THE ARCHITECTURE AND URBAN CULTURE OF FINANCIAL CRISIS
A ONE DAY WORKSHOP FOR URBAN RESEARCHERS

PROFESSOR IAIN BORDEN BARTLETT SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE
MICHAEL EDWARDS BARTLETT SCHOOL OF PLANNING
PROFESSOR MATTHEW GANDY UCL URBAN LABORATORY
PROFESSOR SIR PETER HALL BARTLETT SCHOOL OF PLANNING
DAVIDA HAMILTON DEGW
DR ANDREW HARRIS UCL URBAN LABORATORY
PROFESSOR MARIA KAIKA UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER
MAX NATHAN LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS, CLG & CENTRE FOR CITIES
LAWRENCE WEBB KING'S COLLEGE LONDON
DR DARIUSZ WÓJCIK UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

FRIDAY 24 OCTOBER 2008 09.30 - 17.30
THE BARTLETT SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE
Rm GO2 WATES HOUSE
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SUPPORTED BY
THE ARCHITECTURE RESEARCH FUND
BARTLETT SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE
UCL URBAN LABORATORY
CABE

DEVISED BY LOUIS MORENO FOR THE
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WORKSHOP PROGRAMME

9.30 - 10.00  Tea and Coffee

10.00 Welcome by Professor Iain Borden (Bartlett School of Architecture)

10.10 Workshop Overview by Louis Moreno

10.25 Keynote by Professor Sir Peter Hall (Bartlett School of Planning)

Session One chaired by Professor Sir Peter Hall

11.00 Introduction (chair)  
11.10 Dr Dariusz Wójcik (University of Oxford)  
An Economic Geography of the Financial World: myths and facts

11.30 Brief Q&A

11.35 Dr. Andrew Harris (UCL Urban Laboratory)  
The Golden Calf and Goose: art and finance in contemporary London

11.55 Brief Q&A

12.00 Discussion

12.30 - 13.30 Lunch

Session Two chaired by Michael Edwards (Bartlett School of Planning)

13.30 Introduction (chair)  
13.40 Max Nathan (LSE/CLG/Centre for Cities)  
Counting Cranes: economic geography and the rise and fall of city centre living in the UK

14.00 Brief Q&A

14.05 Davida Hamilton (DEGW)  
Title (tbc)

14.25 Brief Q&A

14.30 Discussion

15.00 - 15.30 Tea and Coffee

Session Three chaired by Professor Matthew Gandy (UCL Urban Laboratory)

15.30 Introduction (chair)  
15.40 Professor Maria Kaika (University of Manchester)  
Autistic Architecture: re-imagi(ni)ng London & reinventing the Square Mile

16.00 Brief Q&A

16.05 Lawrence Webb (King's College London)  
Learning from ‘Las Vegas East’: economic crisis & cinematic space in ‘The King of Marvin Gardens’ & ‘Atlantic City’

16.25 Brief Q&A

16.30 Discussion

17.00 Discussant response by Professor Matthew Gandy

17.25 Conclusion by Louis Moreno

17.30 - 19.30 Reception
Dr Andrew Harris  
UCL Urban Laboratory

The Golden Calf and Goose: art and finance in contemporary London

On the very same day in September 2008 that Lehman Brothers filed for bankruptcy, the artist Damien Hirst sold an unprecedented £111.5 million of new work at auction in London. This event will be used to frame an examination into the complex links over the past twenty years between London’s art world and financial sector. During a period of sustained success, both have relied on new conceptual innovations and promotional strategies, strong political support and new flows of global capital. Both have also greatly benefited from a shared role in the widespread socio-economic reshaping of inner London during this period. This prominence and dominance of high art and high finance has been symptomatic of new inequalities and skewed political priorities in London. Reflecting on the recession of the early 1990s, alternative cultural formations and economic spaces are considered that could emerge during a time of financial crisis.

Andrew Harris is a Lecturer in Urban Studies and Geography at the UCL Urban Laboratory. His research focuses on the contemporary reshaping of urban cultural landscapes and urban infrastructure. He provides critical perspectives in particular on the creative city, gentrification and urban branding. Working between London and Mumbai, he uses comparative frameworks to emphasise the specificity of cities, and to fashion more diverse and cosmopolitan agendas of urban research and policy-making.
Autistic Architecture: re-imagi(ni)ng London and reinventing the Square Mile

London’s Square Mile and its reigning elite authority, the Corporation of London constitute a gap in most Londoners’ cognitive map. The Corporation is not only a powerful business networking institution, but also a powerful planning authority, that until recently had sole jurisdiction over planning decisions for the Square Mile. The Corporation underwent very little institutional evolution over the centuries. However, over the last 30 years, with changes in the urban economy, and a new generation of urban elites entering London’s scene, the Corporation’s structure and ethnography changed dramatically. The paper examines how these changes are reflected in the changing way in which the Corporation promotes and funds urban renewal. Using the recently commissioned iconic buildings in the City as an entry point, the paper aims to: a) examine how changes in the economy, politics and structure of the Corporation are linked to strategic changes in building codes, plot ratios, and land use policies, and b) unveil the role that architectural design and infrastructure are called upon to perform, in creating a new public image for the Corporation and for London.

Maria Kaika is Professor in Human Geography at the University of Manchester. She holds a DPhil in Human Geography from the University of Oxford and an MA in Architecture from the National Technical University of Athens, as well as professional qualifications as an architect. Her research interests lie with the political economy of architectural design, the relationship between built form and urban patronage, and urban political ecology. She is author of: City of Flows: Modernity, Nature and the City (2005 Routledge) and co-editor of In the Nature of Cities: Urban Political Ecology and the Politics of Urban Metabolism (2006 Routledge).

Max Nathan
LSE Communities and Local Government Centre For Cities

Counting Cranes: economic geography and the rise and fall of city centre living in the UK

Geography needs to explain three things: the production of space, the production of places and the production of everyday life in those places. It turns out that economic geography provides a number of helpful tools to do this. In particular, it helps us understand what Michael Storper calls “the demand for urbanness”, and how this is shaped by both long term economic change, and framed by residents, firms, financial institutions and government. Urban housing markets are the sites where many of these conflicting demands come together. With that in mind, this presentation has two aims. First, to set out the ‘economic geography’ view of the production of space, places and everyday life in the city. Second, to explore a real-life example from the UK: the emergence of city centre housing markets and ‘city centre living’ over the 1990s, and their increasingly fragile state today.

Max Nathan is based at LSE, where he is doing PhD research on the economics of cultural diversity in UK cities. He is a Policy Advisor at the Department of Communities and Local Government (CLG) on a range of issues including urban policy, economic development and migration. He is a Research Associate at the Centre for Cities, a leading UK voice on urban policy, where he was previously Senior Researcher. He led the planning and development of the Centre, and worked on a number of projects covering economic development and regeneration, innovation and housing. Max is also a Visiting Fellow at the Institute of Public Policy Research and The Work Foundation.
Learning from ‘Las Vegas East’: economic crisis and cinematic space in The King of Marvin Gardens and Atlantic City

How have mass cultural forms such as cinema historically represented complex economic and urban phenomena? What role have periods of economic crisis played in the modulation of aesthetic and narrative conventions? This paper will outline some ways in which these questions may be approached in the context of ‘New Hollywood’ cinema and the global economic turbulence of the 1970s. As a case study, this paper examines two films shot on location in Atlantic City, New Jersey at opposite ends of the 1970s: The King of Marvin Gardens (Bob Rafelson, 1972) and Atlantic City (Louis Malle, 1980). Taken together, these films chart the city’s trajectory from decline in the early 1970s to processes of redevelopment at the end of the decade through a paradigmatic neoliberal urban restructuring policy: the introduction of deregulated gambling in 1976. This can be seen as an exemplary case of what David Harvey has referred to as a ‘spatial fix’ for the accumulation crisis of the 1970s. The paper will explore some of the ways in which these two films used architectural motifs and popular narrative representations of economics (in Marvin Gardens, the Monopoly board; in Atlantic City, the figure of the gambler) to negotiate this transitional moment in American capitalism and urban development.

Lawrence Webb is a PhD candidate in the Film Studies department at King’s College London. His doctoral research focuses on the relationship between cinema and the global economic and urban restructuring processes of the 1970s across several international contexts.

An Economic Geography of the Financial World: myths and facts

The presentation is based on major findings from an empirical analysis of the global financial sector from mid-1990s until now. These findings will be used to interrogate the assumptions often made in social sciences about the growth of financial services, concentration of financial power, rise of new financial centres, and the nature of financial crises.

Dariusz Wójcik was appointed a Lecturer at the School of Geography and the Environment and a Fellow of St Peter’s College Oxford in July 2007. Dariusz is interested in research at the intersection of finance and geography, whether it is called financial geography, geographies of finance, or geographies of money. Specifically his research interests focus on three areas: financial services and centres, capital markets, and corporate governance.
PARTICIPANTS

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SPECIAL THANKS

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