

**DSD book launch colloquium**, 4<sup>th</sup> May 2011, 13:30, Zaal K (under the orange tribune).

## **ON THE SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ROLES OF ART AND ARCHITECTURE**

Participants: **Wouter Davidts** (Modern and Contemporary Art, VU), **Joseph Früchtl** (Faculty of Philosophy, UvA), **Jane Rendell** (Department of Architecture, The Bartlett).

In his essay 'The Author as Producer', Walter Benjamin contrasted art which is politically committed with the idea that a work of artistic quality requires disengagement. Despite the decades which have elapsed since the essay was written, and despite several onslaughts by artists on the bastions of aesthetic dogma, the inability to resolve the conflict of engagement-disengagement remains a thorn in the side of art, as Jacques Rancière's recent intervention in the debate suggests.

This aporia has played out quite differently in architecture. As a form of art which is typically seen by the public as a form of service, social responsibility is a demand architecture has often faced; yet the idea of subjugation to a compromised society has also encouraged reactions, whether in the form of radical architecture which attempted to intervene in the political or social spheres, or in the form of an autonomous architecture which emphasizes its disciplinary singularity and shuns a direct relation to social or political issues and practices.

The tensions between the acceptance of a limited role for art and architecture in society and rebelling against such a condition, between a desire for commitment and an ingrained idea of aesthetic disengagement, stand at the centre of this Delft School of Design colloquium. On the Social and Political Roles of Art and Architecture, offers an opportunity to engage with contemporary critique emanating from art theory and philosophy, critique which has implications for architecture as well.

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The colloquium is organized by the Delft School of Design to celebrate and launch four new books related to the DSD: Deborah Hauptmann & Warren Niedich, *Cognitive Architecture*; Heidi Sohn, Tahl Kaminer & Miguel Robles-Duran, *Urban Asymmetries*; Tahl Kaminer, *Architecture, Crisis and Resuscitation*.

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### **Program**

- 13:30 Words of welcome by the Dean
- 13:40 Opening words by Deborah Hauptmann (DSD Director)
- 13:50 Introduction to colloquium by Tahl Kaminer
- 14:00 Joseph Früchtl: As If We Could Trust. Fiction and aesthetics of the political
- 14:45 Introduction to *Cognitive Architecture* by Deborah Hauptmann
- 15:00 Wouter Davidts: Claes Oldenburg and the Politics of Scale
- 15.45 coffee break
- 16:00 Introduction to *Urban Asymmetries* by Heidi Sohn

16:15 Jane Rendell: Site-Writing

17:00 Introduction to *Architecture, Crisis and Resuscitation* by Tahl Kaminer

17:15 Closing discussion (Davidts, Früchtl, Rendell, Sohn, Hauptmann  
Moderator: Kaminer)

18:00 Drink (at DSD office)

Details at [www.delftschoolofdesign.eu](http://www.delftschoolofdesign.eu)

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#### Speakers:

**Wouter Davidts** is Professor of Modern and Contemporary Art at VU University Amsterdam. He is author of *Bouwen voor de kunst?* (A&S/books, 2006) and editor of *The Fall of the Studio: Artists at Work* (Valiz, 2009; with Kim Paice) and *CRACK: Koen van den Broek* (Valiz, 2010). He recently curated the exhibition *Abstract USA 1958–1968: In the Galleries* at the Rijksmuseum Twenthe in Enschede (2010).

**Joseph Früchtl**, Prof., Dr.; 2005 Chair in Philosophy of Art and Culture at the University of Amsterdam; since September 2007 Head of the Department of Philosophy. Among his publications are the monographies *Mimesis - Konstellation eines Zentralbegriffs bei Adorno*, Würzburg 1986; *Aesthetische Erfahrung und moralisches Urteil. Eine Rehabilitierung*, Frankfurt/M. 1996; *Das unverschämte Ich. Eine Heldengeschichte der Moderne*, Frankfurt/M. 2004, published in English as *The Impertinent Self. A Heroic History of Modernity*, Stanford University Press 2009.

**Jane Rendell**, Professor, is ViceDean of Research at the Bartlett, UCL. She is author of *Site-Writing* (2010), *Art and Architecture* (2006), *The Pursuit of Pleasure* (2002) and co-editor of many volumes, including *Critical Architecture* (2007) and *The Unknown City* (2001).

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DSD-related books being launched:

Deborah Hauptmann & Warren Niedich, *Cognitive Architecture: From Biopolitics to Noopolitics. Architecture and Mind in the Age of Communication and Information* (010 Publishers) – see more at <http://www.010.nl/catalogue/book.php?id=725>

Heidi Sohn, Tahl Kaminer & Miguel Robles-Duran, *Urban Asymmetries: Studies and Projects on Neoliberal Urbanization* (010 Publishers) – see more at <http://www.010.nl/catalogue/book.php?id=724>

Tahl Kaminer, *Architecture, Crisis and Resuscitation: The Reproduction of Post-Fordism in Late-Twentieth-Century Architecture* (Routledge) – see more at <http://www.routledge.com/books/details/9780415578240/>