

PRESS RELEASE

BRAVE NEW WORLD
New Visions in Architecture

A programme of lectures and exhibitions

Part I

Reinier de Graaf

The century that never happened

Tuesday 15 May 2018, 6 p.m.

The British School at Rome

via Gramsci 61, Roma

Introduction

Stephen Milner, Director of the British School at Rome

Pippo Ciorra, architect, critic, professor UNICAM

Lecture

Reinier de Graaf, architect, urbanist and writer

On Tuesday 15 May at 6 p.m. **Reinier de Graaf's** lecture *The century that never happened* will introduce the programme *Brave New World*. The programme is conceived and curated by Marina Engel (BSR Architecture Curator).

Reinier De Graaf's lecture will focus on the relationship between politics, economics and

architecture, applying Thomas Piketty's economic theories to the rise of modernism:

'Nearly twenty years into the new millennium, it is as though the previous century never happened. The same architecture that once embodied social mobility now helps prevent it. Despite ever-higher rates of poverty and homelessness, large social housing estates are being demolished with ever-greater resolve. Perhaps Piketty's theory, the final undoing of the twentieth century, finds concrete proof in the methodical removal of its physical substance.'

Four Walls and a Roof: The Complex Nature of a Simple Profession Reinier de Graaf
(Harvard University Press, 2017)

The lecture will describe the world that this younger generation of architects and designers has inherited, one in which it will have to confront the consequences of increasing wealth inequality, unstable working conditions, crippling rents and unaffordable housing as well as changes in family structures and gender roles.

The programme's title *Brave New World* refers ironically both to Shakespeare's *The Tempest* and the homonymous masterpiece of Aldous Huxley, in which man is faced with the challenges represented by the 'new' and the 'unknown'. The project seeks to investigate a possible new world for architecture in the 21st century.

Reinier de Graaf is a Dutch architect, urbanist and writer. He is a partner at the Office for Metropolitan Architecture (OMA) and responsible for projects in Europe, Russia and the Middle East. De Graaf is a co-founder of OMA's think tank, AMO; a visiting professor at the Graduate School of Design, Harvard University; and author of the book *Four Walls and a Roof: The Complex Nature of a Simple Profession* (Harvard University Press, 2017) named a best book of 2017 by both the Financial Times and the Guardian.

Brave New World

Common to a number of young architects and artists is the feeling that the present system of designing the built environment is not addressing the economic and social needs of their generation. All the architects in this programme and many others seek to venture beyond the traditional role of the architect. They often initiate social enterprises that aim to compensate for the demising role of the state. At the same time, millennials are the first generation to depend more on their peers than on figures of authority since they are able to access and share information on the web. They drive the rise of self-initiated projects. Assemble, a practice in our programme, describes itself as 'committed to both the practice of making things and the practice of making things happen.'

This generation is seen as the force behind the new sharing economy and the increase of both shared working spaces and shared living spaces. Many predict that such digital natives will have a revolutionary effect on architecture and urban planning and on the way in which we experience space and that, in turn, will affect how we work, play and socialise.

Brave New World proposes to investigate the nature of some of the changes that are being brought about by this younger generation of architects and designers. It therefore proposes

a series of questions: What forms do this new vision of architecture take? Are younger designers driven by a renewed social consciousness and more utopian ideal of what can be done by design? Alternatively, are young designers simply being pragmatic? And what exchanges are taking place between British and Italian architects?

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Lecture: The century that never happened, Reinier de Graaf

Curator: Marina Engel

Communications: Natalie Arrowsmith

Technical assistance: Fulvio Astolfi, Antonio Palmieri, Renato Parente, Peppe Pellegrino

Date: martedì 15 maggio, ore 18.00

Place: British School at Rome, via Gramsci 61, 00197 Roma

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LECTURE IN COLLABORATION WITH

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FORTHCOMING EVENTS

25 June 2018 **Phineas Harper** *The kids aren't alright* | Lecture

8 October 2018 **Assemble** *Ways of Listening* | Exhibition and round table with the support of the British Council

13 February 2019 **Alison Crawshaw, David Knight, Finn Williams e Pooja Agrawal** *New Publics* | Exhibition and round table in collaboration with the Royal College of Art

9 May 2019 **Adam Nathaniel Furman, Fosbury Architecture e Jack Self** *Mean Home* | Exhibition and round table supported by the British Council

18 September 2019 **Rowan Moore** *Just what is it that makes millennial architects so different, so appealing?* | Lecture

September 2019 **Round table in London** in collaboration with the Architecture Foundation