

AHRA 2020: Housing and the City (Nottingham, 19–21 Nov 20)

Department of Architecture and Built Environment, University of Nottingham,
Nottingham, UK, Nov 19–21, 2020

Deadline: Feb 3, 2020

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AHRA 17th Annual International Conference 2020: Housing and the City

In the early twentieth century, a desire to master the workings of the city linked it explicitly to the provision of housing. The processes of 'the urban' became an 'ism', the multiplication of houses became housing. In the twenty-first century, cities are witnessing new ways of working, changing social demographics, increased geographical mobility and mass migrations, as well as the pervasive threat of the climate crisis. New modes of urban domesticity have begun to emerge, among them 'co-living' for young urban professionals, 'co-housing' of various kinds, 'live-work' units and other versions of domesticated working. Sometimes, these trends are born of economic necessity; sometimes, they are driven by aspirations of inclusion, solidarity and sharing. In either case, they are often promoted as desirable styles of life, experiments in housing and working that are linked to the promise of a new kind of collectivity, a new kind of city. The concern of this conference is to investigate the link between housing and urbanism, if not to disentangle it, at least to interrogate it. We ask what these new forms of living and working might mean for the city and, in turn, what current transformations of the urban might mean for the way we conceive of the home.

The primary question asked by the conference is this: what does it mean to be at home in the city in the twenty-first century? Our aim is to investigate the historical and theoretical genealogy of this question, premised on an understanding that the urban and the domestic, the public and the private, the individual and the collective, the political and the personal, are not opposing concepts but constructions that link the subject to the spatiality of the city. Françoise Choay posits Ildefonso Cerda's *Teoría general de la urbanización* of 1867 as the first theory of urbanism, as a 'science' that for the first time conceptualised the spaces of the city and its population in conjunction. Since the rise of 'the urban' as a field of knowledge linking spaces and the population, our very conceptions of the self, of intimacy and care, have come to be engendered by and to propel our understanding of urban spaces and processes. How to house and group the population, how to ensure its welfare and happiness, and how to optimise the potentials of individuals, families and other segments of the urban population have been central urban questions addressed through the potential of architecture throughout the twentieth century. How to do this in an increasingly explicitly global context, facing global threats, becomes the additional question of the twenty-first.

We seek contributions that explore the interactions between the urban, the home and the self in both material and conceptual terms, in different contexts, and from the rise of the metropolis to

the present, but always in order to reflect on the present urban condition. We invite contributions from a variety of disciplines such as architecture, urbanism, sociology, philosophy, geography, anthropology, as well as written and visual contributions from the arts, such as photography or film. We are keen to discuss projects and theories at a range of scales, from the home to the metropolitan region, from the individual to the collective; we are interested in design projects or design research by architectural practices that showcase the specifically architectural contribution to the question of the urban understood in relation to domesticity.

Themes to be explored might include, but need not be restricted to, the following:

- Philosophical and theoretical positions on the intersection between housing, urbanism and subjectivity
- Historical and typological investigations of the persistence and transformation of the architecture of housing over time, and in different cultural and ecological contexts
- The legacies and futures of mass housing
- Architectural and urban design research or projects investigating the urban domestic across different scales
- The politics of housing, the family and urban collectivities
- The economies and ecologies of collective dwelling
- The social practices of urban housing
- Migration, dwelling and the city
- Representations interrogating the categories of urban and domestic, individual and collective

Expressions of interest should take the form of an abstract of 300 words, accompanied by an image if appropriate, to be submitted via the conference website, by 3 February 2020.

<https://www.nottingham.ac.uk/conference/fac-eng/ahra-2020>

We will also consider proposals for entire conference sessions – please contact the conference organisers if you are interested in formulating a session.

AHRA2020@nottingham.ac.uk

A selection of the papers from the conference will be published in a special issue of *Architecture & Culture* and an edited volume in the *Routledge Critical Studies in Architectural Humanities* series.

Keynote speakers include:

- Anna Minton

Anna Minton is a writer, journalist and Reader in Architecture at the University of East London. Her publications include 'Ground Control: Fear and Happiness in the 21st Century' (Penguin, 2009 and 2013) and 'Big Capital: Who is London For?' (Penguin, 2017).

- Professor Peg Rawes

Peg Rawes is a Professor of Architecture and Philosophy at University College London. Since 2010 her research has focused on social, architectural and material ecologies, or 'architectures of care'. Her 3-year AHRC collaboration with Dr Beth Lord (Philosophy, Aberdeen) on wellbeing, equality and the UK housing crisis led to the making of the documentary film, *Equal by Design* (2016).

- Katharina Bayer

Katharina Bayer is the co-founder of einszueins architektur in Vienna, an award-winning practice focussing on new forms of urban housing.

- Chris Matthews

Chris Matthews is a graphic designer and historian. His most recent books include 'Homes & Places: A History of Nottingham's Council Housing' and 'Cities of the North', both published in 2016.

Conference convenors:

Dr. Katharina Borsi

Dr. Didem Ekici

Professor Jonathan Hale

Ye XU

in consultation with Diana Periton (Independent Scholar)

You can get in touch with us via: AHRA2020@nottingham.ac.uk

Reference:

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