

PRESS RELEASE

**FRAGMENTS**

**Meeting Architecture III**

A programme of lectures and exhibitions

**Part IX**

**Jean-Louis Cohen**

**Memory Erased/Regained: Marseilles at War  
introduced by Pippo Ciorra**

*This lecture is organised in collaboration with the American Academy in Rome*

**Tuesday 7 February 2017 18.00**

**The British School at Rome**

via Gramsci 61, Roma

**Meeting Architecture: FRAGMENTS** continues with Jean-Louis Cohen's lecture **Memory Erased/Regained: Marseilles at War**. The lecture concludes the series of events this autumn that focussed on themes relating to World War II and its aftermath.

*The cold-blooded destruction of the centre of Marseilles by the Nazis in 1943 reflected the hatred of the right-wing ideologues in both France and Germany for a city stigmatised as a centre of racial infection for all of Europe, while intellectuals such as Siegfried Kracauer and Walter Benjamin celebrated its cosmopolitan character. The subsequent reconstruction of the city, which involved among others Fernand Pouillon and Le Corbusier, would become a vitrine for contrasting urban design strategies. In both episodes, memory*

*was mobilised in all its manifestations, from the collective one discussed by Maurice Halbwachs in those years to the most intimate one.*

Published in 2011, Jean-Louis Cohen's book *Architecture in Uniform* has recast the accepted vision according to which the Second World War was an empty period for architecture, highlighting all the domains in which it allowed for the victory of modernity. Cohen will lecture on his new research and concentrate on Marseilles both during the Vichy regime as well as its aftermath.

## **BIOGRAPHY**

Trained as an architect and a historian, Jean-Louis Cohen holds the Sheldon H. Solow Chair for the History of Architecture at New York University's Institute of Fine Arts since 1994. He was made a guest professor at the Collège de France in 1994. Cohen's research has focused on the French, German and Soviet architectural avant-gardes, on colonial situations and on the planning history of Paris. He has published more than 30 books, including: *France, Modern Architectures in History* (2015), *Le Corbusier: an Atlas of Modern Landscapes* (2013), *The Future of Architecture. Since 1889* (2012), *Architecture in Uniform* (2011), *Mies van der Rohe* (2007), *Casablanca, Colonial Myths and Architectural Ventures* (2002), and *Le Corbusier and the Mystique of the USSR* (1992). Among the numerous exhibitions Cohen has curated: the centennial show *L'Aventura Le Corbusier* (1987) at the Centre Georges Pompidou; *Scenes of the World to Come and Architecture in Uniform at the Canadian Center for Architecture* (1995 and 2011); *Interférences / Interferenzen – Architecture, Allemagne, France* at the Musées de Strasbourg (2013); *Le Corbusier: an Atlas of Modern Landscapes* at the Museum of Modern Art (2007). In 2014 he received a special mention from the jury for his French pavilion at the Venice Biennale. Cohen is currently Louis Kahn Scholar in Residence at the American Academy in Rome.

## **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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