This conference aims to reflect on the relevance of the concept of dissidence for architectural practice today. Although dissidence has been primarily associated with architectural practices in the Eastern Bloc at the end of the Cold War period, contemporary architectural and other aesthetic practices have in recent years developed a host of new methodologies and techniques for articulating their distance from and critique of dominant political and financial structures. Architecture and the Paradox of Dissidence asks how we can conceive of the contemporary political problems and paradoxes of architecture in relation to their precedents? Devoid of the agency of action, Cold War dissidents articulated their positions in drawings of fantasy-like paper architecture, while contemporary forms of architectural practice seem to gravitate towards activism and direct-action in the world. The political issues – from interventions in charged areas worldwide to research in conflict zones and areas undergoing transformations – currently stimulate a field of abundant invention in contemporary architecture. Both, Cold War dissidents and contemporary activists encounter problems and paradoxes and must navigate complex political force fields within which possible complicity is inherent risks.

New forms of critical practice, and political and spatial dissent are manifold, appearing in stark contrast to contemporary architectural practice in which professional courage seems to have been translated into structural ‘virtuosity’ of surfaces. This conference seeks to map out and expand on the methodologies of architectural action and reinvigorate the concept of dissent within the architectural/spatial field of the possible. A more historical thread that runs through the programme will seek to weave the genealogy of political/spatial practices from the Cold War dissidents of the Soviet Bloc to the activists of South American favelas.

Dissidents in the former communist countries used a specific set of codes to question the ideological doctrine of the state party. Architects who were otherwise employed in state run architectural collectives, or as staff in architecture schools met to produce writings, private lectures, secret installations and architectural articulations of allegories and legends – activities that challenged the ‘stifling’ standardized language of Soviet architecture. Many of these ‘paper architects’ questioned the relationship between art, architecture and politics, but also, and significantly so, the ideological, and thus also ethical function of various forms of ‘creative practices’. The political melt-down of the Soviet Bloc reconfigured this complex field of political codes, architectural gestures and references. The withdrawal of the architect from large ideological concepts regarding social utopias mirrored that fragmentation and dissemination of (neo)liberal market structures. Large ideological battles were replaced with a multiplicity of local, or issue-specific conflicts within which forms of activism have been integrated. Dissent against large integrated and complex networks is no longer possible. All that is left is to navigate the complex fields of forces in a reflective and innovative manner. But can the assemblage of gestures and techniques of past struggles and ‘dilemmas’ of working in politically suppressive regimes help to inform those of today?

During the conference contemporary spatial practitioners, architects, urbanists, journalists, activists, filmmakers and curators will reflect upon temporary forms and conditions of dissent and their potential problems and inevitable paradoxes. And, architects and architectural historians will reflect upon previous articulations of political dissent through architectural practice.
THURSDAY 15 NOVEMBER

5PM REGISTRATIONS

6PM INTRODUCTION

INES WEIZMAN
The Sir John Cass Faculty of Art, Architecture and Design,
London Metropolitan University

ROBERT MULL
Dean, The Sir John Cass Faculty of Art, Architecture and Design,
London Metropolitan University

6.30PM KEYNOTE LECTURE

ALEXANDER BRODSKY
Architect and Artist, Moscow, Russia

RECENT PROJECTS

Alexander Brodsky is an architect and was a member of the Moscow group of so-called 'Paper Architects' whose work in the 1980s centred around a refusal to take part in state sponsored architectural production of low-quality, standardised buildings. During the 1990s Brodsky produced contemporary art, moving to New York in 1996. In 2000 he returned to Russia to practice freely as an architect, working out of a small office in the Moscow State Museum. Brodsky’s work is characterised by a concern with traditional building, using local materials to produce an architecture that explores Russian heritage whilst at the same time acting as a critique of the unregulated and corrupt building industry.

7.30–8.30PM WINE RECEPTION
FRIDAY 16 NOVEMBER

9AM REGISTRATIONS

10–11AM KEYNOTE LECTURE

SRĐAN JOVANOVIĆ WEISS
Architect and Theorist, New York, USA

THE VANISHING ACT OF ARCHITECTURE

This talk will focus on the interfacial, ambiguous, duplicitous and sometimes soft practice of dissidence that challenges the presence of architecture vis-à-vis art in a politically contested society. That subtle, or for that matter differential, evasive and adjustable dissidence emerges from within the practice that is not fully subdued to the hard corners of ideology nor political power. In a way, this kind of soft dissidence may have been complicit with power at the stage of its own will, but not at the stage of the conceptualization of that will, ideas, nor specific skills. The vanishing act of architecture refers to many little maneuvers within the power of softened ideologies to absorb resistance. That resistance requires a specific disappearance of both an architect and architecture in order to re-appear intact when the politics change. Like in a magic trick, the reappearance of a certain architecture prone to dissidence is bound to the design of its own vanishing act.

11-11.45AM COFFEE BREAK

11.45–13.30AM

PANEL ONE
DISSIDENCE THROUGH ARCHITECTURE UNDER STATE SOCIALISM

Ines Weizman, Chair
[Forum, Ground Floor]

MICHAEL J. OSTWALD
School of Architecture and Built Environment, The University of Newcastle, Australia

INAESTHETICS AND RESISTANCE: THE ROLE OF UTOPIAN PROVOCATIONS IN THE WORK OF THE RUSSIAN PAPER ARCHITECTS

French philosopher Alain Badiou has argued for the importance of direct political action as a means of resisting the totalitarian power of the state. However, in his Handbook of Inaesthetics Badiou suggests that the essential nature of architecture seriously restricts its capacity to have any genuine political influence. Despite this, for Badiou,
architectural labor: SIAL’s Skolka. If the notion of playful conditions of an incubator architecture studio Czechoslovakia’s normalization instead facets of the ordinary resisted Western scene and by the Power, in double use: both by the architects ernism as a relevant example of architectural vocabulary and its but not politically aligned architect official politics, by looking comparative importance of taking sides in the career. The second one discusses the succeeded to develop a significant profession. Three brief case studies ing a locally acclaimed architect are proposed – the first present-architectural drawing (representation), and a critique of the division of labor in the construction site.

CARMEN POPESCU University Paris 1, Sorbonne and Ecole Nationale d’Architecture La Villette, Paris, France

ORDINARY RESISTANCE: THREE PIECES ON ROMANIAN ARCHITECTS FACING THE COMMUNIST REGIME

The paper addresses the way Romanian architects attempted to resist during the communist years the authoritarian control exercised by the State and the Party on their profession. Three brief case studies are proposed – the first presenting a locally acclaimed architect who ‘chose freedom’ in 1947 and moved to the USA, where he never succeeded to develop a significant career. The second one discusses the importance of taking sides in the official politics, by looking comparatively at the works of a brilliant but not politically aligned architect and few of his colleagues. The third case study explores the ambiguities of architectural vocabulary and its afferent readings, taking postmodernism as a relevant example of double use: both by the architects who wanted to be tuned to the Western scene and by the Power, in search of a symbolic image. If the three architects to be discussed are not sheer dissenters, they embodied instead facets of the ordinary resistance developed in those times.

ANA MILIACKI MIT School of Architecture and Planning, USA

PLAYING IN THE TIME OF NORMALIZATION: SIAL ŠKOLKA’S CONDITIONS OF ARCHITECTURAL PRACTICE AS A SCRIPT FOR RESISTANCE

At the dawn of the process of Czechoslovakia’s normalization an innovative architecture studio was established in Liberec, around the notion of playful conditions of architectural labor: SIAL’s Skolka. If

individual in a techno-urban envi- ronment and the need to formulate an aesthetic of change. The paper explores how Kurokawa’s critique and agency provides an example of the decolonization of architectural thought and how design work can become a productive site for a theo- rization of the concept of dissidence in other places.

VANESSA GROSSMAN School of Architecture, Princeton University, USA

ARQUITETURA NOVA, AND THE QUARRELS OF MARXISM AND MODERNIZATION

When the architect Sérgio Ferro entitled his 1967 essay ‘Arquitetura Nova’ he intended to align what he proclaimed as a ‘new architecture’ in Brazil with ‘An Aesthetic of Hunger,’ the thesis-manifesto that the Brazilian filmmaker Glauber Rocha first published in 1965. Under the guise of Arquitetura Nova, Ferro together with the architects Rodrigo Lefèvre and Flávio Império took the idea of a ‘neorealist’ aesthetics of poverty baptized as a new ‘poetics of economy,’ that should be defined from ‘the useful minimum,’ the ‘constructive minimum’ and the ‘didactic minimum’ for the con- ception of a new language entirely established ‘on the basis of Brazil’s historical reality.’ By questioning the fragility inherent to the coun- try’s processes of modernization, which were hitherto embraced by Brazilian modern architects, and the political lines of the Brazilian Communist Party (PCB), of which they became dissidents after the 1964 coup d’état, Arquitetura Nova aimed to formulate an alternative strategy based on claims about the ideological function of the architectural drawing (representa- tion), and a critique of the division of labor in the construction site.

NATHANIEL COLEMAN School of Architecture, Planning and Landscape, University of Newcastle, UK

MAKING TRUE ARCHITECTURE POSSIBLE AGAIN: UTOPIA AS METHOD

Association of ‘architecture’ with ‘dissidence’ reveals an oxymoronic conceptual structure. The problem is not so much one of precedent – the paradox of looking to the past as a guide to nonconformist action in the present – as a logistical impossibility. Architecture’s near total capture by whichever system prevails renders futile almost all attempts at escape from the given. Even paper architecture offers little

‘horizontal’ architecture in China, I consider Husserl’s ‘extra-scientific’ geometry in relation to the work of other critical Chinese architects. Whilst these individuals are not precisely dissidents as defined by the Conference, I consider how they are promoting other social, theoretical and built horizons (relations) which question whether the current fascination in symbolic ‘horizontal’ geometries are indeed sufficient enough for our present- and future-horizons.

MIREEILLE RODDIER Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning, The University of Michigan, USA

RECESIONAL AESTHETICS: DETROIT

Of the many narratives used to rep- resent the current state of Detroit, two mutually exclusive depictions come to the fore. The first under- stands the city as an index of social problems fraught with human injustice and governmental ill will, which solicit experiments with alternative community buttnes and self-sufficiency. The second regards the city as a vast unoccupied wasteland, suffused with innumer- able ‘creative’ opportunities born of societal disregard, economic disinvestment and resulting lack of regulations. The former engages the city through survivalist forms of political action, while the latter reinforces the image of the city as a blank canvas that enables an apoli- tical brand of autonomous experi- mentation. Yet, in their exportation to ‘other’ circumstances, claims are attributed that both politicize these forms of political action, while the latter reinforces the image of the city as a blank canvas that enables an apoliti- cal brand of autonomous experi- mentation. Whilst these individuals are not precisely dissidents as defined by the Conference, I consider how they are promoting other social, theoretical and built horizons (relations) which question whether the current fascination in symbolic ‘horizontal’ geometries are indeed sufficient enough for our present- and future-horizons.

MALIN ZIMM Swedish Museum of Architecture, Stockholm, Sweden

FAN ARCHITECTURE – LOVING IT TO BITS

Fan fiction is a productive and post- modern genre where appropriation of an existing fiction is the creative outset of creative production of free-standing expanded stories, whether from a novel, tv series, movie, game or other media. This paper is exploring expressions and activities related to fan art and fan fiction, within architecture. Within fan art, if you may, dis new subgroups of methods are found, more or less true to the activities of fan fiction writing. The paper presents examples from the fan culture around Frank Lloyd Wright, to steampunk and Victorian high-tech dreams, to the intriguing layers of tribute and passionate reworking found in Joseph Gandy’s iconic 1830 painting where Sir John Soane’s un- built design for the Bank of England is depicted as a crumbling, ruin, suggesting the everlasting icon status and enduring significance of the Bank of England, and a set of examples where contemporary photographic collages are pulling icon buildings into a future of decay.

IVONNE SANTOYO OROCZO Architectural Association School of Architecture, London, UK

TACTICS OF INDIFFERENCE

If dissidence is understood as a radical separation from a given polity, then, how can we imagine possible forms of dissent in a context which has elevated differ- ence itself to a self-evident truth? The paper explores aspects of the generic urban condition. Especially because it thrives on subsuming any outside – any truly oppositional political space – the urban tends to invert political dissent into endless marketable identities, and sepa- ration itself becomes part of this production of generic differences. This analysis instrumentalises the early work of British artist Julian Opie which is concerned with a

Antigone’s dustings break the blood allegiances on which theopolis is built, opening a new space of the polit- ical which is that of the city (civi- tasy): a project of inclusion, openness and expansion. Antigone’s words and actions of ‘dusting’ inhabit and at once challenge different systems of laws (nomoi) and definitions of the political (polis) and the domestic (oikos); they defy and question estab- lished notions of space, law, the body and the city.
we can speak of a kind of convergence between dissidence and architecture here, Školka's dissidence was not coincident with the political activism of the Czechoslovak intellectual underground although Školka's activities developed in parallel with the dissident movement, and it was also not equivalent to the political commentary produced in the medium of architectural drawing in 'paper architecture' on both sides of the iron curtain in the late 70s and 80s. Insisting, however, on the term dissidence in the case of Školka, opens up the possibility of the study of power and ideology (as these registers in the sphere of architectural practice) in the manner proposed by the American anthropologist James Scott, a study that allows for 'contradictions, tensions, and immanent possibilities.'

GORDANA FONTANA-GIUSTI
School of Architecture, University of Kent, UK

DISSIDENT IN LIFE, IN ARCHITECTURE, IN WRITING

This paper will analyse selected works of Bogdan Bogdanovic (1922-2010). This Serbian architect, writer and professor of Architecture at the University of Belgrade, was the author of numerous monuments devoted to the victims of fascism in former Yugoslavia (1952-98). As the Mayor of Belgrade (1982-86) Bogdanovic was a liberal member of the Yugoslav Communist Party and later, a strong opponent of Milosevic's regime. This paper argues that Bogdanovic has always been both a dissident and an avant-garde proponent of architecture and its wider culture. Living with the belief that the vocation of an architect presupposes lifetime devotion to learning and experimentation, Bogdanovic carried on with this attitude throughout his life. This approach, spiced up with playfulness and mystery as presented in his early volume Zaludna mistrija (The Futile Trowel) 1968, is the focus of this paper. In this unusual book the narratives are an intrinsic part of the architectural realm including design, drawings of various kinds, and the built form itself.

RELIEF FROM THE NEAR IMPOSSIBILITY OF DOING ANYTHING BEYOND WHAT IS ALREADY POSSIBLE. IN FACT, THE VISIONARY FANTASIES OF PAPER ARCHITECTURE ARE ESCAPIST ABOVE ALL ELSE. ALTHOUGH DIRECT ACTION OFFERS THE POSSIBILITY OF ACTING UPON THE RESTRICTIONS OF THE WORLD, IT USUALLY TAKES AN EXTRA-ARCHITECTURAL SHAPE.

HERE I AM THINKING OF THE DISSERTANT ITALIAN ARCHITECT DANilo DOLCE (1924-1997), WHOSE CRITICAL PRACTICE TOOK THE FORM OF MAKING COMMUNITY BY RESISTING THE GOVERNMENT AND MAFIA ALIKE. IN A MORE GENERAL WAY, THIS PAPER CONSIDERS UTOPIA AS METHOD.

JEREMIE MICHAEL McGOWAN
The National Museum of Art, Architecture and Design Oslo, Norway

SITUATING DISSIDENCE: GESTURES OF REFUSAL IN THE MARGINS OF NEW BABYLON

This paper sets out to complicate notions of 'radical practice' in architecture by focusing on the work and legacy of the Situationist International, particularly the New Babylon project developed by Constant (1920-2005) between about 1956 and 1974. Questioning the degree to which Constant's experimental proposals, like that of the Situationists more broadly, might be understood as constituting a program of dissident urban practice, the paper seeks to reveal the existence of an alternate and overlooked narrative of counter-cultural expression sitting at the heart of New Babylon: namely, the postwar Romani rights movement led by Ionel Rotaru – leader, spokesman and symbolic figurehead of the 'Communauté mondiale gitane'. Like Constant's New Babylon, Rotaru's vision of a Romani homeland activates 'utopia' as a defining act of dissidence.
arsenic, which has resulted in the denial of knowledge of the presence of contaminated ground water. Given the threat from drinking polluted surface water, millions of hand pumps in Bangladesh to reduce the incidence of diarrhoea. However, now that neoliberalism has assumed the status of a new totalitarianism (and of a more straitjacket kind), it produces new kinds of disidence. One strand of disidence in the affluent world is the succession of direct action movements from anti-capitalism in the 2000s to Occupy in 2011. Another, within the protected realm of architecture, is a tendency to design temporary spaces for democracy in response to neoliberalism's democratic deficit. The paper argues that the current situation not only puts architecture into an expanded field but also requires critical reconsideration of its efforts to contribute to alternative models of social and political organisation. Occupancy was ephemeral but became a momentary liberation, living the promise that another world is possible. It occupied spaces but did not need buildings. Is there really anything that architects can do professionally to assist?

IVANA WINGHAM
Faculty of Arts, University of Brighton, UK

ARCHITECTURE’S EXODUS

Occupation is an intentional, and in many ways, political act. Architecture both occupies and arises from the interaction between situation, viewer and larger culture. To produce something new architecture has to offer ‘perception of difference’ and become ‘out of joint’. Architectural practices that produce new perceptions of difference and forge ‘new modes of actualisation’ through its expressions and intentions are ‘burdensome’. Their architecture opposes itself - are the less able it is to change it, or more architecture opposes reality against the dominant architectural system, during and after communism in Romania, Martin Pinchis’s ‘urban fictions’ in the 1960s and the ‘theoretical subversion’ of the 1980s are brought together with several instances of contemporary activism. The argument the paper develops is that, in spite of the totally different conditions during and after communism, ‘resistance’ might be understood similarly in both situations: architects escape direct fight with negative realities by producing new margins of action and enlarging the limits of architecture itself. The two attitudes are very different, one whole and utopian, the other acupunctural and circumstantial. Yet they both develop lateral fields of action beyond their current professional realities. The apparent ‘paradoxes of disidence’ - that the more architecture opposes reality the less able it is to change it, or that architecture opposes itself - are overpassed by this ‘escapism’.

MARIANN SIMON AND PETER HABA
Department for History of Architecture and of Monuments, Budapest University of Technology and Economics, Hungary

A DIFFICULT PERSON FOR SOCIALISM: ELEMÉR ZALOTAY AND HIS STRIP BUILDING FOR 70,000

In 1958 a young Hungarian architect, Elemér Zalotay proposed a ‘techno-utopian’ monumental residential construction, a so-called ‘strip building’, captivated by the large-scale public housing program

PANEL FIVE

Teresa Stopani, Chair
[Forum, Ground Floor]

HELEN MALLINSON
The Sir John Cass Faculty of Art, Architecture and Design, London Metropolitan University, UK

WEATHER DISSIDENTS

In his book Terror from the Air, Peter Sloterdijk makes the comment that ‘between Christmas Eve and Epiphany, Mauritius and Morocco are awash with weather disidents from Germany and France’. Sloterdijk’s comment is ironic because disidence is normally associated with the disenfranchised reacting against an overweening political power: the disidents to whom he refers are evidently exercising a lifestyle choice at the luxury end of the holiday mass market. But are other, more exemplary, acts of weather disidence possible, or even desirable, given that the environment is widely understood as our original and ultimate totalitarian dictator? In this scenario architecture promotes itself as ringleader, at war with the very nature it purports to defend. The contemporary architectural revolt is evidently dissident; at war with the very notion it has been fighting against for generations. But the disidence is normally associated with a weather dissidents.

PANEL SIX

Iain Boal, Chair
[Crit Room, First Floor]

MALCOM MILES
School of Architecture, Design & Environment, University of Plymouth, UK

OCUPPY! ACTIVISM OR DISSIDENCE?

Disidence is often taken to mean underground criticism and cultural work in the ex-East bloc. However, now that neoliberalism has assumed the status of a new totalitarianism (and of a more straitjacket kind), it produces new kinds of disidence. One strand of disidence in the affluent world is the succession of direct action movements from anti-capitalism in the 2000s to Occupy in 2011. Another, within the protected realm of architecture, is a tendency to design temporary spaces for democracy in response to neoliberalism’s democratic deficit. The paper argues that the current situation not only puts architecture into an expanded field but also requires critical reconsideration of its efforts to contribute to alternative models of social and political organisation. Occupancy was ephemeral but became a momentary liberation, living the promise that another world is possible. It occupied spaces but did not need buildings. Is there really anything that architects can do professionally to assist?

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Faculty of Arts, University of Brighton, UK

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MARIANN SIMON AND PETER HABA
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In 1958 a young Hungarian architect, Elemér Zalotay proposed a ‘techno-utopian’ monumental residential construction, a so-called ‘strip building’, captivated by the large-scale public housing program

PANEL SEVEN

Katja Grillner, Chair
[Gallery, Ground Floor]

HELEN RUNTING
School of Architecture and the Built Environment, KTH
Stockholm, Sweden

LET THE RIGHT ONE IN: THE ENTANGLEMENT OF PLANNING AND PARTICIPATORY ART

I note the current proliferation of artistic and curatorial engagements with planning in Stockholm with curiosity, interest and – if I am to be honest – a sense of hesitancy. As if opening the door to a stranger at midnight, in addressing this tendency, I pose the question: to what pleasure do we owe this ostensibly late visit from participatory art? This paper details a moment of reflection conducted from the space of the threshold, taking inventory of what can be said by a planner in response to this disciplinary ‘entanglement’, investigating criteria and models for criticism that can be advanced prior to more detailed empirical engagement. Trying to address the holes and gaps in the response of art criticism, I draw upon and address the critiques of participatory art and participatory planning, ultimately arguing that it is not always a good idea to, without reflection, ‘let the right one in’.

MÁRIA ÀRéMLO
School of Architecture and the Built Environment, KTH, Stockholm, Sweden

ARCHITECTURAL PRACTICE AND SPATIAL JUSTICE: TOWARDS A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR A CRITICALLY ENGAGED ARCHITECTURAL PRACTICE

Architectural practices in Sweden are presently, and have been for some time now, heavily influenced by a neoliberal logic that implicitly promotes an understanding of justice as the product of market forces. This is a questionable understanding of justice, as it can
in the largest mass poisoning in history. This continues to be an underexposed, slow poisoning of a population markedly different from a sudden natural disaster. While Bangladesh has been at the centre of scientific concern relating to arsenic poisoning, there has been little advance in attribution of legal responsibility. Beginning with a biography of arsenic as pharmakon, a philosophical concept where an object is both poison and remedy, this research analyses the complex causalities connected with the poison of development.

LINDSAY BREMNER
School of Architecture and Built Environment, University of Westminster, UK

DISSIDENT WATER

In 2002, on the outskirts of Johan-
nesburg, highly toxic water erupted from a disused gold mine shaft and flowed across the surface of the earth. This made geology – metals, salts, oxides, radio-active compounds – visible and knowable, not as hidden abstractions or scientific facts, but as forms of above-ground experience and matters of concern. In this paper I discuss this water as a mode of political and spatial dissent, articulating a critique of the calculus of capital, complicity, dispossession, technology, labor and wealth of gold mining and the politics of verticity to which it subscribes. In navigating complex political force fields, the water has inaugurated a host of new methodologies and techniques for articulating its distance from and critique of dominant political and financial structures and set up unprecedented associations between academics, activists, artists, politicians, newly floated companies, scientists and shack dwellers in rowdy assemblies working towards the possibility of the composition of a common world.

ADRIAN LAHOU
Bartlett School of Architecture, University College London, UK

THE THIRD DEGREE: PLANETARY SCALE AND CLIMATE POLITICS

On 8 December 2009 during the Copenhagen Climate Summit, Lumumba Di-Aping, the Sudanese negotiator representing the G77 utter's a distinctly un-diplomatic phrase: ‘We have been asked to sign a suicide pact’. The phrase is uttered in reference to the so called ‘Dutch texts’ proposed by the Netherlands' chief negotiator as a possible EU offer. Breaking all protocols, Di-Aping’s radical act of dissidence carries into burden lies in mobility between what architecture is and what and how it may be or become. Practices that resist a stable, unchangeable, permanent sense of ‘home’ reside in exile. Either as a ‘foreigner’ or as a resident in ‘metaphorical exile’ – an architect, an ‘intellectual’ or an artist who forges new, different, disturbing, burdensome, displaced, unsettling, out-of-joint ways of ‘viewing’ the world is a migrant. Analogous to ancient Greek myths contemporary practices address migrants’ creative experience between the opportune moment, the event and resistance to an established order.

JONATHAN MASSEY
School of Architecture, Syracuse University, USA

OCCUPY ARCHITECTURE

‘They got bailed out, we got sold out!’ Chanted by protesters in many U.S. cities in fall 2012, this slogan captured one mode of dissent practiced by the Occupy movement: its use of marches, rallies, and other protest methods to demand changes in state policy and budgets. But the movement also sponsored a deeper mode of dissent as Occupiers turned away from the consumer market, the credit market, and the state to form a quasi-anarchist alternative polity. Occupiers gathered in urban squares to form autonomous economies, societies, and modes of governance. They gathered online via blogs, social media, and crowdfunding to deliberate across local and global scales. They began using credit and ownership practices to shift power from transnational corporations toward small-scale informal associations. I review potentials and pitfalls in this mode of dissent by examining its transmedia architecture of urban camps, online venues, and informal associations.

SAMUEL VARDY
School of Architecture Sheffield University, UK

SELF-ORGANISED SPATIAL POLITICS: PROCESSES OF DISSENSUS AT WARDS CORNER

This paper will consider how self-organised spatial assemblages re-politise the production of space, by re-figuring the spaces of which Rancière calls the police-order, into space for the emergence of creative, political subjects. Using the story of a campaign in Northern London that challenged the privatisation of Wards Corner, I argue that self-organised spatial assemblages are based on a fundamental form of be demonstrated that the implementation of neoliberal policies has instead produced increased socio-economic and spatial polarization. This paper explores the potential for an alternative understanding of justice to inform critically engaged architectural practices. More specifically, it explores the potential for the notion of ‘spatial justice’ as elaborated by Edward Soja and Mustafa Dikeç to inform a simultaneously complicit and dissident architectural practice. In the attempt to operationalize the notion of ‘spatial justice’, it draws on Jacques Rancière’s conceptualization of the relation between aesthetics and politics, and – inspired also by Ananya Roy – ultimately proposes that architects act and practice as double agents.

BRADY BURROUGHS
School of Architecture and the Built Environment, KTH Stockholm, Sweden

VANITY (FAIR), CONFLICT, DREAMS AND DRAMA ON AN ORDINARY DAY AT THE BEASTLET... ON THE POSSIBILITIES OF DISSIDENCE IN CRITICAL PEDAGOGIES

The project brief called for a sanctuary for mythical creatures and visitor facilities in a rural landscape in southeast Sweden, with alternating assignments of collective and individual efforts, constantly negotiating positions within critical fictions. A group of master’s level architecture students adamantly refused their roles as ‘the architects’ and insisted on designing their entire studio project in the guise of their imaginary humanimal counterparts, voicing a strong belief in the necessity to design from the positions of the residents of the proposed sanctuary, The Beastlet. This act and expression of dissent, allowed for all of the vanity, conflict, dreams and drama of everyday life to take up space and matter, within the individual proposals and the sanctuary as a whole. In THIS critical fiction, a simulated article for Vanity Fair, the students’ characters speak directly from The Beastlet, while ‘the architect’ plays the role of the evil counterpart.

HÉLÈNE FRICHT
School of Architecture and the Built Environment, KTH, Stockholm, Sweden

ARCHITECTURE, DISSIDENCE, AND THE FORMULA I WOULD PREFER NOT TO...

With this paper I will present a story launched by the building authorities. He had been fighting for his ideas for years and took every opportunity to disseminate them. Although the radical dissidence and responsible pragmatism of this concept sparked off a heated public debate, building authorities did not support the experiment. The paper analyses this debate, serving as a model for the confrontation between architectural ideas based on socialist collectivism and the rigid system of the socialist state. In the last decade Zalotay’s name re-emerged in Hungarian architectural circles and he became a legend like many of his contemporaries such as Constant, Yona Friedman and the Archigram Group. Zalotay represents an architectural approach – that of the lonely hero – and the fading memories of socially engaged architecture.

NATALIA ROWINSKA AND LUKASZ WOJCIECHOWSKI
Faculty of Architecture, Wroclaw University of Technology, Poland

DISSIDENT’S SHELTER: THE WORKS OF JAN SZPAKOWICZ

In Radziszewskiego Street in Lublin Tadeusz Witkowski built three buildings: one is a 1920’s Modern villa, the other a 1950’s university building built in socialist-realist style, and the third is a 70’s late modernist library. All of them stand in the same spatial context but were built in opportunism to the respective political conditions and conventions of their time. Nevertheless not every architect in Poland followed the party’s obligations so strictly. Although under constant pressure architects such as Witold Lipinski, Jan Szpakowicz, Jadwiga Grabowska-Hawrylak managed to conceive unique architectural works. The best examples can be found in their own private houses which were usually the only possibility to manifest creative skills and ideas. They were paving their own way as professionals, not only by paper visions or officially acclaimed public buildings but also and mainly through domestic architecture, which they not only designed but also built with their own hands.

DUBRAVKA SEKULIC
Jan van Eyck Academie, Maastricht, The Netherlands

THE PARADOX OF NON-ALIGNED MODERNITY: THE CASE OF ENERGoproject

In Yugoslavia, construction enterprises, especially those working in
public speech the reality of a private calculus and its implicit presupposition: the differential scale of anthropogenic impact. Beginning with Di-Aping’s dissident utterance and locating it within contemporary scientific debates on climate modelling, this paper will address the issue of climate change through the problem of scale and scalar politics. Moving beyond questions of sustainability, it will argue that the distance between scientific and political questions can only be maintained by obscuring the economic war over access to global carbon capacity and the uneven scale and effect of temperature increase that results from it.

dissent. The process of political subjectivation that dissensus and self-organised spatial assemblages can put into motion, is built on two key, simultaneous spatial aspects: an ongoing confrontation about the closing down/opening up of the possibilities of space and the roles of actors within it, and the creation of a new common space for the emergence of new subjects. I briefly consider three paradoxes that this raises for both the theoretical development of the notion of self-organised spatial assemblages, and for the practice of actively trying to create them.

The generation of architectural practice, retold with an emphasis on creative resistance. I propose to creatively and critically investigate the paradox of dissidence as it manifests in the shifting location of women in the architectural workplace, both professional and institutional. To do this I will make use of the powers of ficto-criticism to present three scenes, each occupied by iterations of an invented aesthetic figure I have named Bartlebess, who has been adapted from the short story Bartleby, by the American author Herman Melville. I have appropriated and then inverted the character of Bartleby toward a becoming-woman undertaking a creative reinvention of ecologies of practice. I pursue this conceptual and aesthetic experiment by drawing specifically on the thought of Gilles Deleuze, Giorgio Agamben, and Isabelle Stengers, each of whom have undertaken readings of Melville’s Bartleby.

4.15–4.45PM COFFEE BREAK

PRESENTATION IN LECTURE HALL
AHRA Update by Dr Sarah Lappin (Current AHRA Steering Group Chair) and Dr Igea Troiani (Past AHRA Steering Group Chair and Co-Editor of AHRA Journal)

4.45–6PM

PANEL NINE
PROTAGONISTS, PLAYERS AND INSTITUTIONS
Sarah Lappin, Chair [Forum, Ground Floor]*

MICHAEL CHAPMAN
School of Architecture and Built Environment, The University of Newcastle, Australia

AGAINST THE WALL: IDEOLOGY AND FORM IN MIES VAN DER ROHE’S MONUMENT TO ROSA LUXEMBURG AND KARL LIEBKNECHT

Amongst the most enigmatic of Mies van der Rohe’s works is the striking ‘proletarian’ brick monument that he designed and dedicated to Rosa Luxemburg

PANEL TEN
EXPLORING ARCHITECTURE AND FICTION
Michael J. Ostwald, Chair [Cirt Room, First Floor]*

KATJA GRILLNER
School of Architecture and the Built Environment, KTH, Stockholm, Sweden

ARCHITECTURE IN EFFECT – ARTICULATING THE CRITICAL POTENTIAL OF ARCHITECTURE AS PRACTICE, RESEARCH, AND MODE OF DISCOURSE FORMATION

This paper presents the development of a specific research framework designed to articulate of architectural practice, retold with an emphasis on creative resistance. I propose to creatively and critically investigate the paradox of dissidence as it manifests in the shifting location of women in the architectural workplace, both professional and institutional. To do this I will make use of the powers of ficto-criticism to present three scenes, each occupied by iterations of an invented aesthetic figure I have named Bartlebess, who has been adapted from the short story Bartleby, by the American author Herman Melville. I have appropriated and then inverted the character of Bartleby toward a becoming-woman undertaking a creative reinvention of ecologies of practice. I pursue this conceptual and aesthetic experiment by drawing specifically on the thought of Gilles Deleuze, Giorgio Agamben, and Isabelle Stengers, each of whom have undertaken readings of Melville’s Bartleby.

PANEL ELEVEN
THE GENERATION WARS OF ARCHITECTURE
Pawda Tjoa, Chair [Gallery, Ground Floor]*

LUCA GUIDO
Department of Civil Engineering and Architecture, University of Udine, Italy


‘The Biennale of Dissent’ in 1977 was a significant event that merged the political concept of dissidence with art practices and to some extent, architectural culture was becoming dominant, especially in the period after the first oil crisis, in 1970s and 1980s. Not only did this go unnoticed as a negative tendency by the Yugoslav authorities, but the architects were praised for being skilled managers. They were the dissidents working in the heart of socialist economy, that challenged and changed the dominant structures from within and with it the view on architecture.

PANEL TWELVE
ACTIVISM AND PEDAGOGY
Adriana Laura Massidda, Chair [Cinema, Ground Floor]*

MARIA THEODOROU
School of Architecture for All (SARCHA), Athens, Greece

ENTERING AN UNPREDICTABLE PATH: THE WORK OF SARCHA IN THE CENTRE OF ATHENS

Since 2010 in Greece, the fabric of the people’s lives (economy, society, politics, the city itself) is melting away. This is the context of SARCHA’s experimental study on one of the most problematic areas in the center of Athens. SARCHA’s
and Karl Liebknecht. As one of the seminal ‘dissidents’ of the 20th Century, Luxemburg had famously written that ‘freedom is always the freedom of dissenters’ and saw revolution and opposition as central strategies not just against fascists, but in life. Built in 1926 and destroyed, less than a decade later, by the Nazis, the monument is striking not only for its iconic brutalist form, but equally as a rare engagement between Mies and politics. By framing Mies’s monument within the discourse of Marxism, this paper will investigate a ‘dissident’ architecture, which unites the trajectories of modernism, the avant-garde and the radical left in an explosive, but short-lived catharsis. The backdrop is Berlin, where radical ideas of dissidence and the city have simmered throughout the Twentieth Century.

Anna Maria Meister
School of Architecture, Princeton University, USA

Radical Remoteness—the HfG Ulm as Institution of Dissidence

The Hochschule für Gestaltung in Ulm (HfG), which operated from 1953 to 1968, was one of the most influential design schools in postwar Germany. Its investigative quest for ‘good design’ originated as a moral project with a firm belief in aestheticism as means to a democratic society, owing much to the personal history of its founders in the Nazi-Resistance. The endeavor was understood as an operation from the outside, as an oppositional experiment in pedagogy—a position of remoteness, utilized as operational leverage aimed at large-scale change. This understanding of dissidence formed an ideological bond despite all conflicts about content and curricula. Defined and redefined against other institutions, political and societal norms as well as disciplinary ideals, the HfG Ulm treated antagonism as the only valid form of dissidence—while at the same time institution-alizing opposition. The school came to its end in 1968—the year of the student revolts, when opposition became mainstream.

Anna Maria León
MIT School of Architecture and Planning, USA

Designing Dissent: Vilanova Artigas and the São Paulo School of Architecture

Between the 1964 military coup and its institutionalization in 1968, Brazil went through a complicated transformation. As part of the overall process, the São Paulo School of Architecture and Urbanism was replaced in 1963 by Invisibilidade, a Faculty of Architecture and Urbanism, which was based on a competition process to commission a globally significant architectural project. With this context in mind, this paper will reflect on a specific moment of architectural resistance embedded in the short film, Illegal Architect (2012), directed, written and produced by the author. Set in London in 1959, Illegal Architect is a futuristic fiction about a rebel architect who takes on the architectural establishment. The paper does three things. Firstly, it explains the theoretical origins of Illegal Architect and its undertakings as a study of the politics of friendship and enmity related to architectural rebellion and production. Secondly, it explains the reasons for the translation of this pattern of dissidence into one of their projects the Faculty of Invisibility (2009), Ahmed Shabana

IAEA Troiani
School of Architecture, Oxford Brookes University, UK

A Theory of Dissidence in the Short Film, Illegal Architect

This paper reflects on a specific narrative of architectural dissidence embedded in the short film, Illegal Architect (2012), directed, written and produced by the author. Set in London in 1959, Illegal Architect is a futuristic fiction about a rebel architect who takes on the architectural establishment. The paper does three things. Firstly, it explains the theoretical origins of Illegal Architect and its undertakings as a study of the politics of friendship and enmity related to the architectural rebellion and production. Secondly, it explains the reasons for the translation of this pattern of dissidence into a film from textual writing. Thirdly, by referring to the writings by Julia Kristeva, it examines the notion of interdisciplinary practice as itself a dissident activity. The paper is relevant to the conference because it outlines the socio-philosophical structure of dissident behaviour related to revolutionary change and applies a study of the generic concept of friendship, enmity and dissidence to how architectural practice has and continues to operate.

Stephen Walker
The School of Architecture, The University of Sheffield, UK

Dissent, Dissensus & Fiction: Helen Chadwick Read with Rancière and Ziarek

This paper will sketch out changes undergone in the realized work to make personal connections with intellectuals in the Soviet Union. During the Biennale, however, their role appears complex and, on occasions, contradictory. The Italian cultural world mirrored a political situation, in which it became a duty to take up a position which opposed Italy’s Fascist past. Artistic and political opinions coincided. For this reason in Italy the culture of dissidence led to a heated debate. This paper will try to investigate the influence this debate made on a younger generation of architects who began to challenge the limitations and conventions in the architectural discourse at that time.

Helena Stratford
School of Architecture, Sheffield University, UK

Performative Architectures as Gesture of Dissent

Architecture produces certain ways of behaving, yet requires movement/interaction with the body to be understood. In this inter-relation, buildings and public space are perhaps better understood as ‘performative conditions’—acting on us and activated by us. In visual/live art, theatre, participatory and social practices, growing numbers of people and groups are working between concepts of art, architecture and performance to focus on the production of spatial knowledge through embodied, embedded or tacit gestures. Examining specific moments, events and performanc-es in the work of UK artist Emma Smith, German theatre group Rimini Protocol, Turkish architect Can Altay and my own art and architecture practice, this paper will discuss how these works might be described as gestures of dissent.

Pushpa Arabindoo
Department of Geography, University College London, UK

Cracked Icons and the Politics of Global Signature Architecture in Chennai, India

Focussing on the debates surrounding the new legislative assembly building and secretariat complex in Chennai, India, this paper examines the politics behind the initial competition process to commission a ‘globally significant architectural practice’ to design a ‘world-class’ facility, and how its legitimacy was derailed by a combination of architectural, political and social forces. While the architectural lobby in the city questioned the appropriateness of behaving, yet requires movement/interaction with the body to be understood. In this inter-relation, buildings and public space are perhaps better understood as ‘performative conditions’—acting on us and activated by us. In visual/live art, theatre, participatory and social practices, growing numbers of people and groups are working between concepts of art, architecture and performance to focus on the production of spatial knowledge through embodied, embedded or tacit gestures. Examining specific moments, events and performances in the work of UK artist Emma Smith, German theatre group Rimini Protocol, Turkish architect Can Altay and my own art and architecture practice, this paper will discuss how these works might be described as gestures of dissent.

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period of increasing violence and repression, which also coincided with the construction of the São Paulo School of Architecture, designed by João Batista Vilanova Artigas along with a new curriculum. In a series of printed and public forums, Vilanova Artigas argued for the possibilities of architectural agency. He was opposed by younger faculty group arquitetura nova, who viewed him as a passive collaborator of the regime and questioned the possibilities of resistance within the boundaries of the discipline. The debate still holds weight today: can architects play a role in political change, or must they leave their disciplinary boundaries to do so? Vilanova Artigas defended the right of architecture to think critical utopias. I argue that he attempted to construct such a utopia in the school, by establishing dissidence through pedagogy, and resistance through design.

and thinking of British artist Helen Chadwick. Chadwick considered the relationship between art, architecture and politics through an analogy that positioned her work as a dissident virus, one that ‘cultivates dissensus’. I will outline Chadwick’s attempts to articulate the demands (and promise) of this process, and discuss her position in the context of two later definitions of dissensus offered up by philosophers Jacques Rancière and Ewa Plonowska Ziarek, undertaken through their various configurations of the political, architecture, art, fiction and identity.

of iconic or global architecture to a city that is struggling to frame its architectural identity, at the political level, judicial contestations involved one political party simply seeking to undermine the legacy of the other. Through this exercise, the paper shows how the architectural agency in the city was considerably muted by the more overwhelming yet irrational state-led political dissent against the project. As a result, efforts to rethink the image of the city using the paradigm of (iconic) architecture remains incomplete.

Lebbeus Woods claimed: ‘To say that you are resisting something means that you have to spend a lot of time and energy saying what that something is, in order for your resistance to make sense.’ For FAS, the paradox of dissidence in architecture lies in the fact that architects must fight themselves and the way they practice rather than ‘the other’. The paper will present FAS ‘practice of dissidence’ in projects such as the call for an idea competition to design a mosque on a prominent position in Zurich or an architectural initiative to save a train station in Zurich from destruction.
The late 1970s saw various kinds of critique emerge in Eastern Europe in parallel with both the rise of anti-communist opposition and architectural postmodernism. Critics in the architectural press, novelists, sociologists, film makers, photographers and even pop singers drew connections between the total industrialization of housing and forms of anomie. At the same time, some self-consciously ‘alternative’ practices emerged in the margins of architecture. Expressive schemes dressed with anti-communist symbols were commissioned by the Roman Catholic Church in Poland and elsewhere; ‘paper architects’ throughout the Bloc sought the re-enchantment of their profession; and flamboyant vernacularism was being promoted by ‘Organic Architects’ in Hungary. Such self-consciously post-modern projects often sought to align architecture with the memory politics of the opposition. In a talk focusing on Hungary, Poland and Romania in the 1980s, I will explore the extent to which such critiques of architecture might constitute a critique of illegitimate rule.

11–11.45AM COFFEE BREAK

11.45–13.30AM

PANEL THIRTEEN
REDEFINING GROUNDS, OR
PLANNING AND RESEARCHING IN THE UNREGULATED

Eyal Weizman, Chair
[Forum, Ground Floor]

Wouter Davids
Independent Researcher
The Netherlands

SCALAR POLITICS: LUC DELEU AND THE LESSONS IN SCALE AND PERSPECTIVE

In the fall of 1980 Antwerp-based architect Luc Deleu started an extensive body of projects and installations that he has consistently labelled as ‘lessons in scale and perspective’. In an interview in 1987, Deleu stated that this decision was fuelled by his desire to work with ‘two typical [ ] and rather formal notions in architecture’. This turn to formalism was made consciously, he argued, since his work prior to 1980 was always termed ‘political.’ In his early career the architect

PANEL FOURTEEN
ARCHITECTS WITHOUT BORDERS

Peg Rawes, Chair
[Crit Room, First Floor]

Lilian Chee
Department of Architecture, School of Design and Environment, National University of Singapore

A DIFFERENT CALCULATOR: POLITICS, DISSIDENCE, AND THE LEGACIES OF TAY KHENG SOON IN THE SINGAPORE ARCHITECTURAL CONTEXT

This paper addresses dissidence within the geopolitical context of Singapore and Southeast Asia through the figure of architect, urbanist and educator Tay Kheng Soon. It traces his architectural ideologies from the mid-1960s to the present to probe the relevance, reach, and legacies of architectural disidence. In particular, it will look at three decisive moments in Tay’s career where he collided head-on with state-sponsored initiatives

PANEL FIFTEEN
PERFORMING DISSENT

Pushpa Arabindoo, Chair
[Gallery, Ground Floor]

Signe Sophie Bøggild
Independent Researcher, Denmark

DISSIDENCE IN DESIRE AND DISTRESS: COPENHAGEN’S FREETOWN AND NEW TOWN

The post-war New Town Tingbjerg, planned from tabula rasa and the post-1968 Freetown Christiania, squatted by ‘slum-stormers’ resemble opposites. Yet, here I examine them retroactively as social experiments, redefining architecture and citizenship, and as dissidents, challenging the welfare society’s identity and inclusiveness. First, I visit Tingbjerg with the architect Steen Eiler Rasmussen and then Christiania that he considered as ‘corrective’ to the planned welfare city. Second, I revisit the Copenhagen-districts becoming political objects of ‘anti-ghettisation’ and ‘normalisation’ – integration

PANEL SIXTEEN
SPACES OF REVOLT

Torsten Lange, Chair
[Cinema, Ground Floor]

Valentina Rozas and Rodrigo Millán
Faculty of Architecture, Arts and Design Universidad Diego Portales, Santiago, Chile

A STADIUM FOR THE NATION: MANIFESTATIONS OF POWER AND DISSIDENCE IN CHILE’S NATIONAL STADIUM (1973-2012)

This paper focuses on the political acts of contestation against Pinochet’s dictatorship (1973-1989) that have taken place in the National Stadium in Santiago, between 1973 and 1989, and tries to understand this metropolitan place as a scenario of official and dissident practices, in political and cultural terms. Attending to the symbolic dimension of the dissidence, it presents some episodes, that show different ways through which diverse actors defied the regime. This include football chants, political elections, demonstrations during official public acts,
East Jerusalem is not perceived as an urban model, disrupting the local community, as he took up position against the self-indulgent and hypocritical nature of the disciplines of architecture and urban planning in general, and against the institutionalization and bureaucratic nature of the architectural profession in particular. In my paper I will argue that the lessons in scale and perspective can be put on a direct par with the 'pamphletary' works of the previous decade as they shift the scene in dissidence of the architect's activist work towards a critical revision of the scope and modes of address of architectural design.

LORENZO PEZZANI
Centre for Research Architecture, Goldsmiths College, University of London, UK

MAPPING THE SEA: THALASSOPOLITICS AND SPATIAL PRACTICES
This paper draws from my engagement with activist networks that are seeking accountability for the death of migrants at the militarized borders of Europe and looks at how new imaging and modelling technologies have been used to document and spatialize cases of violation of the rights of migrants at sea. By expanding the aesthetic and technological conditions of what can be considered (evidence of) a crime, these attempts of mapping the ocean are bringing to the fore novel legal and political issues, transforming the sea in an aesthetic medium for the first time.

KOEN VAN SYNGEHEL
KU Leuven, University of Leuven, Belgium

AI WEIWEI: DISSIDENCE CAUGHT BETWEEN CREATION AND DESTRUCTION
Ai Weiwei is China’s most famous artist. Maneuvring between criticism, provocation and joke he creates artworks as moral and ethical feints. Being the promoter of individual liberty and freedom of speech he became a ‘dissident’, a fierce opponent of the political system of China. His actions may seem erratic and disturbing but in fact Ai’s work is deeply rooted in Chinese philosophical and scholarly traditions by constantly nurturing ‘in-between-ness’: in between disciplines, in between old and new, in between the original and reproduction. This ‘in-between-ness’ also characterizes Ai Weiwei’s architecture–paradox of dissidence. Caught between destruction and creation, Ai discovered the political content of the architectural practice as a mode of action, instead of an attitude of reaction. Paradoxically, projects like the Olympic ‘Birdnest’ Stadium became only dissident when Ai took distance of the design after realising that the building was emerging in Palestine at the time. Today, East Jerusalem is not perceived as a city by the planning authorities.

SENAN ABDULLAH
Jerusalem

ARCHITECTURE OF (IN)DEPENDENCY
Palestinian space in Israel is characterized by a near-total lack of planning, even an interruption of the vernacular evolution processes. Zionist ideology is founded, inter alia, on a design perception that has interrupted the pre-1948 Palestinian urban model, disrupting the local modernity that was emerging in Palestine at the time. Today, East Jerusalem is not perceived as a city by the planning authorities.

LOIS BARTHEWIZ
The Oslo School of Architecture and Design, Norway

GENEROUS DISSIDENTS
The last decade has revealed a new generation of architects who bring social concerns into their professional practice, exploring and renewing architectural tools and solutions. Their work and working methods reflect a situated and localized approach rather than overarching theories and large ideological concepts. In contemporary Europe, Fantastic Norway, Collectif Exzyt and Lacaton & Vassal Architects form interesting cases. These architects promote generous additions more than oppositional activism while exploring local potentials and utilising organisational loopholes. Conventional categories fall short when confronting with the complexity of concerns in these architectural approaches. Instead, their works may be viewed as generous dissents. This paper wants to test the term dissidence as a conceptual tool, through readings of architectural works, attempting to capture the combinations of critical engagement and generous acts.

ISABELLE DOUCET
Manchester School of Architecture, University Of Manchester, UK

THE SURVIVAL OF DISSENT ALONG THE 1990S SHIFT FROM ‘THINKING CITY’ TO ‘MAKING CITY’
Architectural theory, as part of a wider intellectual field, has undergone a ‘practice turn’ throughout the 1990s, often critical of having abandoned architecture’s critical project. Brussels’ unique way in shifting from thinking to making city is instructive for understanding the possibilities of dissent. In 1990s Brussels, the traditionalist post-modern branch of the reconstruction of The European City – that emerged in the wake of 1968 and proclaimed a return to the pre-industrial working class and even acts of purification. This research also shows how the public memory of terror has remained for some groups after the recovery of democracy (1990-2012), including some architectural and urban interventions to the stadium area, expressed through memorials, routes and public art performances, some of them proposing a critical perspective of the political transition to democracy.

JIMENA DE GORTARI AND CARLOS MOLINA
Universidad Autonoma Metropolitana, Unidad Cuajimalpa, Mexico City, Mexico

DISSIDENCE, HISTORY AND IDENTITY: REFORMA AV. IN MEXICO CITY 1864-2012
This paper analyses Reforma Avenue in Mexico City to show how dissidence is played out in architecture and urbanism. Between 1864 and 2012, this street has been the main focus for social contestation, symbolic construction, and political debate. The aim of this paper is to locate dissidence and architecture within these same coordinates, by pointing at the enactment of visual strategies aimed at subverting national history or the polemics regarding current affairs. International firms erecting buildings at Reforma Av. today (JPA, TBG, Zeytler, Hines & Stern) seek to counterbalance and neutralize such a politically charged location. This investigation is also a report on a course revising concepts about the city, essentially encouraging students to take the streets as a location of their choice, or to launch their own mise-en-scenes or strategies of contestation.

MOHAMED GAMAL ABDELMONEM
School of Planning, Architecture and Civil Engineering, Queen’s University Belfast

SPACES THAT REVOLT: SPATIAL PRACTICES AS AN ACT OF RESISTANCE IN MIDDLE EASTERN CITIES DURING THE ARAB SPRING
Mass protests during the Arab Spring in the Middle East have revealed layers of complex processes of private/public patterns in massive urban revolt, which are yet to be investigated. This paper analyses how fast the public space was reshaped and reproduced to assist its role as a space for resistance and liberation from the traditional state-driven system of power and control. By mapping patterns of interaction, social behaviour and use of space with the physical...
Policies of segregation and fragmentation perpetuate the existing sub-urban situation, preventing the development of a functioning urban space. Planning in such a context is part of a process of urbanization without urbanity, which is now re-emerging, this time not from the pre-1948 city center, but from within the sub-urban fabric itself. This process, in turn, leads to a reactivation of the lost public space through the construction of public institutions. The projects shown in this presentation are meant to provide solutions for residents’ immediate needs by creating a space for civic practices, including social and political communal existence, while making room for unpredictable future developments.

and relying heavily on social networks, Ai Weiwei set out to draw instant worldwide attention to Ordos 100. But the project was stopped in 2009, following the financial crisis. In 2011, as Ai Weiwei had become a global icon of resistance against the authoritarian regime of his country and was imprisoned for almost three months, he decided to exhibit the Ordos Project as a crucial step in his own carrier. The presentation will bring the Ordos 100 project against a broader local and international context, highlight how it eventually informed Ai Weiwei’s transformation into a global activist and discuss his artistic and political strategy from the point of view of contemporary architecture and urban design.

The city – had gradually abandoned its anti-capitalist ideology in favour of a more complacent urban regeneration. Confronted with such perversion, a new generation of architects and cultural-urban activists would emerge. This generation would adopt a more realistic and pragmat ic urban critique, without, however, falling prey to the temptations of projective practice’s ‘surfing on the waves’. In addition, they would, perhaps paradoxically, not fully reject the legacy of the 1970s critique. This paper will unravel the paradoxes and opportunities of such practices of dissent.

characteristics and spatial order of Tahrir Square and its surrounding buildings during the Egyptian revolution, this paper argues that socio-spatial practices that were at work in the Square, were already embedded in the memory of the individuals that could be recalled also in different places and situations to inform actions.

1.30–2.30PM LUNCH

2.30–3.30PM KEYNOTE LECTURE

KELLER EASTLING
Yale School of Architecture, USA

INADMISSIBLE EVIDENCE

Space is often the secret weapon of the powerful because it is a medium of undeclared activities. Yet, as such, it also tutors alternative political arts. There is a place for the forthright declarations of the activist, yet the binaries of enemies and innocents and the limited repertoire of righteousness, resistance, refusal and revolution often offer diminishing returns. As global powers juggle national and international sovereignties or allegiances to citizens or shareholders, their behavior is, by necessity, discrepant. Discrepancy fosters the obfuscation so important to the maintenance of power—the subterfuge, hoax, and hyperbole that is often most consequential in the world. Instrumentalizing discrepancy, rather than righteousness, an extra repertoire of political arts deploys sneakier techniques that are less transcendent and less automatically oppositional—techniques like gossip, rumors, gifts, exaggerated compliance, meaningless, misdirection, distraction or entrepreneurialism. The most familiar forms of activism might find, in this unorthodox repertoire, an unwitting auxiliary offering not tense resistance but dissensus and release.

3.30–4.30PM PANEL DISCUSSION OF ALL KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Ines Weizman, Chair
KELLER EASTLING, FELICITY SCOTT, DAVID CROWLEY, SRĐAN JOVANOVICH WEISS, SENAN ABDELOADER

ATTEMPTING THE IMPOSSIBLE

4.30PM CLOSING OF THE CONFERENCE

4.30–5.30PM COFFEE AND CAKE

END
ABDELMONEM, MOHAMED GAMAL
School of Planning, Architecture and Civil Engineering, Queen's University Belfast
Mohamed Gamal Abdelmonem (PhD) is an architect and lecturer at Queen's University Belfast, where he is the course leader of the BSc in Architecture. Mohamed’s research interests cover spatial practices of traditional quarters, Middle Eastern cities, the architecture of home, and design processes. He is the author of 'The Architecture of Home in Old Cairo' (Ashgate, 2013) and several articles in the Journal of Architecture, the Journal of Traditional Dwelling and Settlements Review, as well as others.
m.gamal@qub.ac.uk

ABDOLEADER, SENAN
Jerusalem
Senan Abdelqader is practicing architect and urban planner, leading his firm 'Senan Abdelqader Architects' (SAA), which he established in Jerusalem in 2004. Through working on numerous private projects and other public ones that are influenced by social and political variables, foremost, the urban planning of the central business district of east Jerusalem, Senan has created a public platform where the process of planning is considered to be a collective act and a space for civil practices. During his practice in SAA, Senan founded the ‘in-formal’ unit in Bezelal Academy in 2007, giving the possibility to architecture students to experiment a space where formality and informality are tangled. Since 2011, he’s a guest professor in Dessau Institution of Architecture (DIA) in Germany, where he teaches Informal urbanism for graduate students. Senan has participated in various local and international architectural Biennales and exhibitions, among which, the Sao Paulo Biennale in Brazil in 2007.

ARABINDOO, PUSHPA
Department of Geography University College London, UK
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BRODSKY, ALEXANDER
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Alexander Brodsky is an architect and was a member of the Moscow group of so-called ‘Paper Architects’ whose work in 1980s centred around a refusal to take part in state sponsored architectural production of low-quality, standardised buildings. During the 1990s Brodsky produced contemporary art, moving to New York in 1996. In 2000 he returned to Russia to practice freely as an architect, working out of a small office in the Moscow State Museum. Brodsky’s work is characterised by a concern with traditional building, using local materials to produce an architecture that explores Russian heritage whilst at the same time acting as a critique of the unregulated and corrupt building industry.

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Brady Burroughs is an architect, teacher and researcher at the School of Architecture and the Built Environment, KTH, Stockholm, within Critical Studies. She has taught design studio in both foundation studies and masters level since 2000, and recently began a research project exploring women-only bathing places. More specifically, this research takes its point of departure in The Skala Women’s Rock Group, an all women swimming group, located in Skala Eressos, Lesvos, Greece. Her research bridges the gap between architecture and gender, with the support of feminist and queer theory. Key references are the works of poststructural theorist Judith Butler, Rosi Braidotti’s writings on nomadic subjectivities and Sara Ahmed’s queer phenomenological approach to things and bodies. A parallel, not unrelated, interest in Brady’s research lies in the experimentation and development of critical pedagogies within architectural education, greatly inspired by feminist writer Bell Hooks.
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Michael Chapman (PhD) is a Senior Lecturer at the University of Newcastle in Australia. Last year he completed his PhD on theories of the avant-garde and their relationship to architectural theory. His work has been widely published in journals and conference proceedings and, together with Michael Ostwald and Chris Tucker,

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CROWLEY, DAVID (KEYNOTE SPEAKER)

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David Crowley (PhD) is a critic, curator and historian. He runs the Critical Writing in Art and Design programme at the Royal College of Art in London. He has written and edited various books on design and material culture in Eastern Europe under communist rule (most recently Pleasures in Organization Space: Enduring Innocence: Global Architecture and its Politics in the Western Bloc, with Susan Reid for Bettina Press, 2010). Crowley was co-curator of ‘Cold War Modern: Extrastatecraft: Infrastructures, Power, and the Minaret Ban’, a public research project launched in 2009. He is the author of ‘Pleasures in Socialism. Leisure and Luxury in the Eastern Bloc under Communist Rule’, published by Springer in 2011, co-edited with N. Janssens; the journal article ‘Making a City with Words: Understanding Brussels through its Urban Heroes and Villains’ (City, Culture and Society, 2012), and the chapter ‘Counter-projects and the postmodern user’ in the forthcoming edited volume Use Matters. An Alternative History of Architecture (R. Cupers, ed. Routledge).

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EASTERLING, KELLY (KEYNOTE SPEAKER)

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Keller Easterling (PhD) is an architect, writer and professor at Yale University. Her books include Enduring Innocence: Global Architecture and its Political Masquerades (MIT, 2005) and Organization Space: Landscapes, Highways and Houses in America (MIT 1999). Her forthcoming book, Extrastatecraft: Infrastructure and Political Arts, examines global infrastructure networks as a medium of politics. She is the Assistant Director of Histories and Theories at the AA Graduate School (1990-2000), was involved in setting up and teaching at the London Consortium Doctoral Programme, and was the Director of Urban Design at Central Saint Martins, London (2003-2007). Fontana-Giusti has published scholarly articles in The Journal of Architecture, ARQ and the AA Files, and is the co-editor of Scale: Imagination, Perception and Architecture (with G. Adler and T. Brittain-Catlin, 2012, Routledge) and author of the Complete Works of Zaha Hadid (with Patrik Schumacher, 2004, Thames and Hudson). Fontana-Giusti has been Professor of Architecture at the University of Kentucky since 2007 with the strategic task to develop the school’s graduate studies and research; she is currently the Professor of Regeneration and the Director of Graduate and PhD studies.

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FOREIGN ARCHITECTS SWITZERLAND (FAS)

FAS (Foreign Architects Switzerland) is a collective of Swiss-based architects, founded in reaction to the general political apathy and neutrality of the profession on the occasion of the minaret ban, debated in 2009. FAS took up arms in protesting against this restriction of the constructed environment, as well as against the xenophobic sign this vote represents. It developed into objecting to the common indifference of architects and planners toward real-estate pressure, conservatism and a general trend of non-involvement. In order to avoid personal recuperation for self-promoting motives, and with the fear to become important, FAS tries to stay anonymous.

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Péter Haba graduated as an art historian from Institute of Art History, Eötvös Loránd University Budapest in 2004. Even before graduation he worked as an editor for Hungarian Architecture, a bi-monthly periodical. He became increasingly interested in trends in global and domestic architecture in the second half of the 20th century, with special regard to the impacts of neomodernist architectural theory on Hungarian architecture. Haba has also published a number of essays on contemporary architecture and design in leading media of the profession. Since 2010 he has lectured at Budapest’s Moholy-Nagy University of Art and Design. His courses are focussed on topical methodology and theory issues of design culture and architecture. Since 2011 he has been a PhD candidate at the Department for History of Architecture and of Monuments, Budapest University of Technology and Economics. The focus of his research is the relationship between Structure, Technology and Aesthetics in Hungarian Industrial Architecture 1947-1970.
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Helen Mallinson (PhD) is a teacher, writer and designer. She completed a PhD at the London Consortium on ‘air’ as the precursor of ‘space’ in the work of Robert Boyle. The topic was examined in the context of the seventeenth century revolution in English science, religion and philosophy, the period widely credited with the genesis of modernity. She has written a number of papers exploring the consequences of the changed perception of air and space for architectural thinking. These include notions of agency, rhetoric, the emotions, enthusiasm and the underground. Helen Mallinson currently lectures in architectural history and theory at the Cass Faculty of Art, Architecture and Design. Previous roles include design tutor, head of school and other management projects, visiting critic and examiner, visiting lecturer, designer and practitioner.
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decolonisation to each country forging its own modernity specific to its historical context. The intention has been to position this thesis at the modernity specific to its historical context. The decolonisation to each country forging its own 20th century Germany, her research interests Program for the History and Theory of Architecture, Anna-Maria Meister is a doctoral student in the Program for the History and Theory of Architecture, Hatje Cantz, 2010). (Arctic Perspective Cahier No. 1: Architecture and Field/Work (Routledge, 2010) and a book chapter outlining revisionist approaches to the shantytowns and the interaction between the shantytowns and the State. She finished an MPhil in Architecture at Cambridge in September 2011 and obtained her architectural training from the University of Buenos Aires, where she graduated in 2006. Adriana worked in architectural practice for some years, both in Argentina and in the UK, before starting her current research. Adriana is a student of King’s College, Cambridge, and the Department of Architecture.

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