

PRESS RELEASE

FRAGMENTS

Meeting Architecture III

A programme of lectures and exhibitions

Monday 12 December 2016: Part VIII

Grzegorz Piatek

Re-constructing Warsaw

presentato da Luca Galofaro

Monday 12 December 2016 18.00–19.30

The British School at Rome

via Gramsci 61, Roma

Re-constructing Warsaw is the eighth event in **Meeting Architecture: FRAGMENTS** curated by Marina Engel.

Both 1945 – the end of the Second World War, which left 80 per cent of Warsaw's building stock destroyed – and 1989 – the transition from socialism to capitalism – mark crucial turning points in the history of Poland's capital. Both events provided opportunities to rethink the city's future as well as to re-engineer its past.

The political and symbolic entanglements of this process will be the main focus of Piatek's talk.

Warsaw, the capital of Poland, is a city whose structure and image has changed almost completely in the last hundred years. It entered the 20th century as a large, yet provincial city on the western edge of the Russian Empire, with onion domes of orthodox churches dominating the skyline and a considerable Jewish population (one third of the total

700,000). A hundred years later, it is a culturally homogenous capital of an independent Poland, that takes pride in its heritage, but at the same time aspires to achieve a perfectly global image. It is a city that constantly updates and reinvents itself, but at the centre of this on-going modernisation lies a spirit of revivalism – a desire to move forward and meet the demands of today and at the same time bring out fragments of chosen eras and events in its history, to re-write its traditions for future generations. [Grzegorz Piatek]

BIOGRAPHY

Grzegorz Piatek (b. 1980, Poland) is an architect, critic, curator, writer and co-founder of Centrum Architektury, an independent architecture foundation and publisher based in Warsaw. Piatek was awarded the Golden Lion at the Venice Architecture Biennale in 2008 for co-curating the Polish pavilion exhibition *Hotel Polonia: The Afterlife of Buildings*.

He has recently published *Sanator* (2016), a biography of the notorious mayor of Warsaw, Stefan Starzyński, and has contributed to numerous books on Warsaw's history and architecture. He is currently writing a book on the post-war reconstruction of Warsaw and has contributed to numerous publications on Warsaw's history and architecture.

MEETING ARCHITECTURE: FRAGMENTS

FRAGMENTS considers how emotions are stirred, memories evoked and ideologies shaped by ruins, buildings and their contents. To this end the programme focuses on the concept of the fragment, defined as an urban ruin, which may be a house and its remaining contents or which may be personal relics, images, photographs, and other documents. When the meanings and memories we attach to our experiences are so closely tied to the material, how are individuals, ethnic groups, nations able to rebuild their identities and histories in the face of destruction? In an age of increasing displacement, architects and visual artists are invited, along with historians and archaeologists to examine and to reassemble such fragments to offer a contribution to the reconstruction of personal or collective identities in zones of present or of past conflict. [Marina Engel]

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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Free entry

PRESS OFFICE MEETING ARCHITECTURE

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