

## **Freestyling: Architectural Transition and Transmission Course Outline**

Classicism and Minimalism; historical revivalism and Postmodern irony. How and why do architectural styles come into, and fall out of, prominence at specific historical moments? Is style purely superficial or generative of architectural form at a deeper, structural level? In collaboration with the Society of Architectural Historians of Great Britain, contributors will reference RIBA Collections to explore developments and resurgences in architectural style. This 4-week online course addresses the vexed issue of architectural style and its evolution from the Renaissance to postmodernism in a series of focused presentations and discussions. This course is inspired by the current online exhibition *Freestyle: Architectural Adventures in Mass Media*.

This course is for adults who have a general interest in architecture and who enjoy discovering new angles on familiar topics, minimal prior knowledge required.

### **Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2021**

#### **The Classical Tradition: From the Insula to the Railway Station, David McKinstry**

The Great Gallery at Somerset House (1661-1663) is one of the most influential and most forgotten classical influences on British architecture in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. We will begin by considering the elements of classicism as exemplified by the Gallery before looking at where those elements came from (such as the Ancient Rome of Vitruvius, the Italian Renaissance of Palladio and the urban planning of seventeenth-century London). We will then consider the ways in which the memory and design of the Gallery was transmitted and altered, even long after its demolition, in buildings constructed for a very different time and purpose.

**David McKinstry** works as a freelance urban design and conservation professional within local government and is a former Secretary of the Georgian Group. He is completing a DPhil on nineteenth-century metropolitan Italianate architecture at the University of Oxford and teaches the history of architecture and design at Imperial College London. His primary research interests are urban design and civic and commercial architecture, particularly in relation to 19<sup>th</sup> century Europe.

### **Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> March 2021**

#### **Medievalism and Gothic, Revd Dr Ayla Lepine**

From soaring cathedrals to eccentric follies and thrusting skyscrapers, medievalism has played a major role in architecture since the 12<sup>th</sup> century. Architects have turned to the Middle Ages to inform buildings of virtually every type across the globe. Gothic Revival

architecture yearns for nostalgia alongside new technologies and innovative forms and was often given associations that could be highly contradictory. The style has been a conduit for expressing religious morality, romantic glory, conservatism, and even revolutionary subversion. By focusing on the Houses of Parliament in London and the Woolworth Building in New York City, the versatility of Gothic will be revealed in relation to historic and contemporary systems of power.

**The Revd Dr Ayla Lepine** is Chaplain of King's College, Cambridge. Her research focuses on the architecture and visual culture of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century Gothic Revival. Following her PhD at the Courtauld, she held postdoctoral fellowships at the Courtauld and Yale. She was a Lecturer and Visiting Fellow in Art History at the University of Essex until 2018. Her publications include *Modern Architecture and Religious Communities 1850-1970: Building the Kingdom* (Routledge 2018), articles in the *Sculpture Journal* and *Architectural History*, as well as recent essays in the *Oxford Handbook of Victorian Medievalism* (OUP 2020) and for the 2020 Bowdoin Museum exhibition of the Wyvern Collection of Gothic art.

**Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> March 2021**

**The Construction of a Style: Postmodernism as Media?, Eva Branscombe & Lea-Catherine Szacka**

What is Architectural Postmodernism? The word implies a severance from Modernism, a kind of overcoming of its dogmatic rejection of history, geography and cultural context. But the story is far more complicated. The concept of style plays an important role in the understanding of both.

In this session we will be critically investigating the concept of style as an artificially constructed mechanism. Focusing on the media involved, from books to exhibitions and museums, we will discuss the dissemination of architectural ideas as 'midwives' of Postmodernism focusing in particular on the role of Charles Jencks's publication activities such as *The Language of Post-Modern Architecture* in publication from 1977 onward, Paolo Portoghesi's first architecture Biennale in Venice staged in 1980 and finally Heinrich Klotz's Deutsches Architekturmuseum in Frankfurt opening in 1984.

From this we will progress to specific case studies in London including the TV-am building in Camden town, completed by Terry Farrell in 1982; the Isle of Dogs Storm Water Pumping Station designed by John Outram and built between 1986 and 1988, China Wharf designed in 1982–83 by Piers Gough of CZWG, no.1 Poultry, completed posthumously by James Stirling in 1997, and, finally, Charles Jenck's' Thematic (Cosmic) house in Holland Park.

**Dr Eva Branscombe** has been teaching architectural history at University College London since 2012. Originally trained as an interior architect, Eva studied for her PhD at the Bartlett. Her research and teaching work has two main strands: the first engages with the links between built heritage and cultural practices in contemporary Western cities, whether expressed through cultural institutions or counter-cultural street art; the second is in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century architectural history of Central Europe, focussing particularly upon Austria and other regions in the former Austro-Hungarian Empire.

Eva has published extensively – including *Hans Hollein and Postmodernism* (Routledge, 2019), the first major monograph on that architect-artist. She has co-curated exhibitions at the MAK Gallery in Vienna, ICA in London and Museum Abteiberg in Germany, and has previously taught architectural history at Queen Mary University, Oxford Brookes University and the University of Westminster.

**Léa-Catherine Szacka** is an architect, critic and researcher based in Manchester and Paris. She is Senior Lecturer in Architectural Studies at the University of Manchester and visiting tutor at the Berlage Center for Advanced Studies in Architecture and Urban Design. After studying architecture in Montreal and Venice, Szacka obtained a PhD in History and Theory of Architecture at the Bartlett School of Architecture (2012). She has been a visiting fellow at the centre for Architecture Theory Criticism History in Brisbane (2015), visiting professor at the Harvard GSD Rotterdam studio abroad program (2018) and visiting fellow at Monash University Art Design & Architecture (2019).

Szacka's work focuses on the history and theory of postmodern architecture, with a particular focus on media and curating. Léa-Catherine is the author of *Exhibiting the Postmodern: The 1980 Venice Architecture Biennale* (Marsilio, 2016) – 2017 SAH GB Alice Davis Hitchcock Medallion – and of *Biennials/Triennials: Conversations on the Geography of Itinerant Display* (Columbia Books on Architecture and the City, 2019). She is also co-author of *Le Concert: Pink Floyd à Venise* (B2, 2017) as well as co-editor of *Mediated Messages: Periodicals, Exhibitions and the Shaping of Postmodern Architecture* (Bloomsbury, 2018) and *Concrete Oslo* (Torpedo, 2018). Her writing also appeared in *Log*, *OASE*, *AA Files*, *Architecture Theory Review*, *Volume*, *Art Papers*, *Architectural Design*, *The Journal of Architectural Education*, *The Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, and *The Journal of Architecture*.

**Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2021**

**Plenary: Is Style a dirty word?', Alan Powers**

After long dominance in both the history and practice of architecture, Style, as a word and a concept has been in disgrace for a long time, both among architects and historians. Has the reaction been too extreme and gone on so long that the ability to 'read' buildings visually become rudimentary? Is there a way to talk about how buildings look that balances and acknowledges both the subjective and the objective? Do we dare bring Style back into the room?

**Alan Powers** specialises in the history of architecture, art and design in Britain in the 20th century. He has worked to re-examine the canon of this period and to revise assumptions about the boundaries and priorities between Modernism and other forms of practice, with a combination of monographs and survey books, including *Britain* (Reaktion Books, *Modern Architectures in History*, 2007) and *Bauhaus Goes West* (Thames & Hudson, 2019). His most recent book is *Abbott Toys: Modern Toys for Modern Children* (Design for Today, 2020). He is History Leader at the London School of Architecture and teaches at the University of Kent and NYU London.