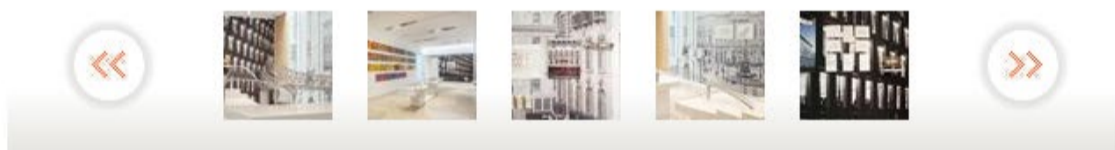


## A pretty healthy suspicion

22 October 2014 | By Carolina Pozzi



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The collaborations of Eric Parry and Richard Deacon make for an interesting strand in this year's Meeting Architecture season at the British School at Rome. Until November 4.

A giant beast smothering a pale, wretched body: this is what we see in the immediate foreground of *Landscape with a man killed by a snake*, maybe Nicolas Poussin's most dramatic and ambiguous painting, held at The National Gallery in London.

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The practice of Turner Prize-winner Richard Deacon – whose work stands out for its intertwining of biomorphic and artificial shapes – seems to have been particularly influenced by this picture, as he himself declares. And there is something of this "Laocoönian" approach that can also be traced in his long-lasting collaboration with architect Eric Parry, which is in the spotlight of a well-balanced study-exhibition at the British School at Rome.

For the second consecutive year, the BSR is presenting a substantial cycle of events – curated by Marina Engel – focusing on the hybridisation and overlap between architecture and visual arts. The program will span almost eight months and aims to bring together internationally renowned artists including, among others, architectural historian *Wouter Vanstiphout*, the artist *Thomas Schütte* and the Oscar-winning scenographer *Dante Ferretti* who will talk about the influence of architecture on his work.

Called *3-2=1: Bridge, Bangle & Cornice*, the exhibition, which has launched the cycle at BSR, credits the joint projects by Deacon and Parry as great examples of a thought-out cross-over between architecture and sculptural art.

The models, sketches, drawings and texts on display – gathered and exhibited for the first time – show how the latter is not being just "exploited" for ornamental urges, but is, rather, structurally integrated in the design of the building.

Despite Deacon's "pretty healthy suspicion" of architects, the pair's joint projects for the Millennium Bridge (2006, unrealised), the façade of Eric Parry's Finsbury Square building (1999–2001), and their highly acclaimed collaboration on St James's Gateway in Piccadilly show a shared focus on rhythm, colour, form and material.

Reminiscent of Poussin's great snake, artistic interventions are here conceived to organically interweave with architecture and explore the chromatic and ductile qualities of matter, while highlighting its modular structure and proportions.

#### Postscript:

Carolina Pozzi is an independent curator and writer based in Rome. She recently collaborated with MACRO – Museum of Contemporary Art of Rome and the Venice Biennale

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