

In Place of Architecture Symposium

Friday 6 November 2015

Bonington Lecture Theatre
Nottingham Trent University

9.30 am – 10 am

Registration and refreshments, Bonington Atrium

Morning session

10 am – 10.15 am

Welcome Introduction

10.20 am – 10.50 am

Peter Ainsworth

10.50 am – 11.20 am

Marisela Mendoza; *Felix Candela's architecture seen through the lens of Hans Guttman*

11.20 am – 11.50 am

Guy Moreton; *Wittgenstein's denkbewegungen: The retreat as creative condition*

11.50 am – 12.20 pm

Fergus Heron; *Desires Grown Solid: Shopping Centre Interiors*

12.20 pm – 12.40 pm

Plenary

LUNCH BREAK

Refreshments are available from Bonington Café, Dine Arkwright Café (Newton building) and the Students' Union building

Afternoon session

2 pm – 2.10 pm

Introduction

2.10 pm – 2.40 pm

Michele Allen in conversation with Elain Harwood; *Photography Domesticity and the Modernist Environment: Exploring Peterlee New Town*

2.40 pm – 3.10 pm

Esther Johnson in conversation with Ian Waites; *Modern living*

3.10 pm – 3.40 pm

Emily Richardson and Jonathan P Watts; *Articulating Space: The Modern House in Artists' Film and Video*

3.40 pm – 4 pm

Plenary

COMFORT BREAK

4.30 pm – 5.15 pm

Keynote Speaker

Andrew Higgott; *Image and counter-image: architecture and its narratives*

Close of events and drinks



#NTUIPoA

Titles / Abstracts

Peter Ainsworth

In this paper I would like to demonstrate how, within my practice I explore various structures; aesthetics and social interactions form the complex urban environment that surrounds us. To highlight that within my work I focus on spaces that are on the periphery of urban areas where I am looking objects and encounters within this space. The photographs produced depicting marks made by subconscious interactions, traces of activity and the render of concrete in sites such as flyovers, storm drains and the isosceles of land around retail parks.

I am intending to demonstrate how ideas of non-human relations have informed the development of my practice and how these concerns may be explored photographically. My intention is to highlight the idea that though the photograph has a more perceived direct relation to the real and empirical I will discuss how making the work is a quixotic and non-exhaustive process of mapping. In a site surrounded on all sides by human infrastructure, I explore an alternate reading of architectural space. And will discuss how the work illustrates how objects interact despite of, as well as because of, human activity.

Marisela Mendoza

Felix Candela's architecture seen through the lens of Hans Guttman

Felix Candela's hyperbolic paraboloid concrete shells became icons of 20th Century Mexican Architecture. Their seductive form and the poetic spaces yielded under these shells were captured by various contemporary photographers including Hans Guttman-also known as Juan Guzman- whose work stands out not only for ingeniously engaging with the aesthetics of these structures but also with the socio-cultural factors that influence their architectural crafting. Coincidentally Candela and Guttman were involved in the Spanish Civil war and they both fled to Mexico at the end of the 1930s.

Guy Moreton

Wittgenstein's denkbewegungen: the retreat as creative condition

Ludwig Wittgenstein's solitary walks in the landscape surrounding his pastoral retreat in Skjolden, on the west coast of Norway allowed him to *do philosophy*, through what he described as – *denkbewegungen* – paths of thought. Robert Macfarlane further extends the etymological translation of *denkbewegungen* as 'thought-movements' or 'thought ways': ideas that have been brought into being by means of motion along a path (*Weg*). Wittgenstein's desire for a simple life, defined through an ascetic rigour that, away from Cambridge and settled in his house built on a rocky outcrop with a view over the glacial Lake Eidsvatnet, allowed him to devote himself entirely to his work. This paper will map and recount walks made to the remote site of the Wittgenstein house with the artist and poet Alec Finlay as we attempted to uncover something of the extraordinary character of the landscape in Skjolden, and in doing so, reveal the contemplative side of Wittgenstein. The house no longer exists; instead the ruins of the rock foundations where the house stood – stand for the possibility and the place of thought.



Fergus Heron

Desires Grown Solid: Shopping Centre Interiors

Desires Grown Solid: Shopping Centre Interiors presents practice based research consisting of photographs belonging to wider artistic work concerned with making visible connections, discontinuities and tensions between the traditional and the modern. The particular work presented depicts local spaces where globally produced goods are displayed, desired and consumed, proposing renewed ways of seeing modern interior architectural spaces as part of a globalising world. The work involves a set of inter-related considerations about real space as abstract image; absence and the uncanny; the public and private; modern vision and globalisation.

Michele Allen In conversation with Elain Harwood

Photography Domesticity and the Modernist Environment: Exploring Peterlee New Town

Esther Johnson In conversation with Ian Waites

Modern Living

A discussion of the themes raised by Esther's work, including *The View from My Window Tells Me I'm Home* an observation, investigation and social record of the lives and thoughts of ten residents of the Golden Lane Estate, London; *Elevation* an unique portrait of Sheffield's in/famous Park Hill estate, created during an eclipse period between clearance and reinvention and Johnson's most recent work *Alone Together, the Social Life of Benches* which illuminates the thoughts and memories of frequent users of two public places in London.

Emily Richardson and Jonathan P Watts

Articulating Space; The Modern House in Artists' Film and Video

Jonathan P Watts will be in conversation with Emily Richardson about *3 Church Walk*, a film about the modernist architect H.T. (Jim) Cadbury Brown's Suffolk house that he and his wife Betty Dale designed and built in 1962 on a site originally ear marked by the composer Benjamin Britten for the Aldeburgh Festival of Music and the Arts' first opera stage. H. T. (Jim) Cadbury-Brown was a British architect best known for his contribution to the design of the iconic Brutalist development of the Royal College of Art, and earlier work on pavilions for the Festival of Britain in the summer of 1951. The film is a journey through the house in its abandoned state as he left it when he died in 2009. The soundtrack is composed from recordings of the objects, surfaces and materials of the house, playing the house as if it were an instrument, much in the same way as Britten played car springs or tea-cups for his compositions, *The Burning Fiery Furnace* and *Noye's Fludde*.



Andrew Higgott

Keynote Address. *Image and counter-image: architecture and its narratives*

The photograph constructs meaning, and in the case of architecture forms a second level of construction beyond that of material making. Buildings are brought alive by presenting them in a heightened condition, seen on a kind of bright morning, perfect and immaculate, emphasising architectural forms over their context: architecture considered as a whole object, a unified entity of parts.

An alternative approach presents architecture as fragmentary and contingent: the background to life taking place, its image not controlled, and with a far wider range of inclusion of what might be considered an appropriate subject. A divergent photographic practice presents a counter-narrative: architecture in a far broader sense is presented as the conveyor of meaning. Its photography institutes and mediates social, personal and spatial interpretation between the subject photographed and its perception, and no longer privileges architecture as designed, making clear in a multiplicity of ways the interdependence of the built and the imagined.

Contributor Biographies

Peter Ainsworth

Peter Ainsworth (1978) is an artist and Lecturer at Portsmouth University, living and working in London. Best known for his photographic works he also uses elements of printmaking, sculpture and video in the realisation of his projects. His work has been exhibited internationally and is held in the collection of the Museum of Fine Art Houston. He has been awarded a Pavilion Commission, Flash Forward Award, Rhubarb Hungry Bursary, and was the recipient of the inaugural Dazed and Confused Emerging Artist Award, 2010.

The project, Zone of Transit, 2011- 2014 was exhibited at Format11, Derby, 'At the Edge of Logic', Plataforma Revolver, Lisbon, State of the Art – New Contemporary Photography, NRW-Forum, Dusseldorf, Uncommon Ground, Flowers East Gallery, London, and formed the basis of his first London Solo show 'Unsounded Surplus' at George and Jorgen Gallery. In his recent work he has been documenting objects and assemblages made using domestic and building materials within the context of the studio. In his research he has been informed by debates surrounding Object Orientated Ontology or 'OOO'.

Marisela Mendoza

Dr Marisela Mendoza is a Senior Lecturer at Nottingham Trent University, she has also taught at the University of Lincoln, the University of Nottingham and Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México. She gained her architecture degree (with Honours) from Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México and she was sponsored by Consejo Nacional de Ciencia y Tecnología - CONACYT– to do a MSc and PhD at Nottingham University, UK. In 2010 she received the Royal Institute of British Architects Research Trust Award to study the work of the Spanish born architect Felix Candela. Dr Mendoza is a member of the International Association of Shell and Spatial Structures Working Groups: Historical Spatial Structures and Concrete Shell Roofs. She is also a member of the History of Structural Engineering Study Group.



Guy Moreton

Guy Moreton is an artist and Associate Professor of photography at Southampton Solent University. He is particularly interested in the relationship between photography and literature through the traditions of travel writing, nature-writing, modernity and the manifestation of architecture in the imagination.

His research uses photography to explore ideas of exile, wilderness and trauma; most recently in the landscape of Kurt Schwitters' Merz constructions in England and Norway, and an ongoing theme in his visual practice is the complex relationship between landscape and thought, particularly through the writing of WG Sebald, and in the topography and character of Ludwig Wittgenstein's philosophical thinking during his self-imposed retreat to the remote west coast of Norway. He is co-author, with Alec Finlay and Michael Nedo of *Ludwig Wittgenstein – There Where You Are Not* (Black Dog Publishing London) and his work has been published, presented and exhibited widely in the UK and internationally, including *EAST International* Norwich; *There Where You Are Not* (with Alec Finlay and Jeremy Millar) at the John Hansard Gallery, Southampton; *Waterlog* (with Tacita Dean, Marcus Coates, Alec Finlay, Susan & Alexander Maris, Simon Pope) at Norwich Castle Museum and Art Gallery; the Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts, UEA; The Collection Lincoln; and *Wall to Wall* at The Hatton Gallery, University of Newcastle (curated by Mariam Zulfiqar and Film and Video Umbrella). His photographs are represented in public collections, including the University of Southampton and the collection of modern and contemporary European Art in Southampton City Art Gallery.

Fergus Heron

Fergus Heron studied at the Royal College of Art and the University for the Creative Arts at Farnham. He was nominated for the Jerwood Artist Platform and his work has been exhibited internationally in group shows at the Museum for Contemporary Art Roskilde, Denmark; K3 Zurich, Switzerland; Cantieri Culturali Alla Zisa, Palermo, Italy and at Pitzhanger Manor Gallery and House, London; George and Jorgen, London; Centre for Contemporary Art and the Natural World, Exeter; Royal West of England Academy, Bristol and was included in the first major exhibition of Photography at Tate Britain; 'How We Are: Photographing Britain'. He is a Senior Lecturer in Photography in the College of Arts and Humanities at the University of Brighton.

Dr Michele Allen

I am a photographic artist and researcher based in North East England. My artistic and academic work is broadly concerned with sense of place, and is often created in response to specific locations. My art practice incorporates documentary, video and oral history often involving some degree of collaboration with particular social groups or communities in its production, and has been exhibited in gallery spaces, site-specific installations and community settings. I am interested in revealing hidden histories, or unfamiliar views of places and I'm fascinated by the variety of different perspectives that can exist in connection to any given place or situation.

I will be talking about the photographic project 'While Reason Sleeps' and the sound work 'An Exercise in Total Environment' both of which explore the work of artist Victor Pasmore who collaborated with architects in the area to create a modernist housing and landscape scheme for the Newtown of Peterlee which included his often maligned modernist sculpture the Apollo Pavilion at its core. My work seeks to explore the multiple discourses connected to Pasmore's work drawing on planning documents, art historical surveys and my own research with residents



of the area, who shared their memories and experiences of living in Peterlee and allowed me to photograph inside their homes.

Elain Harwood

Elain Harwood is a historian at Historic England specialising in post-war architecture. She first campaigned for the listing of the Apollo Pavilion in 1995-6, and has just completed a book on post-war architecture, *Space, Hope and Brutalism*, published by Yale University Press. She grew up in Nottinghamshire and published the Pevsner City Guide to Nottingham in 2008.

Esther Johnson

Esther Johnson is a UK-based artist and filmmaker whose cross-disciplinary research practice explores documentary portraiture and narrative, through moving image, audio and photography. She was awarded an MA from the Royal College of Art, London, and a BA (Hons) at Royal Holloway, University of London. In 2012 she won the Philip Leverhulme Prize for Visual & Performing Arts for young scholars.

Johnson's documentary portraits are concerned with the effects of progress and societal change on communities, and how the universal impacts on the individual. Projects include socially-engaged work that draws upon oral history, contemporary politics and experience – this work

takes the form of portraits that focus on marginal worlds to reveal resonant stories that may otherwise remain hidden or ignored. Recurring themes include personal histories, heritage, tradition, folklore, regeneration and explorations of architectural vernaculars and the inhabited environment.

Work is made for exhibition, cinema screening and broadcast through individual projects, commissions and residencies, and has been exhibited internationally in over 40 countries including BFI London Film Festival; ICA, London; International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam; Istanbul Biennial; Kassel Documentary Film and Video Festival, Germany; NASA, California; Tate Britain and Tate Modern, London. Film and audio works have been broadcast on BBC and Channel 4; and on ABC Australia, Resonance fm and RTÉ radio.

www.blanchepictures.com

www.shu.ac.uk/research/c3ri/people/esther-johnson

Ian Waites

Ian Waites is a senior lecturer in the History of Art and Design at the University of Lincoln. He is particularly interested in the social and cultural history of post-World War Two Britain, and is currently researching childhood memory and sense of place on a 1960s council estate in Lincolnshire. His most recent publication is an article on the disappearance of the estate's playgrounds, entitled 'Once there were roundabouts', for *Uniformagazine* (Spring-Summer 2015).

Emily Richardson

Emily Richardson is a UK based filmmaker who creates film portraits of particular places. Her work focuses on sites in transition and covers an extraordinarily diverse range of buildings and landscapes including empty East London streets, forests, North Sea oil fields, post-war tower blocks, empty cinemas and Cold War military facilities.



She is currently doing a practice-led PhD on modern architectural space in artists' film and video at the Royal College of Art in London. Her current research interests are how architectural spaces are reactivated as filmic spaces and the role sound plays in this. She has recently completed two film works on architect's houses from the post war period, *3 Church Walk*, on the Cadbury Brown's house and *Beach House*, on a John Penn house.

Jonathan P Watts

Writer and critic. www.sounding-east.blogspot.co.uk

Andrew Higgott

Andrew Higgott has taught the history and theory of architecture for the past twenty five years, primarily at the Architectural Association and at the University of East London, where he co-ordinated architectural history and theory teaching and ran an MA course on architectural theory. Over the past year he has lectured at Cornell University, the Bartlett School, Royal College of Art and elsewhere.

As well as numerous other articles and essays, he has published two full length books - *Mediating Modernism* (2007) on British modern architecture and the published media- and co-edited *Camera Constructs* (2012) on the theory, practice and history of the relationship of architecture and photography. He is currently working on new publications relating to architectural photography and to the history of modern architecture, and divides his time between Birmingham, London and Sao Paulo.



Delegate Information

Venue: Nottingham Trent University, Bonington building, Dryden Street, Nottingham, NG1 4GG

- Access times: The opening hours for the Bonington building, Nottingham Trent University are Monday – Friday (7.30 am – 8 pm). Should you require access outside of these times then prior arrangement would need to be made via the conference organiser.
- Car parking: There are a number of car parks located near to Nottingham Trent University; the nearest being on Talbot Street. Please visit www.ntu.ac.uk/maps for more details.
- Fire Alarm: In the event of a fire alarm, please evacuate the building via the nearest exits. The University has dedicated Fire Marshalls who will ask you to wait at an assembly point.
- Printing: If you require printing, please contact the event organiser.
- Wi-Fi Access: To access the wi-fi network, select 'ntu-guest' on your device and accept Terms and Conditions.
- Reception: To contact reception during the conference, please dial 88486 from an internal telephone or telephone Nottingham Trent University main switchboard (0155 9418418).
- Audio visual equipment: All AV equipment is tested prior to your arrival. If you are using AV equipment and encounter a problem, please contact our AV support team or the event organisers.
- Accessing computers: The login details on all University computers is Username: ntupresent and Password: present
- Non-smoking venue: Nottingham Trent University is a non-smoking venue. Smoking is no permitted on University land, this includes outside cafe areas.

