

## **On Experimental Writing**

### **A conversation at the Canadian Centre for Architecture, 10 February 2011**

Introduced by Giovanna Borasi and moderated by David Howes

#### **Albert Ferré**

Actar's editorial director Albert Ferré focuses on visual narratives and collective editorial production in the *Verb* series. As our societies and environments evolve, so do the professions that shape them, and the media that register and reflect on them. *Verb* was conceived as an attempt to redefine architectural publications in the 2000s, resulting in new agendas, formats and editorial structures. Positioned in the belief that practice affects the course of reality, *Verb* operates as a form of collective architectural practice fueled by Actar's editors-architects-journalists-curators-researchers and the in-house team of graphic designers.

#### **Kazys Varnelis**

After the Archive: New Ways of Writing Architecture

Kazys Varnelis discusses the rise of new models of writing architecture—particularly the ideas of architecture fiction and speculative research (using the work of *AUDC* to illustrate)—within the context of a network-based culture in which information is abundant, instead of scarce. In this context, Varnelis also discusses the *New City Reader* as a mode of architectural research and way of reading the city.

#### **Pedro Gadanho**

While introducing the editorial and curatorial project of *Beyond, Short Stories on the Post-Contemporary*, Gadanho dwells on how the rather recent notion of "architecture fiction" may be influencing the way we currently look at architectural writing. Entering the realm of fiction, however, means not only to appropriate "fictional tools" - to use Truman Capote's appropriate expression - but also to enter an interdisciplinary relationship between two fields with their own rules and autonomies. While this conflation can lead to potentially interesting clashes and problems for both fields, it also establishes a somewhat different reading on how literary notions - or even Barthes' *plaisir du text* - may reshape a form of writing that has been largely subsumed to a mere description of objects or, at its best, to the creation of theory.

#### **Naomi Stead**

Springing from an interest in tourist media as a mode of architectural representation, Stead examines how touristic modes of writing – both commercial and literary, ethnographic and experiential, scholarly and pleasurable – might provide new ways of writing architectural form and experience.