

The Royal College of Art

# SPACES OF TRANSCULTURAL RESISTANCE

Alterity in the Design Practices of Lina Bo Bardi and Alison and Peter Smithson

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## SPACES OF TRANSCULTURAL RESISTANCE

Alterity in the Design Practices of Lina Bo Bardi and Alison and Peter Smithson





Fig 1. Alison and Peter Smithson, House of the Future, 1956

Fig 2. Lina Bo Bardi, Teatro Gregório de Mattos, 1986

Cultural institutions founded in the immediate postwar period in both Brazil and the UK give context to this study, with the *Museu de Arte de São Paulo* (MASP) in São Paulo and the *Institute for Contemporary Arts* (ICA) in London representing the intersection of global politics with emerging forms of economic and cultural modernity. As such the thesis investigates both Bo Bardi and the Smithsons' involvement with these respective institutions as a means to uncover the contradictions inherent in their characterisation as marginal historical figures, given their centrality to such new sites of power. In relation to Bo Bardi this is explored through her instrumentalisation of the museum as a school, coupled with an innovative use of print media in the form of the museum's catalogue *Habitat Magazine*. While in the case of Alison and Peter Smithson two projects *Parallel of Life and Art* (1953) and *Patio and Pavilion* (1956), produced in collaboration with artists Nigel Henderson and Eduardo Paolozzi are drawn upon to explore the couple's perceptive manipulation of their relationships as a self-positioning tool within the *Independent Group* (IG) at the ICA.

Within the context of emerging scholarship that asserts ever-expanding definitions of alternative practice in architecture, the thesis argues for the expansion of this discourse to encompass the co-constitution of political solidarity and consciousness as part of the professional identity of the transnational architect. By accounting for the historical development and conceptual significance of the work of Bo Bardi and the Smithsons, this study contributes new insights into the history of alternative practice. It therefore challenges canonical historiographies in order to reveal the dialectic between globally significant institutions, which it is shown shaped the multiple modernities defining of modern architecture in both countries.

This thesis investigates alterity in the approach to architectural design of the Modernist architects Lina Bo Bardi in Brazil and Alison and Peter Smithson in the UK at a pivotal moment at the beginning of their careers in the early 1950s. The obvious connection between Bo Bardi and the Smithsons is the unusual way both architects set themselves up in practice by repurposing prewar European Modernism in relation to urgent concepts and ideas that foregrounded a sociological approach to architecture on each side of the Atlantic. Positioned against the prevalent orthodoxies of European Modernism, Bo Bardi and the Smithsons it, is argued, reoriented architectural discourse towards process and methods of production in search of new ways to instrumentalise architecture as a way of shaping society. Lina Bo Bardi sought to integrate the African culture of the Brazilian northeast, addressing the dichotomy of the late postcolonial situation found there, while the Smithsons developed both archaeological and ethnographic ways of thinking about architecture in relation to the everyday reality of postwar London.

While there has been much focus on the localised nature of their individual practices, this thesis looks instead at how their parallel engagement with multiscalar networks expanded their spatial reach in global terms. This is because what is interesting about a comparative study today is precisely the transcultural narrative in the current literature that suggests both architects as archetypal models for resistance against the current hegemony of the professionalisation of architecture as a global phenomenon. This anachronistic framing however is problematic in that it tends to neglect the relationship between the local conditions of production in their work, located not least within the context of different geographies and cultures from one another, which in turn negates architecture's relationship to sites of capital accumulation defining of the globalising era.

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# ENCES & APPENDICES

cited from Habitat Magazine

s cited by Alison and Peter Smithson

### ACRONYMS

Al Al Al Cu En FA G G IA IA IA IC IC IC IC	ASTA HRC	Association of Architects, Surveyors and Technical Assistants
Al Al C En FA G IA IA IA IC IC IC	HRC	
Al C En FA G IA IA IC IC IC IC		Arts and Humanities Research Council
C EI FA FA G IA IA IC IC IC IC	D	Architectural Design Magazine
EI FA GJ IA IA IC IC IC	R	The Architectural Review
FA GA IA IA IC IC IC	CA	Canadian Centre for Architecture
FA GA IA IA IC IC IC IC	NBA	Escola Nacional de Belas Artes (National School of Arts)
G IA IA IC IC IC	AAP	Fundação Armando Alvares Penteado
IA IA IC IC IC	AUUSP	Faculdade de Arquitetura e Urbanismo, Universidade de São Paulo
IA IC IC IC	SD	Graduate School of Design
IC IC IC	AC	Instituto de Arte Contemporânea
IC IC LC	AC	International Archive Council
IC LC	CA	The Institute of Contemporary Arts
LO	COM	International Committee of Museums
	L. L	The Independent Group
	СС	The London County Council
Μ	IAM	Museu de Arte Moderne (Museum of Modern Art)
М	IASP	Museu de Arte de São Paulo (Museum of Art, São Paulo)
М	IoMA	Museum of Modern Art
N.	AR	Nelson A. Rockefeller
N	HS	The National Health Service
0	IAA	The Office of Inter-American Affairs
R	IBA	The Royal Institute of British Architects
R	CA	The Royal College of Art
SI	ESC	Serviçio Social do Comercio
SI	PHAN	Serviço do Patrimonio Historico e Artistico Nacional
TI	IT	This is Tomorrow
U	NESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
V	&A	The Victoria and Albert Museum

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Any project to transform society must grasp the transformation of spatial and temporal conceptions and practices'.<sup>1</sup>

This thesis is about alternative practice in architecture and the role of transcultural resistance, using as case studies architects who began their careers in the early postwar context; Lina Bo Bardi (1914-1992) in Brazil and Alison (1928-1993) and Peter Smithson (1923-2003) in the UK. Its origins began within a three-year research programme supported by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) called Public Spaces and the Role of the Architect in London and São Paulo, which specified a comparison between modernist case studies of public space with contemporary design in both cities.<sup>2</sup> The comparison hinged on the commonality between both cities as financial capitals with multicultural populations, but also the legacy of modernism in countries positioned on either side of the Atlantic, which was influential not just on the design of buildings, but also public space during the 1960s and 1970s. The PhD expands on these terms of reference, comparing architects Lina Bo Bardi and the Smithsons, not simply because they are both authors of case studies in the research programme, but because of the evolution of their practices as concerted dissolutions from prewar architectural modernism(s).

For Lina Bo Bardi this involved an intense fascination with the non-western culture of the Brazilian northeast,<sup>3</sup> seeking to disrupt the established prewar Eurocentric mainstream through extensive writing, theorising and development of educational work, much of it in collaboration with her husband, Pietro Maria Bardi. The Smithsons found inspiration closer to home in the back streets of London's East End, spending their entire careers together,

# INTRODUCTION

1

Harvey, D., 'The Condition of Postmodernity', Wiley-Blackwell, 1991, p218 The project was a collaboration between The Royal College of Art in London and FAU-USP in São Paulo between 2014-2017. Lina Bo Bardi's Museu de Arte de São Paulo (1968) and the Smithsons' Economist Plaza (1964) were two of the case studies researched.

Geographically the northeast of Brazil comprises 9 of the country's 26 states. These include: Alagoas, Bahia, Ceará, Maranhão, Paraíba, Pernambuco, Piauí, Rio Grande do Norte and Sergipe. Bo Bardi travelled around Brazil, particularly in the Nordeste, however the majority of her work in the region was completed in the Bahian capital, Salvador. The region today is home to 28% of Brazil's population with 58% living in poverty. Garmany, J., 'Situating Fortaleza: Urban Space and Uneven Development in Northeastern Brazil', Cities, Vol. 28,

<sup>1</sup> 2 http://psarchitect.org/about/ 3 No. 1, Elsevier, 2011, pp45-52, p28

and the Smithsons both realised their very first architectural works at the beginning of the decade, yet it wasn't until the very end of it that they received their second large-scale commissions. Additionally, the end of the Second World War marked a shared condition, characterising the socio-political situation in Brazil and the UK during the 1950s. As such, their relationship to what the thesis suggests was an 'alternative' context for architects of the period to be working in, is framed by a time period in which, at either end they actually produced traditional works of built architecture.

Research Questions Given that this thesis pays special attention to context, the research revisits Bo Bardi and the Smithsons' contemporary articulation as 'alternative' by addressing two main questions. Firstly, framed by contemporary global politics, which has led to Bo Bardi and the Smithsons' selection as relevant historical references, does the existing historiography provide an adequate account of their processes as alternative? Secondly, given the remoteness in time and political context, and their own geographical separation, do the practices and processes of Lina Bo Bardi and the Smithsons have lessons relevant for today's alternative practice, and its potential for resistance in an increasingly globalised professional context? To address the question of historiography and contemporary relevance, this thesis touches on three key concepts, which the following three sections of the introduction consider in more detail.

### Alterity

Considered in terms of how architectural practice has been theorised as 'alternative' today, contextualising the more recent attention paid to the work of Bo Bardi and the Smithsons, interrogating how the idea of alterity may manifest as different when dislocated by time and place.

Transcultural Understanding the ways in wh and aware of, international fac class.

Resistance nterrogating Bo Bardi and tl

building, writing, speaking and teaching alongside their design work and theoretical positioning as members of both CIAM and later *Team X*. Bo Bardi and the Smithsons are therefore credited with expanding architecture as a discipline, by explicitly associating the profession with the quotidian. Bo Bardi and the Smithsons however were not unique in this respect; a number of other architects of their generation could equally make good candidates for a comparison. In Brazil, Oscar Niemeyer and João Villanova Artigas certainly had their own brand of self-determined alterity while British architects such as Colin St. John Wilson, Neave Brown and not least Archigram have all been historicised for their distinct claims on alternative architectural territories in the postwar period.

So why compare Bo Bardi and the Smithsons now? Simply, their careers began at the close of war, continuing in tandem throughout their lifetimes. Additionally what separates them from those named on the above list is that they have experienced a renewed popularity amongst a younger, activist generation today, with their resistance to the hegemony of professionalisation understood as newly relevant to the contemporary condition. The first part of this introduction therefore begins by exploring the reasons for the growing interest and therefore construction of their shared alterity within the current literature globally. The second part then turns to the active canonisation of Bo Bardi and the Smithsons' as a global phenomenon, questioning the legitimacy of transcultural and indeed transhistorical comparison. Therefore while the thesis is concerned with Bo Bardi and the Smithsons' shared conceptualisation as 'alternative' today, it also questions attempts in the current literature to treat them with parity, highlighting the problem with simplifying the disparity in the origins of their practices in order to compare them.

One way the thesis approaches this is to focus greater attention on the socio-political and cultural context in which Bo Bardi and the Smithsons worked, rather than the architectural products they designed. Uniquely, the rejection of prewar modernism is explained in the research by framing it against the advent and active institutionalisation of the Modern Art Movement, rather than architecture, in Brazil and the UK. In studying Bo Bardi and the Smithsons' relationship to the *Museu de Arte de São Paulo* (MASP) in São Paulo and the *Institute of Contemporary Arts* (ICA) in London respectively, the thesis is restricted to a consideration of activities undertaken in the 1950s. The function of limiting the scope of the thesis in this way is to focus on the beginning of their careers to understand how they developed experimental methods, before the realisation of their mature works. Bo Bardi

Understanding the ways in which Bo Bardi and the Smithsons' practice was influenced by, and aware of, international factors or non-hegemonic intra-national cultures of race and

Interrogating Bo Bardi and the Smithsons' practice considered as a conscious opposition

to hegemonic forces, the forms that this takes, and the dynamics of their relations with

emergent cultural institutions in the early postwar period.

'Progress consists in a change from the homogenous to the heterogenous'.<sup>4</sup>

While both architects are united through the commonality with which they are referred to as alternative, it is useful to begin by assessing what kind of architectural culture they are considered alternative to. The term alternative practice is now common to western architectural discourse, and has almost become a normalised category of architecture in its own right.<sup>5</sup> For Stanford Anderson this concerns a distinction between architecture as a *profession*,<sup>6</sup> contingent on the historic context of expertise, and as a *discipline* indicating a broader 'body of knowledge' that brings to bear on other 'material and formal skills'.<sup>7</sup> Activities considered part of an expanded discipline of architecture commonly include writing, teaching, exhibition and theatre design, which are all often cast as inferior to the practice of actually designing and constructing buildings. As such alternative practice is not entirely extrinsic to architecture as building, but claims alterity to highlight and absorb difference, denied by the profession. Alternative practice applied today thus validates other disciplines on which architectural design is focused, often as a means of professional critique.<sup>8</sup>

Jeremy Till and Tatjana Schneider, two prominent authors on the topic, highlight the importance in questioning who it is that is defining the norm. In their work *Spatial Agency: Other Ways of Doing Architecture,* they question a definition of alterity that is, 'bound by

1994, p4
5 Colomina, B., 'Collaborations the Society of Architectural Historians
6 Anderson defines the professi architecture perform under specific his body of knowledge involving others be Places Journal', Vol. 4, Issue 1, 1987, p7
7 Finney, T. & Reinmuth, G., 'Ag Ramirez-Lovering, D., 'Studio Futures: 2015, pp133-140, p409, first accessed 4 453/24028/4/2012007150OK.pdf
8 Fischer, OW., 'Architecture, C CG., Cairns, S. & Heynen, H., 'The SAC pp56–69

4

# ALTERNATIVE SPACE

## Contemporary Assessments of Alterity

Young, RJC., 'Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture and Race', Routledge,

- 5 Colomina, B., 'Collaborations: The Private Life of Modern Architecture', Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians, Vol. 58, 1999, pp462-471
  - Anderson defines the profession to mean the way in which practitioners of
- architecture perform under specific historical conditions and discipline to mean a growing body of knowledge involving others beyond the profession. Anderson, S., 'On Criticism', Places Journal', Vol. 4. Issue 1, 1987, p7
- 7 Finney, T. & Reinmuth, G., 'Agency Redirected', in eds. Mitsogianni, A., Bates, D. & Ramirez-Lovering, D., 'Studio Futures: Changing Tranjectories in Architectural Education', 2015, pp133-140, p409, first accessed 4th June 2018, https://opus.lib.uts.edu.au/bitstream/10 453/24028/4/2012007150OK.pdf
- 8 Fischer, OW., 'Architecture, Capitalism and Criticality' chapter in eds. Crysler, CG., Cairns, S. & Heynen, H., 'The SAGE Handbook of Architectural Theory', 2012, SAGE,

Beatrix Potter's Places.<sup>14</sup> In what Smithsons biographer Dirk van den Heuvel calls a 'fine example of [the] foregrounding of the ordinary', Smithson compares the interiors of Peter Rabbit's home with those of Le Corbusier's villas:<sup>15</sup>

or in fact can take.' 16

For Alison Smithson, everyday objects are 'exhibited' for their essentiality, thus providing an alternative and commonly overlooked palette for design.

Associating space with the everyday was popularised within architectural discourse by theorist Henri Lefebvre who paired its potential for occupation as inherently political as a 'stage for social activities', reproduced through the actions of its users.<sup>17</sup> Lefebvre's *The* Production of Space demonstrates how society produces its own space, subject to social practices and importantly, structures of power. Making visible such occupation and use is thus a form of recording social patterns and as Lefebvre argues, 'a tool for the analysis of society'.<sup>18</sup> While there is considerbale comparability between Lefebvre's theory and Bo Bardi and the Smithsons' practices, this thesis is careful to articulate the socio-political motivations in both architects' work. This is in part to apply a critical lens to the notion of alterity in architecture, so as not to conflate the desire for a politicised contemporary architectural practice with the work of others who produced architecture in complex and quite different circumstances. For example, the Smithsons' association with the London County Council (LCC), explored in Chapter 6, best evidences why their work has become conflated with a socialist agenda today, despite the couple's own critique and self-separation from politics as is observable not just in their writing but also their built work.

Alternative Practice: The Smithsons Although Alison Smithson once remarked that 'an architect who cannot build is like a man without arms, almost without identity', emphasising the significance of building, there is

14 15 van den Heuvel, D., 'Alison and Peter Smithson: A Brutalist Story', PhD Thesis, University of Delft, 2013, p58 Smithson, A., 'Beatrix Potter's Places', Architectural Design, December 1967, p573 16 17 Henri Lefebvre's writing is a common reference in texts on alternative practice Lefebvre, H., 'The Production of Space', Wiley-Blackwell, 1991, p42 18 Lefebvre, H., 'The Production of Space', Wiley-Blackwell, 1991, p33

exactly the terms of reference that it would wish to escape'.9 For Till and Schneider, the problem with alterity as a celebrated quality is that it implies the negation of positive qualities that can be found in accepted 'mainstream' practice. As such they argue for a hybridity that focuses on 'possibility' rather than alterity to define new ways of thinking about, let alone making architecture. Bo Bardi features on the Spatial Agency website, which states that her difference is characterised by her 'playfulness and diversity', with her work encompassing a 'social-concern' that rejected the 'grand gestures' of her peers.<sup>10</sup>While these points are not entirely inaccurate, the short entry negates the dynamics of the wider sociopolitical struggle of the profession in Brazil at the time, including the fact that both of Bo Bardi's most significant works are defined each by a singular grand architectural 'gesture'. which this research argues is a key attribute of her alternative approach.<sup>11</sup>

The Smithsons are not listed on the website, most probably as a result of their more effectual canonisation in British architectural history. Their alterity can perhaps be better understood therefore in relation academic Jonathan Hill's concern for the terms in which architecture is produced. In his book Occupying Architecture, Hill identifies that while architecture is primarily concerned with objects, namely buildings, 'architecture' should be conceptualised as the relationship between built form and occupation.<sup>12</sup> For Hill there is a blurring between those who design architecture and those who use it. In turn his study is interested in the activities involved in making, and the actions of occupation, which are implicitly entwined in a reciprocal relationship, governed by an imbalance in power distribution between thoe who hold professional knowledge and those who do not; identities defined not simply by edication but also economics, class, race, and geography. Hill describes this in terms of the profession's tendency to use restrictive visual and verbal language to the exclusion of potential inhabitants, which he argues should be 'dismantled' by including 'signs of inhabitation'.13

The Smithsons wrote prolifically on the concept of inhabitation, applying an observational approach to the design process, enigmatically seen in Alison Smithson's short piece called

'In Beatrix Potter's interiors, objects and utensils in daily use are conveniently located, often on individual hooks or nails, and are all "decoration" the "simple" spaces need,

Smithson, A., 'Beatrix Potter's Places', Architectural Design, December 1967, p573

Till, J., Awan, N., 7 Schneider, T., 'Spatial Agency: Other Ways of Doing 9 Architecture', Routledge, 2011, p26

Spatial Agency website, first accessed 30th August 2018, http://www.spatialagency. 10 net/database/lina.bo.bardi

MASP is defined by the large span created by raising the structure on four large 11 columns while SESC's two concrete tower's are key identifiers of the building.

eds. Hill, J., 'Occupying Architecture', Routledge, 1998, p7 12

<sup>13</sup> eds. Hill, J., 'Occupying Architecture', Routledge, 1998, p10

project, cutting through high-level walkways showcased their ideas for 'streets in the sky'; an approach to living that prioritised sociality in high-density building.

The power of the Smithsons' architecture has therefore largely become restricted to the imagery they created, rather than in the significance of their buildings or even written work. I hadn't connected, for example, their main achievement in London, the housing complex Robin Hood Gardens to the evocative drawings they had produced 50 years before of Golden Lane Estate. Passing the estate's facade on route to the Blackwall Tunnel, the repetition of the concrete sound barrier guarding the building from the road creates a dramatic rhythmic effect, allowing only the occasional peep into the domesticity of its lower ground floors, with washing hanging from windows above. To me the building seemed more akin to a castle; an analogy I would later learn was very much the Smithsons' own. Reminiscent of Alison Smithson's small book AS in DS, my memory of Robin Hood Gardens is eerily fitting - glimpsed from the car only briefly before its image races away.<sup>23</sup> There is an observable disconnect then between the popularity of their ideas, enshrined in drawings, and the success of the architecture itself. With Robin Hood Garden's recent demolition, the Smithsons' architecture risks remaining like this; a ghostly memory reminiscent of an approach, like Bo Bardi's, which aimed, over time, to quietly produce a socio-political role for the architect beyond design.

## Alternative Practice: Lina Bo Bardi

What endures about Bo Bardi's architecture, particularly that of MASP is that fifty years on from its construction, it retains an extraordinary relationship to the open air. As such her architecture is memorable not least because it differs so strikingly to that of her famed counterparts, particularly Oscar Niemever whose buildings are almost unavoidable to a visitor, due to their mix of curvilinear form, juxtaposed with the brilliant white surfaces of modernism with a capital 'M'. The dominance of patriarchal figures has persisted as a trend in Brazil, rendering Bo Bardi almost invisible to most, with her role in the production of the country's architecture, as Daniela Sandler observes, an 'uneasy ending for an account of Brazilian Modernism'.<sup>24</sup> Yet Bo Bardi, as this thesis shows, exerted a significant influence on the narrative, which saw Modernism's adaptation on the Latin continent, placed at the centre

much to suggest the couple conceptualised their practice as alternative. Attributing equal value to all their design activities, Alison also stated, 'a book is like a small building for us'. M. Christine Boyer's recent publication Not Quite Architecture is a dedicated reading of such preoccupations.<sup>19</sup> Focusing on unpublished works found in the Smithsons' archives, this volume assists in enriching an understanding of the centrality of 'writing around' architecture to the Smithsons' building practice. The contradiction between Alison's statements reflects the couple's prescience in understanding that in order to be visible, in lieu of being able to build, they must be involved in some other form of production. Boyer remarks how such activities - writing, drawings, making collages – not only prepared the Smithsons for building commissions, but goes further to suggest that they helped position the couple at the forefront of major shifts in architectural history, notably within the ICA, CIAM and Team X. Boyer's book is comprehensive. It is a thorough archival examination of every extra drawing, every note, every article, every letter the couple wrote, however as a volume does little to articulate how these practices were operative for the couple, beyond being representative of their multiple interests.

Read alongside a narrative history of *Team X*, a group the Smithsons founded with a number of peers, reasons for much of their 'alternative' practices become contextualized. Referred to as 'young turks', the Smithsons were part of a generationally distinct group of London based artists, architects, writers and thinkers who rebelled against the prewar status quo.<sup>20</sup> Indeed the most rebellious act in which the Smithsons were involved was the careful destruction of CIAM, and the subsequent creation of *Team X*. This is clearly seen in *Team 10: Primer*, Alison's retrospective publication on the group, which catalogues their collective work, which emphasies the work of the couple.<sup>21</sup> As such writing was for the Smithsons a means to construct their own history. Retroactively publishing archival material alongside analyses of their buildings brought under the umbrella title of The Charged Void, these three volumes have become definitive tomes on the Smithsons' design thinking.<sup>22</sup> Yet many people, particularly architects, have come to know the work of the Smithsons as I did, not through reading the books they published on themselves, but through their competition entry for The Golden Lane Estate, a staple reference for every young student. The famous sections of the

Smithson, A. & Smithson, P., 'As In DS: An Eye on the Road', Lars Müller

Sandler, D., 'The Other Way Around' chapter in eds. Lu, D., 'Third World Modernism: Architecture, Development and Identity', Routledge, 2010, p44

<sup>23</sup> Publishers, New Edition 2001 24

Boyer, MC., 'Not Quite Architecture: Writing Around Alison and Peter Smithson', 19 MIT Press. 2017

Pedret, A., 'Team 10: An Archival History', Routledge, 2013 20

Smithson, A., 'Team 10: Primer', MIT Press, 1974 21

<sup>22</sup> Smithson, A. & Smithson, P., 'The Charged Void: Architecture', Monacelli Press, 2002

put people at the centre of the project'.<sup>28</sup> This reflects the ideal of many architecture students amongst whom Bo Bardi's work quickly became popularised in Europe. The articulation of Bo Bardi as alternative therefore has happened in part because there is little built work to account for her entire career, but also because of how evocative her drawings are. So unlike the technical monochromatic plans and sections that describe most architecture, Bo Bardi's are full of colour, animated by occupation. As such her built projects speak to a sociality desired by a growing interest in means to counter the detrimental affects of austerity measures in the global north, not least in the UK.

The main issue that arises from this interest is that Bo Bardi was operative in a significantly different era to the present day. In Brazil, the postwar condition was compounded by the legacy of colonialism, which culminated in a number of dictatorships throughout the second half of the twentieth century. In addition, the literature tends not to account for Bo Bardi's agency as a wealthy, educated European migrant, conflating her identity in Brazil with Brazilians whose heritage and experience was vastly different from her own. This has led to architects seeking evidence of participatory design processes to misrepresent the particulars of the sociological themes in Bo Bardi's work, evidenced in the way they paradoxically negate her role in the production of her own architecture.

So while Bo Bardi has been recently recognised for her contribution to postwar architectural discourse, particularly in the west, the recent demolition of the Smithsons' Robin Hood Gardens has called attention to the prescient need to revaluate postwar Brutalism beyond the failures of its edifices in the UK. The retelling of both their narratives tends to accept the ontology of the norm in architectural history in a western context, and therefore the relationship of their practices to it as 'other'. The historical narrative against which their work is compared is rarely challenged, and the terms in which they are described as alternative suffers equal fixity. This thesis therefore posits an additional understanding of Bo Bardi and the Smithsons' otherness' by adopting a historical lens to reject the received analysis of their work as alternative, reconceptualising what alterity means when considered from a different time and place, not least from a non-western context. The thesis thus attempts to find alternative ways of writing about architecture in relation to its historicisation, as much as it is about the alterity of the actions of the architects in question.

#### SPACES OF TRANSCULTURAL RESISTANCE

of a number of debates that would not only decide its direction, but also help shape the work of her more famed peers. However, few people in the city to this day know who built MASP or Bo Bardi's other major publically accessible work SESC Pompéia (1977), which similarly plays an important role in the broader social and political narrative of the city.<sup>25</sup>

Bo Bardi worked with a number of different mediums, in part because she couldn't actually build as a result of the war, and later in Brazil, because she was unknown and then later as a consequence of her political affiliations. Despite her stated desire to build, there is a significant bias in the literature towards her alterity, focused on her understanding of popular culture and the craftsmanship of the northeast. The Instituto Bardi's collection of essays, released on the event of the 100th anniversary of Bo Bardi's birth includes a number of texts which attend to her alterity in relation to modernism, repeating themes of the vernacular, arte povera, myth and 'collective memory'. For the authors of these works, Bo Bardi's alterity is firmly located in the northeast of the country, despite the period in which she spent in the region reflecting a small period in which she was actively disconnected from São Paulo and its metropolitan discourses.<sup>26</sup> This has led to a simplifying in Bo Bardi's historiography, with her main biographer Zeuler Lima stating that her:

'practice [was] situated at the intersection of different worldviews: north and south, city and hinterland, privilege and deprivation.<sup>27</sup>

Reducing her experience to such simple binaries, whether for the ease of description or not, overlooks the complex symbiosis between what these categories represent at the time in which they were experienced, and their consequent imbrication across the entirety of Bo Bardi's career.

This is a result of growing interest in Bo Bardi since the global economic crisis of 2008, which affected the UK and Brazil quite differently. In light of austerity measures under Tory leadership, architecture critics including The Guardian's Rowan Moore championed Bo Bardi's work for creating spaces dedicated to use. Moore quotes Noemi Blager, curator of the exhibition Lina Bo Bardi: Together which toured the world between 2012-16 saying that 'she

28

I have been told informally that part of the reason for this was the distain felt 25 towards Bo Bardi by MASP's director Júlio Neves who had originally produced plans for SESC Pompéia and was removed from the job in favour of Bo Bardi's alternative proposal eds. Lepik, A. & Bader, Vs., 'Lina Bo Bardi 100', Hatje Cantz Verlag, 2014

<sup>26</sup> 

<sup>27</sup> Lima ZRMA., 'Lina Bo Bardi', Yale University Press, 2013, p4

1.2

## TRANSCULTURAL SPACE

#### 'A culture that is merely preserved is no culture at all.' 29

While there is little to suggest that Bo Bardi new the Smithsons work or vice versa, there is some evidence that the Smithsons at least were aware of architectural shifts in Brazil, having visited the country twice in the early 1960s as part of their unrealised work to design The British Embassy in Brasilia.<sup>30</sup> In addition, at the Congrés Internationaux de Architecture Moderne's (CIAM) 8th conference held at Hoddesdon in 1951, Le Corbusier presented MASP as part of his discourse on museums in the city, which the Smithsons presumably would have seen. Indeed the Smithsons appear to have a good measure of architectural typologies and their evolution in Brazil, with Peter stating:

'My experience in South America was in Brazil. There the churches are indebted to European architecture. But they are not like European architecture; they are evolved from it. Maybe that was part of the Iberian gift. Their priesthood did not impose themselves on native culture. They did it cleverly, melding together the native sensibilities with what they were trying to introduce.'<sup>31</sup>

Significantly Bo Bardi had some form of contact with Aldo van Evck, a one-time friend of the Smithsons and key *Team X* member, having designed the walls of her workshops at SESC *Pompéia* in rough concrete breeze block in homage to the Dutch Brutalist.<sup>32</sup> In this sense Bo Bardi and the Smithsons conducted entirely separate yet parallel careers over the course of nearly five decades.

This thesis is therefore attentive to the different geographies in which Bo Bardi and the Smithsons practiced, exploring the significance of location in relation to the equity with

#### INTRODUCTION

which they are described as alternative in contemporary architectural discourse. In studying their practices through a transcultural lens, the thesis situates the importance of their work within a scale not often considered in the retelling of their histories. The transcultural is a term applied here because it acknowledges the complicated history of global transformation and struggle, disrupting categorical identifiers, for example, race and gender and their social meaning when abstracted. The conceptualisation of Bo Bardi's architecture as 'Brazilian' and the Smithsons' as 'British' is given little consideration in this thesis, with the two context Chapters (3 and 6) used to discuss the construction of both countries' differing identities under the framework of the national. The Chapters are structured so as to contextualise Bo Bardi and the Smithsons' architecture in the polemics within which they produced it, offering an expanded understanding of alterity within the architectural histories of both. In other words, rather than focus on the translation of modernism as a unifying condition from Europe to Latin America, constructing an argument of difference around the style's identity as 'British' and 'Brazilian', the research looks at the reciprocity of *ideas* between continents in the ongoing making of modernism in each country.

For Patricia Seed the transnational implies comparison between the contemporary movements of 'groups, goods and technology or people' across national borders, allowing a 'world of comparative possibility' that challenges the ethnocentrism that has come to define historical retellings in the west.<sup>33</sup> Consideration of the flow of both people and ideas on a global scale therefore offers a different approach to discourses on alterity because it accounts for scale.<sup>34</sup> This is important because, as Saskia Sassen states, the local also has significance on the global:

dynamic.' 35

33 Seed, P. as quoted in, Bayley, CA., Beckert, S., Connlly, M., Hofmeyr, I., Kozol, W. Seed, P., 'AHR Conversation: On Transnational History', The American Historical Review, Vol. 3, No. 5, 1st December 2006, pp1441-1464, https://doi.org/10.1086/ahr.111.5.1441 It must be noted that the dominant literature cited which pertains to alternative 34 practice comes from a western centred discourse. While it has not been the intention to rely solely on theories written by authors situated in the global west, restrictions in language, particularly in the early stages of researching the thesis have prevented me from pursuing works by others. This is a considerable limitation in the thesis, which I have tried to account for by conversing frequently with practitioners involved with alternative forms of practice in Brazil. See Hall, J., 'Collective Agency: The Architectural Collective as an Emerging Model for Education and Practice in Brazil', Charrette, Vol. 4, No. 1, Spring 2017 35 Sassen, S., 'The Global Inside the National', Sociopedia.isa, 2001, p7

'Studying the global entails not only a focus on what is explicitly global in scale. It also calls for a focus on locally scaled practices and conditions articulated within a global

<sup>29</sup> Fisher, M 'Capitalist Realism', Zero Books, 2009, p3

<sup>30</sup> According to Toni del Renzio, Revner Banham made a trip to Brazil when he was at the ICA and certainly he knew Oscar Niemeyer. Toni de Renzio interviewed by Dorothy Morland, 1967-78, TGA 955/1/14/1, ICA Collection, Tate Archives, accessed 10th January 2017

<sup>31</sup> Smithson, P. as quoted in eds. Spellman, C. & Unglaub, K., 'Peter Smithson: Conversations with Students', Princeton Architectural Press, 2005, p80

<sup>32</sup> SESC, 'SESC Pompéia', SESC, March 23rd 2016, first accessed 16th March 2018, https://issuu.com/sescsp/docs/folhetohistorico\_ing

This thesis argues that Bo Bardi and the Smithsons' evident proximity to sites of significant cultural power, requires that their historiographies takes into consideration an expansion of the concept of 'alternative practice' to encompass the inter-personal and immaterial qualities of design processes that relied on external contingencies. Considering their work through the lens of the institution, this challenges the existing literature, which largely negates economic or political factors in relation to Bo Bardi and the Smithsons' work. In comparing the dynamics of the institution, rather than specific architectural works, the fact that they practiced on two different continents is accounted for. One of the arguments of this thesis therefore is that both Bo Bardi and the Smithsons relied on a much more complicated relationship with capitalist, postcolonial modernity in order to orchestrate their own agency, as a means to capitalise on their ability to both think critically about, but also produce works of architecture.

Alternative approaches have become a descriptor of small scale, incremental change and as such arguably do not offer a meaningful challenge to the incredibly complex intersection of economic and political hegemony, which operates on a completely different scale. Therefore transnational comparison is not only a means to break with the local as the focus of minor narratives in alternative practice, but a method to observe disjuncture and contradiction within social practices, which allow for 'undisclosed alternatives' to be made visible.<sup>36</sup> What is interesting about a transcultural approach to architectural history then, is its central concern with the movement of cultural ideas at a particular moment in time.

This is the primary reason as given in the start of this introduction for the use of cultural institutions founded in the immediate postwar period in Brazil and the UK to give context and focus to this study. Representing the intersection of global politics with emerging forms of economic and cultural modernity, MASP and the ICA were founded in 1947. Beyond the coincidence of this shared date, both institutions based their constitutions on that of *The Museum of Modern Art* (MoMA) in New York, and the ideology of its founder Nelson A. Rockefeller (NAR), meaning that their values are transcultural and transnational in their origin. While occurring independently, the comparative foundation of MASP and the ICA reflect the importance of the increasing use of soft forms of power that took root at the close of war, on a transatlantic, and more specifically Pan-American scale. As such, to this day both museums operate on a global platform, while arguably work within its confines as a form of 'subnational space'.<sup>57</sup>

Lina Bo Bardi helped found MASP,<sup>38</sup> while Alison and Peter Smithson were young members of the *Independent Group* (IG), comprised of a number of artists who gathered around the ICA during the early 1950s. In focusing on Bo Bardi and the Smithsons' relationship to both, the thesis locates their practices against the backdrop of the supra national, which fundamentally changes the strategic scale against which we should consider both architects, not least as 'alternative'. Yet the existing literature on Bo Bardi and the Smithsons does not consider the evolution of their alternative practice in relation to the influence of such institutions, concerned rather with their association with important artistic figures instead of an in depth analysis of the international context.

<sup>36</sup> Sassen, S., The Global Inside the National', Sociopedia.isa, 2010, p1

<sup>37</sup> Sassen, S., The Global Inside the National', Sociopedia.isa, 2010, p1

<sup>38</sup> Pietro Maria Bardi, Lina Bo Bardi's husband was its director until 1989.

1.3

# **RESISTANT SPACE**

'the state of emergency in which we live is not the exception but the rule.' <sup>39</sup>

If the objective of alternative practice is to reject the certainty and fixity of architecture as a profession, primarily concerned with the production of buildings, implicit within this alterity is the notion of resistance. While Schneider acknowledges the architect's role within dominant power struggles, reminding that architects 'cannot be neutral if the balance of power', namely that of capital, is to revert to the interests of those who already hold it, it is Peggy Deamer who has done significant work to make explicit the political and economic implications of the alternative narratives that are coming to be accepted in architectural discourse.<sup>40</sup> Like Hill, Deamer locates the concern of architecture to be in its making, yet her focus is on the labour that is expressed in the *process* of design. Drawing attention to 'capitalism's interest that labor [sic] is eradicated from our consciousness', Deamer accuses architects of their complicity in thinking that the political economy is a 'dirty world' unrelated to their 'vocation' as designers, where fiscal concerns are perceived a necessary evil rather than a design constraint.<sup>41</sup>While Deamer's analysis focuses on the change in dominance from productive capital to financial capital, and its negation of social concerns related not least to the builder/worker, she additionally recognises the impact of immaterial forms of labour in the growing 'knowledge economy'.<sup>42</sup> This is important to the field of alternative practice because alterity acknowledges how the labour of architecture's production might also *look* and therefore also, *behave* differently.

Observing that alterity is not extrinsic to locations of power, and in fact relies upon it, Iill Stoner's Toward a Minor Architecture theorises the influence of alternative forms of knowledge, to create a strategy of resistive architectural processes, which she calls 'Minor

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Architecture,' <sup>45</sup> In this small volume, Stoner outlines the dominance of consumer capital as the language of architecture directive of a major architecture. Stoner suggests a subversion of its dominance, not through a direct challenge, but from an imbrication within major structures, to recode major architecture for minor purposes. Drawing on Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattarri who proposed a 'Minor Literature',<sup>44</sup> in which they argue minor thinking emerges from within the structure of major discourse, Stoner uses literary references including Franz Kafka, Jorge Luis Borges and JG Ballard to analyse processes of resistance that de-territorialise power through actions such as undermining and refusal. While Stoner's work is difficult to engage due to its reliance on literature, her message is clear. To be a Minor Architect (whom we should all be) is to be engaged in a continuous struggle, as one cannot deny architecture's ability to continuously reproduce and express relationships of power. Alternative practice for Stoner is not a means to an end, but a way of constantly recalibrating and working against normalising and restrictive tendencies:

A minor architect is a minor destructive character, a tinkerer and hacker, journalist and editor, alter eqo and subaltern. But tinkerers may sabotage as well as fix, and wildfully take apart rather than assemble.' 45

Stoner's use of the word subaltern is important. Coined by Antonio Gramsci, the term refers to lower classes and the social groups who are at the margins of a society. Through its use by the Subaltern Studies Group in India it has come to denote colonised people, focusing on the ways history can be told by the colonised rather than colonisers. The term Subaltern is contentious however, as it originates in a western context, while attempting to describe non-western communities. As such Gayatari Spivak has spoken out against its broad use, emphasising that it is an intersectional and thus specific term not to be conflated generally with other forms of oppression. This is important in Latin America not least because, as Mabel Moraña and Enrique Dussel remind, encounters with the European 'other' have commonly been defined by physical violence.<sup>46</sup> Traces of this violence shaped social and class relations in the colonial reality, and as such formed the foundations of the ideology of modernity in Brazil. Bill Ashcroft defines such experiences of post-colonial subjugation as

Stoner, J., 'Towards a Minor Architecture', MIT Press, 2012 Deleuze, G. & Guattarri, G., 'Kafka: Towards and Minor Literature', University of

Stoner, J., 'Towards a Minor Architecture', MIT Press, 2012, p91 eds. Moraña, M. & Dussel, E., 'Coloniality at Large: Latin America and the

<sup>39</sup> Benjamin, W. as quoted in Bhaba, HK., 'Remembering Fanon: Self, Psyche and the Colonial Condition' foreword in Fanon, F., 'Black Skin, White Masks', Pluto Press, 1986 Schneider, T., 'What Architects Also Do', Changing Practices, RIBA Research 40 Symposium, 2009, p2, first accessed 27th August 2018, http://kkilinc.yasar.edu.tr/wpcontent/uploads/2014/08/Schneider\_what-architects-also-do.pdf

Deamer, P., 'Architectural Work: Immaterial Labor' chapter in eds. Lloyd Thomas, 41 K., Amhoff, T. & Beach, N., 'Industries of Architecture', Routledge, 2015. See also, Deamer, P. 'The Architect as Worker: Immaterial Labour, the Creative Class, and the Politics of Design', Bloomsbury, 2015

Deamer, P., 'Architectural Work: Immaterial Labor' chapter in eds. Lloyd Thomas, 42 K., Amhoff, T. & Beach, N., 'Industries of Architecture', Routledge, 2015.

<sup>43</sup> 44 Minnesota Press, 1986 45 46 Postcolonial Debate', Duke University Press, 2008, p2

a constant battle against the 'formations and theoretical strategies' of dominant discourse, noting that post-colonial discourse itself can be another form of subjection.<sup>47</sup>

Stoner's book therefore offers an entirely different lens by which to account for the marginal; it is an alternative way of thinking and writing on alterity. Jane Rendell's work similarly locates potential for alterity in practice through its narration elsewhere. Arguing that writing is itself a 'site of building, design and thinking', due to its spatial and material qualities, Rendell posits that architects rely as much on writing as they do on images not least because much of architecture is formed in legal documents, building codes, contracts and specifications.<sup>48</sup> Interested in what Rendell calls 'Situated Criticism', her work is concerned with the relationship between the construction of subjects and the politics of their location. Drawing on feminist philosopher Rosi Braidotti, Rendell describes states such as nomadism as both a spatial movement but also an 'epistemological condition, a kind of knowingness... that refuses fixity.' 49

Barbara Creed's writing on the concept of the stray echoes this thinking. Developing ways to think about 'otherness' in society, Creed develops a language to represent the marginal in marginal ways. While her book, Stray: Human/Animal Ethics in the Anthropocene is not directly a work of architectural theory, it has implications on the discipline because of its spatial analysis, relating the act of straying to movement, but also the concept of the stray in society in comparison with being a refugee or homeless, marginal conditions not unrelated to the role of architecture, the city and its exclusions.<sup>50</sup> Creed's work is indicative of a number of other works including those by Judith Butler and Donna Haraway that have more recently gained traction not least for their concern for gender, with women perennially cast as outsiders in patriarchal societies.<sup>51</sup> What is unique about both theorists is their notion of the social construction of gender and its performance beyond a simple binary in the technological sphere, which has its own spatial consequence.

Rendell, J., 'Site-Writing', http://www.janerendell.co.uk/wp-content/up-49 loads/2013/02/Rendell-Site-Writing-PDF.pdf

See Butler, J., 'Gender Trouble', Routledge, 2006 and Haraway, D., 'Staying with 51 the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene', Duke University Press, 2016

#### INTRODUCTION

In this respect Bo Bardi and the Smithsons are comparable because of the obvious gender difference in practice between them and the other architects studied in the wider research programme.<sup>52</sup> However a consideration of both Bo Bardi and the Smithsons' alterity due to gender is reductive because it creates a singular narrative around Lina Bo and Alison Smithson, negating the significance of their collaborations, not least with their husbands. Therefore while both women studied were indeed remarkable given the subjugation of their sex during the time in which they began their careers, this thesis does not focus on it as a factor in their alterity; in this sense they are outliers to their own histories because they are women, not because their practice tells us anything specific about being a woman.

I will not however avoid the topic of their gender by refuting its worth; rather the thesis as a whole argues for the creation of intersectional narratives that explore new territories, going beyond the understanding of architecture as simply a neutral category to which alterity (of any kind) is applied as an aesthetic.<sup>53</sup> Gender then is considered part of the comparative context rather than a thematic topic independently addressed. As such the Smithsons are considered together, as their design work was created as a couple, whereas while Pietro Maria Bardi looms large in this thesis, his role was separate to Bo Bardi whose career was established in her own name. The thesis however does not disguise Bardi's importance, rather it addresses him as part of MASP as an institution, representing a figure of power and authority to which Bo Bardi had access but did not hold herself. The decision to consider the Smithsons together and Bo Bardi and Pietro Maria Bardi separately then, is a deliberate attempt to construct a more nuanced understanding of the inequity of power in relationships and how, as designers, both Bo Bardi and the Smithsons manipulated this dynamic as part of their practice.

52 Osmond in the UK. 53 Disobedience', Log 25, summer 2012, p132

<sup>47</sup> Ashcroft, B., 'Modernity's First Born: Latin America and Postcolonial Transformation', ARIEL: A review of International English Literature, Vol. 29, No. 2, April 1998, p9

Rendell, J., 'Site-Writing', http://www.janerendell.co.uk/wp-content/ 48 uploads/2013/02/Rendell-Site-Writing-PDF.pdf

Creed, B., 'Stray: Human/Animal Ethics in the Anthropocene', Power Publications, 50 2017

The other architects included in they study are Oscar Niemeyer, Eurico Prado Lopes and Luiz Telles in Brazil and Leslie Martin, Colin St. John Wilson and Boissevain &

I do this not least because as an outstanding socio-political issue, gender has by no means been fully addressed within either conventional or alternative practice today. Crawford, LC. as quoted in Preciado, B., 'Architecture as a Practice of Biopolitical

1.4

# COMPARATIVE FRAMEWORK

'Language is not the neutral tool of an honest desire to tell the truth...but an instrumental tool for constructing history and inventing realities.' <sup>54</sup>

### Non-Like For Like Method

The paradox of comparing across time frames and continents calls for a new approach to comparative research to construct a more complex notion of what alterity means in relation to the 'inside' and 'outside' of architectural practice, and the implications of their overlap as a resistive strategy. This is achieved through the use of a non 'like for like' approach which does not seek to suggest or refute the value of some form of direct comparison, rather it reflects on contemporary assessments of both as alternative within general discourses of modernism, with a greater and crucially more sensitive attendance to context. In fact, it is the socio-economic context of MASP and the ICA as two cultural institutions, which form the basis of a direct comparison in the thesis, as opposed to a comparison between specific 'works' by the architects.

For cultural theorist James Clifford, breaking with normative forms of categorisation pays attention to diversity, making 'the familiar strange and the exotic quotidian'.<sup>55</sup> This tactic is important because it recognises the bias towards western narratives, conceptualising other ways of telling history to address the disjuncture between non-western and western cultures, which restricts them in a binary, negating any reciprocity. This has been traditionally reinforced through the retelling of modernist history in terms of definitive ideas of nationhood, which rely on evidence of stylistic difference related to such factors of climate rather than a critical engagement with social, political or indeed economic contexts. This critique intends to reveal the dominance of western language and thought, which are applied to practices evolved within alternate localities.

#### Parity

Despite offering an alternative to western historiographies, postcolonial scholarship in fact cautions against transnational and transcultural comparison, due to the terms in which

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subaltern identities have been constructed and narrated many times over by others. Taking this nuance into consideration, the thesis does not intend to contrive a comparison between Bo Bardi and the Smithsons as a product, but treats the process of comparison as part of a unique methodology for furthering the thinking of alterity in each of their practices quite separately, using one to assist, not in defining the other, but in revealing emphasises, strategies and contingencies perhaps overlooked by more mono-directional methodologies. Therefore while the post-colonial has come to describe a wide field of endeavour, mindful of such a limit in this research, comparison in this thesis is designed to recognise not only the multiplicity of modernist narratives located in non-western geographies, but also the politics of their location within a global architectural history.

Bo Bardi and the Smithsons' works are therefore described in this thesis entirely separately, with three chapters dedicated to each. Connected by their joint discussion against the backdrop of the 1950s, the decade in which their respective practices were framed by MASP and the ICA, a direct comparison is constructed between the socio-economic, political and cultural context in which they worked, rather than individual pieces of work they produced. The foundation of MASP and the ICA are therefore described in Chapters 3 and 6 repsectivley, which deal solely with both institutions' relationship to the evolution of modernism at the end of war. The intention of these chapters is to provide the contextual framework within which Bo Bardi and the Smithson' work is positioned in the following discussion chapters which do focus on individual projects.

As such the language used to describe the activities of Bo Bardi and the Smithsons is attentive to the sensitivities and relevance of words as deployed within their context, with the concluding chapter introducing key terms, which draw out the comparative similarities and differences between their practices. An example of this is the way in which the Smithsons' methods are described as demonstrative of 'indifference' a term coined by Moira Roth to describe the parallel work of artists in America who influenced the UK artistic context to which the thesis states the Smithsons were exposed.<sup>56</sup> Likewise, Bo Bardi's work on *Habitat Magazine* in Chapter 5 is explored against the idea of 'hybridity', considering the evolution and application of the word as a postcolonial term, again specific to a colonised territory, in this case Brazil whose historical experience is entirely unlike the United Kingdom's. The use of language throughout the chapters therefore relates  $\overline{56}$  Roth, M., 'The Aesthetic of Indifference', AND Journal of Art and Art Education, 22,

56 Roth, M., 'The Aesthe 1990, pp3-12, p5

<sup>54</sup> O'Gorman, E., 'The Invention of America', Indiana University Press, 1961, p122

<sup>55</sup> Clifford, J., 'Writing Culture', University of California Press, 986, p2

closely to the history of geography, the migrancy of political ideas and importantly the imperialism that to this day, binds the global north and south in an unequal relationship. This strategy is important because it moves away from a focus on comparable mediums that traditionally signify alterity in architecture such as writing and drawing, to instead compare socio-political conditions to demonstrate that the ability to make architecture differently is contingent on factors specific to location.

This thesis argues that it is the very difference in such conditions, which not only makes Bo Bardi and the Smithsons' work 'alternative' then, but also recognises that their use as references for contemporary architectural practice is itself a politically loaded act. As mentioned in relation to the word subaltern, it is important that bespoke terms are not applied generally across two separate contexts merely to facilitate comparison, but looks closely at the significance of language in understanding design practice. Indeed an alternative form of comparison is itself a form of resistance, with language central to this strategy. Comparing across difference avoids the reduction of the world into simple categories, in turn offering richer dimensionality to better understand architectural practice in alternate ways.57

The thesis is based largely on archival research of documents related to the architects Lina Bo Bardi and Alison and Peter Smithson. While it focuses on a selection of specific projects, which they undertook in the 1950s, the wider period of research involved a much broader process, drawing on archives located in Brazil, Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States. The majority of the archival documents used in this project come from two archives; The Smithsons' Archive bequeathed in 2003 on the event of Peter Smithson's death to the Frances Loeb Library at the Graduate School of Design (GSD), Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts and the Lina Bo Bardi Archive held by the Instituto Bardi, situated in her own house Casa de Vidro (Glass House) in Morumbi, São Paulo.

The archives at The Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA), The Tate Archives at The Tate Britain and the Theo Crosby Archive at the University of Brighton Design Archives were also consulted, while in Brazil I visited the archive held at MASP and the library at the Faculdade de Arquitetura e Urbanismo de Universidade de São Paulo (Faculty of Architecture and Urbanism, University of São Paulo, FAUUSP). In addition I visited The Canadian Centre for Architecture (CCA) in Montréal to access drawings pertaining to the Smithsons' project House of the Future, along with The Rockefeller Centre Archive in upstate New York, specifically to access correspondences between Nelson A. Rockefeller and Assis Chateaubriand in English.<sup>2</sup> In all cases the archives were free to visit and between them contain the majority of drawings, documents, newspaper articles and writings of both Bo Bardi and the Smithsons. However, due to their location abroad, access to archives for this thesis has been greatly restricted and it was relied on opportunistic attempts to visit, rather than regularly planned or targeted trips according to the progression of the research.

"...but for every sensible line or accurate fact there would be millions of meaningless cacophonies, verbal farragoes, and babblings'.<sup>1</sup>

Borges, JL., 'La Biblioteca Total' (The Total Library) in 'Selected Non-Fictions',

Viking, 1999, p216 Chapter 3, which introduces both individuals in more detail.

The relationship between the American Businessman Nelson A. Rockefeller (1908-1979) and Brazilian Telecoms Magnate Assis Chateaubriand (1892-1968) is the focus of

Despite their distance, the archives have been influential in shaping the research. As such this chapter begins by describing the centrality of the archive, the process of archiving itself and the experience of the research to the framework of the thesis, followed by a detailed description of the two main archives visited. The main challenge in conducting the research has been in resolving issues inherent in situating the thesis in the context of two distinct geographies and their social and political histories, finding a way of adapting techniques to suit the constraints of both. The ambition to pay particular attention to difference was a means to draw out discrepancies between the archives, in order to repatriate marginal and inchoate narratives within established canons. The interpretive nature of this approach was designed to recognise the value of Bo Bardi and the Smithsons' own personal retelling of their histories; even if at odds with so called 'official' narratives published elsewhere.

*...an essential precondition for good governance, the rule of law, administrative transparency, the* preservation of mankind's collective memory and access to information by citizens'.<sup>3</sup>

Constructing Narrative The above quote surmises The International Council on Archive's (IAC) mission statement. It promises control over actions that ultimately govern real world space, while also access to ephemeral qualities such as the notion of 'memory', which is less easy to define. Thus the IAC, while attempting to create a global profession via systematised regulation, unwittingly reveal the contradictory nature of its project, pointing to the discrepancy that exists between both the literal and abstract character of the archive. The copious literature on this topic largely focuses on such a divide.<sup>4</sup> Beyond the physicality of the objects that it holds, the 'archive' as a system has a much larger role to play in terms of the way in which it records as an 'active shaper' of time.<sup>5</sup> For Terry Cook this is about how memory connects to society:

belonging, of identity.' 6

Illustrating what is elsewhere in the literature referred to as 'public memory', Cook's observation highlights the archive's power to reproduce collective identity, implemented to negotiate society's own terms of governance,<sup>7</sup> which for John Tagg is significant due to:

'the representations [the archive] produces [which] are highly coded, and the power it

wields is never its own.'8

3 www.ica.org/ 4 5 'Archives: Recordkeeping in Society', Elsevier, 2005, p22 6 1997, p18 SAGE Publications, 1999, pp51-64, p54 8

# ARCHIVING AS PRACTICE

*"...that comes from experiencing continuity with the past, from a sense of roots, of* 

The International Council on Archives, first accessed 19th September 2016, http://

The main literature can be found in Archival Journals. The majority of the papers are directed at the interests of archivists although there is little expectation in the writing that archivists take the research onboard, nor is the literature written by archivists.

Cunningham, A. in eds. McKemmish, S., Piggott, M., Reed, B. & Upward, F.,

Cook, T., 'What is Past is Prologue: A History of Archival Ideas Since 1898, and the Future Paradigm Shift', The Journal of the Association of Canadian Archivists, Archivaria 43,

Osborne, T., 'The Ordinariness of the Archive', History of the Human Sciences,

Schwartz & Cook, 'Archives, Records, and Power: The Making of Modern Memory',

#### FASHIONING FICTION

they understood the future telling of their own histories to have, choosing to work on their archives while still in practice, the lack of externalisation of this act seeming to make archiving a part of their design process. This is not immediately obvious given the contents and the way in which it is organised. This thesis has benefitted on occasion from such uncertainty and mystery surrounding the status of some material in the archive. For example upon opening a folder at the *Instituto Bardi* which had been delivered for study under a different premise, a crumpled piece of paper had been neatly unfolded containing a hand typed note written by Bo Bardi. It details Bo Bardi's first meeting with her husband Pietro Maria Bardi and art collector and journalist fourteen years her senior who was also at the time married to someone else. Bo Bardi wrote:

I met P.M.B, we dated, discussed, married and decided to contribute to the development of the rationalist wave in Brazil.'<sup>11</sup>

In the absence of a date, the note was probably written in the 1980s due to its reference to *SESC Pompéia*, a project constructed between 1977-86. While the contents is telling of Bo Bardi's fashioning of her own narrative concerning her emigration to Brazil, what is more interesting is why the piece of paper, given its crumpled nature was at some point unfolded and inserted into the archive, rather than thrown away. Certainly, this account is not reproduced in any of Bo Bardi's other writings; she talks rarely of the circumstances of her first meetings with Bardi. As an artefact, the paper speaks of the randomness of the archive, that not everything in there has been purposefully placed; indeed many things may have been intentionally removed. For Cook absence is significant. Since 'remembering' as something that is carefully constructed, simultaneously the intentionality of what is missing is also important in understanding how some material came to be and some didn't.<sup>12</sup> As such, editing is an overlooked feature in the method of the archive's compilation.

An equivalent finding in the Smithsons' archive concerns a project called *Art into Nature* which proposed a series of follies in the landscape of Stockton-Upon-Tees as part of an open competition with the work of finalists presented at an exhibition at *The Serpentine Gallery* in London. What is surprising about this project is that the Smithsons did the design entirely

Bo Bardi, L., hand typed paper found at the Instituto Bardi
 The concept of memory is central to Cook's thesis who traces a comprehensive
 history of archival thinking in this essay positing it as an ever evolving practice. Cook, T.,
 'What is Past is Prologue: A History of Archival Ideas Since 1898, and the Future Paradigm
 Shift', The Journal of the Association of Canadian Archivists, Archivaria 43, 1997, p18

Yet conversely the wording of the literature often denotes the archive as having some form of power of its own, suggesting that it constitutes more than a static element, rather some form of organic creature to which character can be ascribed.<sup>9</sup> This has as much to do with the archivist structuring the archive, as it has to do with the contents contained within.

Central to the process of this research was developing an understanding of Lina Bo Bardi and Alison and Peter Smithson's own roles in constructing their archives. They both saved and established the material evidence which forms the object based encounters researchers are now restricted in having with their work. Bo Bardi began saving her work, amassing over 7,000 documents and 15,000 photographs including her own writing, articles, books and drawings. A prodigious archivist, this collection however was not adequately catalogued for external enquiry until after Bo Bardi's death which was delayed in the first decade of her passing by an internal dispute between remaining family members.

For the Smithsons archiving was a family concern and practice in itself. Alison Smithson supposedly spent up to two and a half days a week 'archiving' the couple's work, the diligence of which is clearly reflected in the red circular stamps and hand typed descriptions on every document outlining its place within the vast catalogue of works. Even so, it wasn't until Peter Smithson's death in 2003 that all their material was bequeathed by their son Simon Smithson to his alma mater, the GSD at Harvard University, where it is stored alongside the archives of such luminaries as James Stirling and Josep Luis Sert to name just a few.<sup>10</sup> This act of donation could be seen as a continuation of the Smithsons' own fictionalisation, adding themselves to a prestigious collection of Modernist architects despite the displacement of their lifetime's work from the continent on which most of it was made.

### Archival Finds

On entering both archives I was acutely aware of the role both architects had played in their own representation in terms of their use of language and thus its impact on shaping critical thought concerning their work. Beyond this I was also struck by the evident importance

Archival Science, Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2002, p4

<sup>9</sup> Eric Ketelaar describes the archive as having a 'regime of practices'. Ketelaar, E., 'Tacit Narratives: The Meaning of Archives', Archival Science 1, Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2001, pp131-141, p136

<sup>10</sup> The Smithsons have retained part of their archive at the home of their youngest daughter Soraya Smithson in addition to the material kept at Harvard University

Secondary Literature Due to the distance of the two primary archives, I began my investigation with a review of

the secondary literature associated with the life and works of Bo Bardi and the Smithsons. Numerous books on the Smithsons have been published of which a few by notable academic authors including Max Risselada, Dirk van den Heuvel and M. Christine Boyer have had significant impact in relating the couple's work to contexts beyond the consideration of architecture as building.<sup>13</sup>Risselada's anthology of themes in the Smithsons' work compiles a number of essays written by both Smithsons' scholars and others with an expertise in postwar Modernism.<sup>14</sup> It covers the couple's practice extensively in the words of those with whom the couple had a personal connection, including Revner Banham and Beatriz Colomina. As such while the book is detailed it lacks however a certain critical distance. This is similarly true of van den Heuvel's unpublished PhD, Alison and Peter Smithsons: A Brutalist Story.<sup>15</sup> What is impressive about van den Heuvel's research is its extensive nature and rigour in uncovering anecdotes, stories and myths propagated by the couple, the architectural press and their friends. It succinctly points to the complex construction of their historiography, yet like Risselada's volumes fails to fully contextualise the significance of their practice beyond themselves, or even allude to a sense of priority in a joint career that spanned nearly fifty vears.

Bo Bardi's works have been harder to analyse in part due to the small volume of of works generally, but also due to the lack of those published in English. In addition a number of publications are now out of print. Olivia de Oliveira's 2006 thesis Subtle Substances was the first comprehensive analysis of Bo Bardi's work, although perhaps draws too heavily on the author's own projection of meaning onto certain aspects of Bo Bardi's thinking.<sup>16</sup> As the first scholarly publication of its kind, Subtle Substances has widely gone unchallenged with increasing interest focused on Bo Bardi's engagement with craftsmanship in the northeast of the country.<sup>17</sup> The Instituto Bardi have facilitated the publication of a number of volumes and

13 14 Anthology', Ediciones Poligrafa, 2011 15 University of Delft, 2013 16 tavo Gili, 2006 17 Gustavo Gili, 2006

in collaboration with their children, with each one designing their own structure. When the submission was politely refused on the grounds that it was not a 'professional' submission, Alison Smithson wrote a stern letter refuting their rejection and insisting on their inclusion in the subsequent exhibition of finalists, with the entire correspondence archived along with the project's drawings. This project hints at a growing interest in landscape, but also the Smithsons' continued sense of experimentation and willingness to take risks on their own terms. The couple's character has often been the subject of much criticism of their work, which depicts them as egoists with very difficult personalities whereas this project presents an alternative image of the couple, where family life is integrated with humour through their professional work.

Having observed a pattern in the anecdotes told about Bo Bardi and the Smithsons, coupled with the competing narratives that dispute the fictitious nature of much of what they said about themselves, I began to consider the construction of and manipulation of narrative as a form of alternative practice in the making of their work. The second distinct move that narrowed the topic of the thesis is based on this thinking. Understanding Bo Bardi and the Smithsons not as in opposition to or providing an alternative to the hegemony of architectural practice as it is now or was then but working within the mechanisms of professional practice, using its structures as a means to challenge it and produce their own distinct practices which address both micro and macro concerns. Unified by their engagement at the beginning of their careers, in the decade in which neither architect can have claimed to refine their methodologies of practice, I focused as a means to understand the impact of these 'alternative' environments on the work.

After defining my two sites and time frames, I attempted an exhaustive reading of events and activities related to both institutions based exclusively on their archives and secondary source material. It became clear that in order to speak to the Smithsons' association with the ICA two exhibits in particular encapsulated their time there, Parallel of Life and Art (1953) followed by Patio and Pavilion (1956). For the couple these two projects not only provided the opportunity to conduct in interdisciplinary investigations between the practices of art and architecture but also explore the production techniques inherent within the paradigm shift to expanded fields beyond categories to include process. After further analysis both projects speak to the external conditions of modernity and the intersection of the institution while also demonstrating an apparent internalisation the couple experienced working with

Risselada, M. (2011), van den Heuvel, D. (2013) & Boyer MC. (2017) eds. Risselada, M. & van den Heuvel, D., 'Alison and Peter Smithson: A Critical van den Heuvel, D., 'Alison and Peter Smithson: A Brutalist Story', PhD Thesis, Oliveira, O., 'Subtle Substances: The Architecture of Lina Bo Bardi'. Editorial Gus-Oliveira, O., 'Subtle Substances: The Architecture of Lina Bo Bardi', Editorial

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are due to rerelease their 1993 book Lina Bo Bardi which is still the most comprehensive in terms of displaying her built works alongside drawings and other writings.<sup>18</sup> Research on Bo Bardi suffers however from the dominance of those writing on her interest in Popular culture and time spent in the northeast of Brazil. In order to give a more representative idea of how Bo Bardi evolved as a designer in Brazil I searched for Brazilian sources where possible, prioritising the vast and impressive research conducted by PhD students in universities. For example at FAU-USP alone there are over 50 academic dissertations at Masters or Phd level which pursue a number of aspects in her work. Because these texts are unpublished and their authors themselves not established writers, they are often overlooked particularly by Western, non-Portuguese speaking researchers. Moreover in consciously shifting the emphasis of the primary and secondary sources the research gives weight to material acquired by less formal means such as orality. While the thesis does not employ directly the interviews that I conducted in Brazil with Bo Bardi's former employees due to the increased narrowing of focus for the research, the earlier stages of research benefitted hugely from such conversations. This is because they both highlighted avenues of pursuit but also drew my attention to the contentious nature of her historiography and the way in which different people sought to make claims on it.

A number of publications about both Bo Bardi and the Smithsons attempt to narrate definitive histories of their life and works, focusing heavily on delineating fact from fiction. This thesis instead explores the liminal space between the obvious manipulation of historical facts in the literature and the representation of said events by the architects themselves. Indeed, the discussion chapters focus on the reciprocity between a factual 'centre' in the discourse to moments of their obfuscation in order to reflect what Greig Crysler observes is the role of the dominant narrator in creating both major, and in turn minor narratives.<sup>19</sup> In this way the thesis is careful to contextualise not just the material quality of the artefacts that were encountered and selected for analysis, but the broader circumstance of their discovery and use elsewhere. The research therefore challenges the authority of the exisitng historiography of Bo Bardi and the Smithsons, recovering minor narratives, which gain greater significance once placed within alternative discursive systems.

'Linear time is a Western invention; time is not linear, it is a marvellous tangle where at any moment, points can be selected and solutions invented without beginning or end.' <sup>20</sup>

Lina Bo Bardi's archive is housed in the first building she constructed in Brazil. Researchers sit at a large table in a section of the open plan living room cornered off by bookshelves containing works collected by the Bardis but also ones that focus on the life and works of the couple. Sitting amongst Bo Bardi's possessions in the house she lived in for over forty years, the archive is a characterful reflection of Bo Bardi herself; a mysterious and contradictory personality, she encouraged multiple readings of her work and her role in its making. Through a number of visits to the archive in the first year of research, I became increasingly aware of the origins of various texts that have regularly been reproduced in official books and able to identify them through hand typed notes, lectures and articles printed in newspapers and magazines. Gaining first hand experience, touching the original documents and evaluating the material texture and relation to other proximate artefacts was invaluable in understanding how some words and images have repeatedly resurfaced while others seemingly have been supressed. Due to lack of funds much of the content in the archive has yet to be catalogued, while other pieces are recorded under dubious and often ambiguous titles. To the visiting researcher the structure of the archive can thus seem the result of a mysterious process of categorisation with its systems and workings at best hidden at worst entirely non-existent. Any visit to the archive is precluded by the selection of items via an online resource where individual search terms can be entered. On doing so numbered documents appear with a short but non-descriptive title. The researcher is then required to choose from this list with only a very restricted notion of what may be contained within each folder.

This process means that one must rely heavily on the archivists working at the *Instituto* Bardi with archival assistant Marcella Carvalho having been of constant assistance during my visits. In addition, in a chance encounter with Anna Carboncini one of the Instituto's

Bo Bardi, L. as quoted in the exhibition Lina Bo Bardi: Together, http:// 20 linabobarditogether.com/2012/09/18/lina-quotes/

# THE ARCHIVES OF LINA BO BARDI

Bo Bardi, L., 'Lina Bo Bardi, Imprensa Oficial, 1993 18

Crysler, CG., 'Writing Spaces: Discourses of Architecture, Urbanism and the Built 19 Environment', Routledge, 2003, p6

#### FASHIONING FICTION

at big tables in full view of visitors to the museum within a glazed section of the lower ground floor. At MASP the researcher submits a description of their research interests to the archivist in advance. Files at the archive are then selected by the archivist based on the researchers' stated interests and are brought out for consultation one by one. In contrast to the Casa de Vidro documents are treated in a more systematised way to be viewed in 'sets'. This technique has led in my experience to the chance of conversation occurring between the archivist and researcher, as one seeks to understand the needs of the other. Ivani Di Grazia Costa at MASP who has been working at the museum for nearly thirty years has extensive over arching knowledge of the archive and via anecdotal conversation was able to provide a clear indication of the quality of the documents and better context of how they came to be contained within. Not only has Di Grazia Costa met nearly every researcher engaged in work related to the Bardis and the museum, she knew Lina Bo Bardi and Pietro Maria Bardi personally. Di Grazia Costa also introduced me to Eugenia Esmeraldo whose incisive piece on Bardi and his involvement at MASP was a central source to this thesis.<sup>22</sup> Like Di Grazia Costa, Esmeraldo also worked as an assistant to Bardi alongside Anna Carboncini now a borad member of the Instituto Bardi.

Additionally, MASP contains the archives of Assis Chateaubriand, the telecoms magnate who initiated the project to found a museum of art in São Paulo, which provides an idea of the context in which MASP was founded but also a clear idea of Pietro Maria Bardi and by extension Lina Bo Bardi's relationship to the institution. This is evidenced in letters from Bardi and his assistants revealing the behind the scenes operation of the museum as they launched exhibitions, a public programme and eventually a design school which is explored in more depth in Chapter 4. Looking at artefacts related directly to Chateaubriand focused my attention on his personal relationship with Nelson A. Rockefeller and the significance of the American's influence on postwar culture and centrality to Pan-American relations.<sup>23</sup> As a result of the narrowing of the thesis to focus on activities at MASP, I consulted copies of the magazine Habitat, which was published by the museum and forms the basis for Chapter 5. Because the magazine was conceived as the museums' catalogue a full set is available at

publicacoes/anais/modernidade/pdfs/EUG\_ING.pdf would have been Rockefeller's benefit.

directors. I was shown a number of letters contained within Pietro Maria Bardi's archive which is also held at the house but suffers from even less attention and thus cataloguing than Bo Bardi's. The letters I read were between Le Corbusier and Bardi detailing the Swiss architect's frustration with what he perceived to be a lack of credit for his involvement in designing da Educação e Saúde Pública (The Ministry of Education and Health, MES) in Rio de Janeiro.<sup>21</sup> Believing Bardi able to facilitate further work in Latin America, he leans on him to organise exhibitions in Argentina as well as requesting the art dealer demand outstanding fees for his work on the building. These letters were helpful in elucidating the relationship between Le Corbusier and his Brazilian protégés and their joint collaboration in authoring MES. It transpires the building was entirely constructed without Le Corbusier's help after the initial design charette, with the architect learning only of its finished form in 1949, discovering that its detailing betrayed much of his early design.

This correspondence was thus crucial in understanding the proximate relationship between the Bardis and Le Corbusier, assisting in better understanding Bo Bardi's own engagement with European Modernism and also the contested nature of the style as it arrived on the Latin continent, which created the early dichotomy between the Cariocas and the Paulistas. It also gave confidence in further researching the established historiography of Brazilian Modernism posing challenges to its hegemony. I describe this incident as illustrative of how findings in the archive, while not central to the main body of research, enriched the context and provided greater confidence in locating elements of Bo Bardi's thinking within a broader narrative. I also introduce it to demonstrate the importance with which I have ascribed opportunism and participation as part of my methodology in actively discussing and questioning my findings with those holding official institutional roles, but also with others whom I have had chance encounters along the way.

## Museu de Arte de São Paulo

The archive at MASP contains documents relating directly to the museum from its foundation in 1947 to the present day. As such many documents contained within relate directly to works that Bo Bardi was instrumental in formulating including the Instituto de Arte Contemporânea (IAC) located at MASP, Habitat Magazine and numerous exhibitions conducted over a forty-year period. The archive is located in the Bibliotéca in the lower ground floor of the gallery in a space that was once used as the canteen. Researchers work

Esmeraldo, EG., 'Brief Comments on the Role of Pietro Maria Bardi and the Foundation of MASP', Modernidade Latina, Os Italianos e os Centros do Modernismo, MAC, first accessed 21st November 2017, http://www.mac.usp.br/mac/conteudo/academico/

Researching the relationship between Assis Chateaubriand and Nelson A. Rockefeller led me to consult the Rockefeller Foundation Archives in upstate New York where there is a set of correspondences between the pair translated into English for what

MASP's archive, however I found a more complete and better quality set of issues held at FAUUSP rather than at the museum. This was significant because at MASP all the adverts, which precede the contents of each copy, had been removed before compilation, whereas at FAUUSP each issue, while also bound, has more or less been preserved as published. Without having consulted both I would not have known the extent to which advertisement shaped the character of the magazine.

# THE ARCHIVES OF ALISON AND PETER SMITHSON

'We can now sympathise with Eduardo Paolozzi: being asked for documents from one's past can, at times, be like running a mortician's parlour.'<sup>24</sup>

The Smithsons made a record of every magazine or newspaper article in which one of their projects was discussed, alongside drawings and correspondences between the architects, their friends and clients. The overwhelming number of documents that relate to how their work was received publicly hints at the way in which the archive helps to construct a narrative that promotes the Smithsons' importance in architectural history and the way in which they valued professional and public recognition. In the Smithsons' case this was often by virtue of their tendency to begin by writing notes, which would then be typed up often in a number of iterations before submitted for publication to a journal. It appeared that the more 'official' the couple presented their thinking in their archives the more likely a document had later been reproduced by historians who had themselves searched the catalogue. Indeed in both cases Bo Bardi and the Smithsons leave a paper trail of published newspaper and magazine articles as if pointing to the record of their work in other sites of influence.

While I was able to visit Bo Bardi's archive on a number of occasions, I was only able to visit *Harvard University* twice: once in September 2015 and then again in late October 2017. Although rigorously organised with key terms searchable online, the corresponding folders often contain a number of seemingly unrelated material. While this means that it was hard to piece together a coherent narrative around any single project, the element of finding a surprise piece of data changed the direction of the search. Again, the input of the archivist was invaluable to helping shape the character of the research. Inés Zalduendo, the archivist at the Smithsons' archive was there in 2003 when Simon Smithson bequeathed its contents to the school. Zalduendo was part of the group that created the system for its categorisation and thus has intimate knowledge of the projects filed. She is able to make intricate associations between works based on the individual interests of researchers who visit, 24 Smithson, A., 'Patio and Pavilion' Reconstructed', AA Files, No. 47, 2002, pp37-44,

24 Smithson, A., 'Patio p37

# Frances Loeb Library

giving greater depth to their work. For example on returning to the archive midway through my first week, Zalduendo had selected the project Art into Nature which I cite earlier in this chapter due to having made an association between it and my interest in the Smithsons' understanding as themselves as artists, which was the focus of my research at that time. Without her incisive input I would not have viewed this project at all.

### Other Archives Consulted

As the research focused on the two exhibitions Parallel of Life and Art and Patio and Pavilion which the Smithsons produced during their time in the Independent Group (IG), I relied more heavily on the ICA's archives at the Tate Britain. The material contained within the archive was situated mainly within folders pertaining to Nigel Henderson's Estate and as such, personal correspondences and notes between the artist and other members of the IG were woven throughout. While not central to the research, greater proximity to material that spoke to Henderson, Paolozzi and the Smithsons' relationship was important in framing the character of the research, lending greater nuance in terms of how the material was handled. For example due to the level of affection in the letters and reiteration of their relationship in a number of accounts by the group and others, their collaboration is given greater weight in the thesis and indeed is the focus of Chapter 7.

In discovering the importance of friendship in shaping the direction of the Smithsons' work in the 1950s I visited the archive of Theo Crosby, an architect, critic and friend of the couple. Crosby's archive is held by the Design Archives at Brighton University and as far as I could deduce has few visitors. Donated by Crosby's family, the archive is small and contains a selection of his published writings, drafts of various manuscripts for both fiction and nonfiction and a number of sketchbooks. Again, in consulting Crosby's archive and placing greater emphasis on his character I was better able to contextualise topics and events that would have had influence on the Smithsons; indeed in some cases I was able to identify the origin many of their ideas in those of others.

The historiography of Brazilian Modernism is often presented in terms of its completeness, linearity and homogeneity; with the country's colonial past credited for Modernism's evolution in the country, rather than problematised by it.<sup>2</sup> With the arrival of the architectural style on the Latin continent an opportunity for Brazil's rebirth, it is noticeable that in the sphere of the literature, such forms of hybridity are always manifest as 'other' to European architectural traditions. Any innovations are documented as an adaption of principles established abroad, rather than their subjugation to a Brazilian autochthony. Disputes over aesthetic and material difference and in turn the question of independence from European influence underline the struggle for a sense of Brazilian architecture's selfmaking, framed by its architects' perpetual estrangement from the right to the legitimacy of a singular identity of their own. Lina Bo Bardi's architecture is an anomaly in this history, an addition that is recorded as a turn towards the social as an act of defiance in the context of the military dictatorship. Yet the dictatorship did not ascend power until the deposition of João Goulart's Second Republic in 1964, nearly twenty years after Bo Bardi's arrival in Brazil and midway through the construction of one of her largest cultural projects, MASP. Bo Bardi's effective addition as a footnote has written her largely out of Brazil's architectural history, a sign of the struggle that characterises many retellings of her life and works.

After the Second World War Lina Bo Bardi moved to Brazil, developing a career alongside her husband Pietro Maria Bardi at MASP. Together they curated and designed exhibitions that revealed the Afro-Brazilian culture of the country's northern states frequently engaging, in some cases controversially, architectural audiences on both sides of the Atlantic.<sup>3</sup> There is little clear information on exactly why or at what point the Bardis made the decision to stay in the country given that their trip was predicated solely on the temporary exhibition of a

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### 'We will never be Aryans, and perhaps we should thank God for that!' 1

Andrade, M. as quoted in Sadlier, DJ., 'Brazil Imagined', University of Texas Press, See Calvalcanti, L (2003), Dekker, ZQ. (2001), Forty, A. (2008), Mindlin, HE.

I state this in reference to the public argument between Max Bill and his Brazilian contemporaries in 1951-53, which I discuss in more detail in Chapter 5.

<sup>2008,</sup> p195 (1956) & Segawa, H. (1998)

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collection of Italian art.<sup>4</sup> Bo Bardi at one point simply stated that Italy was a country 'one had to leave' <sup>5</sup> while other sources offer her interest and knowledge of building in Latin America as one probable cause:

'When I was in the last year of college, a book on the great Brazilian architecture came out. This was, at that immediate postwar time, a lighthouse shining brightly within a death camp [...] It was a wonderful thing.' <sup>6</sup>

Giancarlo Latorraca, a former employee, corroborates this statement quoting Bo Bardi as saying:

'I told Pietro I wanted to stay...that I had rediscovered the hopes and dreams of war time nights. So we stayed in Brazil.' <sup>7</sup>

Such quotes romanticise the ease of the couple's emigration, suggesting their choice to move countries was without issue. They present their trip as a form of personal escapism and adventure, negating an association with the inherent and unequivocal historical pattern of migration over centuries from Europe to the Americas that preceded them.

Arriving in Brazil at a moment where things were *actually* getting built, the Bardis discovered the extraordinary proliferation of architectural production in the country. Culturally and racially non-European construction workers known as *candangos* were considered nation builders, yet for the tens of thousands who built the new capital Brasilia, the temporality of their accommodation resulted in their eventual exclusion from the city.<sup>8</sup> As historian James Holston explains, the bourgeoisie's dehistoricisation and depoliticisation of the term

#### HOME GROWN MODERNISM

*candango* rendered this huge labour market momentarily legitimate, but they were only ever going to be proximate in the ownership of what they had made. As such these events followed an era of disruption with an increasing anxiety about racial difference within domestic cultures, the result of centuries of colonialism.

Yet the very idea of conflict is central in constructing an understanding of Brazilian identity and the narrative of its architectural history, alternative or otherwise, caught between industrial society and the rise of nationalism. As such this chapter sets out the notional singularity that led to the characterisation of Brazilian Modernism and its representation of the national, in order to explore the centres of power that created it, but also those that arose in opposition to it. The chapter revisits and extends the proposition of the 'other' and its reoccurrence to describe how Brazilian architecture formed multiple iterations in a number of spatial and non-spatial locations, countering the perception of its artistic purity and symbolism. In this way the chapter attempts to provide the contextual setting against which the production of Bo Bardi's architecture can be considered alternative, in order to better understand how her projects challenged this pattern to reveal the actual market, status, and power relations that organised *Brasiliense* society through the construction of her own buildings.

<sup>4</sup> The Bardis held three exhibitions, which were all organised by Mário da Silva Brito whose work Pietro Maria Bardi had previously published back in Italy in the magazine *Quadrante*. The first location was in the lobby of MES in Rio de Janeiro, showcasing Italian paintings from the 13<sup>th</sup> to the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The second was in the Copacabana Palace Hotel one month later exhibiting European furnishings while the third returned to MES showing Modern Italian painting in May 1947. Lima, ZRMA., 'Lina Bo Bardi', Yale University Press, 2013, p34

<sup>5</sup> Bo Bardi, L. as quoted in Consentino, GC., 'Early Years and Wartime: Lina Bo Bardi's Illustrations and Journalism in Italy (1940-46)', pp51-64, p51 in eds. Lepik, A. & Bader, VS., 'Lina Bo Bardi 100', Hatje Cantz Verlag, 2014

<sup>6</sup> Bo Bardi, L. as quoted in Segawa, H., 'Architecture of Brazil: 1900-1990', EDUSP, 1998, p151

<sup>7</sup> Bo Bardi from 'Curriculum Literário' as quoted in Latorraca, G., 'Ways of Showing: the Exhibition Architecture of Lina Bo Bardi' in catalogue of exhibition 'Maneiras de Expor', Museu Casa Brasileira, 2014, p19

<sup>8</sup> Holston, J., 'The Modernist City', The University of Chicago Press, 1989, p209

HOME GROWN MODERNISM

3.1

# **REVOLUTIONISE FROM ABOVE**

'Don't scorn the little seed; one day it will become a giant palm tree.'9

When the young Carioca architects Oscar Niemeyer and Lúcio Costa built the *Educação e Saúde Pública* (The Ministry of Education and Health, MES)<sup>10</sup> in Rio de Janeiro in 1936 under the guidance of Le Corbusier, it stood tall amongst a city dominated by colonial relics of the French Beaux-Arts, imported as a result of the Portuguese court's emigration to Brazil.<sup>11</sup> A symbol of progressive modernity, the building became representative of an increasing agitation towards a European presence, coupled with an aggressive state led drive that promoted newly conceived Brazilian nationalist imagery alongside a developmental economic policy. The building was designed to pay homage to, yet subvert an imported rulebound, quasi-international modernity, addressing postcolonial Latin themes of identity. In turn it aligned with a deep-rooted social imaginary and cultural history, particular to Brazil, which is evident in the building's material form (Fig. 1 & 2). Positioned over three metres off the ground on a forest of thin pilotis, entirely glazed on both sides, MES exhibited all the formal constraints of Le Corbusian Modernism, while simultaneously employing local materials and techniques such as *Azulejos* tiles linked to Portuguese colonial tradition (Fig. 3 & 4).<sup>12</sup>

The Poruguese government immigrated to Brazil in 1807 in order to escape 11 Napoleon's advance in Europe. They are the only imperial power to have ruled from their own colony. For a full history WILLIAMS, D., 'The Politics of Cultural Production during the Vargas Era, 1930-1945', Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Latin American History, April 2016, first accessed 31st October 2017, http://latinamericanhistory.oxfordre.com/ view/10.1093/acrefore/9780199366439.001.0001/acrefore-9780199366439-e-290 12 The literature pertaining to Modernism in Brazil largely credits Le Corbusier's visits as both inspiration and catalyst for the forms it would later take. Letters in the Instituto Bardi sent by Le Corbusier to Pitero Maria Bardi however highlight the Swiss architect's anger at his exclusion from the design process of MES, seeing the building a compromised version of his ideas. Le Corbusier only discovered that MES had in fact been successfully built after the war in 1949, 13 years after his last visit. While Le Corbusier regained his friendship with Lúcio Costa much later, his communications with the Cariocas was fractured during the 1950s, a time when Brazilian Modernism experienced particular scrutiny. Letters from Le Corbusier to Pitero Maria Bardi, dated 28th November 1949 and 27th December 1949, Folder 1.3014, Instituto Bardi, first accessed 7th December 2017



Fig 1. Oscar Niemeyer and Lúcio Costa, Minestério de Saúde e Educação, 1936, Rio de Janeiro

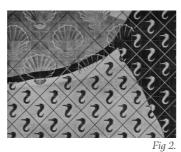
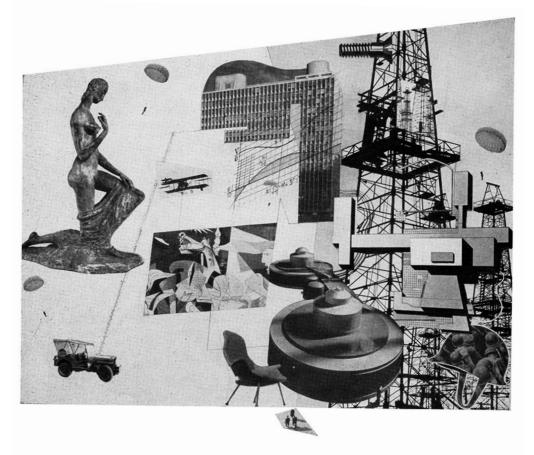






Fig 4



*Fig 5. Collage by Ray Eames, California Arts and Architecture, September 1943* 

Despite such inconsistencies American contemporaries were so taken by the building that the *Museum of Modern Art* (MoMA) in New York decided to dispatch a delegation to visit Rio de Janeiro to see the new aesthetic sensibility and emergent Modernist vocabulary.<sup>15</sup> Prior to its completion in 1943, it was praised in the *NY Times* and *New York Sun*.<sup>14</sup> In 1947 it was featured in an eight-page article in the French journal *L'Architecture d'aurjourd'hui* and described by MoMA curator Philip L. Goodwin in his publication, *Brazil Builds* as the most 'beautiful building in the Western hemisphere'.<sup>15</sup> The September 1943 issue of *California Arts and Architecture* even featured a collage by Ray Eames that juxtaposed photos of MES with other images emblematic of the postwar proximity between art, architecture and industry (Fig. 5). Symbols of warfare including a helmet, airplane and *Willy's Jeep* were placed alongside an Eames' desk and Picasso's *Guernica*, making MES complicit in a Pan-American political discourse.<sup>16</sup>

Guillén, MF., 'Modernism Without Modernity: The Rise of Modernist Architecture in Mexico, Brazil and Argentina, 1890-1940', Latin American Research Review, Vol. 39, No.
2, pp6-34, p16
Le Blanc, A., 'Palmeiras and Pilotis: Promoting Brazil with Modern Architecture', Third Text, Jan 2012, p113
Le Blanc, A., 'Palmeiras and Pilotis: Promoting Brazil with Modern Architecture', Third Text, Jan 2012, p113
Sadlier, DJ., 'Americans All: Good Neighbor Cultural Diplomacy in World War II',

<sup>9</sup> African Proverb as quoted in Sadlier, DJ., 'Brazil Imagined', University of Texas Press, 2008, p185

<sup>10</sup> Now known as the Palácio Gustavo Capanema.

capitalism, yet also concealed systemic issues including poverty and racial prejudice.<sup>24</sup> In her article titled Architecture of Brazil published in The Nation in March 1943, the Brazilian expert and critic Elizabeth Wilder articulated the need for a more balanced reading of the emergent architecture, against a backdrop of wider socio-political conditions:

'It is only to balance this enthusiasm by the observation that most of Brazil is badly housed, that most of the country is without schools or hospitals of any sort.' <sup>25</sup>

Artists began working within this new cultural paradigm because to admit to European influence was to concede a lack of cultural authenticity, yet they struggled to avoid the co-option of their message, which was rooted precisely in highlighting the poverty of the maligned Afro-Brazilian northeast rather than the comfortable Eurocentric modernism of the coast. Vargas's elevation of *carnaval*, samba and *capoeira* therefore led to what Luisa Valle observes was an era characterised by 'aesthetic and ideological ambiguity.' <sup>26</sup>

Due to the parallel political discourses affecting Italian and Brazilian culture, the Bardis were able to translate much of their rhetoric into a fresh context while taking advantage of a significantly more tolerant cultural landscape.<sup>27</sup> This is problematic because of course the cultural and political histories of Italy and Brazil were not in fact the same. In occupying this liminality however, the Bardis followed in the footsteps of many other architects who had visited the continent, considering it a fertile testing ground to realise theoretical ideas in practice. Adnan Morshed draws attention to the tendency to weave certain aspects of perceived Brazilian culture together with architects' own neo-colonial interest for 'the conquest of America by implacable reasoning', enacting a sort of rehearsal for a twentieth

The promise of Brazil's nascent Modernity, coupled with the international renown of its new architecture meant that MES was architecturally significant in Lina Bo and Pietro Maria Bardi's first experiences of the country. On their arrival in Rio de Janeiro in 1946, Bo Bardi read MES as a beacon for hope. Seeing it on the horizon from the ship as she sailed into the city, she remarked that the building emerged as a 'large white and blue ship against the sky', and later referred to it as a 'message of peace'.<sup>17</sup> For the young architect, 'there were no ruins in Rio': Brazil was a place where things were getting built as opposed to the destruction that the couple left behind in Europe (Fig. 6).<sup>18</sup>

Brazil's building boom however only masked the political situation, with President Getúlio Vargas' Estado Novo characterised by its paradoxical alliance between communism and what historian Caroline Jones calls 'home-grown Integralista fascism'.<sup>19</sup> Advocating for cultural nationalism in order to procure the support of the middle class.<sup>20</sup> this strategy was implemented by a small governing elite, meaning that over time broader development across wider national territory became absent of state control, as local interests were prioritised over the national.<sup>21</sup> Although Vargas's approach mirrored Italy's tactics by orchestrating a proto-national discourse solidified through cultural projects,<sup>22</sup> the Estado Novo differed in that it valorised the popular, manipulating aspects of black identity and elevating tropes of Afro-Brazilian culture as authentically national idioms.<sup>23</sup> Styliane Philippou describes this as a 'hopeful fiction' that represented an era ideologically orientated towards Western

University of Texas Press, 2012, p150



Fig 6. Photograph of Lina Bo Bardi and Pietro Maria Bardi arriving in Brazil, 1946

<sup>24</sup> 25 26 academicworks.cuny.edu/cc\_etds\_theses/144 27ING.pdf

Bo Bardi, L. as quoted in Lima, ZRMA., 'Lina Bo Bardi', Yale University Press, 17 2014, p38

<sup>18</sup> Bo Bardi, L. as quoted in Philippou, S., 'Modernism and National Identity in Brazil, or How to Brew a Brazilian Stew', National Identities, Routledge, Vol. 7, No. 3, 2005, p261 MES was built between 1936 and 1945, meaning its construction perfectly 19 paralleled the enforcement of the Estado Novo. Indeed Vargas opened the building in the same year as his deposition. Jones, CA., 'Anthropophagy in São Paulo's Cold War', ARTMargins and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2013, p9

Ação Integralista Brasileira (AIB) was also known as the Greenshirts. They were a 20 political organisation that emerged in parallel to Vargas's first acquisition of power. Hilton, SE., 'Ação Integralista Brasileira: Fascism in Brazil, 1932-1938', Luso-Brazilian Review, 1972, pp3-29, p4

<sup>21</sup> Barros Lisboa, M. de & Latif, ZA., 'Democracy and Growth in Brazil', Instituto de Ensino e Pesquisa, Insper Working Paper, 2013, p16

The Brazilian government thought their similarity to Italy significant enough that 22 they sent officials to visit Fascist Italy. It is also important to note Pietro Maria Bardi's connection to the Fascist state, of which he was effectively exiled due to his promotion of Modernism as the national style which was at odds with the party's interest in Classical Rationalism.

Williams, D., 'The Politics of Cultural Production during the Vargas Era, 1930-23 1945', Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Latin American History, April 2016, first accessed 31st October 2017, http://latinamericanhistory.oxfordre.com/view/10.1093/ acrefore/9780199366439.001.0001/acrefore-9780199366439-e-290

Philippou, S., 'Modernism and National Identity in Brazil, or How to Brew a Brazilian Stew', National Identities, Routledge, vol 7, no3, 2005, p253

Elizabeth Wilder as quoted in Sadlier, DJ., 'Americans All: Good Neighbour Cultural Diplomacy in World War II', University of Texas Press, 2012, p151

Valle, L., 'The Ministry Of Education And Health Building, Rio De Janeiro: Utopia Or Agenda?', CUNY Academic Works, 2012, p3, first accessed 21st January 2018, http://

<sup>1.5</sup> million Italians immigrated to Brazil in the 19th Century. Italy went to great lengths to bring Brazil into its orbit of influence. The Ação Integralista Brasileira pursued a cultural, economic and commercial expansion in Latin America by targeting the general population and the intellectual middle classes. Their main target was the press with an exhibition in the Exposição do Estado Novo in 1939. By 1940 eight Italian academics held chairs at Brazilian universities. Bertonha describes this moment in time as 'a battleground for the major powers'. Bertonha, JF., 'The Cultural Policy of Fascist Italy in Brazil: The Soft Power of a Medium-Sized Nation on Brazilian Grounds (1922-1940)', Modernidade Latina, Os Italianos e os Centros do Modernismo, MAC, first accessed 10th December 2017, http:// www.mac.usp.br/mac/conteudo/academico/publicacoes/anais/modernidade/pdfs/FABIO\_

century colonialism (Fig. 7 & 8).<sup>28</sup> However the work of famed Modernists went mostly unnoticed due to the Brazilian avant-gardes' own preoccupation with trying to escape their Brazilianess, paradoxically looking both to European and American creative models but also denying the transnational circulation of ideas at play.<sup>29</sup>

Architects were much more complicit with the state's commitment to Modern architecture and its willingness to engage both European and indigenous influences.<sup>30</sup> As such a new professional class became arbiters of contemporary culture, meaning that while a seeming plethora of influences were holistically imbibed from both within and abroad, the architects employing them were afforded great autonomy to project their own agenda alongside that of the dominant power. Bo Bardi therefore found affinity with an already rich discourse advanced by her new colleagues, who like her sought to propagate a social agenda by coupling architecture and politics. Lúcio Costa, the architect of MES remarked:

At the time, all of us were convinced that the new architecture we were building, this new approach we were taking, was something connected with social renewal. It seemed to us that the world, the new society, and the new architecture were entwined, everything connected to each other'.<sup>31</sup>

Lúcio Costa was the director of the Escola Nacional de Belas Artes (National School of Arts, ENBA),<sup>32</sup> where he moved the curriculum away from its beaux-arts heritage towards a pedagogy based on the teachings of the Bauhaus. After only a year Costa assumed the directorship of the newly created Serviço do Patrimônio Histórico e Artistico Nacional (SPHAN), an organisation tasked with protecting Brazil's historic and artistic heritage.<sup>33</sup> At this time SPHAN and the Estado Novo were oppositional in their agendas, with the former

Wood, M., 'Black Milk: Imagining Slavery in the Visual Cultures of Brazil and 29 America', Oxford University Press, 2013, p403

30 Greet, M., 'Devouring Surrealism: Tarsila do Amaral's Abaporu', Papers of Surrealism, Issue 11, Spring 2015, p2

Costa, L. as quoted in Rezende, VF., 'Modern Urbanism and Architecture in Brazil: 31 The Emergence and Growth of New Concepts in the Vargas Era. A Look at the Capital, the City of Rio de Janeiro', Urban Transformation: Controversies, Contrasts and Challenges, 14th IPHS Conference, July 2010, p2

Costa assumed this position in 1930 at the age of 28. 32

33 Mario de Andrade created SPHAN at the request of Gustav Capanema while working at MES. Sandler, D., 'The Other Way Around: the Modernist Movement in Brazil' chapter in eds, Lu, D., 'Third World Modernism: Architecture, Development and Identity', Routledge, 2010, p255

plans for Rio de Janeiro

Fia 10. Construction workers sit on top of a building in Brasilia

Fig 9. Aleijadinho (Antônio Francisco Lisboa, 1730-1814), gold church interior

Fia 11.Oscar Niemever photographed in Brasilia aligned with imported yet longstanding European traditions and the latter seeking a total break from French influence. Costa's architecture became the bridge between the two, with his particular interpretation of Modernism championing the eighteenth century baroque architecture from the mining state of Minas Gerais.

Built by the popular and well-known artist Aleijadinho, the style evoked by the colonial churches of cities like Ouro Preto, rich in gold and with highly ornamental decorative interiors, were used by Costa to forge a sense of continuity with the past (Fig. 9). This idea was astute; creating an aesthetic that could be understood nationally by Brazil's wider population for whom Aleijadinho was and to a large extent still is a folk hero. Sunil Bald explains that by uniting religious belief with the 'devotional nationalistic rhetoric of the Homen Novo Brasiliero',<sup>34</sup> Costa was able to appeal to a largely non-white working class demographic hoping that the formal language of modernism as indigenous would create a continuum that recuperated a Brazilian genealogy.<sup>35</sup> In this way it was Costa's approach, not his architecture, that mirrored that of the state, with Nathanial Belcher noting that it is ironic that in order to divert from European colonialism, it was the avant-garde Modernism imported from Europe that was employed to orchestrate a radical rethinking of national identity politics,<sup>36</sup> which in turn 'anticipated rather than expressed modernity and modernisation.' 37

This reciprocal pattern of political and cultural determinism instigated by the Estado Novo would lead eventually to the construction of the continent's first Modernist city Brasilia, which launched Oscar Niemeyer's international career, employing monumentality not as a dialectic conclusion to its history but as a statement of its birth (Fig. 10-12).<sup>38</sup> The city's construction also heralded the end of Classical Modernism in Brazil.<sup>39</sup> although paradoxically during the military dictatorship's twenty-year rule the regime mirrored their

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      ACSA International Conference, 1998, p191
Brazil'.
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2010, p32
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of Cambridge, April 2009
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Bald, S., 'Ordering the Sensual: Paradoxical Utopias of Brazilian Modernism', 85th ACSA Annual Meeting and Technology Conference, 1997, p416 el-Dahdah, F., 'Lúcio Costa Preservationist', Future Anterior, Vol. 3, No. 1, 2006,

Belcher, NB., 'Power and Modernism: The Making of an Architectural Hybrid in

Sandler, D., 'The Other Way Around: the Modernist Movement in Brazil' chapter in eds. Lu, D., 'Third World Modernism: Architecture, Development and Identity', Routledge,

Hall, J., 'Remodeling Brasilia', Unpublished Undergraduate Dissertation, University

Lehmann, S., 'An environmental and social approach in the modern architecture of Brazil: The work of Lina Bo Bardi', City, Culture and Society, Elsevier, 2016, first accessed 22nd February 2018, https://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.ccs.2016.01.001

Morshed, A., 'The Cultural Politics of Aerial Vision: Le Corbusier in Brazil (1929)', 28 Journal of Architectural Education, Vol. 55, No. 4, p205

predecessor's policy of modernity, coopting Brasilia as a symbol of conservatism.<sup>40</sup> The following sections expand on the dynamics of this context in order to situate Bo Bardi's own practice, but also evidence how appropriating the paradoxical nature of Brazilian Modernism became central to her design methods.

> 'The Museum of Modern Art, New York and the American Institute of Architects in the spring of 1942 were both anxious to have closer relations with Brazil, a country which was to be our future ally.' <sup>41</sup>

The previous section introduced the entwined political and cultural conditions in Brazil, demonstrating the way in which state control was centralised through the unusual confluence of European Modernist ideology with indigenous Brazilian symbols. While state patronage was responsible for the opportunities available to architects in Rio de Janeiro, at that time still the country's capital, those wishing to initiate similar change elsewhere, while freed from the immediate influence of government were faced with the difficulty of finding comparable funds. São Paulo, an industrial city made rich from the coffee market, attracted a number of rival institutions interested in architecture's potential to revolutionise the political paradigm. One such party was the telecoms magnate Francisco de Assis Chateaubriand Bandeira de Melo (known colloquially as Chatô), who became the main patron and owner of MASP, the museum which the Bardis would oversee throughout the duration of their time in Brazil.<sup>42</sup>

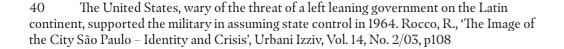
Chateaubriand developed an interest in setting up a museum of art towards the close of the Second World War despite having no background in art collection or its display. Proud of his Amerindian heritage, born in Umbuzeiro in the state of Paraíba in the northeast of the country in 1892, Chateaubriand always considered himself separate from the bourgeoisie, frequently describing himself as a self-made man (Fig. 13).<sup>43</sup> Turning to journalism after practising law, Chateaubriand moved to Rio de Janeiro using money lent by politicians in order to secure his first newspaper title. He amassed vast political power, which he then levied to maintain his business interests both in Brazil and abroad with communications in



Fig 12. A family arrive in the new capital, Brasilia, 1959

Fig 13. Portrait of Assis

Chateaubriand



# THE KINGMAKER

Having been introduced to Chateaubriand at the opening of one of the exhibitions

<sup>41</sup> Goodwin, PL., 'Brazil Builds', MoMA, 1943, p7 42 the couple held at MES, the businessman invited the Bardis to move to São Paulo to found what would be Brazil's first museum of art. The Bardis precise first meeting with Chateaubriand however is not entirely clear. Latorraca notes that Chateaubriand had already contacted Bardi in Europe, being aware of his renown as a critic and art dealer. Latorraca, G., 'Ways of Showing: the Exhibition Architecture of Lina Bo Bardi' in the catalogue of the exhibition 'Maneiras de Expor', Museu Casa Brasileira, 2014, p19 43 dir. Fontes, G., 'Chatô: O Rei do Brasil', 2015

his personal archive at MASP revealing his connections with manufacturers, politicians and charities.<sup>44</sup> He was on the first Pan-American flight to South America and attended events with President Getúlio Vargas.<sup>45</sup> Chateaubriand blurred his business and cultural interests; the contents of private letters addressed to the American industrialist Henry Ford reveal the Brazilian's equal enthusiasm for the Ford Foundation's management structure as well as its social and educational activities.46

A renowned showman, he became increasingly known for his use of threats and blackmail to obtain loans and donations to fund his enterprises, and was named by the New York Times as the 'William Randolph Hearst of Brazil'.<sup>47</sup> All conducted under the guise of his own philanthropy, Rosanne Martorella describes MASP as a 'public utility campaign'.<sup>48</sup> Indeed the museum's origins and ongoing financial status are indelibly linked to Chateaubriand's specific way of doing business in Brazil. It is therefore interesting that while Chateaubriand closely involved himself in the acquisition of art, took an interest in the operational affairs of similar organisations and was primarily responsible for its finances, not least given his personality, he is never mentioned in relation to the agenda the Bardis were proposing beyond advocating for it when called upon.<sup>49</sup> It seems Pietro Maria Bardi and Lina Bo Bardi had free reign to design and run MASP as they desired.<sup>50</sup>

While Chateaubriand and Pietro Maria Bardi co-founded MASP with the intention of pioneering an entirely new model of art institution in Latin America, which is the subject of the discussion in Chapter 4, its origins were in fact closely aligned with those of MoMA

When Bo Bardi proposed moving MASP to the Trianon on Avenida Paulista 50 Chateaubriand, just back from London remarked, 'I'll leave it up to Bardi, the museum director'. Bo Bardi, L. as quoted in 'Stones Against Diamonds', Architecture Words 12, AA Publications, 2009, p121



Fig 14. Portrait of Nelson A. Rockefeller

in New York; indeed documents in MASP's archive state this explicitly.<sup>51</sup> Founded in 1929 by Abby Aldrich Rockefeller, MoMA represented the interests of the wealthy American Rockefeller family who as such, and as this section discusses, governed the fortunes of MASP in its early years. A \$40000 investment by David Rockefeller began the family's formal relationship with Chateaubriand, with Nelson A. Rockefeller (NAR) in particular playing a significant role in shaping the museum's programme (Fig. 14).<sup>52</sup> There is only minimal proof of communication between representatives of MASP and the Rockefeller Foundation in the archives at the museum. However, Brazilian historian Zeuler Lima has produced a comprehensive paper on NAR's connection with institutions in Brazil based on research conducted at the Rockefeller Centre archives just outside of New York where much of the correspondence between the two institutions is now held. A number of other publications contextualise NAR's own interest in Brazil by way of an explanation of the broader postwar politics that were at play.<sup>53</sup> In addition my own visit to the Rockefeller Archive allowed me to see first-hand the correspondences, translated into English, between Chateaubriand and NAR. I have used these as primary evidence in this section to reveal how MASP's origins were greatly influenced by an international rather than national agenda, thus freeing the Bardis from Vargas' ideology yet providing the resources by which they could challenge the dominant cultural hegemony.

The Rockefeller family and their associated businesses pursued an interest in the oil rich resources of Latin America during the 1930s, meaning that NAR's visited many other countries in the continent prior to his inaugural trip to Brazil.<sup>54</sup> With the intention of establishing a cross-cultural infrastructure, NAR first visited the country in 1942 while holding office as the coordinator of The Office of Inter-American Affairs (OIAA).55 Formed

Lima, ZRMA., 'Nelson A. Rockefeller and Art Patronage in Brazil after World War II: Assis Chateaubriand, the Museu de Arte de São Paulo (MASP) and the Musee de Arte Moderna (MAM)', first accessed 24th August 2016, http://www.rockarch.org/publications/

Giebelhausen, M., 'The Architecture of the Museum: Symbolic Structures, Urban

For example see Sadlier, DJ., 'Americans All: Good Neighbour Cultural Diplomacy

Large-scale investment in Brazilian resources had after the Depression depleted Brazil's coffee market, with the Allies copious use of rubber produced in the country restoring faith in a return to industrialisation and economic independence. Jones, C.,

'Anthropophagy in São Paulo's Cold War', 2013 ARTMargins and the Massachusetts

Institute of Technology, 2013, p29, first accessed 23rd August 2016, p8 https://architecture. mit.edu/sites/architecture.mit.edu/files/attachments/publication/artmargins02\_1.pdf Prutsch, U., 'Americanization Of Brazil Or A Pragmatic Wartime Alliance? The

Politics Of Nelson Rockfeller's Office Of Inter-American Affair In Brazil During World War II', Revista Internacional de História Política e Cultura Jurídica, Vol. 2, No.4, 2010, p181-216,

<sup>44</sup> For an in depth biography on Assis Chateaubriand see Morais, F, 'Chatô: O Rei do Brasil', Companhia das Letras, 1994

A letter from Robert Riordon, an export manager from Wheelabrator Corporation, 45 Indianna dated August 13<sup>th</sup> 1959 describes his trip with Chateaubriand and meeting with Vargas. File A1.1.1.24 Bibliotéca do MASP, accessed 28th September 2016

Letter from Henry Ford II dated June 16th 1959, File A1.1.1.19, Bibliotéca do MASP, 46 accessed 28th September 2016

Chateaubriand often held multiple ceremonies on the arrival of international 47 art works, in some cases two, one at the airport and one at the moment of unloading. In return for soliciting donations, Chateaubriand published news stories in his papers about the wealthy individuals who supported the museum, thereby generating advertisement for his financiers and securing their ongoing support. Martorella, R., 'Art and Business: An International Perspective on Sponsorship', Greenwood Publishing Group, 1996, p68

Two other notable 'campaigns' were the foundation of a flying club and a charity for 48 the protection of children. Martorella, R., 'Art and Business: An International Perspective on Sponsorship', Greenwood Publishing Group, 1996, p68

In the 2015 film Chatô: O Rei do Brasil (The King of Brazil) a biographical 49 document of Chateaubriand's entire life, neither Bardi or Bo Bardi are featured, nor MASP.

resrep/lima.pdf.

<sup>52</sup> Contexts', Manchester University Press, 2003, p189 53 in World War II', University of Texas Press, 2012 54 p184

'It is important that you see your old friend and admirer before he leaves for Brazil early in February. Chatô more than any other Brazilian, supported our war efforts and through his chain of newspapers, radio and television stations has constantly reminded the Brazilian public of the contributions being made by the Rockefeller family to Brazil's agricultural, social and economic development.... He is still the Kingmaker and is deeply involved in making Castelo Branco's revolutionary government succeed.' 60

NAR needed frequent reminding of the Foundation's various investments in MASP, indicating that the museum's association with business interests by way of the importance of its transatlantic cultural symbolism was enough to free it of the political and economic agendas of its patrons. Both Chateaubriand and NAR would go on to hold significant political positions later in life as the Brazilian Ambassador to London and the vice-President of the US respectively. With global political and economic concerns guiding MASP in its early years, Bo Bardi's own interest in a more local social agenda seem at odds with the museum's apparent institutional purpose. Broadly the Bardis sought to shift the centre of power; indeed they wished to empower the people, while Chateaubriand wanted to consolidate it.61

in 1940, the OIAA countered the perceived threat to national security posed by the Axis nations by furthering 'positive' cultural and economic relations between Brazil and the United States.<sup>56</sup> Underlying NAR's involvement therefore was a broader set of politics, which he coupled with a personal business agenda strategically disguised behind his support of cultural institutions:

'The peoples of all nations want security, strength, beauty, and friendship that show evidence of love; this is the only force able to overcome hatred, fear and resentment. The development of industrial society made the possibility of art a subject of major importance to every nation.' 57

Therefore while Chateaubriand and the Bardis used MoMA as their template, NAR equally looked to the museum as a model for his investment in Brazil. The following year NAR had his first direct contact with art museums in Brazil making his primary stipulation on the foundation of MASP that any institution created to house the artworks that his foundation donated to should be of private interest rather than subject to government interference, thereby setting the tone for a cultural alliance between the Americas.<sup>58</sup> Chateaubriand and NAR appear to have been in contact from around 1944, continuing until Chateaubriand's death in 1968. Chateaubriand thanked the Rockefeller Foundation in a letter addressed to Berent Friele, NAR's assistant rather than NAR himself, which makes it difficult to decipher the strength of the relationship between the two businessmen:

'I thank you heartily for your interest in our problems which, in a way are mutual. What interests us all is the prosperity of the hemisphere.' 59

Additionally Chateaubriand writes with characteristic enthusiasm declaring his love for the

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Rockefellers in multiple letters and telegrams, yet Berent Friele as late as 1965 has to remind

By this point Chateaubriand was receiving medical treatment in America for a short period of time. Friele, B., Letter to Nelson A. Rockefeller, 25th January 1965, Series 2, Box 2, Folder 12, Rockefeller Archive, accessed 7th November 2016 Morais, F., 'Chatô: O Rei do Brasil', Companhia das Letras, 1994

Prutsch, U., 'Americanization Of Brazil Or A Pragmatic Wartime Alliance? The 56 Politics Of Nelson Rockfeller'S Office Of Inter-American Affair In Brazil During World War II', Revista Internacional de História Política e Cultura Jurídica, Vol. 2, No.4, 2010, p181-216, p184

Lima, ZRMA., 'Nelson A. Rockefeller and Art Patronage in Brazil after World War 57 II: Assis Chateaubriand, the Museu de Arte de São Paulo (MASP) and the Musee de Arte Moderna (MAM), first accessed 24th August 2016, http://www.rockarch.org/publications/ resrep/lima.pdf

<sup>58</sup> Jones, C., 'Anthropophagy in São Paulo's Cold War', 2013 ARTMargins and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2013, p8, first accessed 23rd August 2016, https://architecture.mit.edu/sites/architecture.mit.edu/files/attachments/publication/artmargins02\_1. pdf

<sup>59</sup> Chateaubriand, A., Letter to Berent Friele, 5th December 1949, NAR, RG 4, Box 14, Folder 100, Rockefeller Archive, accessed 7th November 2016

## **BRAZIL BUILDS**

### 'A foreign impetus determines the direction of movement.' 62

The last section outlined the rise of cultural projects in Brazil as a means to make financial gains, with Modern architecture becoming an expression of such opportunity, in turn attracting international interest. The exhibition Brazil Builds: Architecture New and Old 1652-1942 held at MoMA in 1943 was the most significant public manifestation of the concomitant growing interest in the country's architecture (Fig. 15). Occupying most of the museum's ground floor, the exhibition displayed the culmination of a month long trip undertaken by MoMA curator Philip L. Goodwin and photographer George E. Kidder-Smith who had set out to document how Modern architecture in Brazil negotiated climatic constraints, showcasing the country's emergent Modernism against a backdrop of its colonial past.63 Gathering over 1000 photos, the exhibit ran between January 13th and February 24th 1943, going on tour across the United States with a special staging at MES in Rio de Janeiro upon its own opening.<sup>64</sup> MES was the star of the show, with Goodwin recognising the way in which its architects had appropriated Modernist ideas but constructed the building in such a way that it reflected distinctly Brazilian motifs, writing:

'Rio de Janeiro has the most beautiful government building in the Western Hemisphere, the new Ministry of Education and Health. Snr Gustavo Capanema,... has given the most active and practical encouragement to progressive architecture. He has also recognised the important contribution well related painting and sculpture can make to architecture. The Ministry of Education and Health boasts a gigantic mural in tile by Portinari, Brazil's leading modern painter.' 65

Machado de Assis as quoted in Schwarz, R., 'Brazilian Culture: Nationalism 62 by Elimination', New Left Review, Jan 1988, first accessed 27th November 2017, https:// newleftreview.org/I/167/roberto-schwarz-brazilian-culture-nationalism-by-elimination The exhibition was so popular that the Museum sought to extend its run by 63 one month however were unable to do so because of the planned installation of another exhibition. Philip Goodwin was a MoMA trustee and chairman of the museum's department of architecture. Sadlier, DJ., 'Americans All: Good Neighbour Cultural Diplomacy in World War II', University of Texas Press, 2012, p149



Brazil Builds, MoMA, 1943

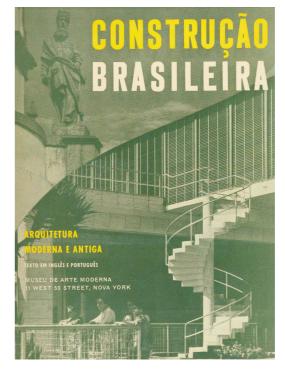
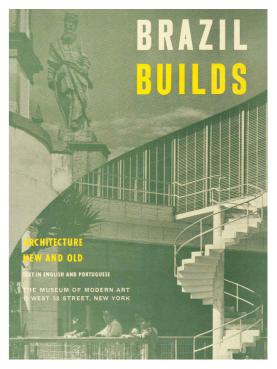


Fig 16. Brazil Builds exhibition catalogue, MoMA, 1943

Goodwin published 2000 copies of an accompanying catalogue also called Brazil Builds (1943), which communicated the contents of the exhibition to a wider audience (Fig. 16 & 17).66 The book resembles travelogue imagery of the period, presenting first Brazil's colonial heritage followed by its modern urban landscape. Written in English with Portuguese translation, the book is dominated by black and white photography, which helps to flatten formal comparison between buildings, but also assists in constructing a more easily perceivable 'style' apparent in the works. Brazil Builds was therefore as much responsible for establishing the idea of national architecture in Brazil as it was in depicting it, and evidences the extent to which the Americans took seriously Brazil's innovations by providing full plans and sections of the newer built works (Fig. 18-20). It was not until 1956 however that a notable book on modern architecture would be published by a Brazilian, with Henrique E. Mindlin's Modern Architecture in Brazil (1956) promoting buildings in the country through a highly edited depiction of largely privately completed houses.<sup>67</sup>

Mindlin's book included Bo Bardi's first built work the Casa de Vidro (The Glass House, 1951). Casa de Vidro was completed the same year that both Philip C. Johnson and Mies van der Rohe constructed their glass houses in New Canaan, Connecticut and Plano, Illinois



Sadlier, DJ., 'Americans All: Good Neighbour Cultural Diplomacy in World War II', Mindlin, HE., 'Modern Architecture in Brazil', Reinhold Publishing Corporation,

Brazil Builds was also exhibited in Mexico City and London. Sadlier, DJ., 'Americans 64 All: Good Neighbour Cultural Diplomacy in World War II', University of Texas Press, 2012, p149

<sup>65</sup> Museum of Modern Art Press Release for 'Brazil Builds', 1943, first accessed 5th December 2017, https://www.moma.org/documents/moma\_press-release\_325360.pdf

<sup>66</sup> University of Texas Press, 2012, p149 67 1956











#### Salvador State of Baia

is made in 1549, when the k overnor-general of Brazil. Wil cluding the first Jesuit mission

o rei de Portug como primeiro governador geral do Bras ando um grupo de cerca de mil homens e

Fig 17. Colonial architecture shown in the catalogue for Brazil Builds, 1943















Fig 20. Water Tower at Olinda, Pernambuco, featured in Brazil Builds, MoMA, 1943



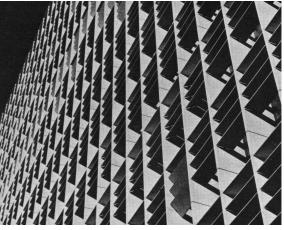


Fig 19. Façade of MES featured in the catalogue for Brazil Builds, MoMA, 1943

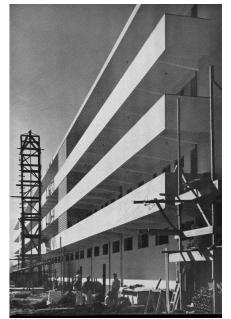


Fig 18. Oscar Niemeyer, Hotel at Ouro Preto, Minas Gerais, featured in Catalogue for Brazil Builds, MoMA, 1943

respectively. Like them, *Casa de Vidro* is composed of a partially glazed box. However Bo Bardi's house cantilevers from the hillside, supported by a number of thin pilotis surrounded by tropical fauna (Fig. 21-22). Painted white in the style of Mediterranean Modernism, it contains within it a courtyard with a large tree at its centre, rising up through the house (Fig. 23).<sup>68</sup> While the Brazilian architecture championed on the pages of Goodwin and Mindlin's books engaged with a regionalist discourse on Modernism's material form, Bo Bardi's house approached regionalism in an unexpected way being both a symbol of modernist extremism yet built on a site immersed in the history of slavery and the relics of industrial sugar production.<sup>69</sup> This history is given material representation through the inclusion of objects such as the two outdoor ovens situated at the exterior of the house that she designed for *Caboclos* (people of mixed indigenous and European heritage) (Fig. 24). When the house was published in *Habitat Magazine*, Bo Bardi wrote this caption beside an image of the two small brick structures:

'Two ovens constructed for Caboclos, at the side of the house in clay and brick. This is a time when popular architecture comes into accord with contemporary architecture.'<sup>70</sup>

Acknowledging the meeting of old and new, Bo Bardi's design for *Casa de Vidro* invokes a dialogue between modern design and the memories of Brazil's colonial past. As such, rather than creating architecture that adapted Modernism, Bo Bardi worked with concrete as if it were a technical advancement, using Modernism as a way of adapting the vernacular. This countered the prevailing neo-colonial attitude towards Brazil, which saw the proposal of numerous sweeping concrete schemes that addressed solely the scale of the landscape.<sup>71</sup> This attitude however was still more than present in the preface Sigfried Giedion provided for Mindlin's book five years later, in which the critic stated that he hoped the country 'lying on the outskirts of civilisation', could be 'elevated to a high architectural standard'.<sup>72</sup> As such while her Modernist peers saw Brazil as some kind of final frontier in pursuit of a

70 Bo Bardi, L., 'Residência no Morumbi', *Habitat* 10, Jan/March 1953, p31





Vidro, interior and exterior view, 1951



Fig 23. Lina Bo Bardi, Casa de Vidro, a tree rises up through the middle of the house, 2017



Fig 24. Lina Bo Bardi, Caboclos, outdoor ovens at Casa de Vidro, 'Residência no Morumbi', Habitat 9





Fig 21. Lina Bo Bardi, Casa de Vidro, interior and exterior views photographed today

<sup>68</sup> Bo Bardi's courtyard and tree are often used to demonstrate her regional adaption to the idea of the modernist house, although Le Corbusier too had a tree at the centre of his house L'Espirit Nouveau in his 1925 Paris Pavilion.

<sup>69</sup> Wood, M., 'Black Milk: Imagining Slavery in the Visual Cultures of Brazil and America', Oxford University Press, 2013, p422

<sup>71</sup> Sandler, D., 'The Other Way Around: the Modernist Movement in Brazil' in eds. Lu, D., 'Third World Modernism', Routledge, 2010, p52

<sup>72</sup> Giedion, S. as quoted in Mindlin, HE., 'Modern Architecture in Brazil', Reinhold Publishing Corporation, 1956

SPACES OF TRANSCULTURAL RESISTANCE

'true' Modernist utopia,<sup>73</sup> the question for Bo Bardi was not concerned with the movement's identity in Brazil, rather how the confluence of Modernist themes with Brazil's existing architecture could render it both new yet at the same time autochthonous.<sup>74</sup>

The Brazilian Pavilion built by Oscar Niemeyer and Lúcio Costa at the New York World's Fair in 1939 is a good example of attempts by Brazil's architects to use form as a means to define the country's identity on a world stage. Costa designed an experimental promenade to 'learn about a country that is still poor'.<sup>75</sup> At the centre of the pavilion was a curve, employed to create an open space and emphasise free movement (Fig. 25). Already considered a piece of Aleijadinho's historical legacy, the ramp executed by Costa and Niemeyer took advantage of the shape of the site. This work was one of the first that drew international attention and was applauded as an elegant and gracious architecture, 'as if architecture allowed nature to speak'.<sup>76</sup> This gave considerable recognition to the projects of Brazilian architects, and in turn confidence to a young generation who wished to depart from Le Corbusier's dictum that prevailed the decade before. The importance of this simple form lies in its specific opposition to the French Pavilion; its architecture used to assert an intentional break with Brazil's colonial forebears yet the clarity of its white modernist aesthetic simultaneously predicating the beginning of the country's political and cultural dependence on a new power, the United States.<sup>77</sup> Brazil's reliance on recognition by Western powers remains to this day an ironic preoccupation; a consequence of post colonialism, which was recognised by poet Mário de Andrade who after the publication of Brazil Builds stated:

'Because it [Brazil Builds] will regenerate, it has already regenerated, confidence in ourselves as it has diminished the disastrous inferiority complex that we have as mestizos and that hurts us so much...Only foreigners can give us this consciousness of our own human normality.' 78





Fig 25. Lúcio Costa and Oscar Niemeyer, Brazilian Pavilion, New York World's Fair, 1939, featured in Brazil Builds, MoMA, 1943



photographed with Lina Bo Bardi at a party, date unknown



Fig 27. Gergori Warchavchik, Casa Modernista, São Paulo, 1928

The context in which Brazilian architects would come to assert their aspirations was thus framed by an intriguing reciprocity between declaring distinct independence while at the same time seeking international affirmation to subdue a national sense of inferiority. Adrian Forty perceives this to be a central quality in the history of concrete in Latin America, unhelpfully reinforcing this paradigm; he describes Brazil's use of concrete during this time as nothing more than a 'dialect'.<sup>79</sup> This he remarks was due to its reliance on technologies and skills advanced in the then 'first world', thus rendering the efforts of architects in Brazil merely, in critical theorist Homi K. Bhabha's words a 'mimicry, almost the same but not quite'.80

Forty's views are reflected in a simple reading of the house that the Russian émigré architect Gregori Warchavchik built as his family home in São Paulo in 1928. <sup>81</sup>Widely credited as being the first recognisably Modernist house in Brazil, the Casa Modernista is attributed by some sources as being the first of its kind in the whole of Latin America (Fig. 26-27).<sup>82</sup> While Warchavchik's house *looks* Modernist, construction was so compromised by the lack of comparable developments in technology in Brazil that the Casa Modernista was in fact built out of bricks.<sup>85</sup> However citing his methods as a regional adaption to Modernism, Warchavchik refuted the accusation of mimicry stating that, 'In São Paulo...concrete is expensive and bricks are cheap'.<sup>84</sup> He defended his house as inherently Modernist because it still adhered to three key principles, economy, rationalism and pragmatism. As such early praise came from Anisio Teixeira who described Warchavchik's work as 'a delightful effort for us to be nothing but Brazil, and this new Brazil that has now been developing.<sup>85</sup> Despite this, references to Warchavchik's house as 'Brazilian' are sparse with real criticism coming years after Le Corbusier's influential visit in 1936, when authenticity and identity began

79 M. & Borden, I., 'Transculturation: Cities, Spaces and Architectures in Latin America', Rodopi, 2008, p147 Bhabha, H., 'Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse', 80 October, Vol. 28, Spring 1984, pp125-133, p126 81 Calvacanti, L., 'When Brazil Was Modern', Princeton Architectural Press, 2003, p10 82 Gullién, M. F., 'Modernism Without Modernity', Latin American Research Review, Vol. 39, No. 2, June 2004, p14 Warchavchik could not build a reinforced concrete structure, but had to use 83 load-bearing masonry walls. He could not find a wide range of industrial products such as handles, frames, mullions, and other fixtures as the products he found featured traditional designs. Sandler, D., 'The Other Way Around: the Modernist Movement in Brazil'chapter in eds. Lu, D., 'Third World Modernism: Architecture, Development and Identity', Routledge, 2010, p36

Majority of cement was imported until after the Second World War, as was steel. By 84 1950s foreign manufactures had set up their own plants in the country. 85 Segawa, H., 'Architecture of Brazil: 1900-1990', EDUSP, 1998, p38

Forty, A., 'Cement and Multiculturalism' chapter in eds. Hernandez, F., Millington,

<sup>73</sup> Morshed, A., 'The Cultural Politics of Aerial Vision: Le Corbusier in Brazil (1929)', Journal of Architectural Education, Vol. 55, No. 4, p201

Morshed, A., 'The Cultural Politics of Aerial Vision: Le Corbusier in Brazil (1929)', 74 Journal of Architectural Education, Vol. 55, No. 4, p201

Bald, S., 'Ordering the Sensual: Paradoxical Utopias of Brazilian Modernism', 85th 75 Annual Meeting and Technology Conference, 1997, p418 ACSA

Nicodemo, TL., 'State Sponsored Avant-Garde and Brazil's Cultutal Policy in the 76 1940s', Revista Landa, Vol. 5, No. 1, 2016, p356

Bald, S., 'Ordering the Sensual: Paradoxical Utopias of Brazilian Modernism', 85th 77 ACSA Annual Meeting and Technology Conference, 1997, p418

<sup>78</sup> Sadlier, DJ., 'Americans All: Good Neighbour Cultural Diplomacy in World War II', University of Texas Press, 2012, p150

70

to prefigure the discourse on Modern architecture. Suddenly Warchavchik's work was

considered too 'modernist' and not Brazilian enough.

Modern Art Week of 1922 (known as Semana '22) is agreed by the majority of writers as the moment when the established and vocal Modern Art Movement or Modernismo gained visibility in mainstream culture, but also signifies the beginning of its international standing and integration with other artistic disciplines, namely architecture. Darlene J. Sadlier describes this as the first time the Brazilian intellectual and artistic community 'experienced the shock of the new'.<sup>87</sup> The event galvanised the positivism of Modernism while searching for what Paulo Menotti del Picchia called the 'Brazilianisation of Brazil', calling for the recognition of the sertão (literally backlands) and its people as part of Brazil's national consciousness.<sup>88</sup> Oswald de Andrade's later Manifesto Antropófago of 1928 became one of the major works credited for introducing modernist ideas to the country.<sup>89</sup> These texts sought independence from both 'romantic nationalism and European artistic domination', proving to be the catalyst for a number of projects that motivated a burgeoning artistic movement, antagonistic towards neo-colonial ideas.<sup>90</sup>

Artist Tarsila do Amaral created one of the most recognisable images of this movement, which was both 'elementally Brazilian and mythical'.<sup>91</sup> The painting Abaporu meaning 'a person who eats human flesh' in the Tupi-Guarani Indian language depicts a figure whose

Bo Bardi, L. as quoted in Wood, M., 'Black Milk: Imagining Slavery in the Visual 86 Cultures of Brazil and America', Oxford University Press, 2013, p404 1922 was also a significant year as it marked the first century of Brazil's 87 independence from Portugal. Sadlier, DJ., 'Brazil Imagined', University of Texas Press, 2008, p187

Menotti del Picchia was a member of 'Group of Five' along with Anita Maldatti, 88 Mario de Andrade and Oswald de Andrade. The group was formed along with Tarsila do Amaral who had trained in Paris and was one of the first painters to integrate Brazilian themes into her work. Philippou, S., 'Modernism and National Identity in Brazil, or How to Brew a Brazilian Stew', National Identities, Routledge, Vol. 7, No. 3, 2005, p249 In 1923 Oswald de Andrade delivered a lecture at the Sorbonne, stating that 89 in Brazil, 'black is a realist dream'. Euclides Da Cunha's 1902 masterpiece Os Sertões (Rebellion in the Backlands), which pictured the journey from the city to the interior, describing it as an 'ideological regression from progress to darkness' was also hugely influential.

90 Journal of Architectural Education, Vol. 55, No. 4, p205 91

# BORROWING FROM THE BACKLANDS

'Brazil's black blood and art...is the soul of the country.' <sup>86</sup>

Morshed, A., 'The Cultural Politics of Aerial Vision: Le Corbusier in Brazil (1929)',

The first retrospective of Tarsila do Amaral's work is on show at MoMA in New York at the time of writing, from which this quote is taken, first accessed 30th March 2018, https://www.apollo-magazine.com/tarsila-do-amaral-the-mother-of-brazilian-modernism/

#### HOME GROWN MODERNISM

Pan-American agenda rather than engaged in an authentic Brazilian one.<sup>99</sup> Reyner Banham's statement that Brazil had been the first to create 'a national style of modern architecture'<sup>100</sup> then serves only to flatten the different Modernisms emergent at the time, disguising the real breadth of the country with its variety of climatic regions and as Steffen Lehmann points out, 'differ[ent] histories of settlement'.<sup>101</sup> Lehmann terms Bo Bardi's architecture 'Dynamic Regionalism', and in his writing develops a more nuanced interpretation of Frampton's popularised term 'Critical Regionalism', built on the ideas of Liane Lefaivre and Alexander Tzonis.<sup>102</sup> Specifically, Lehmann notes Bo Bardi's interest in the technical advancements of modernity rather than a return to purely vernacular forms predicated on their supposed authenticity. Jurgen Joedicke makes similar claims while reiterating the debt such regionalist debates owe to the architecture of Aalto, Wright and Le Corbusier, revealing tensions between the aesthetics of high and low culture, poverty and roughness, all conditions prevalent in Brazil's Modern architecture.<sup>103</sup> Contempoary critic Gwendolyn Wright however positioned modernism in Latin America as a product of its specific colonial history:

*"…where visions for in destruction.*' <sup>104</sup>

Bo Bardi embraced the traffic of ideas defined by both alienation and adaption as a means to frame basic questions concerning quality and taste. Yet as a member of the intellectual elite, she occupied a privileged position, which was inherently contradictory; she simultaneously sympathised and criticised the colonisers and the colonised, creating a duplicitous double perspective. However Bo Bardi argued for a blurring of the distinction between postcolonial Brazil and its 'other', seeing the fluidity between the two a form of subversion in itself,

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proportions are at once both small and gigantean sat beside a cactus that seems impossibly connected to a flower that could be mistaken for an oversized sun (Fig. 28 & 29).<sup>92</sup> *Abaporu* was used to illustrate Andrade's manifesto advancing the notion of *Anthropofagia*, proposing a metaphoric 'cannibalisation' of culture as autochthonous despite the movement's debt to *Surrealism*.<sup>93</sup> Artists including Andrade, Amaral and later Hélio Oiticica, Lygia Clark and Glauber Rocha set out a methodology of ingestion and regurgitation of European, African and Tupí culture as a way of exploring new forms that spoke of and embraced the difficult mixed social conditions of the time.<sup>94</sup> This resulted in explicitly political and far reaching works, which exported the notion of the 'other' as a central theme, culturally removing the concept from the exotic marginality that Europeans craved from the Southern Continent.<sup>95</sup>

The binary opposition formed by the arbitrary line drawn between Northern and Southern hemispheres<sup>96</sup> created an equivocal relationship between the Brazilian descendants of European colonisers and the colonised, the complexity of which in Brazil has been compounded by the import of slaves from Africa.<sup>97</sup> Therefore while projects like MES and the influence of Western publications including *Brazil Builds* neatly fit within the expansion of CIAM endorsed Modernist themes on the Latin Continent, the rival discourse of *Anthropofagia* whose advocates sought to disrupt the ease of this narrative opposed the idea that Brazil's Modern architecture was just 'a different branch of Modernism'.<sup>98</sup> Architects questioned the premise that the Vargas regime had successfully 'rendered European models harmless through the appropriation of a national past', as Philippou suggests, perceiving the work of those such as Lúcio Costa and Oscar Niemeyer as complicit in a twentieth century

95 Luiz Lara describes the work of artists such as Anita Malfatti and Tarsila do Amaral as bourgeois rather than avant-garde (according to Bürger's definition) because they sought a unity aligned with the idea that a national identity could be extracted from explorations into a single and uniquely 'Brazilian' way of life. Lara, FL., 'One Step Back, Two Steps Forward: The Maneuvering of Brazilian Avant-Garde', Journal of Architectural Education, Vol. 55, No. 4, May 2002, p212

98 Frampton, K. as quoted in Rocco, R., 'The Image of the City São Paulo – Identity and Crisis', Urbani Izziv, Vol. 14, No. 2/03, p108

Fig 29. Tarsila do Amaral, Abaporu, 1928



Fig 28. Portrait of Tarsila do Amaral

## "...where visions for improvement and innovation overlapped with an often brutal

Philippou, S., 'Modernism and National Identity in Brazil, or How to Brew a
Brazilian Stew', National Identities, Routledge, Vol. 7, No. 3, 2005, p255
Forty, A., 'Cement and Multiculturalism' chapter in eds. Hernandez, F., Millington, M. & Borden, I., 'Transculturation: Cities, Spaces and Architectures in Latin America',

101 Lehmann, S., 'An environmental and social approach in the Modern Architecture of Brazil: The work of Lina Bo Bardi', City, Culture and Society, Elsevier, 2016, first accessed 22nd February 2018, https://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.ccs.2016.01.001

102 Lehmann, S., 'An environmental and social approach in the modern architecture of Brazil: The work of Lina Bo Bardi', City, Culture and Society, Elsevier, 2016, first accessed 22nd February 2018, https://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.ccs.2016.01.001

103 Sandler, D., 'The Other Way Around: the Modernist Movement in Brazil' chapter in eds. Lu, D., 'Third World Modernism: Architecture, Development and Identity', Routledge,

104 Wright, G. as quoted in Sandler, D., 'The Other Way Around: the Modernist Movement in Brazil' chapter in eds, Lu, D., 'Third World Modernism: Architecture, Development and Identity', Routledge, 2010, p31

<sup>Philippou, S., 'Moder</sup> Brazilian Stew', National Ident
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Brazil: The work of Lina Bo Ba
Sandler, D., 'The Oth
eds. Lu, D., 'Third World Mode
2010, p51
Wright, G. as quoted
Movement in Brazil' chapter in

<sup>92</sup> Amaral was married to Andrade. Abaporu was given to him by the artist for his birthday, and it was him who would later name the painting.

<sup>93</sup> Greet, M., 'Devouring Surrealism: Tarsila do Amaral's Abaporu', Papers of Surrealism, Issue 11, Spring 2015, p3

<sup>94</sup> Oswald de Andrade would coin the phrase 'Tupí or not Tupí?' symbolising the reciprocity between European influences and indigenous culture by substituting the name of a specific indigenous culture within Shakespeare's famous quote 'To be or not to be'.

<sup>96</sup> Moosavinia, SR., Niazi, N. & Ghaforian, A., 'Edward Said's Orientalism and the Study of the Self and the Other in Orwell's Burmese Days', Studies in Literature and Language, Vol.2, No.1, 2011, pp103-113, p105

<sup>97</sup> Brazil was the last country in the 'Western world' to abolish slavery. By 1888 around four million slaves have been brought to Brazil from Africa constituting 40% of the number brought to the Americas.

## social boundaries distinguished by class:

".... There has been, and still is, social distance between different groups of the population. But social distance is – more truly today than in the colonial age or during the Empire (when slavery was central in the social structure) – the result of class consciousness, rather than of race or colour prejudice.' <sup>108</sup>

For thinkers like Freyre, the prerequisite of modernity was newness, change and novelty whereas the products of the poor were defined by their repetition, familiarity and banality, but considered beautiful because of their embodiment of necessity.<sup>109</sup> Bo Bardi attributed these objects as kitsch; a word used traditionally to condemn bad taste by analogy with superstition, in this case the Afro-Brazilian religions of the northeast. However in using the word kitsch, Bo Bardi's intention was to both acknowledge its derogatory use while equally repurposing it:

'In this little exhibition we are not trying an integration of the Kitsch, it is just a little example of the RIGHT TO THE UGLY, an essential base of many civilisations, from Africa to the Far East that never knew the 'concept' of the beautiful, a concentration camp imposed by Western Civilisation.' 110

In doing so Bo Bardi expresses an alternative politics defined by an alternative valorisation of aesthetics, positing that everyday practices are themselves an expression of independence from dominant political and cultural structures. Concerned with visibility and for recognition not as imitations or forgeries, Bo Bardi presents the kitsch as a concept that traverses disciplinary boundaries. Chapter 5 explores these themes in greater detail, using the magazine she founded, *Habitat* to describe how she instrumentalised narration, purposing new formats of communication to integrate her enthusiasm for Brazil's popular culture into a mainstream discourse. While Bo Bardi's adoption of many motifs from Bahia have been much written about, this chapter instead focuses on Bo Bardi's engagement in the region to evidence the dual materialisation of her alternative approach to design and politics.

108 1940s', Revista Landa, Vol. 5, No. 1, 2016, p373 110

upending the proposition that the country was everything Europe was not; exotic and alien, dangerous and unreliable. In this way Bo Bardi modelled herself on her friend and collaborator, the ethnographer and photographer Pierre Verger who spent much of his life between France and the African continent (Fig. 30):

'Verger the Frenchman who never resigned from his European 'position', that is a cultural position that enabled him to deeply penetrate a city and understand its inhabitants as if he were one of them, far away from the dangerous folklore and mushy interpretations.' 105

The colonial gaze suggested in Bo Bardi's description of Verger is left not only unproblematised but promoted as the way in which he was successful in ingratiating with his subjects. This paradox, frustratingly, is not expanded upon in any of Bo Bardi's published writing. Yet in later lectures given to students she justifies the maintenance of cultural distance by calling on young architects to act like archaeologists, unearthing the layers of existence that if seen from the inside of a culture appear unremarkable. As such Bo Bardi sought to collapse exoticism and sentimentality, aligning her practices not of the white Brazilian elite but of the rural poor. Bo Bardi's interests were framed by a discourse that had already gained greater visibility outside of architecture with the well-known anthropologist Gilberto Frevre already critical of American involvement, noting that what was of benefit to the US was not necessarily good for the rest of the Americas. Criticising what he saw as their presumption of a 'divine right' to colonisation, he anticipated that the semi-colonial status of countries like Brazil was 'causing damages to their creative capacity and human potential'.<sup>106</sup>

Freyre also celebrated Afro-Brazilian crafts, sharing with Bo Bardi an interest in their representation within a new form of museum culture to challenge existing historical environments, imagining, 'museums with earthenware pots, tobacco pipes, sertanejo sandals, pottery figures, rag dolls and ox carts'.<sup>107</sup> The culture embraced by these artefacts is not that of the coloniser but of the common and poor, meaning that while Freyre's museum celebrates the beauty he saw inherent in these objects, the act of their display directly subverts distinct



Fig 30. Bo Bardi photographed with ethnographer Pierre Verger

Bo Bardi, L. as quoted in Wood, M., 'Black Milk: Imagining Slavery in the Visual 105 Cultures of Brazil and America', Oxford University Press, 2013, p403

Freyre, G., as quoted in Nicodemo, TL., 'State-sponsored Avant-garde and Brazil's Cultural Policy in the 1940s: Candido Portinari and Gilberto Freyre in the USA', Revista Landa, Vol. 5, No. 1, 2016

Freyre, G. as quoted in Wood, M., 'Black Milk: Imagining Slavery in the Visual 107

Cultures of Brazil and America', Oxford University Press, 2013, p409

Nicodemo, TL., 'State Sponsored Avant-Garde and Brazil's Cultutal Policy in the

Ergül, A., 'Walter Benjamin and Kitsch Politics in the Phantasmagorical Age', Unpublished PhD Thesis, Carleton University Ottowa, Ontario, 2016, p5

Bo Bardi, L. as quoted in Wood, M., 'Black Milk: Imagining Slavery in the Visual Cultures of Brazil and America', Oxford University Press, 2013, p419

3

## CONCLUSIONS

"...to exist is to be called into being in relation to an otherness."

This chapter opened with the political and cultural context of Brazil in the interwar period, primarily in order to situate the Bardis' arrival in the country at the close of the *Second World War*, but also to highlight the unusual alignment of the state's agenda with that of the artistic avant-garde. While Brazil suffered no physical war damage it shared many features with Italy, being also a new nation formed in the nineteenth century and ruled by an authoritarian regime. As such the chapter focused on the way in which the Bardis positioned themselves as a strategy for launching their own careers in Brazil, making use of a familiar imported museological rhetoric while embracing the inherent paradox of its deployment in a new territory, a theme that is explored in greater detail in the following chapter. During this time institutions such as MASP were used to retain cultural hegemony and by extension a soft form of political power through agreements that constituted a type of cross-cultural patronage between north and south, with the sale and exhibition of artworks the language of Pan-American diplomatic discourse.

Thus the weak sense of identity within Brazilian leadership saw the rise of private interests led by Chateaubriand and Rockefeller who used cultural investment to their advantage as a means to continue their political monopoly across all aspects of the economic spectrum, in many ways thus coming to represent the state. Global capital validated political status in Brazil, which gave credence to the manipulation of differing geographic and cultural scales, enabling MASP to exist as an interstitial organisation addressing both the international ideology of museology along with the reality of local conditions. For the Bardis MASP therefore defined a new site of power whose pedagogic agenda was able to flourish because of the distracted ambitions of a few wealthy individuals. Thus the blurring of public and private boundaries engendered a transnational identity that rather than deny nationality enacted a constant exchange, which facilitated the growth of a new culture.

This political situation was reflected in the architecture depicted in Brazil Builds, which

propagated a version of Brazilian Modernism that was seemingly a product of American Good Neighbour policy, while Lúcio Costa and Oscar Niemeyer's contribution was criticised for providing a simple reading of CIAM regionalism in reaction to climatic constraints. The question of Brazilian Modernism was thus two fold, concerning both material and form. Projects such as MES were designed to address a new monumental scale utilising reinforced concrete, which was still at that time expensive to procure yet employed due to its ability to generate innovative new kinds of space, whereas Warchavchik refuted its application on the grounds that it did not reflect the resources available on the continent.

Bo Bardi took advantage of this dichotomy between Brazil's vernacular past and its disputed but ambitious modernist present, with the 1950s experiencing the dual advancement of concrete technology in Latin America and a critical discourse concerning the relationship between Brazil's cultural margins and its centre. The instability of Brazil's colonial history while manufacturing its desire for a fixed identity also created opportunities for its divergence from Western modernity.<sup>112</sup> The originality of this history challenges the absolutism and singular directionality of architectural Modernism, which in a global discourse emotionalised national politics and the construction of the idea of the nation state in the abstract.<sup>115</sup> In invoking the mestizo and their origins in the backlands the thesis therefore introduced the terms in which the notion of the postcolonial 'other' situates Bo Bardi's work in an entirely different frame of modernist discourse than that of the Carioca school, instead navigating a complex 'hybridity' to procure a new notion of Brazilia-ness linked indelibly with a shift in aesthetics.

Young, RJC., 'Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture and Race', Routledge,
1994, p3
Wallerstein, I., 'The Modern World System', University of California Press, 2011,
p391

#### AN ACT OF COURAGE

4

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## 'Ah! What Brazil really needs are public toilets!' 1

On hearing that São Paulo City Hall intended to build restrooms below the belvedere on Avenida Paulista, Bo Bardi visited the Mayor of São Paulo laving in front of him fully drawn up plans for a new building.<sup>2</sup> The family of Joaquim Eugênio de Lima who had gifted the land to the city stipulated that any construction built there should maintain the view across São Paulo for it to remain in public ownership, which in turn led to Bo Bardi's proposal for a large elevated structure, retaining the belvedere with what would become the largest concrete span in the world. Bo Bardi enlisted the help of Edmundo Monteiro, an influential journalist and acting director of Diário Associados, who offered media support in return for the withdrawal of the City's original plans.<sup>3</sup> According to Bo Bardi the Mayor Adhemar de Barros 'agreed without even looking at the drawing' (Fig. 1 & 2).<sup>4</sup> The surprising thing about this narrative is that it is most likely entirely of Bo Bardi's own invention; there is no one who corroborates or is willing to refute it. In contrast Zeuler Lima, in his biography of Bo Bardi, offers a more factual but nonetheless banal version of events, describing Pietro Maria Bardi's ongoing negotiations with the mayor about the site, and his rejection of his wife's initial designs as 'the beautiful dream of a woman'.<sup>5</sup>

Individual narratives describing MASP's genesis are not in themselves significant, rather it is their volume that hints at the contested nature of the commission, and the divisiveness of Bo Bardi's authorship of the project. In a comparable mythologising act nearly fifty years after the building's completion, Brazilian Pritzker Prize winning architect Paulo Mendes da Rocha tried to claim rights to the building's creation. Marcelo Suzuki, one of Bo Bardi's closest student assistants, relayed to me in an interview the story that Paulo Mendes da



MASP's construction



Fia 2. Lina Bo Bardi pictured under MASP's belvedere during construction seated next to her Glass Easels along with construction workers

Rocha, while driving down Avenida Paulista, expressed the opinion that 'MASP should have been designed by Artigas, or mel.<sup>6</sup> While there is plausibility in this story, it may equally also be fabricated, part of Suzuki's own attempt to promote Bo Bardi as a provocative and still relevant figure. For the purpose of this research this question is not important; rather in investigating Bo Bardi as both a private individual and professional architect I have found the fact that her historiography is characterised by duplicitous and often contested narratives revealing in itself. Mendes da Rocha's denial of Bo Bardi's legitimacy as MASP's architect only exposes the sensitivity of the original commission, and the gravity of the project's subsequent success in shaping São Paulo's urban imaginary.

More recently Daniele Pisani has gone to great lengths to question the legality of the endowment that Bo Bardi mentions, which dictated the form of the building given the apparent dictum that prevented the public space from being built upon. Pisani shows that the land was never owned by Lima and was in fact sold to the city in 1911 rather than gifted.<sup>7</sup> While this is not insignificant in itself, what I consider interesting about Pisani's research focus is the determination with which he describes Bo Bardi's fabrication of events and rigour in attempting to dismantle her origin myth. This line of enquiry is seemingly pursued to admonish Bo Bardi as a means to destabilise the ingenuity of the design for which she has been given credit. He writes, 'they were in agreement: the MASP was not Lina's merit'.8



Italics author's own, Suzuki, M. in conversation with the author, São Paulo, 2013 Pisani, D., 'MASP: Brief History of a Myth', Arco, first accessed 30th May 2018. https://www.arcoweb.com.br/projetodesign/artigos/artigo-masp---breve-historia-de-um-

The reality of MASP's provenance is in fact quite banal; modelled on a speculative design Bo Bardi had completed (and published) nearly a decade before, mirroring museological principles she had long established in the interior of her own home, Casa de Vidro. Pisani, D., 'MASP: Brief History of a Myth', Arco, first accessed 30th May 2018, https://www.arcoweb.com.br/projetodesign/artigos/artigo-masp---breve-historia-de-um-

Bo Bardi, L. as quoted in 'Stones Against Diamonds', Architecture Words 12, AA Publications, 2009, p120

The Trianon was a site previously occupied in 1951 by the first São Paulo Art 2 Biennial. I address the importance of the Biennial in relation to MASP in Chapter 5. Lima. ZRMA., 'Lina Bo Bardi', Yale University Press, 2013, p66

<sup>3</sup> eds. Watari, E., 'Lina Bo Bardi', Toto, 2017, p42

Despite gaining consent for the scheme the project would not go on site for another 4 three years with various obstacles delaying its completion until 1969. Bo Bardi, L. as quoted in 'Stones Against Diamonds', Architecture Words 12, AA Publications, 2009, p121

<sup>5</sup> Bardi, PM. as quoted in Lima, ZRMA., 'Lina Bo Bardi', Yale University Press, 2013, p71

<sup>6</sup> mito

<sup>8</sup> 

Pisani however also notes Bo Bardi's own modesty concerning the museum's design quoting an article published in *Habitat Magazine* in 1960 in which it is stated that:

*`...the architecture was not...the result of any architectural eccentricity. The architect did not seek an originality of conception, but met with an imperative of well-defined need.'*<sup>9</sup>

Pisani questions why Bo Bardi did not boast of her authorship of MASP considering her achievement in completing a culturally significant building at the height of the military dictatorship, an attitude he describes as 'paradoxical'.<sup>10</sup> However, diligent ongoing attempts to cast doubt on Bo Bardi's project based on her acquisition of it, as shown by these two examples, indicates the prescience of both her claim of the project and later modesty concerning her hand in its production as a means to counter the discrimination she faced in an industry dominated by white male privilege that attempts to this day to write its own history. This chapter does not engage these particular issues much further due to their breadth, which lies beyond the scope of this thesis, however I mention them simply to foreground Bo Bardi's fictionalisation of events as both a radical political tool and recurring motif in her methods. Instead of repudiating the claims of her critics she embraced them, purposefully confusing her own narrative. This chapter, rather than questioning the validity of Bo Bardi's story, therefore explores how, along with her husband Pietro Maria Bardi, the couple employed a number of different methods in order to perpetuate their own 'truth'; unequivocally establishing MASP as the nexus of cultural production in São Paulo, despite the infancy of their own relations with the country.

At stake here is the couple's authenticity as agents of cultural change with the 'project' of MASP; the museum, the school and the magazine forming, as this chapter shows, a holistic strategy to achieve status in the city. Through an analysis of their own writings and involvement with museological practices on both national and international scales, this chapter explores Bo Bardi's role in MASP as the designer of the museum as a physical space *and* as the designer of MASP as a new type of institution. The chapter shows that

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the confluence of the museum's ideological agenda with its material and spatial qualities constitute its unique character as a project, with the Bardis' pedagogic programme operating within this paradigm as an intransigent form of resistance against São Paulo's cultural and

political governing systems.

<sup>9</sup> Pisani, D., 'MASP: Brief History of a Myth', Arco, first accessed 30th May 2018, https://www.arcoweb.com.br/projetodesign/artigos/artigo-masp---breve-historia-de-ummito

<sup>10</sup> Pisani, D., 'MASP: Brief History of a Myth', Arco, first accessed 30th May 2018, https://www.arcoweb.com.br/projetodesign/artigos/artigo-masp---breve-historia-de-ummito

4.1

## MUSEUS E ANTI-MUSEUS

'Differentiating between a greater and a lesser art makes no sense at all.'  $^{11}$ 

### A Lighthouse Shining Brightly

Positioned on the main arterial avenue the Avenida Paulista, which bisects the city, MASP is central to both the physical geography and the collective identity of São Paulo (Fig. 3 & 4).<sup>12</sup> The building is comprised of a glazed box spanning the full length of the 74m long site, with facilities including an auditorium, exhibition hall, library and canteen housed underneath the plaza, distributed across two floors below ground (Fig. 5).<sup>15</sup> Completed over a decade, the striking solution Bo Bardi found to the constraints of the site means that the building often overshadows the significance of MASP in relation to her work.<sup>14</sup> While the design for which Bo Bardi is now famed was completed in 1969, the museum's institutional foundations began twenty years prior, during a moment of significant political and economic change. Therefore for Bo Bardi, MASP was a much broader project that extended beyond the function of its architecture, encompassing both ideological as well as tectonic dimensions.

Upon the museum's opening on October 2nd 1947 its main patron Assis Chateaubriand intended to call his new institution the Museum of Classical and Modern Art. However Pietro Maria Bardi persuaded the telecoms magnate to change the name simply to Museum of Art, citing the fallacy of distinguishing between the two categories as detrimental to the consideration of material culture as a socially constructed phenomenon. This change



Fig 3. Photograph of the Museu de Arte de São Paulo, as built before the structure was painted red, 1969



Fia 4. Museu de Arte de São Paulo (MASP) as it is today

> signified Bardi's intention of founding Brazil's first traditionally recognisable art museum, while simultaneously dissolving many of the classical tenets of nineteenth century European museology; indeed Bardi thought this in line with the context of the city itself stating:

The Bardis considered the nascence of the nation state justification for the fundamental change in its institutions. In recognising the alterity of the city as it expanded under the influence of the intersection of local and global markets during the twentieth century, the

15

'We felt that it would be a great mistake to transplant a museum of the European type to a new city - a city which, though the fourth centenary of its foundation falls this year, has really been formed and developed during the present century...Furthermore, we are convinced that great changes will have to be made in the concepts on which these cultural institutions rest, if they are not to lose interest for all but a few specialists.' <sup>15</sup>

Bardi, PM., 'The Museu de Arte, São Paulo', Museum, Vol. 7, 1954, p247, first accessed 4th January 2018, http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0012/001274/127442eo.pdf

Pietro Maria Bardi speaking at the inauguration of the 1st Salão da Propaganda at 11 MASP, 'Propaganda da Propaganda', Diário de São Paulo, 05.12.1950 as quoted in Cara, MS., 'O MASP, os Bardi e o design no Brasil', first accessed 24th September 2016, http://www. mac.usp.br/mac/conteudo/academico/publicacoes/anais/modernidade/pdfs/MILENE\_PORT. pdf

<sup>12</sup> MASP has become the focal point for all political and cultural activism in the city providing a common starting point for all protests. It is also the location for numerous events such as weekly markets and film screenings. Despite its importance, while nearly all people in São Paulo will be familiar with the building, few outside the world of architecture know the name of its architect.

The engineer who worked on MASP with Bo Bardi was José Carlos Figueiredo 13 Ferraz.

<sup>14</sup> MASP was built between 1959-1969. The columns were not painted until 1989 during MASP's refurbishment. Although it had originally been Bo Bardi's intention to have them painted, she was unable to do so due to the fragile political situation at the time of MASP's inauguration. Cárdenas, AS., 'MASP: Estrutura Proporção Forma', CAUSP, p41, first accessed 9th January 2018, http://www.causp.gov.br/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/ LivroMaspEstrutura6.pdf

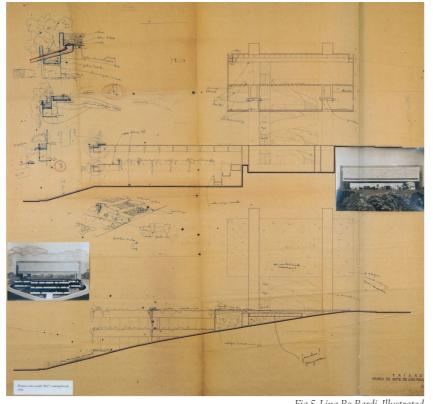


Fig 5. Lina Bo Bardi, Illustrated section through MASP showing its dispersal across a number of levels both above and below ground

Bardis' vision broke with the historicisation of Brazil's post-colonial condition tied to its European inheritance. Bill Ashcroft draws attention to this facet of post-colonial discourse, describing modernity in Latin America as it emerged in the 1950s as a product of global Eurocentrism, which 'denied capacity' for development in order for nations including Brazil to appear static and appear premodern in comparison with their European counterparts.<sup>16</sup> The Bardis instead identify an alternative path for a modern Brazil by introducing a more complex relationship between the otherwise binary condition of colonised space, which Ashcroft cites as delineated by the 'international', in opposition with the 'parochial'.<sup>17</sup> As an institution MASP negotiated the two, being both of international standing due to its claims on museological discourse, while also being of equal national importance and local specificity, implied by the reference in its naming to the city in which it was founded. This chapter explores the significance of this dichotomy through an analysis of a number

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of projects developed by the Bardis at MASP. These include the transnational origins of their pedagogic endeavours, which are demonstrative of their ability to operate across a number of political, economic and cultural scales, shown to be central to the alterity of their approach.

Alterity is significant in relation to the Bardis' pursuit of a number of strategies, not least because the issues concerning MASP's legitimation as a new institution on the Latin continent extended to the problem of their own acceptance as European émigrés; they sought their own assimilation as foreigners along with the acceptance of their museum as somehow autochthonous to the country, yet simultaneously an evocation of their own invention.<sup>18</sup> As such, while MASP is presented in this chapter as a project whose scope extends beyond the confines of its museological premise, what first follows is an analysis of its perceived 'newness' as not only a museum, but also as a cultural institution in Latin America.

A Place of Dead Things MASP welcomed over 2000 visitors on its inaugural day, and was received positively in the press not least because Chateaubriand's newspaper syndicate ran a number of articles expounding the museum's arrival. Despite opening in what was ostensibly a non-descript office building and without a functioning lift,<sup>19</sup> the headlines in Chateaubriand's papers announced the launch as the event of the year, emphasising who attended rather than the specificities of the new museum's manifesto (Fig. 6). Despite their lack of focus on the progressive ideology driving MASP on the night, newspapers had in fact been instrumental in propagating the Bardis' intentions in the months preceding its opening. Between 1st January and 14th August 1947 Pietro Maria Bardi, a notable journalist himself, published at least eighteen articles in Chateaubriand's daily newspaper Diário de São Paulo related to or explicitly outlining the role of the museum in contemporary society.<sup>20</sup> Instrumentalised not only as a means to evolve his ideas for a new museum, Bardi used the articles to sell the proposition to a much broader public audience, attempting to reach beyond the confines of art scholarship, journalism and curation.<sup>21</sup>

18 greater detail in Chapter 5. Lima, ZRMA., 'Lina Bo Bardi', Yale University Press, 2013, p44 19 These articles are collected in a single folder held in the MASP archives. Caixa 2.1, 20 Pasta 12, Título Original: Historico do Museu, 1947 21 Bardi's articles reflect the characterisation of newspapers during the 1950s as a space of ideological journalism, historically utilised for antagonistic and sometimes



Fig 6. Pietro Maria Bardi and Assis Chateaubriand photographed on the opening of MASP, 2nd October 1947

The intertwining of MASP as a professional and personal project is explored in

<sup>16</sup> Here I use Jürgen Habermas's definition of modernity as epoch making in which he identifies the invasion of Latin America as the beginning of the process by which a threshold between the Middle Ages and modern times can be identified. This period parallels Immanuel Wallerstein's proposition of the World System theory, which asserts that the capitalist system has been the world economic system since the sixteenth century. As such this thesis pays close attention to global capital as defining of modernity. Habermas, J., 'The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity: Twelve Lectures', John Wiley & Sons, 2015, p5 For Gayatari Spivak colonised space is therefore entirely defined or rather 17 'worlded' by Europe. It only exists because Eurocentrism constructs it. Ashcroft, B., 'Modernity's First Born: Latin America and Postcolonial Transformation', ARIEL: A review of International English Literature. Vol. 29. No. 2, April 1998, p14

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The couple's vision for a public cultural institution in the Southern Hemisphere emerged in the pages of a daily newspaper long before its more tangible manifestation in the city. However, insufficient attention has been paid to this set of articles as evidence of the genesis of MASP, and little research has been done on the role of Diário de São Paulo, or the consequential reciprocity it created between the public and private origins of the museum. I have not been able to find specific scholarly research on Bardi's articles, nor an analysis of how the act of writing them impacted MASP's built form; the published research about the first iteration of MASP reflects only what occurred *after* its inauguration. I therefore made the decision to focus on Bardi's writing for the majority of this chapter because, while not exhaustive as a representation of everything either Bardi wrote or has been written about MASP, as a set they offer a contemporary narrative of the museum's origins, which differs from the narrative commonly published.

Diário de São Paulo published Pietro Maria Bardi on average twice per month over an eightmonth period. From the outset Bardi explicitly positions his writing thematically around the museum, making a case for its national and international standing. His articles however are telling in what they omit, with his lack of specificity concerning the museum as a project bespoke to São Paulo, giving way to a global agenda. Bardi does not introduce himself in the articles, asserting his authority by refusing to acknowledge by way of justification his outsider status.<sup>22</sup> Bardi repeats his theme, weaving the narrative of a new museum throughout his articles, as if telling a well-known story over and over again in dialogue with his audience, despite the monological nature of publishing. The articles thus adopt a polemical tone, with the diametric opposition of old and new assisting in making his case for the museum as both a Modernist project and his role within it, evidenced further by their intimate and descriptive nature.<sup>23</sup> Bardi's opening article titled Museus e Anti-Museus



Fig 7. Pietro Maria Bardi, Museus e Anti Museus, 'Museums and Anti-Museums'. Diário de São Paulo, 1st January 1947

> (Museums and Anti-Museums) is a good example of the clarity with which he communicated his vision, coupled with its provenance in personal experience, which was intended as demonstrative of his expertise (Fig. 7): <sup>24</sup>

into fashion.' 25

Bardi's articles used language as a form of political and cultural theatre. The newspaper, as John B. Thompson asserts, is a medium where spatial distance makes 'communication instantaneous',<sup>26</sup> denying dialogical exchange through 'mediated quasi-interaction' in order to create connections in alternative spatial and temporal frames.<sup>27</sup> Bardi's articles wilfully bring the museum into existence, making the idea of an institution materially visible to a 24 One other article Musées Hors Limites is often confused with Museus e Anti-Museus. Published in Habitat in 1950 and based on a previous presentation at UNESCO,

Musées Hors Limites is in fact an almost complete replica of Museus e Anti-Museus, which was published in 1947 in Diario de São Paulo as part of Bardi's expanded set of articles. Bardi, PM, 'Museus e Anti-Museus', Diario de São Paulo, 1st January 1947, Caixa 25 2.1, Pasta 12, Título Original: Historico do Museu, 1947, Bibliotéca de Museu de Arte de São Paulo, accessd 20<sup>th</sup> November 2016, translation author's own 26 Thompson, JB., 'The New Visibility', Theory, Culture and Society, SAGE, Vol. 22, No. 6, 2005, p32 Thompson, JB., 'The New Visibility', Theory, Culture and Society, SAGE, Vol. 22, 27No. 6, 2005, p32

As I left the museum and walked down the sidewalk, I was forced to pass by a long line of citizens who, an hour ago, waited, with excessive patience, their turn to enter a movie theater [sic]. I thought that it would be necessary to make the museum as interesting as the cinema, to make it great publicity, to turn it

polemical rhetoric critical of prevailing systems of governance. Such style of journalism had evolved in Brazil as a means to criticise and thus destabilise the monarchy during the preceding century. Carro, R., 'Brazilian Newspapers: The Risk of Becoming Irrelevant', Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, University of Oxford, Hilary Term 2016, p13, first accessed 11th May 2018, https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/ research/files/Brazilian%2520newspapers%2520-%2520the%2520risk%2520of%2520bec oming%2520irrelevant.pdf

The majority of articles list Pietro Maria Bardi as the Director of Studio d'Arte 22 Palma.

<sup>23</sup> Writing about new forms of communication media including newspapers, John B. Thompson notes the separation between the field of the media and politics due to their orientation towards different ends, bound often by reciprocal dependency. He does not touch on the relationship between the media and capital, which is complicated by their dual preoccupation with the market, in Chateaubriand's case industrial development and the telecoms industry.

SPACES OF TRANSCULTURAL RESISTANCE

large audience, which in turn allowed him, unchallenged, to fabricate an image of himself as an equally visible and important cultural figure.<sup>28</sup> Proselytising the museum as a place of inclusion, by using the press as the location of inter-elite communication, Bardi spoke *only* to the dominant class, representative of the type of institutional legitimacy MASP was designed to disrupt.<sup>29</sup>

## Son and Heir

In a more forgiving description of MASP's institutional predecessors, Pietro Maria Bardi commented that the classical museum was 'a little sleepy under the gigantic shadow of time'.<sup>30</sup> In connecting the museum with the cultural life of the city, Bardi's model instead would be a place of activity and not as he put it in slightly more accusatory language, a place of 'dead things'.<sup>31</sup> While oppositional in his emphasis of difference between MASP and other comparable institutions, Bardi's model in many respects returned the museum to its classical origins, by including all branches of cultural activity, demonstrated by the centrality of education to MASP's programme.<sup>32</sup> Despite such affinities, having no ancient or modern works of art publicly accessible in Brazil, nor an institution to curate their display, Bardi's following statement must have been almost impossible for many of his readers to envision:

'The purpose of the museum is to form an atmosphere, a conduct apt to create in the visitor the mental form adapted to the understanding of the work of art, and in this sense no distinction is made between the ancient work and a modern work of art. In the same objective the work of art is not located according to a chronological criterion but presented almost purposely in the sense of producing a shock that arouses reactions of curiosity and investigation.'<sup>33</sup>

MASP's identity then was predicated on relational difference to other institutional models, defined in its subjugation of traditional preoccupation with high culture, in favour of mass appeal and commerciality.<sup>34</sup> Avoiding the 'dangerous neutrality' and 'eclecticism' of the traditional museum, Bardi's proposition intended a shift in value from the artefact itself to the participatory experience of encountering objects, purposefully juxtaposed with one another. Such synthesis would procure intrigue between disciplines as a means to then refute their separation. Alexandre Wollner, a student at the *Instituto de Arte Contemporânea* (IAC) and assistant at MASP, conveyed his confusion with Bardi's curatorial approach:<sup>35</sup>

'One day I saw a window display full of Egyptian and Aztec pottery and, stuck in among a host of other antiquities, was an Olivetti typewriter. I went to talk to Flávio Motta, who was Bardi's assistant and said: 'I think someone forgot a typewriter in the display....' Bardi was intrigued that someone would say that and came to explain to me that a typewriter was no different from an earthenware pot in its day: an object of use, part of the culture of a primitive group, just as the typewriter was an element of ours.' <sup>36</sup>

Wollner's equation of Egyptian with Aztec pottery as 'antiquities' despite their own separation by both time and place confirms Bardi's notion of the paradox of embedded

Bo Bardi, L., 'The São Paulo Museum of Art - Social Function of Museums', Habitat,

In the context of early postwar Brazil, the museum even in its traditional sense was not a familiar typology to the majority of São Paulo's inhabitants. Over the course of the preceding two decades the Vargas government had launched a series of regional historic museums as a way of dictating a narrative history of Brazil as a means of political propaganda, however these were provincial in their scope and not concerned with the contemporary debate or otherwise around the purpose of collections and their relationship to museology. Williams, D., 'Culture Wars in Brazil: The First Vargas Regime, 1930-45', Duke

35 Alexandre Wollner (1928-2018) would go onto found the Escola Superior de Desenho Industrial (ESDI) in Rio de Janeiro in 1962, Brazil's most important school of industrial design. Document 1, Caixa 2.1, Basta 12, Bibliotéca Museu de Arte de São Paulo, accessed 20th September 2016

This is an often-repeated anecdote. Bonadio, MC., 'The fashion in MASP by Pietro Maria Bardi (1947-1987)', Anais do Museu Paulista: History and Material Culture, Vol. 22,

Socially visible in what Thompson calls 'non reciprocal intimacy' in that Bardi becomes a familiar figure in São Paulo through a purely monological exchange. Thompson, JB., 'The New Visibility', Theory, Culture and Society, SAGE, Vol. 22, No. 6, 2005, p34 Benedict Anderson observes the function of newspapers as they began in Latin America as 'appendages of the market' and as such a tool of what Walter Mignalo calls the 'lettered city' privileging the voice of the educated and therefore largely white elite. Anderson, B., 'Imagined Communities: reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism', Verso Books, 1983, p65

<sup>30</sup> Bardi, PM, 'O Museu e a Educação Publica', Diario de São Paulo, 21<sup>st</sup> February 1947, Caixa 2.1, Pasta 12, Título Original: Historico do Museu, 1947, Bibliotéca de Museu de Arte de São Paulo, accessed 20<sup>th</sup> November 2016, translation author's own

<sup>31</sup> Bardi, PM, 'Museus e Anti-Museus', Diario de São Paulo, 1<sup>st</sup> January 1947, Caixa 2.1, Pasta 12, Título Original: Historico do Museu, 1947, Bibliotéca de Museu de Arte de São Paulo, accessed 20<sup>th</sup> November 2016, translation author's own

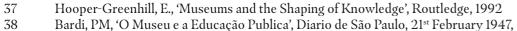
The Mouseion at Alexandria is often cited as the first institution to establish museology as a cause for civic concern. While it was more akin to an academy than a museum, the Library was the model on which more traditionally recognisable iterations of the museum later emerged. Catherine Marcenaro explains how it was only over time and through repetition of its use that the term museum acquired a 'limited and specific' meaning in reference to the collection of objects, and since the nineteenth century made accessible to a wider public. Marcenaro, C., 'The Museum Concept and the Rearrangement of the Palazzo Bianco, Genoa', Museum, Vol. 7, 1954, p259, first accessed 4th January 2018, http://unesdoc. unesco.org/images/0012/001274/127442eo.pdf

<sup>Bo Bardi, L., 'The São P
No. 1, Oct / Dec-1950, p17
In the context of early p
was not a familiar typology to the of the preceding two decades the historic museums as a way of dic propaganda, however these were contemporary debate or otherwit to museology. Williams, D., 'Cub University Press, 2001
Alexandre Wollner (192)
Desenho Industrial (ESDI) in Ri industrial design. Document 1, Caccessed 20th September 2016
This is an often-repeate Maria Bardi (1947-1987)', Anais of No. 2, 2014</sup> 

museological practices. However instead of separating them, the inclusion of the typewriter (perceived by Wollner as the misfit in this assemblage), escalates the museological proposition. Confusing further the extant cultures of defined groups, placing them within a constellation of others, Bardi talks both of the fictive linearity of history but also of the questionable historicisation of these artefacts.<sup>37</sup> In making the individual autonomous to challenge received narratives without rebuke, the intention was to engender inclusion not by dumbing down content, but by reconceptualising its display to appeal to a different kind of audience. In the article O Museu e a Educação Publica (The Museum and Public Education, 1947) Bardi writes of the institutional authority that commonly prevented such transference of roles, from passive visitor to participative user (Fig. 8):

'Every man, responsible and conscientious, has a duty to react in this situation of a museum...but culture should not be understood as a professional duty reserved for the few. It should be considered with a duty, or even as a right for all men, indistinctly. Every man has the right to know how to progress, to be grateful for the fact that he is a son and a heir.' 38

Cast as inheritors the general public become responsible for the museum's development, with Bardi advocating for the blurring of the distinction between the categorisation of artefacts held within the museum, along with institutional boundaries beyond the museum itself. In locating a space for the conventionally excluded, the museum was designed to resist the ideological hegemony imposed by classification. As an alternative space of cultural authority, the visiting public would give visibility and thus credence to the museum's nascent traditions, without then abdicating its claim on institutional power. Bardi's Anti-Museu was thus not against the idea of institution nor for its complete destabilisation, rather Bardi's proposition opposed the internal mechanisms by which institutions traditionally perform their governance.



Caixa 2.1, Pasta 12, Título Original: Historico do Museu, 1947, Bibliotéca de Museu de Arte de São Paulo, accessed 20th November 2016, translation author's own



Fig 8. O Museu e a Educação Publica, 'The Museum and Public Education', Diário de São Paulo **OUADRANTE** 35. DOCUMENTARIO SULLA CASA DEL FASCIO DI COMO



MASSIMO BONTEMPELLI P. M. BARDI: DIRETTO

Fig 9. Front Cover of Quadran Magazine, edited by Pietro Maria Bardi in Italy before the Second World War

'Let MASP remain a marvellous exception to the wrong rules and practice.'<sup>39</sup>

Cults of Civilisation While Bardi's museological proposition described museum going as a leisure activity, the transference of knowledge as the institution's core activity transcended the newness of MASP as an entirely original cultural project.<sup>40</sup> With the European museum's identity originating in fifteenth century Italy, it is not surprising that Orsina Simona Pierini suggests the country is also the origin of critical thinking concerning the appearance of education in the museum context during the twentieth century.<sup>41</sup> She suggests that a number of architecture magazines during the interwar period were responsible for pioneering this approach, which argued collectively for the desacralisation of art and architecture.<sup>42</sup> Ernesto Nathan Rogers notably attempted to reorient titles such as Casabella towards an educational focus, while in 1928 Bardi put into circulation a large-format art newspaper called Belvedere, where he first wrote of the need to synthesise the arts as a means of their democratisation stating that 'art is only itself'.43

In 1930, Bardi controversially used publishing to support the growth of fascist architecture in the Milanese paper L'Ambrosiano and the magazine Quadrante, which were key in orchestrating a discussion on Italian Rationalism (Fig. 9).<sup>44</sup> David Sifkind credits Quadrante with changing the 'language with which architects and their clientele addressed the built

39 1997, Unpaginated 40 p23

Pierini, OS., Continuity and Discontinuity in Casabella and Spazio. The 1950's 41 architecture magazines directed by Luigi Moretti and Ernesto Nathan Rogers', CPA 6, pp140-143, p140, first accessed 6th January 2018, http://polired.upm.es/index.php/ proyectos\_arquitectonicos/article/viewFile/3236/3317 Pierini notes that it is no coincidence that Ernesto Rogers was also a teacher at the 42 new expanded University Centro Studi in Rome, Pierini, OS., Continuity and Discontinuity in Casabella and Spazio. The 1950's architecture magazines directed by Luigi Moretti and Ernesto Nathan Rogers', CPA 6, pp140-143, p140, first accessed 6th January 2018, http:// polired.upm.es/index.php/proyectos\_arquitectonicos/article/viewFile/3236/3317 Bardi, PM. as quoted in Bonadio, MC., 'The fashion in MASP by Pietro Maria Bardi (1947-1987)', Anais do Museu Paulista: History and Material Culture, Vol. 22, No. 2, 2014 Rifkind, D., 'Quadrante and the Politicization of Architectural Discourse in Fascist 44 Italy', PhD dissertation, Columbia University, 2007, p8

## AN EDUCATIONAL EXPERIMENT

Van Eyck, A., 'Museu de Arte de São Paulo', Blau Instituto Lina Bo. E P.M. Bardi,

Hooper-Greenhill, E., 'Museums and the Shaping of Knowledge', Routledge, 1992,

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task of protecting artistic heritage while also attempting to develop a coherent museological programme relevant to present conditions:

of the masses.' 51

Argan's statement explicitly links the museum with the 'elites' and manufacture with the 'masses', with education the confluence of the two, yet representative institutionally only of the former. As such Argan advocated for production to be evident in the museum to equate artefacts with social ideals, and the terms in which they were made:

in art to social life.' 52

Published in an international publication of professional curators and funders, Argan's appeal is to the very elites at whom his criticism is aimed, whereas the craftsmanship he writes of belongs to the world of the uneducated and largely illiterate population, unable to access let alone read his article. Nonetheless he was vindicated in his belief, citing as evidence a display designed by F. Minissi at the Centre for the Educational Function of Museums, which was curated to show that 'educational and museographical problems were one and the same thing.' 53

publicacoes/anais/modernidade/pdfs/EUG\_ING.pdf 51 images/0012/001274/127429eo.pdf#nameddest=10044 52 images/0012/001274/127429eo.pdf#nameddest=10044 53 images/0012/001274/127429eo.pdf#nameddest=10044



Fig 10. Interior of Studi d'Arte Palma

environment' in Italy, signifying that Bardi understood such formats as a way to converse with funders rather than architects.<sup>45</sup> In *Stile* magazine in 1941, Bardi also published the article L'Antico e Noi in which he describes the non-linearity of time, and the relationship between historical and modern precedents, tropes that resurface in Bo Bardi's later writing and in her exhibition design.<sup>46</sup> Similarly on the pages of Lo Stile, curator Guglielmo Pacchioni attacked proponents of the 'museographic neutral environment', arguing that the great art of Italy's past should 'give a sense of the present'. For Pacchioni the display of a work within a museological context inherently lends it value as art, 'be it ancient or modern'.<sup>47</sup>

Bardi shared Pacchioni's view, with his ideas first tested in the curation of Studio d'Arte Palma, a gallery and design company that he founded in Italy in 1944.48 The gallery displayed both ancient and modern works of art, which Bardi described as representing 'all kinds of production of human creativity' (Fig. 10).<sup>49</sup> However, Studio d'Arte Palma is also significant in that it brought together a number of critical figures who were all leading thinkers on the museum as a place of pedagogy. Giulio Carlo Argan is probably the most renown of the staff members who like Bardi also wrote for UNESCO, publishing his essay Circulating and Educational Exhibitions in Italian Museums in the organisation's journal Museum in 1950 (Fig. 11).<sup>50</sup> Outlining issues facing European institutions, Argan argued they suffered from the dual



Fig 11. Photograph of Giulio Carlo Argan (1909-1992)

For all practical purposes these institutions are unconnected...there is no relation between the museum and the production world...the museum represents essentially a culture of elites, and exerts no influence on the culture

'The humanistic conception of a work of art as an absolute masterpiece in itself has the natural effect of placing the tremendous production that is due to craftsmanship in the shade, although that production is a living entity linking ideals

Key to this display was the arrangement of panels that established a comparison between

<sup>45</sup> Rifkind, D., 'Pietro Maria Bardi, Quadrante, and the Architecture of Fascist Italy', Modernidade Latina Os Italianos e os Centros do Modernismo Latino-americano, MAC, unpaginated, http://www.mac.usp.br/mac/conteudo/academico/publicacoes/anais/modernidade/pdfs/DAVID\_ING.pdf

Corato, ACS. in eds. Sparke, P. & Massey, A., 'Biography, Identity and the Modern 46 Interior', Routledge, 2013

Pacchioni, G., 'Per a modern presentazione delle opere d'arte', Lo Stile. 3, Mar / 47 1941, p4 as guoted in Anelli, RLS., 'O Museu de Arte de São Paulo: o museu transparente e a dessacralização da arte', Arquitextos, Vol. 112, No. 1, September 2009, first accessed 2nd January 2018, http://vitruvius.com.br/revistas/read/arquitextos/10.112/22

The name of Studio d'Arte Palma was changed to Estúdio Palma in Brazil and closed 48 in 1949. Lima, ZRMA., 'Lina Bo Bardi', 2013, p53

Bonadio, MC., 'The fashion in MASP by Pietro Maria Bardi (1947-1987)', Anais do 49 Museu Paulista: History and Material Culture, Vol. 22, No. 2, 2014

<sup>50</sup> Esmeraldo, EG., 'Brief Comments on the Role of Pietro Maria Bardi and the

Foundation of MASP', Modernidade Latina, Os Italianos e os Centros do Modernismo, MAC, first accessed 21st November 2017, http://www.mac.usp.br/mac/conteudo/academico/

Argan, GC., 'Circulating and Educational Exhibitions in Italian Museums', Museum, Vol. 3/4, 1950, p289, first accessed 4th January 2018, http://unesdoc.unesco.org/

Argan, GC., 'Circulating and Educational Exhibitions in Italian Museums', Museum, Vol. 3/4, 1950, p289, first accessed 4th January 2018, http://unesdoc.unesco.org/

The museum was based within the National Gallery of Modern Art in Valle Giulia. Argan, GC., 'Circulating and Educational Exhibitions in Italian Museums', Museum, Vol. 3/4, 1950, p290, first accessed 4th January 2018, http://unesdoc.unesco.org/

primitive art and more contemporary examples from Picasso, Moore and Giacometti. Argan relates the impact of this curatorial gesture stating:

Although this exhibition was much opposed in conservative circles, which regard all forms of cultural progress as a kind of subversive propaganda, it was much appreciated by the public, for the very reason of the unprejudiced uptodateness of its display and the comparisons with modern art that it permitted. One visitor, on leaving the exhibition, confessed that it was the first time that he had appreciated the meaning of modern sculpture - thus exemplifying, in the most telling way, the educational influence that ancient art can have on modern civilization.' 54

Argan's comment that conservative circles regarded the 'cultural progress...[as] a kind of subversive propaganda' echoes Bardi's own words, in which he makes explicit reference to activities initiated at MASP as propaganda to 'captur[e] the interest of the young'.<sup>55</sup> While the Bardis were pioneering of this agenda in Brazil, its provenance in Italy demonstrates the lack of originality in the curation of MASP as a project bespoke to Brazilian conditions.<sup>56</sup> This counters the literature on Bo Bardi's exhibition design, which commonly proposes the museum's uniqueness emblematic of her alterity, despite the similarity of her designs to displays elsewhere. While I do not wish to detract from the ingenuity of Bo Bardi's designs, my intention instead is to shift interest in her alterity towards an emphasise on the dynamism of MASP's museological pedagogy, beyond it as a material proposition.

## A Marvellous Exception

Bardi's two texts published in UNESCO's journal Museum emphasise MASP's educative intentions and demonstrate a significant shift from those he wrote for São Paulo's daily newspapers in 1947. The latter written prior to MASP's opening are entirely ideological in their nature, while the former reflect on actual educational activities that took place during the museum's first few years. Published in 1948 the first of the articles for Museum, titled An Educational Experiment at the Museu de Arte, São Paulo, opens with an outline of the material



Fig 12.

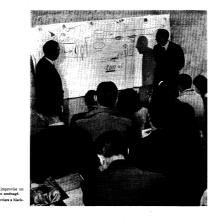


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Fig 12.Pietro Maria Bardi, 'An Educational Experiment at the

Museu de Arte de São Paulo', Article published in ICOM Iournal, Museum, 1948

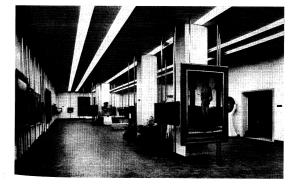
Fig 13. Pietro Maria Bardi with students hired as museum staff at MASP



L'expérience didactique du *Museu de Arte* de SAO PAULO par P. M. BARDI

obstacle to teaching in Brazil, based on the lack of resources (Fig. 12).<sup>57</sup> Bardi describes at length the scarcity of specialised equipment with which to teach history of art, proposing a solution that was twofold. Firstly he organised apprenticeships for young people, offering courses in the history of art and the principles of museography, which would lead directly into positions at the museum.<sup>58</sup> Out of fifty who attended in the first instance, four were permitted to become assistants, working in administration, exhibition organisation and as public guides (Fig13).<sup>59</sup> Secondly Bardi sought to integrate a programme of activities to run regularly, independent of exhibition content.<sup>60</sup> An additional hand typed document found in the archives at MASP reveals that the museum even partnered with the Dutch airline KLM

60 schools.



Bardi, PM., 'An Educational Experiment at the Museu de Arte, São Paulo', Les Musées et l'enseignement, Museum, Vol. 3/4, 1948, p142, first accessed 4th January 2018, http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0012/001274/127442eo.pdf

Bardi, PM., 'An Educational Experiment at the Museu de Arte, São Paulo', Les Musées et l'enseignement, Museum, Vol. 3/4, 1948, p142, first accessed 4th January 2018, http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0012/001274/127442eo.pdf

Indeed over the course of my research I have been surprised by the number of people I have come across who began their careers at MASP in their vouth and still work there today. Examples include the archivist Ivani Di Grazia Costa and Pietro Maria Bardi's two assistants, Anna Carboncini and Eugenia Esmeraldo, all of whom have been at MASP

These activities included an art club for children between the ages of five and twelve, a course on the history of art for secondary school children, courses for university students in collaboration with philosophy professors, courses for teachers and courses for

Argan, GC., 'Circulating and Educational Exhibitions in Italian Museums', 54 Museum, Vol. 3/4, 1950, p290, first accessed 4th January 2018, http://unesdoc.unesco.org/ images/0012/001274/127429eo.pdf#nameddest=10044

<sup>55</sup> Bardi, PM., 'The Museu de Arte, São Paulo', Museum, Vol. 7, 1954, p247, first accessed 4th January 2018, http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0012/001274/127442eo.pdf This shared agenda was ICOM's primary project throughout the 1950s and as such 56 established a trans global mind set in curatorial approaches framed by pedagogy.

<sup>57</sup> 58 59 since the early 1970s.

#### THE MUSEU DE ARTE, SÃO PAULO

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ould be a great mistake to transplant a mus

Fig 14. Pietro Maria Bardi, 'Museu de Arte de São Paulo', Article published in ICOM Journal Museum, 1954

to send its best students to Europe.<sup>61</sup> Bardi also intended local dissemination, creating a travelling exhibition to tour the state of São Paulo; 'we are fitting up a truck for that purpose'. Although never realised, he even attempted to found a partner institution in Florence for which the museum purchased the Villa Mackenzie at Fiesole.62

Despite the number of educational activities listed above, the title of this first article expresses education at MASP as an experiment as opposed to the realisation of a predetermined agenda with pedagogy as its focus, which is surprising given the inheritance of pedagogic thinking from Italy. Astonishment at the museum's achievement's in this respect continues throughout the text, with Bardi stating that on opening the museum it was the general public who held high expectations of MASP's public programme, more so than of



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its exhibits.<sup>63</sup> Bardi thus implies that the nascent activities on offer were the result of demand from enthused participating visitors, rather than derived from the couple's own ideology.<sup>64</sup> However by 1954 Bardi's tone changes entirely, with his second article published in 1954 presenting pedagogy as a central tenet of MASP's operation. The text, now given the simple title The Museu de Arte, São Paulo, not only positions education as an organising principle, it describes MASP's expanded activities as central to the museum's identity as an actual school (Fig. 14):

'While art lovers and collectors admired the masterpieces displayed, educationists and the general public, sometimes not without surprise, learnt that our museum forms the centre of a school – is in fact, part of an institution for the teaching of art and various related subjects, which might appear, at a first glance, to lie outside the ranae of art in the strict sense.' 65

In construing the museum as the subsidiary of a school, as opposed to the reverse, Bardi suggests that the very foundation of MASP was modelled on creating a place of education all along, 'the basic idea was, therefore, an educational museum.' <sup>66</sup>

It is not clear why Bardi re-authored his rhetoric 6 years later, or the origin of his new found confidence in MASP's programme. Offering some insight into Bardi's hesitancy, Bo Bardi's involvement in MASP reveals some of the intentions behind the pedagogy that came to govern the museum's institutional identity. Held just one month after MASP's opening, Bo Bardi along with her husband attended the inaugural meeting of the International Council of Museums (ICOM) in Mexico City on the 8th November 1947. It is at this meeting that Bardi presented his first article for Museum, however it is also where Bo Bardi introduced the programme at MASP, which Giancarlo Latorraca states 'served to make it one of the most acclaimed initiatives of its kind internationally'.<sup>67</sup> It was Bo Bardi who was appointed

63 64 65 66 67 'Maneiras de Expor', Museu de Casa Brasileira, 2014, p6

Despite the Bardis' ambitions the partnership with KLM did not come to fruition. 61 62 The international ambitions of the museum in its early days may have been over emphasised in this particular article not least because Bardi was addressing an international audience concerned with museology as a global concern. Bardi, PM., 'An Educational Experiment at the Museu de Arte, São Paulo', Les Musées et l'enseignement, Museum, Vol. 3/4, 1948, p142, first accessed 4th January 2018, http://unesdoc.unesco.org/ images/0012/001274/127442eo.pdf

Bardi, PM., 'An Educational Experiment at the Museu de Arte, São Paulo', Les Musées et l'enseignement, Museum, Vol. 3/4, 1948, p142, first accessed 4th January 2018, http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0012/001274/127442eo.pdf

Latorraca, G., 'Ways of Showing: the Exhibition Architecture of Lina Bo Bardi' in Catalogue of exhibition 'Maneiras de Expor', Museu Casa Brasileira, 2014, p27

Bardi, PM., 'The Museu de Arte, São Paulo', Museum, Vol. 7, 1954, p247, first accessed 4th January 2018, http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0012/001274/127442eo.pdf Bardi, PM., 'The Museu de Arte, São Paulo', Museum, Vol. 7, 1954, p247, first

accessed 4th January 2018, http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0012/001274/127442eo.pdf Giancarlo Latorraca was an assistant of Bo Bardi's while a student at FAUUSP. He is currently the director of the cultural centre and museum, Museu da Casa Brasileira in São Paulo. Araujo, MM., 'State of São Paulo's Department of Culture' in catalogue for exhibition

member of the ICOM *Education Committee* as opposed to her husband, indicating the significance of her contribution in founding MASP's educational programme. An article that she published in Habitat Magazine as early as 1952 corroborates her knowledge and enthusiasm of the copious activities at MASP:

'There has been a children's art club in the Museum, from its beginning. It started with a puppet theater [sic] followed by classes in design, water-colour, painting, modeling and pottery making. A children's orchestra was formed, thanks to Mrs. Kovach, Levi, Ascarelli. The first performance was held at the opening of the new auditorium with Haydn's 'Kinder Symphonie'. Dancing classes are directed by Mrs. Catunda. The musical teaching will be supervised by Mrs. Levi and will include lectures and a junior orchestra, conducted by Carmargo Guarnieri.' 68

While this description does not in itself evidence Bo Bardi's initiation of them, the overlap of the language used by the couple in their separate descriptions of the museum indicate the shared responsibility of the educational thinking behind MASP as a project. In The Museu de Arte, São Paulo, Bardi states that the museum 'arouse[s] curiosity and interest', while writing much later (the text is undated but published by the Instituto Bardi in 1997) Bo Bardi echoes with:

'the work of art...is presented almost deliberately so as to produce shock, to awaken reactions of curiosity and investigation." 69

As such I consider Bo Bardi in many ways an equal founder of MASP, which offers an alternative reading of the museum's architecture given the complication of her role as both its architect and client; a complexity often obfuscated in the literature.

#### Poetique Mathematique

Published in Italy, Metron Magazine's 1948 review of MASP was one of the few to note the dual input of Pietro Maria Bardi and Lina Bo Bardi, recognising both their individual and collaborative talents:



than the project's co-author.<sup>71</sup>

Significantly in internal documents written by Bardi, her name is given in its maiden form as 'Lina Bo'. In addition he used the masculine form 'arquiteto' in addressing her, which was Bo Bardi's preference over the feminine 'arguiteta'.<sup>72</sup> For the time, and in the context of Brazilian society, such recognition would have been unusual. It appears that Bardi respected his wife's more unusual wishes and did not try to disguise her involvement, yet nor did he promote it. This is unsurprising for a number of reasons. Firstly Bo Bardi was an unknown architect on her arrival in Brazil and significantly Bardi's junior.<sup>73</sup> It was him who had come with an impressive reputation and with whom Chateaubriand had partnered; certainly by many accounts Bardi was himself a conservative character with a misogynistic worldview (Fig. 15). By way of explanation, Bardi's long-term assistant at MASP Eugenia Esmeraldo states that:

70 100', Hatje Cantz Verlag, 2014, pp103-116, p104 71 dissertation, Universidade de São Paulo, 2010 72 73 senior.

'The introduction of the Bardi-Bo coefficient into Brazilian culture will certainly have a positive effect. Bardi brings with him a historic grounding as well as moral and intellectual driver; Lina Bo contributes an element of precision and exactitude, a poetique mathematique.' 70

While it is not quite clear what Metron mean by 'poetique mathematique', a term seemingly of their own invention and one they fail to elaborate, their insinuation is that Bardi contributed rigour with Bo Bardi facilitating a more dynamic and creative role. Although Bo Bardi is credited with these design elements, there has been little work done to explore how she evolved their creation in MASP's first iteration, particularly in relation to the institution's founding educative ideology. As such Bo Bardi is rarely formally recognised by historians in their retellings of the genesis of MASP or by Pietro Maria Bardi himself as a founding partner of the institution; she is usually described as Bardi's accompaniment rather

Sem Autoria., 'A Criança no Museu', Habitat 1, Oct/Dec 1950, p50 68

<sup>69</sup> Author's emphasis. Bo Bardi, L., 'Museu de Arte de São Paulo', Blau Instituto Lina Bo. E P.M. Bardi, 1997, unpaginated

Extract from Italian Metron Magazine, 1948 as quoted in von Fischer, S., 'The Horizons of Lina Bo Bardi: The Museu de Arte de São Paulo in the context of European Postwar Concepts of Architecture' chapter in eds. Lepik, A. & Bader, VS., 'Lina Bo Bardi

See Lima, ZRMA., 'Lina Bo Bardi', Yale University Press, 2013 and Oliveira, O., 'Subtle Substances', Editorial Gustavo Gili, 2006 as the two leading authorities on Bo Bardi's career. In addition the most comprehensive academic thesis I have encountered on MASP by Adriano Canas fails to frame the museum in institutional terms. Canas, AT., 'MASP: Museu laboratório. Projeto de museu para a cidade: 1947-1957', Unpublished PhD

Bo Bardi insisted this was because in Italy the feminine arguiteta does not exist, hence her refusal to use it in her Brazil despite the conventions of language.

Pietro Maria Bardi was born in 1900 (d.1999) making him 14 years Bo Bardi's

'With time I came to learn Bardi's despotic habit of not crediting those who had contributed to the work, a side of him that vexed his collaborators.'74

It is extraordinary then that Bardi allowed Bo Bardi any influence at all on the project, let alone credit her for it, which acts as a testament to the strength of her personality and ability to counter the discrimination prevalent at the time concerning nationality and gender. Conversely, it is certainly not evident that Bo Bardi actively requested particular recognition for her contribution, or believed Pietro Maria Bardi to be at fault for not crediting her more profusely. Bo Bardi herself refuted any alignment with contemporary feminist thinking, and as such the notable lack of credit given to her since, bestowed either by her or others, means that visibility of her involvement in the expanded design for MASP is poor.75

While academic theses written by Brazilian authors describe the first iteration of MASP as a co-authored project, they often follow Metron Magazine's assumptions, separating its ideological positioning from the design of the display, with Bardi credited for the former and Bo Bardi's involvement linked primarily to the latter. Particularly problematic however is much of the English language research on Bo Bardi's work, which tends to do the reverse. Bias in its analysis of MASP's building, the literature speaks generally of MASP simply as a means to explain Bo Bardi's politics and their translation into material form. The historicism of this conflation projects a contemporary urgency onto what was in the 1950s a very different political landscape, which serves to negate the structure's subtler role in its architect's strategic integration of pedagogy as a form of both economic and political insurgency. Because the Bardis polarised their own roles within the institution, with Bardi's directorship positioning him on a globally significant scale, while Bo Bardi operated in the interstices, her obscurity may have had intentional operative benefit. The remainder of this chapter explores this line of enquiry to understand how Bo Bardi's lesser known or rather 'hidden' activities contribute to the concept of MASP as a space of cultural resistance.<sup>76</sup>



São Paulo in the Diários Associados buildina, 230 Rua Sete de Abril, 1947

## Manufacturing the Familiar

When the Bardis arrived in São Paulo there was only one other commercial gallery operational, with the couple also discovering that their intended home for MASP was still under construction.<sup>78</sup> Un-phased they acquired 1000 square metres from Chateaubriand on the second floor of Diários Associados, which was arranged in the shape of a double T (Fig. 16). Dividing the hall into four parts, the space was organised for both temporary and permanent occupation comprised of a picture gallery, a room for cultural exhibition, a lecture room and an exhibition space dedicated to dealing with art history (Fig. 17 & 18).<sup>79</sup> The first show at MASP consisted of 76 panels containing 1500 photographs and explanatory text that presented a panorama of art history.<sup>80</sup> The ongoing construction of the gallery forced Bo Bardi to make freestanding 'walls' to hang the works, installing a number of full height aluminium tubes in order to protect paintings from damp.<sup>8182</sup>

Using the exhibitions shown in MASP's first year as evidence, Milene Soares Cara outlines the importance of the couple's intention to present 'an expanded vision of the art field and the importance of everyday objects.' 83 Moving beyond an explanation of European art

## THE SCHOOL MUSEUM OF LIFE

'Education is an act of love, and because of that an act of courage.' 77

Bardi, PM., 'An Educational Experiment at the Museu de Arte, São Paulo', Les Musées et l'enseignement, Museum, Vol. 3/4, 1948, p142, first accessed 4th January 2018. http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0012/001274/127442eo.pdf

Migliaccio, L., 'Pietro Maria Bardi in Brazil: art history, criticism and chronicle', Modernidade Latina, Os Italianos e os Centros do Modernismo, MAC, Unpaginated, first accessed 21st November 2017, http://www.mac.usp.br/mac/conteudo/academico/publicacoes/

Latorraca, G., 'Ways of Showing: the Exhibition Architecture of Lina Bo Bardi' in Catalogue of exhibition 'Maneiras de Expor', Museu Casa Brasileira, 2014, p25

While Bo Bardi's later glass easel design demonstrates considerable ingenuity, they were in actual fact a product of a number of experimentations with the form, beginning at Studio d'Arte Palma in Rome and later adopted in the three exhibitions that the Bardis organised on their arrival in Brazil at MES. Canas, AT., 'Lina Bo Bardi e a Museografia para o Masp - Sete de Abril', p10, first accessed 17th January 2017, http://arquimuseus.arg.br/ seminario2014/transferencias/\_lina\_bo\_bardi/\_lina\_bo\_bardi-adriano\_canas.pdf In its first three years MASP created eight exhibitions of graphic design, crafts,

fashion and other topics. Cara, M.S., 'MASP, the Bardis and design in Brazil', Modernidade Latina, Os Italianos e os Centros do Modernismo, MAC, first accessed 24th September 2016, http://www.mac.usp.br/mac/conteudo/academico/publicacoes/anais/modernidade/

<sup>74</sup> Esmeraldo, EG., 'Brief Comments on the Role of Pietro Maria Bardi and the Foundation of MASP'. Modernidade Latina. Os Italianos e os Centros do Modernismo. MAC, first accessed 21st November 2017, http://www.mac.usp.br/mac/conteudo/academico/ publicacoes/anais/modernidade/pdfs/EUG\_ING.pdf

Bo Bardi, L., AA Publications, 'Stones Against Diamonds', Architecture Words 12, 75 AA Publications, 2009

<sup>76</sup> The concept of cultural resistance is recurring in this thesis as defined by Stephen Duncombe (2002) et al.

Freire, P., 'Educação como prática da Liberdade', Paz e Terra, 1967

Lima, ZRMA., 'Lina Bo Bardi', Yale University Press, 2013, p44



on Rua Sete de Abril, 1947

history, shows such as Artes Industrias encouraged artists to embrace the techniques and materials of the time, through an analysis of the technical and aesthetic qualities of simple household objects. It was nearly a full year before MASP would hold the first exhibition from this series, with Exposição da Cadeira (Exhibition of the Chair) opening on the 14th September 1948.84 Outlining the history of the chair, the exhibition explained the way in which the basic model has been replicated throughout history, while demonstrating how over time, individual craftsmen had adapted the design to express 'sensitive innovations'.<sup>85</sup> The Eameses' plywood bent chair with rubber joints was the 'success of the exhibition', indicating to the Bardis that it was possible for pre-industrial aesthetics to be deposed in favour of contemporary production, stating that 'the chair is not a monument, it serves to be sat upon.' <sup>86</sup> Bo Bardi presented a set of incongruous historical examples to incite assessment of the chair as a consumer product. The museum thus treated the consumer marketplace as a pedagogic subject, with critical discrimination between objects taught as a







Fig 18. Exhibition about Roberto Burle Marx displayed at MASP on Rua Sete de Abril, published in Habitat Magazine

no avail. As such Pietro Maria Bardi stated that:

I made it my chief concern to create a new institution corresponding to actual conditions of artistic culture. They are as yet undeveloped.'<sup>88</sup>

Bo Bardi's solution was to design a moveable and stackable chair to allow flexibility within the internal spaces of MASP, so that their use could be easily interchanged (Fig. 19).<sup>89</sup> Following the necessity of producing her designs, Bo Bardi began planning a course at MASP that would officially install a school within the museum. As such in proposing industrial design as an extension of art history, Bo Bardi's role transformed yet again from founder and designer to teacher, and in doing so extended MASP's broader pedagogic action.90

87 88 89 publicacoes/ARQtextos/pdfs\_revista\_14/04\_RA\_gosto%20moderno\_070210.pdf



Fia 19. Lina Bo Bardi, Stackable chair made for MASP, 1947

culturally acquired skill. This vision was stalled by the lack of connectivity between design and manufacture in Brazil, which hindered the Bardis' ability to source furniture befitting a modern institution.<sup>87</sup> Bo Bardi even enlisted numerous renowned designers to assist in the task including Gregori Warchavchik, John Graz, Joaquim Tenreiro and Lasar Segall but to

Cara, MS., 'Difusão e Construção do Design no Brasil: O Papel do MASP', 84 Unpublished PhD Thesis, Universidade de São Paulo, 2013, p37

<sup>85</sup> From text possibly authored by either Bardi or Bo Bardi as quoted in Cara, MS., 'Difusão e Construção do Design no Brasil: O Papel do MASP', unpublished PhD Thesis, Universidade de São Paulo, 2013, p39

From text possibly authored by either Bardi or Bo Bardi as quoted in Cara, MS., 86 'Difusão e Construção do Design no Brasil: O Papel do MASP', unpublished PhD Thesis, Universidade de São Paulo, 2013, p39

Lima, ZRMA., 'Lina Bo Bardi', Yale University Press, 2013, p45

Bardi, PM., 'An Educational Experiment at the Museu de Arte, São Paulo', Les Musées et l'enseignement, Museum, Vol. 3/4, 1948, p142, first accessed 4th January 2018, http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0012/001274/127442eo.pdf

Sanches, AC., 'The Studio of Art Palma and the furniture factory Pau Brasil: people, climate, national materials and the design of modern furniture in Brazil', FAU USP, July 2003, p29, first accessed 6th January 2018, https://www.researchgate.net/ publication/270643003\_O\_Studio\_de\_Arte\_Palma\_e\_a\_fabrica\_de\_moveis\_Pau\_Brasil\_ povo\_clima\_materiais\_nacionais\_e\_o\_desenho\_de\_mobiliario\_moderno\_no\_Brasil Anelli, RLS., 'Gosto Moderno: O Design Da Exposição E A Exposição Do Design', Arquitexto, 14, first accessed 2nd January 2018, p102, https://www.ufrgs.br/propar/

SPACES OF TRANSCULTURAL RESISTANCE

## Adopting Different Molds

In 1951, Lina Bo Bardi opened the Instituto de Arte Contemporânea (IAC) at MASP, which was one of Brazil's first design schools devoted to training young designers, with the museum using its cultural capital to foster links with national industry.<sup>91</sup> This initiative paralleled the launch of Habitat, a quarterly magazine that completed the Bardis pedagogic project. The primary aim of Habitat was to create a market for contemporary Brazilian design through the promotion of products in its pages. The museum would then act as an additional tool to educate the general public in this new artistic field, while the IAC completed a wider strategy by educating designers to make the products for a new society (Fig. 20-22). An extract from an article published in Diário de São Paulo describes the IAC as:

'...completing the work of artistic education that the museum has been offering, giving clear avant-garde orientation to its students."<sup>92</sup>

Now targeting fabricators and industrialists, Bardi's writing shifts from attracting middle class consumers to include those at the forefront of the production of rampant industrialisation. Factory owners did not question design as such, and continued to fabricate replicas of old items or those popularised in Europe, meaning that for the Bardis change was about making the home a new site of design:93

'Habitat magazine, for example, railed against the ugliness of São Paulo's urban furniture, bourgeois interior decoration, and commercial window displays. After all, there was no point in having a museum with permanent exhibits of Poussin, Tintoretto and Picasso if the elite went on sitting on Napoleonic thrones and entertaining in rooms in which eclectic upholsterers had been given free rein.' 94

In priming the São Paulo elite to serve as the driving force behind socio-cultural



course at the IAC



the etching course at the IAC



Ballet Infantil at the IAC

transformations of the city and nationwide, the Bardis aimed to create a professional class of industrial designers who could communicate with and shape business interests and thus control manufacture. In avoiding the reproduction of styles, the Bardis thought that products better fitting not only to a modern society but an inherently Brazilian one would be produced. As such Ethel Leon refers to MASP as founded on an 'an eloquent belief in the future.' 95 Yet this future was in many ways not Brazil's own, with the Bardis again refuting European models while simultaneously looking to others advanced in the west, and thus equally alien as the museum was to the Latin context. Writing in February 1951 one month before the opening of the IAC, and again using the newspaper to formulate and sell his ideas to a wider public, Bardi detailed his visits to schools in North America:

'I want to adopt different moulds from the North Americans, aiming at our school the greatest freedom and the greatest respect for individuality.' 96

Bardi wrote to a number of arts institutions in the Northern Hemisphere asking for advice from more established schools.<sup>97</sup> The types of institutions Bardi approached included notably Black Mountain College and the Bauhaus, asking them to help create a curriculum and describe their methodologies. The fact that such information was not widely available, as many of these institutions were themselves in their infancy, demonstrates just how new such design teaching was across the globe as well as how pioneering Bardi's intentions for MASP were in a Latin American context.<sup>98</sup> Despite their shared nascence Bardi received less than enthusiastic responses from the various institutions that he approached, possibly because Brazil was still not taken seriously as a nexus for the training of design professionals in a global context, nor Bardi known for his pedagogy.99

Unique to MASP and unlike its counterparts was the fact that the IAC was established inside

95 cacoes/anais/modernidade/pdfs/ETHEL\_ING.pdf 96 dissertation, Universidade de São Paulo, 2010, p63 97 found in the archives at MASP. 98 99 Design do Brasil, Blucher, 2013, p7

Additional information on the IAC is limited, with Ethel Leon's small volume on its history providing the most succinct history. Leon, E., 'IAC/MASP, a Futurist School in São Paulo', Unpaginated, Modernidade Latina, Os Italianos e os Centros do Modernismo, MAC, first accessed 24th September 2016 http://www.mac.usp.br/mac/conteudo/academico/publi-

Bardi, PM. as quoted in Diário de São Paulo, 13th February 1951 Canas, AT., 'MASP: Museu laboratório. Projeto de museu para a cidade: 1947-1957', unpublished PhD

A full correspondence between Pietro Maria Bardi and American schools can be

Letters from Pietro Maria Bardi located in the archive at MASP. first accessed 2013. Other documents cited by Ethel Leon credit both the Bauhaus and Institute of Design in Chicago for influencing the education at IAC, Leon, E., 'IAC Primeira Escola de

<sup>91</sup> Lasting only two years, Bo Bardi led the course alongside Flavio Motta and Luis Hossaka.

Anonymous, Diário de São Paulo, 8th March 1951 as guoted in Canas, AT., 92 'MASP: Museu laboratório. Projeto de museu para a cidade: 1947–1957'. Unpublished PhD dissertation, Universidade de São Paulo, 2010, p63

<sup>93</sup> This particular theme forms the subject of Chapter 5 which discusses *Habitat* Magazine and its contents.

Leon, E., 'IAC/MASP, a Futurist School in São Paulo', Unpaginated, Modernidade 94 Latina, Os Italianos e os Centros do Modernismo, MAC, first accessed 24th Septmeber 2016, http://www.mac.usp.br/mac/conteudo/academico/publicacoes/anais/modernidade/ pdfs/ETHEL\_ING.pdf

the museum, meaning that it was free from public or private corporate pressures that were still concerned with propagating traditional methods of education elsewhere. In Germany the Bauhaus was scrutinised by the governments of Weimar and Dessau, while in Chicago Walter Paepcke the owner of the Container Corporation of America followed the institute's every step. In both cases design was understood by its patrons as a business tool and monitored accordingly.<sup>100</sup> MASP however was able to defend design as a practice whose goal was to help manufacturers sell their products, arguing for its ethical foundation independent of history. Yet to be corrupted by capitalism, the Bardis' were convinced of their enterprise's purpose as part of an educational mission, the school allowing the couple to deploy their collection of art works within a new cultural paradigm in which they controlled the entire process through commissioning, manufacture, public display and finally consumption, within the interior of the home.

## **Brazilian Fashions**

Bardi used other well-known figures amongst his staff to legitimise the IAC, boasting of the Ukrainian-Brazilian artist Laser Segall's connection to the Bauhaus. Segall had indeed visited the school and corresponded with Wassily Kandinsky, although Bardi tried to allude to Segall's own training there writing again in Diário de São Paulo that:

'not only for his merit as an artist, but also the experience he acquired at the first ever school of industrial design, the famous Bauhaus in Dessau, Germany where Segall worked alongside the great renovators and researchers of the applied arts and architecture.' <sup>101</sup>

Leon describes institutions such as the Bauhaus and the Institute of Design in Chicago therefore as more than just a reference, but rather something of a founding myth for Bardi. Although the IAC would only last for two full years closing in 1953, the school produced some of its own designers of note. Amongst the first modernist Brazilian designers trained at the IAC were Alexandre Wollner, Emilie Charnie and Antônio Maluf. Wollner would



go on to found the Escola Superior de Desenho Industrial (ESDI) in Rio de Janeiro in 1962, which has since become Brazil's most important school of design.<sup>102</sup> Their success reflects the type of designer the IAC hoped to create, modelled on the Italian architect Gio Ponti who personified someone who could design everything from spoons to entire cities.<sup>103</sup> It is not surprising then that the IAC curriculum was comprised of a range of subjects including model making, architecture, botany, textiles, painting and engraving, photography, graphics, composition, and sociology directly replicating courses at The Chicago Institute (Fig. 23).<sup>104</sup>

The IAC closed due to its inability to successfully engage local manufacturers. The identity of the IAC, split between its global claims on educational ideology, in contrast with its parallel focus on local production, offers one reason for its failure. Bardi's description of how courses were introduced, reactive to the museum's contextual condition, demonstrates the lack of direction and degree to which the programme operated in flux (Fig. 24):

'When it is observed that Brazilians dress more suitably for snow-covered countries than for the tropics, the Museum starts a movement which, after the necessary period of research, design, weaving and making up of textiles, results in the presentation of suggestions for Brazilian fashions.' 105

102 20th Septmember 2016 103 correspondence with him even after her arrival. 104 Universidade de São Paulo, 2010, p67 105



106



Document 1, Caixa 2.1, Basta 12, Bibliotéca Museu de Arte de São Paulo, accessed

Indeed Bo Bardi had worked for Ponti prior to her move to Brazil, maintaining a

The IAC was structured in two phases, the first focused on what the Bardis considered the fundamentals of culture encompassing technical and artistic knowledge. Pietro Maria Bardi taught History of Art while Bo Bardi led the course on Architecture. Other well-known figures such as Jacob Ruchti, Oswalde Bratke, Roberto Sambonet, Rino Levi and Roberto Burle-Marx ran a number of complimentary courses including Knowledge of Materials, Acoustics in Architecture and Gardens respectively. The second stage tested the practical application of these classes, which made use of the museum's gallery with exercises focused around works in the collection. Canas, AT., 'MASP: Museu laboratório. Projeto de museu para a cidade: 1947–1957, unpublished PhD dissertation,

Bardi, PM., 'The Museu de Arte, São Paulo', Museum, Vol. 7, 1954, p248, first accessed 4th January 2018, http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0012/001274/127442eo.pdf

Leon, E., 'IAC/MASP, a Futurist School in São Paulo', Modernidade Latina, Os 100 Italianos e os Centros do Modernismo, MAC, first accessed 24th September 2016, http:// www.mac.usp.br/mac/conteudo/academico/publicacoes/anais/modernidade/pdfs/ETHEL\_ ING.pdf

Bardi, PM., 'No Museu de Arte, Instituto de Arte Contemporânea, Professores que 101 farão parte da Congregação', Diário da Noite, 22nd March 1950 as quoted in Leon, E., 'IAC/ MASP, a Futurist School in São Paulo', unpaginated, Modernidade Latina, Os Italianos e os Centros do Modernismo, MAC, first accessed 24th September 2016, http://www.mac.usp. br/mac/conteudo/academico/publicacoes/anais/modernidade/pdfs/ETHEL\_ING.pdf

The IAC was also threatened by Chateaubriand's rival project the Escola Superior de Propaganda (School of Propaganda), which occupied a room in the Diários Associados building along with MASP (Fig 25). Surviving slightly longer than the IAC until 1955 Chateaubriand's school had a distinct agenda, related directly to advertising and the sale of products, rather than an ideological preoccupation with their manufacture. Founded in parallel was the Fundação Armando Alvares Penteado (FAAP), which Chateaubriand set up with Annie Alvares Penteado, and was created with the clause that it should provide an art school. Chateaubriand attempted to integrate the FAAP and MASP by allowing Bardi responsibility for direction and sharing the collection of the museum between the two. However Bardi's role lasted only for a year, with the collection returned to MASP in 1959 after Bardi refuted FAAP's curatorial style.<sup>106</sup>

The IAC's failure in the shadow of the comparably restricted pedagogic environment of rival schools such as FAAP, which articulated a singular agenda rooted simply in the intersection of politics and capital, describes perhaps the limits of the Bardis' agency. The essentiality of Chateaubriand's patronage and thus authority over the greater project that is MASP, despite the Bardis' as figureheads of its 'brand', is revealed in the IAC's demise. Following both Lina Bo Bardi and Pietro Maria Bardi's failure to retain their teaching roles at FAUUSP and FAAP respectively in 1959, the couple looked to the museum's architecture to provide the foundation for the pedagogic context of the museum, breaking with the physical interior of Chateaubriand's business by moving MASP to Avenida Paulista. By this point a lifelong project for the couple, the construction of a new building for MASP, while facilitating the consolidation of their programme, also formed a symbolic shift in regaining their agency of the museum's internal operation.<sup>107</sup>

While this chapter has mainly described immaterial elements of MASP's design, the following section turns to the tectonic qualities of the architecture that Bo Bardi built to demonstrate the necessity of the building itself in protecting the territory of political freedom, in a city increasingly compromised by both politics and finance.

107 Lima, ZRMA., 'Lina Bo Bardi', Yale University Press, 2013



Propaganda (School of Propaganda) also in the Diários Associados Building

No-where and Everywhere As this chapter has worked to demonstrate, the ideological nature of MASP was first defined in Bardi's early articles and then best evidenced in practice through the programme of activities that developed at the museum. While detailed in their expression of activity, none of the articles explicitly speak to the spatial quality of such an institution. Yet there is one article that Bardi wrote, which only in its title eludes to the museum's potential form. This article *Musées Hors Limites* (Museum without limits) was first presented at ICOM and like the others clarified Bardi's idea for a museum, with the title seemingly indicating Bardi's understanding of its limits not in terms of physical boundaries but as an extension of educative and programmatic dissemination.<sup>109</sup> As such the content of the article is incredibly familiar, indeed it even resurfaces in a number of different locations with most sources citing its first appearance in Habitat Magazine published in 1951, despite its delivery as early as 1947.<sup>110</sup> Additionally the text almost entirely mirrors Bardi's article Museus e Anti-Museus, which was published in Diário de São Paulo and formed the subject of the first part of this chapter.

The Anti-Museu has become indelibly linked with the Bardis' particular project in São Paulo and a Latin context, whereas the title Musées Hors Limites makes more explicit reference to a contemporary Modernist inheritance. Employing the phrase 'without limits', the obvious connection is to Le Corbusier's project the Infinite Museum, which he conceived and reiterated in numerous designs from 1929 onwards.<sup>111</sup> Eschewing all notions of hierarchy, 108 Le Corbusier quoted in Storrie, C., 'The Delirious Museum: A Journey from the Louvre to Las Vegas', Tauris, 2006

109 art-1968-2015/ 110 p50

Le Corbusier and Pietro Maria Bardi were well known to each other. Meeting at 111 the first CIAM conference held in Athens in 1933, Bardi in many ways acted in the capacity

## **BOLD IDEAS**

'The museum is bad because it does not tell the whole story. It misleads, it dissimulates, it deludes. It *is a liar.*' <sup>108</sup>

Moura, S., 'The Reenactment of Lina Bo Bardi's Display for the São Paulo Museum of Art (1968-2015)', Stedelijk Studies Journal, first accessed 3rd January 2018, https://www. stedelijkstudies.com/journal/reenactment-lina-bo-bardis-display-sao-paulo-museum-

Variations of this text are reproduced on numerous other occasions from as early as 1946, although it is often mistakenly credited as first published in Habitat 4, Jul/Sept 1951,

In its final configuration on Avenida Paulista in the building designed by Bo Bardi, 106 the museum made space for a drawing course, a History of Art course, artist oriented painting course, a museography course, which began in 1970 and finally a course on Photography and the History of Music led by José Augusto França. While this set of topics relate closely to those offered by the IAC, their loose configuration and relation with the museum allowed their survival until 1984. Lima, ZRMA., 'Lina Bo Bardi' Yale University Press, 2013, p71

Despite Le Corbusier's design addressing an internally focused museological discourse, the context in which the *Infinite Museum* was conceived reflects CIAM's parallel concern with the museum as a focal point in the city.<sup>116</sup> The meeting of CIAM 8 at Hoddesdon in 1951 introduced the *Heart of the City* as a central concern, conceived of as a fifth function to the much popularised prewar idea of zoning. The main element of this proposition became known as the '*Core*', an invention largely rooted in western urban history. Giedion's presentation on *The Historical Background to the Core* referenced the Greek Agora while Walter Gropius remarked on the terms in which his *Harvard University* students were 'deeply impressed by Italian Piazzas', having never seen anything like it before.<sup>117</sup>

However as the breadth of papers given on the topic of the core demonstrates, there was a lack of consensus concerning its function specifically in relation to its transference across different climatic regions. Gropius articulated the core as pertaining to 'the Human Scale', Ian McCallum in terms of 'spontaneity' and Gregor Paulsson as an expression of the relationship between 'the Past and Present'. It was JM Richards however who initiated a notion of the synthesis between the *Core* and the *Arts*, evoking it as 'the repository of the group's collective memory', while Le Corbusier determined it as 'a meeting place of the arts'.<sup>118</sup> Significantly as indicative of his interpretation of the core, Le Corbusier presented MASP's incarnation on Rua Sete de Abril to attendees of CIAM 8 as an example of the potential new role of the museum in the city.<sup>119</sup>

ideas relating the display and by extension, experience of art to architecture. Colomina, B., 'The Endless Museum: Le Corbusier and Mies van der Rohe', Log, No. 15, 2009, pp55-68, p55 The Congrès Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne (CIAM) founded in 1928 by 116 Le Corbusier and a number of other architects in Switzerland sought to promote modern architecture globally. CIAM met eleven times over its thirty-one year history, expanding to receive delegates from all over the world, not least from Latin America. Sert even wrote to Giedion stating that the Colombian CIAM chapter was, 'the best after Brazil'. However interest declined rapidly after CIAM 6 in 1947 due to no Brazilian groups being in attendance despite the seeming proliferation in Modernist projects in the country, which were known largely by way of the Brazil Builds exhibit (1943) and the Brésil issue of L'Architecture d'aujourd'hui (1947). Mumford's record of CIAM depicts how Giedion bemoaned the lack of presence amongst international members, particularly the younger generation including Niemeyer, Warchavchik and Costa, none of whom were prepared to organise the Brazilian delegation. One reason for this is the continued lack of interest paid by the Congress towards issues specific to explicitly non-western cultures, with the universal ideals of Modernism obfuscating the specificity of conditions in Latin America despite Brazil having been colonised by the Portuguese with European urban typologies familiar throughout the country. Mumford, EP., 'The CIAM Discourse on Urbanism, 1928-1960', MIT Press, 2002, 117

117 Mumford, EP., 'The C p213

118 Mumford, EP., 'The Cl p213

Pietro Maria Bardi however was present at CIAM 4 in 1933 where the group's most widely disseminated publication, the Athens Charter was produced. Canas, AT.,
 'MASP: Museu Laboratório. Projeto de Museu para a Cidade: 1947–1957', Unpublished PhD

the *Infinite Museum*, or *Museum of Unlimited Growth* as it is also known was based on a spiral plan that extended endlessly as time passed. Visitors would enter from a deep tunnel, emerging at the centre having never seen the museum's façade, thus having no sense of its true (and expanding) scale (Fig. 26). Chin notes that the *Infinite Museum* 'looks outwards, in anticipation of one day consuming the exterior within its yet to be constructed, yet constantly expanding walls'.<sup>112</sup> The entire building would be raised on pilotis meaning that at ground level there would exist complete fluidity and transference between spaces. For Le Corbusier this enabled the visitor to dictate their own choreography of the space, released from the linear constraints of traditional museum going. Mirroring Bardi's curatorial approach, Le Corbusier's *Infinite Museum* too sought an expanded and anachronistic meaning:

"...museums have just been born. There were none in other times. In the tendentious incoherence of museums the model does not exist only the elements of a point of view. The true museum is the one that contains everything."<sup>115</sup>

Relating the museum's symbolism to its physical form Chin goes on to state that '… placeless, the *Museum of Unlimited Growth* is unbound to nation or state, being of no-where and everywhere' making it a contemporary and topical project of the postwar period, preoccupied by the formation of the nation state.<sup>114</sup> In these terms the *Infinite Museum* held physical and symbolic significance, a perhaps theoretical proposal contextualised by a postwar discourse that nonetheless Le Corbusier pursued throughout his later career in what Beatriz Colomina describes as 'variations of one obsessive theme'.<sup>115</sup>

of the Swiss architect's agent in Latin America; defending his interests by contesting his role in MES and consequent lack of financial remuneration followed by curating a show about his work at MASP in 1951. In addition Le Corbusier asked Bardi to assist him in acquiring work in Argentina. Numerous letters between the two detail such projects in Bardi's archive held at the Instituto Bardi, São Paulo, Folder 1.3014.5, 1.3014.6 and 1.3014.8, accessed 7th december 2017

112 Chin, I., 'Le Corbusier's Musée á Croissance Illimitée: A Limitless Diagram for Museology', Le Corbusier, 50 Years Later International Congress, Valencia, 20<sup>th</sup> November 2015, p1, first accessed 23rd 11th 2017, http://ocs.editorial.upv.es/index.php/ LC2015/LC2015/paper/viewFile/584/1269

113 Le Corbusier as quoted in Colomina, B., 'Privacy and Publicity: Modern Architecture as Mass Media', MIT Press, 1996, p180

114 Chin, I., 'Le Corbusier's Musée á Croissance Illimitée: A Limitless Diagram for Museology', Le Corbusier, 50 Years Later International Congress, Valencia, 20th November 2015, p10, first accessed 23rd 11th 2017, http://ocs.editorial.upv.es/index. php/LC2015/LC2015/paper/viewFile/584/1269

115 Le Corbusier realised three versions of the Infinite Museum, two in India and one in Tokyo. Colomina also cites his La Roche House as an attempt to further his

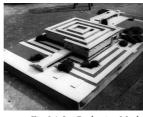


Fig 26. Le Corbusier, Model for the Infinite Museum

Mumford, EP., 'The CIAM Discourse on Urbanism, 1928-1960'., MIT Press, 2002,

## Art into the Street

Alex Miyoshi draws parallels between Bo Bardi's preliminary sketches for a building found in her archive and with Le Corbusier's Infinite Museum. He argues that the drawings are precursors to MASP as it was later built on Avenida Paulista between 1959-69. Depicting a prismatic shaped building, glazed on all sides and encasing a spiral slope, the drawings show a structure entered from below, rising up through the building, a motif indeed reminiscent of Le Corbusier's design (Fig. 27).<sup>120</sup> The eventual completion of the building at the Triannon on Avenida Paulista however demonstrates what is argued was an alternative notion of the infinite, with Bo Bardi's design synthesising Le Corbusier's theme with Bardi's writing in *Musées Hors Limites* pertaining to the museum as part of lived experience.<sup>121</sup> For Bo Bardi this meant literally conceiving of the museum as part of the city, blurring the threshold between interior and exterior, which she coupled with a didactic programme:

'The orientation of the art museum was always to take the problem of art into the street, into ordinary life, to people who still did not understand the intimate relationship between art and life. This work is developed through a permanent effort, by organising courses, conferences, publications, exhibitions etc.' 122

While Le Corbusier's museum is always experienced from within, the edifice Bo Bardi proposes gives shelter to and a setting for activity from the outside. Indeed, the facade of MASP is crucial in Bo Bardi's design with the glazed walls providing transparency as a point of symbolism during a moment of political upheaval; a time during which the military dictatorship censored activity (Fig. 28 & 29). There is elegance to the design of the structure, which is countered by the crudeness of its execution; its materiality primitive yet at the same time technologically sophisticated. Bo Bardi's design is thus a reversal of Le Corbusier's. Where the Infinite Museum attempted to hold within it the 'significance of the world', endlessly expanding and colonising the city, Bo Bardi sought to integrate the city within the museum, a disruptive process upending the representation of a singular universal

Fig 27. Lina Bo Bard

Fig 30. Photograph of the public space below MASP taken from the staircase, which lifts

visitors up into the building

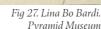
paradigm.<sup>123</sup> In opposing the Modernist canon, Bo Bardi's design reflects the couple's perception of Brazil as a modern state, with Bardi observing that in Latin American 'people understood that bold ideas were not utopian.' 124

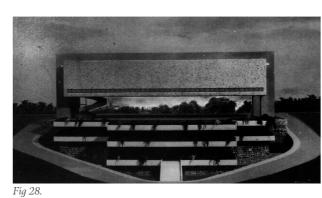
> 'I am of the opinion that the Americas will really be the first to grasp the educational function of the new museums...it seems to me that, here in Brazil, people understand that audacious ideas are never utopias and utopias are never audacious.' 125

And yet the principle organising factor of MASP's building is both utopian and audacious. The entire floor span of MASP, which constituted the internal space of the museum, is entered in a similar way to Le Corbusier's proposal for the Infinite Museum with a staircase lifting visitors up from the underbelly of the structure (Fig. 30). On arrival the space is completely devoid of walls, given over instead to the display of art on a number of glass easels. These easels, recently restored at MASP after nearly thirty years of retirement, were designed to mirror a sense of publicness in the space below. Acting as support structures, they consisted of a cubic base of concrete and wood with a glass plate measuring 2.4 metres high with four different widths provided according to the work of art that they individually

123 No. 15, 2009, pp55-68, p55 124 publicacoes/anais/modernidade/pdfs/EUG\_ING.pdf 125









112



Fig 29. Illustration and collage of MASP showing a concrete façade to the main structure

Colomina, B., 'The Endless Museum: Le Corbusier and Mies van der Rohe', Log,

dissertation, Universidade de São Paulo, 2010, p5

Mivoshi, A., 'A Pirâmide de Lina Bo Bardi', Revista de História da Arte e 120 Arqueologia, No. 9, Jan-June 2008, pp150-157

<sup>121</sup> Equally Zeuler Lima has compared the early prismatic sketches of MASP to Frank Lloyd Wright's Guggenheim in New York, which she had recently visited. Lima, ZRMA., 'Lina Bo Bardi', Yale University Press, 2013, p70

<sup>122</sup> Bo Bardi, L. as quoted in Mensario de Arte eds. Habitat Editora Ltda, February 1954 in 'Concreto e Cristal: O Acervo do MASP nos Cavaletes de Lina Bo Bardi', MASP, 2016, p70

Esmeraldo, EG., 'Brief Comments on the Role of Pietro Maria Bardi and the Foundation of MASP', Modernidade Latina, Os Italianos e os Centros do Modernismo, MAC, first accessed 21st November 2017, http://www.mac.usp.br/mac/conteudo/academico/

Bardi, PM. as quoted in Migliaccio, L., 'Pietro Maria Bardi in Brazil: art history, criticism and chronicle', Modernidade Latina, Os Italianos e os Centros do Modernismo, MAC, unpaginated, first accessed 21st November 2011, http://www.mac.usp.br/mac/ conteudo/academico/publicacoes/anais/modernidade/pdfs/LUCIANO\_ING.pdf

intended to support.<sup>126</sup> All facing forward, the transparency of the display system meant that each painting appeared floating in space, decoupled from the traditional blurb that would explain its author and origin. By refusing to tell visitors where to go or in which order to view the works, the exhibition accorded a form of self-directed learning whereby each picture was assessed on its own terms as if still on the canvas on which it was made. Visitors became part of the installation, complicit as they moved through and between paintings, with art works made for the wealthy now 'cohabiting among the common.' 127

It is in this sense that the Bardis' ideas, and specifically Bo Bardi's design, differ from Le Corbusier's museum typology in their politicising nature. Bo Bardi's choreography of the museum heightened tension between its outward projection and inward function, the former emblematic of its authoritative civic standing and the latter concerned with the democratisation of art. Unlike Le Corbusier's devolution of the status of the building by the removal of the facade in an act Anthony Vidler understands as a form of resistance against monumentality, the Bardis' counter-museum does away with the need for a building altogether; rather the building is important in as far as it provides an infrastructure as an institutional symbol and thus backdrop for the multifarious activities the couple imagined.<sup>128</sup> As such it is the public space in Bo Bardi's design, defined by the building's form that acquires significant meaning enveloping the wider city much like Le Corbusier's Infinite *Museum*, yet crucially without the need for actual walls negating the boundary between interior and exterior.

### Playing in the Sun

According to the French cultural critic André Malraux, museums have become so much a part of our lives today that we forget that they have imposed on the visitor, or to use his word 'spectator' a wholly new attitude towards the work of art. Dividing the works of art they bring together from their original functions, this estrangement transforms 'even portraits into pictures' in which the name of the painter gives the painting identity rather than the subjects painted within the confines of the frame. Bo Bardi's glass easels, in countering Malraux's simple observation, have however become so fetishised that as Roger Buergel has

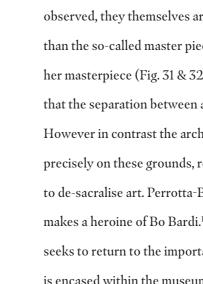


Fig 32. Each Glass Easel supports a painting exhibited as if it were floating in the air

This is important because as a site of protest the space below the belvedere has become central to political activism in the city, a central meeting point for campaigns against a range of issues, 'internalising the externalities of São Paulo' (Fig. 33-37).<sup>151</sup> Echoing the wellknown image of MASP occupied during the dictatorship, the public space is perhaps more significant to the ritual of culturalisation than Bo Bardi could have imagined which was to:

129 130 dessacralizado/

131 por-francesco-perrotta-bosch/



Fig 31. View of the top floor gallery at MASP populated by Glass Easels

observed, they themselves are the installation and the art that people come to see, rather than the so-called master pieces they exhibit; Bo Bardi is the painter and people gather to see her masterpiece (Fig. 31 & 32). It is unclear whether Buergel sees this as problematic citing that the separation between art and non-art was 'always conspicuously low at MASP.' 129 However in contrast the architecture critic Francesco Perrotta-Bosch denounces the display precisely on these grounds, referring to it as a sacralisation of what had been an attempt to de-sacralise art. Perrotta-Bosch's argument is that the reintroduction of the glass easels makes a heroine of Bo Bardi.<sup>130</sup> Positing the glass easels as a distraction, Perrotta-Bosch seeks to return to the importance of the public space and its occupation as opposed to what is encased within the museum's walls, literal or otherwise.

Perrotta-Bosch, F., 'A Arquitetura dos Intervalos', Blog IMS, 2013, first accessed 21st January 2018, https://www.revistaserrote.com.br/2013/12/a-arquitetura-dos-intervalos-

Perrotta-Bosch, F., 'O Risco de Sacralizar o Museu Dessacralizado', Blog IMS, 126 11th December 2015, first accessed 21st January 2018, https://blogdoims.com.br/o-risco-desacralizar-o-museu-dessacralizado/

Perrotta-Bosch, F., 'O Risco de Sacralizar o Museu Dessacralizado', Blog IMS, 127 11th December 2015, first accessed 21st January 2018, https://blogdoims.com.br/o-risco-desacralizar-o-museu-dessacralizado/

<sup>128</sup> Vidler, A., 'The Architectural Uncanny', MIT Press, 1994, p95

Buergel, RM., 'The Birthplace of Installation Art', chapter in 'Concreto e Cristal: O Acervo do MASP nos Cavaletes de Lina Bo Bardi', MASP, 2016, p131 Adriano Pedrosa, now Director at MASP is reactivating Bo Bardi's legacy by bringing back into use her designs at MASP installing the easels in 2015. Perrotta-Bosch, F., 'O Risco de Sacralizar o Museu Dessacralizado', Blog IMS, 11th December 2015, first accessed 21st January 2018, https://blogdoims.com.br/o-risco-de-sacralizar-o-museu-





Fig 34. Gasolina, Teto Preto, 2015





Fig 38. Lina Bo Bardi, Illustration of a Circus occupying the space underneath MASP, 1972

"... create an atmosphere in the Trianon. I would like the public to go there to see open air exhibitions and discuss things, listen to music, see movies. Children too, playing in the sun, from morning to evening. And brass band concerts. A somewhat bad taste in popular music."

This simple subversion is reflected in her characteristically playful drawings of the space (Fig. 38 & 39). One of the most well-known, an oblique view of MASP in elevation shows the public space below filled with colourful carousels, imaginative play structures all surrounded by tropical fauna. In Bo Bardi's own words:

'The praça below MASP was dedicated to some practical structure, part static, part moveable, light and music, dedicated to children that can value the sculptures for play...from day one the young would be the protagonists in the life of the museum through design, music and theatre.' <sup>155</sup>

132 Bo Bardi, L., 'Museu de Arte de São Paulo', Blau Instituto Lina Bo. E P.M. Bardi, 1997, unpaginated



Fig 35. Someone jumps from the rock which Bo bardi named after Assis Chateaubriand situated under the belvedere at MASP



Fig 36. Protest at MASP campaigning against the rise in bus fares, 2013



Fig 37. Gathering outside MASP during a protest



Fig 39. Lina Bo Bardi, Illustration of MASP

The sizing of the objects is unusual depicted as they would be in the imagination of a child rather than to scale. This is a fantastical universe, one made impossible by the political context in which MASP was built, where such individual expression writ large was unthinkable. Such seeming simplicity in the activities of the everyday belies Bo Bardi's later descriptions of the work, which cast it in a more far-reaching political role. By giving over so much of the museum's space to free occupation, Bo Bardi subverts the authority of the architect as a specialist in which they define forms, spaces and their function; rather her key design move for MASP is instead a form of submission, designing for ephemeral and temporal occasions rather than permanence. With design traditionally enforcing a particular demarcation of space, here the lack of architecture serves to break with normative hierarchies, with the museum inviting habits to form outside its control.

<sup>133</sup> Bo Bardi, L., Caixa 2, Basta 6, Bibliotéca Museu de Arte de São Paulo, accessed 21st

4

## CONCLUSIONS

## 'Play fool to catch wise.' <sup>134</sup>

This chapter introduced MASP in its first iteration on Rua Sete de Abril, describing the unique conditions framed by alternative models of business and politics that brought the Bardis to Brazil.<sup>155</sup> In Bardi, Chateaubriand met a collaborator who was able to direct the cultural and thus ideological direction of the museum, while he managed it as a political and economic entity. The dynamics of this context allowed the Bardis to pursue their agenda with comparative freedom, despite the challenge of establishing MASP's cultural validity as a part subversion of European museology. Drawing attention to the museum's patronage by private business as a means to retain its alterity, MASP's physical location in São Paulo, was described in this chapter as fundamental to its success in these terms, with the institution part of an alternative narrative of capital rather than national modernity.<sup>136</sup> The chapter argued that the blurring of the museum's geopolitical and transcultural origins allowed it to operate within the interstices of formal organisation, which gave credence to the alterity of its identity as an institution.<sup>137</sup>

Facilitated by the institution's interdependency on both national and international accreditation, it is claimed that this blurring was achieved by the Bardis' ability to speak to audiences both included and excluded by museological debate. The idea for a pedagogic cultural institution appeared repeatedly in contemporary European discourse of the immediate postwar period with UNESCO and its sub organisation the International Council of Museums (ICOM) providing the clearest framework to which directors and curators contributed internationally.<sup>138</sup> This chapter showed that despite the originality of MASP in

The nature of this Modernity is elaborated upon in the following chapter. 136

138 While the period that concerns this research is primarily limited to the early 1950s

#### AN ACT OF COURAGE

the Brazilian context, the museological concept was neither new nor the couple's own. It was the integrity of this discourse then, rather than the alterity of the activities themselves that was central to the couple's strategy, codifying education such that it could be understood within a broader constellation of recognised disciplines.<sup>139</sup> In this way the museum was both familiar and yet radically different; the ingenuity being that its programme demanded its status as an institution.

The museum's imbrication with international discourse was communicated to São Paulo's inhabitants primarily by way of Bardi's documentation of the project in the local press.<sup>140</sup> Newspapers linked the financial and political elite with the growing middle class where a new readership could, as Matias López asserts, 'follow trusted opinion leaders.' 141 The Bardis' collaboration with existing locations of power, rather than their resistance to them. highlights the boundaries they negotiated between their stated agenda and the terms in which they pursued it; speaking in the language and within the space of the dominant class to create a mask of their own counter hegemony. Working together not only to occupy both central and peripheral roles at the same time, this thesis advanced the claim that the Bardis actively produced the 'inside' as much as their rhetoric attempted resistance from it. To appropriate such spaces for their own purposes can, as Bill Ashcroft suggests, reorient discourse towards other localities, yet equally risks further marginalising peripheral groups by speaking for them rather than with them.<sup>142</sup> Given their manipulation of these centres, the research questioned the extent to which the couple can still then be considered cultural outsiders in the contemporary literature.<sup>143</sup>

images/0001/000108/010894fo.pdf 139 the Shaping of Knowledge', Routledge, 1992, p2 140 1983, p65 141

142 1998, p18

143 Studies, Vol. 1, No. 3, 1998, pp305-319

Proverb of Jamaican Slaves as quoted in Scott, JC., 'Domination and the Arts of 134 Resistance: Hidden Transcripts', Yale University Press, 1990, p3

<sup>135</sup> Giddens, A., 'The Consequence of Modernity', Polity Press, 1990, Stanford University Press, p175

Having been introduced to Chateaubriand at the opening of one of the exhibitions 137 the couple held at MES, the businessman invited the Bardis to move to São Paulo to found what would be Brazil's first museum of art. The Bardis precise first meeting with Chateaubriand however is not entirely clear. Latorraca notes that Chateaubriand had already contacted Bardi in Europe, being aware of his renown as a critic and art dealer. Latorraca, G., 'Ways of Showing: the Exhibition Architecture of Lina Bo Bardi' in catalogue of exhibition 'Maneiras de Expor', Museu Casa Brasileira, 2014, p19

it is striking that even as late as 1958, UNESCO's annual meeting in fact held in Rio de Janeiro names its conference The Role of Museums in Education, the topic thus occupying a central position to the organisation's ongoing interests over a decade after the Bardis first addressed the very same issue. This is the same year in which Bo Bardi moves to Salvador in Bahia to establish another museum of art the Solar do Unhão which again had pedagogy as its focus, albeit in arguably an even more contested cultural field, http://unesdoc.unesco.org/

It is important to emphasise the radical nature of pedagogy within the context of the museum at this time given what Eilean Hooper Greenhill states is that 'knowledge is now well understood as the commodity that museums offer'. Hooper-Greenhill, E., 'Museums and

As relics of colonial administration, newspapers in Latin America were, in the postwar context with the rise of industrial capital all the more market driven. Anderson, B., 'Imagined Communities: reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism', Verso Books,

López, M., 'Elite Framing of Inequality in the Press: Brazil and Uruguay Compared', The Journal of the Brazilian Political Science Association, Vol. 10, No. 1, 2016, p5 Ashcroft, B., 'Modernity's First Born: Latin America and Postcolonial Transformation', ARIEL: A review of International English Literature. Vol. 29. No. 2, April

Beverley, J., 'Theses on Subalternity, Representation, and Politics', Postcolonial

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Scott's criticism however is that the institutional elite's attempt to portray social action in the 'public transcript' denies the possibility of autonomous social action by those whom are supposedly being represented.<sup>149</sup> The language of Paulo Freire, the renowned Brazilian sociologist and educator articulates this dynamic in Brazil, 'we always believed we had something to exchange with them [the people], not just offer them.' <sup>150</sup> In attempting a collaborative project, Freire's statement only highlights a distinction between *us* and *them*; the educated elites and the uneducated masses.<sup>151</sup> It is important then to challenge the modes in the historiography that promote participation as reflective of an inclusive society, questioning the presumption of the viewer's passivity and the 'activating' body (the institution) performing a normative good.<sup>152</sup> If one's own agency is defined by the ability to move between dominant and subjugated identities, what does it means to claim to speak from a position of alterity, and in Brazil, on behalf of the subaltern? The next chapter investigates the positions from which such voices were enunciated in relation to *Habitat*, the magazine edited by the Bardis, which they established to provide a discursive platform for design in Brazil.

The thesis therefore challenged the construction of Bo Bardi as a marginal figure, arguing that her occupation of a marginal role at MASP, in collaboration with Pietro Maria Bardi, was crucial in a way that has largely been overlooked.<sup>144</sup> Bardi occupied the official directorate representing the museum in a formal transnational capacity, while conversely Bo Bardi operated with no such official title or categorical label, allowing her freedom to pursue the museum's more intransigent activities on a local scale. In addressing this lost point of accreditation, the Bardis' focus on both self-legitimisation and proselytisation achieved what the political scientist James C. Scott deems the 'formal veneer' of institutional integrity. For Scott such strategies enable a means of carrying out subversive activity without reproach from more dominant parties as an 'every day form of resistance.' <sup>145</sup>

Scott describes forms of resistance that are out of sight as 'hidden transcripts'. While acknowledging the limits of such small acts, Scott denies their triviality, claiming that they often lead to forms of inventiveness that are less likely to be called into question.<sup>146</sup> In transforming the dominant museological discourse as their own, the Bardis created both an ideological and physical space of 'hidden' cultural resistance.<sup>147</sup> The significance of MASP as an architectural space is the infrastructure it provides in the conversion of the hidden transcript to that of the public, meaning that it makes visible the couple's claim on the existing hegemony of cultural territories. The building's publicness is not just an evocation of Bo Bardi's political aspirations of 'freedom', but performs as a backdrop for occupation, which makes a tangible visual connection between the institution and the city.<sup>148</sup> One cannot experience art at MASP without encountering the building, heightened by the structure's constant reinforcement of the thresholds between inside and outside, between what is public and what is private. With the military dictatorship diminishing the ability for such inclusivity in Brazil during the 1960s, these spatial qualities took on even greater significance as a form of political resistance.

University Press, 1990, p46 150 de Oliveira, O., 'Lina ti-Schools', in Concreto e Cry MASP, 2016, p94 151 Freire was well award his writing. Scott, JC., 'Domin University Press, 1990, p49 152 Stuart Hall describes an unsocialist perspective. Ha

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Scott, JC., 'Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts', Yale

150 de Oliveira, O., 'Lina Bo Bardi's and Paolo Freire's Anti-Museums and Anti-Schools', in Concreto e Crystal: O Acervo do MASP nos Cavaletes de Lina Bo Bardi',

151 Freire was well aware of, and acknowledged the disparity in power relations in his writing. Scott, JC., 'Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts', Yale

152 Stuart Hall describes the notion of considering people as purely a passive force is an unsocialist perspective. Hall, S., 'Notes on Deconstructing 'The Popular' in eds. Samuel, R., 'People's History and Socialist Theory', Routledge, 1981, pp227–240

<sup>144</sup> In reconsidering Pietro Maria Bardi's role by crediting him for the advancement of the thinking that is usually considered to underpin Bo Bardi's design practice in no way detracts from her talents, instead it is meant as a way of clarifying their partnership while giving weight to their individual abilities.

<sup>145</sup> Scott, JC., 'Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts', Yale University Press, 1990

<sup>146</sup> Scott, JC., 'Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance', Yale University Press, 1985, p33

<sup>Ashcroft, B., 'Modernity's First Born: Latin America and Postcolonial Transforma</sup>tion', ARIEL: A review of International English Literature. Vol. 29. No. 2, April 1998, p18
Bo Bardi claimed that the artist John Cage had, while driving down the Paulista remarked that MASP was a 'space of freedom' which she later reflected encapsulated her political intentions for the project. Bo Bardi, L. as quoted in 'Stones Against Diamonds', Architecture Words 12, AA Publications, 2009, p112

SPACES OF TRANSCULTURAL RESISTANCE

5

## A GREATER SOCIAL COMMITMENT

'Habitat was a magazine made with six hands; two from Lina, two from Pietro and two from Flavio Motta.'1

The previous chapter focused on the alterity of the education programme at MASP to claim that the museum utilised its symbolic power as a global institution, as a means to gain legitimacy as a cultural project. To explore further how the museum cemented its claim as an alternate space for aesthetic and political debates about art, architecture and industrial design in Brazil, this chapter shifts the discussion to Habitat Magazine, which was published to complement MASP's stated agenda. Habitat ran for 25 issues until 1965, although Bo Bardi edited only the first 10, returning to edit issues 14 and 15 before resigning entirely.<sup>2</sup> While Habitat was devoted to supporting MASP's programme of promoting the arts in Brazil, it featured articles addressing a range of issues that reflected the museum's broader ambitions. The founding of Habitat and its history as one of the first magazines dedicated to the emerging field of industrial design has been well researched and documented, specifically within academic theses at Brazilian universities. However there is not one stand-alone publication on the topic; rather *Habitat* has come to form part of more general biographies of Bo Bardi.<sup>3</sup>

In Fabiana Terenzi Stuchi's masters thesis Revista Habitat: Um Olhar Moderno sobre os Anos 50 em São Paulo (Habitat Magazine: A Modern Look on the Fifties in São Paulo), Bo Bardi's involvement in Habitat is traced from the magazine's conception through to its emergence

as one of the country's first design journals.<sup>4</sup> The author has compiled a diligent inventory of all the articles and traced its early history, focusing specifically on the terms in which Bo Bardi's editorial work in Italy informed Habitat.<sup>5</sup> And yet despite the acknowledgement of Habitat as Bo Bardi's project in such a comprehensive piece of research, her involvement is presented in a restricted way that recognises only her writing, rather than acknowledges her managerial execution of the magazine's design or its function in advancing her own design practice. The dynamics of the magazine's impact on bringing the culture of more disparate areas of the nation into a discourse on design, mirroring her tactics at MASP, has therefore not been considered in much detail. Indeed the most significant article published in the magazine, Bela Criança, written by Bo Bardi and printed in the second edition of Habitat (which I return to later in this chapter), has been selected in the literature almost independently as indicative of her entire engagement with architecture in Brazil, devoid of the context, design or otherwise in which it was produced.

As a consequence Bo Bardi's writing in *Habitat* has more recently been co-opted in an attempt to elevate her status. This has been done to canonise Bo Bardi as part of western Modernist history in order to make a case for her comparison to other authorial figures including Le Corbusier, whose own writings in many ways hold equal weight to his architecture. An example of this is the book Lina por Escrito, which showcases Bo Bardi's work through her writing by collating the articles that she published in *Habitat* (amongst other sources) and presenting them without the context in which they were first published, negating the magazine as a material object central to the practice of writing.<sup>6</sup> In attempts to consolidate Bo Bardi's writing in one space, the book's editors hope to reveal a singular polemic, which fails to give consideration to the magazine as a site for thinking about alternative strategies for the design of architecture itself.

In *Lina por Escrito* Bo Bardi's words become a string of isolated musings approximating an ideology rather than reflecting the conflicting and sporadic nature in which they were written, or their part in an ongoing dialogue intentionally constructed within sequential

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Stuchi, FT., 'Revista Habitat: Um Olhar Moderno sobre os Anos 50 em São Paulo', Masters Thesis, Faculty of Architecture, University of São Paulo, Faculdade de Arquitetura e Urbanismo, Universidade de São Paulo (FAU-USP), 2006, p61

While Habitat Magazine was the publication that Bo Bardi had the longest standing connection to having founded it in 1951, it is her joint sub-editorship of Domus Magazine in Italy that is often documented as the pinnacle of her publishing career. Along with its connection to the designer and architect Gio Ponti, this role has become a renowned part of her biography in part because she was only 25 years old at the time. Despite the retelling of this connection and significance of her involvement in magazine publishing in both Italy and Brazil

PhD and Masters theses in Brazil are quite different from their UK counterparts. 3 They are generally seen as a professional undertaking by researchers already established in their field and pursuing academia as a career path making them a more reliable source of information than would usually be assumed

USP). 2010

Paulo (FAU-USP), 2006

See also Canas, AT., 'A Revista a Habitat e o Museu de Arte de São Paulo', unpublished PhD thesis, Faculdade de Arquitetura e Urbanismo, Universidade de São Paulo (FAU-

Stuchi, FT., "Revista Habitat: Um Olhar Moderno sobre os Anos 50 em São Paulo', unpublished Masters Thesis, Faculdade de Arquitetura e Urbanismo, Universidade de São

Revista das Artes

issues.<sup>7</sup> This chapter addresses this gap in the literature by situating Bo Bardi's writing in Habitat relative to the magazine as a wider project, particularly in relation to the construction of the post-colonial subject.<sup>8</sup> In doing so the research claims a more critical reading of the magazine beyond simply being a site of reporting.<sup>9</sup> In fact the chapter reframes *Habitat* entirely to situate the magazine as both a document of Bo Bardi's own experimentation, but also a tool designed to catalyse social, political, artistic and architectural change in Brazil, through acts of both subtle subversion, contrasted with more overt forms of confrontation.

"...art, from the professionals and from the aspirants, and that includes the brave primitives and petulant amateurs, needs the news- paper/radio/TVbattage.' 11

MASP was brought into being by the Bardis through their use of the media as a powerful channel for communication. By positioning these articles as a form of propaganda, Chapter 4 showed how the Bardis were able to enter one institutional discourse by way of another, the press. Pietro Maria Bardi's frequent publishing about MASP in the lead up to its inauguration worked to create not just a new site of design thinking, but also a strategy to engage middle class consumers and by extension São Paulo's political and financial elite. The ingenuity of this approach was the conceptualisation of the articles as a space without permanent or physical presence, which acted as a symbolic marker for the museum before its foundation. Bardi's writing thus constructed the museum in the public imaginary, earning it institutional status before its occupation of a building. The early success of this strategy led the couple to return to print in October 1950, publishing the first issue of Habitat: Revista das Artes no Brasil (Habitat, Magazine of the Arts in Brazil), which officially doubled up as MASP's catalogue.<sup>12</sup> Challenged with forming an integral connection between the institution's museological agenda and the IAC, the content of the magazine was oriented to create a market for the new type of design taught at the school, while extending MASP's reach to audiences either unable or having not yet visited the collection.

Habitat Magazine was presented in portrait and 210mm x 297mm making it A4 in format. The

10 Architecture, University of São Paulo, 2006, p40 11 MAC, unpaginated, first accessed 21st November 2017 12 Arte de São Paulo.

5.1

## A SECRET OF PASSION<sup>10</sup>

Pietro Maria Bardi stated that Quadrante, the magazine he worked on in Italy before immigrating to Brazil was only in fact possible because, '...for the first year the financial secret of [the magazine was] simply a secret of passion'. Given that Habitat was officially aligned with MASP, which was financially backed entirely by Assis Chateaubriand, it seems strange that the magazine was not funded in the same way however there is very little available information on this issue. Bardi, PM. as quoted in Stuchi, FT., "Revista Habitat: Um Olhar Moderno sobre os Anos 50 em São Paulo'. Masters Thesis, Faculty of

Bardi, PM. as quoted in Migliaccio, L., 'Pietro Maria Bardi in Brazil: art history, criticism and chronicle', Modernidade Latina, Os Italianos e os Centros do Modernismo,

Complete sets of Habitat Magazine are available at Casa de Vidro, the Faculdade de Arquitetura e Urbanismo at the University of São Paulo and the biblioteca at the Museu de

eds. Rubino, S., 'Lina por Escrito', Cosac & Naify, 2009 7

<sup>8</sup> Costa da Nóbrega Cesarino, LM., 'Brazilian Postcoloniality And South-South Cooperation: A View From Anthropology', Portuguese Cultural Studies 4, Fall 2012, pp.85-113, p85

<sup>9</sup> Ashcroft, B., 'Modernity's First Born: Latin America and Postcolonial Transformation', ARIEL: A review of International English Literature. Vol. 29. No. 2, April 1998, p18

and organizer of "Construzioni"), Candido Portinari and by me.' 14

Bardi's letter indicates that, as an early initiative, *Habitat* was a completely separate project to MASP, with an ambition to think about architecture rather than art or design.<sup>15</sup> Bardi's suggestion to form an editorial team of architects, working with Oscar Niemever the wellknown Carioca, could be read then as demonstrating a strategy to bridge the two cultural centres of Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo. This would not only strengthen MASP's nascent reputation, but also assist in situating Bo Bardi (who along with her Italian colleague Palanti, is the only one Bardi has to qualify with a descriptive introduction) as part of a contemporary avant-garde group by aligning her work with more renowned architects, whose projects were already credited with transforming the cultural context of Brazil. Niemeyer however concluded that the architectural cultures of both cities were significantly different that they merited independent treatment, which offers one reason why Habitat abandoned its architectural agenda instead coming under the auspices of the museum.<sup>16</sup>

Shock of the New

Under the strong rhetoric of Carioca Modernism, Habitat risked acquiring a very specific and already established identity, rooted in a regionalist approach to European Modernism. Therefore while the shift in focus to São Paulo freed the Bardis of this constraint, it meant that a magazine now fixed in the city would have to address its comparable lack of identity and absence in the architectural cultural discourse of modernity. For São Paulo, a city known for its industrial development, the integration of art into a market society underpinned any address of its new culture. While Carioca Modernism suffered from the pressure of inventing a national style aligned with state politics, São Paulo's artists and architects focused instead on the new bourgeoisie as their patrons. The innovations of the bourgeoisie were a lasting result of the independence of the nation state, which converted property owners into a new form of ruling class. The perception of their own odernity however

14 p57 15 16 Bardi', Yale University Press, 2013, p47

front cover was printed in colour while the inside was mostly black and white with colour used to highlight certain articles (Fig. 1). On occasion a different paper stock was used for articles by invited international authors, as was the case when Max Bill was published in the magazine. Colour was also reserved for advertisements, which were printed together at the front of the magazine. A summary page written in English immediately followed, providing a brief translation of a selection of the articles found within (Fig. 2). Printed on an off pink textured paper it contrasted with the slight gloss and brilliant white of the magazine's interior pages. The preface, along with a list of contributors, set the tone for the magazine, with details of its production and distribution also listed. Habitat was sold in Brazil for Cr \$150 and published 4 times a year, although in effect its publication was sporadic. First aimed at a Paulista market, after issue three the magazine was also distributed in Rio de Janeiro and after issue ten sold in Argentina, followed by Portugal, Spain, Salvador, Porto Alegre and the US under the editorship of Flavio Motta.<sup>15</sup> Habitat's ambition was thus to promote Brazilian design abroad with its positive recognition by foreign audiences a measure against which a local readership assessed its value.

The magazine's subtitle printed on its front cover denotes its concern with 'arts in Brazil', however in canvassing support for a new magazine, Pitero Maria Bardi lists contributors, bar Portinari, entirely from the field of architecture. Therefore while Habitat is often described as a vehicle to publicise MASP and the failed IAC, it is evident that the magazine was first conceived with entirely different ambitions. Bardi writes to Sigfried Giedion in 1948 explicitly stating that the magazine's purpose was architectural:

'I was able only today to talk with Niemeyer about our idea of inviting you to Brazil. (...) We have decided two things: first of all to ask and to make the possible for you to be invited officially by the Brazilian government to come to this country and give two series of lectures, one at Rio de Janeiro and other at the "Museu de Arte de São Paulo". We have already given the first steps.

Secondly: we shall publish an important architecture magazine that shall be organized and oriented by Niemeyer, Eduardo Kneese de Mello, Lina Bo (my wife, that has been

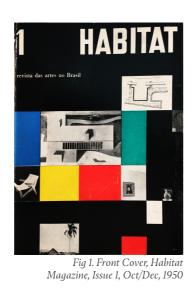




Fig 2. English Summary, Habitat Magazine, Issue 1, October 1950

Stuchi, FT., 'Revista Habitat: Um Olhar Moderno sobre os Anos 50 em São Paulo', Masters Thesis, Faculty of Architecture, University of São Paulo, 2006, Correspondência de Pietro Maria Bardi a Siegfried Giedion, com data de 7 de dezembro de 1948; encontrada no acervo histórico do MASP. Documento transcrito na integra ver ANEXO 05 (grifo nosso),

The subtitle for Habitat is 'Revista das artes no Brazil' translated as 'Magazine of the arts in Brazil', a title it would retain throughout the Bardis' editorship.

According to Bo Bardi, Niemeyer claimed that the 'alliance between Rio and São Paulo made no sense and each group [should] stay on its own place'. Lima, ZRMA., 'Lina Bo

<sup>13</sup> Stuchi, FT., 'Revista Habitat: Um Olhar Moderno sobre os Anos 50 em São Paulo'. Masters Thesis, Faculty of Architecture, University of São Paulo, 2006, Correspondência de Pietro Maria Bardi a Siegfried Giedion, com data de 7 de dezembro de 1948; encontrada no acervo histórico do MASP. Documento transcrito na integra ver ANEXO 05 (grifo nosso), p5

therefore positioned the magazine as a tool to break with the traditions of the old, without setting out the parameters of the new. The tactic they employed in *Habitat Magazine* in order to emphasise such a division was to provoke a reaction from their readership. Julio Katinsky a former student of Bo Bardi's and later an established designer himself noted:

"... Habitat magazine was a shock to all of us,...[we waited] anxiously for each number and reading up to the Alencastro notes.' <sup>21</sup>

Bold editorial gestures that retained a clear graphic style throughout Habitat's entire print run engendered the shock which Katinsky describes, with the magazine cover creating a striking aesthetic. Making use principally of high contrast primary colours, figurative imagery was collaged with everything from illustrations of tropical fauna and primitive sculpture to plans of buildings and even whole urban designs (Fig. 3-6). With the absence of text, and in frequently using illustration rather than photography as the lead image, the covers give little away to the content inside; rather they set a visual tone and abstraction to encourage the expectation of something new. Here 'newness' is an end in itself, voicing the Bardis' ambitions to open up the contemporary dialogue as a means to conceive modernity in a multiple number of ways.<sup>22</sup>

A Space for Representation The newness of the magazine covers however, disguised familiar topics within, with the inaugural issue serving in fact to reframe old agendas. Pietro Maria Bardi wrote the first article published in Habitat reiterating MASP's programme of the previous four years. His piece simply titled Foreword, paraphrases much of the content that he had published previously in Diário de São Paulo in 1947.23 The magazine therefore launches not with a statement of its own imagining, but with one that supports the ongoing programme of the museum. Immediately following Bardi's article is another authored by NAR called Cidadelas da Civilzação (Cities of Civilisation), which works with much the same ambitions, praising

21 pseudonyms, the use of which I address later in this chapter. p35 23

contrasted with the old labour structures and thus forms of production still relied upon by the country. This meant that the image of progress was linked indelibly with colonial forms of oppression.<sup>17</sup> As such *Habitat Magazine* became the broker of relationships between artists, their work (now framed as products) and new sites of emerging capital, within a growing cultural market place. Accordingly as Roberto Schwarz describes, the difference between the 'two Brazils' was not an imitation of western capitalism or part of a transitional process to modernity, rather it fundamentally characterised Brazilian identity as a Modern nation.<sup>18</sup> Habitat's editorial scope absorbed this shift, with the lens under which the production of art was considered subsuming also architecture. The parallel launch of the IAC provided the impetus for the couple's focus on new forms of production, despite their lack of clarity regarding the agenda for the school. Writing about the curriculum Bardi stated that:

Public reaction will certainly be good and cancel forever the old story of the unpopularity of the new. The experiment takes place in a city that - as distinct from the European ones - does not have specific traditions of taste and is ready to accept with enthusiasm the daring news.' <sup>19</sup>

The Bardis' had no need to convey their vision with any greater specificity because those whom they wished to engage were manufacturers, whose interests were predicated on the desires of their consumer base without any orientation towards design themselves. Therefore Habitat's initial ambition was not so much to establish any definite manifesto for the direction of art and architecture in Brazil, rather as a publication its task was to affirm a break with the past to engage the perspective of those whom may have a financial stake in the city's claims on modernity. Heralding what Immanual Wallerstein states was an era where progress became fundamental to the ideology of modernity; Habitat perpetuated the perception that anything new embodied a normative good, which became an identity in itself.<sup>20</sup> The Bardis'





Fig 4. Habitat Magazine, Issue 4, July/Sept, 1951 Fig 6. Habitat Magazine, Issue 8, July/Sept, 1952

Fig 5. Habitat Magazine,

Issue 5, Oct/Sep, 1951

5

HABITA

Schwarz, R., 'Brazilian Culture: Nationalism By Elimination', New Left Review, Vol. 17 1 No. 67, Jan-Feb 1988, first accessed 3rd July 2018, https://newleftreview.org/I/167/robertoschwarz-brazilian-culture-nationalism-by-elimination

Schwarz, R., 'Brazilian Culture: Nationalism By Elimination', New Left Review, Vol. 18 1 No. 67, Jan-Feb 1988, first accessed 3rd July 2018, https://newleftreview.org/I/167/roberto-schwarz-brazilian-culture-nationalism-by-elimination

Bardi, P.M. as quoted in Amorim, P. & Cavalcanti, V., Modern Design Meets Latin 19 America: The Role of Pioneering Design Magazines Habitat and Nueva Visión in Brazil and Argentina', Design Frontiers: Territories, Concepts, Technologies, p496

Mauro Guillén highlighted the phenomenon of 'modernism without modernity' 20 in Latin America referring to the lack of the typical requirements for modernism such as industrialisation and modern construction technologies. Lu, D., 'Entangled Modernities in Architecture' chapter in eds. Greig Crysler, C., Cairns, S & Heynan, H., 'The SAGE Handbook of Architectural Theory', SAGE, 2012, p238

Katinsky, J. as quoted in Stuchi, F., 'Revista Habitat: Um Olhar Moderno sobre os Anos 50 em São Paulo', Masters Thesis, Faculty of Architecture, University of São Paulo, 2006, Correspondência de Pietro Maria Bardi a Sigfried Giedion, com data de 7 de dezembro de 1948; encontrada no acervo histórico do MASP. Documento transcrito na integra ver ANEXO 05 (grifo nosso), p40. Alencastro refers to one of Bo Bardi's

Kaya, I., 'Modernity, Openness, Interpretation: A Perspective on Multiple Modernities', Social Science Information, Vol. 43, No. 1, SAGE Publications, 2004, pp35-57,

## A GREATER SOCIAL COMMITMENT

opportunism, meaning that it held a temporal urgency requiring assistance in forwarding its progression. A magazine in this instance can be disseminated more quickly than the planning or construction of a building; publishing is faster than architecture. With the developing market itself based on speed and opportunity, the introduction of alternative tactics for the dissemination of architecture and design reflected the emerging culture of the age.

The process involved a moment of shock or astonishment, with the mechanisms of the magazine directed at stripping events of their self-evident, familiar qualities, making them strange and allowing the audience to observe their underlying causes. Bo Bardi's subjugation and rejection of traditional power bases in Habitat's publication as a subsidiary of MASP, therefore created a space for a counter discourse without refuting the inherent value of power as a means to reorient the focus of the narrative governing design.<sup>27</sup> The question then is how can we understand Habitat as a critical response to the power structures of capital, both new and old as they transitioned in Brazil? In thinking about this question I use what remains of this chapter to present *Habitat* in terms of the tensions it created in attempting to operate both as a form of resistance, while also as a proposition for an alternative form of modernity.

Chateaubriand and citing MASP as the centre of global peace. The appeal of the article to an international audience is made clear by its full translation into English, which is afforded only to a selection of articles printed in the magazine during its run, and never usually in their entirety. The ongoing significance of Pan American relations is demonstrated in the couple's choice to foreground NAR's speech in the opening issue, which also reflects their articulation of the magazine as a strategic site for more subtle forms of political expression.<sup>24</sup>

Bo Bardi's interest in magazine publishing began in Italy, just before her departure for Brazil where she contributed to editorial discussions and provided articles sporadically to Bruno Zevi and Carlo Pagani's short-lived A Magazine. Described by Zeuler Lima as a 'personal and professional' ambition of Zevi, A Magazine was founded at the close of war to act explicitly as a form of propaganda to further the concern of art and architecture in the field of reconstruction in Italy (Fig. 7).<sup>25</sup> Framed by this context Bo Bardi presented a paper at a conference organised by Pagani called La Propaganda per la Ricostruzione (Propaganda for Reconstruction) in Milan between December 14-16th 1945. Her speech was focused primarily on her belief in the role of popular media newspapers, the radio and monthly magazines in the rebuilding debate, insisting that:

"...it is necessary to fire up public opinion, creating interest for whatever Italy needs to do...it would be useless to create plans...without moral participation.'<sup>26</sup>

Bo Bardi uses words that echo the language of recent combat, employing polemics such as 'firing up public opinion' to address culture as if it was a topic of warfare; for Bo Bardi constructing a new cultural paradigm equated to the reconstruction of cities physically devastated by war, where traditional party politics had failed. Since culture had become such a contested territory in the interwar period as was outlined in Chapter 3, the problem was no longer one of documentation, but the use of information as weaponry.

As this chapter has so far suggested, the question was not necessarily confined to that of identity but how to render it both new, yet at the same time autochthonous. In this way the Bardis' 'war' had no singular enemy, just a discernible direction, they were against the 'old' and sought the 'new'. This linear projection demanded an architecture of reactive

Lima, ZRMA., 'Lina Bo Bardi', Yale University Press, 2013, p30 25





Magazine, edited by Bruno Zevi

<sup>24</sup> Rockefeller, NA., 'Cidadelas da Civilzação', Habitat 1, Oct/Dec 1950, p18

<sup>26</sup> Lima, ZRMA., 'Lina Bo Bardi', Yale University Press, 2013, p28

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5.2

## HIDING IN PLAIN SITE

'The important thing is to feel your heart and confirm that it palpitates'.<sup>28</sup>

## For Reasons of Fantasy

This section considers the formation of *Habitat's* identity as a Paulista publication to demonstrate the importance of the city to establishing its autonomy. Analysing the complexity of the numerous competing narratives that characterised the time, this section claims that for Bo Bardi, the magazine as an object was part of her ideology of architectural practice rather than a medium that merely contained it. Simplistically this can be seen in a cursory flick through the pages of *Habitat*, which show it to be a platform designed to further specific themes pertinent to architecture, situated in the context of a concern for national welfare. Projects related to museums, schools, hospitals, housing and urban projects, both built and speculative, were published in the initial issues. As such its inaugural issue can be read specifically as an extension of the Bardis' core practice given the magazine's Pan American museological theme. However the subsequent serialisation of the magazine further illustrates an intimate portrait of the couple's interests, featuring a number of Bo Bardi's own works along with her musings on a range of topics, unrelated to the built environment or its relationship to culture.

Consequently the argument is often made that Habitat evidences Bo Bardi's 'unique' approach to architecture, design, and graphic sensibility, with the magazine principally cited in the literature as a record of her personal design thinking. Articles incongruous to the broader themes presented in *Habitat* include drawings by Bo Bardi's father Enrico Bo,<sup>29</sup> the most charming of which being a small sketch of a figure standing in front of a number of cacti featuring no title just a caption stating 'Enrico Bo, A Collection of Cacti' (Fig. 8).<sup>30</sup> Her connection to the artist is also omitted with the accompanying text offering only a simple biography:



Fig 8. Illustration by Lina Bo Bardi's father Enrico Bo, titled 'A Collection of Cacti', featured in Habitat Magazine

> 'Enrico Bo is a painter who started to paint when sixty-two years old. For sixty-two years he collected forms, colours, subjects, until when, amidst the blasts and ruins of his city, he opened the repository of his mind and created those so perfectly accomplished paintings. De Chirico was among his first admirers and the magazine Graphis devoted an article to them. Those, capable of feeling in the work of art the 'music of the spirit', will also partake in this mysterious and childlike world of things collected in so many years and tinged with such restrain.'<sup>31</sup>

The second article that is notable for the personal nature of its subject is an argument for the virtues of cats as companions for artists. The small text is richly illustrated with drawings and photographs of a number of cats spread across several pages (Fig. 9-11):

'Cats have always been indispensable companions of artists, either as an inspiration or merely as a dear friend. In our days, where figurative art is giving way to abstract art, all a cat really can do in a studio into [sic] chase rats. With our deepest respect for abstract painting we reserve three of our pages for painters, sculptors and photographers who still found interest and inspiration in felines.' 32

Text reproduced in English as printed in the original magazine edition. Bo Bardi, Anon, 'Alguns Gatos' (Some Cats), Habitat 5, Oct/Dec 1951, p37

Quote from 'Exposição da Cadeira', Diário de São Paulo, 19 de Setembro de 1948 28 as quoted in Cara, MS., 'Difusão e Construção do Design no Brasil: O Papel do MASP', Unpublished PhD Thesis, Universidade de São Paulo, 2013, p45

Enrico Bo was an artist and friend of de Chirico who painted Bo Bardi's portrait as 29 a teenager. Fuller examples of his work 'Enrico Bo', Habitat 7, April/Jun 1952, p36

<sup>30</sup> Bo Bardi, 'Enrico Bo', Habitat 7, April/June 1952, p36

<sup>31</sup> 'Enrico Bo', Habitat 7, April/Jun 1952, p36 32



Fig 9. Anon, Alguns Gatos (Some Cats), printed in Habitat Magazine

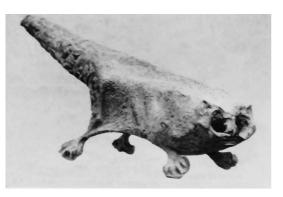




Fig 12.

Bo Bardi's own love of cats is well documented, with numerous photographs showing her either holding or in the presence of one (Fig. 12-14).<sup>33</sup> A number of articles such as this are published anonymously throughout *Habitat*, however the personal nature of their content has since led to the attribution of Bo Bardi as their probable author. However in trying to position the magazine as reflective of her career alone, coupled with the heroic assumption that as a tactic its only objective was to promote her work, most of the literature misses the broader polemic purpose of the magazine as a tool to reorient design discourse in Brazil. This obfuscation is problematic because it negates the wider, and as this chapter argues, far more instrumental role the magazine played in radically confronting the complex orthodoxies governing design in the country.

Redolent of alternative forms of display that Bo Bardi was concurrently exploring at MASP, by printing her father's drawings she 'exhibits' them by the fact of their reproduction in the magazine, with the page itself becoming a new form of picture frame. Bo Bardi's insertion of her father's work reinvents the historicisation of traditional forms of art, which acts as a parallel form of performativity that takes place within the physical space of Habitat's pages, not just in the rhetoric that created it.



Fig 10.



Fig 13.



Fig 14.



Fig 11.

# A GREATER SOCIAL COMMITMENT

## Subversion of Patronage

The magazine invented its subject matter by continually reproducing it in each issue, becoming a vital form of apparatus with which to address the relationship between culture and a consumer society, by way of producing the very market on which it was reporting. The significance of these anomalous articles suggests that Bo Bardi questioned institutionalised systems of meaning, not through their refutation but instead by creating multiple sites for their discussion. The focus on Bo Bardi's authorship in Habitat Magazine often detracts from its other contents, significantly the adverts for consumer items, which explicitly advocate for the project of Brazilian capitalist modernity. The copious display of advertisements in the magazine, which were featured before the editorial in every issue, promote a range of both local and international manufacturers selling everything from modern furniture to escalators (Fig. 15). The ratio of imagery derived from advertising is more heavily weighted towards domestic consumer products than for art or architectural services, demonstrating the magazine's prioritisation of commerce despite its by-line as the 'magazine of the arts' (Fig. 16 & 17). The transition to a market driven society, particularly in São Paulo brought with it the dominance of western consumer tastes to an emerging culture, which masked the social relations of production in Brazil. Such reinforcement of European cultural hegemony through capitalist modernity reinforced existing patterns of colonisation, with the continued denial of the sertão only underscoring further its perceived inferiority.<sup>34</sup>

The implementation of such cultural logic projected a singular and teleological reading of progress in Brazil, in doing so seemingly neatly resolving the often-conflicting narratives that throughout the twentieth century had reflected the country's fragile sense of self, caught between historical rupture and its recapitulation.<sup>35</sup>Both Lina Bo Bardi and Pietro Maria Bardi, who as European émigrés were invited to Brazil to set up a museum, immediately formed part of São Paulo's intellectual middle class situated within this contentious history. Therefore *Habitat*, while attempting to speak from the peripheries, did not speak with a marginal voice. This is an issue that is largely avoided in the literature on the magazine; with Bo Bardi's own marginality as a woman somehow seen as equivalent to the ongoing subjugation of peoples living within the conditions of post-coloniality.

featured in Habitat Magazine



Fig 16. Adverts for lights printed in Habitat Magazine



suecos patenteados e desenhado nelo arquiteto prof. Aalto



MOVELS ORIGINALS, EXCLUSIVOS E PROPRIOS PARA O NOSSO CLIMA, FABRICADOS COM MADEIRA DE LEI

Executamos projetos de decoração de hotei indard ou de acôrdo com os desenho

Av. Copacabana, 291; Copacabana Palace Hotel. Tels.: 37-0513 e 45-2137 Rio de Janeiro

Habitat Magazine



Fig 17. Advert for chairs in





stated that:

"...to live in these interiors was to have woven a dense fabric about oneself, to have secluded oneself within a spider's web.' <sup>37</sup>

(Fig. 18-21).<sup>38</sup>

36 Bo Bardi, L. as quoted in Lima, ZRMA., 'Lina Bo Bardi', Yale University Press, 2013, p29 37 Benjamin, W. as quoted in Leach, N., 'Mimesis', Architectural Theory Review, Vol. 10, No. 1, 2005, pp93-104, p93 Canclini, NC., 'Hybrid Cultures: Strategies for Entering and Leaving Modernity', 38 University of Minnesota Press, 1995

This is important because for many in the country Africa represented an abstraction; a lens through which racial identities could be configured as a means of dealing with Brazil's own modernity along national and transnational scales of development, race and class. Coming to be seen as a distinctly traditional region, the bounded territory of the northeast represented the antithesis of Brazil's modernising agenda and a site of anxiety for the ruling elite.

Therefore Bo Bardi's attempts to demythologise the sertão by speaking to São Paulo's wealth heightened tensions within the formation of Brazil's modern identity by promoting Brazilian products made elsewhere. The conflation of opposing value systems was however not intended to unmask those to whom the art market appealed, rather Bo Bardi challenged the origin of their values. Without abandoning the culture of Brazil's European inheritance and orientation to western modernity, she sought to subvert and rehabilitate them by appealing to the home as a shared space of critical reflection, Bo Bardi stated:

"...to make architecture accessible to everybody so they can realize the kind of house where they want to live...and to have critical judgement. This is what we plan to do through our magazine and through fair publicity.' <sup>36</sup>

Habitat Magazine's location of the home as the contested focus for design disrupted what Walter Benjamin described as the closeted 'dreamspace of bourgeois cosiness'. Benjamin

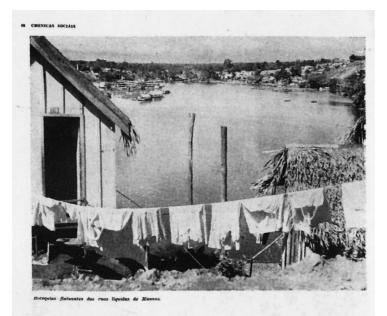
In increasing the simultaneity of different cultures by their exhibition side by side on its pages, Habitat forced their interrelation thereby exemplifying an understanding of modernity that situated the sertão if not within, at least alongside Brazil's established cultural centre

Fig 15. Advert for Escalators

Lu, D., 'Entangled Modernities in Architecture' chapter in eds. Greig Crysler, C., 34 Cairns, S & Heynan, H., 'The SAGE Handbook of Architectural Theory', SAGE, 2012, p235 35 Holston, J., 'The Modernist City', The University of Chicago Press, 1989, p214



Fig 18. Images from a selection of the Sertão featured in Habitat Magazine



Amazônas: o povo arquiteto

mais parecem penseas suite ja vertilaa, de par alives ve alimente viva. Steindade, entilo, algeities todar os cida-dies, ale listaries as franchier de Arianas. De vez em quando sparece as a cidade um

boites). habitat ma casa uncional enas da atravia rel, com

Fig 19. Article Amazonas: O Povo Arquiteto typical of content written by Bo Bardi



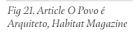




Fig 20. Didijokeh, Ilha do Bananal, Goisás, Image of girl printed in Habitat Magazine



O provo nasce com a arquitetura no san fue, crocura, das necessidades, dias opri-fundades, das fundes da vida. Foria to da problemas concretos. Sabe o parte da vida qui o corresponden-to da problemas concretos. Sabe o parte da vida qui o corresponden-no da constitución e a na terra da vida. Foria por outro da do "o estilo é o homen", no este da um dado "o estilo é o homen", no este da um dado "o estilo é o homen", no este da um alado "o estilo é o homen", no este da do "o estilo é o homen", no este dado e na se permete ressi máxima que a nós se no safigura funda se un parte da do estilo é a na turar da productado e não se deixa levar por outra do esta mas acterias da esta da esta da esta da esta por actina de tudo se abortece al na da guenas por actina de tudo se abortece a do da qui lo que é i múlti paras, da arquitetura de gabinete, chas or poro acima de tudo se abortece or por outro da equile to do de da esta de se abortece a do da que ta tera por acima de tudo se abortece a tor da estorte esta da tera poro acima de tudo se abortece a tera poro acima de tudo se abortece or poro acima de tudo se abortece a tor do se aborte esta porta esta tera da servanta so da esta de tera do se abortece a tera por a das que são, replandos completados esta da se a mas acortes da aborte esta tera porta da esta da se atortes da da da esta tera porta da se a da se a condições da se repousas. Por por acima de tudo se abortece a tera da da esta da se a tera porta da se a da se a condições da se fantassas. Esta tera da se a se a condições da se fantassas das partees que construida que de por por atra da fora do Rio, em Prestem é Basta

## Habitat Entangled

Attending to the same agenda, but approaching it in a slightly different way, Bo Bardi eschewed an appeal to middle class tastes by perpetually invoking the culture of the sertão in order to provide a visual language by which to talk about Brazil's constituent cultures, recognising the dislocation of modern identities from Brazil's coastal regions, rooted elsewhere in everyday heterogeneous daily practices (Fig. 22). Bo Bardi's neat articulation of the northeast as singular despite its own fractured multilocality refuted the West as the prototype for social progress, with the idea of multiple modernities a means to confront the tendency of dominant realities over others. For Göran Therborn who coined the term, such juxtaposition elucidates the idea of modernity not only as multiple but also 'entangled'. positing their interwoven nature rather than binary existence.<sup>39</sup> In making multiple the visibilities of alternative modern narratives, the magazine decentres the hegemony of classical theories of modernisation. Importantly however, rather than construct an alternate modernity in Habitat Magazine, Bo Bardi simply reveals the parallel existence of difference as the result of largely unequal forms of developmental capitalism and forms of social and labour relations. Her argument is not one of replacement, subjugating Western modernity to a nascent and seemingly more 'authentic' Brazilian alternative; rather Bo Bardi attempts to upend the inequality in the relationship to power between the two. In addressing this rebalance by giving equal voice to the aesthetic and material forms of both, Bo Bardi highlights the west as an idea as much as it is a geographical fact.<sup>40</sup>

Conversely Bo Bardi's fashioning of subaltern groups in the pages of *Habitat* served only to reinforce Bahia's history and culture as different from that of the modern metropolis. There is little to demonstrate the desire of crafts people in the northeast to achieve assimilation with societies geographically distinct from their own. In reality their incorporation into an official sphere anaesthetised Brazil's sertão for the palatability of the rich rather than empowering a culture of the poor, thereby institutionalising the marginal rather than advocating for their independence or agency. As Arjun Appadurai has suggested the 'collective memories and desires' of the diaspora are shaped by their plurality rather than their ability to be defined by others.<sup>41</sup> In other words, by their refusal to occupy fixed locations and thus in turn identities



Fia 22. Ex-Votos. Canindé. Imaae printed in Habitat magazing

bestowed upon them, marginal cultural groups demonstrate what Steven Vertovec has deemed a, 'valuable resource for resisting repressive local or global situations.'42

Criticising Habitat Magazine for lacking revolutionary polemic and what could be perceived as its neo colonialist tendencies in subsuming the northeast into a dominant cultural discourse perhaps belies its quieter subversions. In expanding the contents of the museum and geographies beyond its own walls into the private space of the home, *Habitat* infiltrates the curated interior world of the cultural elite appearing where it perhaps shouldn't, or at least hadn't before.<sup>43</sup> In this way the inherent contradiction in the provenance of the magazine's authorship, coupled with the terms in which it promoted cultures found elsewhere acted as a tool of distraction; a fetishisation perhaps yet importantly a sincere attempt to destabilise the centres of cultural hegemony. The inequality in the terms in which it both appropriated and advocated for groups of alterity reflect the inequality of the history in which modern society had been formed. Bo Bardi used Habitat then to catalyse awareness amongst a class materialising from the country's uneven pattern of industrial development with the magazine's purpose to create a labour market located in regions external to Brazil's major centres. Thus as a political project the magazine acted combatively to challenge broader social relations by unusually passive, but nonetheless provocative means, to make the bourgeoisie the principle agent of their own decline.<sup>44</sup>

This idea is influenced by Judith Butler's 'Bodies That Matter', which describes the 44 subject's agency in subverting the dominant power against itself, For Butler it signifies the opportunities of subverting the law against itself to radical, political ends.

## Vertovec, S., 'Conceiving and Researching Transnationalism', Ethnic and Racial

There are interesting parallels between Le Corbusier's magazine L'Esprit Nouveau, which ran between 1920-25 and Habitat Magazine. Le Corbusier also understood L'Esprit Nouveau as a tool to subvert the interests of his readership stating, 'L'Espirit Nouveau is read calmly. You surprise your client into calmness, far from business, and he listens to vou because he doesn't know vou are going to solicit him'. It is likely that Lina Bo Bardi would have been familiar with the influential publication, not least because of the personal friendship between Le Corbusier and Pietro Maria Bardi. Le Corbusier as quoted in Colomina, B., 'Privacy and Publicity: Modern Architecture as Mass Media', MIT Press, 1996,

Therborn, G., 'Entangled Modernities', European Journal of Social Theory, Vol. 6, 39 No. 3, 2003, pp293-305

Hall, S., 'The West and the Rest: Discourse and Power' in eds. Hall, S. & Gieben, B., 40 'Formations of Modernity', Polity Press, 1992, pp275-332

Appadurai, A. 'The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective', 41 Cambridge University Press, 1989, pi

<sup>42</sup> Studies, Vol. 22, No. 2, 1999 43 p185

5.3

## CLEAR POLEMICAL INTENT

'The legion of 'little Le Corbusiers' that formed was a great danger to modern architecture.' <sup>45</sup>

## Fight for the Centre

The last section detailed the complex paradox of *Habitat* as a modern project in its use to challenge the notion of a universal modernism brought about by the advent of industrial capital. Despite the magazine's purpose to undermine the privilege of those in positions of political and cultural power it nonetheless established a problematic proto-colonial perspective of development of its own.<sup>46</sup> In this way the magazine worked to reinforce the agenda of MASP shifting the locus for cultural activity, which encouraged avant-garde thinking yet within an equally institutional setting. Forcing a dichotomy between formal recognition of the intellectual elite and informal 'didactic' methods of display, the interests of the former were subverted as a means of engaging a broader public. The ambitions of this as a wider cultural project however were not limited to MASP and were indeed mirrored across a number of arts institutions that emerged in Brazil in the early post war period, signifying more holistic attempts by others in addition to the Bardis to reorient a political discourse around a cultural one.

MASP was in fact the sole purveyor of cultural modernity in São Paulo for less than a year with its rival institution the Museu de Arte Moderne de São Paulo (MAM-SP) founded in 1948 (Fig. 23).<sup>47</sup> MASP's American investors were equally surprised at what NAR's assistant Carlton Sprague-Smith referred to as the 'art situation' in Brazil. Despite also explicitly stating its orientation towards the arts, MAM-SP was organised by a group comprised mainly of architects including Gregori Warchavchik, João Vilanova Artigas, Rino Levi, E. Kneese de Mello, and Almeida Salles all led by the businessman Francisco Matarazzo 'Ciccolo' Sobrinho.<sup>48</sup> Despite Rockefeller having been in contact with Chateaubriand as

45 This article appears to also have been published by Manchete Magazine in June 1953. d'Aquino, F., 'Max Bill, o Inteligente Iconoclasta', Habitat 12, Jul/Sept 1953, p34 Hosagrahar, J., 'Interrogating Difference: Postcolonial Perspectives in Architecture 46 and Urbanism' chapter in eds. Greig Crysler, C., Cairns, S & Heynan, H., 'The SAGE Handbook of Architectural Theory', SAGE, 2012, p70

Given their competitive natures is it curious that both MASP and MAM at one 47 point occupied the same building as each other on Rua Sete de Abril, albeit on different floors.

48 Interestingly Jacob Ruchti is named as a founding partner in MAM yet would go



Fig 23. Photograph of NAR talking with Matarazzo and Yolanda Penteado

early as 1944, the Foundation appears to have backed MAM-SP first, actively encouraging a conflict between the two groups.<sup>49</sup> Sprague-Smith stated in 1950:

'There is probably some rivalry between Chateaubriand and Matarazzo museums. Chateau started out with classical pictures...but recently his emphasis has been on Modern Art and he apparently wants to run Matarazzo a race in this respect. I doubt whether you will have any trouble, but the amusing fact is that you gave pictures to inauqurate the Matarazzo collection and now are being asked to give your blessing also to the Diários Associados outfit. It seems that this rivalry may be very healthy and salutary [sic].' 50

It is not evident that the Rockefeller Foundation was hedging their bets by championing both organisations; rather their interest was primarily in establishing a broader culture of the arts across Brazil by focusing on its main economic centres, as Sprague-Smith affirms:

boys together.' 51

NAR however also held a personal interest in the project, rooted in what Jeffrey Frank states was the billionaire's desire to be:

he could not build.' 52

on to teach at MASP's IAC demonstrating how close collaborators involved in both of the institutions were. Warchavchik and Levi had originally been tasked with designing MAM. but were over looked in favour of Artigas who at that time was not as well-known and much junior. Herbst, H., 'Toda Ideia tem seu Lugar: Interlocuções das Bienais do Museu de Arte Moderna com a Cidade de São Paulo', Universidade Federal Rural do Rio de Janeiro, 2 Seminário Internacional Museografia e Arquitetura de Museus, first accessed 11th March 2018, http://www.arquimuseus.arq.br/anais-seminario\_2010/eixo\_i/P1\_Artigo\_Helio\_Herbst. html

49 Rockefeller became personally involved, writing to his friends including Peggy Guggenheim and Phillip Goodwin to donate towards MAM-Rio in order to support the construction of its new building. However all support ceased in 1962. After donating \$50,000 the Foundation withdrew all funding due to changes in tax laws in the USA. 50 Sprague-Smith, C., Letter to Nelson A Rockefeller, 23rd June 1950, NAR, RG 4, Box 148. Folder 1464

Sprague-Smith as quoted in Lima, ZRMA., 'Nelson A. Rockefeller and Art 51 Patronage in Brazil after World War II: Assis Chateaubriand, the Museu de Arte de São Paulo (MASP) and the Musee de Arte Moderna (MAM), first accessed 24th August 2016, http:// www.rockarch.org/publications/resrep/lima.pdf Frank, J., 'Big Spender', The New Yorker, October 13 2014, first accessed 8th Febru-52 ary 2018, https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2014/10/13/big-spender-2

'We are doing well to stick to the movement...our next task is to get our Rio and São Paulo

'a would-be master builder, fascinated by the art he could not make and the buildings

It was in part for this reason that the Foundation focused on:

'slaps on the back and encouragement [which] will keep the fires burning and be more enduring than direct financial assistance.' 53 54

Thus Habitat Magazine's role as the mouth piece of MASP became fundamental given the competitive field emerging between MASP and MAM-SP, which is in part evidenced by the magazine's launch date in late 1950, a moment that coincided with the planning of the first São Paulo Art Biennial by MAM-SP. The rest of this section therefore analyses how Habitat both procured legitimacy for institutions engaged in the arts in São Paulo, while simultaneously stoking a rival discourse against MAM-SP, demonstrating the magazine's centrality in creating paradoxical alliances to further a proto-colonial ideology.

### A Brazilian Miracle

Described by Pietro Maria Bardi's long term assistant at MASP, Eugenia Esmeraldo as a 'man of taste'<sup>55</sup> and by Caroline Jones as 'Rockefeller's peer',<sup>56</sup> Matarazzo's interest in the arts was shared with NAR referring to himself as 'a man who understood nothing of art... [I am] an administrator of the arts' (Fig. 24).<sup>57</sup> Unlike Matarazzo, Chateaubriand did little to personally support artists or critically engage with art beyond indulging in the buying and selling of works as a means of bolstering his reputation.<sup>58</sup> Esmeraldo indicates that this

Sprague-Smith, C., NAR, RG 4, Box 148, Folder 1464, Rockefeller Archives, 53 accessed 7<sup>th</sup> November 2016

Esmeraldo, EG., 'Brief Comments on the Role of Pietro Maria Bardi and the 55 Foundation of MASP', Modernidade Latina, Os Italianos e os Centros do Modernismo, MAC, first accessed 21st November 2016, http://www.mac.usp.br/mac/conteudo/academico/ publicacoes/anais/modernidade/pdfs/EUG\_ING.pdf

56 Having travelled widely he had acquired an interest in Modern Art and through connections made via his romantic partner Yolanda Guedes Penteado, and was appointed the president for the municipal commission for the coordination of the fourth centenary celebrations of São Paulo. Jones, C., 'Anthropophagy in São Paulo's Cold War', 2013 ARTMargins and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2013, p13 First accessed 23rd August 2016, https://architecture.mit.edu/sites/architecture.mit.edu/files/attachments/ publication/artmargins02\_1.pdf

Chateaubriand taunted Matarazzo Snr with negative publicity when he refused 57 to sign publicity contracts. The elder Matarazzo however was perhaps not as successful as Chateaubriand in part because of his aristocratic history was unable to adapt to new market and business conditions.

58 Unlike Chateaubriand, Matarazzo came from a moneyed elite who had found



Francisco Matarazzo 'Ciccolo' Sobrinho

'Chateaubriand and Matarazzo both decided to form art collections, partly out of vanity, partly out of competition and partly out of personal rivalry.' <sup>59</sup>

The nature of this personal rivalry was a matter of public knowledge. In 1952 an argument escalated between the two museums with supporters of MAM-SP at the newspapers Jornal do Brasil and O Estado de São Paulo writing inflammatory articles that refuted the authenticity of the collection that the Bardis' had amassed at MASP.<sup>60</sup> As such the Bardis went on a tour of Europe with part of MASP's collection, exhibiting it to secure its authenticity in the eyes of a foreign audience. The couple's resultant absence from São Paulo meant that they had to step down as editors of *Habitat* for the duration of their trip, yet they continued to use the magazine as a way of voicing the success of the museum's collection abroad. Five separate articles published in issue 13 of Habitat emphasise not only the success of MASP's collection in Paris but also link the city of São Paulo's 400th anniversary to the museum's own seventh birthday celebrations that year, boastfully stating:

'Who would have thought that in seven years this museum would collect so many master pieces that the rooms of the Orangerie are too small to receive all of them.' <sup>61</sup>

In reiterating the prestigious location of L'Orangerie in Paris and the event of MASP's collection there, the articles in *Habitat* explicitly legitimise the works while affirming praise for the museum's donors, many of whom had grown weary of the Bardis:

'[Chateaubriand] woke the interest for this institution and the names of the donors occupy several pages of the catalogue of the Orangerie Exhibition.' 62

than the state of Rio and São Paulo combined. publicacoes/anais/modernidade/pdfs/EUG ING.pdf 60 resrep/lima.pdf 61

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Bazin, G., 'Exposição do Museu de Arte de São Paulo n L'Orangerie' (The Museum

fortune in the coffee business with his family holding a larger share in the national economy

Esmeraldo, EG., 'Brief Comments on the Role of Pietro Maria Bardi and the Foundation of MASP', Modernidade Latina, Os Italianos e os Centros do Modernismo, MAC, first accessed 21st November 2017, http://www.mac.usp.br/mac/conteudo/academico/

Lima, ZRMA., 'Nelson A. Rockefeller and Art Patronage in Brazil after World War II: Assis Chateaubriand, the Museu de Arte de São Paulo (MASP) and the Musee de Arte Moderna (MAM)', 2010, first accessed 24th August 2016, http://rockarch.org/publications/

Bazin, G., 'Exposição do Museu de Arte de São Paulo n L'Orangerie' (The Museum of Art at the Orangerie)', Habitat 13, Oct/Dec 1953, p1

<sup>54</sup> NAR's donation of art over direct finances underscores the prized symbolism of his connection with the continent meaning that both businessmen had to source alternative monetary assistance. Despite their own personal wealth both businessmen used other people's money with Chateaubriand courting investment while Sobrinho tried to transfer the costs of his initiatives to the state, with it bearing half the cost of the first three Biennials. Martorella, R., 'Art and Business: An International Perspective on Sponsorship', Greenwood Publishing Group, 1996, p71

The prose of such a short article therefore works hard to explicitly tie MASP's nascent programme to revered institutions abroad, mentioning both the conservation director at the Louvre, German Bazin and Nelson A. Rockefeller; the text is even bold enough to state MASP's 'consecrat[ion]...by Europe' emphasising the *Louvre's* willing reception of 'the youngest of the great museums of the world' (Fig. 25).63 Rhetoric concerning Brazil's embodiment of the 'new world' is echoed in the fourth article of the same issue titled Um Milagre Brasileiro Apaixonou Paris (A Brazilian Miracle Fascinated Paris), which goes even further to emphasise links between Europe and exoticised versions of Brazil's post-colonial identity. In referring to Chateaubriand as a Condottiere, a mercenary leader contracted by Italian states and the Papacy <sup>64</sup> the article reinforces the claim on the collection's official status while also promoting a proto-colonial origin story as a means to legitimise its more experimental programme. The same article goes on to state:

'Two ladies were overheard making the following remarks in front of the photographic display of the museum's activities: They even have fashion shows among paintings and sculpture. And they held concerts, ballet, classes. This is not a museum, but a real conservatory... those creatures of the new world are so dynamic they give their energy even to museums." 65

As such *Habitat's* portrayal of MASP's reception celebrates the nation's progressive modernity vet plays into colonial tropes of Brazil's 'otherness' as part of the 'new world' by reinforcing a Eurocentric lens. The instrumentalisation of a contradictory approach such as this was mirrored in the way that the Bardis' negotiated their own acceptance in Brazil where they were viewed with hostility, principally as outsiders because of their Italian nationality.<sup>66</sup> Confusingly then, the Bardis' collection required legitimation by external influences, yet their own status as individuals was questioned because of their Italian background. As such, in a purposeful display of commitment the Bardis acquired Brazilian



Fig 25. Photography of L'Orangerie featured in the editorial of Habitat Magazine



Fig 27. Poster for the first São Paulo Art Biennial, designed by Antônio Maluf, 1951



Fig 26. the first São Paulo Art Biennial, 1951

citizenship in 1953.<sup>67</sup> As a closer reading of *Habitat Magazine* during this period thus reveals, a complex intersection of symbolic gestures staged internally and abroad reflects the terms in which institutions were required to embark on their own projects of legitimation prior to the acceptance of their agenda. The magazine demonstrates the couple's foresight of this paradigm with the Bardis devising Habitat as a means to secure support not just for MASP but also their reception in Brazil as part of São Paulo's dominant class.<sup>68</sup>

Love of the Useless The complicated interwoven narrative that linked foreign colonial perceptions of the 'old' world to legitimacy in the 'new' world was challenging for both MAM-SP and MASP who, rather than considering it to their detriment, actively capitalised upon such confusion treating the dichotomy to their advantage. While the Bardis went abroad to gain support for their museum, MAM-SP defended its territory from home. The museum launched the first São Paulo Art Biennial founded by Matarazzo in 1951, which upon its opening was perceived as a symbol of international and more specifically American expansion (Fig. 26 & 27). The event even attracted protestors in its attempt to reorient Modern Art towards localities situated outside the Northern Hemisphere, provoking a debate that unintentionally invited criticism not just from internal but also external geographies precisely because it achieved this by celebrating advancements made in Europe. Matarazzo's 'festival in the mould of Venice' 69 therefore appropriated an established European model but in being the first to import it to Brazil, created a dialectic that forced a turn against Brasilidade and the canonical status that Semana 22' had acquired.<sup>70</sup> The Biennial's promotion of a geometric international

of Art at the Orangerie)', Habitat 13, Oct/Dec 1953, p1

Bazin, G., Exposição do Museu de Arte de São Paulo n L'Orangerie' (The Museum 63 of Art at the Orangerie)', *Habitat* 13, Oct/Dec 1953, p1

Guilbert, CG., 'Um Milagre Brasileiro Apaixonou Paris' (A Brazilian Miracle 64 Fascinated Paris), Habitat 13, Oct/Dec 1953, p4

<sup>65</sup> Guilbert, CG., 'Um Milagre Brasileiro Apaixonou Paris' (A Brazilian Miracle Fascinated Paris), Habitat 13, Oct/Dec 1953, p4

Bo Bardi wrote that Matarazzo had referred to her as a 'troublemaker' because she 66 was both foreign and the director of Habitat Magazine whereas Bardi was labeled an ex-Fascist. Bo Bardi, L., handwritten note quoted in Lima, ZRMA., 'Lina Bo Bardi', Yale University Press, 2013, p223

<sup>67</sup> 68 National d'Histoire de 'Art, 2013, p380 70

The couple registered their citizenship on 18th March 1953 and it was approved on 28th April 1953. Lima, ZRMA., 'Lina Bo Bardi', Yale University Press, 2013, p67

Whitelegg, I., 'The Bienal Internacional de São Paulo: a concise history, 1951-2014', Perspective, Institut National d'Histoire de L'Art, 2013, pp380-386, p388

The São Paulo Biennial was only the second of its kind in the world. Whitelegg, I., 'The Bienal Internacional de São Paulo: a concise history, 1951-2014', Perspective, Institut

According to Oswald de Andrade the week of 1922 had been kept alive 'in the

style in turn complicated the state's ambitions to recover a national identity, and like others that have emerged since, São Paulo's Biennial too sought a global cosmopolitanism.<sup>71</sup> In transcending the banality of the national popular project in pursuit of 'technocratic Modernism',<sup>72</sup> further controversy was caused with the Swiss designer Max Bill taking home the first sculpture prize for his work Tripartite Unity.73 Based on the Mobius Strip, the sculpture is formed of a ribbon like geometric shape made from stainless steel, composed entirely of a single twisting yet seemingly continuous surface (Fig 28-30).

Consequently Bill has been credited with launching the Concretist tendency in Brazil, propagating the perception of a coherency between Modernism and Modernisation.<sup>74</sup> Concretismo captured the urgency of postwar pragmatism manifest in non-geometric abstract art, which was guasi-architectural in its aesthetics and unlike its American counterparts was less concerned with the consensus that abstraction signified progression.<sup>75</sup> Caroline Jones describes this as a 'coding for the schizophrenia of the Brazilian context' referring to *Concretismo* as torn between its foreign origins and its anthropophagic tendencies, which is reflected in the Biennial's choice to award national works that depicted biomorphic forms and international works focused on the geometric (Fig. 31).76 Although a winner of the sculpture prize for his abstract form. Max Bill on the other hand saw this as a negative quality perceiving the confusion inherent in the work as emblematic of the uselessness of Brazil's Modern art and particularly its architecture:

'As a matter of fact, modern Brazilian architecture suffers somewhat from its

memory of the esteemed public'

Jones, C., 'Anthropophagy in São Paulo's Cold War', 2013 ARTMargins and 72 the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2013, p4, first accessed August 23rd 2016, https://architecture.mit.edu/sites/architecture.mit.edu/files/attachments/publication/ artmargins02\_1.pdf

Whitelegg, I., 'The Bienal Internacional de São Paulo: a concise history, 1951-2014', 73 Perspective, Institut National d'Histoire de 'Art, 2013, p381

Michael Asbury notes that this apparent synchronicity between art and 74 architecture signified the completion of an important shift whereby as related disciplines, the arts no longer affirmed national identity but instead instrumentalised the nation's modernity. Asbury, M., 'Changing Perceptions of National Identity' chapter in Hernandez, F., Millington, M. & Borden, I., 'Transculturation: Cities, Spaces and Architectures in Latin America.: Cities, Space and Architecture in Latin America', Rodopi, 2008, p68

Such self determinacy was rooted in the fall out of the 1929 economic crash 75 and loss of the Coffee market. Jones, C., 'Anthropophagy in São Paulo's Cold War', 2013 ARTMargins and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2013, p12, first accessed August 23rd 2016, https://architecture.mit.edu/sites/architecture.mit.edu/files/attachments/ publication/artmargins02\_1.pdf

Asbury, M., 'The Bienal de São Paulo: Between Nationalism and Internationalism' 76 in Espaço Aberto/Espaço Fechado: Sites for Modern Brazilian Sculpture, Henry Moor Foundation, 2006, p75

Fig 28. & 29. Max Bill, Tripartite Unity, 1951

Fig 31. Victor Brecheret, O Indio e a Suassuapara (The Indian and the Fallow Deer), National Prize Winner for Sculpture, First São Paulo Biennial, 1951 to consideration.' 77

The artist had until that moment become a revered figure amongst both Carioca and Paulista artists as a result of his first exhibition at MASP in 1950, followed by his sculpture shown at the Biennial only a year later.<sup>78</sup> However in criticising the Brazilians' initial attempts at selfdeterminacy. Bill's comments were hugely divisive. Delivered during a lecture in São Paulo in 1953, Bill's speech was reprinted in the pages of *Habitat*. In fact Bill was featured twice in issues 12 and 14. The former article describes his views at length authored by d'Aquino, who states

'He expresses his views with directness, he does not praise easily and does not want to praise gratuitously. Therefore his views are of great interest: perhaps these are the first sincere views on our modern architecture, Max Bill did not like Rio, as a city – it looks like a bombed city – he told us – holes and constructions everywhere; excitement, noise, general nervousness. The landscape is simply impressive, but has not been well used.' 79

In criticising their city Rio de Janeiro, Bill's dislike of the Carioca Modernists is at first veiled, while in the latter issue his views deride openly the work of Oscar Niemever at whom his polemic was principally focused. In failing to censor Bill in her magazine, Bo Bardi implicitly supported the artist's claims, which also served to stoke a rivalry with her Rio counterparts. Habitat however was not the only publication to reinforce such comments on the event of Bill's visits. The journal of the Museu de Arte Moderne (MAM-Rio) in July 1953 reproduced opinions previously published in the Tribuna da Imprensa and in the Diário Carioca. In the latter, on 6th June of the same year, art critic Antonio Bento praised Max Bill precisely *because* of the controversy that he caused, commending its usefulness for honestly critiquing the country's architecture:

Bill, M. as quoted in d'Aquino, F., 'Max Bill, o Inteligente Iconoclasta', Habitat 12, 77 Jul/Sept 1953, p34 78 There is a rich history of correspondence between Brazilian artists and Bill, many of whom visited Ulm, a design school Bill founded in Germany in 1950. Varela, E., 'Critica e Narrativa: A Vista de Max Bill em 1953', Universidade Federal de Rio de Janeiro, Associação Nacional de Pesquisadores em Artes Plásticas (ANPAP), p520 first accessed 13th April 2018, http://www.anpap.org.br/anais/2012/pdf/simposio4/elizabeth\_varela.pdf This article appears to also have been published by Manchete Magazine in June 79 1953. d'Aquino, F., 'Max Bill, o Inteligente Iconoclasta', Habitat 12, Jul/Sept 1953, p34







love of the useless, for what is merely ornamental...its social function [is] not taken in

Sadlier, DJ., 'Brazil Imagined', University of Texas Press, 2008, p190 71

'Worse would be if Max Bill had said that he liked the building by mere courtesy, to return to Switzerland with an unfavourable judgment about this capitalist work of modernism in Brazil.' 80

This demonstrates that while Bo Bardi was not averse to allowing colonising techniques to affirm marginal trajectories, unlike other authors she favoured legitimising her claim by facilitating the reproduction of opposing views, using her editorship as a means to do so. Habitat therefore masked Bo Bardi's more polemical opinions on design in Brazil, by assisting in obfuscating both her gender and lack of professional reputation and allowing her to vicariously disavowal advocacy for carioca modernism, through the appropriation of the voice of international critics as her own.<sup>81</sup>

An Excessive Tendency The previous section highlighted the terms in which the cultural context of post-colonial Brazil remained at once consistent with and in opposition to colonial practices. Hybrid cultural and social patterns emerged as a consequence of such contradictions, reflecting material inequalities of colonial power in a context which Olivia Richmond observes, 'is also the site where power is experienced in its most negative forms'.<sup>83</sup> Conditions that govern everyday life including the print media became sites of resistance through assimilation and adaption with the camouflaging of Bo Bardi's views disguised amongst those of others in Habitat as an example of how she expressed her opinions in a social and political context hostile to their reception. Her most well-known article in this respect, as mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, was published in the second issue of Habitat. In this short text titled Bela Criança (Beautiful Child) Bo Bardi argues for Brazilian architecture to adopt a new position, amplifying the language of resistance that she used previously in her editorial of magazines in Italy:

"...continue the fight against the formulaic and routine...the old way doesn't work anymore, so let's move ahead with the times, or we'll lose out.'<sup>84</sup>

In order to facilitate her polemic she identified the work of Lúcio Costa and Oscar Niemeyer as the focus of her opposition. Accompanied by an image of MES, Bo Bardi wrote of its symbolism as a model for modernity in Brazil but one she believed was not yet free from European 'habits'. Thus Bo Bardi again disparages the nascent work of her Brazilian contemporaries, namely Carioca Modernism, with the article focusing on a celebration of the vernacular talents of makers 'from the rubber tapper...and the backlander', referencing remote regions she considered overlooked by modernity.<sup>85</sup> Bo Bardi begins by crediting Le

82 Sept 1953, p34 83 84

Richmond, O., 'A Post-Liberal Peace', Routledge, 2011, p128 Bo Bardi, L., 'Bela Criança', Habitat 2, Jan/March 1951, p3 85 It is important to remember that during this period while Bo Bardi had travelled

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'Collectivity is formed by individuals, but individualism destroys collectivity.'<sup>82</sup>

Bill, M. as quoted in d'Aquino, F., 'Max Bill, o Inteligente Iconoclasta', Habitat 12, Jul/

Varela, EC, 'Crítica e Narrativa: A Vista de Max Bill em 1953', Universidade Federal 80 de Rio de Janeiro, Associação Nacional de Pesquisadores em Artes Plásticas (ANPAP), p 520, first accessed 13th April 2018, http://www.anpap.org.br/anais/2012/pdf/simposio4/elizabeth\_varela.pdf

According to Zeuler Lima, Bo Bardi's opinions were revealed in magazines by more 81 subtle means whilst working on Zevi's A Magazine. Bo Bardi never signed her articles vet they can be attributed to her by means of a correspondence between Zevi and Pagani that traces editorial discussions in which she was involved noting 'her customary barbed remarks'. Lima, ZRMA., 'Lina Bo Bardi', Yale University Press, 2013, p30

The indecisive nature of Bo Bardi's analysis is a comment on the hybridity of the debate, which acts both in support and derision of the Modern project in Brazil. Blinded by what Homi K. Bhabha called a 'double vision', Niemeyer's architecture, Bo Bardi suggests, accepts Brazil's condition as a colonised subject with its expression of difference indicative of the alienation of the local context rather than a celebration of it.<sup>89</sup> The Cariocas' attempts to attain some power over a Modernism impressed upon them was in Bo Bardi's view just a representation of an official version of 'otherness' authorised by the state. Given the timing of the article, which was published during the first São Paulo Arte Biennial, when the provenance of Brazil's Modernism was hotly debated internationally, Bo Bardi's defence reveals as much about her own search for an 'authentic' cultural identity as it does about the architecture of her peers.

Tactical Collaboration

Bo Bardi's principal role in *Habitat* was as editor with her full name printed in bold capital letters as part of the heading of each issue above the list of additional contributors (Fig. 32). However mirroring her multi-dimensional engagement across different design disciplines, Bo Bardi's involvement in producing the magazine also varied widely. Exhibiting numerous iterations of herself as an author within its pages, it is hard to decipher her voice or rather, to separate the multiple voices that she presents in the text as she deployed a range of pseudonyms for her articles. These include Alencastro, her maiden name Lina Bo, and Lina Bo Bardi, with a significant number of additional articles left anonymous which have since been credited to Bo Bardi. As director of the magazine her full name Lina Bo Bardi is used while all written contributions are credited to Lina Bo.<sup>90</sup> Indeed any reference to her design work, such as furniture she developed for Studio d'Arte Palma along with Giancarlo Palanti, is credited to Lina Bo with accompanying text addressing herself in the third person. In dropping her married name, Bo Bardi asserts distance between herself, her husband and the museum, which is indicative of her intention to be recognised as a designer and thinker independently of her association with Pietro Maria Bardi, but also her objective to begin a career beyond the governance of MASP.

At the time however the museum's catalogue was for Bo Bardi the only magazine in which

89 October, Vol. 28, Spring 1984, pp125-133 90 teen year history.

Corbusier's influence as corresponding, 'most closely to the aspirations of a Latin people... unrestrained by puritanical assumptions', while Brazilian architecture as she saw it should be full of 'spontaneity and passion of primitive art.' 86 Bo Bardi however avoids presenting her position as a binary, with her use of language romanticising both Brazil's adaption of European Modernism and less well known structures familiar to the sertão, demonstrating her own sense as an architect of feeling somehow caught between the two. While the article begins by articulating what she regarded as Brazilian Modernism's 'flaws', she attributes this to a consequence of the country's youth, having 'came into being all of a sudden, as a beautiful child.' 87 Bo Bardi's invention of the term 'Beautiful Child', while expressing the hybrid conditions and consequent architecture of cultural and largely social inequalities across Brazilian society, it is in many ways also a personal reflection of herself; the description echoes her own experience, emerging in Brazil a qualified architect yet to build, navigating new terrain socially, culturally and politically.

Despite observing possible continuities and overlap, Bo Bardi's combative style placed her in opposition to her Carioca peers who did not entertain the idea of the Luso-tropical, thinking the backlands the antithesis of the 'high art' to which they aspired. Confusingly, in the same issue as Bela Criança, Bo Bardi publishes an article titled Two Buildings by Oscar Niemeyer in which she celebrates the architect's 'instinctive feel for the sculptural qualities of these new forms', elaborating in her praise stating that:

'His work is moving ever further away from the 'box frame' in his search for a plasticity that is not baroque in architecture but is still a completely aesthetic expression of craftsmanship, whereas modern architecture's pursuit of free forms is a desire to perfect what we'll call 'unfolded' forms - the perfect forms of machine-made perfection.' 88

On the one hand Bo Bardi suggests Niemeyer's architecture a form of mimicry, one that imitates and thus appropriates the culture of a European power, while on the other she implies the evolution of his work recognising its movement away from the colonial baroque.

- 87 Bo Bardi, L., 'Bela Criança', Habitat 2, Jan/March 1951, p3
- Bo Bardi, L., 'Two Buildings by Oscar Niemeyer' in 'Stones Against Diamonds', 88 Architecture Words 12, AA Publications, 2009, p40

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ARQ. LINA BO BARDI SUMÁRIO

G C. PALANTI ALENCASTRO

SSIS IATEAUBRIANI

Fig 32. Contents showing contributors to Habitat Magazine, Issue 2 listing both Lina Bo and Lina Bo Bardi as authors, 1951

- Bhabha, HK., 'Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse',
- Fabiana Terzini Stuchi's masters thesis Revista Habitat: Um Olhar Moderno sobre os Anos 50 em São Paulo (2006) lists fully every article published in Habitat across its fif-

around Brazil, her affinity with the northeast, particularly the region of Bahia, had not yet fully begun

Bo Bardi, L., 'Bela Criança', Habitat 2, Jan/March 1951, p3 86

she was likely to be published because of both the role she played in its foundation and the lack of comparable titles being printed at the time. Bo Bardi therefore instrumentalised her connection to MASP, only to then assert her autonomy from it. This is again demonstrative of Bo Bardi's ability to subvert expectations, both working for the magazine complicit in its agenda while utilising various tactics such as writing under a different name or inserting antagonistic material as a ploy to reveal inimical tension between different cultures, in doing so also exploring her own point of view camouflaged amongst others. In this section I explore this notion further, considering her evocation of a number of voices a form of collage in itself; another way of camouflaging in the sense that Jacques Lacan has stated:

'It is not a question of harmonizing with the background, but against a mottled background, of becoming mottled- exactly like the technique of camouflage practised in human warfare.' <sup>91</sup>

Homi K. Bhabha's use of Lacan's quote in his text Of Mimicry and Man was used as a way to describe the subversive potential of mimicry. Bhabha suggests that a fusion of traditional and 'mimicked' ideas rather than creating a derivative discourse that acts as a weak copy, can act to mobilise a distinct culture capable of opposing its oppressors.<sup>92</sup> At the same time we see Bo Bardi negotiating a form of mimicry where she attempts to break out of her identity as a European émigré by using multiple voices to report in the magazine. Through Bo Bardi's numerous uses of pseudonyms she not only collaborates with other authors but also collaborates with different sides of herself, as if in search of her own authentic voice. More recently attention has been focused on revealing architecture to be a product of collaboration rather than that of the sole author, however not often is that collaboration thought to be constituted of or within one person.<sup>93</sup> While a multi-authorial approach could be considered confusing, weakening the magazine's polemic, it is instead conceived in Habitat as an alternative form of attack; characteristic of the magazine's subtlety of hiding in plain sight, Bo Bardi's voice is more impactful if read alongside others, than if in isolation.

Alencastro is the most mysterious of her pseudonyms and is the most useful example in



Fig 33. Cat's Eyes adorning the pages of Habitat Magazine denoting Lina Bo Bardi's Pseudonym Alencastro

> thinking about mimicry and authorship as a form of subversion. Used on occasion when Bo Bardi deemed it necessary to be entirely anonymous, her identity is only revealed in the denotation of cat's eyes, which adorn the pages of the magazine throughout (Fig. 35).<sup>94</sup> A pair of cat's eves was Bo Bardi's signature, as can be observed looking through her personal notes found in her archive. Appearing on the opening editorial page and later in its own dedicated section devoted entirely to event based cultural activities taking place around the city, Alencastro acts as both programmer and gossip page, promoting the activities of high society in São Paulo while equally bestowing criticism. Appealing to the 'artistic taste of the local elite', this section allowed Habitat's readership to see themselves represented amongst its pages, but in its sarcastic tone and juxtaposition with more diverse content across the rest of the publication it is also a form of mockery, revealing the disparities in the social system.<sup>95</sup> In de-territorialising spaces of privilege Bo Bardi's polyvocal approach choreographs hybridity in Habitat Magazine to represent a coexistence of difference, rather than promote assimilation in the form of mimicry or bias towards internationalism.

The symbol for Alencastro also appears in personal notes and on sketches for

Leon, E., 'IAC/MASP, a Futurist School in São Paulo', Modernidade Latina, Os Italianos e os Centros do Modernismo, MAC, unpaginated, first accessed 24th September 2016, http://www.mac.usp.br/mac/conteudo/academico/publicacoes/anais/modernidade/

Lacan, J. as quoted in Bhabha, HK., 'Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of 91 Colonial Discourse', October, Vol. 28, Spring 1984, pp125-133, p125

Bhabha, HK., 'Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse', 92 October, Vol. 28, Spring 1984, pp125-133

Colomina, B., 'Collaborations: The Private Life of Modern Architecture', Journal of 93 the Society of Architectural historians, 58, 1999, pp462-471, p462

<sup>94</sup> projects 95 pdfs/ETHEL\_ING.pdf

## The Right to the Ugly

Indeed by confusing her authorship amongst a number of pseudonyms, Bo Bardi created a form of authorial hybridity allowing the creation of a third space between the constriction of her own self mimicry and the emergence of a hybrid. While for Bhabha such hybridity marks an active moment of challenge and resistance against a dominant cultural power,% Richmond points out that hybridity often works on behalf of the more powerful rather than the local.<sup>97</sup> Considered a process of negotiation, the agonism that results is the product of techniques of collage, sampling and bricolage that dismantle within Habitat's pages the dichotomy between the coast and the backlands. Reliant on a reversion in the association between the former as civilised and the latter as primitive, Habitat's ambition was to challenge essentialist notions of culture and identity by presenting tradition as socially constructed and as such largely factitious. Taking advantage of the malleability of set boundaries, Bo Bardi's third space also allowed her to promote herself as an established designer despite her lack of built work.

The Bowl Chair was the first of her projects printed in Habitat to actually be put into production and is a good example of the hybridity that transcended both the magazine and her designs (Fig. 34-36). Made both to suit the interiors of the elite while also referencing the poor, Marcus Woods describes the chair as a reference to the central object of the sugar refinery, a spherical drum, which Bo Bardi turned upside down and placed on metal supports. In translating the object's use through a change in materiality and scale, it lost its original function without relinquishing its symbolism.<sup>98</sup> The Bowl Chair is then not simply an exercise of form and contemporary manufacturing techniques; rather it is in itself a political act invoking dialogue between Modernist design and the 'amorality of slavery'.<sup>99</sup> Bo Bardi's designs exhibit a form of hybridity whereby she appropriates tropes of the local, applying them to modernist forms rather than the vernacular adapting to the modern.

The aesthetics of this hybrid were confluent with her politics, problematising aesthetic beauty as representative of the optics of the dominant power at one moment in time. Bo Bardi pursued an aesthetics of ugliness which she stated in contrast is timeless. Going







Fig 36. Lina Bo Bardi, Bowl Chair, 1951

same spread, Habitat Magazine, 1951

Raab, J. & Butler, M., 'Introduction: Cultural Hybridity in the Americas', p3, first 96 accessed 22nd March 2018, https://www.uni-bielefeld.de/(de)/ZIF/FG/2008Pluribus/ publications/raab-Butler\_intro-hybrid.pdf

Richmond, O., 'A Post-Liberal Peace', Routledge, 2011, p17 97

<sup>98</sup> Woods, M., 'Black Milk: Imagining Slavery in the Visual Cultures of Brazil and America', OUP Oxford, 2013, p478

Woods, M., 'Black Milk: Imagining Slavery in the Visual Cultures of Brazil and 99 America', OUP Oxford, 2013, p478

further Bo Bardi wrote a piece called the *RIGHT TO THE UGLY*, describing beauty as a concept 'imposed by western civilisation'.<sup>100</sup> Such writing, often published in *Habitat*, reinforced her designs, embodying what Antonio Gramsci deemed an Organic Intellectual, a figure actively involved in society engaged in a constant struggle to change minds.<sup>101</sup> As a focus for the 'making conscious' of the intellectual's role between their private production and public dissemination, Habitat Magazine is not just a site for challenging cultural norms but also a space in which the production of this new role takes place. Bo Bardi who was steeped in Gramsci's tutelage, used *Habitat* as a way to construct herself as an organic intellectual while also supporting the ascendancy of her professional role as a designer, artist and architect, fashioned as a strategist extending into a number of fields pivotal to the workings of modern society.

Edward Said points out that by definition the intellectual must be in almost permanent opposition to the status quo, occupying a critical distance. Bo Bardi then uses marginal content both as a means to empathise with those from peripheral regions while simultaneously appropriating it to develop her role as a public figure. She has agency as a European to speak in a privileged location, a space where 'intellectual others' are excluded but where her point paradoxically may have most impact; a form of self-imposed exile that according to Said empowers the critical agency of the intellectual in order to speak 'truth to power.' 102

1993 Reith Lectures', Vintage Books, 1996, p3

Habitat Magazine ran continuously between 1950 and 1965, although the Bardis' involvement was sporadic, with the couple eventually resigning as editors in 1952, handing over the title firstly to Flavio Motta followed by Geraldo Serra in 1954.<sup>104</sup> In their final editorial the couple write that they thought Habitat had run its course, that it no longer invited interest and that they believed it was repetitious in its content. For the Bardis the 'secret passion' that drove their editorial ambitions had gone (Fig. 38):

'Five years is a lot for a magazine, one ought not to repeat oneself continuously. Others, younger people, will have younger ideas.' 105

While Habitat assisted in establishing the couple as part of a rival discourse in São Paulo with modern manufacturing the foundation of the city's own modernity, the Bardis' direction of the magazine evidences a more complex engagement with the cultural context beyond an exercise in their own self-realisation, despite Silvana Rubino's observation that for the Bardis, Habitat Magazine had been a rehearsal for 'their first alliances in Brazil and in the field of architecture.' 106 The duality of the magazine's function in these terms, demonstrates that the publication is not simply a propositional tool for an alternative material aesthetic, but also a site of resistance against existing forms of culture making. The text is concerned with questions pertaining to the inequality in these processes, which for Stuart Hall are defined by the dominant culture's ability to constantly disorganise and reorganise popular culture, which he describes as the 'dialectic of cultural struggle.' <sup>107</sup> In other words, the research focuses on *Habitat Magazine* as to reveal the structuring of 'the popular' in Brazil, and the tensions between the central domain of elite culture and that of the periphery.

5

# CONCLUSIONS

## 'Those who make a contribution will be remembered in Habitat'.<sup>103</sup>

Bo Bardi's capitalisation, Bo Bardi, L. as guoted in Wood, M., 'Black Milk: Imagining 100 Slavery in the Visual Cultures of Brazil and America', Oxford University Press, 2013, p419 101 This differed from other well-established definitions such as Julian Benda's more conservative definition of the intellectual as a superiorly gifted individual with a moral responsibility. Gramsci, A. as quoted in Said, EW., 'Representations of the Intellectual: The

<sup>102</sup> Said, EW., 'Representations of the Intellectual: The 1993 Reith Lectures', Vintage Books, 1996

<sup>103</sup> Bo Bardi, L., Editorial, Habitat 1, Oct/Dec 1950 Lima, ZRMA, 'Lina Bo Bardi', Yale University Press, 2013, p49 104 Le Corbusier as quoted in Colomina, B., 'Privacy and Publicity: Modern 105 Architecture as Mass Media', MIT Press, 1996, p194 Rubino, S. as quoted in Canas, AT., 'MASP: Museu 106 Laboratório. Projeto de Museu para a Cidade: 1947-1957', Unpublished PhD dissertation, Universidade de São Paulo, 2010, p123 Hall, S., 'Notes on Deconstructing the Popular' in eds. Samuel, R., 'People's History 107 and Socialist Theory', Routledge, 1981, pp231-239

The research positioned *Habitat Magazine* as giving form to such a context, mediating on the message of the new under Bo Bardi's editorial direction.

The Bardis' explicit rejection of an affiliation with dominant cultural identities in Brazil reflects what Isabelle Stengers has described as a form of wilful refusal, which, 'brings us back to transformation and generation, to the possibility of acting to spark change'.<sup>113</sup> J. Patrick Williams however draws attention to consumption as a device used by those in power to keep cultural participants 'busy with their own culture rather than demanding broader cultural change'.<sup>114</sup> Yet we see Bo Bardi engaging in the reverse; rather than explicitly addressing a marginal subgroup in *Habitat Magazine*, she focuses on consumption as a means to keep the dominant class busy, while she inserted in the magazine products generative of the lives of excluded others from Brazil's regions. This is demonstrative of Bo Bardi's use of the emerging cultural industries to rework and reshape what they represent, and by repetition and selection to impose definitions of a preferred new culture.<sup>115</sup>

The spaces that *Habitat* defines are characterised by the reception of information rather than an actual or more equitable exchange of knowledge with excluded others.<sup>116</sup> Despite being written in tones that suggest a dialogue, the format of the magazine forbids response. Bo Bardi then speaks to and of the Southern Hemisphere, yet is not of it. However by virtue of her migration and lengthy residency in Brazil she is no longer of the West either. Elaborating on Ranajit Guha's definition of the subaltern as a name for subordination, delineated predominantly by class structures, John Beverley argues that the term has parallel meaning in the division it asserts between the educated and non-educated. For Beverley it is problematic for the subaltern to be represented by forms or sites of academic knowledge themselves, 'implicated in the social production or 'othering' of the subaltern.' <sup>117</sup> Whereas for Patricia Seed the importance of the 'location of enunciation', as Walter Mignalo has

113 Press, 2002 114 115 and Socialist Theory', Routledge, 1981, pp231-239 116 No. 3, 1998, pp305-319, p305

The conspicuous nature of the magazine aided in bringing the Bardis' cultural ideology into the public sphere, acting as a form of counter-hegemony by reinforcing a rival, yet nonetheless equally central site of cultural power and capital. The magazine thus made visible the 'hidden transcripts' operative at MASP, as discussed in the previous chapter. For James C. Scott from whom I borrow the term, the process of externalising internal mechanisms gives those acts their meaning. In fact for Scott their visibility is the very process by which they acquire their meaning.<sup>108</sup> With a reading public emerging as part of the wider modern project, the magazine was a concerted new space for received knowledge, but also the location of its contestation.<sup>109</sup> Indeed the Bardis noted in their last editorial how Habitat had been used as a means to direct intransigence at their opponents:

"...an organ of collective responsibility, such as a magazine, a newspaper, a personal triumph, a more or less legal way of asserting oneself. If ever Habitat's polemic seemed to be harsh, if Habitat resorted to ways deemed too violent to reach its scope, such harshness and violence were used for a notorious reason to attack opponents, only for those means and as we have said polished, disinterested means...with no second purpose...an end to which we dedicate our lives and which alone: the culture.' 110

The chapter showed how using shock as a tactic became woven into the texture of the magazine, using both graphic imagery and text as a means to 'attack opponents'. Although the couple state that this attack had no secondary purpose, their chosen methods echo motifs pioneered in contemporary arts and literature. According to both Berthold Brecht and Walter Benjamin, shock was a 'formal principle' and part of modern life itself. In Brecht's *Epic Theatre* distances between the spectator and the character are intentionally dissolved to break the illusion of the stage to depict familiar objects and relations in a new light and achieve consciousness of those alienated by the process of modernity.<sup>111</sup> In his commentary on Brechtian theatre, Ernst Bloch illustrated how the experience of regaining perception is itself a shocking process, 'but its effect within a purposeful context will not be uninviting'.<sup>112</sup>

Bo Bardi, L., 'Untitled', *Habitat* 14, Jan/Feb 1954, p1 110

<sup>108</sup> Williams, JP., 'Subcultural Theory: Traditions and Concepts, Polity, 2011

<sup>109</sup> Kava, I., 'Modernity, Openness, Interpretation: A Perspective on Multiple Modernities', Social Science Information, Vol. 43, No. 1, SAGE Publications, 2004, pp35-57, p35

Polgovsky Ezcurra, M., 'On 'Shock:' The Artistic Imagination of Benjamin and 111 Brecht', Contemporary Aesthetics, first accessed 12th July 2018, https://contempaesthetics. org/newvolume/pages/article.php?articleID=659

<sup>112</sup> Bloch, E. as quoted in Polgovsky Ezcurra, M., 'On 'Shock:' The Artistic Imagination

of Benjamin and Brecht', Contemporary Aesthetics, first accessed 12th July 2018, https:// contempaesthetics.org/newvolume/pages/article.php?articleID=659 Stengers, I. as quoted in Zournazi, M., 'Hope: New Philosophies for Change', Pluto

Williams, JP., 'Subcultural Theory: Traditions and Concepts, Polity, 2011 Hall, S., 'Notes on Deconstructing the Popular' in eds. Samuel, R., 'People's History

Baudrillard, J. & Maclean, M., 'The Masses: The Implosion of the Social in the Media', New Literary History, Vol. 16, No. 3, John Hopkins University Press, 1985, pp577-589 Guha's definition is 'a name for the general attribute of subordination...whether this is expressed in terms of class, caste, age, gender and office or in any other way' as quoted in Beverley, J., 'Theses on Subalternity, representation, and politics', Postcolonial Studies, Vol. 1,

reminds, there is:

"...no whole, authentic, autonomous 'popular culture' which lies outside the field of force of the relations of cultural power and domination.' <sup>121</sup>

Thus the relations of cultural power are intrinsic; *Habitat* attempts to redistribute and shape them, yet is compromised by the fact that it always has its roots in the social and material conditions of a particular and more dominant social class. In conceptualising Habitat as a new form of space, the extent to which it designed and shaped resistant tendencies and a community around it is also a story of Bo Bardi's own acculturation. Habitat Magazine reflects the fragile sense the Bardis felt concerning their own marginality as foreigners in Brazil, despite the fact of their European heritage. Utilising affiliations with institutions across the Atlantic as a means to legitimate MASP, they furthered the notion of the country as an exotic frontier, a practice neither Pietro Maria Bardi nor Lina Bo Bardi comment on or problematise.

described it, shifts the focus away from what is produced to questions of 'who and why'.<sup>118</sup> The question then is not what 'type' of modernity, categorised by the transnational identity of Brazil's population, the country should pursue, rather how is modernity shaped by those speaking for it? Habitat Magazine speaks both from the centre of post-colonial power and from its peripheries. The connection to the country's colonial history and ties to Europe were therefore not negated in Habitat, with its transcultural history and thus character of its own modernity presented as multiplied rather than centralised.

In blurring the discourse of difference, Bo Bardi was able to challenge cultural dominance and its production of the subaltern. The magazine however was limited in its ability to make possible the inclusion of the 'other' within the creation of discourse itself. The chapter explored the tensions inherent in Bo Bardi's method of addressing the corresponding cultural separation of the poor, by promoting contested and largely excluded cultural idioms. Unexpected content was 'made Modern' through its reproduction in print on Habitat's pages, allowing it to 'pass', while simultaneously invoking a notion of 'primitivism' that appealed to the constructed artifice of the 'New World' as exotic in the eyes of the 'Old'. As a site in which images and their interpretation become embodied, the simple act of recognising them elevated content without accompanying justification. For Walter Benjamin such practices are just a continuation of the invisible mechanisms by which art, over the centuries had come to be categorised:

'only later did it come to be recognised as a work of art. In the same way today, by the absolute emphasis on its exhibition value the work of art becomes a creation with entirely new functions, among which the one we are conscious of, the artistic function, later may be recognised as incidental.' <sup>119</sup>

In de-territorialising and hybridising culture, *Habitat* attempts to come closer to capturing

Benjamin, W. as quoted in Colomina, B., 'Privacy and Publicity: Modern Architec-119 ture as Mass Media', MIT Press, 1996, p217

120 Nationalism', Verso Books, 1983 121 and Socialist Theory', Routledge, 1981, pp231-239

the thoughts of people living outside Brazil's European looking centres, using cultural hybridity as a model for alternative cosmopolitan expression, which disrupts the idea of the Modern project as complete in its attempt to extirpate all mixtures.<sup>120</sup> Although as Hall

Walter Mignolo emphasises the geocultural and ideological spaces from which 118 discourses of power and resistance are enounced. In order to overcome the hegemony of the 'alphabet oriented notions of text and discourse', Mignolo proposed colonial semiosis as a concept that included additional materials such as cultural artefacts allowing for a wider exploration of dominated cultures acting to decentre and multiply centres of power and the production of knowledge. Mignolo sites those such as Edmundo O'Gorman and Angel Rama, as 'intellectual others', those writing in the 1950s about postcolonial cultural modernity whose voices were marginalised by often western authors in favour of alternative postcolonial theorists located themselves in the West. Mignolo, WD., Colonial and Postcolonial Discourse: Cultural Critique or Academic Colonialism?', Latin American Research Review, Vol. 28, No.3, 1993, pp120-134, p122-3

Anderson, B., 'Imagined Communities: reflections on the Origin and Spread of

Hall, S., 'Notes on Deconstructing the Popular' in eds. Samuel, R., 'People's History

6

## GENERATIONAL SHIFTS

'Puerile new towns spread out over farmland, lauded as achievements, implied that new buildings were owing to all who felt they had claims on the Welfare State.'1

In the summer of 2018, a fragment of the Smithsons' revered Robin Hood Gardens (1972) housing complex appeared amongst the buildings of a former shipyard and armoury clustered around the various waterways of Venice (Fig. 1). Situated amongst the restored industrial buildings that speak of the island's nautical heritage, the construction of the façade signalled a somewhat less heroic attempt at restoration conveyed by the assistance of an amalgamation of scaffolding and plywood (Fig. 2). Exhibited as part of the 16th Venice Architecture Biennale the Smithsons were once again propelled into the spotlight as two of Britain's most controversial architects, despite their own passing decades before. Experiencing a double displacement, first from its location in the East End and secondly from the Victoria and Albert Museum (V&A) by whom it had been acquired, the facade of what was once the country's finest example of postwar Brutalism found itself displayed as evidence of an artefact resurrected, unsure of the intentions behind its own presence as both celebration and provocation. Considered highly insensitive to some who already questioned the V&A's acquisition of it as an asset in their collection, the appearance of the fragment revives many of the visceral arguments that had led to both its construction, and more recent *destruction* prior to its surely surreal display on Venetian shores (Fig.4-5).

While the V&A justify their decision by way of referencing in their title the Smithsons' Ruins in Reverse, it is questionable as to whether the exhibit quite reflects what Alison Smithson meant when she stated that one, 'never know[s] when a ruin, even a bit of wall, may come in handy'.<sup>2</sup> Perhaps they would have been pleased of their own importance reflected in its exhibition so many years later, and indulge the further mythologising of both themselves and their ideas. In this sense the divisive nature of the discussion around Robin Hood's display mirrors the equally divisive nature of its architects. Watching even a fraction of the 1972



Fig 2. Photograph of fragment from Robin Hood Gardens in situ at the Venice Biennale, 2018



Fig 3. Document for listing by the Twentieth Century Society



Fig 1. Photograph of Robin Hood Gardens



film The Smithsons on Housing, readily available on YouTube is enough to be put off by both the couple and their particular brand of ideology. Announcing the 'poetry of the ordinary', Alison Smithson dressed at one point in a metallic outfit<sup>3</sup> is accompanied by Peter Smithson who labours an analogy between the plan of Robin Hood Gardens and a kipper (Fig. 6 & 7).<sup>4</sup> The Smithsons come across as purposefully evasive, their rhetoric alienating more than it is explanatory of their vision to revolutionise social housing. This attitude is seemingly touched upon by Revner Banham in his 1955 essay The New Brutalism published in The Architectural Review in which he quotes R. Furneaux who commented that 'Lubetkin talks across time to the great masters, the Smithsons only talk to each other.' <sup>5</sup>

The extraction of this quote has since been historicised as emblematic of the Smithsons' inward looking gaze, reflecting the same manner which they display in the film. Yet when considered as part of Banham's broader critique, his emphasis on their contemplation was meant in their defence, noting the necessity of the young movement to be considered 'against the background of the recent history of history.' 6 The perennial attention given to their joint demeanour thus detracts from the Smithsons' use of dialogue, which was in fact actively conducted in collaboration with others as a means to advance their critical architecture beyond themselves; the volume of which eclipses their built work.<sup>7</sup> Part of



Smithson, A., 'The Infliction of Holes', Hand Typed Paper, Folder E054, University of Harvard Archives, Cambridge, MA, first accessed 4th November 2016

Smithson, A., 'A lyrical Architecture Appropriate to the City full of Holes', Hand 2 Typed Paper, Folder E054, University of Harvard Archives, Cambridge, MA, first accessed 4th November 2016

<sup>3</sup> bow around her head, she threw a glass of red wine over him. 5 6 7

I don't wish to draw unnecessary attention to Alison Smithson's outfit other than to note that both Smithsons were known for their dress sense, which characteristically they took very seriously. A well-known anecdote relates that when James Stirling retied Alison's

Smithson, A. & Smithson, P., 'The Smithsons on Housing', Published 5th February 2013, first accessed 30th May 2018, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UH5thwHTYNk Banham, PR., 'The New Brutalism', The Architectural review, 1955

Author's italics. Banham, PR., 'The New Brutalism', The Architectural review, 1955 I borrow the term 'critical architecture' from Jane Rendell, whose use of it I apply

### SPACES OF TRANSCULTURAL RESISTANCE

a number of collaborative groups notably *The Independent Group* (IG) and later *Team X*, the Smithsons' work particularly during the 1950s if anything can be categorised by their attention to and engagement with their peers, extending not least beyond the confines of their architectural thinking. For two people whose historicisation is replete with examples of their secrecy and seeming hostility, this is a surprising point of note.

As such this chapter introduces the broader political and social context that led young architects returning from war to seek a more interdisciplinary practice, shifting to then consider the two groups that the Smithsons were affiliated with, as mentioned above, as instrumental to the inter conversational methods the couple developed. While this chapter is designed mainly to extend a narrative context of the immediate postwar period in the UK as a way of situating the Smithsons' multifarious practices between the intersection of art, architecture and the latent socio-political conditions of a postwar society, the ambition is to frame their practice as part of a wider collaborative dialogue. Within this the research focuses particularly on the Smithsons' own retelling of their experience within The IG and Team X to evidence the importance of the couple's active participation in the making of their own narrative history.





Fig 6 & 7. Alison and Peter Smithson featured in the film. The Smithsons on Housing, 1972

to the Smithsons' work at a later stage in this chapter. Rendell, J. chapter in eds. Rendell, J., Hill, J., Dorrian, M. & Fraser, M., 'Critical Architecture', Routledge, 2007, p148



Southbank during the Festival of Britain showing the Royal Festival hall in the foreground, 1951

## 'Madness... but the sort of madness that would put Britain on the map.'<sup>8</sup>

1951 was the year that promised future happiness on both sides of the Atlantic with varying degrees of success and according to contemporary commentators, a great deal of failure. On the south side of the river the postwar Labour government financed The Festival of Britain, which opened in London on May 4th (Fig. 8).9 The first 'mega-event' of its kind in the twentieth century, the Festival looked back both to the past success of The Great Exhibition a hundred years before, while simultaneously projecting what would be a pioneering vision of the future to residents and visitors of the capital alike.<sup>10</sup> It is estimated that with a population of nearly 49 million, half participated in the Festival in some way making the idea of social inclusion a core tenet of the *Festival's* imagery, which symbolised the way society *ought* to operate mandated by economic nationalism. At a cost of £12,000,000 the Festival came at a time of renewed postwar austerity when basic construction materials including steel were still being rationed.<sup>11</sup> As such two individuals, Herbert Morrison<sup>12</sup> and Gerald Barry were responsible for carefully negotiating the division of party politics to sell the Festival to the nation not as a 'tonic' as Mary Banham was to put it, but rather as a way to disguise the false sense of relative prosperity of the early 1950s.<sup>13</sup>

Because of its political origins, the Conservatives decried the Festival as a Labour endeavour reinforced by its direction under the leadership of Barry, who was at that time an editor

12 Council (LCC).

Adrian Forty uses the word 'narcotic' to explain Barry and Morrison's approach 13 to veil austerity. Forty, A. as quoted in eds. Banham, M. & Hillier, B., 'Tonic to the Nation: Festival of Britain, 1951', Thames and Hudson, 1976, p26

# BREAD, CIRCUSES AND SOCIALISM

Morrison, H. as quoted in Gillilan, L., 'Pleasure Dome', The Guardian, 15th April 2001, first accessed 1st May 2018, https://www.theguardian.com/theobserver/2001/apr/15/

The South Bank is an area by the river Thames that prior to its development as part of the Festival of Britain was a wasteland adjacent to Waterloo Station.

8.5 million people visited the Festival of Britain over the 5-month period that it was open. http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/may/3/newsid\_2481000/2481099.

It is a credit to the Atlee government for supporting a programme of heroic building at this time, indeed as part of the Education Act that instructed the construction of 2.400 schools the Smithsons' Hunstanton School used up all of Norfolk's steel ration during the

Morrison was the MP for Hackney and a former leader of the London County

<sup>8</sup> features.magazine57

<sup>9</sup> 10 stm first accessed 22nd August 2016 11 period 1950-54.

SPACES OF TRANSCULTURAL RESISTANCE

at the *News Chronicle*, a left leaning national newspaper that competed fiercely with Lord Beaverbrook's *Daily Mail* and *Evening Standard*.<sup>14</sup>8.5 million people visited the *Festival* between May and September 1951 before it was demolished to make way for the Queen's *Coronation* celebrations, which has since been described as indicative of the conservative's revenge.<sup>15</sup> While such high visitor numbers gave reassurance to developers who had been weary of Modern architecture, architect Sir Misha Black described the public's reaction as in fact a 'curious mix of exaltation mixed with disaster',<sup>16</sup> despite Black having previously championed such a project, advocating in 1950 for the power of exhibitions as a government form of propaganda:

'While architecture languished in Great Britain during the war, exhibitions, Government sponsored as a propaganda medium attracted to themselves the flattering attention of architectural critics.' <sup>17</sup>

The project at the *South Bank* therefore was principally designed to give visual form to the conditions of recovery, forming a complex tripartite between politics, national identity and design. For the first time culture was considered a way of creating shifts in people's lives with the state's long term support signified by *The Arts Council* <sup>18</sup> who stated it would 'carry[...] the *Festival* message through the country.' <sup>19</sup> The message of Modernity was signified along the *South Bank* by a series of buildings, memorably *The Royal Festival Hall*, the only remnant of the *Festival* still standing today; *The Dome of Discovery* by Ralph Tubbs and the *Skylon* designed by Philip Powell and Hidalgo Moya. A temporary aluminium structure stretching out across an 111m diameter and 26m high, *The Dome of the Discovery* when it was built was the largest spanning dome in the world. Featured within were the *Planetarium, Polar Theatre* and a full-scale reproduction of Captain Cook's *Endeavour*. Symbols of Britain's history



Fig 9. Siegfried Charoux, The Islanders, Festival of Britain, 1951



Fig 10. The Skylon designed by Powell and Moya, 1951 as colonial explorers were thus juxtaposed with imagery of sci-fi and space exploration, including one exhibit that even promised the reception of radio signals from the moon, creating a surreal fiction of past and present. A large stone sculpture depicting a family looking out to sea by Siegfried Charoux called *The Islanders* reinforced such narratives of inheritance, with its design intended to represent the relationship between the British people and the coastline (Fig. 9).

Such imagery made The Festival of Britain complicit in an expansionist agenda, which countered the pro-American and anti-imperial discourse in which the aesthetics of the exhibition were otherwise engaged.<sup>20</sup> Other structures emblematic of the proto-transatlantic modernity the Festival sought to emulate included the Skylon, an iconic vertical cigar shaped tower held in place by tension cables, giving the impression that it was floating in mid air (Fig. 10). At 300ft the structure signified an impossible feat, its seeming lack of functionality drawing criticism given the money spent on it in contrast to the comparable cost of reconstruction beyond the local geography of the *Festival*. Diametrically opposing imagery became united by aspiration and joint reversion of the UK's historical legacy. Such contradiction was thus symptomatic of the performative ideology of the government's building projects in the early postwar period, encapsulated by large-scale tabula rasa urbanism and countrywide social reforms that projected a hopeful image of nation building. This included the creation of *The National Health Service* (NHS) and the building of new schools propagating a number of narratives that successfully reflected the country's recent triumph in war while with equal success disguising the cost of its collective trauma. Not every attendee however agreed with the celebration including author Evelyn Waugh who wrote that:

'In 1951, to celebrate the opening of a happier decade, the government decreed a Festival. Monstrous constructions appeared on the south bank of the Thames...but there was little popular exuberance among the straitened people and dollar-bearing tourists curtailed their visits.'<sup>21</sup>

Disaffection at the time has since been argued by those such as architectural historian Alan

Anonymous, 'A Walk Round the Festival of Britain', July 2016, first accessed 1st
May 2018, https://alondoninheritance.com/tag/dome-of-discovery/
Waugh, E., 'Unconditional Surrender: The Conclusion of Men at Arms and Officers and Gentlemen', New Ed edition, London, Penguin Classics, 2001, p237

Both papers continuously published derogatory partisan articles about the Festival despite it officially having no objections from either party within government eds. Banham, M. & Hillier, B., 'Tonic to the Nation: Festival of Britain, 1951', Thames and Hudson, 1976, p26
 eds. Banham, M. & Hillier, B., 'Tonic to the Nation: Festival of Britain, 1951', Thames and Hudson, 1976, p37

<sup>16</sup> eds. Banham, M. & Hillier, B., 'Tonic to the Nation: Festival of Britain, 1951', Thames and Hudson, 1976, p11

<sup>17</sup> Black, M., 'Exhibition Design', London Architectural Press, 1950, p11 as quoted in Crippa, E., 'Exhibition, Design, Participation: An Exhibit 1957 and Related Projects', Afterall, Exhibition Histories, Vol. 7, p41

<sup>18</sup> Grafe, C., 'Peoples Palaces - Architecture, Culture and Democracy in Post-War Western Europe', Architectura & Natura Press, 2014, p65

<sup>19</sup> The Arts Council consolidated 46 arts institutions during the war, in itself a model for a new form of postwar empire based on philanthropy. eds. Banham, M. & Hillier, B., 'Ton-ic to the Nation: Festival of Britain, 1951', Thames and Hudson, 1976, p13

### GENERATIONAL SHIFTS

socialism', the LCC was the first democratically elected body, whose remit extended to urbanism with divisions within the Architect's Department dealing with schools, housing, planning and 'general'.<sup>29</sup> The Architect's Department employed over 1500 people in the early 1950s of which 350 were architects making it the largest architecture office in the world. John Henry Forshaw who led the department enforced a method dubbed 'group working', giving autonomy to smaller numbers within the organisation.<sup>30</sup> For the Smithsons the LCC represented a symbolic form of paternalism. Joining the schools division immediately upon their graduation,<sup>31</sup> Alison Smithson even called the LCC a 'home from home... It could be, and was, everyone's Uncle.' <sup>32</sup> For the couple the institution offered a form of surrogacy, which for Peter Smithson echoed the importance of 'belong[ing] to a family', a connection he had valued amongst his unit in Burma, which he subsequently lost on his return from war.<sup>33</sup> Alison Smithson described such reciprocation of friendship, characterised by institutions like the LCC, as a result of a collective feeling of both loss and being lost:

life, as it were.' 34

mar/22/london-county-council-centenary-1989-1889 29 2013-09.html

Harwood, E., 'London County Council Architects (act. C.1940-1965)', Oxford 30 University Press 2004-14, First accessed 12th August 2016 http://www.singleaspect. org.uk/mht/Oxford%20DNB%20article%20%20London%20county%20council%20 architects%202013-09.html

31 32 ty%20council%20architects%202013-09.html 33 34 Plenty', MIT Press, 1990, p17

Powers as demonstrative of a generational divide between a conservative prewar generation who saw the endeavour as a waste of money.<sup>22</sup> and those who understood the postwar context as a catalyst for what Sir Hugh Casson the director of the Festival of Britain stated would be 'a pattern book for our new urban landscapes'.<sup>23</sup> Casson was 38 at the time of his acquisition of the leadership to deliver the Festival; indeed he was barely 40 years old on its opening due to the speed in which the construction was accomplished, a feat emblematic of the paradigm of the time.<sup>24</sup> Catherine Jolivette describes the *Festival* as a watershed in Britain's cultural history, dividing two decades and those who had participated in them. She also notes the conservative nature of the committee, including Casson, despite his relative youth.<sup>25</sup> Tradition was reflected in the inclusion of artists Barbara Hepworth and Henry Moore who produced sculptures for the South Bank, the latter of whose work critic David Sylvester described as cliché due to the terms in which the artist had been, 'exploiting it for twenty years' (Fig. 11 & 12).<sup>26</sup> The neo-Romantic nature of artists such as Moore no longer spoke of the postwar shape and texture of the British landscape, nor of the climate of regeneration that gave character to the concerns of a younger generation gathered around institutions primarily tasked with actual rebuilding projects including the London County Council (LCC).27

Founded in 1889 as part of the 1888 Local Government Act, the LCC inherited governance of London from the unelected Metropolitan Board of Works.<sup>28</sup> Described as 'municipal

22 Half the budget was cut during planning for the exhibition for the Korean War. Banham, M., 'Sixty Years on from the Festival of Britain', The Architectural Review, 28th June 2011, first accessed 1st May 201, https://www.architectural-review.com/essays/ viewpoints/sixty-years-on-from-the-festival-of-britain-mary-banham/8616920.article 23 Casson, H. as quoted in Clift, S. & Camic, PM., 'Oxfird Textbook of Creative Arts, Health and Wellbeing: International Perspectives on Practice, Policy and Research', Oxford University Press, 2018

27 A distinct level of autonomy was given to young architects to design and build Utopic projects on a large scale with such trust and experimentation defining the environment created at the LCC in the immediate postwar period. Well known examples include Neave Brown's Alexandra Road (1968), Patrick Hodgkinson's Brunswick Centre (1967) and George Finch's later Brixton Rec (1971). Alison and Peter Smithson were of a slightly earlier generation working in the Schools division alongside Ron Herron of Archigram.

Elements of this 'municipal socialism' had been seen before in Birmingham and 28 Manchester but for Londoners the LCC ws perceived as something entirely distinct. As Lord Rosebery proclaimed at the first meeting, 'The population which may come hereafter, unbounded and unborn, may look back with gratitude to this first Council, endowed with powers which seem so great now, and will seem then relatively so small - (cheers) - and recognise that in this cradle there lay a giant infant, the prophet and the soul of a better dispensation that brought a new message of hope and prosperity to the people.' Travis, A., 'Centenary of the Setting up of the London County Council', The Guardian, 22nd

Fig 11. Henry Moore, Reclining

Figure, Festival of Britain, 1951



Fig 12. Barbara Hepworth working on her sculpture. Contrapuntal Forms for the Festival of Britain, 1950

'We were all the lost generation together; that is, the generation immediately ahead of us were coming back from war, back to their lives before the war. There was just no room, there was too great a back log in all walks of life for any of us to be let in and we were all just the people queuing up; and while we were queuing we talked together, and that was the only common ground, the fact that we were all queuing to get into

March 2016, first accessed 1st May 2018, https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2016/

The general division was tasked with designing fire stations and old people's homes. Harwood, E., 'London County Council Architects (act. C.1940-1965)', Oxford University Press 2004-14, first accessed 12th August 2016 http://www.singleaspect.org.uk/mht/ Oxford%20DNB%20article%20%20London%20county%20council%20architects%20

The couple left to work on their winning entry for Hunstanton Secondary School, the commission that they won in 1950. Parnell, S., 'Alison Smithson (1928-1993) and Peter Smithson (1923-2003), Architectural Review, 30th January 2012, first accessed 11th July 2017, https://www.architectural-review.com/rethink/reputations-pen-portraits-/alisonsmithson-1928-1993-and-peter-smithson-1923-2003/8625631.article

Smithson, A. as quoted in Harwood, E., 'London County Council Architects (act. C.1940-1965)', Oxford University Press 2004-14, first accessed 12th August 2016 http:// www.singleaspect.org.uk/mht/Oxford%20DNB%20article%20%20London%20coun-

Smithson, P. interviewed by Colomina, B., 'Friends of the Future: A Conversation with Peter Smithson', October Magazine, October 1994, MIT Press, p15, Folder E145, University of Harvard Archive, Cambridge, MA, first accessed 31st October 2016 Smithson, A., 'The Independent Group: Postwar Britain and the Aesthetics of

The Festival of Britain was completed within 22 months. 24

<sup>25</sup> Jolivette, C., 'Landscape, Art and Identity in 1950s Britain', Routledge, 2017, p16

<sup>26</sup> Sylvester, D., 'Festival Sculpture', Studio, September 1951, Vol. 142, No. 702, p75

At a time when the very idea of nationhood was subject to revision, the state invested in prewar imagery, invoking a history immersed in nostalgic sentiment, to posit a parody of a commercial proto-capital society, as a means to constitute the modern. The LCC aligned itself in some capacity with the political and cultural determinism of the state, yet concurrently fostered an opposing image of Modern Britain that focused on escapism to counter disillusionment with society.<sup>35</sup> In doing so the Architect's Department found itself with an unparalleled mandate to use architecture as the main tool for achieving change, making architects like Alison and Peter Smithson, who in the words of Revner Banham, were 'the bellwethers of the young'; complicit in challenging the social paradigm to reconceive the relationship between national politics and cultural production in the postwar age.<sup>36</sup>

While The Festival of Britain attempted the recovery of universal human values, mandated by a Labour government who promoted a complete break, and consequent amnesia of the recent past, the scale of its organisation nonetheless drew heavily on military procedure. Many of those who took part in organising the Festival had served in the forces during the war, including Casson and Barry who were part of The Camouflage Service in the Air Ministry and Royal Air Force respectively. According to Mary Banham, as a result the Festival was run with a keen eye for organisation:

"...long-term planning and the art of ad hoc decision making; imperative was clear communication throughout the organisation, to know their exact rank and to do what they were told.' <sup>38</sup>

The Festival of Britain was thus in many ways a product of a military education, however, so too was the counter position adopted by its opponents, whose dissent from Festival ideals focused on making visible wartime experience, rather than support its suppression.<sup>39</sup> Discord was centred within educational settings due to the fact that many ex-servicemen from working class backgrounds were denied work requiring high levels of academic education, and as such received grants to retrain, many within visual programmes. Nigel Henderson, the artist who would go on to collaborate with Alison and Peter Smithson during their time together as members of the IG, attended art school as a result of receiving a grant, <sup>40</sup> along with Clifford Hatts a student at The Royal College of Art (RCA) who recounted how the experience of war impacted on the institutions that they joined:

Beuys, J. as quoted in Wilk, E., 'The Artist-in-Consultance: Welcome to the 37 New Management', e-flux Journal, 74, , first accessed June 2016, https://www.e-flux.com/ journal/74/59807/the-artist-in-consultance-welcome-to-the-new-management/ eds. Banham, M. & Hillier, B., 'Tonic to the Nation: Festival of Britain, 1951', Thames 38 and Hudson, 1976, p14 eds. Banham, M. & Hillier, B., 'Tonic to the Nation: Festival of Britain, 1951', Thames 39 and Hudson, 1976, p14 These grants were issued through the Further Education and Training scheme (FET). 40 In 1949 there was a surge in applications as rumours spread that the labour government were set to cut the grant.

# RETURNING FROM WAR

## ...you cannot wait for an ideal situation. You cannot wait for a tool without blood on it.' <sup>37</sup>

As Ruth Lang notes, the LCC was unique in that it viewed its role as a catalyst for 35 change by creating a holistic approach that created ties between the Architects' Department and the construction industry. As such the LCC's scope extended across scales from citywide aspiration to the detailed design necessitated in the building of each housing unit. Lang, R., 'Architects Take Command: The LCC Architects' Department', Volume, first accessed 12th August 2016, http://volumeproject.org/architects-take-command-the-lcc-architects-department/.

Parnell, S., 'Alison Smithson and Peter Smithson', Architectural Review, January 36 2012, http://www.architectural-review.com/reviews/reputations/alison-smithson-and-petersmithson/8625631.article

#### GENERATIONAL SHIFTS

labour market, rather than that of a professional middle class.<sup>46</sup> AASTA primarily protected the interests of architects against The Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA), who in principle supported public practice.<sup>47</sup> Indeed the incumbent President L.H Keay used his inaugural speech to evince his support:

"...the institute...does not differentiate between those who serve as private individuals and those who elect to work as a servant of the community.' 48

By the end of the war, public practice had become synonymous with alternative interests in architecture, and a unifying theme of those returning from war, which Sir John Summerson observed was a concern for 'the relation of architecture to other things.' <sup>49</sup>Summerson notes the chaotic character of this practice as it emerged, highlighting its exploratory nature and lack of consolidation as a unified practice:

'For some reason or another, [the architect has] stepped out of his role, taken a look at the scene around him and then become obsessed with the importance not of architecture, but of the relation of architecture to other things...He has left the first personality at the drawing board and taken the second...on a world-tour of contemporary life - scientific research, sociology, psychology, engineering, the arts and a great many other things." 50

One of the 'great many other things' Summerson was referring to was the growth of writing as a practice of architecture. A critic himself, in his last piece published in the RIBA Journal

48 University of Warwick, 1988, p7 49 University of Warwick, 1988, p7 50 University of Warwick, 1988, p7

'We were ex-servicemen in our late twenties who were not in the mood to take any nonsense from anyone...[we] were men, not little students. Big chaps who had fought their way across the Northern Approaches on a battleship in the depths of winter [who] didn't take kindly to being told not to smoke by a painting tutor!"<sup>41</sup>

As such, the hierarchy that separated student and teacher was reversed, not least because in some instances many had held senior rank during war than those by whom they were being taught. This division was compounded by the generational split between teachers, who relied on early thirties prewar art education, and students, who elevated the pedagogical value of lived experience to challenge academic norms. As Sir Peter Blake, then a student at the RCA painting school recounts:

National Service had a really big effect because you'd met so many people by the time you went to college that you'd had an education in life.' 42

Concurring, Robyn Denny, a fellow painting student stated 'I had developed independent views. I questioned everything. I wouldn't accept received opinions'.<sup>43</sup> This attitude was mirrored in architecture, however was framed by a concern for pubic service. Colin St John Wilson who worked for the LCC between 1950 and 1955 described working for the Architect's Department, 'a summons to join the Forces again but in this case to win the peace by rebuilding London.' 44

The divide between public and private practice had split the profession at the beginning of the Second World War, with the Association of Architects, Surveyors and Technical Assistants (AASTA), acting on behalf of architects in public office.<sup>45</sup> Their objective was to improve salaries, raise the status of the architect and show the need for the involvement of architects in the social and political aspects of architecture, with design considered the product of a

AASTA were one of a number of organisations set up during the 1930s and 40s that variously attempted to align the profession with the trade union movement. Resistance to unionisation largely centred on the requirement of the architect by association to adopt a political role subsumed by the interests of a number of others thereby relinquishing their status and autonomy as 'artists'. Day, NM., 'The Role of the Architect in Post-War State Housing : A Case Study of the Housing Work of the London County Council, 1919-1956',

Some of AASTA's other work consisted of a project for deep bombproof shelters during the war. Collette, C., 'The Newer Eve: Women, Feminists and the Labour Party',

Day, NM., 'The Role of the Architect in Post-War State Housing : A Case Study of the Housing Work of the London County Council, 1919-1956', unpublished PhD thesis,

Day, NM., 'The Role of the Architect in Post-War State Housing : A Case Study of the Housing Work of the London County Council, 1919-1956', unpublished PhD thesis,

Day, NM., 'The Role of the Architect in Post-War State Housing : A Case Study of the Housing Work of the London County Council, 1919-1956', unpublished PhD thesis,

<sup>46</sup> unpublished PhD thesis, University of Warwick, 1988, p15 47 Springer, 2009, p85

<sup>41</sup> Seago, A., 'Burning the Box of Beautiful Things: The Development of a Postmodern Sensibility', Oxford University Press, 1995, p77

Seago, A., 'Burning the Box of Beautiful Things: The Development of a Postmodern 42 Sensibility', Oxford University Press, 1995, p77

Seago, A., 'Burning the Box of Beautiful Things: The Development of a Postmodern 43 Sensibility', Oxford University Press, 1995, p79

Harwood, E., 'London County Council Architects (act. C.1940-1965)', Oxford 44 University Press 2004-14, first accessed 12th August 2016 http://www.singleaspect. org.uk/mht/Oxford%20DNB%20article%20%20London%20county%20council%20 architects%202013-09.html

AASTA was formed in 1919. Understanding their role primarily as that of a trade 45 union, AASTA affiliated officially with the TUC in 1939.

in 1957, titled The Case for a Theory of Modern Architecture, he notes that architecture had become about propagandist writing, rather than the actual adoption of theoretical positions, belonging to a 'history of ideas' and not buildings.<sup>51</sup>

The agenda of the architectural press, who dominated architectural criticism in the postwar period, was organised by two opposing critical positions. Architectural Design (AD), edited by Monica Pidgeon, represented a more avant-garde stance, while the other title, The Architectural Review (AR) adopted a policy of 'visual re-education' rooted in the co-option of urban planning, promoting a uniquely English (as opposed to British) built environment. Edited at the close of war by Nikolaus Pevsner, the idea of the Townscape was promoted by the AR who followed the neo-Romantic sympathises of *The Arts Council*.<sup>52</sup> For Kenneth Frampton the aesthetics the AR championed were reflected in *The Festival of Britain*, which he accused of progressing an 'undemanding cultural policy.' Monica Pidgeon's title corroborated Frampton's view, critical of the Festival for its parochial manner and support for Swedish Empiricism.<sup>53</sup>

As such Pidgeon used the pages of her magazine explicitly to promote the ideas of young architects, courting the neo-avant-garde by way of architect and critic, Theo Crosby's contacts at the ICA.<sup>54</sup> While Crosby, whose role I return to in the next chapter, celebrated the architecture of prewar masters including Mies van der Rohe and Le Corbusier, he also sought an aesthetic and material change.<sup>55</sup> Rather than be 'blinded by the theorists',<sup>56</sup> Crosby

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thought that architects could reorient their position in relation to society, taking advantage of the 'ideological collapse', which he observed made, 'a marvellous space for action and involvement, from many directions'.<sup>57</sup> In advocating for increased diversity in the discipline of architecture, confusingly this meant both the maintenance of the architect as a distinct professional role, while simultaneously promoting the dissolution of professionalisation, 'It is a cliché that we live in a world of specialists, that in the twentieth century knowledge consists in knowing more and still more about less.' 58

Transcript for article 'The New Iron Age', The Crafts Council magazine, 7th October 57 1987, Brighton Design Archives, accessed 3rd August 2016. 58 Transcript for article on Pieter Brattinga, circa 1980, Theo Crosby Archives, Brighton Design Archives, Box 13, accessed 3rd August 2016

Summerson, J., 'The Unromantic Castle and Other Essays', Thames and Hudson, 51 1990, pp257-266. Originally published in the Royal Institute of British Architects Journal, June 1957, pp307-310

Bullock, N., 'Building the Post-war World: Modern Architecture and 52 Reconstruction in Britain', Routledge, 2002, p96

Frampton, K., 'Modern Architecture: A Critical History', Thames and Hudson, 53 Fourth Edition, 2007, p263 For an interesting account of the Architectural Review and Englishness see Boyer, CM., 'Not Quite Architecture: Writing Around Alison and Peter Smithson', MIT Press, 2017

Stephen Parnell outlines the importance of the Smithsons in relation to AD's 54 increasing success throughout the 1950s. AD was devoted largely to the Smithsons' cause, although the couple did publish in rival publications including The Architect's Year Book and AR. Parnell, S., 'Architectural Design', 1954-1972, unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Sheffield Department of Architecture, 2011, p148

Theo Crosby was born in 1925 in South Africa and migrated to the UK in 1947, 55 first working for Jane Drew and Maxwell Fry. Stating that he 'came to England for the conversation', Crosby found in Fry and Drew's office an environment that nurtured cultural investigations and curiosity, fostering new approaches to architecture directed by innovations in social organisation. Theo Crosby Archives, Brighton Design Archives, Box 13, accessed 3rd August 2016

<sup>&#</sup>x27;Howard - Wright - Gropius - Le Corbusier, in whose name we have built terrible 56 things'. Un-titled typed text, circa 1980, Theo Crosby Archives, Brighton Design Archives, Box 13, accessed 3rd August 2016

SPACES OF TRANSCULTURAL RESISTANCE

6.3

## **REVOLUTION IS ACCOMPLISHED**

'I am glad that at long last the Athens Charter has been recognised as what it is in reality, namely an utterly useless and nonsensical salad of meaningless phrases.' <sup>59</sup>

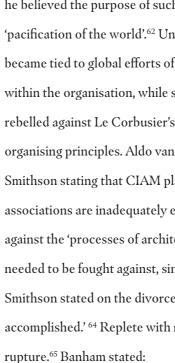
In the period following the Second World War, Modern architecture experienced a significant shift in its reach, geographically expanding within new territories, while also evolving to encompass a number of themes either ignored or subjugated by its prewar arbiters. The aims of Modern architecture and its architects became multi faceted in their dimension, adopting new social, political and cultural environments as well as adapting to the conditions consequent of war. As such this was a time framed by significant change and instability, leading to a number of activities beyond architecture 'proper', which notably manifest across a number of scales. At an international level CIAM.<sup>60</sup> reconvened shortly after the end of war, with the intention of reasserting its authority over the discourse that surrounded Modern architecture, and its purpose in a new ordering system. Focusing their work on urban renewal, and led by Congress chair Jose Luis Sert, CIAM's 1951 meeting held at Hoddeston in the UK established the notion of the 'Core', later renamed The Heart of the City as central to the organisation's concerns. This theme re-located CIAM's activity around a civic centre, which addressed a Humanist agenda foregrounding human needs over functionality. CIAM based its new direction largely on the ideological position set out by The United Nations (UN), in its first meeting in 1945, with its explicit support of reconstruction and house building. As Sarah Deyong notes, CIAM saw its purpose as:

"...the attempt to formalise the vision of a new architecture into the coherent framework of an international organ that would have ties to a bigger legislative body.' 61

While Le Corbusier had been antagonistic to the UN's predecessor The League of Nations,

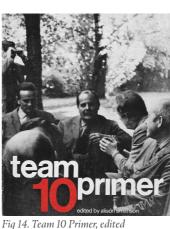


Peter Smithson pictured far right at CIAM IX. Aix-en-Provence, 1953



'CIAM was in ruins and Team X stood upon the wreckage of something that they had joined with enthusiasm, and – with equal enthusiasm – destroyed.'66

Smithson and Banham's joint narration of *Team X's* separation from CIAM as a form of rebellion mythologises their dissent, disguising the fact that Le Corbusier, who was arguably the figurehead of the organisation, invited the accession of the younger generation. At the opening of CIAM 10 in Dubrovnik in 1956, Josep Luis Sert read a letter authored by Le Corbusier, which addressed the younger members who would go on to form *Team X* proposing that 'the generation of 1928 should step aside and let the generation of 1956 take command'.<sup>67</sup> However Annie Pedret whose comprehensive biography of *Team X* details the multiple ways in which the origin of the group can be understood and indeed told, identifies evidences of continuity. One way regards the later retelling codified in Alison Smithson's biography of the group the *Team X Primer*, while the other considers its earlier iteration as a product of thinking throughout the 1940s and 1950s (Fig. 14). Paralleling the time period of this thesis therefore places emphasis on Pedret's second articulation of Team X's history.



by Alison Smithson

he believed the purpose of such a body, through global influence, could contribute to the 'pacification of the world'.<sup>62</sup> Under Le Corbusier's immediate postwar leadership, CIAM became tied to global efforts of restructuring. However a younger generation operating within the organisation, while supportive of the emergent themes established at Hoddesdon rebelled against Le Corbusier's regime, seeking to collapse entirely Modernism's prewar organising principles. Aldo van Evck and Peter Smithson were particularly inimical, with Smithson stating that CIAM planning 'tended to produce towns in which vital human associations are inadequately expressed', and Alison Smithson stating that they were against the 'processes of architectural thought' (Fig. 13).63 For the Smithsons this Modernity needed to be fought against, since it implied the negation of real living conditions. Peter Smithson stated on the divorce from CIAM, in no uncertain terms, that 'the Revolution is accomplished.' <sup>64</sup> Replete with motifs of destruction, *Team X* was conceived of as a complete

Gutkind, E., as guoted from a letter to MARS in Parnell, S., 'Parnell, S., 59 'Architectural Design', 1954-1972, unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Sheffield Department of Architecture, 2011, p237

CIAM was founded in 1928 with the Charter of Athens published in 1933 setting 60 out the direction and purpose of Modern Architecture

Deyong, S., 'Planetary Habitat: The Origins of a Phantom movement', The Journal of 61 Architecture, Vol 6, no 2, Summer 2001, pp113-128, p115

Deyong, S., 'Planetary Habitat: The Origins of a Phantom movement', The Journal of 62 Architecture, Vol. 6, No. 2, 2001, pp113-128, p115 Smithson, P., as quoted in Mumford, L., ', p240 63 Pedret, A., 'Team X: An Archival History', Routledge, 2013, p2 64 Core members of Team X were the Smithsons, Aldo van Evck, Jacon Bakema, 65 George Candilis and Shadrach Woods. Banham, RP. as quoted in Pedret, A., 'Team X: An Archival History', Routledge, 66 2013, p2 67 McCarter, R., 'Aldo Van Eyck', Yale University Press, 2015, p77

Alison Smithson's claim that the group were 'Utopian about the present' is one of the many ideas borrowed from CIAM who in 1928 stated similarly that architecture should express the 'orientation of the age.' 68

While the architectural project *Team X* argued for had a lot to do with Modernism, the clear celebration and visceral desire for the invention of the new, for Hilde Hevnen, has more to do with the attitude of Modernity.<sup>69</sup> Following her definition that modernity describes the life associated with continuous progress', *Team X* was the response to its members' own experience of the modern world, born in the shadow of war. The critical position adopted by the group is congruous with Heynen's assessment that being critical of modernity corresponded with the embrace of its promises, characteristic of 'intellectuals dealing with the contradictions and paradoxes that modern life implied.' 70 Indeed the formative period of *Team X* happened in a period of flux; a moment where positions were being developed through a reiterative and repetitive process in which members influenced each other. This quality however is disguised by the Smithsons' role in defining the group, with Alison Smithson the gatekeeper to its history (Fig. 15). Peter Smithson stated:

"...she controlled everything - layout, picture sizes, text, etc, collaborating with the editor, and this included the suppression of texts, the putting aside of pictures which confused the line she was trying to construct.' 71

As such Pedret argues that *Team X* was a means to make the Smithsons famous. Indeed the couple implied as much, asserting their credentials by drawing attention to their connection with famed others, 'these were the people you were talking about, and the connections between them were observable.' 72 Despite their personal focus and in part because of it, Pedret offers that their lack of large-scale work in comparison to other members limited them to critical architecture, meaning that they instrumentalised their importance in *Team X* as a means of gaining attention. Even the Smithsons stated that:

Fig 16. Philip Johnson, Review of Hunstanton Secondary School in the Architectural Review, 1954

Fig 18. Gymnasium, Hunstanton Secondary School, 1954

other architectural institutions or groups.' 73

This however belies the evident agency the Smithsons repeatedly exhibit, positioning themselves as and where they desired. Hunstanton Secondary School had been a profitable job for the couple; indeed their career is punctuated by high fee paying work every ten years meaning that they actively did not pursue building work due to the lack of economic necessity (Fig. 16-18):

'Hunstanton was a real job. It produced enough money to be able to do theoretical work. We were living fantastically modestly. We had no assistants, ate no food. And the job created the circumstance in which you felt confident. We had of our right to change the social system. Because we won the war we had the right to change our own system and that gave a fantastic kind of energy.' 74

Alison Smithson even noted that they took an interest in state education because they couldn't afford private education for their own children, preferring to save money in order

73 smithson-1462016.html 74 October 2016



transcripts from CIAM 10

at Dubrovnik, 1953

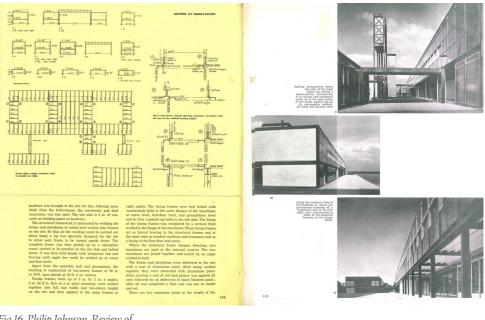




Fig 17. Photograph of Alison and Peter Smithson in a doorway at Hunstanton Secondary Modern School, Norfolk, during construction

'We (Alison and Peter Smithson) needed Team X most ... having no adherence to any

Banham, M., 'Obituary: Alison Smithson', The Independent, 18th August 1993, First accessed 7th February 2017, http://www.independent.co.uk/news/people/obituary-alison-

Smithson, P., 'Peter Smithson Interview', Architectural Magazine, Loose pages, 30th March 1994, Folder E121, University of Harvard Archive, Cambridge, MA, first accessed 31st

Pedret, A., 'Team X: An Archival History', Routledge, 2013, p3 68

Heynen, H., 'Engaging Modernism', p22, first accessed 30th May 2018, http://www. 69 team10online.org/research/papers/delft2/heynen.pdf

Heynen, H., 'Engaging Modernism', p22, first accessed 30th May 2018, http://www. 70 team10online.org/research/papers/delft2/heynen.pdf

<sup>71</sup> Smithson, P. as quoted in Pedret, A., 'Team X: An Archival History', Routledge, 2013, p214

<sup>72</sup> eds. Spellman, C., & Unglaub, K., 'Peter Smithson: Conversations with Students', Princeton Architectural Press, 2004, p10

to dedicate their finances to projects they wished to work on. Indeed if Alison Smithson's accounts are to be believed for this reason, Peter Smithson would have chosen to not have children at all.<sup>75</sup> As such, the couple's 'critical architecture' is not a result of their failure to build, but their wish actively not to. Their need to be part of *Team X* then, was not so as to be productive or legitimised within a traditional architectural discourse that spoke to the practice of building, but so as to be part of a group, which they believed a mechanism for propagating criticality. Banham recognised this quality, observing that the Smithsons saw groups as 'active and effective, rather than that of individuals making lone stands' with Alison Smithson supporting Banham's claim describing *Team X* as a means for 'talking to each other as a family.' 76

In spring 1951 Dorothy Morland was approached by Richard Lannov a gallery assistant about the possibility of organising a meeting amongst younger members separate to the main ICA program.<sup>78</sup> The group would go on to meet for a single evening every two months,<sup>79</sup> with the programme addressing the interests of attendant members who used the meetings as a trial ground for new ideas.<sup>80 81</sup> Morland first entered this into the calendar as the 'Young Group' and has therefore since been credited with giving the Independent Group (IG) their name.<sup>82 83</sup> Being the deputy director of the ICA, Morland's relationship to the nascent group is significant in that her assistance lent them institutional legitimacy, with Beatriz Colomina suggesting that she also became the generational link between young IG members and elder founders of the ICA.<sup>84</sup> A converse story about the origins for the name however suggests the Smithson, A. as quoted in Grove, V., 'The Compleat Woman', The Hogarth Press, 77 1988, p262 78 Members of the IG were required to be under 35 at the time. ICA Printed Programme of Events for the Independent Group, 1955, Folder TGA 87/1/7, The Institute of Contemporary Arts Archive, Tate Britain, first accessed 19th January 2017 Smithson, P. interviewed by Colomina, B., 'Friends of the Future: A Conversation 79

with Peter Smithson', October Magazine, October 1994, MIT Press, p7, Folder E145, University of Harvard Archive, Cambridge, MA, first accessed 31st October 2016 80 Author Unknown, Printed Programme of events for the Independent Group of the Institute of Contemporary Arts for 1955', Folder TGA 87/1/7, The Institute of Contemporary Arts Archive, Tate Britain, first accessed 19th January 2017 81 The first session of the IG was in early 1952 with a group of around twelve people meeting at the ICA's Dover Street premises. The artist Eduardo Paolozzi, the philosopher AJ Aver and the American kinetic artist Edward Hoppe led the three sessions that spring. Whiteley, N., 'Revner Banham: Historian of the Immediate Future', MIT Press, 2002, p84 Smithson, A., 'The Independent Group: Postwar Britain and the Aesthetics of 82 Plenty', MIT Press, 1990, p20 83 Anecdotes such as an instance when long streams of paper were thrown out of an upstairs window of the ICA's Dover Street premises as part of a performance or the occasion when Guy Debord was 'chased over the rooftops of Dover Street' give a picture of a sociable, informal setting, which in 1954 John Berger disparagingly called 'no more than a Jazz club'. Indeed there was a series of historical introductory lectures to jazz running alongside talks on art from the École de Paris, with critic David Sylvester taking a prominent part. Under the auspices of composer Elisabeth Lutyens and sculptor Eduardo Paolozzi, jazz becomes a key part of ICA cultural life. Frank Cordell, the ICA's Independent Group member, worked for the jazz/pop music industry, and by 1957 Melody Maker, 'the jazzman's own newspaper', was taking advertisements in the monthly Bulletin. John Berger as quoted in 'Fifty Years of the Future: A Chronicle of the Institute of Contemporary Arts', first accessed 10th July 2017, http://www.hmgt.co.uk/ica/OldWEBSITE/history/50years.pdf Founded by Herbert Read, ELT Mesens and Roland Penrose, their interest in Surrealism dominated the early years of the ICA. The idea for a new institution for the arts however pre-dated the war with Herbert Read putting forth a proposal in 1938, designed to oppose the academicism of the Royal Academy. The ICA first occupied a number of

## **BUSY WIZARDS**

'After the school we had already made a myth of ourselves.' 77

Banham, M., 'Obituary: Alison Smithson', The Independent, 18th August 1993, First 75 accessed 7th February 2017, http://www.independent.co.uk/news/people/obituary-alisonsmithson-1462016.html

<sup>76</sup> Smithson, A., 'Team X', AD Magazine, November 1975, Folder J042, University of Harvard Archives, Cambridge, MA, first accessed 31st October 2016

desire by the group for complete rupture from the ICA, with Richard Hamilton contending that:

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'I understand that the title 'Independent Group' came from the idea of rejecting the mother image of the ICA. That it was a resentment of the ICA actually bringing these people together at all, and so we said, all right. We'll be together but we want to be independent of the ICA.' 85

On the one hand Hamilton depicts the IG as being nestled within the institution, seeking to devise ways of making a larger contribution, while on the other they are cast as representative of an entirely separate faction, with an opposing ideology set on dismantling the institution.<sup>86</sup> Nigel Whitelev notes in his book on Revner Banham that members of the IG, including Banham himself, actively refrained from using the name The Independent Group.<sup>87</sup> In 1956 in an article in *Design* called *Things to Come*? Banham speaks of the group's membership as:

"...hav[ing] been involved in recent studies at the Institute of Contemporary Arts into the way in which advertising reflects and created popular aesthetic standards.'<sup>88</sup>

Whitelev posits the informality of meetings as one reason why for Banham the group did not have a 'name and identity' with the attribution of coherence a factor of its historicisation claiming that in fact 'historical mythmaking' is the sole reason for the IG to be known as it is today.<sup>89</sup> Anthony Hill corroborates Whiteley's observation, diminishing the contemporary importance of the group. Although admitting to attending only three meetings, Hill describes *"...in retrospect...rather difficult for me to be aware of any importance. I think they* might have been putting it on a bit, that they were like a secret cell of busy wizards.' 90

Yet Anne Massey's extensive writing on both the ICA and the IG provides a succinct overview of the individuals and activities that constituted the group, going to a great deal of care to unpack some of the myths that have since evolved concerning its historicisation.<sup>91</sup> One example Massey focuses on is refuting the myth of members' shared working class background, countering Banham's claim that the IG was 'the revenge of the elementary school boys.' 92 Colomina has described the image of the Smithsons with Paolozzi and Henderson as 'look[ing] like some neighbourhood thugs',<sup>35</sup> however as Anne Massey shows, this largely was an identity they wished to project, rather than based on any truth. Noting Nigel Henderson's links to high society through his familial connections with the art world, Massey makes much of his mother Wye Henderson's association with Peggy Guggenheim for whom she ran a gallery, in turn highlighting Henderson's connections to Surrealists including Marcel Duchamp (Fig. 19).94 For others it was education that was definitive of class identity. At a time when attending university was deemed a necessity, Lawrence Alloway stated that the IG was formed around an objection to established forms of 'university culture', thereby, albeit echoing Massey's account, offering a shift in its framing.<sup>95</sup>

It is through the lens of multiple contemporary retellings of the IG that the importance of the image emerges; how individuals in the group wished to be *perceived* both autonomously

90 91 1949-1959', Manchester University Press, 1996 92 93 94 1976, first accessed 10th January 2017 95 Aesthetics of Plenty', MIT Press, 1990



Anthony Hill interviewed by Dorothy Morland, Folder TGA 955/1/14/7. The Institute of Contemporary Arts Archive, Tate Britain, first accessed 19th January 2017 Massey, A., 'The Independent Group: Modernism and Mass Culture in Britain,

Lingwood, J., 'Nigel Henderson' in Robbins, D. ed., 'The Independent Group: Postwar Britain and the Aesthetics of Plenty', MIT Press, 1990, p76

Smithson, P. interviewed by Colomina, B., 'Friends of the Future: A Conversation with Peter Smithson', October Magazine, October 1994, MIT Press, p17, Folder E145, University of Harvard Archive, Cambridge, MA, first accessed 31st October 2016 Nigel Henderson's wife, Judith Stephens was the niece of Virginia Woolf and Henderson's mother's was connected to Woolf through the Bloomsbury group, at one point living with her son in Gordon Square. Massey concedes that Eduardo Paolozzi offered the most legitimate working class connection with Nigel Henderson affirming 'Eduardo put in the gut reaction which was missing on the English scene' by way of explanation for how Paolozzi's so called 'rough' background manifest in the work. Henderson, N., 'Nigel Henderson interviewed by Dorothy Moreland', Document TGA 955/1/14/6, 17th August

Alloway, L. in eds. Robbins, D., 'The Independent Group: Post war Britain and the

residences across London including a location at 17/18 Dover Street amongst a few smaller venues. Smithson, P. interviewed by Colomina, B., 'Friends of the Future: A Conversation with Peter Smithson', October Magazine, October 1994, MIT Press, p5, Folder E145, University of Harvard Archive, Cambridge, MA, first accessed 31st October 2016 85 Hamilton, R., as quoted in Troiani, IS., 'The Politics of Friends in Modern

Architecture: 1949-1987', unpublished PhD thesis, Queensland University of Technology, 2005

<sup>86</sup> Founders of the ICA, notably Herbert Read were not against the younger generation, with the institution promoting their work which can be seen in exhibitions such as 'Young Sculptors' held at the ICA in London in 1952 in which Paolozzi showed three works. Kitnick, A., 'The Brutalism of Life and Art', October Magazine 136, MIT Press, Spring 2011, pp63-86, p64

Whiteley, N., 'Reyner Banham: Historian of the Immediate Future', MIT Press, 87 2002, p425

Banham, R., as quoted in Whiteley, N., 'Reyner Banham: Historian of the 88 Immediate Future', MIT Press, 2002, p425

<sup>89</sup> Whiteley, N., 'Reyner Banham: Historian of the Immediate Future', MIT Press, 2002, p83

and collectively. One cynical reason for this is encapsulated in Anthony Hill's remark that members of the IG were 'made by the scene', noting the desire to be at once associated with the ICA, only to then be seen to be operating within its margins.<sup>96</sup> This goes someway to explain why Henderson, Paolozzi and the Smithsons (amongst others) inhabited counter identities to their own, visually or otherwise, as a means to underscore the real and imaginary separation from the institution. Indeed Peter Smithson even noted the establishment qualities of the IG:

'For me, the Independent Group was like a school boy association; I am making it sound ridiculous, but it was all sorts of nudging and giggling.<sup>97</sup>

Anthony Hill corroborates a feeling of exclusion recounting that:

"...people attracted to the arts possibly with no real basis of knowledge or experience... in next to no time they're figures of the fringe art world.' 98

Indeed many of the core membership who made up the first committee of the IG went on to hold significant roles within the very institution they principally opposed, meaning that while some members may have positioned the IG's origins against the ICA, many in fact spent their entire time of their membership consolidating their association with it.<sup>99</sup> Alloway for example stated that he only stayed involved with the IG because of its 'potential usefulness of association with the ICA to his career',<sup>100</sup> going on to lecturer at The Tate Gallery and later in 1955, while the IG were still meeting became an assistant director at the ICA.<sup>101</sup> As such for Tom Lawson, the historic relevance of the IG is its mythology:

actual group itself.' 102

The Smithsons were surprisingly complicit in manufacturing the myth of the IG, which is remarkable because they appear in very few stories told by other members, and also, according to their own account, were only present for 'four meetings of about fifteen or so.' <sup>103</sup> However in the one important story in which they are mentioned they refute its validity. In an anecdote famously perpetuated by Richard Hamilton, he claims that he defined Pop Art in a letter to Alison and Peter Smithson:

'Popular (designed for a mass audience); Transient (short-term solution); Expendable (easily forgotten); Low cost; Mass produced; Young (aimed at youth); Witty; Sexy; Gimmicky; Glamorous; Big business.' 104

Peter Smithson denied they ever received the letter, noting that nonetheless the story had somehow made it into 'everybody's essays'.<sup>105</sup> However, only refuting Hamilton's claim in 1994, Smithson's statement reflects the couple's casual attitude to accuracy, in which they allow the perpetuation of the myth, only correcting when pressed. This type of event for van den Heuvel is emblematic of what he calls the 'Smithson-ness of the Smithsons', noting that the IG was where the 'indeterminate fables' were made, which have now come to dominate the couple's current historiography.<sup>106</sup> A 'Smithson-ness' attribute then is their ability to manipulate their own importance in the IG through their prolific retelling of events. Alison Smithson even attempted to reorient the IG's origins towards alternative institutions, with which only her and Peter Smithson were associated:

102 chive, Cambridge, MA, first accessed 2nd November 2016 103 104 warhol1/andy/warhol/articles/popart/hamilton.html 105 University of Harvard Archive, Cambridge, MA, first accessed 31st October 2016 106

"...the notion of a legacy bequeathed by the IG artists has to go further than individual cases, for in reality it is the mythic IG that has been important, not the

Anthony Hill interviewed by Dorothy Morland, Folder TGA 955/1/14/7, The 96 Institute of Contemporary Arts Archive, Tate Britain, First accessed 19th January 2017 Smithson, P. as quoted in eds. Spellman, C. & Unglaub, K., 'Peter Smithson: 97 Conversations with Students', Princeton Architectural Press, 2004, p41

<sup>98</sup> Anthony Hill interviewed by Dorothy Morland, Folder TGA 955/1/14/7, The Institute of Contemporary Arts Archive, Tate Britain, first accessed 19th January 2017 The first committee was made up of Lawrence Alloway, Peter Reyner Banham, 99

Richard Hamilton, John McHale, Eduardo Paolozzi, Toni del Renzio and Peter Smithson. Author Unknown, 'Printed programme of events for the Independent Group of the Institute of Contemporary Arts for 1955', Folder TGA 87/1/7, The Institute of Contemporary Arts Archive, Tate Britain, first accessed 19th January 2017

<sup>100</sup> Bradnock, L., 'Lawrence Alloway: Critic and Curator', Yale University Press, 2015, p17

<sup>101</sup> Whiteley, N., 'Reyner Banham: Historian of the Immediate Future', MIT Press, 2002, p84

Lawson, T., 'This Is Tomorrow Today', 1987, Folder J154, University of Harvard Ar-

Smithson, P. interviewed by Colomina, B., 'Friends of the Future: A Conversation with Peter Smithson', October Magazine, October 1994, MIT Press, p6, Folder E145,

University of Harvard Archive, Cambridge, MA, first accessed 31st October 2016

Hamilton, R., 'Letter to the Smithsons', 1982 http://www.warholstars.org/warhol/

Smithson, P. interviewed by Colomina, B., 'Friends of the Future: A Conversation with Peter Smithson', October Magazine, October 1994, MIT Press, p6, Folder E145,

Along with the Smithsons the other architects who attended were Sandy Wilson, Geoffrey Holroyd and James Stirling. van den Heuvel, D., 'Alison and Peter Smithson: A Brutalist Story', unpublished PhD Thesis, Technical University of Delft, 2013, p40

'The IG seemed to be very largely compiled from discussions at the Central School tea table and therefore in its first season comprised staff members and affiliates... Theo was never a member of the IG (I suspect a sore point still).... Nigel disappeared to the country and this changed the IG as it severed the smell of a Bloomsbury connection. Then Alloway left for the US and it was all over bar a single meeting Dorothy called in the back lounge to try to revive something...it ended in laughter over my mispronunciation of Kandinsky as Klandinsky.'<sup>107</sup>

Alison Smithson authors this account, emphasising the importance of membership, while placing herself at the centre of the group's demise. Her offhand phrasing appears to trivialise the tone and content of the meetings, which contradicts what both Smithsons have later stated concerning their importance, memorialising events such as Paolozzi's first showing of his *BUNK!* series as of historical significance. Positioning as a rhetorical act is significant in explaining their actions, with Alison stating that positioning was 'a necessity for the IG' and 'part of the excitement of the 1953/54 meetings.' <sup>108</sup> Peter Smithson affirms that unless one had a position '…there would be an embarrassment about it. To take too easily is a form of eclecticism', meaning that creating opposition was a tactic in itself to explore interests and meaning amongst each other.<sup>109</sup>

Thus the identity of the IG as an avant-garde group can be defined by its internal differences, rather than perceived as a neat coherent whole, with the increasing homogeneity of its membership indicative of the end of its useable life span. For Alison Smithson the end of the IG was characterised by a loss of independent positioning, which led to a, 'progressive merging, as the IG members became increasingly among the ICA's star performers and then its establishment.' <sup>110</sup> Finding little equivalence amongst their peers in terms of fame within the art world, Alison Smithson's observation reflects the anxiety felt by the couple of being left behind, despite their own tendency to find fission within collaborative groups, while

#### GENERATIONAL SHIFTS

at the same time exploiting them in order to reinforce their own autonomy. The following chapter thus analyses the role of the IG in the Smithsons' practice in greater detail, to claim that the act of positioning was not a means to an end for the couple, but crucial to developing

their practice as designers.

<sup>107</sup> Smithson, A., 'Independent Group AMS from memory 1986-87', Typed single page, Folder E098, 1988, University of Harvard Archive, Cambridge, MA, first accessed 1<sup>st</sup> November 2016

<sup>108</sup> Smithson, A., 'Independent Group AMS from memory 1986-87', Typed single page, Folder E098, 1988, University of Harvard Archive, Cambridge, MA, first accessed 1<sup>st</sup> November 2016

<sup>Smithson, P. interviewed by Colomina, B., 'Friends of the Future: A Conversation with Peter Smithson', October Magazine, October 1994, MIT Press, p9, Folder E145, University of Harvard Archive, Cambridge, MA, first accessed 31st October 2016
Smithson, A., 'Independent Group AMS from memory 1986-87', Typed single</sup> 

page, Folder E098, 1988, University of Harvard Archive, Cambridge, MA, first accessed 1<sup>st</sup> November 2016

as its sole remit in the postwar period. Their association with the ICA, indeed the way in which they imbricated themselves with the IG, is demonstrative of their lack of commitment to the principles of the avant-garde in its traditional sense. Hal Foster challenges Bürger's premise questioning both what can be determined 'art' and 'life.' 116 Stating that the avantgarde's 'activities can[not] be subsumed under the project to destroy the false autonomy of bourgeois art', Foster's refutes the notion that one theory can adequately deal with the avant-garde.117

While for young artists and architects returning from war, the new paradigm was to be constructed through the interdisciplinary relationship between a range of practices beyond the confines of art and architecture, enveloping within them a concern for the prosaic existence of the everyday. As such the site for such storytelling became the contested terrain of public patronage and private professional practice, which expanded the role of the architect as both a practical servant and avant-garde thinker. As such magazines including as the AR and AD provided an experimental medium, becoming what architectural theorist Jane Rendell describes as, 'an architectonics – a series of procedures for the material organisation, structure and construction of space.' <sup>118</sup> The magazine then was conceived as an additional tool to shape architectural practice, with a multiplicity of narratives advanced during this period. Challenging those who controlled the imagery of social and political discourse, at stake was the identity of Modernity not just on a national, but international stage. A generational narrative constructed legitimate forms of renewal in which mistakes of the past could transition but also, transform. The next chapter expands on the dichotomy between identities located in both the past and present, to further explore the impact of avant-garde thinking on a younger generation, and the role of imagery in the construction of their individual and collective sense of self.

# CONCLUSIONS

## 'There is a strong Cool School in England.' 111

On the one hand Western Modernity progressed in the UK in the postwar period full of hope, projecting an image based on the intentional amnesia of the recent past. On the other its negation of the complexities of postwar life manifest in everyday acts of in*habitat*ion, overlooked less heroic forms of recovery that characterised most people's existence. The experience of modernity was therefore explored in this chapter, in order to posit the identity of the different groups that developed alternative cultural systems to that advanced by the state. Hilde Heynen celebrates the avant-garde of this era for their ability to embrace paradox and to articulate a material aesthetic born from the quotidian, without relinquishing the utopian.<sup>112</sup> For Dirk van den Heuvel, the Smithsons' established themselves as part of this avant-garde in a meta-historical sense, meaning that they primarily worked to 'oppose the then established culture.' <sup>113</sup> The historical avant-garde is located in Peter Bürger's framing as an inherently political group, part of a rebellion against bourgeois practices, which must be 'useful' and challenge the dynamics of social and political power.<sup>114</sup>

Bürger stated that the purpose of the avant-garde was to merge art with life, with art understood as the product of labour, alongside that of other types of work.<sup>115</sup> Positioned in opposition to institutionalised forms of art, Bürger's theory has often been used to describe *Team X*, and the Modernism produced by those allied against CIAM. However, as this chapter has shown, Alison and Peter Smithson were very much part of an autonomous artistic institution. In fact the ICA was at the time claiming the field of contemporary art

<sup>116</sup> New Perspectives : Avantgarde, Avantgardekritik, Avantgardeforschung', Rodopi, 2000, p245 117 Foster, H., 'The Return of the Real: Art and Theory at the End of the Century: Avant-Garde at the End of the Century', Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1996, p8 118 Rendell, J. as quoted in Brown, LA., 'Feminist Practices: Interdisciplinary Approaches to Women in Architecture', Routledge, 2016, p38

<sup>6</sup> 

Killian, T., 'Brutalism an Outsider's View', Typed Document, undated, Folder J019, 111 University of Harvard Archive, Cambridge, MA, first accessed 31st October 2016 Heynen, H., 'Engaging Modernism', p29, first accessed 30th May 2018, http://www. 112 team10online.org/research/papers/delft2/heynen.pdf

<sup>113</sup> van den Heuvel, D., 'Alison and Peter Smithson: A Brutalist Story', unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Delft, 2013, p34

The avant-garde and modernism were used interchangeably in the late 1960s. 114 Renato Poggioli's Theory of the Avant-Garde, translated from the Italian in 1968, was reviewed in the United States as if it were a book about 'modernism', and John Weightman's The Concept of the Avant-Garde of 1973 is subtitled 'Explorations in Modernism'Huyssen, A., 'The Search for Tradition: Avant-Garde and Postmodernism in the 1970s', New German Critique, no.22 (Winter 1981), p26

Mauro, E., 'The Death and Life of the Avant-Garde:|| Or, Modernism 115 and Biopolitics', Mediations : Journal of the Marxist Literary Group, first accessed July 28th 2016, http://www.mediationsjournal.org/articles/the-death-and-life-of-the-avant-garde

Foster, H., quoted in Highmore in Scheunemann, D. (ed.), 'European Avant-Garde:

7

## (SOCIAL) LIFE AND ART

### 'Science states meanings; art expresses them.'<sup>1</sup>

The previous chapter introduced the context in which the Smithsons began their practice, focusing on the intersection of social and political concerns, defined by the separation between professional public and private sectors. The architectural press played a substantial role creating what has been described as a binary division between The Architectural Review and AD Magazine, which also loosely mirrored a generational split, with those returning from war rejecting the parochial image of modernity depicted by The Festival of Britain. The formation of warring factions continued as a motif of the 1950s with CIAM's deposition by Team X in which Alison and Peter Smithson played a crucial part. Having looked at the context in which both the IG and *Team X* were formed, this chapter turns to consider the work that the couple produced during the period of their membership, principally the first exhibition that they made with Nigel Henderson and Eduardo Paolozzi at the ICA in 1953 titled Parallel of Life and Art (Fig. 1). The exhibition was a lengthy exploration of the power of photography and the image, engaged in attempts to destabilise all recognisable forms of display as a means to shift cultural values.<sup>2</sup> For Henderson, Paolozzi and the Smithsons, photography provided a new way of interpreting the world, creating alternative ways in which to construct reality predicated on identifying the marginal and over looked (Fig. 2).

This chapter aims to understand *Parallel of Life and Art* as indicative of the influence that the collaborative experience had on the Smithsons, in order to frame their early architectural practice as emergent from the contemporary art world in early postwar London.<sup>3</sup> Of course the Smithsons' practice was not entirely extrinsic from the industry in which they were trained, rather they were part of a broader history of both artists and architects concerned with non-modern 'others', in search of more 'authentic' cultural forms. While there are evident links between the Smithsons' work and others with whom they associated, the chapter does not draw parallels between *Parallel of Life and Art* and the evolution of *Pop Art*,

3 Crippa, E. and other authors, 'Exhibition, Design, Participation', Afterall Books, 2016, p13

Fig 1. Photograph of Nigel Henderson, Eduardo Paolozzi, Alison and Peter Smithson, seated in an unidentified street. Photographed for the 'This is Tomorrow' exhibition catalogue held at the Whitechapel Art Gallery, 1956



Parallel of Life and Art Held at the Institute of Contemporery Arts

Fig 2. Catalogue Cover, Parallel of Life and Art, 1953

### (SOCIAL) LIFE AND ART

nor the commercial aesthetics of the era, as they have been widely discussed elsewhere. Here *Parallel of Life and Art* is considered in terms of the experience of the *design process* for the artists and architects that made it, rather than the external experience of either a general public or critical press. While this includes discussions of architectural concepts, design strategies, and in some instances built work, the research centres on the role of the people associated with the installation's production to better understand the project as part of a *process* of identity making, which this chapter shows, was a significant element in the Smithsons' alternative design methodology.



<sup>1</sup> Dewey, J., 'Art as Experience', Perigee Books, 1934, p210

<sup>2</sup> Dewey, J., 'Art as Experience', Perigee Books, 1934, p210

7.1

## ELUCIDATING THE COMMON

## 'Thought happens in the mouth.' <sup>4</sup>

### Entering Someone's Head

Opening on September 11th 1953, Parallel of Life and Art <sup>5</sup> was an installation comprised of 122 images, displayed at height on a number of surfaces positioned at angles within a single room at the ICA, then situated on Dover Street (Fig. 3).<sup>6</sup> Based entirely on photographs, the artists exhibited a composition of images whose content was sorted into 18 'categories' denoted as Anatomy, Architecture, Art, Calligraphy, Date1901, Landscape, Movement, Nature, Primitive, Scale of Man, Stress, Stress Structure, Football, Science Fiction, Medicine, Geology, *Metal and Ceramic* (Fig.4).<sup>7</sup> The ICA described the exhibition in their press release as:

*...an encyclopaedic range of material from past and present...brought together through* the medium of the camera which is used as recorder, reporter, and scientific investigator.'8

This description succinctly unites two significant aspects of the exhibition; firstly the importance of the breadth of its content, with the press release tellingly evading any attempt at its explanation, and secondly the role that the camera played in the production of the exhibition, which the ICA insinuate underscored its meaning. However, for the unsuspecting viewer, on entering Parallel of Life and Art, little of this analysis was conveyed with clarity. Images such as an x-ray of a skull were placed below a still of sprinters running on a track mid race, while a large number of others depict various archaeological artefacts and



Fig 3. Photograph of installation view of Parallel of Life and Art exhibition windows in Dover Street Premises, ICA, Parallel of Life and Art, 1953



Fig 14. Images were also hung from the ceiling, surrounding the viewer, Parallel of Life and Art, 1953

microscopic images of fossils, parts of Machu Picchu or Dublin's bus garage (Fig.5-13).9 All of the images displayed were reproduced in black and white with the obfuscation of scale causing an intentional confusion between the micro and the macro.<sup>10</sup> The objective was to engulf the viewer, forcing a confrontation with the material by completely occupying their peripheral vision (Fig. 14).<sup>11</sup> The dimensions of the room at the ICA, which had huge full height windows, elevated the effect; the installation hung mainly on three walls, making use of the ceiling as its fourth.<sup>12</sup> Yet photographs of Parallel of Life and Art largely omit the fact that the room was naturally lit, meaning that the exhibition appears smaller in scale and more

9	Dyckhoff, T., 'Ordinar
accessed 13th June 2017, https://	
tomdyckhoff	
10	Walsh, V., 'Nigel Hend
p89	
11	Colomina, B., 'Unbrea
pp28-59	
12	According to Alison S
same in which the IG had their	

pp184-195



of works included in the catalogue for Parallel of Life and Art, 1953

ry beauty', The Guardian, Saturday 20th April 2002, first s://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2002/apr/20/weekend.

derson; Parallel of Life and Art', Thames and Hudson, 2002,

athed Air 1956', Grey Room 15, MIT Press, Spring 2004,

Smithson the room used for *Parallel of Life and Art* was the meetings, which she reiterated did not mean there was an explicit connection between the exhibition and the group. Smithson, A. & Smithson, P., in eds. Robbins, D., 'The Independent Group and the Aesthetics of Plenty', MIT Press, 1990,

Tristan Tzara as quoted in eds. Daz-Diocaretz, M., 'The Bakhtin Circle Today', Rodopi, 1989, p174

<sup>5</sup> Parallel of Life and Art ran for 5 weeks between September 11th – October 18th 1995. It was originally worked on by the Smithsons along with Eduardo Paolozzi and Victor Pasmore, however Henderson soon replaced Pasmore. The engineer Ronald Jenkins also worked on the exhibition. For a succinct account of Parallel of Life and Art see Dirk van den Heuvel's unpublished PhD thesis 'Alison and Peter Smithson: A Brutalist Story' (2013), Ben Highmore's article 'Rough Poetry: Patio and Pavilion Revisited' (2006) and Victoria Walsh, 'Nigel Henderson Parallel of Life and Art' (2001).

The ICA gained its first permanent residency through Arts Council support. 6 Adamson, W., 'Embattled Avant-Gardes: Modernism's Resistance to Commodity Culture in Europe', University of California Press, 2007, p335

Scalbert, I., 'Architecture as a Way of Life: The New Brutalism 1953-1956', Team 10 7 Online, p62, http://www.team10online.org/research/papers/delft1/scalbert.pdf

Press release for Parallel of Life and Art by the ICA, 31st August 1953, Folder TGA 8 9211/5/1/2, Tate Archive, accessed 10th January 2017

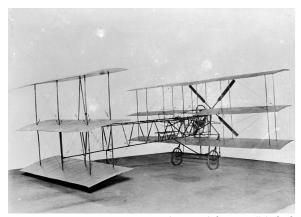


Fig 5. Photograph from Parallel of Life and Art exhibition catalogue, no.49

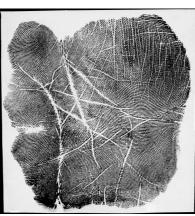


Fig 7. Photograph from Parallel of Life and Art exhibition catalogue, no.54



Fig 10. Photograph from Parallel of Life and Art exhibition catalogue, no.7



Fig 6. Photograph from Parallel of Life and Art exhibition catalogue, no.64



Fig 12. Photograph from Parallel of Life and Art exhibition catalogue, no.19



Fig 8. Photograph from Parallel of Life and Art exhibition catalogue, no.104

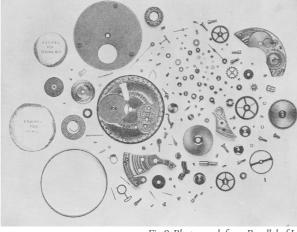


Fig 9. Photograph from Parallel of Life and Art exhibition catalogue, no.1



Fig 11. Photograph from Parallel of Life and Art exhibition catalogue, no.18





Fig 13. Photograph from Parallel of Life and Art exhibition catalogue, no.30

#### (SOCIAL) LIFE AND ART

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hermetic (Fig. 15 & 16).<sup>15</sup> Despite this detail, in saturating the viewer's perspective the display achieved its purpose by being at once overwhelming in its subject matter, and claustrophobic in its structure, as Tom Dyckhoff has described, 'it was like entering someone's head.' 14 Dyckhoff's observation is not far from reality with the content mined from a selection of images collected personally by all four members of the group over the course of a year.<sup>15</sup> The exhibition was therefore designed to feel exactly like being in four people's heads at once, with Nigel Henderson's description of the group's weekly meetings offering a more nuanced understanding of individual input versus the instrumentalisation of images within a group dynamic:

'We had for some time been interested in exchanging images from our own private 'imaginary museums'...we often found that this exchange resulted in confirmation of our beliefs,...that others too responded in the same way to the visual impact of a particular image.' <sup>16</sup>

Beyond the pertinence of any singular image, the meaning of the exhibition was for the group signified in this moment of transfer (Fig. 17). Consequently Henderson's retelling indicates how the repetition of a method based on individual subjectivity, engendered the revelation of a form of objective consciousness, or put another way, the value of one image over others was affirmed by the group acting together.<sup>17</sup> For the artists value was thus assigned unconsciously and individually to each image by this process, with the sheer fact of their consequent exhibition providing the recognition of their collective value, without an accompanying explanation of it. However, given the absence of captions or explanatory information, all the work done in accumulating and then attributing significance to the contents, was in effect hidden from their audience. The group thus achieved the creation of a collective aesthetic, but without developing a parallel verbal equivalent with which to communicate it to others.





Fig 15 & 16. The installation was bathed in light during the day, a feature omitted in most photos of the exhibition, Parallel of Life and Art, ICA, 1953



Fig 17. Peter Smithson with the engineer Ronald Ienkins who collaborated on Parallel of Life and Art in his office at Ove Arup & Consulting Engineers, Charlotte Street, London, 1951

exhibition's opening:

I think we all felt the people were a bit nervous of us, that perhaps we were thought to be a bit harum-scarum, unsure of our around. We felt this nervousness and fought it off: it was a brake on the adventure, because it was an adventure one couldn't prefigure the form it would take...we wanted to find the expressive terms of it as we went along.' <sup>18</sup>

In referring to the installation as a 'brake', Henderson implies that Parallel of Life and Art punctuated the 'common working aesthetic' upon which they were focused, signifying that the process of the project's making was the work.<sup>19</sup> As such the objectives behind the display as the final product of a design process comes into question. Henderson's comments make the whole thing appear somehow accidental, negating the group's intentions in creating Parallel of Life and Art by highlighting the lack of thought that had gone into its final form. Yet while the exhibition was essentially a public revelation of the group's private scrapbooks, Henderson's last sentence in which he states their desire to 'find the expressive terms' does suggest that the group looked for ways that the material could be understood bevond their own internal communications.

Given then that the exhibition was not for its artists a synthesis of ideas meaningfully displayed, but an experiment in how to convey the nascence of their thought beyond themselves, this chapter turns to a consideration of Parallel of Life and Art as part of an experience rather than an object-based artwork. In thinking of the exhibition as unfinished, realised in a contrived moment of rest, the following sections question its purpose, not as evidence of a new aesthetic culture, but as the material product of an intimate relationship between four people. Moreover, it is suggested that the intended political agency of the installation lies simply in its very existence.<sup>20</sup> Framed as a challenge to its parent institution, this is explored through the notion of the exhibition as a by-product of the Smithsons'

The intensely private nature of this process, which was seemingly inaccessible to anyone else, became the cause of a sense of alienation amongst the group on the event of the

<sup>13</sup> Colomina, B., 'Unbreathed Air 1956', Grey Room 15, MIT Press, Spring 2004, pp28-59

Dyckhoff, T., 'Ordinary Beauty', The Guardian, Saturday 20th April 2002, first 14 accessed 13th June 2017, https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2002/apr/20/weekend. tomdvckhoff

<sup>15</sup> Nigel Henderson as quoted in van den Heuvel, 'Alison and Peter Smithson - from the House of the Future to the House of Today', 010 Publishers, 2004, p15

Walsh, V., 'Nigel Henderson; Parallel of Life and Art', Thames and Hudson, 2002, 16 p92

<sup>17</sup> Walsh, V., 'Nigel Henderson; Parallel of Life and Art', Thames and Hudson, 2002, p92

Nigel Henderson interviewed by Dorothy Morland, 17th August 1976, TG 18 955/1/14/6, ICA Collection, Tate Archives, accessed 10th January 2017 19 Nigel Henderson as quoted in van den Heuvel, 'Alison and Peter Smithson - From the *House of the Future* to the House of Today', 010 Publishers, 2004, p15 Hilde Heynen labels works such as this 'committed' artworks meaning that the 20 intention behind their making is bound up in their existence rather than in any meaning to be found within the work itself. Heynen, H., 'Architecture and Modernity', MIT Press, Second Edition, 1999, p131

ulterior motive to position themselves within the ICA, primarily by way of their association with Henderson and Paolozzi. As such the terms in which the group made the exhibition are explored, but equally in turn how the exhibition also made them.

## Paradox of Reality

For an exhibition predicated on the deconstruction of meaning with little recourse for interpretation, it is perhaps no surprise that *Parallel of Life and Art*failed to illicit a positive immediate reception from the public. The exhibition came across to many as incoherent with visitors able to draw only tenuous links from one image to another. Students at the influential Architectural Association denounced the ugliness of Parallel of Life and Art stating its 'denial of the Spiritual in Man' <sup>21</sup> while David Sylvester wrote at the time of its 'consummate inconsequentiality.' 22 Other critics were more forgiving of Parallel of Life and Art's attempt to articulate a new reality, by finding value in the exact incoherence for which it was being derided, with Bryan Robertson and Tom Hopkinson describing it as 'beautiful and rewarding' and 'genuinely original' respectively. In their coverage both highlight the exhibition's claim to eliminate the hierarchy between high and low culture, seeing the installation's disregard for traditional or expected forms of representation constituting its essential quality. As such, the exhibition becomes an equal contributor, a fifth 'head' with its own catalogue of imagery contributing to the cycle of 'elucidating' the common, as Henderson had put it; yet in this instance in dialogue with the public. In this way the exhibition is not just a visual product of the group's process, but an invitation to join it.

This invitation is extended in photographs taken of *Parallel of Life and Art* by Nigel Henderson. Indeed it is through his lens as the artist that we acquire an additional reading of the work, captured in the images he produced. In one photograph Henderson depicts his daughter standing in a doorframe surrounded by images of stone sculptures and ancient markings. It is unclear to what extent she should be considered part of the exhibition, with the juxtaposition of images in the shot now coupled with this human disruption (Fig. 18-20). The photograph constitutes a new 'frame' and thus a new way of experiencing the show, with Henderson's daughter reduced to source material, now part of the artists' 'collection.'

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Fig 18-20. Nigel Henderson's daughter Justin shown standing in amongst the images of Parallel of Life and Art at the ICA on Dover Street, 1953

The installation has therefore come to be encountered in different ways, with Henderson's photographs today equally evocative as the original.<sup>23</sup> Predicated on the principle of pairing images side by side, the photography of *Parallel of Life and Art* allows for another layer of juxtapositioning to take place. Reyner Banham elaborates on the ability of photography for the transmutation and layering of imagery:

*`...the photograph being an artefact applies its own laws of artefaction to the material it documents, and discovers similarities and parallels between the documentations, even where none exists between the objects and the events recorded.'*<sup>24</sup>

In his essay *The New Brutalism* from which this quote is taken, Banham reiterates his belief in the importance of logical inconsistency as a key tenet of the artistic process,<sup>25</sup> which resonated with increasing critical attention focused on photography at the time, due to its embrace of ambiguity and ability in providing in Rosalind Krauss's terms, a 'vehicle for the expression of public reaction.' <sup>26</sup> Krauss's statement infers the medium's inclusive potential, appealing to those without requisite expertise as a point of entry to the 'cognate visual arts.'<sup>27</sup>

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23 For an interesting analy
The search for Contemporary Copp314-331
24 Banham, PR. as quoted
23<sup>rd</sup> February 1990, Folder E097
accessed 22nd September 2015
25 In The Development of
the image as used to describe evo
status of art. Kitnick, A., 'The Bro
Spring 2011, pp63-86, p81
26 Krauss, R., 'A Note on I
pp49-68, p49
27 Krauss, R., 'A Note on I
pp49-68, p49
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23 For an interesting analysis in this respect see Cranfield, B., 'Not Another Museum: The search for Contemporary Connection', Journal of Visual Culture, Vol. 12, No. 2, 2013,

Banham, PR. as quoted in Hatton, B., 'Age of Plenty', Building Design Magazine, 23<sup>rd</sup> February 1990, Folder E097: Alison and Peter Smithson Archives, Harvard University, accessed 22nd September 2015

In The Development of British Pop published in 1966, Lawrence Alloway stressed the image as used to describe evocative visual material from any source, with or without the status of art. Kitnick, A., 'The Brutalism of Life and Art', October Magazine 136, MIT Press,

Krauss, R., 'A Note on Photography and the Simulacral', October, Vol. 31, 1984,

Krauss, R., 'A Note on Photography and the Simulacral', October, Vol. 31, 1984,

<sup>21</sup> The Burlington Magazine notes that at the time the average AA student was both radical and visually educated which 'revealed the Little England attitude that prevailed in the art world of 1953'. Burlington Magazine, February 2002, Folder E153, Alison and Peter Smithson Archive, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, accessed 31<sup>st</sup> October 2016 22 Sylvester, D. as quoted in Hill, W., 'How Folklore Shaped Modern Art: A Post-Critical History of Aesthetics', Routledge, 2015, unpaginated

for this could have been because the exhibition was first accepted under a different name. Sources. The group's initial choice for the title reflects the literal interpretation of their 'working aesthetic', revealing their interests in the method of acquiring contents rather any reference to the intended impact of their display. The later name change to Parallel of Life and Art is important as it signifies a shift by the artists towards an engagement with juxtapositioning as a statement in itself, with the title now emphasising the form of the installation and as such the connection between Art and Life. The press release issued by the ICA reflects the institution's confusion concerning Parallel of Life and Art, both advocating for and deriding the artists' intentions simultaneously. The text begins by surmising that the exhibition's form was 'suggested by the material' describing it as 'poetic-lyrical...where images create a series of cross-relationships.' 32 The ICA therefore accepted the broader idea for the installation by acknowledging that the 'common visual denominator' that unites the images was 'independent of the field from which they [are] taken', yet equally admonishes Parallel of Life and Art for lacking a 'watertight scientific or philosophical system.' <sup>33</sup>

The ICA's support of the installation, hosting it as well as reviewing it favorably in comparison with other critics, demonstrates that the institution did not immediately recognise itself as the target of the group's dissent. Rather than subordinated by the ICA's cultural hegemony, the group intentionally worked to occupy its margins with Parallel of Life and Art an expression of their claim on peripheral status within IG subculture.<sup>34</sup> In securing what the sociologist Max Weber calls 'social esteem' the Smithsons established the authenticity of their practice and commitment to the neo-avant-garde by creating their own 'social order' in partnering with Henderson and Paolozzi.<sup>35</sup> The formal recognition of the IG by the ICA legitimised their nascent agenda, meaning that the Smithsons' search for independence within the group can be seen as a form of 'rebellion' rather than articulated as resistance. Rather than concerned by how they are perceived by the ICA, the centre of official cultural discourse, the Smithsons pursue a further stage of 'othering' as a reaction to

32 paolozzi-untitled-study-for-parallel-of-life-and-art-t12444 33 9211/5/1/2, Tate Archive, accessed 10th January 2017 34 Polity, 2011, p131

35 For discussion on social positioning in subcultures see Fox, KJ., 'Real Punks and Pretenders: The Social Organisation of a Counterculture', Journal of Contemporary Ethnography, Vol. 16, No.3, 1987, pp344-370

For Hal Foster, photography therefore holds a synergy with the subsequent shift made by artists in this period towards sociological interests, due to its parallel refutation of traditional art world contexts.<sup>28</sup> Designating ethnography's political orientation as a 'paradigm advanced on the left', according to Foster, the sociological subject is an active objection to:

*...the bourgeois institution of autonomous art, its exclusionary definitions of art,* audience, identity.' 29

The group's turn towards sociology as their subject matter, particularly 'much [that] has been so completely taken for granted as to have sunk beneath the threshold of conscious perception',<sup>50</sup> coupled with their interest and use of the photographic medium, distinguished them from their counterparts in the IG, who advanced aesthetic theories linked primarily to the intersection of technology and consumerism. This difference was instrumental to the group's construction of themselves as outsiders in opposition to both the ICA and its own subcultural group, the IG. Parallel of Life and Art was a visual expression of their challenge to both organisations' distinct claims on alterity, both positioning themselves as key actors in shaping alternative cultural paradigms in Britain. Thus while the group were committed to occupying the extreme peripheries of artistic practice, they were involved in what was a continuous process of self 'othering', participated in by other organisations whom the group considered representative of the dominant culture. The objective reality of the Smithsons' own self-identification as marginal must therefore be contextualised within a constant process of negotiation, contingent on the construction and importantly recognition of their desired identity by others.

## Subcultural Capital

Henderson, Paolozzi and the Smithsons were required to seek approval for Parallel of Life and Art from the ICA over a year before its display. The fact that the institution allowed the development of the concept illustrates that they cannot have been aware of the artists' intended antagonism towards them in advance of its final form, or rather that the group may have themselves not been have been fully aware of their own intentions.<sup>31</sup> One reason

Extract from the Tate website http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/henderson-

Press release for Parallel of Life and Art by the ICA, 31st August 1953, Folder TGA

The majority of subcultural theory as it is thought of today relates to youth culture and consumerism. As such I have been careful to navigate the literature pertaining to subcultural structures, drawing when necessary on discussions of categorisation, hierarchies and social perception in relation to Henderson, Paolozzi and the Smithsons when describing them as part of a subculture. Williams, JP., 'Subcultural Theory: Traditions and Concepts',

Foster, H., 'The Return of the Real', MIT Press, 1996, p304 28

<sup>29</sup> Foster, H., 'The Return of the Real', MIT Press, 1996, p302

Smithson, P. as quoted in Boyer, MC., 'Not Quite Architecture: Writing Around 30 Alison and Peter Smithson', MIT Press, 2017

Parallel of Life and Art was first presented in April 1952. Scalbert, I., 'Architecture 31 as a Way of Life: The New Brutalism 1953-56', p62, http://www.team10online.org/research/ papers/delft1/scalbert.pdf

how they believe they are seen from the perspective of IG members.

Through their connection to Henderson and Paolozzi, whom Kenneth Frampton described as 'remarkable personalities', the Smithsons acquired 'symbolic capital' within the IG in the form of status.<sup>36</sup> Both artists were well connected in Paris and personal acquaintances of Surrealists including Tristan Tzara, Mary Reynolds, Alberto Giacometti and Jean Dubuffet. While unknown and significantly junior to artists of such international renown, Henderson and Paolozzi actively pursued connections to them. John Stonard's analysis of Henderson's letter to his wife Judith Henderson at that time reveals Paolozzi's pursuit of the Surrealists as 'more or less surly conquests':

'A great moment of my stay so far was a visit with Ed. To Fernand Leger (sic) at his studio. This is the sort of initiative of E's that I admire without reservation. We simply barged in he led – I followed.' 37

Thus, the Smithsons' initiative within the IG must be contextualised in relation to their friendship with both Henderson and Paolozzi, whose own confidence within the neoavant-garde is demonstrative of their claim on reputational independence from the IG. The following sections of this chapter explore the collaborative aspect of Parallel of Life and Art in relation to the influence of Henderson and Paolozzi in order to look beyond the Smithsons' construction of their self-identity simply as outsiders, instead considering the meaning of social connections to their design practice.



Fig 21. Photograph of Nigel, Judith and Drusilla 'Jo' Henderson in the garden of 46 Chisenhale Road, Bethnal Green, 1952



Fig 22. The Samuels Family pictured on Chisenhale Road, Bethnal Green, London

Peter Smithson had met Eduardo Paolozzi whilst teaching at The Central School of Arts and Crafts and it was later in 1952 that Paolozzi introduced the Smithsons to Henderson, then a recent graduate of *The Slade School of Art.*<sup>39</sup> Having taken up photography Henderson moved to Bethnal Green in the East End with his wife Judith Henderson (née Stephens) who lived and worked in the area (Fig. 21). Judith Henderson's job was to conduct sociological research and as part of the work was required to live amongst her subjects. Her project, Discover Your Neighbour, followed their neighbours the Samuels family, building on the work of Mass Observation conducted in the 1930s.<sup>40</sup> which focused on how families had survived the war and the way in which their values could be mirrored in postwar building (Fig. 22).<sup>41</sup> The Smithsons were exposed to Henderson's photography first hand through a number of walks they took with the artist around Bethnal Green, consciously seeking out a prewar way of life that was lost in the debris but not yet cleared for reconstruction. The couple lived at 46 Chisenhale Road where Henderson began taking photographs of the local street life in and around their home.<sup>42</sup> Henderson's photography is underscored by his perception that surrealism had become an observable reality in the bombed out urban context, commenting that:

'Houses [were] chopped by bombs while ladies were still sitting on the lavatory, the rest of the house gone but the wallpaper and the fires still burning in the grate. Who can hold a candle to that kind of real life Surrealism.' 43

38 Spring 2011, pp63-86, p69 39 1949-1959', Manchester University Press, 1996 40 massobs.org.uk/ 41

tomdyckhoff 42

43

# REAL LIFE SURREALISM

"...a kind of equivalence appears here that simultaneously functions as a form of collapse." <sup>38</sup>

## Discover Your Neighbour

Kitnick, A., 'The Brutalism of Life and Art', October Magazine 136, MIT Press,

- Massey, A., 'The Independent Group: Modernism and Mass Culture in Britain,
- Mass Observation is an archive specialising in material about everyday life in Britain. It contains papers from the original Mass Observation project between 1937 – the early 1950s along with newer material when the project was revived in 1981, http://www.
- Dyckhoff, T., 'Ordinary beauty', The Guardian, Saturday 20th April 2002, first accessed June 13th 2017, https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2002/apr/20/weekend.

Walsh, V., 'Nigel Henderson: Parallel of Life and Art', Thames & Hudson, 2001 Henderson, N. as quoted in Highmore, B., 'Hopscotch Modernism': On Everyday

Symbolic Capital is defined as the resources available to an individual on the basis 36 of honor, prestige or recognition, and serves as value that one holds within a culture. The term was coined by Pierre Bourdieu and is expanded upon in his work Distinction (1979). Frampton, K., 'Modern Architecture: A Critical History', Thames and Hudson, Fourth Edition, 2007, p263

Letter from Nigel Henderson to Judith Henderson, 28th August 1947; London, Tate 37 Gallery Archives, TGA, 9211/1/1/9 in Stonard, JP., 'The Bunk Collages of Eduardo Paolozzi', first accessed 17th April 2017, https://johnpaulstonard.files.wordpress.com/2012/12/ paolozzi\_bunk.pdf

Photographs taken from an upstairs window of children playing hopscotch below reveal what Ben Highmore has stated constitutes the 'ritualistic' nature of the game that was taking place, showing both nostalgia for a lost innocence of a bygone culture, while placing the everyday amongst the ruins of a demolished industrial environment (Fig. 23-25).44 With the benign aesthetic of the images betraying elements of collective trauma, occupation suddenly becomes surreal; this contrast emphasising the social construction of street life embedded within the irrevocable newness of the situation.<sup>45</sup> Consequently for the group, Henderson became a kind of archaeologist later known as 'the John Betjeman of rubbish.' <sup>46</sup> With the intention of connecting art's intellectual project with that of observable reality, Henderson's techniques of 'scavenging' and 'salvaging' framed for the Smithsons a new aesthetic, based on the distortion of the original image.<sup>47</sup>

Nigel Henderson first began experimenting with the manipulation of imagery using photograms, employed initially as a substitute for drawing.<sup>48</sup> Embracing the unpredictable nature of the medium, a process that involved passing light from an enlarger through the frame that holds the photographic negative, Henderson instead filled the frame with unusual and often found objects from 'those gold-mines of semi transmuted things like bombsites' (Fig. 26).<sup>49</sup> Selecting material that had already experienced some form of mutation, the images produced showed a further manipulation of the original, causing an abstraction that made the objects at once both familiar vet unrecognisable.<sup>50</sup> Creating what Walsh describes as 'compelling image[s] due to its powerfully synesthetic character, it is both physically present and absent', and echoing Moholy-Nagy's explanation of the photogram as part of the artist's 'research work', in his influential book New Vision, the experimental nature of Henderson's photograms signifies a duality in the importance of this new way of creating material.<sup>51</sup> Firstly, the transformation expresses an ambiguity in authorship with the almost

Life and the Blurring of Art and Social Science, Modernist Cultures, 2006, p74 Highmore, B., 'Hopscotch Modernism': On Everyday Life and the Blurring of Art 44

Dyckhoff, T., 'Ordinary Beauty', The Guardian, Saturday 20th April 2002, https:// 46 www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2002/apr/20/weekend.tomdyckhoff

As a consequence of which while serving with the RAF he suffered a severe 47 nervous breakdown. Walsh. V., 'Nigel Henderson: Parallel of Life and Art', Thames and Hudson, 2001

- Walsh, V., 'Nigel Henderson; Parallel of Life and Art', Thames and Hudson, 2001 48
- Scalbert, I., 'Architecture as a Way of Life: The New Brutalism 1953-56', p62 49
- 50 Walsh, V., 'Nigel Henderson; Parallel of Life and Art', Thames and Hudson, 2001, p21

51 Walsh draws attention to the significance of publications such as Moholy-Nagy's New Vision published in 1939, which contained a whole chapter on photograms and was leant to Henderson by Paolozzi. Walsh, V., 'Nigel Henderson; Parallel of Life and Art', Thames



Fig 23. Nigel Henderson, Children playing in the street, Bethnal Green, London, c.1949-56



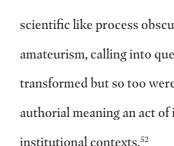
Fig 24. Nigel Henderson, Boy playing in the street, Bethnal Green, London, c.1949-56



Fig 25. Nigel Henderson Photograph of Peter Samuels with unidentified young girl, 1951



Fig 26. Photograph of a photogram of a milk bottle, c.1949-1951



### Reality As It Is

In a world where the value of life itself had become a question of daily survival, reorienting Parallel of Life and Art towards an audience centred examination of the conditions of a new aesthetic disrupted the conventions of the art world, by challenging institutional authority from within its own walls. Inspired by Marcel Duchamp's ready-mades, for Henderson indifference was communicated in their neutrality and passivity, which were held up as positive qualities; their value considered in their stance against the personal touch of the artist.<sup>53</sup> As someone connected to the centre of prewar surrealism however, Henderson defined his own artistic history and precedents by pursuing an alternative aesthetic from the moral anger that inspired the indifference of *Dada*.

To artists and architects in the IG, Henderson was a comparative anomaly (Fig. 27). Fifteen years senior to many members, his connections to the Parisian art world made him as St. John Wilson noted in the context of the nineteen fifties, 'a man who could introduce you to Duchamp'.<sup>54</sup> Similarly, Peter Smithson described both Henderson and Paolozzi as 'the inheritors of Paris' in recognition of their centrality as interpreters of postwar Surrealism, around which the ICA had been founded.<sup>55</sup> Despite such admiration, Henderson was underrated in his own lifetime, with this predicament brought about by his own reluctance to court fame for his work, unlike a number of his younger peers.<sup>56</sup> The quiet observation depicted in Henderson's photographs reflect this personality trait with the artist stating that his images were part of 'a small private vision...in praise of the world as far as I can

and Hudson, 2001, p21 52 Society, Vol.23, No. 2, 1st May 2006, pp466-469, p466 53 No. 22, 1990, pp3-12, p4 54 55 www.team10online.org/research/papers/delft1/scalbert.pdf 56 next section of this chapter.

Fig 27. Portrait of Nigel Henderson

scientific like process obscuring scale and texture, while secondly the technique privileges amateurism, calling into question the essentiality of the artist's role. Not only were objects transformed but so too were the conscious parameters of their makers, with the negation of authorial meaning an act of indifference against the autonomy of the artist, celebrated within

and Social Science, Modernist Cultures, 2006, p72

Highmore, B., 'Hopscotch Modernism': On Everyday Life and the Blurring of Art 45 and Social Science, Modernist Cultures, 2006, p72

Papastergiadis, N., 'Modernism and Contemporary Art', Theory, Culture and Roth, M., 'The Aesthetic of Indifference', AND Journal of Art and Art Education,

St John Wilson, C. as quoted in Dyckoff, T., 'The Age of Spectacle: Adventures in Architecture and the 21st Century City', Cornerstone Digital, 2017

Scalbert, I., 'Architecture as a Way of Life: The New Brutalism 1953-56', p68, http://

The terms in which members of the IG sought to promote themselves by way of their connections to more famed artists within the early days of the ICA is the focus of the

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sense it, and make some sense of it' (Fig. 28).<sup>57</sup> In this respect, Henderson's work was entirely of and for his own purposes, making it confusing as to why, given his aversion to attention, he became part of the IG, who as a group were explicit self-promoters. However his upbringing and exposure to London's literary and later artistic avant-garde, through his mother's connections as outlined in Chapter 6, goes some way to explain his relative comfort at the centre of such discourse; while his peers fought to claim the avant-garde, Henderson effectively inherited it.58

Therefore as members of the IG negotiated their status within the group, Henderson's was all but confirmed because of the significance of his age, history and connections. His impact however surpassed his importance as merely a model for subcultural action; he was instrumental in introducing the wider group to a number of texts, which have since been historicised as the unifying factor within the alterity of thinking amongst neo-avant-garde groups, related to both art and architecture of the era. Rudolf Wittkower's Architectural Principles in the Age of Humanism (1949) and Alexander Dorner's The Way Beyond Art (1947) proposed new relations between the artist and their role in society. Writing about the idea of the 'universal creator', Dorner writes:

'The expression way beyond art should mean an explosive transformation of the very idea of art. We have set art in quotation marks to indicate that even our conception of art is but a temporary fact in human history.' 59

Aligned with a pervasive humanist agenda, texts such as Dorner's presented a neo-romantic view of the artist as a leading figure of society.<sup>60</sup> Sir Patrick Geddes, an influential biologist, sociologist and pioneer of early town planning brought multidisciplinary knowledge to the debate, writing of revealing 'things as they are', and 'reality as it is.' <sup>61</sup> Proposing The Valley Section as a means to connect people with the place they inhabit, Geddes formulated a

Hatton, B., 'Age of Plenty', Building Design Magazine, 23rd February 1990, Folder 59 E097, University of Harvard Archive, Cambridge, MA, first accessed 1st November 2016 Peter Smithson stated that the urban theories of Patrick Geddes were central to his 60 and Alison's thinking with the Valley Section 'a familiar graphic of the period'. Smithson, P. as quoted in Pedret, A., 'Team 10: An Archival History', Routledge, 2013, p128

Kitnick, A., 'The Brutalism of Life and Art', October Magazine 136, MIT Press, 61 Spring 2011, pp63-86, p69



Henderson, not dated

SHEPHERD PEASANT GARDENER WOODMAN HUNTER

RELATIONSHI

STREET

Fig 31. Extract from Statement

of Habitat Diagram or Urban re Identification which used Niael Henderson's Photography

Fig 29. Sir Patrick Geddes, The Valley Section, 1909

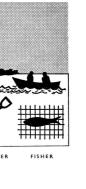
> method for situating people's lives within a framework that described a working and living ethic (Fig. 29). The Smithsons wholly embodied Geddes's theory producing their own version, parodying his diagram in the *Statement of Habitat*. Presented by *Team X* after the Doorn meeting, the sketch was an analogy of their approach to urbanism that connected the rural and the urban from the interior to the sea (Fig. 30 & 31).<sup>62</sup> The reality of the architect's function in this paradigm of increased human connectivity is given form by Peter Smithson's observation of the need to engender change in their role, threatened by the opposing narrative of commercialisation:

'Today we are being edged out of our traditional role by the new phenomenon of popular arts-advertising...which is establishing our whole pattern of life-principles, morals, aims, aspirations and standard of living...We must some- how get the measure of this intervention, if we are to match these powerful and exciting impulses with our own.' 63

Requiring the construction of what was perceived as an authentic identity organised around the everyday, in incorporating Dorner and Geddes's ideas as their own the couple, the

62 Pedret, A., 'Team 10: An Archival History', Routledge, 2013, p133 Colomina, B. interview with Displayer, 'This Is Tomorrow', pp13-19, p15 http://adkp. 63 ruhe.ru/sites/default/files/0102.pdf

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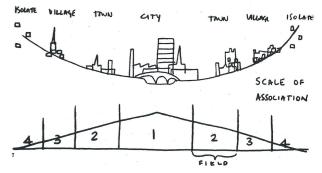


Fig 30. Alison and Peter Smithson, Statement of Habitat Diagram, 1960

<sup>57</sup> Dyckhoff, T., 'Ordinary Beauty', The Guardian, Saturday 20th April 2002, first accessed June 13th 2017, https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2002/apr/20/weekend. tomdyckhoff

Henderson's mother Wye Henderson managed a gallery in London on behalf 58 of Peggy Guggenheim, introducing Henderson to the Paris Surrealists including Marcel Duchamp in his youth.

Smithsons believed themselves to be part of an opposition, forming a campaign against the malaise of postwar destruction and pathology of encroaching Americanisation.<sup>64</sup>

## Sensibility Towards Solidarity

The New Humanism helped the IG define a social identity, lending them a language from which to construct a collective aesthetic sensibility. For the Smithsons, their own selfidentification within the group relied upon expressing similarity to their peers while establishing a concomitant distinction. As such the Smithsons developed their own language to frame their interest in sociology, translating Judith Henderson's research by way of Nigel Henderson's lens. Peter Smithson described Henderson's photographs as '[sociology] emerg[ing] from the rain-forest into the streets' going on to state '[sociology] had to be made visible for architects to be conscious of that as a general emergence.' <sup>65</sup> While the Smithsons' rhetoric of the period has led to the assumption of an intrinsic relationship between Parallel of Life and Art and their ideas on the everyday based on the simplicity of diagrams such as Geddes's, this research argues that this focus overlooks the significance of the design process of the exhibition as a means of the artists' own self-making; constructing an identity very much predicated on their experience of transition between inter and postwar contexts.

In an interview with Beatriz Colomina, Peter Smithson states his enthusiasm for the 'machinery of war' including Willy's jeeps, of which an image of one is featured in Parallel of Life and Art. The Smithsons also owned one on Peter's return from Burma,<sup>66</sup> with the jeep appearing in many photographs of the couple including outside Hunstanton Secondary School, which Smithsons historian Max Risselada has claimed even owes its material aesthetic to the vehicle (Fig. 32 & 33).<sup>67</sup> In the interview Peter Smithson remarks on the feeling of solidarity between those he served with and the consequent feeling of separation, or rather absence from his 'family' as he puts it when war was over. The image of the jeep thus becomes symbolic of the intensified friendships formed during the war, which for Sarah Cole acts as 'a metaphor for the most resilient, cherished and vulnerable of bonds.' 68 The machismo of the

Peter Smithson recounts they explored this idea further at CIAM 9 in Aix en 65 Provence in 1953, Smithson, P., Untitled typed document, Loose pages, Folder E150: Alison and Peter Smithson Archives, Harvard University, accessed 22nd September 2015

Colomina, B., 'Friends of the Future: A Conversation with Peter Smithson', 66 October, Vo. 94, MIT Press, 2000, pp3-30, p15

Cole, S., 'Modernism, Male Friendship, and the First World War', Cambridge Uni-68 versity Press, 2003, p6

the family jeep holding son Simon Smithson in Regent's Park

Fig 32. Alison Smithson seated in



Fig 33. Hunstanton School under construction, with Peter Smithson and jeep, 1953, Norfolk, UK

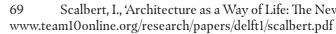
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jeep is emblematic of male intimacy, despite its problematic connotations as a facilitator of violence. For Smithson such comradery is memorialised in his personal choice to own a jeep, paradoxically also acting then as a souvenir of war.

The image of the jeep in Parallel of Life and Art however is of an x-ray, with the entire vehicle depicted in skeletal form. Here the Smithsons appropriate the military machine by deconstructing its image through new visual technology as a way of suggesting additional other ways in which it could be considered beyond a military legacy, namely its domestication engendered by breaking it down into its constituent parts thus challenging its scale and use. The image of the jeep attempts to belie its construction as a weapon to reveal the many small-scale components that form its whole, thus signifying its manmade nature and the human role in its assembly. Irénée Scalbert has made a similar analogy with the image of the typewriter:

"...now lost to the manufacturer, drifted in a semantic field of their own, open to the musings of the observer. The parts had become constituted as signs.' <sup>69</sup>

The Surrealist nature of this deconstruction was normalised in a positive orientation towards objects rejected in such traditionally exclusionary spaces as the gallery. In reversing the relationship between inside and outside, the exhibition works to create visual connections to reveal occluded interpersonal relationships, forged in the start of war, yet denied at its end



Hollander, JA. & Einwohner, RL., 'Conceptualizing Resistance', Sociological Forum, 64 Vol. 19, No. 4, 2004, pp533-554, p536

eds. Risselada, M. & van den Heuvel, D., 'Alison and Peter Smithson: A Critical 67 Anthology', Ediciones Poligrafa, 2011

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7.3

# COLLECTIVE COLLAGING

'the basic idea of the collection is the visual likeness between objects of a totally dissimilar nature... as if one had stumbled upon a set of basic patterns for the universe.' 70

## Interesting Revelations

The first part of this chapter has worked to outline the connection between the type of images used in *Parallel of Life and Art* and the significance of their consequent display, to explore the intersection between the acutely personal processes that brought about the work, coupled with broader concerns for the shifting postwar paradigm. Intentionally incongruous to the agenda of the ICA, the chapter has described the influence of Nigel Henderson's photography on the Smithsons in terms of both its evocation of the everyday, but also its impact on introducing to them the manipulation of imagery as a new form of communication. While this transformation talks of the Smithsons' growing realisation of their own agency in the production of modernity, it does not reveal the specifics of their instrumentalisation of Henderson's techniques as their own. For Peter Smithson the appropriation of Henderson's methodology in their own practice necessitated yet another stage of transformation:

'One speculates...in our work, part certainly of 'life of the streets' – from Nigel and Judith Henderson, and the looser-linked forms in which we began to formulate these streets ideas, again, certainly, in part, from the graphics of Eduardo Paolozzi in that period.' 71

Eduardo Paolozzi's graphics were certainly influential at the time, with his BUNK! series presented at the very first meeting of the IG (Fig. 34). Constructed from a range of images, Paolozzi created a 'live collage' by projecting them onto a screen emphasising the characteristics of each object while simultaneously suggesting their direct comparison through juxtaposition (Fig. 35 & 36).<sup>72</sup> This inaugural event has been well documented with



Fig 35. Dr Pepper, 1948

Fig 36. Alice with Innovations, 1949

the 45 collages made by Paolozzi as part of his theory of advertisement, which he posited was contributing more to contemporary art than contemporary artists.<sup>73</sup> Cut from American magazines given to Paolozzi by ex-soldiers in Paris, BUNK! could mean two things; either the type of bed slept on by soldiers or equally, 'nonsense'. The name was thus itself juxtaposed, evoking a constellation between two different forms of imagery.<sup>74</sup> In reducing references to pattern and texture they were rendered part of a common system with photography acting as a levelling medium, which Banham observed established similarities of outline or texture where there was no obvious connection of content.75 As such an explicit relationship between Parallel of Life and Art and BUNK! can be drawn due to their simultaneous production and similarity in technique, primarily in relation to how scale was used to confuse contents. Additionally, both works navigate a duality in their sense of disruption and unity, using collage to manipulate content while simultaneously attempting to create a singular form.<sup>76</sup>

Fig 34. Evadne in Green Dimension, BUNK!, 1972



from magazines to create not just finished artworks but also produce a copious amount of For extensive descriptions of Paolozzi's work see Anne Massey (1996), Nigle 73 Whitelev (2002), David Robbins (1990). first accessed 13 July 2017 http://www.theartstory.org/artist-paolozzi-eduardo-74





Paolozzi's use of collage began as a child in Scotland, using paper and images extracted

Scalbert, I., 'Architecture as a Way of Life: The New Brutalism 1953-56', p65, http://

Whitford, F., 'Sir Eduardo Paolozzi', Obituary, The Guardian, Friday 22nd April, 2005, first accessed 27th June 2017, https://www.theguardian.com/culture/2005/apr/22/

<sup>70</sup> Scalbert, I., 'Architecture as a Way of Life: The New Brutalism 1953-56', p65, http:// www.team10online.org/research/papers/delft1/scalbert.pdf

Smithson, P., Untitled typed document, Loose pages, 9th April 2001, Folder E150: 71 Alison and Peter Smithson Archives, Harvard University, accessed 22nd September 2015 Paolozzi, E., 'BUNK!', first accessed 21st February 2017, https://www.goldmarkart. 72com/index.php?option=com\_content&view=article&id=64&Itemid=749

artworks.htm#pnt\_1 75 www.team10online.org/research/papers/delft1/scalbert.pdf 76 obituaries

supporting material in scrapbooks (Fig. 37).<sup>77</sup> As such his BUNK! series resonated with the Smithsons whose own scrapbooks and archival contents reveal a sensibility towards not just similar collage techniques but also similar source material.78 Alison Smithson in particular collected adverts since her teenage years when she spent time in Edinburgh as part of the war evacuation, owning a large collection of cut-out images which she pasted into a copy of the Pictorial History of Old England as M. Christine Boyer writes, 'until its seams were bursting and only a few pages left unadorned.'<sup>79</sup> Images from American magazines belonging to Smithson's aunt became of great fascination much later to the pair who continued to collect cut outs from newspapers, assisting in isolating for them the 'nonsensical explosion in use of images and words that was happening'.<sup>80</sup> For the Smithsons collage was thus a process, a means of constructing their own narratives that engaged with the present day, being both generated of and by its imagery, while constructing 'close fictions' that spoke of alternate possible futures. With the provenance of collage common to Henderson, Paolozzi and the Smithsons early work, Parallel of Life and Art's sophistication as an evolution of the technique suggests its importance as a transformation of the group's individual responses into one of directed collective action.

## Loose Association

The material ingenuity of collage allowed it as a medium to engage multiple authors simultaneously. This is revealed in the group's earliest studies for Parallel of Life and Art where Henderson and Paolozzi used collage techniques together in their preparatory work the installation. Made in 1952, their study Untitled (Study for Parallel of Life and Art) assembles a number of images gathered by each artist and arranged separately in two horizontal strips with one set above the other on a single canvas (Fig. 38). With their names independently inscribed adjacent to their own choice of images, the artists denote their separate contributions while proposing a reading of the work as a single image. The Smithsons' later inclusion as equal contributors evidences the expansion of collage as a group activity, with the final installation creating a complexity of 'cross-relationships'

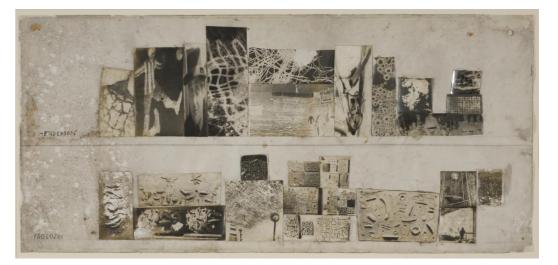
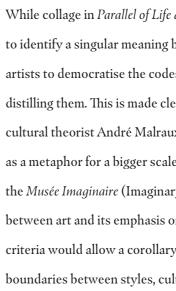


Fig 38. Untitled (Study for Parallel of Life and Art), 1952

> between all four arstists and their images.<sup>81</sup> Such ambiguity resists the legitimation of the author's ingenuity, denving the conventional understanding of the singularity of meaning in a work, which in turn undermines intent (Fig. 39). Additionally, the 'makeshift quality' of collage makes their completeness difficult to determine as autonomous works, further underscoring the problem of identifying intentionality; as John Stonard observes in Paolozzi's work, it was unclear whether any of his collages were ever in fact intended for display.82



<sup>81</sup> 82 83 Routledge, 2016 84 with developing cultural policy during the 1960s.





#### Fig 39. Spread from Nigel Henderson's Scrap books

While collage in *Parallel of Life and Art* may therefore negate the usefulness in attempting to identify a singular meaning behind the work, the technique points to an intention by the artists to democratise the codes and language of the art world, by confusing rather than distilling them. This is made clear by the group's enduring reference to the French artist and cultural theorist André Malraux who understood the scenographic qualities of exhibitions as a metaphor for a bigger scale beyond the gallery space itself.<sup>85</sup> Having coined the term the Musée Imaginaire (Imaginary Museum) in the 1930s, which envisaged a new relationship between art and its emphasis on western history, Malraux argued that a shift in aesthetic criteria would allow a corollary change in values, heralding a new paradigm that collapsed boundaries between styles, cultures and time periods (Fig. 40).<sup>84</sup> Photography for Malraux

Foster describes Paolozzi as the first person to really take an interest in ads as a 77 legitimate form of artistic production. Foster, H., 'On the First Pop Age', New Left Review 19, January 2003, p93

van den Heuvel, D., 'Alison and Peter Smithson: A Brutalist Story', unpublished 78 PhD Thesis, Technical University of Delft, 2013, p50

Accounts of Paolozzi's interests mirror this, collecting as a child also in Scotland 79 and influenced later by American Magazine's in Paris. Boyer, MC., 'Not Quite Architecture: Writing Around Alison and Peter Smithson', MIT Press, 2017, p141

<sup>80</sup> eds. Robbins, D., 'The Independent Group: Postwar Britain and the Aesthetics of Plenty', MIT Press, 1990, p202

Adamson, W., 'Embattled Avant-Gardes: Modernism's Resistance to Commodity Culture in Europe', University of California Press, 2007, p265

Stonard, J.P., 'The Bunk Collages of Eduardo Paolozzi', first accessed 17th April 2017, https://johnpaulstonard.files.wordpress.com/2012/12/paolozzi\_bunk.pdf den Oudsten, F., 'Space.Time.Narrative: The Exhibition as Post-Spectacular Stage',

André Malraux was the French Minister for cultural affairs and heavily involved

served a precise disruptive purpose allowing not only the literal comparison of objects within a space but also between those that lie beyond the confines of the museum walls.<sup>85</sup> In the opening lines of *Musée Imaginaire*, Malraux states:

'A Romanesque crucifix was not regarded by its contemporaries as a work of sculpture; nor Cimabue's Madonna as a picture. Even Pheidias' Pallas Athene was not, primarily, a statue.' 86

The Musée Imaginaire then would operate both within a physical space and an imaginary one framed by the individual but shared collectively.<sup>87</sup> The elevation in status of objects denied display within gallery contexts allowed them to be identified as part of an existing and traditionally accepted ordering system, while simultaneously challenging the very tenets on which such categorisation was based.<sup>88</sup> The group had even hoped that Malraux would open their exhibition, noting their debt to him in the description of the work:

'We were probably hanging the material for about two or three days, and were trying to get into a kind of spider's web above the heads of people...we had built up quite a bit of nervous tension. We wanted André Malraux to open it.' 89

The web of tension described by Henderson resonates with the type of parallel experiments produced notably by Charles and Ray Eames in California, whose interest in information flow characterised their engagement with the power of images to be brought together from around the world, within the space of the museum. Beatriz Colomina links the Eameses' use of multimedia as a new form of display with their fascination for the circus, where



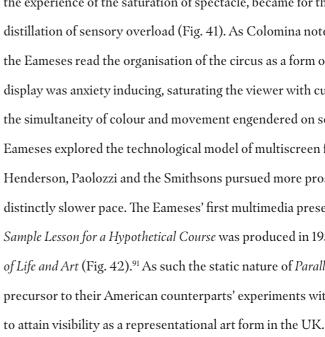
Fig 40. André Malraux in the process of selecting images for the book Le Musée Imaginaire de la Sculpture Mondiale, published in 1952



Photograohs of the Circus



Fig 43. Photograph of Charles and Ray Eames in their Californian office



The Eameses were in frequent contact with the Smithsons, even assisting in helping Peter Smithson visit the USA (Fig. 43). While it therefore cannot be claimed that Charles and Ray Eames inspired the group's exhibition directly, the multi-screen method, kinetic or otherwise was a form of display prescient in postwar visual discourse on a much broader scale than for which Henderson, Paolozzi and the Smithsons can claim individual credit. This after all was an era of desired transparency in the postwar condition where techniques to apprehend information through new forms of display were thought to empower the decision-making processes as they had during the war. The analogue version presented in Parallel of Life and



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Fig 42. A Rough Sketch for a Sample Lesson for a Hypothetical Course

the experience of the saturation of spectacle, became for the couple, an analogy for the distillation of sensory overload (Fig. 41). As Colomina notes, 'It is not without irony that the Eameses read the organisation of the circus as a form of crisis control'.<sup>90</sup> The Eameses' display was anxiety inducing, saturating the viewer with cut and paste techniques through the simultaneity of colour and movement engendered on screens. However, whereas the Eameses explored the technological model of multiscreen for multimedia presentation, Henderson, Paolozzi and the Smithsons pursued more prosaic techniques operative at a distinctly slower pace. The Eameses' first multimedia presentation A Rough Sketch for a Sample Lesson for a Hypothetical Course was produced in 1952, only a year prior to Parallel of Life and Art (Fig. 42).91 As such the static nature of Parallel of Life and Art was perhaps a precursor to their American counterparts' experiments with film, which as a medium was yet

Despite the group's antagonism towards their host institution, Herbert Read the 85 director of the ICA opened Parallel of Life and Art. For Read universality of form was the bedrock of his belief in anarchy as the only valid radical politics. Cranfield, B., 'All Play and No Work? A 'Ludistory' of the Curatorial as Transitional Object at the Early ICA', first accessed 27th April 2018, http://www.tate.org.uk/research/publications/tate-papers/22/allplay-and-no-work-a-ludistory-of-the-curatorial-as-transitional-object-at-the-early-ica Malraux, A., 'The Museum without Walls' in 'The Voices of Silence', originally 86 published by Doubleday & Co, 1953, p13

Malraux was however critical of photography stating that 'for the last hundred 87 vears. Art History has been the history of what can be photographed' pointing to the increasing importance of photography but also to the danger of exclusion, that things that are not photographed risk being ignored. McAndrew, J., 'The Non-Imaginary Museum', College Art Journal, Vol. 14, No. 2, Winter 1955, pp124-134, p128

Foster, H., 'The Archive without Museums', October Magazine, Vol. 77, 1996, MIT 88 Press, pp97-119, p97

Nigel Henderson interviewed by Dorothy Morland, 17th August 1976, TG 89 955/1/14/6, ICA Collection, Tate Archives, accessed 10th January 2017

Eames, C. as quoted in Colomina, B., 'Enclosed by Images: The Eameses Multimedia Architecture', Grey Room, No. 2, MIT Press, 2001, pp5-29, p15 Eames Office Official Site, first accessed 6th August 2018, http://www.eamesoffice. 91 com/the-work/sample-lesson-for-a-hypothetical-course/

concerned.' 94

Creating what Wes Hill refers to as 'collage in space', Smithson's comment invokes a dialogue between contents and display, suggesting that exhibitions should offer a real experience if only as an imitation.95 For Manfredo Tafuri this relates to architecture as a form giving process, one that is capable of offering what Hilde Heynen describes as a 'dynamic experience'.<sup>96</sup> The ability of multimedia spaces to exceed the capacity of the viewer to absorb them allowed what the Eameses argued was an awareness of relationships between seemingly unrelated phenomena achieved by 'high-speed techniques'; the excess of input synthesised by the audience engendering an emotional response before an analytical one. During a time marked by capitalist rationalism, the mere production of artwork no longer sufficed, with architects themselves forced into new roles commencement with a new society. Peter Smithson explains the group's understanding of this condition in these terms:

moment, but full of life.' 97

While here Smithson manufactures a separation between architects and artists, for the purpose of the project they referred to themselves collectively as 'editors', a role which Alexander Kitnick describes as the 'act of picking up selecting and consuming.' 98 Parallel of Life and Art then is an innovation in the world of communication, beyond its basic function

94 Constructions', Routledge, 2005, p96 95 Routledge, 2015, unpaginated 96 97 Cambridge, MA, accessed 1st November 2016 98

Art like with the Musée Imaginaire, worked primarily to disrupt behaviours within existing museological systems, asking the viewer to stay with the work as one traditionally would within a gallery context rather than question entirely the spatial condition.

## Basic Patterns for the Universe

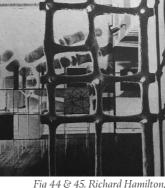
Despite their connection with the Eameses, the Smithsons would not go on to work with film in any capacity, hinting that film was at that time an American innovation within the Cold War context. The group's reference for Parallel of Life and Art was very much embedded within a European genealogy of display regardless of its resonance with a transatlantic discourse. The Smithsons reviewed their sketches for the installation (still named Sources) in April 1952, with their drawings depicting a number of panels hung at angles around a space. Despite the non-specific nature of the drawing, Parallel of Life and Art's final form is recognisable in this sketch, echoing also other significant exhibitions of the same period. Richard Hamilton's Growth and Form (1951) for example also drew on a range of material that referenced the progress of Modern science, which was in fact inspired by a book by D'Arcy Wentworth of the same name given to him by Nigel Henderson. Depicting a number of images displayed on a vertical system of panels, Growth and Form surrounded the viewer in a kind of maze, the display system creating a network of images in space (Fig. 44 & 45). About the exhibition Hamilton stated:

'I had begun to feel that exhibition was an art form in its own right. The exhibits were subsidiary to the way they were treated.' 92

Similarly Herbert Read's 40,000 Years of Modern Art (1948) utilised a display system that referenced Herbert Bayer's well known 360 Degrees Field of Vision, a diagram popularised during the 1920s and 30s, with the influence of the latter also clearly visible in Peter Smithson's drawing (Fig. 46). With screens wrapping the audience in some way in each of these exhibitions, the eye cannot escape the visual material but must constantly jump between images, never fully able to catch up with the received contents. These systems are symptomatic of a period when exhibition display became a discipline of its own, as Bayer himself put it 'encompassing the total application of all plastic and psychological means.' 93

Richard Hamilton as quoted on MACBA Website. MACBA Foundation. Gift 92 of Rita Hamilton. Installation reconstructed in 2014 by Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid, and Tate Modern, London, on the occasion of the exhibition 'Richard Hamilton', https://www.macba.cat/en/growth-and-form-5245





Growth and Form, ICA, 1951

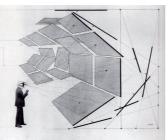


Fig 46. Hebert Bayer's 360 Degrees Field of Vision, 1930

## For Peter Smithson this made the exhibition a concern of architectural design:

I hate the exhibition that is just magazines stuck on the wall. That is not an exhibition in my view. Any exhibition has to be a simulacrum of the spatial condition with which it is

'For in this way, the architect's work of providing a context for the individual to realise himself in, and the artist's work of giving signs and images to the stages of this realisation, meet in a single act, full of those inconsistencies and apparent irrelevancies of every

Smithson, P. as quoted in Rattenbury, K., 'This is Not Architecture: Media

Hill, W., 'How Folklore Shaped Modern Art: A Post-Critical History of Aesthetics',

Heynen, H., 'Architecture and Modernity', MIT Press, Second Edition, 1999, p131 Hatton, B., 'Age of Plenty', Building Design Magazine, 23rd February 1990, Folder EO97, Alison and Peter Smithson Archive, Graduate School of Design, Harvard University,

The Smithsons, Paolozzi and Henderson appeared to distance themselves from the exhibit with none of the quartet's names appearing on the catalogue. Kitnick, A., 'The Brutalism of Life and Art', October Magazine 136, MIT Press, Spring 2011, pp63-86, p69

<sup>93</sup> Bayer, H. as quoted in Staniszewski, MA., 'The Power of Display', MIT

Press, 2001, first accessed 30th April 2018, http://www.worldcat.org/wcpa/servlet/ DCARead?standardNo=0262692724&standardNoType=1&excerpt=true

as an exhibition to display, pre-empting the logic of the information age. Working as a provocation against the acceptance of art history's tautology in its institutional form to transform the dynamics of art and architecture, Henderson, Paolozzi and the Smithsons use instead the installation to explore the relationship between maker and user, with control of the image subjugated as part of a collective extrinsic spectacle.<sup>99</sup>

Fig 47. Portrait of Theo Crosby

## A Sore Point Still

This chapter has shown so far that Parallel of Life and Art was not just a curated display of images that represent a number of randomly chosen artefacts, but that their confluence demonstrates an attitude embracing the paradox of the postwar condition; celebrating sociality through fragments of the technology of war, intended to elevate the man-made rather than glorify recent events. In other words, the exhibition communicates the experiences of the past in the present. While the types of objects chosen for display suggest that the experiences that the group wished to share were somehow related to observations of the everyday, set against advancement in science and technology, this section refutes the reductive nature of such assumptions to posit the extent to which the intensely personal nature of the exhibition shaped it. This approach seeks to reach beyond the common analysis of the work as a public endeavour, to present the idea of human relationships in terms of both friendship and conversely enmity as central to its design. It explores the terms in which the Smithsons instrumentalised their relationships within the IG in order to further their creative practice, proposing a reading of the installation as a negotiation of those relationships.

The Smithsons' accounts of the IG are characterised by comments regarding their friendship with other members. A key influence on their experience at the ICA and indeed the way they were introduced to it was through their connections with the architect and critic Theo Crosby (Fig. 47).<sup>101</sup> Crosby was the Smithsons' housemate, first sharing with Peter before the couple's marriage when he then went to 'live upstairs'. It was certainly Crosby's personal understanding of the value of friendship, which first affected the Smithsons. Believing human relationships vital to the intersection of different artistic disciplines, Crosby wrote on

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## LIKE A LOVE AFFAIR

"...in your twenties you are at the stage that friendship continues throughout your life." <sup>100</sup>

Skansi, L., 'Manfredo Tafuri and the Critique of Realism', SAJ, 1st June 2014, first 99 accessed 3rd June 2018, http://saj.rs/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/SAJ-2014-02-L-Skansi. pdf

Smithson, P. as quoted in eds. Spellman, C & Unglaub, K., 'Peter Smithson: Conversations with Students', Princeton Architectural Press, 2004, p47 Peter Smithson met Theo Crosby in Florence in 1948 at a workshop. Alison was

on the trip too as is evidenced by Crosby's sketch books in which there are numerous illustrations of the couple. Theo Crosby lived in a flat with Peter when he moved from Durham to London. Crosby then 'moved upstairs' when Alison joined the following year. Theo Crosby Archives, Brighton Design Archives, accessed 3rd August 2016

#### (SOCIAL) LIFE AND ART

often triumphed ideology. While Pidgeon expresses a sense of loyalty to her friends, the Smithsons appear less concerned in reciprocating with parity, remarking much later in 1988 that Theo Crosby was never really part of the IG, with Alison Smithson adding that, 'I suspect [it's] a sore point still.' <sup>106</sup> On the one hand the Smithsons' forcible removal of Crosby from IG history appears to undermine their friendship while conversely it suggests a more complex reading of how the Smithsons approached friendship, separating their ambitions from their regard for personal connection.

Much Laughter The reason that the Smithsons offer for joining the IG conflates their professional ambition to disrupt the cultural focus on 'rich people interested in art'<sup>107</sup> and their personal interest in developing relationships with other members. Peter Smithson explicitly states that at least the core motivation for their ongoing participation was a direct influence of those whom they met:

'I regarded [the IG] as an arena to celebrate friendship with Eduardo and Nigel. At that stage of friendship everything was amusing. You know it's like a love affair. And consequently, the meetings were regarded as an opportunity to show off really.' <sup>108</sup>

'What Alison and I did together with them was almost without discussion: much laughter, and, really from Nigel and Eduardo both, the rare use of words.' <sup>109</sup>

The reduction of speech that Smithson describes suggests an affinity found between members of the group, which allowed for a shift in emphasis away from the complexity of

language towards the sole reliance on the quality of the image. For Smithson the reliance

106 page, Folder E098, 1988, University of Harvard Archive, Cambridge, MA, first accessed 1st November 2016 Smithson, P. interviewed by Colomina, B., 'Friends of the Future: A Conversation 107 with Peter Smithson', October Magazine, October 1994, MIT Press, p5, Folder E145, University of Harvard Archive, Cambridge, MA, first accessed 31st October 2016 Smithson, P. interviewed by Colomina, B., 'Friends of the Future: A Conversation 108 with Peter Smithson', October Magazine, October 1994, MIT Press, p4, Folder E145, University of Harvard Archive, Cambridge, MA, first accessed 31st October 2016 Nigel Henderson and Eduardo Paolozzi would go on to found Hammer Prints together and continue their collaboration throughout the following two decades. Smithson, P., Untitled typed document, Loose pages, 9th April 2001, Folder E150: Alison and Peter Smithson Archives, Harvard University, accessed 22nd September 2015

the subject throughout his career. Later in life when a researcher asked Crosby for advice on collaboration between artists and architects, Crosby responds with a number of explanatory bullet points, the last simply reading without a qualifying statement: 'friendship.' <sup>102</sup> Various sketchbooks found in Crosby's archive detailing their holidays together along with portraits drawn of the couple indicate the closeness of their connection and the degree to which they valued each other's company (Fig.48 & 49).<sup>103</sup> Yet it is Crosby's facilitation of the Smithsons' career as a result of that friendship that evidences how such proximity manifest in their visibility as part of the neo avant-garde. Crosby was the technical editor of AD Magazine and as such gave the Smithsons a platform to advance their ideas. AD's editor at the time, Monica Pidgeon, was supposedly endeared to the Smithsons because of a trip to the Mediterranean for the 9th CIAM conference, where she saw Peter Smithson 'having trouble maintaining his modesty' in shorts knitted by Alison (Fig. 50).<sup>104</sup> However her support for their ideas remained separate from her friendship with the couple, accepting their publication only because it would aid in the promotion of AD against its rival The AR. Pidgeon in fact demonstrated her dislike for what the Smithsons were doing, particularly in relation to Team *X*:

'I was very fed up with them killing it [CIAM] like they did because I didn't think what resulted was much good either. Team 10, you know. We published Team 10, I shouldn't say this, but it's because of my colleague, Robin Middleton. At the time, we published Team 10 in full, the whole of a December issue. Oh! I thought it was so boring! The Smithsons and Aldo van Eyck and Shad Woods, those 3 and especially Alison, were the progenitors of Team 10.' 105

As such Pidgeon's loyalty to her generation represented by CIAM is compromised by her friendships with Robin Middleton and Theo Crosby, demonstrating that personal connection



Fig 50. Photograph of Monica Pidgeon, editor of AD Magazine



Fig 48. Portrait of Alison and Peter Smithson by Theo Crosby, Florence, 1948



Smithson with Theo Crosby

Peter Smithson goes on to elucidate the dynamics of this friendship noting that;

Smithson, A., 'Independent Group AMS from memory 1986-87', Typed single

Letter to Mr. Whittet, undated, Theo Crosby Archives, Brighton Design Archives, 102 Box 13, first accessed 3rd August 2016

<sup>103</sup> Sketch books in the Theo Crosby Archives, Brighton Design Archives, first accessed 3rd August 2016

Parnell, S., 'Alison Smithson (1928-1993) and Peter Smithson (1923-2003), 104 Architectural Review, 30th January 2012, first accessed 11th July 2017, https://www. architectural-review.com/rethink/reputations-pen-portraits-/alison-smithson-1928-1993and-peter-smithson-1923-2003/8625631.article

<sup>105</sup> People such as Monica Pidgeon and Theo Crosby are incredibly important to this narrative. As supporters and critics of the profession rather than architects themselves it is their belief in both the work but also those that made it that gave a template to those such as the Smithsons to cultivate relationships as a way of furthering their own careers. As one close friend of Monica Pidgeon said, 'not only was she enthusiastic about architecture, she loved architects as well.'

The centrality of the notion of otherness pervades accounts of IG at this time, perceived as a quality that both identified commonality and difference. Therefore while the historicisation of the IG deems it a holistic gathering of individuals, a better definition would describe it as a collective of outsiders. This dynamic was beneficial to some, with Henderson, Paolozzi and the Smithsons working collectively as outsiders within an organisation that characterised itself by its 'otherness', with Alison Smithson explaining that 'it was vital to us personally as an energising 'togethering'...to feel we were not alone in needing to think quite differently'.<sup>113</sup> However for others such liminality proved intimidating with one junior member stating that the IG was:

"...more of a social scene. And people were kind of cracking jokes which...I had no possibility of entering into. Everybody seemed to have known each other for so long...It was more an attitude rather than a work of art that one was admiring.'<sup>114</sup>

Marginality was understood by the IG as a method in and of itself, with unspoken codes central to its operation beyond the creation of art. Del Renzio later commented that the IG's exclusivity was essential, that 'It couldn't possibly be opened too widely to the membership because then people that mattered in it would have dropped out',<sup>115</sup> thereby demonstrating that despite the unification of difference within the IG, the organisation propagated an internal hierarchy, emulating the establishment that its original insurgency had sought to destroy.

Marker of Difference Many years later in an interview with The Architectural Magazine, Peter Smithson reiterated that 'I still am an outsider' despite the purpose of the piece to reflect on a career that had spanned over forty years and cemented his and Alison's reputation as leading modernists,

World', The Independent, 25th August 2015, first accessed 26th July 2017, http://www. independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/art/features/eduardo-paolozzi-living-in-a-materialistworld-8784364.html 113 Smithson, A. & Smithson, P., in eds. Robbins, D., 'The Independent Group and the Aesthetics of Plenty', MIT Press, 1990, pp184-195 Smith, R., in eds. Robbins, D., 'The Independent Group: Postwar Britain and the 114 Aesthetics of Plenty', MIT Press, 1990, p43 Toni de Renzio interviewed by Dorothy Morland, 1967-78, TGA 955/1/14/1, ICA 115 Collection, Tate Archives, accessed 10th January 2017

on images as a form of communication between the foursome created a 'condensation of meaning' leading to their eventual display as Parallel of Life and Art.<sup>110</sup> However as a set the images also evidence a private language developed between Henderson, Paolozzi and the Smithsons, which acted as a means of exclusion; both in terms of how it spoke to a public as discussed in the first section of this chapter, but also isolating the group from other members of the IG. Segregation such as this may have been accidental with the permissiveness between Henderson, Paolozzi and the Smithsons engendered by their friendship oppositional to the more serious disposition of IG meetings, which were characterised by their formality. In the early days each meeting began with a presentation followed by comments from a carefully selected and discerning audience. The formulaic nature of these assemblies however belies the social purpose of the IG, which was only in part concerned with a re-examination of ideas through art. As Toni Del Renzio stated, most members of the IG empathised with Henderson, Paolozzi and the Smithsons' isolationist sentiment:

'My chief memory is of being such an isolated minority; beleaguered, attacked by everybody; we had very few friends. The tabloid press seemed to feel it was its duty to attack anything we were doing. In some ways it was a very painful time, but it was exciting too. One really felt one was pioneering.' 111

The IG therefore was formed of a number of people who sought some form of collective identity that transcended the individual experience of members. Del Renzio saw this as indicative of the IG as a 'minority' with their shared association despite personal difference uniting them in contrast to the main stream. The idea of difference was a crucial tenet of artistic practice for artists gathered around the IG, as Paolozzi remembers of his time in Paris:

'I still find that French approach...the need, the passion, to consider and handle things at the same time quite endearing – and very necessary for me. And it also justifies the reason I had to leave London in the 1940s and go to France – just to show that I was not such an oddball. And I have lived by that ever since, the concern with different materials, disparate ideas – and to me that is the excitement; it becomes almost a description of the

Paolozzi, E. as quoted in Hamilton, A., 'Eduardo Paolozzi: Living in a Materialist

Smithson, P., Untitled typed document, Loose pages, 9th April 2001, Folder E150: 110 Alison and Peter Smithson Archives, Harvard University, accessed 22nd September 2015 del Renzio, T. as quoted in 'Fifty Years of the Future: A Chronicle of the Institute 111 of Contemporary Arts', first accessed 19th January 2017 http://www.hmgt.co.uk/ica/ OldWEBSITE/history/50years.pdf

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the whole a great pity, because less work is actually done with this kind of talk at meetings.<sup>123</sup> The operational value of 'friendly enmity' was therefore a failure for the IG as a whole, but also in fact one of the most successful attributes of the Smithsons' own involvement, evidenced by their collaborations with Henderson and Paolozzi:

'Nigel Henderson and Eduardo Paolozzi had a spontaneous affection for each other. That is both exhibitions we did with them were done with a minimum of discussion because. like a love affair, there was a confluence of understanding. For five years or longer we were very important to each other, and then it faded. Like in the 1920s between Braque and Picasso, there was this close friendship for a short period.' 124

Despite what Peter describes was the 'hilarious confluence of Nigel Henderson and Eduardo Paolozzi'<sup>125</sup> it was Henderson with whom they had the closest connection, about which Peter Smithson stated, 'we were all affection until the end', whereas the nature of their relationship with Paolozzi was quite different (Fig. 58).<sup>126</sup> In contrast Smithson states that, 'there is no affection in him for me'. This was probably more to do with Paolozzi than the Smithsons, as a former student of Paolozzi's recounts:

would get bored.' 127

As such some of the Smithsons' friendships were short lived, while others lasted their entire lifetimes; they appear to have seen equal value in both.

arguably the most revered architects of the postwar years in the UK. Smithson also remarked that, 'It is much easier when you are working as an outsider, like an anthropologist' implying that the retention of such status relates to an acquisition of agency.<sup>116</sup> As two of only a handful of architects in the IG, the Smithsons found themselves marginalised within an already self-declared outsider organisation. In this regard enmity appears to have been as important as friendship, with the Smithsons commenting that the IG was 'greater than any reality of togetherness: it was a deliberate 'marker' of our difference from others - and there seemed to be many." <sup>117</sup> Various disagreements are evidenced in the retelling of IG meetings. Banham is said to have 'sniggered'118 throughout Paolozzi's first presentation while George Hoellering remarks that 'they were quite a quarrelsome lot.' <sup>119</sup> Dorothy Moreland too commented that 'they were a rather disparate lot, they had by no means the same ideas: they just had the opportunity to come up against each other, which was valuable.' 120

Opposition between members was thus in itself a form of symbolic positioning of both status and ideas within the IG. Alison Smithson was particularly complicit in engendering friction between members naming the grouping of Alloway, Banham, McHale and Hamilton as the 'grey men'.<sup>121</sup> Equally the Smithsons conveyed little affection for other IG members, with Peter Smithson in his interview with Beatriz Colomina, after being repeatedly asked about his individual relationships with couples in the IG, remarking of Magda Cordell and John McHale that, 'McHale was very helpful to us.' <sup>122</sup> As such friendship was temporal with Hoellering offering some explanation for this by framing disagreement as a positive attribute, 'I think that they probably needed to quarrel to defend each other's ideas' but also a method for advancing contemporary discourse in avoidance of mediocrity. Dissensus was consciously negotiated with members aware of their position to the extent that it became disruptive, as Hoellering goes onto remark 'members showed self-importance and that is on



Fig 51. Photograph of Eduardo Paolozzi (L) and Nigel Henderson, 1947

'If he really liked you he wouldn't let you go, but a lot of people who he met throughout his life did not stand the test of time. He would fall in love quickly, and then you had to keep him interested - in what you were doing, or what you were saying - otherwise he

eds. Spellman, C & Unglaub, K., 'Peter Smithson: Conversations with Students', 116 Princeton Architectural Press, 2004, p37

Smithson, A., 'Independent Group AMS from memory 1986-87', Typed single 117 page, Folder E098, 1988, University of Harvard Archive, Cambridge, MA, first accessed 1st November 2016

<sup>118</sup> Alloway, L., as quoted in Bradnock, L., 'Lawrence Alloway: Critic and Curator', Yale University Press, 2015, p17

Interview with George Hoellering by Dorothy Morland, 26th of January 1977, 119 Document TGA 955/1/14/6, 17th August 1976, Tate Archives, first accessed 10th January 2017 Dorothy Moreland, Interview with Toni del Renzio by Dorothy Morland, 1976-120 1978, Document TGA 955/1/14/1, Tate Archives, first accessed 10th January 2017 121 Whiteley, N., 'Revner Banham: Historian of the Immediate Future', MIT Press, 2002, p89

<sup>122</sup> Smithson, P. interviewed by Colomina, B., 'Friends of the Future: A Conversation with Peter Smithson', October Magazine, October 1994, MIT Press, p4, Folder E145, University of Harvard Archive, Cambridge, MA, first accessed 31st October 2016

Interview with George Hoellering by Dorothy Morland, 26th of January 1977, Document TGA 955/1/14/6, 17th August 1976, Tate Archives, first accessed 10th January 2017 Smithson, P. as quoted in eds. Spellman, C. & Unglaub, K., 'Peter Smithson: Conversations with Students', Princeton Architectural Press, 2004, p41

Smithson, P., Untitled typed document, Loose pages, 9th April 2001, Folder E150; Alison and Peter Smithson Archives, Harvard University, accessed 22nd September 2015 Smithson, P. interviewed by Colomina, B., 'Friends of the Future: A Conversation with Peter Smithson', October Magazine, October 1994, MIT Press, p29, Folder E145, University of Harvard Archive, Cambridge, MA, first accessed 31st October 2016

Fahri, N., as quoted in Muraben, B., 'Eduardo Paolozzi: on a singular teacher and his devil may care philosophy', 11th July 2017, first accessed 11th July 2017, http://www. itsnicethat.com/features/eduardo-paolozzi-unseen-works-private-collections-art-110717

7

## CONCLUSIONS

'...today's social structure is utterly different. If we ask a man to name his friends and then ask them in turn to name their friends they will all name different people, very likely unknown to the first person; These people would again name others, and so on outwards.' <sup>128</sup>

This chapter described *Parallel of Life and Art's* contents and exhibition structure, but significantly has focused on an analysis of the dynamics of the relationship that the Smithsons conducted with Nigel Henderson and Eduardo Paolozzi, and the wider network of relationships they were involved with within the IG. In much of the literature there seems to be a particular interest in finding meaning in the work through an analysis of the images used, with significant focus on *Parallel of Life and Art* as illustrative of Alison and Peter Smithson's turn towards sociology, the everyday and collaboration in the early 1950s. However there is little recourse to an explanation of the effect of the juxtapositioning of content, beyond commenting on the resulting ambiguity of the installation. This chapter has pointed to the limited nature of this analysis, noting that the success of *Parallel of Life and Art* lay in ambiguity, which worked as a form of refusal against the cultural hegemony of the art world. Instead it is shown that *Parallel of Life and Art* was significant to the group as a means of producing their own self 'othering' from the IG, whereby they defined themselves as more authentic in their resistance against their parent institution.

The chapter discussed the group's resistance in terms of their intentions to be visible not to their stated target, the ICA, but rather for their resistance to be recognised by their peers within the IG. According to Jocelyn Hollander and Rachel Einwohner, such forms of resistance need not be recognised by their stated target, but are important for their appeal 'to culturally aware observers', in this case other members of the IG.<sup>129</sup> As such the ICA in fact barely registered the group's statement of difference, supporting the exhibition in a number of ways, with Herbert Read the director even opening it. Therefore rather than being subordinated by the ICA's cultural hegemony, the group intentionally worked to occupy its margins, with *Parallel of Life and Art* an expression of their claim on peripheral status within

## IG subculture.<sup>130</sup>

In exploring the reasons behind the group's complicity in producing their own marginality, it was revealed that central to securing their place within the IG was the categorisation of themselves by the ICA as resistant. As such an antagonistic form of opposition was the sole means of marking out the group's difference, whereby claiming authenticity lay not in the ability to define their alterity, but rather in the degree of its expression against the clear inauthenticity of mass culture and modernity embodied in the institution. This form of resistance can be understood as as 'indifference', a term coined by Moira Roth, which relates to the apolitical nature of the work of mainly American artists emerging in the 1950s, as an intentional form of resistance against cultural hegemony.<sup>131</sup>While Roth writes primarily in relation to American artists emerging in the 1950s, her analysis provides an apt commentary for what became a global cultural movement.<sup>132</sup> Constructing her argument around the apparent apathy expressed by artists such as Jasper Johns and his work American Flag, Roth doubts the piece was unintentionally apolitical, despite the artist's own remonstrations and the collective culture's lack of interest in 'real politics nor concerned about a vigorous defence of Modernism.' 135 Consequently, Roth's text The Aesthetic of Indifference works to contextualise the supposed nihilism of this period within the parameters of social and economic politics, in order to situate the absence of meaning in their work as a political statement in itself.134

John Katz calls this a 'politics of negation', whereby negation functions as a form of active resistance against the construction of meaning. Katz describes the importance of the institution as a precondition for the emergence of such resistance, stating that extreme constraint means that opposition can only take the form of passive action so as to direct

The majority of subcultural theory as it is thought of today relates to youth cul-130 ture and consumerism. As such I have been careful to navigate the literature pertaining to subcultural structures, drawing when necessary on discussions of categorisation, hierarchies and social perception in relation to Henderson, Paolozzi and the Smithsons when describing them as part of a subculture. Williams, JP., 'Subcultural Theory: Traditions and Concepts', Polity, 2011, p131 131 Roth, M., 'The Aesthetic of Indifference', AND Journal of Art and Art Education, No. 22, 1990, pp3-12, p5 132 Roth, M., 'The Aesthetic of Indifference', AND Journal of Art and Art Education, No. 22, 1990, pp3-12, p5 133 Roth, M., 'The Aesthetic of Indifference', AND Journal of Art and Art Education, No. 22, 1990, pp3-12, p5 Roth, M., 'The Aesthetic of Indifference', AND Journal of Art and Art Education, 134 No. 22, 1990, pp3-12, p5

<sup>Alexander, C. as quoted in Sudjic, D., 'The Language of Cities', Penguin, 2016
Hollander, JA. & Einwohner, RL., 'Conceptualizing Resistance', Sociological Forum, Vol. 19, No. 4, December 2004, pp533-554, p536</sup> 

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The ambition of juxtaposition as a method then is to establish continued reciprocity between images in order to prevent the reestablishment of any binary distinctions inherent in the originals; producing a third distinct term would only produce another binary.<sup>142</sup> Put another way, the collage rather than creating a new form, has the potential to hold the originals up to scrutiny, producing what for André Breton was an 'active element' by which something other emerges. Objects usually precluded by the art world and whose meaning would not have been obvious within an exhibition context become instrumentalised when viewed together. the purpose of which Katz succinctly describes as 'a specifically irritating resistance.'<sup>143</sup> Paradoxically the work is both legitimised by its display within a museum context while equally aiming for the destabilisation of the gallery space altogether; indeed with the advent of photography, according to André Malraux art no longer even necessitated a visit in person.144

The duality in identification between Henderson, Paolozzi and the Smithsons as a separate group and the wider culture of the IG is important in understanding the significance of the process of making the installation as a form of 'becoming' for the group.<sup>145</sup> What is of interest is the exhibition as a statement of, for and by the artists - with this amalgamation of imagery signifying a collective inheritance rooted in personal subjectivities redolent of Richard Rorty's statement that solidarity is defined by 'reflective human beings try[ing to] plac[e] their lives in a larger context, to give sense to those lives'.<sup>146</sup> Solidarity is understood as a mutual struggle that connects two (or more) people. In respect to Parallel of Life and Art, solidarity operates on a number of registers; concerned with the inward facing personal knowledge tied to recent experience, the shared anxiety felt by the immediate group as both friends and makers of the work, and finally its outward motivation - connecting with society's collective condition.

142 and John Cage', Psychology Press, 1998, p63 143 and John Cage', Psychology Press, 1998, p63 144 145 146 p21

opposition.<sup>135</sup> Indifference then is conceived of as apolitical neutrality, which is conditioned by and situated within institutional dominance.<sup>136</sup> In contributing works whose meaning was ambiguous at best, Parallel of Life and Art worked against the privileged space and cultural jurisdiction of the ICA, with the subtle appropriation of the space a subversive act. In paying specific attention to the cultural context of the period, which promoted increased parity between new and old media, this chapter offers an alternative reading of Parallel of Life and Art, by rehabilitating what has largely been presented as an otherwise apolitical work.

Citing newspapers and magazines, Marjorie Perloff observed that collage is a way of connecting 'external sources' to one's own 'personal universe' with the express aim of imbibing its imagery to make it somehow one's own.<sup>137</sup> As both a mirror of production and a critical response due to the process of deconstruction and reassembly, collage can thus be considered a form of resistance to modes of cultural transformation in that it values the personal deconstruction of ubiquitous imagery.<sup>138</sup> However for David Banash, the reliance on commercial imagery in collage is in fact an intrusion into the private world of artists rather than the manipulation of such contents for personal or indeed subversive deployment elsewhere.<sup>139</sup> Yet while Banash doubts the authenticity of collage, he also implicates its 'mode' as not just a form and practice but also a metaphor, 'at the centre of twentieth-century culture' as a type of resistance against 'imperatives of capitalist practice.' <sup>140</sup> Contemporary critic John McAndrew articulated such an observation in the use of collage frequent of the period:

*`...show[ing] relationships which the unaided eye might never have discerned. Valid but* not obvious kinships can be revealed between works coming from the same spiritual and intellectual background, genuine affinities of style not so easily seen in the originals.' 141

The indifference of the exhibition cannot therefore be disassociated from the historical moment at which it was produced, with the Smithsons introducing elements that would

Roth, M. & Katz, J., 'Difference/Indifference: Musings on Postmodernism, Marcel 135 Duchamp and John Cage', Psychology Press, 1998, p63

<sup>136</sup> Roth, M. & Katz, J., 'Difference/Indifference: Musings on Postmodernism, Marcel Duchamp and John Cage', Psychology Press, 1998, p63

Perloff, M., 'The Invention of Collage', New York Literary Forum, 1983, pp5-47 137

For a comprehensive discussion on collage as a form of resistance see Banash, D., 138

<sup>&#</sup>x27;Collage Culture: Readymades, Meaning, and the Ag of Consumption', Rodopi, 2013, p18 Banash, D., 'From Advertising to the Avant-Garde: Rethinking the Invention of 139 Collage', Postmodern Culture, Vol. 14, No. 2, 2004, first accessed 16th July 2018, http://pmc.

iath.virginia.edu/issue.104/14.2banash.html Banash, D., 'Collage Culture: Readymades, Meaning, and the Ag of Consumption', 140 Rodopi, 2013, p17

McAndrew, J., 'The Non-Imaginary Museum', College Art Journal, Vol. 14, No. 2, 141 Winter 1955, pp124-134, p124

Katz, J., 'Difference/Indifference: Musings on Postmodernism, Marcel Duchamp

Katz, J., 'Difference/Indifference: Musings on Postmodernism, Marcel Duchamp

In 'The Museum without Walls' Malraux identifies the museum as a western construct that is barely two hundred years old. He goes to great lengths to emphasise their imposition 'on the spectator' and their role in changing the conception of art.

Williams, JP., 'Subcultural Theory: Traditions and Concepts', Polity, 2011, p140 Rorty, R., 'Objectivity, Relativism and Truth', Cambridge University Press, 2012,

resonate specifically with the postwar generation, many of whom had been part of the war effort.<sup>147</sup> The collective identity of this new categorisation of audience transcended exclusory groupings of race and class for whom cultural products were defined, with the exhibition aiding a search for a sense of self within an emerging generation, whose very shared identity was predicated on resistance as a form of survival. One can thus understand Parallel of Life and Art not simply as a mechanism by which the Smithsons advanced their own neo-avantgarde standing, but also their attempt to shape the modern project by mediating between the dialectic of the new, while extoling the reality of the recent past.





Fig 1 & 2. Alison and Peter Smithson during the installation of Parallel of Life and Art, 1953





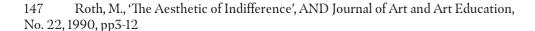
Fig 3. Group 6 pictured together on the poster for This Is Tomorrow, 1956 The previous chapter introduced the first of Alison and Peter Smithson's two exhibitions, Parallel of Life and Art, which they created in collaboration with the artists Nigel Henderson and Eduardo Paolozzi in 1953. It described Parallel of Life and Art by way of its duality between process and content, presenting the exhibition as the product of both a contemporary engagement with image and form but also in terms of the significance of the process of making the work, signified by the friendship between Henderson, Paolozzi and the Smithsons (Fig 1 & 2.). This chapter turns to the Smithsons' second collaboration with both artists, Patio and Pavilion, which is widely considered an extension of Parallel of Life and Art, principally because of the terms in which it demonstrates the couple's design methodology the As Found.<sup>2</sup> Described in this chapter as the product of new collaborative typologies, which the couple stated was part of 'a vague English inherited belief that the arts should be able again to collaborate as in the Renaissance',<sup>3</sup> Patio and Pavilion is an experiment in the intersection of art and architecture (Fig. 3):

'The method of work has been for the group to agree on the general idea, for the architects to provide a framework and for the artists to provide the objects.' <sup>4</sup>

Yet while its material form exhibits this separation of roles, the process that produced the installation, cannot be divided so simply. This is demonstrated by a lecture given by Alison Smithson in 1990 at the opening of a retrospective of the IG at the ICA, in which Patio and Pavilion was reconstructed. In emphasising the original installation she reveals a belief in the

Constructions', Routledge, 2005, p97 It is generally accepted that Henderson's influence on Parallel of Life and Art is 2 evidence of the exhibition as a precursor to the development of the Smithsons' the As Found, which became the couple's self-declared design process. van den Heuvel, D., 'Alison and Peter Smithson: A Brutalist Story', unpublished PhD Thesis, Technical University of Delft, 2013, p185

3 Smithson, A & P., 'The "As Found" and the "Found" in eds. Robbins, D., 'The Independent Group: Postwar Britain and the Aesthetics of Plenty', MIT Press, 1990, p201 Smithson, A. & Smithson, P. as quoted in Walsh, V., 'Nigel Henderson: Parallel of Art and Life', Thames and Hudson, 2001, p115



8

## A HOUSE NOT A HOME

'An architect who cannot build is like a man without arms, almost without identity.'1

Smithson, A. as quoted in Rattenbury, K., 'This is Not Architecture: Media

necessary limitations of a reconstruction, remade by others:

'Patio and Pavilion was made expressly for symbolic inhabitation - to focus on the art of 'dressing' one's domain. But no reconstruction can represent (even with tape recordings) the intense philosophical arguments, the excitement, the transmitted fire, the urgency and the youthful energy of these past beginnings." 5

The installation's authenticity is defined by the circumstances of its provenance, connected indelibly to its making. As an object Patio and Pavilion is secondary to the events that took place during its original staging. Alison however does not make it easy for her audience to understand what in particular defines this quality, going on to state that:

"... not to be subject to the magical arrangement of Nigel and Eduardo makes a travesty of the 'inhabitation' that was the intention of this exercise in domain dressing.' <sup>6</sup>

This chapter attempts to locate these zones of ambiguity in the Smithsons' exhibition work, and to reorient attention towards the non-material qualities that characterise their design process. The chapter demonstrates how the couple's architectural thinking grew from an attempt to create an 'othered' sense of space, and a connection to the theme of in*habitat*ion. Seen as a chronological advancement in thinking about the home, the set of small scale works undertaken by the Smithsons not only prototype models for living in a way radically different from the contemporary paradigm, but also posit a new relationship between the inhabitant and the making of their own home. Patio and Pavilionn is positioned as the precursor to the Smithsons' development of an attitude towards New Brutalism, a label Alison coined in 1953, which has been historicised as the material and aesthetic conclusion of their design method, the As Found, upon which this chapter concludes.<sup>7</sup> Exploring the liminal boundary emphasised by the couple between their theoretical and built architecture, this chapter ascribes significance to the confluence of process with materiality as a resistive strategy to determine authorial control in their work and in the production of their own historiography.

There is a long discussion to be had around the origins of the term New Brutalism. While the Smithsons claimed its coinage, a similar term was most certainly in use by Gunnar Asplund in Sweden at a similar time, while other competing origin 'myths' exist.



Fig 4. Entrance to This Is Tomorrow, Whitechapel Gallery, 1956



Fig 5. Front cover to exhibition catalogue for This Is Tomorrow, Whitechapel Gallery, 1956

Architectural Shifts Patio and Pavilion was the first inhabitable structure that Alison and Peter Smithson built within a gallery context and the first they would name a pavilion. Patio and Pavilion was displayed as part of the group show This Is Tomorrow, which opened on August 9th 1956 at the Whitechapel Gallery in East London. 36 individuals took part, organised in 12 groups, each comprising a painter, an artist and an architect, in an exhibition whose specific aim was to explore three-dimensional form.<sup>9</sup> This Is Tomorrow was considered a huge success given the number of visitors, with more than 19,000 people seeing the exhibition in a one-month period despite its location in the East End (Fig. 4).<sup>10</sup> The catalogue sold out and had to be reprinted (Fig. 5-7).<sup>11</sup> Graham Whitman offers that this was because the exhibition provided a distraction from current affairs, citing:

"...Political news in Hungary and Suez [which] dominated the news in England in 1956... [TIT] caught the imagination of the public eager for diversion from politics.' 12

Planning for This Is Tomorrow however had started two years previously in 1954, meaning that although it was widely publicised in newspapers and on the radio, for the way in which

## THIS IS TOMORROW

'Collaboration was an idea very much in the air - Le Corbusier was always talking about 'le syntheses des arts.'8

St. John Wilson as quoted in Kite, S., 'Colin St John Wilson and the Independent Group: Art, Science and the Psychologising Space', Journal of Visual Culture, 2013, p251 Paule Vezléy first contacted Leslie Martin who was then the chief architect of the London County Council (LCC). The exhibition was first proposed for the Royal Festival

While visitor numbers were high, Banham offers that in fact many people passed by the exhibition, dropping in without really engaging with the contents by which he implies that a more centrally based audience may have been more discerning. Walsh, V., 'Nigel Henderson: Parallel of Life and Art', Thames & Hudson, 2001, p115

It is somewhat ironic that this statement distancing Patio and Pavilion from the IG comes directly from a piece written by the Smithsons in the catalogue for an exhibition about the IG. Equally Lawrence Alloway underscores not just the IG's links with This is Tomorrow but also the importance of architects' involvement in the IG. Smithson, A. & Smithson, P., 'The 'As Found' and the 'Found', ed. Robbins, D. in 'The Independent Group: Postwar Britain

Whitman, G., 'This Tomorrow Today', 1987, Folder J154: Alison and Peter Smithson Archives, Harvard University, accessed 2nd November 2016

Smithson, A., 'Patio and Pavilion' Reconstructed', AA Files, no 47, 2002, pp37-44, 5 p37 Smithson, A., 'Patio and Pavilion' Reconstructed', AA Files, no 47, 2002, pp37-44, 6

p38

<sup>8</sup> 9 Hall with the intention of showing the integration of the arts. 10 11 and the Aesthetics of Plenty', MIT Press, 1990, p201 12

Smithson observed:

'[the] whole idea...was to allow the different directions, which made it the contrary of Group Espace, which had an ideology and was going in one direction.' <sup>19</sup>

Crosby's role was thus pivotal in instigating a shift towards architecture, but also in prompting a focus on collectivity as central to its production. Despite this resulting as Crosby later put it, '[in] a big fight and we were all promptly excommunicated from Group Espace' and thus the near collapse of the idea, the subsequent way in which plans for This is Tomorrow developed reveals the importance of dialogue and collaboration as constitutional of the work itself. Crosby is widely praised by participants in later retellings of the event for being 'easy going but authoritarian when necessary', which in turn is demonstrative of the terms in which he understood collectivity to be concerted; broad enough to encompass a range of voices, yet small enough to focus any cacophony.<sup>20</sup>

Category Smashing Plans for This Is Tomorrow were made in various artists' studios on both Fitzrov Street and Charlotte Street during which the overarching organising principle for the exhibition was agreed. As the architect Colin St. John Wilson remembered it, the exhibition 'would be split up like market stalls in a fair and autonomous groups should each do their own thing' reflecting in his description both the individual and collective tone of the show.<sup>21</sup> Alloway

# October 94, 2000, pp3-30, p5 18 Journal of Visual Culture, 2013, p251 19 Peter Smithson', October 94, 2000, pp3-30, p29 20 Plenty', MIT Press, 1990 21 exhibition catalogue, Lund Humphries, 1956

it appeared to address the political climate, such foresight and consequential resonance was perhaps coincidental. Although influenced by the socio-political events that had led to the contemporary circumstance, This Is Tomorrow articulates the anticipation by avantgarde factions gathered around the ICA of new forms of cultural and political expression. However, despite the proximate relationship between the ICA and This Is Tomorrow, many sources attempt to distance the exhibition from IG activities, not least the Smithsons who noted that only one third of the groups participating were members.<sup>13</sup>

Disavowed as a product of the IG, *This Is Tomorrow* coincides with both the end of the group's meetings and also the rise and prominence of architects within its membership. The lack of representation of artists connected to the ICA also reveals the notable shift towards architectural concerns. Revner Banham makes explicit the importance of architecture in This Is Tomorrow evidenced in his criticism of the exhibition published in The Architectural *Review*, in which he prioritises the naming of architects for each project.<sup>14</sup> Similarly in his retrospective account of the IG, Lawrence Alloway foregrounds the influence of architects in his introduction, describing the IG as 'architecture based' in part because of Reyner Banham's emerging leadership, which 'attached to him...a number of architects.' 15 Alloway goes on to list individually all the architects involved, emphasising the IG's direct connection to the architectural press through Theo Crosby whom he notes was 'the central organiser of This Is Tomorrow...generally taken as the end of the IG'.<sup>16</sup> Therefore while This Is Tomorrow sought to explore the essentiality between art, sculpture and architecture, it was an emphasis on the latter, which at least according to some notable IG figures took precedence over other disciplines.

As the then technical editor of AD Magazine, along with his own architectural training, Theo Crosby's interests were framed by the intersection of emerging contemporary art, popular culture and architecture. He became the default organiser of This Is Tomorrow due to the fact of his attendance of the first meeting about a possible group show, which emerged as the result of an invitation from the French collective *Group Espace*.<sup>17</sup> The group's London





Fig 6 & 7. Spreads from exhibition catalogue for This Is Tomorrow, Whitechapel Gallery, 1956

representative, Paule Vezelay proposed The Royal Festival Hall as a venue, however relations between those present at the first meeting broke down because Group Espace intended a huge number of participants while Crosby fought for a much smaller group.<sup>18</sup> As Peter

St John Wilson, C., 'A Note about This Is Tomorrow' as quoted in This Is Tomorrow

<sup>13</sup> van den Heuvel, D., 'As Found, The Metamorphosis of the Everyday', OASE Journal, 59, 2002, p56

Banham, R., 'This Is Tomorrow', The Architectural Review, September 1956, p186 14

<sup>15</sup> Alloway, L. in Robbins, D., 'The Independent Group: Postwar Britain and the Aesthetics of Plenty', MIT Press, 1990

Alloway, L. in Robbins, D., 'The Independent Group: Postwar Britain and the 16 Aesthetics of Plenty', MIT Press, 1990

<sup>17</sup> Peter Smithson adds that, 'we didn't want to have anything to do with that because it represented a 30s notion about how do you bring art into architecture'. Smithson, P.

as quoted in Colomina, B., 'Friends of the Future: A Conversation with Peter Smithson',

Vezelay also wanted to include applied arts such as fabrics and tiles but this was received with consternation. 'We're not interested in little abstract tiles'. Kite, S., 'Colin St John Wilson and the Independent Group: Art, Science and the Psychologising Space',

Smithson, P. as quoted in Colomina, B., 'Friends of the Future: A Conversation with

Crosby's easy acquisition of leadership reveals how he pioneered the role of curatorship within an exhibition context at the ICA. Crosby secured sponsorship in kind for the fabrication of the exhibition raising £300 and securing materials. He publicised This Is Tomorrow having also worked on its graphic design and liaised directly with the director of the Whitechapel Gallery, Bryan Robertson in order to control the curation. Alloway, L. as quoted in Robbins, D., 'The Independent Group: Postwar Britain and the Aesthetics of

for artists, not word people?" <sup>50</sup> Such rhetoric demonstrates the significance of the extant division between both categories and participants, despite the explicit intention of the exhibition to do away with such distinctions. Altercations however were not limited solely to conflict between disciplines, manifesting also in an intergenerational dispute, which was demonstrated by Crosby's rebuttal of The Whitechapel Gallery director Bryan Robertson's attempt to include more established artists in the line-up. Robertson wrote to Crosby stating that:

In maintaining that the exhibition was explicitly for a new group of artists,<sup>32</sup> Crosby defined both multi-disciplinary practice and collaboration as the fundamental identifying markers of a new generation, thus claiming the future for the young.

Belonging to No One Selected not least because of their close friendship with Crosby, Alison and Peter Smithson's contribution to *This Is Tomorrow* is in many ways archetypal of the show, reflecting the duality of the exhibition's turn towards architecture and promotion of rising stars at the IG. The couple again teamed up with Nigel Henderson and Eduardo Paolozzi, forming Group 6 to exhibit Patio and Pavilion. Together they depicted what is frequently referred to as a post-apocalyptic scene, where the 'new human' shelters amidst the relics of western consumerism. Found objects, mostly ceramics, were strewn amongst a bed of sand, which visitors were invited into. The pavilion was made from simple plywood strips Crosby had managed to acquire in kind, with the structure covered by a plastic corrugated roof through which Henderson and Paolozzi's decorative fragments could be observed Casting shadow onto the space inside, the objects comprised 'a battered bugle, a clock face without hands and an archaic pistol...laid out.' <sup>33</sup> A mirrored panel enclosed the entire structure reflecting the visitor as they moved through it (Fig. 10-12). While the number of objects signified the

30 31 33 Oxford University Press, 2006, p4

however had reservations about such an approach, describing the exhibition as 'closer to the jumble of the present environment',<sup>22</sup> questioning also the title which he commented 'was either ironic or intentionally inexact...Yesterday's tomorrow is not today' (Fig. 8).<sup>23</sup> Contention over the name is indicative of the factionalism that was beginning to emerge amongst the exhibition's contributors. For Crosby collaborative success was illustrated in the ability to achieve a true 'synthesis of the arts',<sup>24</sup> while on the other hand Revner Banham thought collaboration a much more complex affair that could not simply be induced between 'practitioners of the different arts', stating cynically that 'anything in theory could have been done'.<sup>25</sup> Lawrence Alloway corroborated, observing that there could be no successful integration of the arts, only 'antagonistic cooperation.' <sup>26</sup> As such, while some believed the synthesis of several disciplines into a singular object indicative of the coming age, others emphasized method characterised by individual interdisciplinarity.<sup>27</sup>

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Despite Banham supporting the ambition to collapse boundaries between categories of art and architecture, part of the conclusion in his review of the exhibition notes that the act of 'category-smashing' is not enough to support the reappraisal of values within the exhibit.<sup>28</sup> However Banham's frustration with the experimental nature of IG members and their counterparts outside the group is symptomatic of his own exclusion from the production of This Is Tomorrow (Fig. 9).<sup>29</sup> As a critic, Banham's position precluded him from both the design and construction of the exhibition, despite his default leadership of some of those taking part. Indeed at one point during the planning stage Roger Hilton ordered Alloway and Banham to leave stating, 'Get these effing word men out of here! This is a discussion

22 Alloway, L. in Robbins, D., 'The Independent Group: Postwar Britain and the Aesthetics of Plenty', MIT Press, 1990

Alloway, L. in Robbins, D., 'The Independent Group: Postwar Britain and the 23 Aesthetics of Plenty', MIT Press, 1990

Crosby perceived this in the work of St. John Wilson, with Peter Carter, 24 engineer Frank Newby and Sculptor Robert Adams Kite, S., 'Colin St John Wilson and the Independent Group: Art, Science and the Psychologising Space', Journal of Visual Culture, 2013

25 Banham, R., 'This Is Tomorrow', October, no 136, 2011, pp32-34, Architectural Review, September 1956, pp186-88, p34

26 Colomina, B. interview with Displayer, 'This Is Tomorrow', pp13-19, p17, http://adkp. ruhe.ru/sites/default/files/0102.pdf

The reviewer in the Times noted this division stating: 'There is no over-all 27unanimity in the exhibition. However, two distinct tendencies are revealed both by the exhibits and the contributions, which each group has made to the sumptuous catalogue. On the one hand a number of collaborations have brought sculpture and architecture together in a genuine synthesis. These works aspire to an ideal style, a conscious purity of form....the work is significant as symbol not as form.' 'Architect and Artist, Ideal Realised', Times (London), 9th August 1956 as quoted in This Is Tomorrow, exhibition catalogue, Lund Humphries, 1956

28 Banham, R., 'This Is Tomorrow', Architectural Review, September 1956, p34

29 Banham, R., 'This Is Tomorrow', Architectural Review, September 1956, p34



Fia. 9 Portrait of Revner Banha

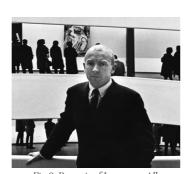


Fig 8. Portrait of Lawrence Alloway

## 'I feel that there should be a contribution from the Hepworth-Nicholson faction together with work by an architect of approximately their generation.' <sup>31</sup>

St. John Wilson, C. as quoted in Kite, S., 'Colin St John Wilson and the Independent Group: Art, Science and the Psychologising Space', Journal of Visual Culture, 2013, p252 Bryan Robertson letter to Theo Crosby, 23<sup>rd</sup> May 1955, Whitechapel Gallery Archives as quoted in *This Is Tomorrow* exhibition catalogue, Lund Humphries, 1956 Bryan Robertson letter to Theo Crosby, 23<sup>rd</sup> May 1955, Whitechapel Gallery Archives as quoted in *This Is Tomorrow* exhibition catalogue, Lund Humphries, 1956 Highmore, B., 'Rough Poetry: Patio and Pavilion Revisited', Oxford Art Journal 29.2,

show's catalogue:

"...Necessities of human habitat... the first necessity is for a piece of the world, the patio. The second necessity is for an enclosed space, the pavilion.'<sup>34</sup>

As with Parallel of Life and Art experiences of war loom large in Patio and Pavilion. Ben Highmore notes the contribution of the installation to the unease of the era where neither links to the past nor the possibility of a credible future could be assured. His analysis emphasises its significance as the first example of a New Brutalist aesthetic, which made it distinct from the 'proto-pop or neo-dada practices' of other exhibits of the time.<sup>35</sup> Yet conversely Banham who later was the principle champion of the Smithsons' New Brutalism, criticiced the installation for its 'traditional values', surprisingly finding favour instead in the 'pop' environment designed by Hamilton, McHale and Voelcker (Fig. 13-15).<sup>36</sup> In regards to Patio and Pavilion in The Architectural Review Banham wrote:

'They erected a pavilion within a patio and stocked it with sculptures signifying the most time-honoured of man's activities and needs. This was, in an exalted sense, a confirmation of accepted values and symbols...yet, curiously, their section seemed to have more in common with that of the New Brutalists than any other, and the clue to this kinship would appear to lie in the fact that neither relied on abstract concepts, but on concrete images—images that can carry the mass of tradition and association, or the energy of novelty and technology, but resist classification by the geometrical disciplines by which most other exhibits were dominated.' 37

Banham was keen to 'claim' Patio and Pavilion as a project of New Brutalism, yet simultaneously struggles with its aesthetic connotations, unsure whether it represents the New Brutalism or refutes it.<sup>38</sup> How can the architecture of 'the Machine Age' be both forward

34	Catalogue for This Is T
35	Highmore, B., 'Rough
Oxford University Press, 2006	
36	Banham, R., 'This Is To
p33	
37	Banham, R., 'This Is To
p34	
38	Banham, R., 'The New

#### SPACES OF TRANSCULTURAL RESISTANCE



Fig 10. Aluminium screen wrapped the structure, Group 6, Patio and Pavilion, This Is Tomorrow, Whitechapel Gallery, 1956



Fig 11. Group 6, Patio and Pavilion, This Is Tomorrow, Whitechapel Gallery, 1956

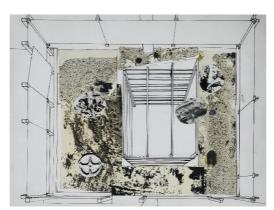


Fig 12. Group 6, Sketch for Patio and Pavilion, 1956



Fig 13. Group 2, Richard Hamilton, John McHale and John Voelcker. This Is Tomorrow, Whitechapel Gallery, 1956

complexity and layers of meaning the artists sought to evoke, the derivation of the name for the installation clarifies the simplicity of their premise, which Peter Smithson outlines in the

*Tomorrow*, Lund Humphries, 1956 Poetry: Patio and Pavilion Revisited', Oxford Art Journal 29.2, 6, p3 omorrow', Architectural Review, September 1956, pp186-88, Comorrow', Architectural Review, September 1956, pp186-88, w Brutalism', The Architectural Review, December 1955

emphasising the division of their roles, with Peter Smithson describing the process as late as 2001 that 'nobody talked to the others you just did it.' <sup>45</sup> As such the group developed an alternative approach predicated on autonomy rather than the conflation of roles, while still fulfilling Crosby's notion of the structure as an 'anonymous work'. This attitude his characteristic of the group who employed micro rebellions to provoke the ICA; they both participate in the wider ideas outlined for them, yet express their own ideas through clear opposition. Frampton's assessment of the Smithsons' architecture reflects this tendency but on a macro scale:

'Although it wasn't Le Corbusier's tabula rasa urbanism, it was meant to be more assertive, more rigorous. At the same time it also aspired to be rooted in a kind of nineteenthcentury sense of community rather than in the postwar welfare state. It wasn't opposed to social welfare, but it hankered after the spontaneous social identity of nineteenthcentury urban culture.' <sup>44</sup>

In ignoring the emphasis placed on the politics of socialist architecture, yet making use of some of its more utopic elements, the Smithsons' work pursued an individual identity within a collective framework. As Highmore has put it, the Smithsons were concerned with 'drag[ging] a rough poetry out of the confused and powerful forces which [were] at work'; his use of the word 'force' resonating with Frampton's later assertion of the importance of the 'spirit', a quality not characteristically part of the political or socially minded vocabulary of architecture at the time.<sup>45</sup> In this regard the couple's alterity allowed the introduction of a new lexicon, which displaced the certainty and prescription of modernity. The destabilisation of a predetermined material reality, is used to invoke a time when people where capable of producing their own 'spirit', promising the new in both collective and individual terms.

Smithson, P., 'The Two Lives of *Patio and Pavilion*', AA School of Architecture,
Lecture given 15th October 2001, first accessed 20th May 2018, https://www.youtube.com/
watch?v=f1XqGdOTqsM
Frampton, K., as quoted in 'A Conversation with Kenneth Frampton', Octobe 106, 2003, pp35-58, p37
Highmore, B., 'Rough Poetry: *Patio and Pavilion* Revisited', Oxford Art Journal, Vol. 29, No. 2, 2006, p9

and backward looking? How could it encompass emerging technological advancement while rooted in what he perceived to be parochial symbolism and imagery? The Smithsons' contemporaries and fellow contributors including St. John Wilson joined Banham in his assassination of the project referring to it as 'sold out to the picturesque idea':

*"…we are in fact getting the same old mish-mash of picturesque clobber like an antique shop in which any objects from the past or from your life are allowed to hang around and gather dust and stare at you.*<sup>39</sup>

For St. John Wilson collaboration between sculpture and architecture should manifest in a synthesis between the material object created rather than 'resist classification' as Banham describes it. While both would agree that *Patio and Pavilion* answers St. John Wilson's additional call for projects to create 'something that they wouldn't have done unless they were working together',<sup>40</sup> the structure has more in common with Roland Barthes's notion of collaboration as a process 'consist[ing] in creating a new object that belongs to no one.'<sup>41</sup> Making a natural distinction between collaborators, the group value individuality over aesthetic or material singularity. Their own description of the project, which they discussed many years later on the event of its reconstruction, outlines this alternative:

'Our Patio and Pavilion answered a 'programme' of our own making, offering a definitive statement of another attitude to 'collaboration': the 'dressing' of a building, its place, by the 'art of inhabitation'...With the transparent roof of the pavilion made to display Nigel's arrangement of the 'as found', the sand surface of the patio (ultimately) chosen to receive Nigel and Eduardo's tile and object arrangement...the complete trust in our collaboration was proved by our Patio and Pavilion being built to our drawings and 'inhabited' by Nigel and Eduardo in our absence, as we were camping on our way to CIAM at Dubrovnik.'<sup>42</sup>

The group reiterated this particular set of events on numerous occasions, each time



Fig 14. The 'Pop' environment of This Is Tomorrow, Whitechapel Gallery, 1956



15. Installation of This is Tomorrow, Whitechapel Gallery, 1956

<sup>St. John Wilson, C. as quoted in Kite, S., 'Colin St John Wilson and the Independent
Group: Art, Science and the Psychologising Space', Journal of Visual Culture, 2013, p253
St. John Wilson, C. as quoted in Kite, S., 'Colin St John Wilson and the Independent
Group: Art, Science and the Psychologising Space', Journal of Visual Culture, 2013, p253
Barthes, R. as quoted in Clifford, J., 'Writing Culture', University of California</sup> 

Press, 1986, p1 42 Smithson, A., as quoted in Highmore, B., 'Rough Poetry: *Patio and Pavilion* Revisited', Oxford Art Journal, Vol. 29, No. 2, 2006

8.2

## HOUSE OF THE FUTURE

## 'Geometrical lines do not produce likeable people.'<sup>46</sup>

## Symbolic Inhabitation

The last section explored the importance of collaboration in the making of *This Is Tomorrow* focusing on Theo Crosby's role to demonstrate the way in which collaboration was considered both a methodology to define the age but also a way of identifying the emerging avant-garde within it. It was shown that the Smithsons' approach to collaboration not only countered that of their peers but also the wider socio-political context, rejecting a synthesis in favour of a design methodology based on the intersection of the individual's autonomy with group thinking. The imagery that constitutes Patio and Pavilion further asserts the group's dissolution from the prewar avant-garde, reflecting the alterity of their method in the identity of its material form, paradoxically engaging surrealist tenets yet also heralding their erasure. The exhibition's conscious use of bit parts, found objects and reference to undefined space is rooted in the fragmentation of *Dada* and sets out what Victoria Walsh has called a 'surrealist game.' <sup>47</sup> The pavilion is both familiar, with its allusions to the garden shed, yet suggests an incompleteness that points to the possibility of its own destruction. As such, Patio and Pavilion offers an 'othered' type of space (Fig 16 & 17).

Fig 16. Nigel Henderson, Head

of Man, collage hung in the interior of Patio and Pavilion

While the group's previous installation, Parallel of Life and Art, played with mental causation, explored through the unexpected juxtapositioning of images, flattening them into one medium and texture, Patio and Pavilion sets up a more complex narrative space using a series of thresholds, demarcated by material changes in its setting. Again making use of every available surface, the floor was covered by a collage of a pond and on the wall a collage of plant growth and seed dispersal depicted cycles of decay and rebirth.<sup>48</sup> Unlike in Parallel of

#### A HOUSE NOT A HOME

also their 'image'.

Paradoxically while more substantive in its material scope, Patio and Pavilion speaks to conditions beyond its materiality which are commonly over looked in favour of descriptions of its form, most notably as a ruin, with the absence of material considered more significant than what is there. Widely accepted to be what Highmore calls 'bomb site architecture', Banham's critique of the installation has made it infamous as a 'garden shed...excavated after the atomic holocaust.' <sup>49</sup> Frampton puts forth a less violent analysis, positioning the pavilion instead as an informal form of primitive architecture:

"...ironic reinterpretation of Laugier's primitive hit of 1753 in terms of the back yard reality of Bethnal Green...within this cryptic...metaphor of the shed the distant past and immediate future fused into one.' 50

Nicola Pezolet's analysis however deconstructs all of these positions stating that it has wrongly been memorialised as a comment on consumer society and war, remarks on the lack of observable destruction of the exhibit by noting that in the photographs, the supposedly forgotten fragments are in fact carefully arranged, and that the materials used include fresh plywood, clean plastic and aluminium.<sup>51</sup> Pezolet's alternative reading of the pavilion allows it to be understood as a place of nurture rather than destruction.<sup>52</sup> In rejecting Highmore's analysis of its wartime aesthetic, Pezolet suggests that Patio and Pavilion not only provides a template for habitability, but also imagines a whole new way of living. Reflective of the Smithsons' interest in 'change and mobility', the structure is easily disassembled and reassembled due to the basic function of its materials.<sup>55</sup> Its mobile quality therefore speaking to the migratory nature of modern life, which for Berger, Berger and Kellner is a defining characteristic of modernity:

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Thresholds Journal, No. 35, MIT Press, 2009, pp44-49, p45
52
53
Thresholds Journal, No. 35, MIT Press, 2009, pp44-49, p47
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Fig 17. Nigel Henderson, Life and Death in a Pond, collage, Patio and Pavilion, 1956

Life and Art these materials were to be engaged by an audience, with the Smithsons offering that the aluminium screen, in reflecting the visitor, would trap both the physical body and

Tati, J., 'Les Années Sauvages: Mon Oncle', Arte Magazine, No. 20.45, Cinéma, 30th 46 December 2002, p2

Walsh states that a comparison between Henderson's Head of Man and Jean 47 Dubuffet's Chevaux de Sylvain made in 1953 affirms the surrealist connection. Head of Man was a giant photographic montage of the upper torso and head of a 'fractured and craggy' man displayed within the pavilion, which St. John Wilson bought despite his criticism of the whole thing stating that, 'what the hell it was doing in a potting shed I never understood'. St. John Wilson, C. as quoted in Walsh, V., 'Nigel Henderson: Parallel of Life and Art', Thames & Hudson, 2001, p118

<sup>48</sup> Walsh, V., 'Nigel Henderson: Parallel of Life and Art', Thames & Hudson, 2001, p118

Banham, R., 'The New Brutalism', The Architectural Review, 1966 Frampton, K. as quoted in Pezolet, N., 'Signs of Inhabitation: The Critical Legacies of

Patio and Pavilion', Thresholds Journal, no 35, MIT Press, 2009, pp44-49, p45

Pezolet, N., 'Signs of Inhabitation: The Critical Legacies of Patio and Pavilion',

Heynen, H., 'Architecture and Modernity', MIT Press, Second edition, 1999, p15 Pezolet, N., 'Signs of Inhabitation: The Critical Legacies of Patio and Pavilion',

'In everyday life the modern individual continuously alternates between highly discrepant and often contradictory social contexts.' 54

The pavilion thus provides the basic requirements for living in a material sense, while also encapsulating the 'homelessness' of the modern condition.

## Compartments of a Cave

Patio and Pavilion was positioned as an artistic intervention, a metaphor for the loss of certainty pervasive in the renunciation of traditional frameworks for living. However it was also part of a broader lineage of thinking by the couple on housing, particularly on the nature of 'home', their projects of the time showing the 'various influences that are beginning to shape postwar Britain.' 55 The home became particularly important in the postwar period due to its instrumentalisation in the contestation of modernity. Therefore a way of actively resisting the teleology of modernity was to suggest alternative typologies for the home. The debate had become around consumer products, because not only were they quicker to manufacture than an actual home, but they could be mass-produced, reaching everyone and used every day. As architects, to be part of this debate, an equally speedy and scalable method was necessitated.

It is perhaps for this reason that a number of the Smithsons' housing proposals are characterised by their shared development within an exhibition context. A clear example of this is House of the Future, an installation designed concurrently with Patio and Pavilion, which while aesthetically unusual in its appearance, functioned entirely like a home. Constructed for The Scottish Daily Mail Ideal Home Exhibition at The Olympia Exhibition Centre in March 1956, it ran for 25 days and therefore predated Patio and Pavilion by 5 months, meaning that the Smithsons were at some moment working on both projects at the same time.<sup>56</sup> House of



Fig 18. House of the Future, Daily Mail Home Show, 1956



Fig 19. Colour image of House of the Future, 1956

the Future's main structure comprised a single shell made from plastic impregnated plaster, with the roof covered in aluminium foil. Every possible surface was curved in some way, looking as if it was moulded from a single sheet of material (Fig. 18). The few colour photos that exist of the house reveal that it was in its entirety a colourful mêlée of yellows and reds with furniture to match (Fig. 19).<sup>57</sup> Constructed as a single storey, the house was organised around a central courtyard that provided natural light and private exterior space. Set twentyfive years into the future, it imagined a compact form of living where all the facilities such as the kitchen and bathroom were to be hidden in curvilinear cubicles that separated the main space from the bedroom (Fig. 20). On the one hand the house demonstrated a distinct privacy with everything hidden away, while on the other all the spaces flowed into each other, which gave the main living areas a sense of exposure. The Smithsons described the layout in analogous terms:

'The general conception of the house: The rooms flow into one another like the compartments of a cave, the skewered passage which joins one compartment with another effectively maintains privacy.' 58

## 2000, p7

57 58



Berger, P., Berger, B. & Kellner, H, 'The Homelessness Mind: Modernization and 54 Consciousness', Vintage Books, 1974, p184

<sup>55</sup> Hamilton, R., 'Exteriors, Interiors, Objects, People', Edition Hansjörg Mayer, 1990, p44

Although the Smithsons co-authored all their work, Peter remarks that House of 56 *the Future* was Alison's, only involving himself in order to negotiate the fabrication of the installation. Most of the drawings for *House of the Future* are kept at the Canadian Centre for Architecture, while some supporting documents such as letters are at the Smithsons' Archive at the GSD in Harvard University, 1956 was a busy year for the Smithsons as Beatriz Colomina points out in her interview with Peter Smithson. The couple completed both Patio and Pavilion and House of the Future along with attending the CIAM conference in Dubrovnik and making a film. Peter remarks in response that Hunstanton's completion in 1954 allowed them to do 'spontaneous work' without a client because they still had some of their fee left over. Colomina, B., 'Friends of the Future: A Conversation with Peter Smithson', October 94,

In van den Heuvel and Risselada's book, there are small-scale colour reproductions of photos of the house. van den Heuvel, D. & Risselada, M., 'Alison and Peter Smithson from the House of the Future to the House of Today', 010 Publishers, Rotterdam, 2004 Smithson, P. as quoted in eds. Spellman, C. & Unglaub, K., 'Peter Smithson in Conversation with Students, Princeton Architectural Press, 2005

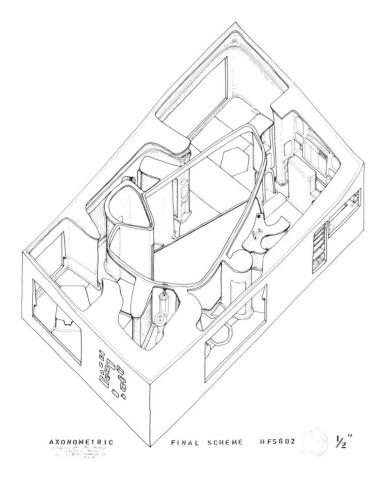




Fig 21.



Fig 24. Richard Hamilton, Just What Makes Today's Homes so Different, So Appealing?, 1956

> taken from American magazines and is based on a template from Ladies Home Journal showing Irvin 'Zabo' Koszewski, winner of Mr LA 1954, flexing his muscles as the centrepiece (Fig. 24). Surrounded by domestic ephemera including pot plants, coffee tables and lamps the image juxtaposes the familiar with new tools of modern technology: a television, tape recorder and a hoover.<sup>61</sup> While in many ways prophetic, Hamilton's collage was meant as an ironic critique of popular culture and its relationship to the modern interior.

The 'pop' aesthetics of *House of the Future* mark the project as a distinct anomaly within the Smithsons' own work due to its materiality, which has become both its defining feature but also the most distracting facet of its design. This is due to the copious use of plastic, a material that symbolised the forward-looking aesthetic of the house, along with distinguishing it from the rougher materiality of Patio and Pavilion. The choice of plastic however reflected a serious engagement by the couple in advancing prototypicalbuilding materials, which they believed would become in the near future a primary form of construction.<sup>62</sup> Additionally, because of favourable oil prices, plastics in the mid-1950s seemed a sustainable choice:

61 appealing-upgrade-p20271 62 Constructions', Routledge, 2005, p93

Fia 20. Axonometric drawina of House of the Future, 1956





Fig 21-23. Actors wearing knitted clothes designed by Teddy Tinling in collaboration with the Smithsons

Visitors were invited to walk around its exterior at both ground level and on a raised walkway that overlooked the installation, in which actors were positioned to enact living in the space. The Smithsons even helped design all the outfits, dressing the actors in knitted costumes inexplicably imagined as the future of fashion (Fig 21-23).<sup>59</sup> Aligning House of the Future explicitly with Richard Hamilton's collage titled, Just what is it that makes today's homes so different, so appealing? used in the catalogue for This Is Tomorrow, Frampton claimed the material treatment in the design evidenced the couple's acceptance of encroaching Americana and consumer lifestyle.<sup>60</sup> Hamilton's composition utilises images

The outfits were designed by Teddy Tinling, however the Smithsons gave directions 59 stating 'Clothes for the woman for other occasions should be in evidence...The garments should not excite laughter, nor detract from the house or the equipment the people are trying to demonstrate. (The architects would like to see the ideas of the dress designer to check this before they are too far committed)'. Smithson, A. & Smithson, P., 'House of the Future', Typed loose pages, 6th November 1955, Folder BA002, University of Harvard Archive, Cambridge, MA, first accessed 1<sup>st</sup> November 2016

The Smithsons later refuted this on the occasion of the Independent Retrospective 60 in 1990. 'We always considered ourselves very English and – contrary to what Frampton infers - we have always been oriented towards Europe and never deviated...recognising

<sup>[</sup>America] as a wider threat to Europe's cultural identity', van den Heuvel, D., 'Alison and Peter Smithson; A Brutalist Story', Technical University of Delft, 2013, p105 As the Tate website points out these would have been new items in 1956, considered at the forefront of technology, first accessed June 1st 2018, http://www.tate.org. uk/art/artworks/hamilton-just-what-was-it-that-made-vesterdays-homes-so-different-so-

#### SPACES OF TRANSCULTURAL RESISTANCE

"...at the time the cost of oil had gone down every year, and it continued to do so until the oil crisis – therefore the notion of making a house where...you use plastic, seemed reasonable – if the price of oil had continued to fall.' 63

Peter Smithson's evident surprise at the later economic instability of plastic reveals that despite their pursuit of genuine possible future materials, the quality of their choices was as much about creating the correct image of that future as it was about the realities of its fabrication.

## Car or a Piece of Clothing?

Considering the fault line between the theoretical and the built aspects of their work, the exhibition context in which *House of the Future* was constructed becomes newly significant; the house is both an experiential installation but also intended as a working prototype, advancing technology in the advent of its success regardless of future conditions. The *Canadian Centre for Architecture* (CCA) notes on its website that *House of the Future* was explicitly not intended for actual occupation but only for the purpose of instigating theoretical discussion,<sup>64</sup> with Sabine von Fischer concurring that:

'House of the Future is not an architectural project, but a scenographic mock-up at full scale of a living unit.' 65

While such criticism suggests that the exhibit's only capacity was to enact an idea of living as some type of exploratory performance, this chapter argues that the design of the house, revealed in its internal coherency suggests otherwise. In the CCA archive where von Fischer conducted much of her research, all the drawings for the project are held. Several of these drawings show complex technical details including a sketch for the drainage of the house, indicating that despite being hosted indoors and therefore not in need of such functional attributes, the Smithsons designed House of the Future as if it were able to cope with the complexities of outdoor weather (Fig. 25 & 26).<sup>66</sup> That is to say there is an intriguing

#### A HOUSE NOT A HOME

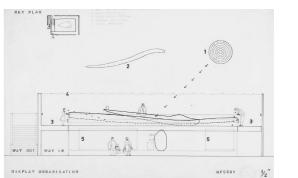


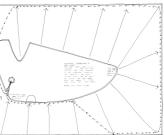
Fig 25 & 26. Technical drawing for House of the Future including detailing roof drainage

> reciprocity between functionality and performance on display; functionality is *performed* and living itself becomes a *performance*.

> While *House of the Future* may have been misinterpreted as a non-functional stage set, qualities of performance were central to how it was intended to function. This is most clearly reflected in the numerous analogies made about the structure. Eluding categorisation, the house is variously described as a bunker and a spaceship, as a showroom and a courtyard or as a car or piece of clothing.<sup>67</sup> Take for example Beatriz Colomina's widely read and extensive piece on the show titled Unbreathed Air 56, which analyses each category as described above in some detail.<sup>68</sup> Colomina demonstrates the terms in which *House of the Future* provides a commentary on the contemporary context by narrating its affinities with prototypical commodities of the period. The analogy to the car is perhaps the most convincing. Alison wrote that:

'[Caravans] are the nearest to an expendable architecture that the market has to offer... For against the standard solution of the permanent dwelling, the caravan is neat, like a big piece of equipment...the caravan represents a new freedom.' 69

for Architecture in Montréal. Colomina, B., 'Unbreathed Air 1956', Grey Room, 15, MIT Press, 2004, pp28-59, 67 p29 Colomina, B., 'Unbreathed Air 1956', Grey Room, 15, MIT Press, 2004, pp28-59 68 69 Colomina notes Barthes similar reading of the Citroën in Mythologies (1957) in which he called it a Goddess. Peter Smithson knowingly referenced both Barthes and Le Corbusier when he equated the Citroën DS to the 'great Gothic Cathedrals'. Smithson, A. & Smithson, P. as quoted in Colomina, B., 'Unbreathed Air 1956', p35



Although the desire to integrate all the appliances with the very fabric of the house imagined

Smithson, P. as quoted in Rattenbury, K., 'This is Not Architecture: Media 63 Constructions', Routledge, 2005, p93

House of the Future, Article 10 of 13, Canadian Centre for Architecture Website, 64 first accessed 1st August 2017, http://www.cca.qc.ca/en/issues/2/what-the-future-lookedlike/32734/1956-house-of-the-future

Fischer, S., 'The Sound of the Future', Canadian Centre for Architecture Website, 65 first accessed 1st August 2017, http://www.cca.qc.ca/en/issues/2/what-the-future-lookedlike/32734/1956-house-of-the-future

A full set of drawings for the project are held at the archives of the Canadian Centre 66

a life fully assimilated with technology, it is the engagement with environmental performance that von Fischer states linked the house's architecture to the terms in which it was intended to operate, imagining a regulated future where internal and external conditions become paramount.<sup>70</sup> Plastic then gave aesthetic form to a new typology of housing in lieu of the effectual reality of the technology that could make it a reality. However, the blurring in the identity of *House of the Future* as a house and as an exhibition works to its advantage rather than to its detriment. Its pretence as a house allows it to exist as a site of fantasy, projecting an almost comical vision of the modern home, allowing a critical voice, while conversely its attempts to function as an inhabitable structure make the impossibility of its vision a potential reality. Although in many ways House of the Future actively engages consumer culture rather than rejects it, its format as an installation allowed the Smithsons to refute modernisation's strict definition of what is and isn't possible.<sup>71</sup> In doing so they gain some influence over the discourse of domesticity; not by controlling it themselves, but by destabilising it's ownership, showing the mainstream narrative up to be inconsistent and a mere contingency.

Analogy characterised the performative nature of *House of the Future*, which complicates the extent to which it can be considered a serious model for housing versus a prototype to simply talk about living. This section considers a number of different registers across which the term performance relates to the project, extending the term in relation to its use outside an exhibition context in the couple's own house Solar Pavilion. The aim is to demonstrate the connection between performance and the act of living, with the former intended as a public manifestation, the latter a private one. Although in material terms House of the Future may not have resembled the typical inner city dwelling, it was designed to facilitate established forms of family life. This is most clearly reflected in the way that *House of the Future* was reported in the press, with Mechanix Illustrated's coverage of the exhibition resting entirely on an explanation of the house's domestic features and their relationship to technological function:

'A short-wave transmitter with push buttons controls all electronic equipment. We're sure you'll be interested to know that the shower stall has jets of water, air for drying and the sunken bathtub rinses itself with detergent. No bathtub rings left for Mother.' 73

Mechanix Illustrated's spread reinforces its own statement defining domestic servitude as female by accompanying the text with a series of photos showing a woman using all the gadgets of the home (Fig. 27). Therefore while House of the Future was intended as a prototype to upend social relations within an urban context, the Smithsons were principally concerned with the functionality of the family unit within wider society rather than a radical appropriation of the dynamics of individual families within the home. The Smithsons were further complicit in describing the performativity of their creation emphasising only to the woman's role:

72 73

71 Fisher, M., 'Capitalist Realism', Zero Books, 2008, p17



## SOLAR PAVILION

'The most mysterious, the most charged of architectural forms are those which capture the empty air.' 72

## Society Has Disappeared

Fig 27. House of the Future featured

In her online article about her time spent in the CCA archives, von Fischer analyses 70 House of the Future by way of the contribution it makes to the use of sound technologies in what she states were 'a postwar enthusiasm for controlled environments'. Fischer, S., 'The Sound of the Future', Canadian Centre for Architecture Website, first accessed 1st August 2017, http://www.cca.qc.ca/en/issues/2/what-the-future-looked-like/32734/1956-house-ofthe-future

than embraces it proper.78

## Brutalist Grandchild

The notion of dwelling is manifest in a number of ways, from Patio and Pavilion's symbolism through to House of the Future's functionality. While the previous section focused on House of the Future as an autonomous work, describing it as an individual object within a wider exhibition context, the project was in fact designed to work across a number of iterative scales. Despite its interior curvilinear plan, the house was set within a rectangular box meaning that it could be replicated side by side with similar dwellings thus forming part of a thesis concerned with how the individual unit sat within a larger, denser urban context. The Smithsons developed numerous designs using organic arrangements similar to that of *House* of the Future, which have since become collectively known as The Appliance Houses.<sup>79</sup>

These structures explored new types of occupancy based on combinations of people living together in more ad hoc arrangements such as students, childless couples and the elderly. As none of these houses were ever built. Dirk van den Heuvel and Max Risselada retrospectively refer to the Appliance Houses as 'a series of idea houses' and in this sense suggest that the Smithsons' proposals, including House of the Future were somehow not really architectural.<sup>80</sup> The literature therefore creates a hierarchy in the Smithsons' work favouring the few building projects that they completed over the unbuilt and small-scale theoretical works. Alison Smithson would not be denied the label of architecture for her project, rejecting the necessity of material longevity as essential to a project's impact:

78 Fisher, M., 'Capitalist Realism', Zero Books, 2009, p5 The Appliance Houses refer to Snowball House (1956-7), Bread House (1957), 79 Portico Row House or White Formica House (1957) and Strip House (1957-8). van den Heuvel, D. & Risselada, M., 'Alison and Peter Smithson – from the House of the Future to the House of Today', 010 Publishers, 2004, p98 80 van den Heuvel, D. & Risselada, M., 'Alison and Peter Smithson - from the House of *the Future* to the House of Today', 010 Publishers, 2004, p98 Beatriz Colomina writes that the Smithsons' demonstration of the importance of the temporal and the memory of an idea or an event often has stronger consequences than if it had been permanent. Here Colomina elaborates using Mies van der Rohe's Barcelona Pavilion as an example. She states that it has become one of the defining buildings of

'.... the 'wife' will demonstrate:- cleaning by vacuum polisher, laundry, the uses of the cooking equipment, food preparation and refuse disposal. As she circuits the house she will go through almost every kind of movement, from sitting down in low chairs to operating the sliding folding doors.' 74

One possible reason for *House of the Future's* replication of conservative models is because of its display within the context of an exhibition funded by the right leaning Daily Mail. Thus the domesticity that is presented within *House of the Future* is familiar; its ritual form, the hierarchy it represents and the familiarity of the nuclear model of living it reinforces are all well known. Looking back at *House of the Future* from the position of today, the project in this sense seems to be going for a radical insight into living typologies but appears instead remarkably ordinary. This is despite the Smithsons themselves being in many ways pioneering in regards to the internal structure of their own home life, with the couple occupying the flat above their design studio and Peter Smithson taking equal responsibility for the care of their three children. As such their focus on the practicality of the house reflected in the quote above reads more like a press release than a critical proposition, prioritising the commercial qualities of *House of the Future*, recognised by Colomina who asserted that the exhibition is 'just like a consumer product.' 75 Another object rendered in plastic like so much else of the era, the proximate concerns of technology and capital were important in the project so far that they corroborated Alison Smithson's concern in 'foresee [ing] the consumer-oriented society... that would change all our lives.' <sup>76</sup>

Echoing Jennifer Spohrer's statement that 'consumption has retreated to the confines of the single-family home and society has all but disappeared', the project's performed operational attributes can be read as a parody of a futuristic modernity, and as such critical of the 'threat' of Americanisation.<sup>77</sup> The knitted costumes, garish colours and gadgetry are part of a constellation of ironic humour employed by the Smithsons to frame their critique; presented nonetheless with characteristic seriousness, demonstrated in the copious technical detailing of the house. Claiming, as Mark Fisher has put it, that 'the attitude of ironic distance proper to postmodern capitalism is supposed to immunise us', the Smithsons present a new engagement with consumerism, a type of everyday realism that subjugates technology rather

Like all exhibitions, they live a life of say four weeks in reality, then they go on and on forever. Like the Barcelona Pavilion before it was reconstructed.'<sup>81</sup>

Smithson, A. & Smithson, P., 'House of the Future', Typed loose pages, 6th November 74 1955, Folder BA002, University of Harvard Archive, Cambridge, MA, first accessed 1st November 2016

Colomina, B., 'Unbreathed Air 1956', Grey Room, 15, MIT Press, 2004, pp28-59, 75 p31

<sup>76</sup> Colomina, B., 'Unbreathed Air 1956', Grey Room, 15, MIT Press, 2004, pp28-59, p29

<sup>77</sup> In Tati's Mon Oncle the protagonist Monsieur Hulot navigates France's obsession with modern architecture and mechanical efficiency realised in rampant consumerism during the postwar period. Tati, J., 'Mon Oncle', released 10th May 1958, rereleased 29th November 2004, British Film Institute, 120 minutes

### SPACES OF TRANSCULTURAL RESISTANCE

Even though few saw Mies van der Rohe's famed structure exhibited in 1929, it has since become historically significant which Colomina states was the result of its second outing as part of MoMA's retrospective of van der Rohe in 1947 (Fig. 28 & 29).82 In the catalogue for the exhibition, Philip C. Johnson writes that:

'The Barcelona Pavilion has been acclaimed by architects and critics alike as one of the milestones of modern architecture...that justifies comparison with the great architecture of the past...for the first time Mies was able to build a structure unhampered by functional requirements or insufficient funds.' 83

Johnson indicates that the exhibition setting allowed the architecture to operate without normative constraints and thus able to achieve what Johnson describes as 'an original work of art', beyond architecture. Colomina observed that the pavilion had been for a couple, a template for advancing both architectural ideas but also testing material possibility in a way that would have consequential impact:

*`...[for] the Smithsons...exhibitions are the important site for architectural production in* the 20th century; that the temporal, in other words, is more important than the bermanent.' 84

Van der Rohe was however more than just a reference, with the couple drawing on his structural approach to create a small building known as Upper Lawn, which Alison Smithson stated should be considered The Barcelona Pavilion's 'New Brutalist grandchild.' 85 Also known as Solar Pavilion the couple's holiday retreat was built in Fonthill, Wiltshire between 1959 and 1961 (Fig. 30 & 31).86 The Smithsons acquired Upper Lawn when it was semi-derelict

Modernism in the twentieth century, yet no one really saw it when it was exhibited in 1929. Not until its resurrection by MoMA in 1947 did the pavilion begin gaining traction as such an important piece of architecture. The Smithsons believed that the reconstruction of it ruined it, as the place it held in architects' imaginations was far more powerful. Colomina, B., 'Friends of the Future: A Conversation with Peter Smithson', October 94, 2000, p24

82 The exhibition ran from 16th September 1947-25th January 1948 at The Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York. Full catalogue available online https://www.moma.org/documents/moma\_catalogue\_2734\_300062055.pdf

Johnson, PC., 'Mies van der Rohe'. The Museum of Modern Art, 1947, p58, first 83 accessed 24th August 2018, full exhibition catalogue available online https://www.moma.org/ documents/moma\_catalogue\_2734\_300062055.pdf

Colomina, B. interview with Displayer, 'This Is Tomorrow', pp13-19, p14, http://adkp. 84 ruhe.ru/sites/default/files/0102.pdf

van den Heuvel, D., https://c20society.org.uk/botm/alison-peter-smithsons-upper-85 lawn-pavilion/

86 In parallel with constructing Upper Lawn the Smithsons completed the Sugden

Barcelona Pavilion, 1929

Fig 28. Mies van der Rohe,



Fig 29. Mies van der Rohe pictured with Philip C. Johnson at MoMA, 1947

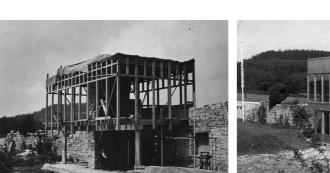


Revner Banham at Solar Pavilion

comprising what was originally a pair of cottages set into the north side of a walled garden. They retained the walls enclosing the garden, including the north wall of the original house and the two walls that once held fireplaces at either end of the property. The entire ground floor's glazed facade opens out completely reducing the boundary between the inside and the outside of the property, with echoes of Patio and Pavilion in van den Heuvel's commentary of it as 'nothing more than a primitive hut.' 87

It is surprising that the Smithsons chose Solar Pavilion as their holiday house given the un-homely nature of the design, which is barren in terms of material comfort, complicated by the fact that they were parents to three small children (Fig. 32).<sup>88</sup> Devoid of many of the conventional services and comforts that would usually be expected of a home – evidence of which can be seen in many of the photographs that show both the interior and exterior of the house, the design is remarkable for its lack of ease (Fig. 33 & 34).89 The Smithsons however comparedSolar Pavilion to Mies' Farnsworth House (1951) and the Eameses' Case Study House (1949). While the former was built for a client, the latter was the home of its designers, Charles and Ray Eames who lived there between 1951-2000. Placing their modest building in a lineage of architectural designs within the Modernist canon, the Smithsons insert

architecture-of-music/5080125.article 87 botm/alison-peter-smithsons-upper-lawn-pavilion/ 88 com/lifeandstyle/2003/nov/30/shopping.homes Architecture, Dublin, 22<sup>nd</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> October, 2008





Solar Pavilion, Fonthill, 1961

A HOUSE NOT A HOME



House, built for their friend and engineer Derek Sugden in 1955 in Watford, Hertfordshire. Derek Sugden lived in the house from 1955 up until his death in 2015. He much admired the house although disagreed with its grade II listing. Swenarton, M., 'Derek Sugden: The Architecture of Music', 11th February 2016, https://www.bdonline.co.uk/derek-sugden-the-

Building of the Month, Sugust 2004, van den Heuvel, D., https://c20society.org.uk/

Jane Withers comments by way of explanation that 'they were hardy northerners'. Withers, J., 'Down to Earth', The Observer, 30th November 2003, https://www.theguardian.

Hawkes, D., 'The Architecture of Climate: Studies in Environmental History, Smythson and the Smithsons', PLEA 2008 – 25th Conference on Passive and Low Energy

themselves within its history and in doing so introduce a more blurred boundary between what historians have nominally considered separate territories concerning the theoretical and built architectures of the couple's work.

## Needs That Change

The Smithsons' comments as part of their small text *Italian Thoughts*, later reiterated in Peter Smithson's *Interview with Students*, illustrates their strategy of insertion casting themselves as the inheritors of the entire history of modern architecture in western Europe. Reaching as far back as the Renaissance, the Smithsons stated that there existed a lineage joining them through the Eameses and Le Corbusier right back to Alberti.<sup>90</sup> In proposing such a narrative the Smithsons establish a reciprocal relationship between the canonical and the new, sharing their inheritance with other 'famed' siblings as a means to claim it for themselves. This is one example of how *Solar Pavilion* 'performed' for the couple, being a work they could narrate as evidence of their own importance. For the Smithsons, echoing Mies's structural honesty was not paramount, but the image of it was.

Alison Smithson drew the first designs for *Solar Pavilion* in 1958 while Peter made a photographic record showing the building's completion in 1961.<sup>91</sup> The family visited *Upper Lawn* frequently, eventually selling in 1982 due to noisy neighbours at which point the building was acquired by a private owner and refurbished by the architects Sergison Bates in 2004 and later grade II listed in 2011.<sup>92</sup> By way of explaining the thinking behind their design, in their book *The Charged Void* the Smithsons refer to 'sun acceptance' as a way of describing the fundamental qualities that the building embodies.<sup>95</sup> Like *Patio and Pavilion* with its basic requirements for living realised in a series of simple material moves, all that *Solar Pavilion* is designed to do is provide minimum 'weather protection from one quarter or another, a need that can change.' <sup>94</sup> The crucial word here is 'change', the performance of transition from one state to another, which for Peter Smithson meant its ability to be adapted thus connecting technical operation with form. Smithson describes how the technical detailing of the house developed in situ, with the pipework first running along the surface of

Fig 34. Bathroom facilities at Solar Pavilion



Fig 33. Interior of Solar Pavilion

#### A HOUSE NOT A HOME

the masonry but then having to be buried because it caused condensation. With many details decided on site and necessitating amendment once installed, the construction process for *Solar Pavilion* was a rehearsal for its own occupation, and is described by Peter Smithson as such:

'This sort of process is very much like a stage design: once you start to run rehearsals and things don't work, you pull them out or change the lighting.' <sup>95</sup>

Smithson's words transform *Solar Pavilion* into a piece of theatre; with the joy in its occupation conflated with the perpetual process of its making. The graduation to theatre as an analogy from simply operation or performance distinguishes the *Solar Pavilion* from its two predecessors *House of the Future* and *Patio and Pavilion*, because while the simulation of a building within an exhibition can rely solely on the symbolism of its function, in theatre everything does have to work. For von Fischer the *House of the Future* is not a house precisely because of such fakery, with its timber construction belying its structural integrity, rendering its sole contribution symbolic.<sup>96</sup> The Smithsons however refuted such claims, believing the tradition of temporary structures part of a long lineage connected to the instigation of more permanent change in the reincarnation of later built forms. Again drawing on the Renaissance as historical precedent, the Smithsons proposed temporality as a means to test taste and style, which was conducted within architectural settings both public and private from masked balls through to public and thus civic spaces.<sup>97</sup>

The simple act of demarcating physical space however temporal, expanded the territory in which space could be considered real, with the setting of the exhibition allowing for more unusual behaviour; a kind of careful flaneuring is encouraged where wandering and retracing steps can occur, not normative to the private dwelling or architecture of scale. According to Ruedi Baur exhibitions are thus 'a stage backed by another stage, which is real life' where the real and the virtual become blurred and the act of occupation able to render everyday life visible through its repetition of ritual and habits.<sup>98</sup> As such *Solar Pavilion*, devoid of the

<sup>90</sup> Smithson, A. & Smithson, P., 'Italian Thoughts', Alison and Peter Smithson, 1993

<sup>91</sup> Historic England, 'Upper Lawn Cottage (*Solar Pavilion*), with Associated Garden Walls and Raised Patio', Listing Summary, Historic England, first accessed 25th July 2017, https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1396457

<sup>92</sup> Sergison Bates Architects http://sergisonbates.com/en/projects/holiday-housetisbury

<sup>93</sup> Smithson P. as quoted in Smithson, A. & Smithson, P., 'The Charged Void: Architecture', Monacelli Press, 2002, p475

<sup>94</sup> Smithson, A. & Smithson, P., 'The Charged Void', 2002

<sup>95</sup> Smithson, P. as quoted in eds. Spellman, C. & Unglaub, K., 'Peter Smithson: Conversations with Students', Princeton Architectural Press, 2005, p77
96 von Fischer, S., 'The Sound of the Future', Canadian Centre for Architecture Website, first accessed 1<sup>st</sup> August 2017, http://www.cca.qc.ca/en/issues/2/what-the-future-looked-like/32734/1956-house-of-the-future
97 Smithson, P., as quoted in Colomina, B. interview with Displayer, '*This Is Tomorrow*', pp13-19, http://adkp.ruhe.ru/sites/default/files/0102.pdf
98 Baur, R. as quoted in den Oudsten, F., 'Space.Time.Narrative: The Exhibition as Post-Spectacular Stage', Routledge, 2016, p225

exhibition context that defined *House of the Future*, is situated within the confines of the Smithsons' own lived experience. In thinking of the couple's very first exhibition Parallel of Life and Art, where the last chapter began, a progression can be traced through this set of small works to reveal the couple's ambition to create a real life simulation of Art and (their) Life, where the process of designing and building, as seen in House of the Future and Solar Pavilion, becomes for them simply a way of being; a continual performance played out in the liminal space between the theoretical and the real.

'Thus the As Found was a new seeing of the ordinary, an openness as to how prosaic 'things' could re-energise our inventive activity.' 99

Open to the Ordinary The As Found has come to be identified as the method that unites the Smithsons' early exhibition work with their architecture. It relates directly to their concern for careful observation and collection, with a process of selecting and collage giving their ideas material form. Alison and Peter Smithson described the As Found as both a methodology and an aesthetic, which they stated they 'named in the 1950s.' 100 Yet they appear to only have articulated it as late as 1990 in a piece written at the request of David Robbins who put together a retrospective of The Independent Group at the ICA. Defining the As Found, they stated:

'The 'as found' where the art is in the picking up, turning over and putting with...and the 'found' where the art is in the process and the watchful eye...' 101

As the most quoted document on the As Found this description has become canonical in defining the method. Therefore while historians have followed the Smithsons in retroactively attributing the idea of the As Found to their work (even to Hunstanton Secondary School, a commission won in 1950), the architects themselves describe the As Found as something the felt they discovered during the 1950s, indicating a process of its discovery as a method rather than something that was objectively applied.

The text relates the As Found to four categories of work: Architecture, Exhibitions, Sculpture and Polemic.<sup>102</sup> However what is disorienting about these categories and how they are

99 tectural Cultures in Britain', Routledge, 2007, p86 100 101 102

## THE AS FOUND

Alison and Peter Smithson as quoted in Higgott, A., 'Mediating Modernism: Archi-

Smithson, A., 'The As Found and the Found' in eds. Robbins, D. in 'The Independent Group: Postwar Britain and the Aesthetics of Plenty', MIT Press, 1990, p201

Smithson, A., 'The As Found and the Found' in eds. Robbins, D. in 'The Independent Group: Postwar Britain and the Aesthetics of Plenty', MIT Press, 1990, p201

Smithson, A., 'The As Found and the Found' in eds. Robbins, D. in 'The Independent Group: Postwar Britain and the Aesthetics of Plenty', MIT Press, 1990, p201

While Banham's assessment of the Brutalists translated this into a question of ethics. revealed in the supposed honesty of materials and structure, for Peter Smithson this logic extended to provenance and craftsmanship as equally significant attributes.<sup>107</sup> For the Smithsons, the notion of design, meaning a process that would lead to an aesthetic bound by an object, was concerning, with Alison Smithson even stating that design was for them 'a dirty word.' <sup>108</sup> Instead the As Found embodied a particular relationship to material, with design constituted by the manipulation and application of raw materiality; the process of translation of an idea into physical form:

'We were concerned with the seeing of materials for what they were: the woodiness of wood, the sandiness of sand. With this came a distaste of the stimulated, such as the new plastics of the period – printed, coloured to imitate a previous product in 'natural' materials. Dislike for certain mixes, particularly with technology such as the walnut dashboard in a car.' 109

Coupled with their statement on the As Found as a process, the method has a dual dimension of being both a sensibility towards materiality and a method of its compilation. Claude Lichtenstein who has put together the only distinct volume on the method combines these attributes, naming the As Found an 'approach'. He describes the As Found as a form of navigation:

'a way of thinking about and proceeding in the fine arts, architecture, and the 'performing arts' of cinema and theatre [sic].' 110

Lichtenstein therefore implicates the role of the individual and their bodily experience in the process of design within a multiplicity of disciplines. Framed in this way the designer

107 Aesthetic?', The Architectural Press, 1966 108 Plenty', MIT Press, 1990, p201 109 Aesthetics of Plenty', MIT Press, 1990, p202 110 Publishers, 2001, p8

described is that they pertain little to the labels which they are given; indeed reference to the subjects themselves are almost entirely absent, with the descriptions consisting of rambling text on process, which is almost entirely limited to the Smithsons' two works Parallel of Life and Art and Patio and Pavilion. The lack of substantive explanation for their categories, coupled with the opportunism displayed in defining them, indicates the couple's use of the occasion to reaffirm their position in relation to architectural history. In setting out the same formal innovation of their Modernist forebears, replicating those such as Le Corbusier who refined his thesis on Modern architecture by dictating a number of categories with which to affirm a new 'language', outlined in his 1923 tome Towards a New Architecture,103 the Smithsons' act of naming their method attempts to bestow on their work a recognisable language. Incorporation of their own language despite its evident deficiency provides a set of criteria against which their architecture can be identified and assessed, but also is a means to position themselves as official inheritors of the historiographical narrative. The couple simultaneously solicit erasure of the past by replacing the canon's main ideas, while perpetuating the motifs of the Modernism that precluded them.

This reading however tells us a lot about the Smithsons' ongoing concern for their own positioning within the narrative of modern architecture, but little about the As Found as a design method. Using descriptions of arrangement, collage, randomness, collaboration and play, the As Found was centred on what the couple describe as an archaeological approach inspired by Henderson's photography, which depicted the 'actuality around his house.' 104 The method thus sought to connect the old with the new, lending site specificity to their thinking centred on 'remembrancers in a place', which the Smithsons outlined had its own aesthetic qualities.<sup>105</sup> For Peter Smithson this concerned an adherence to authenticity, explaining:

*...it's like the fake mirrors they have in pubs that are made in Hong Kong or somewhere;* advertisements for Guinness from 1910. They have no meaning anymore. If you'd found one in a garage, an original, you'd think how lovely; it would move you. But if you'd just manufactured it, it loses all meaning.' 106

Banham's 1966 book 'The New Brutalism: Ethic or Aesthetic' has been widely quoted from and circulated in retellings of Brutalism's architectural history. As such this thesis does not expand on the meaning behind Banham's critique, rather I use it to demonstrate in contrast how the As Found evidences the Smithsons' understanding of process as both an 'ethic' and an 'aesthetic'. Banham, PR., 'The New Brutalism: Ethic or

Reference some theory or definition of design. Smithson, A., 'The As Found and the Found' in eds. Robbins, D. in 'The Independent Group: Postwar Britain and the Aesthetics of

Smithson, A. & Smithson, P. in eds. Robbins, D., 'The Independent Group: Forerunners of Postmodernism?', 'The Independent Group: Postwar Britain and the

Litchenstein, C., 'The As Found: The Discovery of the Ordinary', Lars Müller

Corbusier, L., 'Towards a New Architecture', Dover Publications, 1985, first 103 published, 1923

See Chapter 7 of this thesis for a more detailed description. Smithson, A., 'The As 104 Found and the Found' in eds. Robbins, D. in 'The Independent Group: Postwar Britain and the Aesthetics of Plenty', MIT Press, 1990, p201

Smithson, A., 'The As Found and the Found' in eds. Robbins, D. in 'The Independent 105 Group: Postwar Britain and the Aesthetics of Plenty', MIT Press, 1990, p201

Smithson, P. as quoted in Rattenbury, K., 'This is Not Architecture: Media 106 Constructions', Routledge, 2005, p94

revealed in the circumstantial:

'Accident' intentionally as a 'prompter in the wings of unconscious...what we call the SELECTIVE ACCIDENT...must function like the objet trouvé – a chance set of 'found' phenomena bringing about an order which you might ideally [have] wished/invented to create from scratch.' 115

The installation is thus 'unreal' in that it manifests a quality that is the product of chance, which creates its essential identity as a work in negating the dominance of any one member of the group. For Yeoryia Manolopoulou chance can be formed by intuition, subjectivity and imagination but also be iterative, based on structured and methodological processes that invite variation rather than anticipate it, meaning that it is a quality of a process that negotiates between the real and the unreal.<sup>116</sup>

According to this register, chance characterises the link between thought and action, the technique of juxtaposition perhaps being the most obvious and in many ways simple example of how chance was proactively employed in the making of both exhibitions. Distinguishing between the two, for the couple Patio and Pavilion represents a significant shift in thinking towards materiality. The project was concerned principally with the idea of place and the relationship between the 'sense' of that place and its physical boundaries. Peter Smithson's description of Patio and Pavilion as providing the essentials for human inhabitation echo Christian Norberg-Schulz's description of the 'archetypal act of building' emphasising the importance of basic architectural elements like wall, floor, or ceiling, which the human inhabitant experiences as 'horizon, boundary, and frame for nature'. This translation of materiality into a series of thresholds reciprocates Martin Heidegger's fourfold and his eloquent phrasing of it as the 'location of human existence as between the sky and the earth.' 117

In this sense the Smithsons situate themselves at once inside and outside the modern, with

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abdicates their role, where design is no longer considered a decision-making process but an experiential one; the quality of which is described in unusual terms such as 'self-confidence'. Moreover, Lichtenstein goes onto observe that 'the As Found is not an object that can be touched; it is a metaphor...it is above all the property of a thing, not the thing itself' thus constituting its 'phenomena.' <sup>111</sup> While Lichtenstein's assessment may be over reaching somewhat in its elaboration, he nonetheless attempts to encapsulate the method's more intangible values such as character and space. The As Found can thus be understood as the Smithsons' attempt to describe a process that makes visible such genius loci.<sup>112</sup>

### Another Attitude

The liminality between pretence and reality are central to understanding As Found as both an immaterial process and material form; echoed in a concern for their dual foci in the production of the unconscious as conscious. Given the emphasis on language as outlined in the previous section, further analysis of the Smithsons' use of language when describing their method in relation to these two projects is valuable as it reveals the intersection of the As Found, understood in the first instance as physical action (of picking up and turning over, the making of collage) with the more subjective and imaginary process of manifesting the imaginaries of the four artists involved.

Parallel of Life and Art was characterised by a period of collecting and collaging between the Smithsons, Henderson and Paolozzi, with its *As Found* quality signified in its construction; a process devised as a way of fusing a selection of imagery contributed by four different members, uniting their subconscious individual and collective experience by way of circumstance and randomness. With the intention to 'invent the new', van den Heuvel proposes this as a principle of ordering, an image system that encompasses both the content but also the 'structure of the discourse itself',<sup>113</sup> going on to state it is the 'outcome of a process and the staging of one' (van den Heuvel's emphasis).<sup>114</sup> The performative attributes of Parallel of Life and Art thus render the implicit reasoning of its makers visible to an external audience. Nigel Henderson uses the word chance to describe the act of giving aesthetic identity to unconscious acts, with the space between the conscious and unconscious

<sup>111</sup> Litchenstein, C., 'The As Found: The Discovery of the Ordinary', Lars Müller Publishers, 2001, p8

This places the As Found in dialogue with the concept of Roman genius loci, Gestalt 112 and the 'spiritual' of a place, concepts furthered by Heidegger in his essay 'Building Dwelling Thinking' and later in the work of the Norwegian theorist Christian Norberg-Schulz. Norberg-Schulz, C., 'The Phenomenon of Place' chapter in eds. Cuthbert, AR., 'Designing Cities: Critical Readings In Urban Design'. Wiley-Blackwell, 2003, p116

van den Heuvel, D., 'Alison and Peter Smithson: A Brutalist Story', unpublished 113 PhD Thesis, Technical University of Delft, 2013, p182

van den Heuvel, D., 'Alison and Peter Smithson: A Brutalist Story', unpublished 114 PhD Thesis, Technical University of Delft, 2013, p180

Henderson, N. as quoted in van den Heuvel, D., 'Alison and Peter Smithson: A Brutalist Story', unpublished PhD Thesis, Technical University of Delft, 2013, p186 Manolopoulou, Y., 'Architectures of Chance', Routledge, 2017, pxxiii Heidigger, M., 'Building Dwelling Thinking', chapter in, eds. Hofstader, A., 'Poetry, Language, Thought', Harper Colophon Books, New York, 1971

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the metaphysical intention of *Patio and Pavilion* a comment on the aberration of modernity. The project occupies an interstitial space being both ingrained in the practices of modernity, engaged by its associated fragmentation and homelessness, while equally advocating for the 'necessities of human habitat...for an enclosed space' that is in fact located and materially identifiable.<sup>118</sup> As a method, the As Found symbolises the nomadic state of modernity in gathering together artefacts of fragmentation and loss, yet offers celebration in their reassembly, which Alison Smithson describes as the very 'art of the As Found.' 119

## Quality Without a Name

Amongst historians that have tried to name the unconscious as part of a design process in architecture, Christopher Alexander successfully manages in his book The Timeless way of Building to offer a succinct summary of the phenomenological while refuting his own ability to do so, stating it is both a 'substance' and a 'quality without a name':

"...a central quality which is the root criterion of life and spirit in a man, a room, a building, or a wilderness. This quality is objective and precise, but it cannot be named.' 120

For Alexander it is the processes of pattern making which emerge over time that are central to the making of phenomenological qualities in architecture, establishing 'pattern languages, which people use.' <sup>121</sup> In other words the repetition of language creates new traditions, which in turn establish authentic customs giving character and meaning to the architecture they create. He asserted that the main issue with contemporary design was the fact that these languages had broken down, yet equally he defends the difficulty in communicating these languages acknowledging that, 'most of the difficulties of design are not the computable sort.' 122 Alexander thus defends the privileged role of the designer and their position by stating that architects are often unable to dully articulate what they do:

'Our ability to recognise qualities of a spatial configuration does not depend on our being able to give a symbolic description of the rules on the basis of which we recognise them.' 123

119 Smithson, A. & Smithson, P., 'The 'As Found' and the 'Found', ed. Robbins, D. in 'The Independent Group: Postwar Britain and the Aesthetics of Plenty', MIT Press, 1990, p201 Alexander, C., 'The Timeless way of Building', Oxford University Press, 1979, pix 120

121 Alexander, C., 'The Timeless way of Building', Oxford University Press, 1979, pix

Alexander, C., 'The Timeless way of Building', Oxford University Press, 1979, p36 122

123 Visser, W., 'Schön: Design as a Reflective Practice', HAL. 29 June 2011, p5, first

What Alexander is stating is that if designers are able to make qualitative judgements, they are not necessarily able to make explicit the criteria on which they base them. Such rhetoric lies beyond the familiar language of architecture, echoed in the Smithsons' statement that for them the object was not 'prefigured but looked for as a phenomenon within the process.' 124 Their refusal to adequately explain or prettify their method to fulfil simple binaries of linear design processes is thus resonant with Alexander's assessment. Nigel Cross have termed such phenomena a 'creative leap' which they believe is discovered as part of a process of exploration, whereby material solutions evolve through reflective practice.<sup>125</sup> Coined by Donald Schön, Reflective Practice has been one of the defining theories of twentieth century design theory and is described as 'learning through and from experience towards new insights of self and or practice.' 126

Conversely a particularly conservative view rooted in postwar notions of progress championed Herbert Simon's Logic of Design, which was predicated on the idea that scientific methods can assist in problems concerning social research.<sup>127</sup> Simon's 'scientific' design process appealed to the contemporary belief in academic rigour combining emerging social interests and increasingly powerful computer technology.<sup>128</sup> Although the Smithsons state that they invented the As Found in the 1950s, it is evident in their description of their later works that the As Found in fact evolved through a reflective process, which Peter Smithson himself relates in *The Slow Growth of Another Sensibility*:

'it is reflection - thought, re-thought, lessons relearned, experiences, re-experienced and action taken in the light of reflection – that plays a paramount part in the growth of sensibility.' 129

124 Britain and the Aesthetics of Plenty', MIT Press, 1990 125 Design Issues, Vol. 17, No. 3, pp49-55, 2001, p38 126 PBPL paper 52, January 2008, p1 127 vol 31, number 2, Spring 2015, p29 128 129

This Is Tomorrow Exhibition Catalogue, Lund Humphries, 1956 118

accessed 28th July 2015, https://hal.archives-ouvertes.fr/inria-00604634/document The Smithsons as quoted in eds. Robbins, D., 'The Independent Group: Postwar

Cross., 'Designerly Ways of Knowing: Design Discipline versus Design Science',

Finlay points to the work of Boud et al (1985), Boyd and Fales (1983), Mezirow (1981) and Jarvis (1992). Finlay, L., 'Reflecting on 'Reflective Practice", The Open University,

Huppatz, D.J., 'Revisiting Herbert Simon's "Science of Design", MIT, DesignIssues,

This was manifest in architectural terms through Claude Perrault's view that

architectural design should serve modern science, declaring that 'man has no proportion or relation with the heavenly bodies'. Perrault, C. as quoted in ed. Caicco, G., 'Architecture,

Ethics, and the Personhood of Place', University Press of New England, 2007, p6

Smithson, P. in 'The Slow Growth of Another Sensibility', 1965, as quoted in Boyer, CM., 'Not Quite Architecture: Writing Around Alison and Peter Smithson', MIT Press, 2017

Therefore the Smithsons' As Found approach contrasted with northern European discourse that until the prewar period had developed to favour Simon's positivist view of system led design. Engaging with this paradigm, the As Found can be considered an attempt to mobilise the socio-cultural, to change 'architectural thinking' and the 'values of society' as Alison Smithson remarked:

'We were interested in how things could be with technology touching everything and everyone. We foresaw a general reappraisal of values would occur, since as we 'read' through the aspiration-images on offer in the magazines, the approach of the acquisitive society.' 130

However the As Found not only outlined a process for design, it also prioritised within it the role of the architect whose individuality is able to change the parameters of the process valuing 'immaterial labour' and quality of professional knowledge.<sup>151</sup> The solution for the Smithsons in particular was the radical refusal of style. Each building would try and look like it emerged out of a specific engagement with the site; as Peter Smithson put it, 'there is no sidestepping the fundamental shift towards specificity'. Reyner Banham perceived it as the reason for their lack of success:

'Their stylistic development has been marked by complete and spectacular discontinuity. Such a result is inherent in their determination to approach every design from first principles and without formalistic preconceptions.' <sup>132</sup>

The inchoate material aesthetic however was itself their style; despite the work looking different, their process had not changed, characterised by the repetition of what Peter Smithson stated was 'a response to circumstance.' 133 The lack of identity in the work is a refusal against complicity with predetermined direction, intended not for innovation or specificity but also for a more subtle and complex interpretation of the world.

'The Smithsons have contributed the most initially to the theoretical formulation of Brutalism...they are virtually Mr. and Mrs. Brutalism.' 134

The performative quality of the Smithsons' work was not only an essential criterion of their architecture, but also significant to the way they operated as architects, echoed in their choreography of friendship as discussed in Chapter 7. The exhibition format was for the couple more than primarily the locus for the display of art, but a way to showcase 'the new before the new', its temporality countered by its ability to have a long term effect on the audience through memory.<sup>155</sup> Exhibitions, and indeed stage sets, are designed to tell stories; they are mediums in which one would expect to experience a displacement of time and place, making them more permissible environments in which to introduce themes considered incongruous to the reality of the present condition. As such this chapter presented the Smithsons' involvement with exhibition design as a means to investigate the reciprocity between the values of the physical and the immaterial in their work.

For theorists including Christian Norberg-Schulz, such attributes give a place its sense of meaning; his utopian thinking on the production of modernity in these terms navigating the tension between the concrete and 'that which gives it significance.' 156 This position was defended by both Norberg-Schulz and Christopher Alexander who were subsequently criticised by Hilde Heynen for their nostalgia, mysticism, and thus encouragement of a humanist agenda that rejects the meta-narrative of progress. Accordingly she scorns them for presenting 'rootedness and authenticity' as superior to mobility, privileging the eulogy and material reality of place as lacking a commitment to the transiency of the modern.<sup>137</sup> The temporality of the Smithsons' early architecture then sits in contrast with their interest in phenomenology as projects of modernity; they are at once mobile yet also celebrate the

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## CONCLUSIONS

Smithson, A. & Smithson, P. in eds. Robbins, D., 'The Independent Group: 130 Forerunners of Postmodernism?', 'The Independent Group: Postwar Britain and the Aesthetics of Plenty', MIT Press, p202

<sup>131</sup> Deamer, P., 'The Architect as Worker: Immaterial Labour, the Creative Class and the Politics of Design', Bloomsbury, 2015, p61

Highmore, B., 'Rough Poetry: Patio and Pavilion Revisited', Oxford Art Journal 29.2, 132 Oxford University Press, 2006, p7

<sup>133</sup> Smithson, P. as quoted in Rattenbury, K., 'This is Not Architecture: Media Constructions', Routledge, 2005, p94

<sup>134</sup> 135 pp13-19, p18, http://adkp.ruhe.ru/sites/default/files/0102.pdf 136 137 Press, Second Edition, 1999, p22

Killian, T., 'Brutalism an Outsider's View', Typed Document, Undated, Folder J019, University of Harvard Archive, Cambridge, MA, first accessed 31st October 2016 Smithson, P., as quoted in Colomina, B. interview with Displayer, 'This Is Tomorrow',

Heynan, H., 'Architecture and Modernity', MIT Press, Second Edition, 1999, p18 Heynen pushes her critique even further noting Norberg-Schulz and Alexander's vocabulary as resonant with Nazi ideology. Heynen, H., 'Architecture and Modernity', MIT

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qualities of shelter and thus permanence.

*Patio and Pavilion* provides an intriguing intersection of the 'real' and 'unreal'. It is real in that it is material, has a form and that each object holds aesthetic importance. Mark Fisher states the importance of the tangibility of the 'real' made visible through its own 'performance' is a leitmotif in the process of legitimisation and authentication<sup>158</sup> For Peter Smithson it is in the material manifestation of an immaterial process that gives *Patio and Pavilion* its essential quality:

Patio and Pavilion nothing came from us. The framework was established, and we went to Dubrovnik while it was being made. There was absolutely no influence on the content. And therefore the relationship between the framework and the occupation itself was absolutely pure – by chance.' <sup>139</sup>

The Smithsons were concerned with influencing the way people acted in space, creating a shared conscious experience. An analysis of *Patio and Pavilion* showed how different scenes were created using a collage of materials, juxtaposed to form a series of thresholds in which the visitor would gain awareness of their own participation in the exhibit. In emphasising human presence within the space demarcated by *Patio and Pavilion*, the installation mediates between both physical and mental states, prioritising internal private processes and experiences, which Julia Tanney states are not 'locatable.' <sup>140</sup> Refuting the Cartesian separation of body and mind, Tanney notes that bodily process are external and therefore can be witnessed by observers, but mental processes are private and 'internal', the space they occupy not so easy to define. Reudi Baur's analysis of exhibition design provides some insight into the dynamic of this strategy in tectonic terms, stating that exhibitions allow works to become about interaction in a way that architecture alone often isn't or struggles with.<sup>141</sup> In this sense the work of the actor (the inhabitant), is impossible without the scenery supporting the dramatic action (the house), engendering a shift from the *representative* to the *performative*.

#### A HOUSE NOT A HOME

Likewise in *House of the Future*, the entire structure *performs*. Its material form was described as something that can be used to describe shape but also the 'act of creating these attributes', which *House of the Future* and *Patio and Pavilion* do in different ways; both concerned with 'form as action.' <sup>142</sup> Keller Easterling suggest such performance as a form of 'operation ', a term she uses to describe the hylomorphic relationship between objects, which she states 'possess agency' through the notion of their 'disposition'.

*House of the Future* relies on being operated; it requires people to act within it. Residents of the house have dispositional knowledge of how to operate it, or what philosopher Gilbert Ryle would call 'Knowing How', with the contemporary analogy befitting a machine rather than a conventional home. The inactivated house has a potential that is not yet in evidence; Ryle calls this 'a ghostly happening, but because it is not happening at all.' <sup>145</sup> In the same way that *Parallel of Life and Art* became itself a 'fifth' collaborator, the *House of the Future* holds its own knowledge, a complicit protagonist in the collective act of living; the exhibition part illusion, part reality. The Smithsons' display in the set of projects discussed in this chapter, extending even to their own home, demonstrates an ingenuity with materials, as well as an understanding of the place of drama and a sense of place in the architectural experience. Yet they play with misunderstanding, duality and incongruity to expose their structures for what they really are; often temporary illusions that reveal the uncertainty of the modern paradigm.

Easterling, K., 'Dispositions', p253, first accessed 29th 2018, http://xenopraxis.net/ readings/easterling\_disposition.pdf
Ryle, G. as quoted in Easterling, K., 'Dispositions', p252, first accessed 29th 2018, http://xenopraxis.net/readings/easterling\_disposition.pdf

<sup>138</sup> Fisher, M., 'Capitalist Realism', Zero Books, 2009, p10

<sup>139</sup> Smithson, P. as quoted in Rattenbury, K., 'This is Not Architecture: Media Constructions', Routledge, 2005, p94

<sup>140</sup> Tanney, J., 'Rethinking Ryle: A Critical Discussion of The Concept of Mind', pvx, first accessed 29th August 2018, http://www.unige.ch/lettres/baumgartner/docs/ryle/ protect/tanney.pdf

<sup>141</sup> den Oudsten, F., 'Space. Time. Narrative: The Exhibition as Post-Spectacular Stage', Routledge, 2016

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## CULTURES OF RESISTANCE

Representation means using language to say something meaningful about, or to represent the world meaningfully, to other people.'1

This thesis relied on a wide range of archival material pertaining to the biographies of Lina Bo Bardi and Alison and Peter Smithson, to claim an additional layer of complexity in the reading of their practices as alternative. The intention was to contribute a different understanding of alterity as a defining feature of their work, given its dominance in the current literature, challenging the existing historiographies of both. A gap in the literature exists because of the bias towards the notion of alterity as dealing only with the object based projects they both designed, distinct from their construction of buildings. Instead the thesis focused on the context in which their work was produced, in order to investigate alterity in their design processes, not just in the finished outcome. This approach focused specifically on Bo Bardi and the Smithsons' connections to dominant sites of cultural power, shifting the notion of their widely historicised individual ingenuity towards recognition of collectivity in their processes. The research therefore demonstrates the extent to which Bo Bardi and the Smithsons relied on broader networks to facilitate their methods, with relationships between people, groups and organisations shown to be significant in understanding alterity as more than a simple reading of the work they made as 'other'. Alternative practice is then identified in their conversations, collaborations, confrontations, dissensus and attitude as much as it is defined by material objects such as exhibition, magazine and theatre design for which their alternative approach as architects is already well documented and known.

It is shown that Bo Bardi and the Smithsons' alterity is visible across a number of scales and in a range of methods, which are collectively explained as forming a wider strategy for resistance against both embedded and emerging types of cultural hegemony. On the one hand these architects acknowledged their own difference, capitalising on their alterity to gain cultural and social capital, while conversely they sought to integrate themselves within the global historical canon as it emerged during their careers. The duality of such ambition makes their methods appear on occasion wilfully counter productive and at times

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contradictory; they marginalised themselves amongst their peers through acts of dissent while concurrently making claims on institutional spaces they treated with derision. In order to conclude, the following chapter discusses the significance of what may seem from the outset confusing elements in their historiographies, so as to create a composite reading of their practices as complex, contingent and throughout their careers always in flux.

Gathering together a number of conclusions drawn from across the thesis, what follows is a presentation of both their practices as an amalgamation of strategies, which it is argued required as much *design* as the material projects they produced as architects.

9.1

## STRAYING FROM THE CENTRE

'What happens to the hole when the cheese has gone?'<sup>2</sup>

## Alternative Historiographies

The chapters worked to situate the early careers of Bo Bardi and the Smithsons within the context of local political, economic and social conditions in Brazil and the UK respectively, as a means to identify and categorise the relationships that governed their practices. Founded in the same year, MASP and the ICA played pivotal roles in the formation of both architects' design thinking, during a period marked globally by the search for new social paradigms. Despite Bo Bardi and the Smithsons' candidacy as inheritors of the existing cultural establishment due to the terms in which they have both been historicised as arbiters of the neo-avant-garde, the research aimed principally to destabilise the notion of a singular generational group who opposed the practices of their forebears. Rather, it is shown that the alterity of their work was imbricated within a culture of alternative institutional governance, emergent during a moment of socio-political change. Given that the wider context was also characterised by a search for alterity from what had come before, rather than embrace the ICA and MASP as allies in the construction of their alternative identities, Bo Bardi and the Smithsons recognised both institutions as in fact replicating the stringent forms of control that defined the reproduction of party politics elsewhere. It is shown however that Bo Bardi and the Smithsons both worked with and against these new institutions, with the scalar nature of their methods demonstrating their willingness to align themselves with formally organised sites of power as much as they resisted them to codify their own cultural systems.

The social and political fields of Brazil and the UK were introduced in Chapters 3 and 6 respectively in order to theorise the nature of such insidious forms of power that were at play. In doing so the chapters describe the types of hegemony negotiated by the political and cultural ruling class in both countries, to reveal the contested landscape over which they fought for ideological control. In Bo Bardi's case, Chapter 3 questioned the current

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dominance of the state in the literature, which tends to describe the linearity of Modernism's evolution in Brazil, revealing instead the counter influence of a parallel economic and cultural system pioneered in São Paulo. Framed by the patronage of Assis Chateaubriand's telecoms empire, Bo Bardi's work it was argued, was freed from the narrative that ties Brazilian architecture to national forms of expression, with industrial methods of production the basis for an alternative ideological infrastructure to that of Vargas's *Estado Novo* and later Juscelino Kubitschek's progressive politics.<sup>3</sup> This is not to state that Bo Bardi's work existed entirely independent of the state's agenda, but draws greater attention to the importance of alternative sites of economic and political power to give greater weight to commerce and industrial methods of production in shaping her ideas. In acknowledging Bo Bardi's access to alternative forms of social and cultural capital, the thesis emphasised how her agency in working between different identities as a political *outsider*, a *woman* and a *foreigner* underscored her alternative methods of practice.

The Smithsons' on the other hand courted the mythology of their lone ingenuity, propagated by those such as their friend and critic Reyner Banham who wrote frequently of their originality within their generation. While the IG is often presented as a footnote in their early career, this thesis has instead centred on their reliance on institutions including the ICA as a significant actor in shaping the couple's design thinking. It was argued that the Smithsons' relationship to key individuals through the institution was central to the formulation of their design practice, rather than their alterity the result of a concerted effort by the couple solely to assert difference from their peers. Chapter 6 drew attention to competing images of modernity in postwar Britain, and the figures associated with their contestation. An analysis of the conditions which led to the foundation of *Team X* and the IG illustrated how the Smithsons associated with both groups as a form of self-positioning within movements that they believed would become of historical significance in the postwar period.

In situating Bo Bardi and the Smithsons' practices within the dominant political, social and economic structures in which they were produced, the thesis challenges the dichotomy

<sup>2</sup> Berthold Brecht's quote refers to what has been characterised as the postmodern view of power, which states that cultural resistance will fail if a movement's very existence is tied to the existence of its dominator. Brecht, B. cited in Kershaw, B., 'The Radical in Performance: Between Brecht and Baudrillard', Routledge, 1999, p1

<sup>3</sup> President Juscelino Kubitschek was the President of Brazil between 1956 and 1961. As Mayor of Belo Horizonte in Minas Gerais he commissioned many of Oscar Neimeyer's early works and indeed the Modernist city of Brasilia which formed part of his programme of progressive developmentalism characterized by the slogan 'Fifty years progress in five'. This research does not investigate the impact of his Presidency on the changing cultural sphere in Brazil during this time nor on Bo Bardi's practice which would make for an interesting continual analysis of her work in relation to the changing politics of the state.

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redeploying recognised images disruptively or reframing existing discourses.<sup>5</sup>Raby's proposition then allows a more complex way in which subordinate groups can be considered resistant, conceptualising resistance as the implementation of a number of moves, requiring new tools in order to identify sometimes opposing characteristics.

In shifting the retelling of Bo Bardi and the Smithsons' histories away from outwardly expressive acts of design which claim individuality, un-heroic and incremental forms of practice are made visible which in turn allows them to be recognised as constitutive of resistance. The thesis therefore positioned the tangential, non-material and thus fluid activities of Bo Bardi and the Smithsons as forms of resistance within the cultural sphere, focusing on their subtlety as a reason for why such actions have been overlooked or have not held more prominence in appraisals of their work. Subtlety as a resistive strategy is understood here as productive as it offers a means to construct narratives of alterity that not only blur the boundaries between dominant locations of power, whom often get to construct official historiographies, but also suggest that marginal groups have agency in producing their own centres. In addition, subtlety empowers groups to make claims on existing centres from which they are denied due to its quiet nature and ability to subvert rather than confront. This is significant not least in relation to the transcultural framework in which this thesis is situated, where globally the parameters that govern professional practice are inherently hermetic, protecting the dominance of white, male and usually western centred space.

Chapter 4 discussed how Bo Bardi's association with MASP legitimised her status amongst the São Paulo elite, yet conversely demonstrated her use of a pedagogic agenda to occupy the museum as a way of undermining its institutional authority. In print, as was discussed in Chapter 5, Bo Bardi rallied against the fashions and tastes of the very group amongst whom her acceptance in São Paulo relied, resisting the interests of western cultural modernity in favour of elevating work from more marginal geographies. As an analysis of *Habitat Magazine* showed, it was Bo Bardi's ability to subtly ingratiate her opinions through multiple authorial voices, which enabled her ideology to become *inserted* rather than *imposed* upon the audience she wished to co-opt. The Smithsons similarly worked with tactics of coercion rather than through overt signs of resistance, operating with relative impunity within the IG, never risking formal expulsion from the group. The couple attended meetings, held roles  $\overline{5}$  Raby, R., 'What is Resistance?', Journal of Youth Studies, Vol. 8, No. 2, June 2005,

5 Raby, R., 'What is R pp151-171, p154

of power in their historiographies as a simple binary between dominance and submission. The research instead demonstrates the interstitial complexity of power at play as a function of the reciprocal process between exertion and resistance in their work.<sup>4</sup> In refuting their alterity as evidence of their marginality, this focus uncovers the subtle strategies in the way that Bo Bardi and the Smithsons operated, showing how adept they were at being able to move between roles of both dominance and submission. This mobility was principally due to factors of wealth, class and education, which inherently lent them status and thus power. Bo Bardi for example held authority within the educated intellectual and artistic elite of São Paulo, which is reflected in her ability to engage financial capital through Chateaubriand and equally access with ease international museological discourse at ICOM. While Alison and Peter Smithson although both from working class backgrounds received professional university level training and were able to live off their substantial earnings from *Hunstanton Secondary School*, dedicating their time to participating in international cultural discourse, taking on private work out of choice rather than necessity.

## Subtle Subversion

The reframing of Bo Bardi and the Smithsons' historiographies is important because the significance of these architects' politics and role in the production of alternative ones tends to be projected onto them by the contemporary literature from a position that desires alterity as a model for resistance against forms of twenty first century economic capital. Instead of outward displays of intransigence that devolve power, the thesis showed that in relation to both MASP and the ICA, Bo Bardi and the Smithsons sought in fact to create new centres for it. In highlighting the different registers across which such displays of opposition manifest, the thesis showed that the alterity in both their approaches could therefore be characterised by more complex strategies involving both compliance and defiance. At MASP the museum's institutional directive was intended as a form of resistance imbricated within, while for the Smithsons the ICA, despite its own claims on alterity, functioned as just another form of cultural dominance for the couple to resist. This research then assists in evolving theories on resistance, which currently struggle with contradictions embedded in attempts to reconcile issues related to subjects' intentionality, complicity and agency. Aligned with Rebecca Raby's evocation of discourse as fundamental to understanding resistance as a strategy rather than a relationship between binary oppositions, the research pays attention to more subtle forms of resistance such as negotiating established labels,

reality.

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on its committee and made friends with its members, even replicating exhibition techniques popularised by their peers. To all extent and purposes the Smithsons were contributing members to the group's ideology. However Chapter 7 worked to show how the couple in fact antagonised both the IG and ICA in their staging of Parallel of Life and Art, the exhibition introducing themes and forms of display intended to destabilise the role of institutional authority, while making claims on its physical space. In being both proximate to the IG but vet outwardly stating their difference from the group's other members, the Smithsons relied on the institution to recognise their subversion without causing any real alarm.

## The Centre Produces its Other

The ability to undermine the cultural inside paradoxically relies on its fixity, which is constituted by the reiterative articulation of its power; achieved through a process that gives definition to its boundaries but that also produces its 'other'. As such the literature on alternative practice tends to manufacture the purity of a mythical 'outside' which was discussed in Chapter 1 as a dangerous fiction that further marginalises its subjects; characterised by how such language fixes actors in positions of subjugation, restricted rather than emancipated by their own alterity.<sup>6</sup> The 'other' as a construction absorbed within professional practice removes the ability of its subjects to change, transcend their status or indeed make claims on spaces from which they are denied. A label that is given rather than fought for by more marginal groups, this research demonstrates that resistance is not always conceived with the intention to achieve complete change in governing structures, but a conditional tool employed to fight for heterogeneity and greater representation within the existing cultural sphere.

The research was careful to acknowledge the importance in understanding the social alliances making up the two binary positions occupied by Bo Bardi and the Smithsons, noting their dexterity in speaking to both, through their self-articulation within each.<sup>7</sup> For example Pietro Maria Bardi's articles published in local newspapers in São Paulo demonstrate the couple's assertion of the need to be seen as public intellectuals, with connections to Europe, while also pioneers of the New World. Whereas the Smithsons

In Brazil, institutional identity allowed the Bardis access to recognised systems of power defined by existing social relations and cultural processes. In making claims on museological discourses shared globally, MASP commanded institutional authority, seeking to replace the hegemony of the cultural centre in Brazil rather than destroying it.<sup>8</sup> Bo Bardi not only designed the spaces that the museum occupied but orchestrated the programme, with its focus on education a means to describe the values of a popular culture, alternative but with ambitions to claim equality within dominant museological cultures. Additionally the museum's refusal of subordination to other institutions was evidenced by its physical presence, functioning as a disruption to normative forms of museology by drawing attention to its programme, without objectifying its alterity as an institution. Despite appearing alternative in so far that the approach to curation and exhibition design *looked* different, MASP refused to adopt an identity of difference, carefully controlling the perception of its alterity<sup>9</sup> Habitat Magazine in a Brechtian sense was designed to plant the seeds of social transformation, by targeting a consumer oriented audience, reinforcing the importance of a

cultural centre rather than appeal to the more marginal groups it represented in its pages.

Conversely the Smithsons used their position as insiders in order to antagonise the perceived centre, with the aim of its reproduction intended to produce and define the 'outside'. Using J. Patrick Williams' definition, the thesis framed in Chapter 7 the Smithsons' practice as an attempt to construct a 'subculture'. The couple's collaboration with Nigel Henderson and Eduardo Paolozzi formed a sub group within the IG, in which the four connected to each other in an outward expression of their shared interests and interactions. Their self-identification in contrast to the counter cultural values explored by the IG achieved their subcultural status, positioning themselves in relation to the group by reinforcing their alterity from it. Through non-normativity rather than marginality, the subculture created by the Smithsons challenged cultural forms of hegemony by appropriating and reorganising the values and materials of the institution, occupying the

voiced their claim as Britain's best architects, while at the same time aligning themselves with the seeming anti-intellectualism and counter-culture of Paolozzi and Henderson, as representatives of the 'working class', which was manufactured at best rather than a factual

> Beverley, J., 'Theses on Subalternity, Representation, and Politics', Postcolonial Richmond, O., "A Post-Liberal Peace', Routledge, 2011, p145

Here I use the term 'outside' in reference to Jeremy Till's notion of community as 6 introduced at the beginning of the thesis. Community, according to Till, is a fictional ideal which commends the dissolution of authoritative power held by both state and architect. Till, J., 'Architecture of the Impure Community' in ed. Hill, J., 'Occupations of Architecture', Routledge, 1998, pp61-75, p62

Duncombe, S., 'The Cultural Resistance Reader', Verso, 2002, p5

<sup>8</sup> Studies, Vol. 1, No. 3, 1998, pp305-319

'Where there is power, there is resistance, and yet, or rather consequently, this resistance is never in a position of exteriority in relation to power.' 10

Confusion Through Camouflage The first section of this chapter focused on the extent to which Bo Bardi and the Smithsons relied on institutional power as much as they sought to disrupt it, which necessitated an ability to be simultaneously cooperative and oppositional. Having discussed the terms in which their projects worked to construct both the 'inside' and 'outside', this section turns to consider a number of the strategies used by Bo Bardi and the Smithsons to maintain their dual identity. To an extent the occupation of these roles operates through exclusionary means rather than a process of consolidating their definition; that is, it is about rejecting one in order to form its 'other'. This was discussed in the thesis as an act of camouflage; a strategy used as a form of refusal of the fixity of identity. In hybridising the function of their roles, claiming alterity is thus a form of agonistic negotiation, a sign of resistance that does not aim at recreating the cultural hegemony that is opposed nor the supposed autonomy of outsider status. Indeed one was often used as a means to disguise the other.

The Bardis' official role in the management of MASP acquired as a mask for their own assimilation during the process of their self-legitimatisation prevented them from being outwardly vocal against institutional structures. Employing James C. Scott's notion of 'hidden transcripts', it was claimed that the Bardis therefore operated 'behind the official story' using pedagogic ideology as a means to counter the constraints of more dominant cultural discourse.<sup>11</sup> Equally Habitat Magazine was compliant in furthering a contemporary discourse on the modern by encouraging consumption through advertisements, which in turn disguised content of usually excluded subject matter that was also inserted within its pages. It was argued that the dynamics of this pattern of camouflage were more than merely a reflection of Bo Bardi's idiosyncratic taste; rather they were the result of careful

10 Foucault, M., 'History of Sexuality: Volume 1 An Introduction', Pantheon Books, 1978, p95 Scott, JC., 'Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts', Yale 11 University Press, 1990

ICA's physical and ideological spaces as a means of subversion. Their production method used for Parallel of Life and Art was highly coded replete with signs that gave meaning only within the privileged, private process designed by the group. In excluding the participation of others, the project was intended to manufacture difference and thus procure friction between themselves and the ICA. The Smithsons' second installation Patio and Pavilion on the other hand engaged with the theme of collaboration as defined by Theo Crosby, proposing a method of juxtaposition rather than synthesis in order to construct a new lexicon to make collective their practice. However, confined within the context of the wider exhibition This Is Tomorrow, the group's specific take on the theme sought to destabilise forms of communication governed by cultural institutions and ideology, yet tellingly was delivered from within hegemonic structures rather than either outside or against them.

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and the Smithsons had to perform their alterity through a process of reiteration in order for it to translate into the material objects that define their practice. It is this process, not the inherency of the material or aesthetic forms in their work that makes visible their alterity. This was described in the thesis as a pattern of resistance whereby the cumulative effect of resistive strategies only gain traction when repeated. As such it was posited that alterity requires practice, with the necessity of reiteration a sign that the materialisation is never assured nor complete.<sup>15</sup> This is a reflection of the instability of the conditions in which Bo Bardi and the Smithsons' worked, with their strategies reactive rather than holistically planned in advance. The possibility for constant re-articulation however can be seen to their advantage; they require no planning or coordination and as such can manifest spontaneously, enabling an immediate and constant questioning of the counter hegemonic forces establishing themselves around them.

There was however no guarantee that either Bo Bardi or the Smithsons' resistance would be acknowledged or even heard. Alterity isn't given, it isn't taken and it isn't maintained, but through a series of repetitive actions it is acquired creating its own authenticity that aims at its own legitimacy.<sup>14</sup> As such the performative quality of their strategies is an important act of punctuation for their resistance to be vocalised and thus made visible. Pietro Maria Bardi for example publishes an article every two weeks in the year before MASP's inauguration demonstrating the necessity of engaging some form of action in the absence of the museum's material form. Similarly the regularity in publication of *Habitat Magazine* affirms Bo Bardi's ideas in a recognised cultural sphere by their repetition in each consecutive issue. Pedagogic action at MASP too is performed, made visible through weekly if not daily activities held in the public space, regardless of their reciprocity with MASP's main program. Their practice then is a form of refinement, establishing ways in which to occupy a liminal space caught between exile and immersion within the culture they broadly resisted, through their appeal to a lay external public. Importantly what characterises these small displays of activity is their outward projection.

While repetition was for Alison and Peter Smithson also important in making visible their agenda, it was moments of punctuation in the process that reinforced their alterity as outsiders. In the production of *Parallel of Life and Art* the Smithsons emphasised the

calculation that expressed a uniquely aware reflection on the intersection of intellectual and popular works within and beyond the institution. The activist tendencies of *Habitat Magazine* projected the political project that MASP could not overtly be, while simultaneously acted as a testing ground for the making public of the Bardis' private agenda. This was an unaggressive form of expression, dialogic in aspiration but monological in reality. The passivity of such confrontation was coded with intention, the couple exhibiting a deceptive form of political agency by confusing their voice amongst those of other authors. Although this thesis argued that *Habitat Magazine* was implicated in the production of the postcolonial cultural subject, its content was presented in an intentionally apolitical style.

The Smithsons' projects too adopted such an attitude, achieved through modes of collage that confused any attempt to identify a singular meaning in their work. Rather than proposing an opposing agenda of their own, they blurred the boundary between reality and pretence in their manipulation of content as a device to sustain the co-existence of multiple points of view. In refusing to effectually communicate the Smithsons cultivated apathy against recognised systems; as Jean Baudrillard stated, 'the strategic resistance is the refusal of meaning and the refusal of speech'.<sup>12</sup> Camouflage then became the motif of indifference, in the process of its deployment unintentionally producing its own distinct identity. Patio and Pavilion demonstrates the couple's ingratiation of architectural themes into an art world context, showing how an alternative setting can produce alternative themes. Continuing this approach, House of the Future's production as a theoretical work of architecture camouflaged as an exhibition enabled the testing of ideas on a small scale before the couple then staked their claim in concomitant international circles. The ability to work in a more permissive environment vet building at an architectural scale, allowed the couple to take on greater risk without having to commit their ideas to discourse. In a sense the Smithsons were 'hiding out' at the IG, building up their reputation while waiting to take their turn on an international stage.

## Repetition Made Visible

If Bo Bardi and the Smithsons' resistance necessitated camouflaging their ideas and identity, how then was it to be recognised as such, or even effective in achieving change? There is no singular act that signifies alterity in their practice; rather it is an iterative process that produces the effects that it names. In other words this thesis argues that both Bo Bardi

Butler, J., 'Bodies that Matter', Routledge, 1993, p2 Hobsbawm, E. & Ranger, T., 'The Invention of Tradition', Cambridge University

<sup>13</sup> Butler, J., 'Bodies tha 14 Hobsbawm, E. & Ra Press, 1983, p1

<sup>12</sup> Baudrillard, J. & Maclean, M., 'The Masses: The Implosion of the Social in the Media', New Literary History, Vol. 16, No. 3, John Hopkins University Press, 1985, pp577-589

regularity of their meetings with Henderson and Paolozzi in order to communicate their connections with the pair, and by extension their claim on ideological spaces beyond architecture. The event of the exhibition gave visibility to these meetings and performed for them their avant-garde status. The couple's pursuit of small-scale projects such as exhibitions and writing in architectural magazines also signifies their sense of alterity as a conscious act. Ouicker to reproduce than buildings and having a bounded audience to receive their work, such projects gave the couple visibility within the public sphere. The Smithsons identified that being relevant involved engaging audiences beyond the hermetic culture of the IG. The projects the Smithsons produced therefore required choreography to perform for them their alterity.

This was further investigated in the thesis through the couple's friendships, which traced a pattern of active associations they made with a number of individuals in order, it was claimed, to create greater agency in the negotiation of their own position. Their movement between friendships signified by their orchestration of acts deliberately intended to destabilise them, demonstrates how the couple were continuously engaged in a process of their own self-making, which along with the public articulation of their reiterative practice reproduces alterity in their work. Hollander and Einwohner's assertion that resistance is often manipulated through behaviour to encourage or discourage recognition, suggests that the power to enact contention is through choice, again calling into question the effectual reality of their labelling as 'marginal.' 15

## Paradox of Confrontation

The incremental nature of these repetitive actions, which change and are refined as they accumulate, implies a lack of urgency and quiet complicity in Bo Bardi and the Smithsons' agendas. Evidence of this is seen in the Bardis' wilful exoticisation of Brazil, advertising the country as part of the 'New World' in their quest to legitimise MASP by association with the European institution, L'Orangerie in Paris. Rather than defiantly occupy their identity as outsiders in Brazil, the couple compromised their own rhetoric to ensure personal survival within the intellectual cultural sphere. The Bardis are unable to control the narrative they had sought to establish with MASP and *Habitat*, with the security of their European heritage rather than an insurance of their insider status, working instead to their detriment. As cultural figures, protecting their professional reputations trumped ideology; Bo Bardi and

the Smithsons fall short in their outward display of resistance in the event of personal risk. While this thesis has demonstrated the value of such subtlety as a means to protect agency, it has also shown their lack of confrontation, which only manifest in moments of exigency. For example, Bo Bardi supports Max Bill's diatribe on Brazilian Modernism but from the safety of a monological medium, the magazine, which forbids response and renders impossible any process of exchange.<sup>16</sup> Whereas Alison and Peter Smithson propose radical forms of living in their design for *House of the Future*, but fail to interrogate the social traditions and role of the family unit itself. Additionally, its humour only highlights the illusion of Modernity but is not active in its resistance against it.<sup>17</sup> While the thesis has analysed both their alterity as a strategy for a more empowering form of architectural practice, it also shows how their agenda is critically lacking in outward politicisation.

In Brazil the country was comparably impoverished in terms of its educative opportunity due to the influence of racial ideology, which excluded the majority of the population from access to sites of culture, learning and thus self-definition.<sup>18</sup> In Bo Bardi's case, was it really possible to advocate for the periphery through an explicit alliance with groups aligned with distinct forms of racial oppression? In this respect the couple's lack of specificity to the local context in conceiving MASP is revealed in their failure to address the question of race in the foundation of the museum.<sup>19</sup> While this thesis claims the couple's conceptualisation of the pedagogic subject an explicit politicising tool, given their perhaps wilful ignorance of the cultural displacement of western approaches to pedagogy in the Brazilian context, one has to consider whether they pushed their ideas far enough.

Baudrillard, J. & Maclean, M., 'The Masses: The Implosion of the Social in the Media', New Literary History, Vol. 16, No. 3, John Hopkins University Press, 1985, pp577-589 Benton, G., 'The Origins of the Political Joke' chapter in eds. Powell, C. & Paton, 17 GEC., 'Humour in Society: Resistance and Control', 1988, p54 18 This thesis does not expand on the issue of race in Brazil in relation to institutions such as MASP given the broad scope of the subject, which necessitates a considerably more detailed analysis requiring a degree of sensitivity unable to achieve in this section. The Brazilian sociology theorist Gilberto Freyre is influential in this field. Pereira, AA. & Araújo, M., 'Race, History, and Education in Brazil and Portugal: Challenges and Perspectives', Educação e Realidade, Scielo, Vol. 42, No. 1, 2017, first accessed 28th June 2018, http://www. scielo.br/scielo.php?pid=S2175-62362017000100139&script=sci\_arttext&tlng=en It is not clear that they would have pursued the topic given the freedom to do so. 19 the Bardis certainly would have been required to temper any racial ideology in order to appeal to the middle classes, the descendants of European settlers for whom the perception of racial harmony in the post Vargas era was important in the post World War II period which had been defined by racial division. Pereira, AA. & Araújo, M., 'Race, History, and Education in Brazil and Portugal: Challenges and Perspectives', Educação e Realidade, Vol. 42, No. 1, January 2017, Scielo, first accessed 28th June 2018, http://www.scielo.br/scielo.php?pid=S21 75-62362017000100139&script=sci\_arttext&tlng=en

Hollander, JA. & Einwohner, RL., 'Conceptualizing Resistance', Sociological Forum, 15 Vol. 19, No. 4, December 2004, pp533-554, p540

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their attitude to politics has largely been overlooked. Thus while Bo Bardi and the Smithsons avoided overt expression of their work as political, it has since been historicised as such. Adolph Reed comments on the dangers of the infrapolitics of everyday resistance and daily confrontation, noting that 'promoting politics that doesn't look like politics is a disastrous retreat from the political stage.<sup>22</sup> Stephen Duncombe concurs questioning the ubiquity of reading cultural resistance as of itself political, stating that while those who attempt to re-author cultural discourse as a political act risk the institutionalisation of resistance and inevitably mimic the systems that created them.<sup>23</sup> Therefore while one could demand more overt signs of political resistance from Bo Bardi and the Smithsons, there is perhaps value in setting them apart from traditional political discourses, so as not to confuse them. Any appraisal of their work viewed through a contemporary lens must assert this separation, and not substitute or mistake their methods for actual organised forms of political movement.

The value of confrontation is less essential to the Smithsons' narrative, however the question of politics is. It could be argued that their very activities within an explicitly art-oriented culture ignored the wider issue of postwar construction; that their skills would have been better valued elsewhere. Having had success with Hunstanton Secondary School delivered during their time at the LCC, the Smithsons' then left public practice in pursuit of their own fame. Therefore while their ideas adopted the language of a social agenda, which has since advanced within theories of sociology, the fact that they orchestrated them outside of the political system is both telling of its constraints and their ambivalence to its importance, despite the system representing the very people they believed their designs were for. One can therefore be critical of their lack of engagement with politics and their decision to actively refute the significance of a relationship between politics and architecture. The couple self-proclaimed that they were aligned with 'politics' on only two occasions: one in opposition to the demolition of the Euston Arch and the second in relation to state schooling. The limited nature of their political commitment to either state education or the NHS can be seen in a revealing remark made by Alison Smithson:

'We took up rigid ethical positions: on state education, for example, because my husband was against our having any expenses that would oblige us to take on jobs we didn't want to, like hospitals. So the children went to local primary, then comprehensive schools.' 20

The Smithsons thus chose their causes only when it had a direct effect on their personal ability to practice, which was prioritised above everything else. Peter Smithson however thought this momentary, stating their choice to marginalise themselves a luxury of youth, prophesising that such practice would be short lived and thus in turn excusing their nihilism:

'[We] work[ed] out of hopeful poverty. Of course people as they get older get sucked into society and lose their ideological purity.'<sup>21</sup>

The Smithsons appear to have been able to avoid this inevitability and due to their delivery of Robin Hood Gardens, a project now implicitly associated with social welfare, this facet of

Smithson, A. as quoted in Grove, V., 'The Compleat Woman', The Hogarth Press, 20 1988, p263

Smithson, P. as quoted in 'Peter Smithson Interview', Architectural Magazine, 21 Loose pages, 30th March 1994, Folder E121, University of Harvard Archive, Cambridge, MA, first accessed 31st October 2016

9.3

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"Alternative' and 'independent' don't designate something outside of mainstream culture; rather they are styles, within the mainstream.' <sup>24</sup>

### A Narrative Intervention

This thesis focused on the cultural discourses born from political goals that mobilised identity categories in the postwar period. However, as discussed, it was the persistent disidentification of these categories that was crucial to Bo Bardi and the Smithsons' ability to rearticulate alternative sites for their contestation. This agency was described as a manifestation of the relative nature of their existing privilege and ability to advance antagonism in their practice without formally abdicating power or status. While modes of camouflage and repetition can be considered forms of pressure, their subtlety equally protected both Bo Bardi and the Smithsons from being 'uncovered' as different. Understanding the dynamic and reality of working between oppositional forms of power is important, as it challenges the notion that Bo Bardi and the Smithsons were committed to their identity as outsiders and questions their prerogative to make claims on both spaces. Neither actually experienced outsider status as defined by the abject conditions of isolation and restriction that characterises marginality. Being an outsider was for them an occupation of sorts, a methodology for seeing the inside more clearly. Their non-normativity then was an unwillingness to comply, rather than a true inability to do so.<sup>25</sup>

Within post-colonial studies significant work has been done to describe how members of the dominant culture have power to control the identity of the marginal under the guise of 'knowing it.' <sup>26</sup> The danger of which, as outlined by Edward Said, is the establishment of a historiography that rather than destabilising forms of cultural hegemony, simply replaces it. This is problematic specifically in relation to Latin American history, but also in an increasingly global capitalist context where communities defined by their alterity are supported by sympathetic architectural agendas who themselves are made up of members

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from significantly more powerful groups. This is not to detract from Bo Bardi and the Smithsons' own struggles, but contradicts the positivity of newer historiographies, which claim their alterity as a normative good. As subsequent histories about Bo Bardi and the Smithsons celebrate them as figures of alternative practice, they produce the premise that they refute. What value is there in arguing for Bo Bardi and the Smithsons' alterity without consolidating the professional imperative? Without fetishising an aesthetic and material reproduction of their work that ignores the systemic social and political construction of their identity as 'other'? We can celebrate architects using their position of power to subvert and give form to alternate ways of producing the world, but we must limit them as models for change, and not misrecognise them as blueprints or templates. After all, the paradox of resistance is that if it lasts forever, it's not resisting anymore.

The discursive technique of post-colonial theory has advanced ideas on alterity and the politics of oppression far more than any appraisal found in western architectural discourse. An outcome revealed in the method of comparison in this research has therefore been the applicability of writing on the subaltern to inspire similar criticisms of the effects of global capitalism and its subjugations in other parts of the world both then and now. In a contemporary transcultural narrative these issues are amplified due to more immediate forms of media, which highlight similarity and difference between local agendas found in disparate geographical localities. A possible field for future research is the development of theories of resistance within architectural frameworks on a transnational scale, to better understand the role of the architect as a public intellectual and global professional, who must act politically yet paradoxically distance themselves from politics. The field of alternative practice and its associated literature must therefore acknowledge difference in order to resist the flattening of the architect into a universal role. This requires an agonistic criticism of identity politics within the profession, and a fundamental shift in the contemporary construal of alternative practice as a material reality onto which alterity is artificially imposed. As the comparison between the alternative practices of Bo Bardi and the Smithsons demonstrates, the reconfiguring of power relationships during the design process must be considered the focus of design itself.

<sup>24</sup> Fisher, M., 'Capitalist Realism', Zero Books, 2009, p9

Creed, B., 'Stray: Human/Animal Ethics in the Anthropocene', Power Publications,2017

<sup>26</sup> Ashcroft, B., 'Edward Said: The Paradox of Identity', Routledge, 1999, p9

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Habitat 9, © Instituto Bardi

featured in Brazil Builds © MoMA, 1943

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painted red, 1969, source unknown

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- of Hunstanton Secondary School in the Architectural
- d Peter Smithson in a doorway at Hunstanton Secondary g construction, photograph Nigel Henderson, © The Nigel
- n Secondary School, 1954, Nigel Henderson, © The estate of
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Fig 14. Images were also hung from the ceiling, surrounding the viewer, Parallel of Life and Art, 1953, Nigel Henderson, © The estate of Nigel Henderson & © reserved

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Fig 18-20. Nigel Henderson's daughter Justin shown standing in amongst the images of Parallel of Life and Art at the ICA on Dover Street, 1953, Nigel Henderson, © The estate of

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