visible from a distance and became a local landmark – postcards were printed of 'Holloway Castle.' The meaning of this architecture wasn't always clear: although it was labelled forbidding or fortress-like, one often-repeated story claimed that the style was intended to placate middle-class neighbours, who opposed the construction of a prison in their leafy suburb.

Rather than seeing the demolition of the old prison and the construction of a new, red brick 'hospital-type institution' as a moment of late-1960s idealism, I'm more interested in two different dynamics that I think were at work in the redevelopment. The first relates to disorder and control: with its absurd, 'fairy castle' appearance, Holloway's built fabric helped to challenge the legitimacy of penal policy – it seemed ridiculous that women were locked up in such a place. This was particularly problematic in the early 1970s, when radical opponents to prison were becoming more vocal. The first issue of Spare Rib, the feminist magazine, contained an article arguing against the plans for a new prison; their piece was based on report by Radical Alternatives to Prison (RAP), a group that argued for a serious reduction in incarceration. Redeveloping was a means of reasserting control and

undermining radical opposition: Holloway would no longer be a visual symbol of the absurdity of the prison system.

The second dynamic concerns the role of architecture in determining the meaning of the prison. The redevelopment team wanted the new complex to be secure and to allow for the control of inmates, but these measures were intended to be inconspicuous. If possible, buildings would form the site's perimeter; where a wall was necessary, it would be a crinkle-crinkle one, rather than a straight boundary. The overall aim of these variations in the design was to erode the 'psychological barrier represented by the prison wall' – an indication that the impact of the prison was seen to derive from the physical environment – the prison wall – rather than the institution's function as a site in which the individual was deprived of her liberty. This idea is apparent in other texts: in an address to the Howard League for Penal Reform, the Chief Medical Officer at Holloway stated that the design of the new gate and reception would 'obviate the psychological hazard of initial impressions of the establishment' (Blyth 1971). Again, architecture was the problem: good design could prevent the harmful effects of imprisonment.

The demolition of the old Holloway and its replacement with what its architects Robert Matthew, Johnson-Marshall described as a 'soft,' 'feminine,' 'normal' building suggests that the process elaborated by Foucault in his Collège de France course on the 'punitive society' is cyclical, not linear (Rabinow 1997). Here, Foucault argues that in 18th-century thought, the prison was considered strange, enigmatic, and flawed. Over the course of the 19th century, this odd creation was made to appear inevitable. The redevelopment of Holloway shows a similar moment in the 1970s, where prison appeared unstable and absurd. Giving Holloway a normal appearance was a means of re-establishing incarceration as an 'anthropological constant' and a 'primary assumption' at a moment when, in relation to women, its inevitability seemed unclear. If this process reoccurs, as the Holloway redevelopment suggests, then we should watch for moments of instability and the corresponding means by which the acceptability of the prison is re-established. At Holloway, architecture worked to reassert legitimacy: once again, the prison could be a sign of progress, rather than a relic of the past.

### **Harriet Jennings, 2016**

#### **Unsanitary and Unsavoury: Housing on Robin Hood Lane**

The degeneration and regeneration of housing on Robin Hood Lane in Poplar, Tower Hamlets, has long been instigated by health concerns. In March 1879 the East London Observer celebrated the impending demolition of 'one of the most unhealthy rookeries in Poplar' which was replaced with James Hartnoll's Grosvenor Buildings in 1885. These in turn fell into unsanitary conditions, recorded as 'foul' and overcrowded by sanitary inspectors by 1901. Purchased and demolished by the Greater London Council in 1965, they were replaced with Alison and Peter Smithson's 1972 Robin Hood Gardens public housing estate. The reduction of residents' exposure to traffic pollution and the provision of a central green envisaged as a 'stress-free zone' and the 'lungs' of the estate were at the heart of their designs. However, despite the vision of a better way of life promised by the Smithsons' scheme, since its

completion Robin Hood Gardens has acquired increasingly negative associations.

Indeed, Nikolaus Pevsner described the project as ‘ill-planned to the point of being inhumane’ (Pevsner 2005). The apparent failure of the Smithsons’ buildings to embody the health ideals of their architectural vision can to a great extent be attributed to the unpopular material properties of the concrete blocks. The blocks embody the Smithsons’ objectives of New Brutalism, which aspired to ‘drag a rough poetry’ out of the ordinary. However, Pevsner described the finish of the precast blocks as threatening ‘rough and tough shuttered concrete’ (Pevsner). Adrian Forty notes such adverse reactions to concrete, observing ‘an element of revulsion seems a permanent, structural feature of the material’ (Forty 2012). Forty links this response to concrete’s fluid material properties and changeable liquid/solid state – preventing people from comfortably defining it or its perimeters. In 1966 anthropologist Mary Douglas defined dirt as ‘matter out of place’. Douglas wrote that ‘where there is dirt there is a system’ and speculated perceptions of dirt and pollutants arise from ‘a contravention of that order’ (Douglas 1996). In light of her analysis that we dislike things that cut across clear categorisation, finding them intolerable for defying the symbolic systems by which we live and which dictate our attitudes to hygiene, the negative reactions to concrete’s fluid properties are understandable. Thus concrete is identifiable with dirt, a view supported by the fact ‘béton,’ French for concrete, derives from the old French ‘betum’ meaning ‘rubble, rubbish, or dirt’ (Calder 2016).

It is interesting to consider how these formal attributes of concrete can contribute to perceptions of post-war estates, and those who live in them, as dirty, diseased and marginalised. Even Barnabas Calder, author of *Raw Concrete: The Beauty of Brutalism*, recounts that when growing up concrete architecture represented ‘everything which was frightening and other’ – identifying the architecture and its inhabitants as contravening the accepted social order and posing a threat to the normative populace. In *Geographies of Exclusion*, David Sibley proposes that the relegation of defiled members of society who are ‘judged to be deviant, imperfect or marginal’ to defined areas such as council estates is how ‘exclusionary, purified social space’ is created and maintained by the powerful in society (Sibley 2011).

Separations are exacerbated by the stigma attached to council residents, as elucidated by Lynsey Hanley who notes that ‘the word “council” has become a pejorative term’ used ‘to ridicule people’s clothing, their hairstyles, their ways of speaking’ (Hanley 2007). Such judgements resemble those made by social investigator Charles Booth of the Robin Hood Lane site in 1897 and have inherent class implications as the socio-economically disadvantaged are less able to conform to bourgeois norms. In his notes Booth described the streets around the Grosvenor Buildings as ‘all evidenced of their being of the poorest and roughest’ (Booth 1897). He makes this assertion from the fact that there were many ‘bootless children, unwashed steps, no flowers in the front window’ which he attributes to ‘official laziness’.

Booth’s categorisations seem unfounded and moralistic, as he branded people as ‘rough’ or in a poverty band of ‘semi-criminal’ based on the visual appearance of their built environment. This has remarkable resonance with former Prime Minister David Cameron’s 2016 assertion that a certain kind of architecture nurtures a criminal class. He proclaimed that the 2011 rioters ‘came overwhelmingly from these post-war estates’ as they encourage ‘social problems to fester and grow unseen,’ and called for social reform to begin with the metaphorical and physical cleansing of the built environment. Both

Booth and Cameron's explanations for poverty and social strife are rooted in the visual impression of the built environment and they reveal how powerful perceptions of dwellings as imposing, neglected or dirty are in shaping the popular reputation of an area and its residents. Sibley identifies such judgements as originating from 'the opposition between purity and defilement'. Although wary of Douglas' cross-cultural generalisations, her observations of socio-spatial practices devised from concepts of dirt can be applied to contemporary western societies to explain the 'boundary consciousness' explicit in Booth and Cameron's assessment of the built environment (Sibley).

The Robin Hood Lane site makes East London inequalities explicit as the Smithsons' neglected, New Brutalist, Welfare State estate stands in stark contrast to the clean, prosperous, neo-liberal architecture of encroaching Canary Wharf. As former resident Abdul Kalam asserted, 'Canary Wharf dictates East London now... And Robin Hood Gardens is too close to Canary Wharf. It's like an eyesore' (Brennan 2015). The estate is facing impending demolition and regeneration by Swan Housing association, which it is feared will increase the number of private units and replace council tenancies with insecure 'affordable' housing. Therefore not only will the regeneration cleanse the site of the Smithsons' gritty architecture, but could potentially exile the local working-class community as the site becomes desirable for city workers. As resident Nicholas Ruddock identified, tenants 'are seen as less valuable, in a sense diseased -' implied by the dehumanizing term 'decanted,' used to describe their removal from the buildings and the area (Brennan).

Specific material and social relations reveal how notions of pollution and the abject elicit stigma which prompts phases of architectural and social change on the site. Thus concepts of dirt and pollutants permeate its social and architectural fabric, with manipulation of the built environment historically perceived as a mechanism of socio-economic change. This has had different political motives and embodied varying State attitudes towards the care of the population. Yet the repetitive nature of the cycles of de- and regeneration on the site, explicated by this metaphor of dirt and pollution, reveal that changing the physical form of the built environment has never succeeded as an alternative for deeper socio-economic change.

### **Jon Astbury, 2015**

#### **'A Record Of The Unsettling Present: The Forensic Criticism of N. Ratsby in The Architectural Review (1996 - 2006)'**

The architectural press, subject to the increasingly commercial relationship between architecture itself and the agents of the media, rarely changes in its presentation of architecture as a complete and factual site. Critical self-reflection on the discipline's methods is taboo.

This study seeks to uncover the 'politics and ideologies of architectural representation' of architectural journalism by creating a fictional form of criticism, Evidence, by an invented writer, N. Ratsby, for The Architecture Review. The thesis examines fact and fiction in Ratsby's work for the journal. It proposes that architectural recording is not unlike a work of detection. Articles are created to maintain the Review's formal layouts, but traditional photographs are replaced with a more informal mode of photographic close-up in which indistinct or blurred images of empty rooms are paired with

textual commentaries directly influenced by detective novels. This disruptive form of 'architectural detection' interrogates assumptions made by the architectural media regarding the ability of the photographic image and its textual accompaniments to act evidence for architectural critique.

The thesis refers to the 'forensic' turn, a term borrowed from Thomas Keenan and Eyal Weizman's study *Mengele's Skull* (2012) which interrogates the role of human remains in the posthumous trial of SS Officer Joseph Mengele, transforming the status of evidence in a court of law by allowing previously unseen and inanimate agents to 'testify'. This renewed interest in the ability of objects to 'speak' shifts the role of the photograph from a static representation into one capable of an active, reconstructive role.

The history into which the thesis's invented articles have been inserted is factual but the work is, in many ways, also an autobiographical experiment in criticism. As such, the fabricated work is aware of the criticism of it, while the criticism itself generates an additional layer of fabrication. Both, like the theories used, remain unfinished: both still 'wait' for one another to reach a conclusion, feeding off the productive potential to represent a process of mutual cooperation. 'It is impossible to speak of architectural criticism 'without also speaking of literary technique, rhetoric, and the persona of the critic as author' (Macarthur and Stead 2006, 116).

### **Grainne Hebel, 2015**

#### **The Alphabet is Dead: Long live the alphabet!**

The beauty of Arabic calligraphy is not easily integrated into modernity. It has not been straightforward uniting the major technological advances of the past millennia, specifically the printing press and computerised digitisation with an alphabet used by Middle Eastern culture. The slowness to adopt these seemingly beneficial technologies is due to numerous structural challenges in the written form of Arabic rather than a cultural aversion to technology.

Unlike Latin languages where there are only two forms of a single letter, Arabic script is vastly more complex. Arabic script requires letters to be joined together to make a word, while each single letter has at least four different forms that change depending upon where it is placed. After the unveiling of Gutenberg's printing press, it became apparent that the complexity and financial investment to produce Arabic movable type far exceeded that of a Latin movable type alphabet and thus, very few printed works were published (Mata'a; Roper; Vrolijk).

The initial presentation of the printing press to the Middle East did not help either. The first full book printed in Arabic was a Psalter called *Kitâb salât al-sawâ'î* (1514), a book of daily prayers, ordered by Pope Julius II for the Greek Orthodox Christians of the Levant. For Muslims and religious leaders this was an affront to their religion and their understanding of written text as being "God's word." It was in opposition to the infiltration of Christian texts into the Muslim world that prompted the Ottoman Empire at the end of the 16th century to declare an almost across-the-board ban on printing of any type (Szyliowicz).

Where the West transitioned quickly to a printed system, the Middle East functioned in an oscillating relationship between modes of oral and written composition. Oral tradition has a long history in the Middle East and was understood to be greater than or equal to calligraphy in some cases, especially in regard to recitations of the Quran. As seen in the verse below,

“The medium [as] the message” is clearly bridged in the way Quranic verses were learned and passed on (McLuhan). Adjoining oral recitation, writing was not necessarily the means for disseminating information but was intended for visual appreciation of the holy book of the Quran, something that sets it apart both aesthetically and culturally from the Bible, which was stamped and duplicated mechanically almost entirely without this vision (Abi-Farés).

#### Digitisation

From the 1960s until the late 1980s, the transition timeframe from analogue to digital, Arabic script was faced again with similar problems as when the Gutenberg printing press was introduced. Regardless of lingering difficulties with physical print technologies, the adoption of digital computing still had fundamental incompatibilities with Arabic. Attempting to insert Arabic script into the existing Western computing model, with English as the overarching language for coding, proved troublesome. It was not until the introduction of Unicode in 1987 that Arabic script would be supported.

Interestingly, since the 1990s, Western text-based communication technologies have become well established in the Arab world. During the transition period, most (including but not limited to the Internet, PCs, bulletin board systems, forums, email, instant messaging, and SMS) only support communicating via languages in Latin script (Encyclopedia). To this day some technologies do not support Arabic as an option. This limitation has resulted in Arabic speaking users usurping Latin script to transliterate Arabic to English. Clever workarounds, such as Arabizi, have been created for convenience and coherence. Arabizi, the slang term used to describe a popular writing system based on substitution that uses Latin letters and numbers to form and symbolise Arabic, can be conservatively interpreted as a direct affront to Middle Eastern culture (Yaghan). Many users of mobile phones and computers still write in this language code even when their platform supports Arabic script.

Yet, the virtual medium offers the promise of a more malleable interface for design strategies. Not only has Unicode offered Arabic script a place in the digitisation of written language, but other technologies revolving around audio-based communication are paving the way for the future of orality in the Middle East.

#### Conclusion

Although it appears that the Middle East’s lack of participation in printing history should inhibit its interaction with the modern age’s digital format, it can actually be seen as a benefit. Where the West has become entrenched by the interiorisation of written composition, the Middle East is not self-limited by this transition because of a different history of development – nurturing its calligraphic art form through religion, as well as maintaining an emphasis on its cultural history of oral recitation.

There is now the technological know-how and social interest in representing Arabic script on the digital platform in more ways than one. It is growing – most significantly due to the nature of digital technologies; it would appear that Arabic script development has the potential to “leapfrog” forward and lead the way in virtual arenas, both written and oral. However, the written word is becoming less and less of a dominating factor in the progression to the modern computing age, which positions the Middle East with an advantage, given its cultural heritage and the present day push to digital orality. Perhaps as audio-based computing improves, the alphabet may become a point of nostalgia. It may not be technically needed for communication in the future, if mechanised android voices verbally convey

information. For cultures like those of the Middle East, and particularly cultures that are Muslim, this connection between image, text, oration and dissemination of knowledge remains paramount, and moving forward is a relevant model for the digital paradigm.

**Chris Purpura, 2014**

**Holding Hands, Touching Alterity: Dance as Spatial Practice at Monte Verità, 1914.**

An architecture without buildings is possible – according to late nineteenth-century German architectural theories in *Der Stijl* or ‘The Style’ where Gottfried Semper decides ‘the beginning of building coincides with the beginning of textiles’ (Semper in Mallgrave & Robinson 2004: 247). Before the primitive hut, during the mythic Golden Age and its denouement, when clothes and shelter were still unnecessary to protect man from Paradise, Semper identifies the origins of architecture in ‘the fence of interwoven and tied sticks and branches’ as the first ‘division of space’ to define an interior from exterior, ‘as the most original vertical spatial enclosure invented by man’ (Semper). Heinrich Wölfflin’s famous image of the G’othic shoe’ reprises this softer architecture of textiles at the less monumental scale of costume to evidence ‘the most immediate formal expression’ of *Stilwandlung* or the ‘change in styles’ (Wölfflin 1964: 78). In these conceptions of architecture as clothing, Semper and Wölfflin both propose a foundational absence not only of masonry and carpentry, but one also of the body – ‘the earliest partition’, it seems, can be made by hands, but not of hands.

Footwear has similarly been stressed in the *Lebensgefühl* or ‘life spirit’ of another art form’s founding myths: the *Stilwandlung* leading to the ‘birth’ of modern dance that at the beginning of the twentieth century carried the byname ‘barefoot dancing’. Famed for her lyrical movement in Grecian robes freed from corsets and shoes, Isadora Duncan the ‘grandmother of modern dance’ visited the self-sustaining artist’s colony Monte Verità in 1914, then a locus for *Lebensreform* (‘life reform’) on a hill overlooking Lago Maggiore from the Swiss side of the Italian border. At this rural enclave at the periphery of bourgeois convention, Monte Verità offered artists, intellectuals and dropouts from Europe’s cities an opportunity to experiment in a plurality of alternative lifestyles including anarchism, vegetarianism, and nudism (Green 1986: 1-4). That same year, the visual artist-turned-movement theorist Rudolf von Laban de Varalja – before dropping the honorifics and becoming known as the ‘founding father of modern dance’ – began his second season as the director of the colony’s ‘School of Art’. Sharing the mottos ‘Light, air, life, sun!’ and ‘Back to nature’, Laban and his students performed early ‘free dance’ experiments – outdoors, offstage, and often without clothes – in reenactments of pagan rites for the resurrection of that timeless Golden Age, becoming modern through a past that was never present.

Along the lakeshore Laban and five students posed in a line, forming a nascent ‘fence’ not of twigs and branches, but of bodies intertwined and fingers clasped. A ‘living architecture’, so to speak, beneath the partial-arch of a mountain proscenium, some raising their arms as if to bow in a ‘Curtain Call’. As if to end a performance that had only just begun, sometime in the summer of 1914 before the mass exodus from Monte Verità following the July outbreak of World War I. [...]

Laban's notion of 'a living architecture' has the potential to operate beyond formal analogies between buildings and human anatomy. As both the spatial organization of bodies, and the corporeal organization of space, choreography is the possibility of an architecture without buildings. Choreo from the Ancient Greek *choros* refers not only to the people who make up the band of dancers, or the chorus, but also 'a public space marked off as the dancing ground' (Nagy 1996: 92).<sup>15</sup> As much about space as about bodily movement, my discussion of Laban's Monte Verità experiments will resist conventional notions of dance as theatrical performance. Instead, I will ask how phenomenological concepts of bodily experience can offer the reading and writing of histories for live performances that survive primarily through photographic representation.

Neither film footage nor notated dance scores survive for Laban's 1914 experiments, and the live repertoire, the embodied knowledge of our cast, has already passed – their memories scattered in fragments across the various biographies of Laban and his students. Within the discipline of dance history, no account has yet been dedicated solely to Laban's experiments at Monte Verità, and within the discipline of art history, the same holds true for the period's most vivid primary evidence: the Meisenbach autochromes. In this dissertation, the fragmented verbal memories have been collected in order to appear alongside images sourced from Perrottet's personal archive in Zürich as well as Laban's in Guildford, UK. Nevertheless, the task is not simply to pair 'word and image' (Mitchell 1996: 47-8). A project designed to give voice to supposedly mute images would operate within dichotomous thinking that threatens to flatten the spatial and temporal dimensions of Laban's Monte Verità experiments as live, embodied performances. Resisting the tendency to subsume the spatial within the visual, between word and image I insert the 'body' as a third term – insisting on a historical narrative sensitive to not only aural and visual, but also 'haptic' perception – the sense of touch which extends beyond the hands to mediate our entire body's relation to its surroundings.

Rather than approaching Laban's Monte Verità experiments as discrete events in linear time, I argue that dance as spatial practice constitutes multiple, overlapping performances between the levels of the live body and the still photograph, the click of the shutter in 1914 and those images circulated in the present across these pages. By suspending standard disciplinary methods of dance history, and reframing Laban's experiments through Michel de Certeau's notion of 'spatial practice', a point of entry opens for the writing of historical narratives that can account for cross-temporal and intermedial complexity. After unpacking Maurice Merleau-Ponty's phenomenological understanding of the relation of space to the 'lived body' from which spatial practices emerge, I turn to recent feminist and queer interpretations of embodiment. Through what Rosalyn Diprose calls an 'opening to alterity', I argue that Laban's experiments functioned as 'performative' spatial practices that produced, rather than passively reflected, the counter-normative lifestyles and subjectivities of those who inhabited Monte Verità. Paying special emphasis to Judith Butler's 'corporeal styles of being', I evaluate the liberatory potential that Laban's experiments had (and perhaps continue) to offer individuals who failed to materialize oneself in obedience to societal norms, to offer communities facing punitive consequences by virtue of their otherness.

References cited in extract:

Green, M. (1986) *Mountain of Truth: The Counterculture Begins: Ascona, 1900 – 1920*. Hanover and London: University Press of New England.

Mitchell, W. J. T. (1996) *Word and Image*. In: Nelson, R. & Shiff R. (eds.) *Critical Terms for Art History*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Nagy, G. (1996) *Poetry as Performance: Homer and Beyond*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Semper, G. (2004) *Style in the Technical and Tectonic Arts; or, Practical Aesthetics*. Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute.

Wölfflin, H. (1964) *Renaissance and Baroque*. Glasgow: Collins Fontana Library.

### **Carlo Menon, 2013**

#### **The Missing Decade? Architectural Magazines of the 1990s**

If architecture is seen to exist only through its interpretations, then magazines are a privileged medium in which to disseminate architectural knowledge and to engage architects with critical reflections on their work. Hybrid between a newspaper and a book, they don't have to follow the logic of immediateness of the former, or to possess the definitive character of the latter. Rather, the relationship they establish with architectural history and theory may be seen as that of a corrupted, but seminal ground for the expression of new positions, whereby the provisional aspect of the content is enriched by the possibilities for experimentation, debate, collaboration, and contact between academia, profession and the public realm.

Magazines practice a peculiar form of authorship through which editorial statements and individual contributions are contaminated, altered or compromised by other elements: proximities between contents, advertising, paratexts, images, graphics, and so to some extent hazard determines the object more than the will of a single author or editor.

Nonetheless, this fragmentation does not reduce the aura of the magazine: quite the contrary. The rapidity of exchange, of publication and exposure, and of changing editorial patterns, has created the success of the magazine as a contemporary platform for architectural discourse, and its near-monopoly in terms of architectural dissemination.

Technological innovation in publishing, such as the impact of global digitalisation, has also been important for architectural magazines. Only when a new technology appears are we able to become fully aware of its precedents. By focusing on niche magazines like *ANY*, *Terrazzo*, *Le Visiteur*, *UME* and *Zodiac*, this essay is therefore an attempt to look back across the 'wall' of the digital divide, figuring out the state of the art of architectural magazines just moments before Internet technologies became fully available to architects, critics and publishers. What main issues did this change raise, and what were its unspoken consequences? How did those involved approach authorship, images and graphic design? And what measures were they already adopting to counter the new-found competition of digital mass-media?

After briefly picturing the context of the 1990s and the format of each of the five architectural magazines individually, the essay formulates some possible answers through a close reading and a comparative, transversal approach to the printed material.

### The missing decade

Given the impossibility of built architecture to be reproduced for its manifold audiences, as other disciplines like music can do, architecture has always held a special relationship with printed matter.

From the perspective of today, it is common to consider the 1960s and 70s as the 'golden age' of architectural magazines, when thanks to more accessible reproduction technologies in printing, a host of 'little' magazines, fanzines and other ephemeral publications supported a polemical approach against established values and customs. These experiments in new forms of architecture and criticism generate as much longing and nostalgia as does the other 'heroic' moment in the history of architectural periodicals, the avant-garde magazines of the 1920s, when Theo Van Doesburg was publishing *De Stijl* and Le Corbusier was shaping his audience through *L'Esprit Nouveau*.

At first glance, the periodicals of the 1990s lack anything like the same kind of appeal and imageability. In the usual meta-narrative of the subject, this represents the 'missing decade' of architectural journals. One thinks of the typical 1990s architectural magazine as something ugly, glossy, commercially-driven, especially when compared to the variety of magazines published today. But in every epoch it is possible to locate some interesting publications. This essay is based on a close reading and a comparative, transversal approach to the printed material of five geographically and intellectually diverse architectural magazines which started publication in those years: *ANY* (1993-2001), *Terrazzo* (1988-1996), *Le Visiteur* (1995-2003), *UME* (1996-2011) and *Zodiac* (1989-1999).

### A magazine is a fictional world

Despite all the editorials, subtitles, and declarations of intentions, it is very rare that the first aim of any architectural magazine is that of criticism and polemic. If criticism is not therefore the main category to define a magazine, then what is it about? Enlarging the set of filters used to analyse a magazine, and placing criticism within a broader spectrum of features, allows us to give credit to the magazine's materiality — i.e. to its modes of representation, to its pleasantness, character, openness to variation, degree of attention for the reader, geographic horizon, and so on. By looking beyond the surface of the magazine, and reconstructing its 'claims' and 'longings', it is possible to define its inherent project in the form of a fictional scenario, or 'unspoken voice'.

Each magazine then represents a distinct world that can be very tiny, exotic, reductive of many aspects of reality, or open to many and changing influences. From the analysis of the five magazines emerge a series of similarities and oppositions via various thematic tropes: enthusiasm towards the digital age, nostalgia for the loss of a more 'profound' past, preciousness of the object, an enlarged space for architectural discourse, and, perhaps surprisingly, the multiform legacy of *Oppositions* (1973-1984).

### Going large: preciousness or the question of the original

The large format chosen by the two most appealing magazines studied here is revealing of a major concern for authorship in the 1990s — i.e. piracy, reproducibility and uniqueness. Instead of embracing the cheap production techniques already used by the counter-cultures of the 1960s and 70s, *ANY* and *Terrazzo* adopted a reactive position, so as to mark their distinction from other media: Xerox, scanners, A4 colour printers and the like. They set a graphic standard that couldn't be reproduced easily. Both reclaimed their preciousness by being visually appealing and pleasant, although in very

different ways: digital for ANY, craft-based for Terrazzo, especially in its choice of different paper types according to the content. The graphic layout was intended as disturbing in the case of the former, soothing in the latter.

In the new digital age, what explains this attachment to the original object — the protagonist of the twentieth century — is its loss of importance in favour of the digital file. The ‘script’ or ‘code’ is the only original item, while its materialisation as a printed, laser-cut or otherwise electronically generated object is a simple by-product of the script. An object that can’t be reproduced, even when it is realised thanks to computer software, is thus able to maintain the aura attributed to collectible items.

The idea of the magazine as a ‘total work of art’, a phrase coined by the decorative arts movements a hundred years before, and kept alive almost unchanged by the modernist avant-gardes, is still at stake in the 1990s. More than Terrazzo, the graphic project of ANY integrates typography, graphic design, artwork, diagrams and plans, in the same synaesthetic mode of the historic avant-gardes. ‘We approach the new with the psychological conditioning and sensory responses to the old’, declared Marshall McLuhan in 1967. The resurgence of ‘precious’ printing modes and inventive formats in architectural publishing after 2005 is still, tellingly, a physical response to the virtual media. Or as McLuhan added: ‘When faced with a totally new situation, we tend always to attach ourselves to the objects, to the flavour of the most recent past. We look at the present through a rear-view mirror. We march backwards into the future.’

#### **Isabelle Priest, 2012**

#### **Coming Clean: In Search of Le Corbusier’s Cleaners in his Parisian Domestic Architecture 1922-1934**

Cleaners’ work goes mostly unrecorded. This report takes the problem of hidden cleaners and examines them as class of labour: its personnel and practices. [...] It takes the moment when the hygiene and germ theories of nineteenth and early twentieth centuries first converged with architectural design during the period of the international style. And in contrast to current research on cleaners and cleaning which concentrate on ‘mundane’, ‘everyday’ settings and which are created almost exclusively outside of architectural history, it takes the iconic, canonical architecture of one of the founders of this style, and a man ‘among the most famous [for the] expression of the beauty of cleanliness’: Le Corbusier.

The changes that took place in the name of cleanliness and hygiene during this period are well versed. From Adrian Forty’s *Objects of Desire* (1986) to Mark Wigley’s *White Walls, Designer Dresses* (1995), however, with regard to architecture these changes are treated as a theme or image of health. Forty and Wigley discuss how the notion of hygiene came to be taken seriously and what changes were made to architectural decorative schemes ‘once dirt was identified with disease [and] nothing short of absolute cleanliness could pass as satisfactory’. The changes in public and private buildings included: white walls, linoleum flooring, fitted furniture without carving and mouldings, chromed steel, glass surfaces and an abundance of plumbing. In fact, another protagonist of the movement, Adolf Loos, in his essay for the *Neue Freie Press* entitled ‘Plumbers’ (1898) exclaimed in relation to the Viennese ‘increasing water usage is one of the most pressing tasks of culture’.

'The argument [consequently] is not about hygiene per se. It is about a certain look of cleanliness. Or, more precisely, a cleansing of the look, a hygiene of vision itself.' This trompe l'oeil interpretation is adopted by Nadir Latiji's and D.S. Friedman in 'At the Sink: Architecture in Abjection' (1997) about Le Corbusier's and Loos' washbasins in hallways of some of their houses. Many of these aesthetic ideas are set out in Le Corbusier's *Vers une Architecture* (1923), and as Reyner Banham explains 'poised for world conquest, the new architecture discovered that it had a uniform by which friend could be distinguished from foe, a uniform whose adoption indicated that its wearer wanted to be considered as one of the gang'. Paul Overy demonstrates in *Light, Air and Openness: Modern Architecture Between the Wars* (2007) that these ideas were inspired by the hygienist movement's tuberculosis sanatorium that hoped to prevent, for example, the one sixth of deaths caused by the illness in France, 1918.

Whilst 'it is impossible to say whether life and people were objectively and cleaner', it does seem possible to move beyond aesthetic discussions by looking at the subject and engaging with how cleaning was provided for, spatially, materially and contractually. This report considers these discussions from the cleaner's practical and social perspective. If 'Europe and America began to find dirt more alarming and be increasingly anxious about cleanliness', what was going on in practice? The report takes long-running discussions in new directions and complements the existing body of work.

Geographically, the study takes us to the city with the greatest concentration of Le Corbusier's buildings that engage most comprehensively with the themes of cleanliness and hygiene in 1920s and 1930s: Paris and its environs. It concentrates on his domestic architecture because these are in the greatest number and the most surprising. Hence: *Atelier Ozenfant* (1922), *Villas Lipchitz-Miestchaninoff* (1923), *Maison La Roche* (1923-1925), *Maison Jeanneret* (1923-1925), *Maison Planeix* (1924), *Villa Cook* (1926), *Villa Savoye* (1928) and *Immeuble Molitor* (24 Rue Nungesser et Coli, 1931-1934).

For whatever reason – the low status of cleaners in society, their invisibility and the difficulty of tracing them – and despite the acknowledged importance of the rhetoric of cleanliness for Le Corbusier, none of the scholarship on his domestic architecture deal with how the buildings were cleaned, or by whom. Therefore it has been necessary to conduct primary research in Paris, including visits to Le Corbusier's dwellings that are accessible, to the archives of the Fondation Le Corbusier, Paris, Haut-de-Seine and Yvelines for his buildings just outside Paris and Bibliothèque Nationale.

What becomes apparent when starting to research this topic through primary sources, however, is that we are dealing with another subject entirely. Although this essay is subtitled 'In Search of Le Corbusier's Cleaners', we find, in fact, that there are no cleaners at all. Instead, cleaning was absorbed into the multiple tasks of domestic servants, of whom it turns out there were many. Ultimately, because of the inherent invisibility of cleaning processes, this essay concentrates on the spaces provided for the people who cleaned.

[...]

It is my belief that these spaces have remained invisible to continue the hegemonic interpretation in architectural historiography of 1920s Western Europe as an era of female emancipation, socialist ideas, intellectualisation and joie de vivre. In agreement with Laubier in *The Condition of Women in*

France: 1945 to the Present, my argument is in relation to the domestic that these experiences were only experienced by the few: middle and upper classes. Life for the rest remained as burdensome. [...] When considering the homes in their entirety, Le Corbusier's dwellings represent a microcosm image of an era: more limitedly progressive than their perception teaches us. Part of the interest is, of course, the contrast between iconic architecture and wealthy, employing owners and ordinary, hidden, service areas and employed servants.

References cited in extract:

Forty, A. (1986) *Objects of Desire: Design and Society 1750-1980*. London: Thames and Hudson

Friedman D. S., LAHJI N. (eds.) (1997) *Plumbing: Sounding Modern Architecture*. New York: Princeton University Press

Laubier, C. (1990), *The Condition of Women in France: 1945 to the Present*. London: Routledge

Overly, P. (2007) *Light, Air and Openness: Modern Architecture Between the Wars*. London: Thames and Hudson

Wigley, M. (1995) *White Walls, Designer Dresses: The Fashioning of Modern Architecture*. London: MIT Press

### **Davide Spina, 2012**

#### **America and the Sign Economy of Postwar Italy: the ENI Building in Rome**

This paper explores the semiotic implications of a paradox embedded in the Italian system: the disconnection between what is seen in the realm of consumption and what is lived in the world of production. The problem is examined in relation to the trajectory of modernity in the country, from national unification to the current economic crisis, with a focus on the encounter with American modernity during the postwar period. The discussion unfolds around the ENI building in Rome, an American-looking building commissioned by national oil company ENI in 1959. In addition to semiotics, insights from psychoanalysis and critical theory enable us to appreciate the significance of a seemingly uninteresting work that academia always ignored, dismissing it as a derivative. The theoretical framework informs the observation of the phenomenal object as well as that of its pictorial, photographic, cinematic and textual representations. This study expands on existing literature on Americanisation in the discipline of architectural history by looking at the long-term psychological and political consequences of the transatlantic exchange in Italy. In so doing, it provides a different perspective on postwar Italian architecture. In conclusion, the relevance of the ENI building is highlighted in relation to recent building developments in Rome that seem to repeat the same pattern.

[...]

The ENI building is not an object you find in handbooks of modern architecture. Over the years it has been ignored by academia and is now an obsolete, mute glass box sitting at the margins of the architectural canon. Yet, for the reasons that I outline here, it is arguably one of the most interesting Italian buildings constructed since WW2. The following study is

based on new material, archival and oral evidence that has never circulated before.

The client, national oil company Ente Nazionale Idrocarburi (ENI), played a pivotal role in introducing an American model of modernisation in postwar Italy. ENI was a 'one man show'. Its head, Enrico Mattei, was more an absolute monarch than a public administrator, an attitude which earned him the criticism of those who thought he ran ENI 'as a state within the state'. A man of humble origins, under Fascism Mattei had become a successful industrialist in the chemical sector. Then, when Mussolini fell, he went on to lead the Christian Democratic branch of the resistance movement against the puppet Republic of Salò and the Nazis. After the war, the National Liberation Committee, impressed by his outstanding performance as a partisan leader, appointed him chairman of AGIP, the oil company of the Fascist regime. ENI came into existence in 1953 from the ashes of AGIP, from which it inherited personnel (Italy had no Nuremberg: see Pavone 1995, Battini 2004), organisational structure and real estate assets.

Mattei's aim, as head of ENI, was to bring the country into the club of major industrialised nations by means of a long-term national energy policy seeking out oil and gas resources wherever possible (see Perrone 1995). This effort was portrayed as a legitimate 'quest of a place in the sun', a slogan echoing Fascist imperial language which nonetheless Mattei repeated ad nauseam. Underpinning the 'quest' was 'Neo-Atlanticism' (coined by Pella in 1957), a doctrine connected to the short-lived exploits of a powerful strand within the Christian Democratic Party (DC). The Neo-Atlanticists were fascinated by American levels of affluence, which they wanted to reproduce in Italy. In order to bring this about they thought Italy should exercise an independent voice in the Mediterranean and the Middle East, areas hitherto under the influence of France and Britain, waning colonial powers. Mattei and his political associates looked for endorsement from a non-colonial, dominant power, the United States, seeing themselves as junior partners in the transfer of power.

[...]

The design of the building was entrusted to Milan-based engineers Bacigalupo and Ratti. The versatile firm had already worked for ENI and was to maintain a close relationship with the company for a long time. B&R positioned a SOM-like slab right on the eastern end of the lake, far from the neighbouring buildings. The building's isolation is a good allegory of the will to self-organisation, marking the ethos of the company in national and international affairs and also releases it from the obligation to negotiate a context reminiscent of painful events. In addition, the positioning adjacent to the horizontal stretch of water makes the building emerge from a tabula rasa, a device that allows for a scene of unmistakable modernity.

The building incorporated the most advanced technologies of its time. Its twenty storeys made it the biggest steel frame building in Italy at the time of its completion. It was air-conditioned throughout and for this reason the glass panels on the façade could not be opened. To fix the travertine cladding to the sides, the design team employed a standard mastic from American aerospace engineering. The vertical circulation was ensured by nine American-crafted OTIS elevators, two of which were reserved for the top managers and went straight to the top floor. As the icing on the cake, provisions were made to accommodate a rooftop helipad.

By the time B&R sat down to design the building, across the ocean SOM-style boxes had been appearing all over the country for almost a decade. This type

was the result of the problematic adoption of European modernism by North-American corporate practice. In this culture, office design was a minimum investment, maximum profit business. Therefore what the resulting glass boxes were valued for was a favourable ratio between the quantity of rentable space in the interior and the walled perimeter, a logic which generated thick buildings (thick shapes make for more surface with less perimeter). In these buildings, technology is not there just for show, but to help bring this about. Steel frame systems, air conditioning machines and fluorescent lighting allow a dense concentration of workforce in deep floor plates organised in open space layouts. As Manfredo Tafuri pointed out, the 'true "value"' of the curtain walled, open-spaced building is in its 'identity with economic policy' (Tafuri 1978), in the pact between architecture and corporate rationality.

References cited in extract:

Battini, M. (2004) 'Sins of memory: Reflections on the lack of an Italian Nuremberg and the administration of international justice after 1945'. *Journal of Modern Italian Studies*. 9

Pavone, C. (1995) *Alle Origini della Repubblica, Scritti su Fascismo, Antifascismo e Continuità dello Stato*. Turin: Bollati Boringhieri

Perrone, N. (1995) *Obiettivo Mattei: Petrolio, Stati Uniti e Politica dell'ENI*. Rome: Gamberetti

Tafuri, M. (1987) *The Sphere and the Labyrinth: Avant-Gardes and Architecture from Piranesi to the 1970s*. London: MIT Press

### **Amy Thomas, 2011**

#### **'The Mart of the World': An Architectural and Geographical History of the London Stock Exchange**

A stock exchange is a spatial contradiction. Conceived as a marketplace for the trade in securities and other financial instruments, it is intended to provide a regulated forum to ensure a fair and free market for its members: an open economic environment that is only made possible by its institutional confinement. Once the largest and most influential of its kind in the world, the London Stock Exchange (LSE) has historically embodied this contradiction. Established in the heart of the imperial metropolis, the LSE emerged at the core of a global financial network that was sustaining Britain's territorial and economic empire and facilitating international commerce. Concurrently, its self-regulated standing within the City of London and reliance on an esoteric world of gentlemanly connections positioned it as an establishment that was both shaped and assisted by its locality.

With the rebuilding and subsequent enlargement of the LSE from the 1850s onwards came the increasing complexity of the floor as a microcosm for imperial trade. An extraordinary diagram by J.J. Cole from 1880 shows the organisation of the trading floor prior to enlargement using colour-coded sections to represent the markets, defined by curved and perforated lines as if to highlight their flux and instability. A subsequent pamphlet written in 1884 'to confer on the arrangements of the Market on the opening of the Eastern addition' uses the drawing as a reference for the proposed reorganisation of the floor in the New House, providing a rare insight into the link between the trading floor and the global marketplace.

Throughout the first half of the twentieth century, the building avoided any great alterations and largely escaped the onslaught of the Blitz. The increasing internationalisation of finance and technological advancements in trading that occurred throughout this period resulted in the move to rebuild in 1966, in a concrete, modernist idiom that had radically departed from the institutional classicism of the last two centuries. Designed by architects Lloyd Llewelyn Davies, Fitzroy Robinson & Partners and Weeks, Forestier-Walker & Bor, the new concrete monolith was completed in 1979 (officially opened in 1972), reaching 26 storeys, with a trading floor spanning 23,500ft. However, despite the attempt at modernisation and almost £11 million spent on the project, the building became rapidly out-dated, culminating in the abandonment of the trading floor following the deregulation of the stock market and the abolition of open outcry trading in 1986.

In the ensuing decades, the Stock Exchange decreased in scale and prominence with the geographical restructuring of a global economy and the advancements in electronic trading and continued to be housed on several floors within the tower. Coupled with the loss of its regulatory powers in 2000 to the Financial Services Authority (FSA), the change in architectural demands for the LSE resulted in the move to an office building without a trading floor, located in Paternoster Square. Built in 2003 as a component in William Whitfield's masterplan by architects Eric Parry and Sheppard Robson in a restrained modernist style, the edifice was subsequently fitted for the LSE in 2004 by interior architects Gensler, using rhetorics of openness, global reach and transparency to appeal to its international membership. Now defined by a central glazed atrium with LED strips and media screens adorning its walls, the corporate serenity of the LSE is a far cry from the chaotic marketplace of centuries before.

In mapping the movement of global markets alongside the shifting terrain of the LSE buildings, this dissertation considers the manner in which the latter reflects the geographical scope of Britain's capital accumulation throughout the last three centuries. The LSE is looked at in the context of the rise and fall of the British Empire and in its more recent role as channel for foreign capital, in order to assess whether its architectural choices might reflect shifting attitudes towards economic expansion. The Exchange is analysed in its role as a marketplace to evaluate the extent to which the organisation, operation and visibility of its trading floor is exemplar of broader shifts in international finance. Within this context, the temporal incompatibility between architectural permanence and the volatility of financial markets will be interrogated, exploring the ability of architecture to accommodate verbal, technological and economic exchange.

In addition to charting its spatial link with global finance, I consider the site-specificity of the LSE in the City of London and within British Society, as well as its relationship with Government. Hovering between private club and platform for public investment, the LSE is considered in its institutional capacity, assessing the role of architecture as a method for the conscious self-representation of a collective social identity.

Addressing the history of a British financial institution with global reach, I endeavour to bridge the gap between geographical economic analysis and architectural history, not to provide a complete architectural survey nor historical narrative of the LSE, but rather to align key moments in both histories to the development of financial markets. In order to encompass the topographical and chronological breadth in question, the enquiry implements a methodology of spatial scales.

Beginning with the telescopic assessment of international capital flows, the first section addresses the symbiosis between imperial expansion and subsequent globalisation of the economy, and the cartography and scalar shifts of the LSE buildings. The second section more specifically looks at the role of the LSE as a marketplace and microcosm for international commerce, especially the organisation of markets on the trading floor. In the third section, the focus is the interior world of the LSE, as architectural form and style are explored as a form of institutional expression within the national context. Following on from this, the final section narrows its focus to the mechanical and psychological aspects of trade, looking at the interaction of jobber and broker within the architectural environment of the LSE. In producing a dialogue between macroscopic and microscopic analysis, the dissertation aims to expose the more tangible interpretations of an immaterial system that is so influential in shaping our material reality.

**Miriam Delaney, 2010**

**Line, Text, Silence & Scale: Reading the Raven Maps of Londonderry, 1622**

This thesis presents a critical reading of cartography in the early modern period, in order to examine the ideological implications of representation at the beginning of modern colonial expansion, and to explore an architect's conditioned response to reading drawings. My primary objects of study are maps prepared by the cartographer Thomas Raven in 1622, which trace the early years of the Londonderry plantations. The primary interpretative idea is that maps are opaque cultural artefacts, which can reveal unconscious ideologies implicit in the cultures and societies from which they are produced. This notion is complicated by the belief that no observer of these maps can have a singular wholly objective view.

History is always written in the present, and each historian brings their background, training and scope of knowledge to bear on their research.

I hope therefore, to acknowledge how my own training and practice as an architect has coloured my reading of the Raven maps and to indicate how this reading may differ from interpretations originating from other discourses and professions. I anticipate that this dissertation will add the study of iconography and cartography, and that my readings of the Raven maps will form part of wider discourse on colonialism, particularly the colonial mindset in the early modern era.

The critical reading and research which has accompanied this dissertation has been very broad, and rather than apply a single theory or philosophical methodology to the work, I have used a wide range of sources. I begin each section by noting key theorists and historians who have influenced my understandings of the topic at hand. This framework introduces ideas from iconographical analysis, cartographic historiography, anthropology, architecture, geography, archaeology and critical theory. The starting point of this analysis is the assumption that maps can be examined as value-laden images. Also key is the hypothesis that, through close reading and analysis of the maps, interpretations can be made about the early colonial mindset. I begin by introducing the context in which these maps were made, specifically Ireland and Ulster in the early modern period, and also the wider context of exploration and colonisation in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The second chapter focuses on the primary object of study, the Raven maps, and examines their provenance and agency, describing the structure of the maps and their position within contemporaneous Irish and

European cartography. In chapter three, I study the modes of representation used in the Raven maps. Four modes of reading the maps are undertaken, beginning by looking at line and legend within the maps; I then examine the importance of scale and measure in both the maps and the wider context of the plantations of Ulster. The third reading explores text within the maps and the final section looks at absences, omissions and editing in the maps. I conclude by considering how the maps have been used by cartographers, archaeologists and geographers, and how my own training has influenced my readings of them.

[...]

One aspect of the Raven maps that surprised me was the density and importance of the text within the maps. Text on architectural drawings is usually directional, providing information and instruction to clients, builders and planners. On Raven's drawings however, the text is highly charged, polemical and political. Unlike architectural drawings, where the traditional role of text is to reinforce the drawn image, the text on Raven's drawings makes explicit what the drawings omit; the intensity of conflict between the colonisers and natives within the plantations of Londonderry.

The most significant difference I believe between an architect's reading of the Raven maps and those arising from other professions is that the architect constantly imagines the built reality of the world drawn in maps and plan. It was therefore initially difficult for me to conceptually differentiate between the analysis of the drawings and the analysis of the town and villages. The role of the architect's imagination, in 'constructing' imaged space from two-dimensional drawings, leads one initially to see the maps as tools for mental construction rather than constructions in their own right.

In the research and preparation of this dissertation my reflections on how architects use and read drawings came late. The maps Thomas Raven made of Londonderry in 1622 are ultimately those made by hand, in time. They present glimpse into a world of great upheaval, social, political and cultural change. I hope to have shown through my readings of these drawings, how close examination can not only illustrate societies and ideologies past, but also make one more self-conscious in the present.