


LOBBY



No 1 | Autumn 2014 | The Bartlett School of Architecture

Un/Spectacle

Contents

Reception

- 9** **Editor's Letter**
Words by Regner Ramos
- 10** **Lobby Foreword**
Words by Thomas-Bernard Kenniff,
Christian Parreño, Mariana Pestana,
David Roberts and Danielle Wilkens
- 12** **Surfing the Wave: An interview with Bob Sheil**
Words by Regner Ramos and Sophie Read
- 15** **Approaching Wates House**
A Collaborative Renga
- 16** **Orange Spot!**
Words by Nahed Jawad-Chakouf

The Exhibition Space

- 20** **It's a Fine Line: Humour and stories in the work of Bureau Spectacular**
Words by Ines Dantas and Regner Ramos
- 24** **District of Unspectacles**
Words by Thomas-Bernard Kenniff
- 28** **CONTACT: Augmented Acoustics**
A Project by Felix Faire
- 30** **The Spatiality of Boredom: Asphyxiating yet bare**
Words by Christian Parreño
- 33** **Through the Eyes of the Situationists**
Words by Nito Ramirez and Laura Narvaez
- 36** **Superimposed Landscapes: Edges of misperception**
A project by Andrew Walker
- 38** **Big, BIG Ambitions**
Words by Regner Ramos
- 45** **The Eames Leg Splint: Organic solutions for modern architecture**
Words by Kate Slattery
- 48** **Indivisual: A meditation on rogue visualist ontology**
Words by Fame Ornruja Boonyasit

The Seminar Room

- 52** **The Standards**
Arno Brandhuber in conversation with
Muck Petzet and Florian Heilmeyer
- The New Standards:**
- 58** **Viewing Aid**
Words by Kieran Mahon
- 59** **Monstrous Quality**
Words by Freya Wigzell
- 60** **Storm and Stress**
Words by Tim Normann
- 61** **The Flicker**
Words by Danielle Hewitt
- 63** **Seminar Discussion**
Sophie Read in conversation with Kieran
Mahon, Freya Wigzell, Tim Norman
and Danielle Hewitt

The Lift

- 68** **Fallen from Grace: Tracing the spectacular in the evolution of the lift**
Words by Laurie Goodman
- 70** **AEROCRAFT: Physical manifestations of social media**
A Project by Tamon Sawangdee
and Eizo Ishikawa
- 72** **Leave Nothing but Footprints**
Mojave Desert and Las Vegas
Words by Patch Dobson-Pérez
- 75** **A Cultural Objective**
Granada and Seville
Words by Nick Elias
- 78** **More than a Fascination of Decay**
Detroit
Words by Louise Bjørnskov Schmidt
- 81** **Caught Between the Old and the New**
Barcelona
Words by Heidi Au Yeung

The Crit Room

- 84** **Timescape: Morphing geometric sculptures with nature**
A Project by Chiaki Yatsui, Bernardo
Dias and Qiuying Zhong
- 87** **Reconstruction and Record: Exploring alternatives for heritage areas after earthquakes in Chile**
A Project by Bernadette Devilat
- 90** **Start-Up City: Re-activating Coventry City Centre with micro-economics**
A Project by Claire Taggart
- 93** **Caustic Architecture: Architecture of Light**
A Project by Francois Mangion
and Shuchi Agarwal
- 96** **Lobbying for the Spectacular in Architecture: Teaching, practicing and critiquing**
Words by Nahed Jawad-Chakouf

The Staircase

- 100** **N-visioning the Elusive (t)HERE**
Words by Italia Rossi
- 102** **The Ashmolean Museum: Analysing atria through Space Syntax**
Words by Athina Lazaridou
- 104** **Cedric Price: An insight into literature and architectural knowledge**
Words by Marcela Araguez
- 106** **Performing Installations: From private experience to public space**
Words by Lea Collet
- 108** **... And Space as the Storyteller**
Words by Laura Narvaez
- 110** **Urbanism as a Product of Repetition: Fast architecture, fast becoming a problem**
Words by Fani Kostourou
- 112** **Stairway to Heaven**
Words by Sophia Psarra

The Library

- 116** **Latent Dialogues in Whispering Voices: Exploring The Bartlett Library through its readers**
Words by Stylianos Giamarelou
- 118** **Sensing Spaces at the Royal Academy: Negotiating architectural displays in the gallery space**
Words by Claudio Leoni
- 119** **Opening up Architectural Dichotomies Beyond Sensing Spaces**
Words by Costas Spyridis
- 120** **Caught in the Loop of the Strangely Familiar: A decade-long interrogation of the everyday unspectacular**
Words by Costas Spyridis
- 122** **Flushing Without Forgetting**
Words by Stylianos Giamarelou
- 123** **An Architectural Historian Unlocks the Water Closet**
Words by Christopher Purpura
- 124** **Revising Central Constructs Through Peripheral Practices**
Words by Ricardo Agarez
- 126** **Ecologies of Care and Architectures of Life**
Words by Stylianos Giamarelou
- 128** **Towards a Relational Architecture**
Words by Jaime Bartolome Yllera
- 129** **Transformed or Be Transformed:**
Words by Emilia Smeds, Pekka Piirainen
and Tom Youngman
- 130** **Beauty, Horror and Understanding**
Words by Daniel Stilwell
- The Toilets**
- 133** **Waits House**
Words by Mrinal S. Rammohan
- 141** **Welcome to Wild Wates**
Illustration by Nick Elias

LOBBY

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF Regner Ramos

DESIGN AND ART DIRECTION studio 4

EDITORIAL

The Exhibition Space _____ **Regner Ramos**
The Seminar Room _____ **Sophie Read**
The Lift _____ **Nito Ramírez**
The Crit Room _____ **Nahed Jawad-Chakouf**
The Staircase _____ **Laura Narvaez**
The Library _____ **Stylios Giamarelos**
The Toilets _____ **Mrinal S. Rammohan**

Editorial Assistants Cameron Clarke, Laurie Goodman, Carrie Lai Tieng Leong, Daniel Stilwell

Contributing Writers Ricardo Agarez, Marcela Araguez, Heidi Au Yeung, Jaime Bartolome Yllera, Fame Ornuja Boonyasit, Lea Collet, Ines Dantas, Patch Dobson-Pérez, Nick Elias, Laurie Goodman, Danielle Hewitt, Thomas-Bernard Kenniff, Fani Kostourou, Athina Lazaridou, Claudio Leoni, Kieran Mahon, Tim Norman, Christian Parreño, Pekka Piirainen, Sophia Psarra, Christopher Purpura, Louise Bjørnskov Schmidt, Emilia Smeds, Costas Spyridis, Daniel Stilwell, Italia Rossi, Freya Wigzell, Tom Youngman

Illustrators Nick Elias, Rayka Luo Guanghui, Kaiser Ulla

Cover illustration Stina Löfgren

Photographers Lester Cheung, Patch Dobson-Pérez, Nick Elias, Stylios Giamarelos, Thomas Bernard-Kenniff, Josh Redman, David Roberts, Louise Bjørnskov Schmidt

Published Student Work by Shuchi Agarwal, Bernardo Dias, Bernadette Devilat, Felix Faire, Eizo Ishikawa, Francois Mangion, Tamon Sawangdee, Kate Slattery, Claire Taggart, Andrew Walker, Chiaki Yatsui, Qiuying Zhong

Contributors DaeWha Kang, Carlo Menon, Luke Pearson

Copyeditor Jamie Timson

Social Media Madalina Hanc, Carrie Lai Tieng Leong, Daniel Stilwell, Jacob Westmoreland

Online Editor Duarte Lobo Antunes

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The Bartlett School of Architecture
132 Hampstead Road
London NW1 2PS
info@bartlettlobby.com

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instagram: @BartlettLOBBY

Contributors

Can we experience something spectacular through senses other than sight? To answer the riddle we handpicked four of this issue's contributors and asked them the following question: **What's the most spectacular thing you've ever felt, tasted, smelled or heard?**

Fame Ornuja Boonyasit, Contributing Writer
@FameOBoonyasit



Fame is pursuing her Masters of Architecture at The Bartlett's Graduate Architectural Design programme. Apart from writing for LOBBY, she's also involved in art direction and writing for *Numéro Thailand* (though we want to keep her for ourselves). You can easily recognise her by her geometric bob which she admits is the product of her own cutting. Feel free

to turn to page 48 in the Exhibition Space to read Fame's article.

“Without any sense of sight, the taste of an ice-cream is always a spectacular feast. As a sense conductor, its taste flourishes as soon as it loses structure, while at the same time calling for the emergence of other sub-senses. A spoonful or a scrumptious bite brings about a sense formation comparable to that of a tree, with taste as a core, touch, smell and temperature fluctuation branch out in an immediate venation of causality.”

Laurie Goodman, Editorial Assistant
@_LGOODMAN



Laurie is a masters student in Spatial Design here at The Bartlett, and she's got a background in architectural history. She is a very, very serious and very clever academic, often using words such as 'phenomena', 'paradigm' and 'ubiquitous'. In between that, she enjoys naps and cat videos on YouTube. Laurie was a recurrent face in the

very official meetings between the magazine's editors, who felt compelled to invite her due to how fired up she was about being involved in the editorial process. We were dubious at first, but now we don't regret it. You can read the article Laurie's written for us on page 68 in the Lift.

“A potent combination of gin and Beyonce.”

Nick Elias, Contributing Illustrator
nickelias.co.uk



Nick is your boy-next-door-type, apart from being a little more scared of bees. He's a truly gifted architectural illustrator, and we're lucky to have him on our team, especially since we nearly missed him. Nick is now an official Bartlett alumn, having just finished his Masters in Architecture; it's a relief that we caught him in time before he made an escape.

If you're curious about Nick's contribution to the issue, be patient, you'll see his illustration in the Toilets. No pun intended.

“I think it's probably a smell. Smelling something is known in science to have a stronger connection to memories than any other sense. I guess I find it more 'spectacular' when a sense like this exposes otherworldly sensations of nostalgia and situation. It sort of tells a story, meaning that a poo could be more spectacular than a piece of Mozart.”

DaeWha Kang, Crit Room Contributor
@daewhakang



DaeWha is one of the non-Bartlett, external contributors we were keen to have on this issue. He studied architecture at Princeton and Yale University and is an Associate at Zaha Hadid Architects, where he's worked since 2004. You can read through his insightful, contributing student-critiques throughout pages 84-95 in the Crit Room.

“Smell is considered to be the sense most deeply linked to our emotions and our memories. I think of the smell of moist wood and dust in the air after a short spring rain in the stone garden of Ryoan-ji temple in Kyoto. In a culture that increasingly privileges the visual over our other senses, our connection with the scent of architecture might reacquaint us with the deep essence of materiality and the pathos of history that is so fundamental to our discipline.”

Photography: Josh Redman (Nick & Laurie)

Ecologies of Care and Architectures of Life

On the occasion of the recent publication of her latest edited collection *Relational Architectural Ecologies*, LOBBY follows Peg Rawes's intellectual trajectory from relational ecologies and poetic biopolitics towards an architectural ethics of care.

Words by Stylianos Giamarellos

How did this book initially come together?

The book is the first of two edited collections that came partly out of the interdisciplinary conference that I organised and ran with UCL colleagues from The Bartlett (Jane Rendell), French and Art History, along with other colleagues from KTH, Stony Brook and Hofstra (US), called 'Sexuate Subjects. Politics, Poetics & Ethics'. The conference looked at feminist approaches to these concerns, through issues of spatial justice and of spatial crisis. It took place at the same time as the 2010 UCL student occupation against fees, an important background setting for our exploration into how our work in UCL can have both

a value inside higher education and relate to political life outside academia. This book—*Relational Architectural Ecologies*—reframes the conference (contributions from colleagues including: North-American based philosophers Lorraine Code and Elizabeth Grosz, UCL medic Anita Berlin, New Zealand political scientist Bronwyn Hayward, UK architect Katie Lloyd Thomas, and US academic Gail Schwab) into an academic publication that is situated within live discussions and debates.

How does this project relate to previous work of yours?

The book also comes out of my work with feminist philosophy and new theories

of materialism, which I find very rich and active conversations about how philosophy can offer ways of thinking about the formation of diverse subjectivities' spatial and architectural relations and novel understandings of matter. So, personally, I really wanted the conference to talk about matter and ecological principles, for example, to show the relations between biological and scientific concepts of ecology, through social and architectural ones.

The other aim of the project was to open up conversations about sustainability and ecological thinking in the architectural profession, which in the main have tended to come through technological innovation and remediation of carbon emissions. Such literature doesn't talk about ecology that reflects important feminist thinking about the environment since the 1960s, including Rachel Carson and the feminist environmental political activist movements which were such strong drivers for current environmental and eco-critiques. More commonly, contemporary professional discussions are removed from this recent historical context in which ecology is concerned with culture and politics. Today however, much environmental architectural literature is still cautious of political approaches, for example, *Wheatfield—A Confrontation* by Agnes Denes and reproduced on the front cover, which I've been wanting to write about as an image of another way of architectural thinking for about 12 years. However, if you look at the Harvard *Ecological Urbanism* volume (2010) it's given a double-page spread but with absolutely no conversation about the project. It has been totally decontextualised and retrofitted in an overview to our current context, but totally removed from its site of production. Instead, I really wanted to highlight how it's an example of a complex approach that precedes more recent approaches to urban activism, city agriculture or questions around resources, yet it was done 30 years ago.

At the start of our conversation, you mentioned a companion publication to this book.

The second publication derived from the conference, is called *Poetic Biopolitics*. This book focuses more on the performative and poetic humanities-based discussions.



RELATIONAL ARCHITECTURAL ECOLOGIES

Architecture, nature and subjectivity

EDITED BY PEG RAWES



It doesn't include specific ecological or environmental conversations but links with the earlier publication because it argues that we need to take into account different political and poetic structures and agencies in architecture, and my personal contribution in the volume is to explore these questions in biological 'architectures of life'.

Since this is a book that retains such strong links with that conference, can you also outline your approach to the book launch symposium at The Bartlett School of Architecture last October?

The cross-school seminar was important for me, because I was very aware that this book didn't include

colleagues who also work on the environment and ecology. Having developed the project where, to some extent, the interdisciplinary nature steps outside architecture 'proper', I wanted then to bring it back into the Department to have conversations with colleagues who do this work, so as to extend its architectural sensibility. So, it was a really important second phase of conversation—i.e. not just dissemination, but engagement. It was also exciting because we haven't done many public staff debates in recent years. For example, it was the first time that Jonathan Hill and Laura Allen have spoken about their approaches to ecology at the same event in the Department.

“Contemporary professional discussions are removed from this recent historical context in which ecology is concerned with culture and politics”

So it was an example of the diverse thinking in the School, and it was also important for the book, and its contributors, to be engaged with by colleagues.

And where do you see your work going now?

The other context for this project is the work that I have been doing over the past few years around feminist critiques of technology and science, and history of philosophy, which picks up—especially—on Spinoza's ethical project, which entails a strong ecological thesis. This body of work is concerned with concepts of difference—biological, material and psychic difference—which I think has quite interesting ways of critiquing para-metricism. But the other strand it leads into is a new body of work, begun over the past six months, which is a project on equalities of wellbeing. I hope that these conversations of wellbeing, social and environmental health in housing, are something that can be looked in through the work of Spinoza and will link to the ecological conversation begun in this book—what I'm calling an architectural 'ethics of care'. 🏡