

CALIFORNIA
INSTITUTE *of the* ARTS
24700 McBean Parkway
Valencia, California 91355

GUEST SPEAKERS:

Phil Bernstein
Benjamin Bratton
Christina Cogdell
Teddy Cruz
Peggy Deamer
Andrés Jaque
Laura Kurgan
Neil Leach
Reinhold Martin
Patrik Schumacher

the
POLITICS
of
PARAMETRICISM

Digital Technologies
& the Future(s)
of Sociality

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CALARTS

MA Aesthetics and Politics Program

A CONFERENCE CURATED
AND ORGANIZED BY:

Matthew Poole &
Manuel Shvartzberg

HOSTED BY:

The MA Aesthetics & Politics Program at
CalArts & The Gallery at REDCAT

FRI 15th & SAT 16th NOV 2013 @ **REDCAT**

631 West 2nd Street • Los Angeles, CA 90012 • www.redcat.org

Friday 15th & Saturday 16th,
November, 2013

@ REDCAT

631 West 2nd St., LA, CA 90012

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the POLITICS of PARAMETRICISM

Digital Technologies & the Future(s) of Sociality

“Parametricism” has been heralded as the new avant-garde in the fields of architecture and design—the next ‘grand style’ in the history of architectural movements. Parametric models enable digital designers to create complex structures and environments as well as new understandings of space, both real and virtual.

Whether as tools for democratic action or tyrannical spectacle; self- and community-building capabilities; a post-humanistic subject; or, the mediatized politics of our various futurisms—all these themes are figured within the Parametricist discourse.

This conference, which includes a range of high profile international speakers from architectural practice and theory, will explore urgent questions that concern the social and political ramifications at stake in the evolution of this new design paradigm.

GUEST SPEAKERS:

BENJAMIN H. BRATTON is a theorist whose work spans philosophy, art and design. At the University of California, San Diego, he is Associate Professor of Visual Arts, Director of The UCSD Design Theory and Research Platform and D:GP, The Center for Design and Geopolitics. His research is situated at the intersections of contemporary social and political theory, computational media & infrastructure, architectural & urban design problems, and the politics of synthetic ecologies and biologies. Bratton's current work focuses on the political geography of cloud computing, massively-granular universal addressing systems, and alternate models of ecological governance. His next book, *The Stack: On Software and Sovereignty*, is forthcoming from MIT Press.

PHILLIP G. BERNSTEIN is a Vice President at Autodesk, a leading provider of digital design, engineering and entertainment software, where he leads Strategic Industry Relations and is responsible for setting the company's future vision and strategy for technology, as well as cultivating and sustaining the firm's relationships with strategic industry leaders and associations. An experienced architect, Bernstein was formerly with Pelli Clarke Pelli Architects where he managed many of the firm's most complex commissions. Bernstein teaches Professional Practice at the Yale School of Architecture where he received both his B.A. and his M.Arch. He is co-editor of *Building (In) The Future: Recasting Labor in Architecture* (2010) and *BIM In Academia* (2011). He is a Senior Fellow of the Design Futures Council and former Chair of the AIA National Contract Documents Committee.

CHRISTINA COGDELL is a cultural historian who is a Chancellor's Fellow and Associate Professor in the Department of Design at the University of California at Davis. Her research investigates the intersection of popular scientific ideas and cultural production, in particular art, architecture and design. She received her Ph.D. in Art History from the University of Texas at Austin (2001), her M.A. in American Studies from the University of Notre Dame (1994), and her B.A. in American Studies from UT Austin (1991). She is the author of *Eugenic Design: Streamlining America in the 1930s* (2004, 2010), winner of the 2006 Edelstein Prize for outstanding book on the history of technology, and co-editor with Susan Currell of the anthology *Popular Eugenics: National Efficiency and American Mass Culture in the 1930s* (2006). Cogdell's work has been included in *Visual Culture and Evolution* (2011), *Art, Sex, and Eugenics* (2008), and published in *Boom: A Journal of California, American Art, Design and Culture, Volume, Design Issues and American Quarterly*. She has received fellowships from the Mellon Foundation, the American Council of Learned Societies, the Canadian Centre for Architecture, the Penn Humanities Forum at the University of Pennsylvania, the Wolfsonian Design Museum, the Georgia O'Keeffe Museum Research Center for the Study of American Modernism, and the American Philosophical Society. Cogdell is currently writing her second monograph on today's “generative architecture” in relation to recent scientific theories of self-organization, emergence and the evolution of complex adaptive systems.

A Conference Curated and Organized By:
Matthew Poole & Manuel Shvartzberg

Hosted by: *The MA Aesthetics & Politics Program at CalArts & The Gallery at REDCAT*

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 15

7:00 PM – 9:00 PM
Keynote Event

“Architecture and politics:
Parametricism within or beyond
liberal democracy?”
— a discussion with Reinhold Martin
and Patrik Schumacher

Reinhold Martin: **On Numbers,
More or Less**

Patrik Schumacher: **Thesis on
the Politics of Parametricism**

LAURA KURGAN is Associate Professor of Architecture at the Graduate School of Architecture Planning and Preservation at Columbia University, where she directs the Visual Studies curriculum, the Spatial Information Design Lab and is Co-Director of the Advanced Data Visualization Project. She is the author of *Close Up at a Distance: Mapping, Technology, and Politics* (Zone Books, 2013). Kurgan's work explores subjects ranging from digital mapping technologies to the ethics and politics of mapping, building intelligence, and the art, science and visualization of big and small data. Her work has appeared at the Cartier Foundation in Paris, the Venice Architecture Biennale, the Whitney Altria, MACBa Barcelona, the ZKM in Karlsruhe, and the Museum of Modern Art. Kurgan was the recipient of the United States Artists Rockefeller Fellowship in 2009.

NEIL LEACH is a Professor at the University of Southern California. He has also taught at the AA, Columbia GSAPP, Cornell University, DIA, IaaC and SCI-Arc. He is the author, editor and translator of 24 books, including *Rethinking Architecture, The Anaesthetics of Architecture, Designing for a Digital World, Digital Tectonics, Digital Cities, Machinic Processes, Swarm Intelligence, Scripting the Future, Fabricating the Future* and *Camouflage*. Leach has been co-curator of a series of international exhibitions including the Architecture Biennial Beijing. He is currently a NASA Innovative Advanced Concepts Fellow working on robotic fabrication technologies for the Moon and Mars.

REINHOLD MARTIN is Associate Professor of Architecture in the Graduate School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation at Columbia University, where he directs the Ph.D. program in architecture and the Temple Hoyne Buell Center for the Study of American Architecture. He is a member of Columbia's Institute for Comparative Literature and Society as well as the Committee on Global Thought. Martin is a founding co-editor of the journal *Grey Room* and has published widely on the history and theory of modern and contemporary architecture. He is the author of *The Organizational Complex: Architecture, Media, and Corporate Space* (MIT Press, 2003), and *Utopia's Ghost: Architecture and Postmodernism, Again* (Minnesota, 2010), as well as the co-author, with Kadambari Baxi, of *Multi-National City: Architectural Itineraries* (Actar, 2007). In 2012, Martin co-curated with Barry Bergdoll *Foreclosed: Rehousing the American Dream*, at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, for which he and Bergdoll also co-edited the exhibition catalogue. Currently, Martin is working on two books: a history of the nineteenth century American university as a media complex, and a study of the contemporary city at the intersection of aesthetics and politics.

TEDDY CRUZ was born in Guatemala City. He obtained a Master in Design Studies at Harvard University in 1997 and established his research-based architecture practice in San Diego, California in 2000. He has been recognized internationally for his urban research of the Tijuana-San Diego border, and in collaboration with community-based nonprofit organizations, such as Casa Familiar, for advancing border immigrant neighborhoods as sites of cultural production, from which to rethink urban policy and propose new models of inclusive housing and civic infrastructure. In 1991 he received the prestigious Rome Prize in Architecture and in 2005 Cruz was the first recipient of the James Stirling Memorial Lecture On The City Prize, by the Canadian Center of Architecture and the London School of Economics. In 2008 he was selected to represent the U.S. in the Venice Architecture Biennial and in 2011 Cruz was a recipient of the Ford Foundation Visionaries Award, the Global Award for Sustainable Architecture and was named one of the 50 Most Influential Designers in America by *Fast Company* magazine. Cruz is currently a professor in public culture and urbanism in the Visual Arts Department at the University of California, San Diego, and the co-founder of the Center for Urban Ecologies.

PEGGY DEAMER is Assistant Dean and Professor of Architecture at Yale University and a principal in the firm of Deamer Studio. She received a B.Arch. from The Cooper Union and a Ph.D. from Princeton University. Her dissertation on Adrian Stokes emphasized the relationship he explored between vision, the body, and craft. Articles by Deamer have appeared in *Assemblage, Praxis, Perspective, Architecture and Psychoanalysis*, and *Harvard Design Magazine*, among other journals and anthologies. The work of her firm has appeared in *Dwell, The New York Times, Architectural Record* and *House and Garden*, among others. She is the editor of *The Millennium House and Architecture and Capitalism: 1845 to the Present* and co-editor of *Re-Reading Perspecta; Building in the Future: Recasting Architectural Labor*; and *BIM in Academia*. Deamer's recent articles include “The Changing Nature of Architectural Work,” in *Design Practices Now Vol II, The Harvard Design Magazine* no. 33; “Detail Deliberation,” in *Building (in) the Future: Recasting Labor in Architecture*; “Practicing Practice,” in *Perspecta 44*; “Work,” in *Perspecta 47*; “Design and Contemporary Practice” in *Architecture from the Outside*; and “Marx, BIM, and Contemporary Labor,” in *BIM Futures*, 2013.

ANDRÉS JAQUE is an architect whose work explores the role that architecture plays in the making of societies. In 2003 he founded the Office for Political Innovation, a transdisciplinary agency engaged with the making of an ordinary urbanism out of the association of heterogeneous architectural fragments. Jaque has lectured at a number of universities around the world, including Berlage Institute, Columbia University GSAPP, Princeton University, Bezalel Academy, Universidad Javeriana de Bogota, and the Instituto Politecnico di Milano, among others. His work has been exhibited at the Schweizerisches Architekturmuseum in Basel, the Instituto Valenciano de Arte Moderno (IVAM), the *Biennale di Venezia*, and at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York City. He is also the author of other works like *Teddy House* (Vigo, 2003, 2005), *Mousse City*, (Stavanger, 2003), *Peace Foam City* (Ceuta, 2005), *Skin Gardens* (Barcelona, 2006), the *Museo Postal de Bogotá* (Bogotá, 2007), *Rolling House* for the Rolling Society (Barcelona, 2009), the *House in Never Never Land* (Ibiza, 2009), the *ESCARAVOX*, (Madrid, 2012), *Hänsel and Gretel's Arenas* (Madrid, 2013). Jaque currently teaches at GSAPP, Columbia University.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 16

10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Panel 1: Introduction To Parametricism: Historical and Technological Context

Phillip G. Bernstein: **Finding Value in Parameters: How Scripting Beyond Form Changes the Potential of Design Practice**

Christina Cogdell: **Breeding Ideology: Parametricism and Biological Architecture**

Neil Leach: **There is no such thing as a political architecture; there is no such thing as digital architecture**

2:00 PM – 4:00 PM

Panel 2: Parametricism, The Commons And Social Representation

Teddy Cruz: **The New Political: Where the Top Down and the Bottom up Meet**

Peggy Deamer: **Parametric Schizophrenic**

Laura Kurgan: **The Method is the Message**

4:45 PM – 6:30 PM
Panel 3: Designing Subjectivities, Curating New Models of Sociality

Benjamin H. Bratton: **The Always Partial System: For an Inhuman Parametricism**

Andrés Jaque: **Architecture as Rendered Society**

PATRIK SCHUMACHER is Partner at Zaha Hadid Architects and Founding Director at the AA Design Research Lab. He joined Zaha Hadid in 1988 and has since been the co-author of many key projects, such as MAXXI—the National Italian Museum for Art and Architecture of the 21st century in Rome. In 2010 he won the Royal Institute of British Architects' Stirling Prize for excellence in architecture. Schumacher studied philosophy, mathematics, and architecture in Bonn, London and Stuttgart, where he received his Diploma in architecture in 1990. In 1999 he completed his Ph.D at the Institute for Cultural Science, Klagenfurt University. In 1996 he founded the Design Research Laboratory with Brett Steele, at the Architectural Association in London, and continues to teach in the program. Since 2000 Schumacher is also guest professor at the University of Applied Arts in Vienna. In 2010 and 2012 he published the two volumes of his theoretical opus magnum *The Autopoiesis of Architecture*. His lectures and essays in architectural theory are available at www.patrikschumacher.com. In 2002 Schumacher curated *Latent Utopias—Experiments within Contemporary Architecture* and he is currently planning the exhibition *Parametricism—The New International Style*.

CONFERENCE ORGANIZERS:

MANUEL SHVARTZBERG is an architect and writer. He has worked for, among others, OMA/Rem Koolhaas, and was project architect for David Chipperfield Architects in London, where he led a number of international arts/cultural projects between 2006 and 2012. In 2008 he co-founded the award-winning experimental practice Hunter & Gatherer, with which he has lectured and made various projects on questions of contemporary art, architecture, and critical theory. Since 2011 he has been teaching in Los Angeles, California, at CalArts and the University of Southern California. Shvartzberg is currently based in New York City where he is enrolled in the Ph.D in Architecture program and is a graduate fellow of the Institute for Comparative Literature and Society at Columbia University.

MATTHEW POOLE is a freelance curator and contemporary art theorist living in Los Angeles. His curatorial projects and writing explore the contradictions of neoliberal politics and how they are transforming contemporary art, curatorial practices, the built environment and the political currencies of culture more generally. Before moving to LA, Poole was the Director of the Centre for Curatorial Studies, in the School of Philosophy & Art History at the University of Essex, UK. His recent projects can be viewed online at: www.kynaston-mcshine.org.uk

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