

The ARC Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions, Europe 1100 - 1800 and The University of Adelaide School of Architecture and Built Environment presents:

MAPPING THE EMOTIONAL CITYSCAPE: SPACES, PERFORMANCES AND EMOTION IN URBAN LIFE



Arundel House, London, 1646
Wenceslaus Hollar

British Museum, Wiki Commons

Date: 18 September 2017

Time: 8.30am–6.15pm

Venue: Napier Building,
The University of Adelaide

Registration: Free. All Welcome.

Register online by 12 September 2017

www.historyofemotions.org.au/events/mapping-the-emotional-cityscape-spaces-performances-and-emotion-in-urban-life

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Since Henri Lefebvre suggested that space is socially constructed and constituted, cities have been reclassified from static 'maps' for human activities to performed spaces that draw together human behaviour, meaning, discourse, and material conditions in their production. Cities are not simply a background for movement, but a function of cultural and emotional practice. That cities are named, given boundaries and called home – and in turn that cities name, define and give identity to their inhabitants – has equally implicated emotion in their production, as a recent turn to emotional geographies and urban emotions reminds us. This symposium seeks to contribute to this burgeoning scholarship through exploring the productive relationships between emotions and cityscapes across time and space.

The symposium is particularly interested in the relationship between urban geographies, architectures, buildings, and materialities and emotion. How are neighbourhood boundaries produced through and with emotion? How do emotional communities form and define themselves through urban space? How does architecture and the physical environment inform social relationships and behaviours and vice versa? And how do the emotional imaginings of urban environments impact on their histories, identities and communities? Moreover, what are the implications of such emotional productions of the cityscape for relationships of power, identity and more within them?

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

- Kate DARIAN-SMITH (The University of Melbourne)
- Nicolas KENNY (Simon Fraser University)

ABSTRACTS

portals. A London theatre, like any given Londoner's body, is permeable, if bounded. Its shape funnels attention toward staged bodies, players skilled in manipulating passions. Its audiences, in turn, are skilled participants in the ritual of play, repeat customers who take vestiges of their experiences with them when they leave. The complementary—or even discordant—dispositions of play-maker and play goer mutually constitute social experiences of passion. We cannot, however, divorce those experiences from the physical positions of timber and thatch, nor can we truncate them cleanly at the theatre's doors. My paper will consider both the body of the theatre and the theatre of the body, investigating the flow of passion and its containment in these two leaky vessels.

Athens is the New Athens: Art, crisis and emotion in the city streets

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With the emergence of Greece's financial crisis in 2009 and the more recent refugee crisis, images of suffering, anarchy, indignation and violence have become synonymous with Athens. However, developing in parallel with this is a cultural revolution heralded by the city's fast-changing arts sector. Recently this has attracted the attention of the international art world leading some to proclaim Athens as 'The New Berlin'. This paper analyses the political, economic and social conditions that have facilitated this vibrant new art scene, as a means of exploring the extent to which times of crisis can be culturally productive. Despite the lack of funding and resources, artists have developed alternative and novel ways through which to produce and present their work. One of the most significant developments has been the move from traditional gallery spaces and art institutions to the more democratic, collaborative and often chaotic city streets. Key historical events such as occupations, revolutions and political violence exist in the city's collective memory and invest the streets with emotive potentialities. Through performative and symbolic means, the emotive forces of these spaces are often

invoked and used to understand and contest the current crisis. These contested spaces provide artists with a vibrant canvas that invests their work with powerful emotional content ranging from anger and despair, to hope. This paper argues that the relationship between urban spaces, art objects, artists and the public is active and dynamic. The complex social relations of the city can be unraveled through the analysis of the production, performance and reception of art within its specific urban context. For this reason it is not right to call Athens 'The New Berlin' but rather as one graffiti artist wrote, 'Athens is the New Athens'. This paper is based on a year of ethnographic fieldwork in the Athens art scene between July 2015 and July 2016.

Art as spatial resistance in Phnom Penh, Cambodia: The production of emotional belonging in the White Building

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The White Building in central Phnom Penh was built in 1963 as part of a modernist vision of social housing for artists and performers. Following the trauma of the Khmer Rouge, where the city was emptied and an estimated ninety percent of Cambodia's artists were killed, the intervening Vietnamese-backed government sought to repopulate the building with an invitation to surviving artists to return. In recent years, largely due to government neglect, the building has fallen into disrepair. Many residents within the building are still artists and performers, but the community is often disparaged by government and segments of the press as a slum populated by criminals and sex workers. Since the mid-2000s, the building has been under constant threat of demolition by developers backed by the Cambodian government, replicating similar land-grabbing episodes that have occurred across the city as part of a violent neoliberal spatial reckoning.

Within this context, we utilise a Lefebvrian lens to chart the history of the Building

from the late 1950s, before focusing on art and storytelling programs from 2008 to the present. We trace the upsurge in artistic endeavours within the building and how they have become a way of articulating pluralistic modes of struggle for a diverse range of residents. With access to documentary footage of residents within the Building, shot by members of a White Building collective, we explore the emotional sense of belonging and emergent forms of resistance co-constituted by their connection to this urban space and surrounding street life. From this perspective, we argue that the dominant discursive acts of the more powerful can and have been challenged through the expression of the 'lived' and the elevation of everyday life. Furthermore, we argue that the very perception of space and the sense of emotional belonging that occurs within it can and has been (re)produced through these alternative interactions.

Love thy neighbour

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The neighbourly trope is well established in the Australian political, cultural and social landscape. On ABC Radio National in January 2017, psychologist and social researcher Hugh Mackay attributed epidemics of obesity and mental illness to social fragmentation. That people 'don't even know their neighbours', bemoaned Mackay, 'is a cliché of urban life'. Discourses about neighbourliness, it appears, are more urgent at critical moments of change—postwar reconstruction, accelerated urban expansion in the 1970s, rapid demographic pressure in the 21st century. Furthermore, contemporary experiences of neighbourliness are often represented as a pale shadow of the way neighbours interacted in the past. There is underlying agreement, therefore, that neighbourliness matters, although there is an inherent disconnection between the set of cultural understandings of what it means to be a good neighbour, the management and regulation of everyday neighbourly interaction, and the actualities and variations of social experience over time and across space. Axioms abound, rooted in Judeo-Christian