

## Communiqué / Press Release

For immediate release

### **THE OTHER ARCHITECT AT THE CANADIAN CENTRE FOR ARCHITECTURE**

**The exhibition pushes beyond traditional architectural practice to develop architecture as a field of energetic, critical, and radical research addressing the urgent issues of our time.**



*The Other Architect* collage by Christian Lange, Munich.

Montreal, 27 October, 2015 – The Canadian Centre for Architecture (CCA) presents *The Other Architect*, an exhibition that emphasizes architecture's potential to identify the urgent issues of our time. On display are twenty-three case studies dating from the 1960s to today that illustrate how international and often multidisciplinary groups invented and adopted new methods outside of traditional design practices. *The Other Architect* is on view in the CCA's main galleries from 28 October 2015 through 10 April 2016.

The various groups sought to expand the role and responsibility of architects in society by working outside of traditional design practices and pursuing collaborative strategies, new tools and experimental attitudes. Their ingenuity showed the ability of architecture to shape the contemporary cultural agenda, a lesson that remains critically relevant today.

CCA Director Mirko Zardini stated, "Some of CCA's past exhibitions have demonstrated that architecture and urban design are too important to be left to architects. This new exhibition

presents architecture as more than building – architecture as the production of ideas. These ideas can contribute to changing the world.”

*The Other Architect* is organized by CCA’s Chief Curator Giovanna Borasi and presents architects whose work challenged the concept of individual authorship in favor of establishing networks and partnerships with permeable roles. These include AD/AA/Polyark, AMO, Anyone Corporation, Architects Revolutionary Council (ARC), Architectural Detective Agency (ADA), Architecture Machine Group (AMG), Art Net, Atelier de recherche et d’action urbaines (ARAU), Center for Urban Pedagogy (CUP), CIRCO, Corridart, Delos Symposium, Design-A-Thon, Forensic Architecture, Global Tools, Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies (IAUS), International Laboratory of Architecture and Urban Design (ILAUD), Lightweight Enclosures Unit (LEU), Multiplicity, Kommunen in der Neuen Welt, Pidgeon Audio Visual (PAV), Take Part, and Urban Innovations Group (UIG).

“To find another way of building architecture, we have to be willing to broaden our understanding of what architecture is and what architects can do,” said exhibition curator Giovanna Borasi. “The groups represented in *The Other Architect* remind us that architecture has to do more than just resolve a given set of problems – it has to establish what requires attention today.”

*The Other Architect*, like the case studies it examines, is a research project, concerned in its own way with contributing to a new reflection on the role of the architect, and inspiring and proposing unexpected ways of practicing architecture today. It is a way of responding to the question of how we can position architecture as an original site for the production of ideas.

## EXHIBITION

Beginning in the 1960s, it is possible to identify a range of experiences that pushed beyond the established domains of academia and the usual dynamics of editorial and institutional activities to develop architecture as a field of energetic, critical, and radical intellectual research.

*The Other Architect* shows 700 documents that illustrate their ways of thinking and working.

These alternative working methods and strategies manifested in a range of forms including letters, books, drawings, photographs, budgets, tactics for accessing resources, videos, mission statements and manifestos, surveys, posters, meeting minutes and organizational schemes, T-shirts, questionnaires, boats, and buses. The archival documents on display reveal how architects constructed a cultural agenda without the intervention of built form. Tracing the development of these unusual creative processes allows us to consider how these different ways of defining architecture can be applied today.

The materials are organized in thematic galleries that identify shared interests and methodologies of the groups. These themes are: “The experimental mix,” “The unexplored role,” “The tangential research topic,” “The intelligent tool,” and “The chosen mode and format”. However, many alternate connections can be identified among the groups in regards to the formats or tools they used or the approaches they shared – even the appearance of the same protagonists in different contexts. The exhibition focuses primarily on the early years of production of the different groups,

considering their energetic founding periods which most clearly express the purpose, priorities, and motivating forces of their founders.

“The experimental mix” includes **AMO, Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies (IAUS), International Laboratory of Architecture and Urban Design (ILAUD), and Urban Innovations Group (UIG)**. By blurring the distinctions between practice, school, and research, and by looking for new interpretations or combinations of these roles, they invented new institutions as unexpected systems for gathering and sharing knowledge. Their structures were often based on the productive confusion of roles and on various modes of exchange among diverse subjects. Their working methods exemplify that architecture is a discussion and a testing ground for thinking on both practical and theoretical levels.

- **AMO** was established by Rem Koolhaas and Dan Wood in 1999 to operate as a think tank both within and independently of the architectural practice Office for Metropolitan Architecture (OMA) in Rotterdam, The Netherlands. The exhibition starts with a large-scale model of their proposal for Universal Studio headquarters (1999), a project in the CCA Collection shown to the public here for the first time. This is the project that triggered the creation of AMO. Other early projects by AMO are shown including the work done for the fashion company Prada (starting 1999), the research project for the identity of the European Community (2001), and ideas for magazines such as *Wired* (2003) (courtesy of OMA). These examples make evident the way in which AMO applied “architectural thinking” outside of built form and how it experimented with a new role for an architectural office.
- **IAUS** (1967-1983) was instigated by Peter Eisenman and founded in New York City, USA, to offer an alternative to academic studies and bridge the gap between theoretical and pragmatic aspects of architecture. Among its many outputs were exhibitions, planning projects, educational programs, books, and magazines. The exhibition includes the early urban research projects of IAUS on Harlem, New York (1968), *The Streets* (1972), and *Low-Rise High Density Housing, Manhattan* (1972), which express the unique commitment of the Institute to establishing prototypes and methodologies for urban intervention through a combination of teaching, research, and applied projects. The material has been selected from the Institute of Architecture and Urban Studies fonds, in the CCA Collection.
- **ILAUD** (1974-2003) was conceived by Giancarlo de Carlo in Urbino, Italy, and involved participants like Peter and Alison Smithson and other former members of Team X, as well as Charles Moore, Donlyn Lyndon, Melvin Charney and others, and students from universities around the world. Its two month-long seminars and other projects opposed the rigid methodologies of the modern movement and favored anti-authoritarian, participatory approaches. Textual documents and drawings mainly on loan from the ILAUD Archive at Biblioteca civica d'arte Luigi (Modena, Italy) and from the Peter and Allison Smithson Archive at the Frances Loeb Library, Graduate School of Design, Harvard University, illustrate how the Laboratory operated, and how the international network of universities was able to develop a specific approach towards urban issues with both professors and students researching and designing on the same site. ILAUD continues today as a globally-connected network of universities.

- **Urban Innovations Group** (1971–1993) was established in Los Angeles, USA, by Harvey Perloff as a design and research laboratory at UCLA to give students real professional experience and professors the opportunity to conduct work in a more research-based setting. It pioneered the field of urban planning as a common ground between planners and architects. In the exhibition, the main focus is on the founding of the group and the period when Charles Moore was its director (1974–84), when UIG contributed to major urban projects such as Piazza Italia, New Orleans (1974–79), Bunker Hill, Los Angeles (1979–80), and Beverly Hills Civic Center (1982–91). The material is on loan from The Alexander Architectural Archive at the University of Texas; The Charles Moore Foundation, Austin Texas; and UCLA Architecture and Urban Design.

“The unexplored role” includes **Take Part**, **Architectural Detective Agency**, **Design-A-Thon**, **Multiplicity**, and **Kommunen in der Neuen Welt**. By inventing new profiles for themselves, these architects were able to engage with society in different ways. Taking on the roles of dancers, detectives, television hosts or sociologists allowed these groups to transform architecture into specific actions that brought them closer to issues of public interest – while also sharing the methodologies of those for whom the project is intended.

- **Take Part** (1971–1976) was a choreographic workshop series held in different cities such as San Francisco, Fort Worth, New York, and Cleveland, USA, organized by Lawrence Halprin & Associates with the intention of establishing new models of participatory design and alternative ways of moving, seeing, and thinking about the natural and built environments. These workshops were based on early experimental methods developed by landscape architect Lawrence Halprin and choreographer Anna Halprin in the 1960s. The documents and images on loan from the Lawrence Halprin Collection, The Architectural Archives at University of Pennsylvania focus on how these workshops were designed and performed to foster community participation and conversations on urban issues, and to trigger environmental awareness.
- **Architectural Detective Agency** (1974–1986) was founded by Terunobu Fujimori and Takeyoshi Hori in Tokyo, Japan with the goal of documenting unnoticed or abandoned early-modern buildings through photography, sketches, and maps in order to establish a new method of writing architectural history. The thorough photographic and annotated documentation (courtesy of Terunobu Fujimori and Takeyoshi Hori, Tokyo) illustrate how field research and inventory can reveal the city in new ways.
- **Design-A-Thon** (1976–1984) was an hour-long live television show about urban design studies produced by the firm Moore Grover Harper (Chad Floyd with Mark Simon, Jeff Riley, and Charles Moore). The show served as a series of workshops that brought citizen participation to public projects in Virginia, Ohio, Massachusetts, and New York, USA. The textual documents and archival television footage of the program (from Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library) illustrate the way television was used as an urban planning tool to broadcast the concerns and opinions of architects on topics of real public interest.
- **Multiplicity** is a research group founded in 2001 by Stefano Boeri in Milan, Italy. Multiplicity unites an international group of researchers who study territorial transformations and the dynamics of changing social behaviours in urban environments. Projects such as *Solid Sea*



(2000), regarding the conflictual issues of migration across the Mediterranean Sea, and USE (Uncertain States of Europe, 2002) mapping the complexity of newly formed European Community illustrate the timely appropriation and commitment of this group to transforming news into territorial and architectural concerns.

- **Kommunen in der Neuen Welt** (1969–1976) was conceived by Liselotte and Oswald Mathias Ungers as a series of research trips to study the lifestyles, customs, and architecture of commune settlements across the USA. Their photographs, maps, and observations (on loan from Ungers Archiv für Architekturwissenschaft) were published in magazines, pamphlets and the publication *Kommunen in der Neuen Welt*.

“The tangential research topic” includes **Forensic Architecture**, **Lightweight Enclosures Unit (LEU)**, **Global Tools**, and **Architecture Machine Group (AMG)**. Through their choice of subjects and modes of operation these groups were able to rethink what architecture is and radically expand its sphere of activity. Their work considered research to be an end in itself: the final output wasn’t the constructed form, but one better suited for circulation and exchange. The materials they produced were for others to enjoy and engage, while proposing new responsibilities for architecture that could not be realized in its traditional domain.

- **Forensic Architecture** was initiated in 2011 by Eyal Weizman at Goldsmiths, University of London, England, with support from the European Research Council. A team of architects, artists, filmmakers, activists, and theorists conduct research that gathers and presents in legal and political forums spatial analysis that reconstructs and visualizes past events, primarily those involving human rights violations and war crimes. Three main investigations are on view (courtesy of Forensic Architecture): Rafah in the Gaza Strip, 2014-15; Nakba Day protest, 2014; Mir ali and Miranshah drone strikes, 2013, represented through videos that show the use of architectural expertise to produce evidence.
- **Lightweight Enclosures Unit** (1969–1986) was founded by Frank Newby and Cedric Price in London, England, to conduct research and design related to lightweight air structures. It resulted in extensive photo documentation and bibliographies alongside project designs. The Lightweight Enclosures Unit is part of the Cedric Price fonds in the CCA collection.
- **Global Tools** (1973–1975) was founded by a group of radical Italian architects and designers in Milan. They reacted against the industrialization of design processes and promoted the study and use of natural materials and non-technological methods in workshops, courses and publications. The documentation (courtesy of Ugo La Pietra, Franco Raggi, Davide Mosconi, Adolfo Natalini, Piero Brombin and Valerio Tridenti, and Michele De Lucchi) focuses on the founding of the group, their bulletins, and the outcomes of some of their workshops on the topic of the body and the issue of communication.
- **Architecture Machine Group** (1967–1985) was established at MIT by Nicholas Negroponte and Leon Groisser as a multi-disciplinary model for teaching, developing, and communicating computer-aided architecture. Its work resulted in hardware and software prototypes as well as exhibitions and publications. The material (drawn from Negroponte’s personal archive and MIT Museum; MIT Libraries, Institute Archives and Special Collections;

and MIT Archives, Boston) illustrates AMG's idea of providing more democratized access to architecture through the use of computers and conversational interfaces.

"The intelligent tool" includes **Center for Urban Pedagogy (CUP)**, **Atelier de recherche et d'action urbaines (ARAU)**, **Architects' Revolutionary Council (ARC)**, and **Corridart**.

These groups use the medium of architecture – drawings, models, exhibitions – as tools for public debate. In this way architecture is an opportunity to provoke civic responsibility and serve as a reminder of what citizenship entails.

- **CUP** was founded in 1997 as a nonprofit organization in New York, USA, with the aim of using design to improve civic engagement. Publications, exhibitions, and community events demystify urban policy and make complex issues or laws accessible through simple visual and multilingual explanations. Their different activities (courtesy of Damon Rich) are exemplified through the presentation of research exhibitions such as *Building Codes: The Programmable City* (Storefront for Art and Architecture, 2001), educational projects like "Garbage City" (2002), or through the use of specific tools like YouTube videos and games, which illustrate how CUP was able to establish a new field of intervention: urban pedagogy.
- **Atelier de recherche et d'action urbaines** was founded in 1969 by sociologist René Schoonbrodt, priest Jacques Van Der Briest, and architect Maurice Culot as a residents' committee in Brussels, Belgium. It represented residents' rights and influence on post-war urban planning in Brussels, with an emphasis on education, public awareness, and the creation of counter proposals. Drawings, posters, songs, hats in the form of buildings (on loan from AAM archives, Brussels; ARAU archives, Brussels) show their activist activities and commitment to preserve the historical city.
- **Architects' Revolutionary Council** (1974–1978) was established as an activist group by Brian Anson and students of the Architectural Association, London, England. Their aim was to criticize the profession and education of architects while working with communities to offer design expertise and stress the social role of architecture (on loan from Architectural Association, London).
- **Corridart** was a large-scale outdoor exhibition staged in Montreal, Canada, as the arts and cultural component of the 1976 Summer Olympics. The project, curated by architect Melvin Charney, included artworks that critically engaged with historic and contemporary social and economic problems of Montreal, and was destroyed by city officials before the opening of the Olympic Games. The documents (from the Melvin Charney fonds at CCA, and on loan from Concordia University Archives - Special Collections, Montreal) showcase how the format of an exhibition in the public space can be a tool for highlighting the contradictions of a city and its administration.

"The chosen mode and format" includes **AD/AA/Polyark bus tour**, **Pidgeon Audio Visual (PAV)**, **Anyone Corporation**, **Delos Symposion**, **Art Net**, and **CIRCO**. As in a traditional architectural project, a research topic needs to be addressed with the right formats and methods. These groups and their respective projects had particular mandates that considered architecture

and education in such contexts as the use of new technologies, the desire to shape conversations in friendly or unusual ways, or finding ways to see the world as a unified system.

- **AD/AA/Polyark bus tour** was organized in 1973 by Peter Murray at Architectural Design magazine, the Architectural Association, and Cedric Price (Polyark). Its aim was to expand educational formats and increase communication among schools of architecture across England through mobility, physical interaction, dialogue, and sharing of recordings and images. A special emphasis is given to the organization of the tour, the transformation of the double-decker bus into a video library, and the implementation of a television and video distribution (from the Cedric Price fonds at CCA, and loans from the personal archive of Peter Murray).
- **Pidgeon Audio Visual** is an audio-visual collection created by Monica Pidgeon in London, England, in 1979. The illustrated talks by architects, designers, and engineers were meant to support education by giving architecture schools access to the most important practitioners from around the world. As of 2009 Pidgeon Digital makes these and new resources available online. In the exhibition, a lecture by Cedric Price "Technology is the answer but what was the question?" is presented in the original format of tape and slides with a Telex Caramate projector, as well as correspondence between Pidgeon and many architects that illustrates her process of selecting, researching, editing, and publishing (on loan from RIBA Archives, London). The CCA collection includes over 200 of the original Pidgeon Audio Visual kits.
- **Anyone Corporation** (1990–2000) was established as a think-tank to foster debate on architecture, which took the form of ten annual conferences organized by editor Cynthia Davidson and held in Los Angeles, Yufuin, Barcelona, Montreal, Seoul, Buenos Aires, Rotterdam, Ankara, Paris, and New York. Photographic documentation of the conferences, post-conference exchanges with the editor, and textual documents on the organization showcase the formation and the scope of this institution. The Any Corporation archive is held at the CCA.
- **Delos Symposion** (1963–1972) was a forum for discussion held annually on a boat in the Aegean Sea, hosted by its organizer, Constantinos Doxiadis. The inter-disciplinary discussions addressed topics related to population growth, resource management, and the role of science and technology in the planning of the built environment. Unpublished notes edited by Jacqueline Tyrwhitt during the cruises, along with the final statements (Delos Declarations) and photographic documentation of the cruises (on loan from the Constantinos A. Doxiadis Archives, Athens, and Marshall McLuhan fonds, Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa) testify to the intensity of the debate and the global scale of its scope.
- **Art Net** (1973–1979) was a gallery in London, England, created and directed by Peter Cook. As a non-commercial place, it provided a venue and unfamiliar formats for the exhibition and discussion of art and architecture – and their relationship, borrowing elements from both fields. In order to reach an audience outside of London, Art Net documented all exhibitions and events through photography and video for eventual publication. The materials shown (from the CCA Collection and on loan from Archigram Archive and AA Archive, London) emphasize the witty character of the gallery.

- **CIRCO** was founded in 1993 by architects Luis Moreno Mansilla, Luis Rojo de Castro, and Emilio Tuñón in Madrid, Spain, as a publishing initiative to freely exchange essays on architecture in pamphlet form and to encourage discussion of critical theory. The publications emerged at a time of transition between analog and digital tools in the architectural office of Mansilla and Tuñón. It was designed simply and printed on single A4 pages. The editors folded, stamped, and mailed each booklet themselves. In addition to many issues of the magazine, the exhibition includes humorous and personal postcards from CIRCO archives that people sent to request free subscriptions.

In addition to the physical materials on view in the exhibition, one gallery is designed as a lounge dedicated to the presentation of video materials. Visitors will be able to see oral histories as well as archival footage from several groups represented in *The Other Architect*.

These case studies are only a selection from what could be a much larger manual of alternatives. It is by imagining the possibility of a more articulate way of understanding architecture and reflecting on what architecture can be that a wider field with more potential for action emerges.

## CURATOR

Giovanna Borasi joined the CCA as Curator for Contemporary Architecture in 2005 and became Chief Curator in 2014. Her exhibitions and related books shape contemporary discussion in architecture with a particular attention to alternative ways of practicing and evaluating architecture, and how environmental, political and social issues are influencing today's urbanism and built environment: *Journeys: How Travelling Fruit, Ideas and Buildings Rearrange our Environment* (2010) which examined how migration transforms the physical environment in an increasingly mobile world; *Some Ideas on Living in London and Tokyo* by Stephen Taylor and Ryue Nishizawa (2008); and *Environment: Approaches for Tomorrow* (2006) on the work of Gilles Clément and Philippe Rahm. She co-curated, with Director Mirko Zardini, the exhibitions *Imperfect Health: The Medicalization of Architecture* (2011); *Other Space Odysseys* (2010) featuring the work of architects Greg Lynn, Michael Maltzan, and Alessandro Poli (Superstudio); *Actions: What You Can Do With the City* (2008); and *1973: Sorry, Out of Gas* (2007).

Educated in architecture, Borasi initiated her career as editor and writer for *Lotus International* (1998–2005) and *Lotus Navigator* (2000–2004), and served as assistant editor for the book series *Quaderni di Lotus* (1999). She was a member of the editorial staff of the graphic design magazine *Lettera* (2000), a supplement to the magazine *Abitare*, and recently was Deputy Editor in Chief for *Abitare* (2011–2013). She has written widely on contemporary architecture, has served on international juries, and is a regular speaker at symposia and conferences.

The curatorial team for *The Other Architect* is composed of Gregory Barton, Lev Bratishenko, Rebecca Taylor, and Alice Haddad. The research team is composed of Gregory Barton, Lev Bratishenko, Alice Haddad, Josephine Minhinnett, Rebecca Taylor with Kayoko Ota and Jin Motohashi (Architectural Detective Agency), Maggie Tsang (Design-A-Thon), Florencia Alvarez (Pidgeon Audio Visual), Konstantinos Pantazis and Marianne Rentzou (Delos Symposium).



## EXHIBITION DESIGN

The material is displayed mainly on the horizontal surfaces of a series of large tables which invite the visitors to sit and read the documents similar to a working table in an architectural office. The walls carry large reproductions of some of the key documents illustrating characteristics of the groups.

The exhibition graphics are designed by COCCU Christian Lange (Munich). Lange has a Master of Arts in Design from Zurich University of the Arts, Zurich and has given workshops and lectures at the Leipzig book fair, the Academy of Fine Arts, Munich, and the University of Applied Sciences, Munich. In 2014 he won Bronze at the *Best Book Design from all over the World* competition and in 2013 the award for the *Best German Book Design*.

The CCA curatorial team worked with MOS Architects (New York) who conceived the installation and designed the display furniture. MOS principals Hilary Sample and Michael Meredith received the 2015 Cooper Hewitt National Design Award in Architecture. Their recent projects include the studios at Krabbesholm Art, Architecture, and Design School in Skive, Denmark; House No. 11 (Corridor House) at the 2015 Chicago Architecture Biennial; the modular Element House designed for off-the-grid living; a Community Center in Kathmandu, Nepal; among other built and conceptual projects. Their practice is characterized by a playful approach to research and independent exploration of materials and methods.

## PUBLICATION

*The Other Architect* is also a book, edited by Giovanna Borasi, that presents each case study through a selection of documents, over 300 colour facsimiles in total. These represent the traces these groups left in letters, books, drawings, photographs, budgets, videos, mission statements, meeting minutes, T-shirts, boats, and buses. Encountering the plans and ideas of these groups in their own words, and seeing how the structure of some documents becomes another tool for shaping their practice, offers further perspectives on *The Other Architect*.

Historical documents are contextualized with short contributions by Florencia Alvarez, Pep Avilés, Greg Barton, Samuel Dodd, Isabelle Doucet, Ole W. Fischer, Anna Foppiano, Kim Förster, Owen Hatherley, Larissa Harris, Alison B. Hirsch, Douglas Moffat, Whitney Moon, Pierluigi Nicolin, Kayoko Ota, Panayiota Pyla, Angela Rui, Deane Simpson, Johanne Sloan, Molly Wright Steenson, Rebecca Taylor, and Mirko Zardini, who place each case study in a relevant setting, introduce the main protagonists, and identify their goals and obsessions.

CCA publications have long been marked by a strong visual narrative that is complementary rather than illustrative of the written narrative, objects that are understood as materials rather than images, and a tone of investigation and proposal rather than affirmation and definition. A larger format of 24 x 31 cm was developed for *The Other Architect* and chosen for legibility of archival documents, as well as supporting annotations and parallel narratives.



The 416-page book is a co-publication with Spector Books, Leipzig. It was designed by Jonathan Hares (Lausanne, London).

## ABOUT THE CCA

The CCA is an international research centre and museum founded in 1979 on the conviction that architecture is a public concern. The institution is a leading voice in advancing knowledge, promoting public understanding, and widening thought and debate on architecture, its history, theory, practice and role in society today.

The CCA Collection holds one of the most significant collections of architectural material and ephemera worldwide: it includes the archives of Peter Eisenman, Arthur Erickson, John Quentin Hejduk, Gordon Matta-Clark, Cedric Price, Aldo Rossi, James Stirling. Recently, the CCA Collection was enriched with several donations, including the Abalos & Herreros archive, the Pierre Jeanneret archive, the archive of Foreign Office Architects and a large part of Álvaro Siza's office archive, along with the collection of project archives related to *Archaeology of the Digital*.

The institution promotes global, interdisciplinary research by scholars and students while continuing to grow, with a special concern toward acquiring and addressing recent digital architectural production. It offers a unique environment dedicated to the study and presentation of architectural thought and practice.

**The CCA gratefully acknowledges the generous support of the Ministère de la Culture et des Communications, the Canada Council for the Arts and the Conseil des arts de Montréal and Hydro-Québec.**

###

Contact:

Isabelle Huiban  
Head of Press Relations  
Canadian Centre for Architecture  
Tel: 514 939 7001 ext. 2607  
[media@cca.qc.ca](mailto:media@cca.qc.ca)