Grand Gestures (Basel, 10 Oct - 8 Dec 16)

eikones NFS Bildkritik, Universität Basel, Oct 20–Dec 8, 2016

Stefan Neuner

Lecture Series
Grand Gestures: Planning, Contingency and the Image of the Modern City
Part 2

From Brasilia to Boston, from Bucharest to Chandigarh, Grand Gestures are not the same as the Great Deeds they were intended to become. Whereas the Great Deed is a retrospective historical construct, the Grand Gesture is a projective fantasy, a performance in which the intention never determines the result, and agency is not necessarily synonymous with sovereignty. The discrepancy between plan and result, which characterises the phenomena in question, gives rise to skepticism about the historiographic category of intentionality, for the sheer scale of such projects mutates them into enterprises that cannot be controlled by individual authors, but rather entail a multiplicity of actors—each with their own entanglements and interests.

This lecture series asks prominent contemporary scholars to illuminate the history of interventions that have attempted to reimagine the modern city. This investigation is not limited to the circulation of mass media images that are produced to further grandiose visions, for even a preliminary consideration of the phenomena exposes dynamics that we cannot reduce to mere effects of the mediated city. Rather, the raw dimensions of such a great enterprise often results in a substantial transformation of those material and social conditions under which the plan was originally conceived. This lecture series will therefore ultimately attempt to address the material and iconographic agency of architecture, and how it might perturb the real, imaginary and symbolic economies of the city.

eikones NFS Bildkritik, Rheinsprung 11, CH - 4051 Basel
eikones Forum

TERMINE

Donnerstag, 20. Oktober 2016, 19.15 Uhr
Davide Spina (ETH Zürich)
A Spaceship for Bureaucrats: The ENI Building in Rome

Donnerstag, 27. Oktober 2016, 19.15 Uhr
Felicity D. Scott (Columbia University New York)
Earthlike: Architecture and the Space Colony Apparatus

Donnerstag, 10. November 2016, 19.15 Uhr

Charlotte Malterre-Barthes (ETH Zürich)
Larger than Life: Hydro-Infrastructures and Desert Cities in Egypt

Donnerstag, 17. November 2016, 19.15 Uhr
John Macarthur (University of Queensland)
The Smell of Politics: Liberalism in Civilia and Townscape

Donnerstag, 24. November 2016, 19.15 Uhr
Milica Topalovic (ETH Zürich)
Hinterland: Scale, Urbanisation and Planning of Territory Beyond the City

Donnerstag, 8. Dezember 2016, 19.15 Uhr
Liam Ross (University of Edinburgh)
Pyrotechnic City: On the Repeated Failure to Build an Unburnable Tokyo

Reference:
ANN: Grand Gestures (Basel, 10 Oct - 8 Dec 16). In: ArtHist.net, Sep 28, 2016 (accessed Nov 6, 2026), <https://arthist.net/archive/13823>.