

**VIOLENT ACTS 2. Lectures**  
**Teresa Stoppani**  
**2011**

Resuming the conversations previously produced in 'Violent Acts of Architecture', this series of lectures continue to explore architecture's ambiguous relationship with violence.

Moving from the violence performed by architecture to the intrinsic vulnerability of the architectural object and its subjection to the external forces that alter its project, these lectures intend to question the space of such distinction.

What is challenged in this move (and sometimes literally exploded) is the opposition of order and disorder, chaos and control, form and formlessness in the making of architecture.

The ambiguity of architecture's relationship with violence allows for a reconsideration of violence in architecture that becomes part of its project - a tool to dismantle established historical languages and categories, to question forms of order, and to work in time to produce an architecture of the dynamic.

What is ultimately questioned here is the shift of intentionality in the project of architecture, from a controlling form-defining prescription to an enabling moving strategy. Inevitably, this questioning will open up the space between architecture and building.

The lectures are structured around key words that suggest different articulations of the relationship of architecture with violence; each is explored through architectural projects and texts by architects, philosophers and theoreticians.

Session one: **FLASHBACK**

A summary of the key issues and stories previously examined by 'Violent Acts of Architecture': the architecture of the disaster (Blanchot to Woods); architecture and the discipline of the body (Ledoux); divisions, internments and the construction of otherness (Foucault); falls and fireworks (Tschumi); battle lines (Le Corbusier); ambiguous building types and violent laughters (Bataille); under attack (9/11).

Session two: **VIOLENCE**

An introduction to theories and definitions of violence, from Walter Benjamin to Hannah Arendt, from Georges Sorel to Slavoj Zizek.

Session three: **EXPLOSIONS, CUTTINGS AND PIECES**

On the undoing of the integrity of the architectural object, via the works of Giovanni Battista Piranesi, Gordon Matta-Clark and Kurt Schwitters.

Session four: **WAR**

From 'urbicide' as cultural obliteration, to the idea of pervasive environmental attack, and the poetry of deterrence: on the agency of sudden change in relation to the slow project of architecture.

Session five: **OBSOLESCENCE**

On industrial remains, dead technology and the availability of the contemporary ruin. Reuse and reinvention beyond use.

Session six: **FIRE**

From architecture as thermodynamics – a form of temporary equilibrium of the competing forces of construction and destruction - to the theory of the accident – for which sudden destruction is embedded in and enabled by the technologies that make architecture possible.

Session seven: VIRUS

From *terrain vagues* to viral spaces and parasitical architectures: infiltrations, transgressions, transformations and coexistence in the contemporary city and architecture.

**Lecturer:**

Teresa Stoppioni studied architecture at the IUAV in Venice and received a PhD in Architectural and Urban Design from the University of Florence. Teresa is Reader in Architecture at the University of Greenwich in London, where she co-ordinates the postgraduate Architecture Histories and Theories programme. Her writings on architecture's histories, theories and representations touch on different disciplines and focus on the relationship between architecture and the city. Her book *Paradigm Islands: Manhattan and Venice* was released by Routledge in Autumn 2010.

**Preliminary reading list:**

'Cities Unbuilt', *Volume #11*, Archis, 2007:1.

'Fire', *Cabinet*, 32, Winter 2008-2009.

Keith Ansell Pearson, *Viroid Life. Perspectives on Nietzsche and the Transhuman Condition*, London and New York: Routledge, 1997.

Hannah Arendt, *On Violence*, San Diego, New York, London: Harcourt and Brace & Company, 1969.

Rudolph Arnheim, *The Dynamics of Architectural Form*, Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1977.

Rudolph Arnheim, *Entropy and Art. An Essay on Disorder and Order*, Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1974.

Aaron Betsky and Erik Adigard, *Architecture Must Burn: Manifestos for the Future of Architecture*, London: Thames & Hudson, 2000.

Robert Bevan, *The Destruction of Memory. Architecture at War*, London: Reaktion Books, 2006.

Maurice Blanchot, *Awaiting Oblivion*, Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press 1999.

Maurice Blanchot, *The Writing of the Disaster*, Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press 1995.

Elizabeth Burns Gamard, *Kurt Schwitters' Merzbau. The Cathedral of Erotic Misery*, New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2000.

Critical Art Ensemble, *Marching Plague. Germ Warfare and Global Public Health*, New York: Autonomedia, 2006.

Critical Art Ensemble, *The Molecular Invasion*, New York: Autonomedia, 2002.

Gilles Deleuze, *Foucault*, London: Athlone Press, 1988.

Tim Edensor, *Industrial Ruins. Space, Aesthetics and Materiality*, Oxford and New York: Berg, 2005.

Luis Fernandez-Galiano, *Fire and Memory. On Architecture and Energy*, Cambridge, MA and London: MIT Press, 2000.

Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, London: Penguin, 1977.

Stephen Graham (ed.), *Cities, War, and Terrorism*, Oxford: Blackwell, 2004.

Manfred Hamm, *Dead Tech. A Guide to the Archaeology of Tomorrow*, Santa Monica: Hennessey + Ingalls, 2000.

Julia Hell and Andreas Schoenle (eds), *Ruins of Modernity*, Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2010.

Paul Hirst, *Space and Power: Politics, War and Architecture*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 2005.

Paul Hirst, *War and Power in the 21st Century*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 2001.

Fredric Jameson, 'Future City', in A. Krista Sykes (ed.), *Constructing a New Agenda. Architectural Theory 1993-2009*, New York: Princeton Architectural Press, pp. 246-267.

Rem Koolhaas, 'Junkspace', in A. Krista Sykes (ed.), *Constructing a New Agenda. Architectural Theory 1993-2009*, New York: Princeton Architectural Press, pp. 134-151.

Sanford Kwinter, *Architectures of Time. Toward a Theory of the Event in Modernist Culture*, Cambridge, MA and London: MIT Press, 2000.

Sanford Kwinter, *Far from Equilibrium: Essays on Technology and Design Culture*, Actar, 2008.

Bruce B. Lawrence and Aisha Karim (eds), *On Violence. A Reader*, Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2007.

Pamela M. Lee, *Object To Be Destroyed. The Work of Gordon Matta-Clark*, Cambridge MA and London: The MIT Press, 2000.

Kurt Schwitters, *Poems, Performance Pieces, Proses, Plays, Poetics*, Cambridge MA: Exact change, 2002.

Peter Sloterdijk, *Terror from the Air*, Los Angeles: Semiotext(e), 2009.

Georges Sorel, *Reflections on Violence*, Mineola NY: Dover, 2004.

Bernard Tschumi, *Architectural Manifestoes*, London: Architectural Association 1979.

Bernard Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction*, Cambridge MA and London: MIT Press, 1994.

Paul Virilio, *Bunker Archaeology*, New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1994.

Paul Virilio, *Unknown Quantity*, London: Thames & Hudson; Paris: Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain, 2003.

Slavoj Žižek, *Violence*, London: Profile Books, 2008.