

Phd Programme Architecture and Design Cultures

SEMINAR WITH NICHOLAS THOBURN (UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER)

“Brutalism”: style, architecture and conflict

curated by

Jacopo Galimberti, Andrea Borsari and Annalisa Trentin

22nd October

02.00 - 06.00 pm

Online connection



ALMA MATER STUDIORUM
UNIVERSITÀ DI BOLOGNA
DIPARTIMENTO DI ARCHITETTURA
DIPARTIMENTO DI ECCELLENZA MIUR
(L. 232 DEL 1/12/2016)

“Brutalism”: style, architecture and conflict

A lecture and a discussion organised as part of the teaching of History and aesthetics of industrial products for the degree course in Design of the Department of Architecture - Unibo, in collaboration with the Phd programme Architecture and Design Cultures (University of Bologna) and the Collège international de philosophie (Paris).

In addition to the students of the course and the PhD candidates in Architecture and Cultures of project, they also will take part in the seminar:

Vando Borghi (Department of Sociology and Economic Law),
Valentina Antoniol (Department of History, Culture and Civilisation),
Giovanni Leoni (DA),
Matteo Cassani Simonetti (DA),
Stefano Ascari (DA - Cast Unibo),
Pierpaolo Ascari (DA)



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“Brutalism”: style, architecture and conflict

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(University of
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02.00-03.00 p.m.

Introduction to brutalism

Jacopo Galimberti

(Department of Architecture - Unibo and Collège international de philosophie)

The introductory lecture will briefly present the historical and conceptual picture of brutalism as an architectural style and as an artistic and cultural “attitude” to an audience of non-experts.

03.30-05.00

Lecture: *Salvage Brutalism: Museums, Housing Demolition, and the Crisis Artefact of Robin Hood Gardens*

Nicholas Thoburn

(Reader in Sociology, University of Manchester)

(with discussion
until 06.00)

This talk explores an eight-tonne fragment of Robin Hood Gardens, salvaged by the Victoria and Albert Museum from the demolition of this Brutalist council estate in east London. Exhibited at the 2018 Venice Biennale of Architecture, the V&A’s fragment will be a lead attraction at the V&A’s planned museum in east London’s vast Olympic-legacy regeneration. While the V&A fashions the fragment as a seamless artefact of modern architectural heritage, it is presented in this talk as a ‘crisis artefact’, implicated in the dispossession and demolition of working-class housing that accompanies state- and culture-led regeneration. The talk will unpack the features and effects of this crisis artefact, focusing on two aspects of its physical and discursive form: its conversion of the crisis of council housing into cultural history and civic exchange; and its reframing of working-class housing as class-cleansing public art.

Author biography:

Nicholas Thoburn is Reader in Sociology at the University of Manchester. He is author of *Anti-Book: On the Art and Politics of Radical Publishing* (2016) and *Deleuze, Marx and Politics* (2003).

Short Bibliography

- Nicholas Thoburn, “Concrete and council housing. The class architecture of Brutalism ‘as found’ at Robin Hood Gardens”, *City. Analysis of Urban Change, Theory, Action*, Volume 22, 2018 - Issue 5-6
- Calder, B. 2016. *Raw Concrete: The Beauty of Brutalism*, William Heinemann
- Grindrod, J. 2014. *Concretopia: A Journey around the Rebuilding of Postwar Britain*, Old Street Publishing.

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