

# Architect Writers

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# Architect Writers

## Description

Taking stock of the architecture profession today, this seminar brings together a select group of architects who have written about their design work as a means to better understand the built environment while reflecting on the field of architecture as a whole. For the purpose of this inaugural seminar, it has been conceived with an inclusive title but with varying content meant to change from year to year. This year's focus will be on writings by women architects about their design work. While it is possible to argue over whether venues and platforms exclusively for women are needed, and how it is problematic to "insert the female figure into the male canon", it is certain that women's' participation in the field of architecture is still unrepresented. Specifically, when it comes to the representation of ideas through writing, women's contributions about their own design work appearing on bibliographies is scant. And despite gender imbalance, lingering stereotypes, today, continue the idea that architects are atypical writers and as writers, unusual architects. It has been argued that written ideas last as long as drawn or built ones, and this writing about architecture remains critical to the education of an architect. This seminar is designed to invite students to intently focus on ten twentieth and twenty-first century women architects, from around the world, to examine their buildings, built work, proposal projects, installations, objects, design writings, lectures, as well as critical essays written about their work. Of the architects included here, most are well known within the architecture community, and several recognized beyond. This course draws upon the usual visual materials from architecture and art such as drawings and painting, to models and mock ups, but also includes other forms of representation through a variety of mediums -- videos, film, novels, interviews, conversations, short stories, to poetry, in addition to written materials. This seminar will primarily engage architecture and design work and writings, and focus secondarily on their biographies for the purpose of understanding their educational and career limitations and accomplishments. The course seeks to examine both buildings and writings in parallel as way to understand the field of architecture and its creative culture up close.

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The seminar will ask several questions surrounding the work of these architects. As architecture is a profession, formal education is necessary to achieve the status of being a professional, what educational limitations were presented, what opportunities arose? Examine the intersection between a lack of education and achieving a professional status. What sources of influences can be identified? Did role specific models or mentors contribute to a career path? And in turn Is the role of a mentor or model important? Was gender a consideration in seeking out education or professional opportunities? When looking at the design work examine how the work is done, did individual styles of designing or doing architecture influence or shape the work? When looking at the writing how is the writing completed? Is there a style to the writing? Some of the writers are as well known for their buildings as their texts, but how did different types of achievements affect their work? Is design enriched by writing? If so how? How does the role of collaboration impact their creative work? What kinds of practices are novel and can be attributed to them individually or in a collaboration? What areas or subjects have they advanced in the field? For instance, almost no subject is off limits to architects, be it aesthetics, color theory, engineering from social to climate, environmental, materials, structural, to the digital and representational, or beyond to urban planning, design or historic preservation. Where are the written texts published? Similarly, are there other venues for exhibiting work that enabled the architect writer establishing an audience? When does architecture become part of broader cultural conversation or awareness and what role did these architects play in that awareness? Or what role does experimental architecture play? What critical knowledge is established in the design work versus writing about design? How are these two forms different beyond the obvious and expected? How does writing infuse practice? And vice versa? . . . If writing about a previously built project what could be said? Through these trailblazers and pioneers, we can think through the established domains of architecture in order to reframe its future. This seminar has received support from Het Nieuwe Instituut and The National Museum of Women in the Arts.

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## Format

Each week, students will study select readings and set of related buildings. Professor Hilary Sample will present ten lectures about the built work, projects, and architectural ideas. Three of the sessions will be dedicated to presentations by guests. After each lecture, there will be a discussion about the architecture and readings from each week's subject. In addition, students will be expected to complete four assignments. A part of the seminar's purpose is to create a more in-depth bibliography on architects' writings, and the goal of the seminar will be to double the size of the syllabus bibliography and identify additional architects who are practicing around the world. Students will also develop a list of questions for a questionnaire and list of architects to distribute the questionnaire to. Students will write a 500-1,000 words essay with no less than five images and five citations.

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## Schedule

**Week 1            Sept. 5            Introduction:**

**Week 2            Sept. 12          Jane Drew**

Fry, Maxwell, and Jane Drew. *Tropical Architecture in the Humid Zone*. London: Batsford, 1964.

Drew, Jane, *Village Housing In The Tropics. With Special Reference To West Africa*, 1947

Drew, Jane, *Architecture For Children*, 1945

Fry, Maxwell and Drew, Jane, *Architecture and the Environment*, Allen & Unwin, 1976

Drew, Jane (ed.), *Architect's year book* (1945, 1st ed.; 1947, 2nd ed.; 1949, 3rd ed.) Housing, pg. 43-53.

### Additional Reading:

Constance E. Wagar, *Architecture and the Environment* by Maxwell Fry and Jane Drew (review), *Leonardo*, The MIT Press, Volume 10, Number 4, Autumn 1977, p. 348.

**Week 3            Oct. 3    Alison Smithson**

Smithson, Alison. *Urban Structuring: Studies of Alison + Peter Smithson*. Studio Vista / Reinhold, 1967.

Smithson, A. and P. Smithson, *An Urban Project: Golden Lane Housing. An Application of the Principles of Urban-re-identification*, *Architects Year Book 5*, 1953, 48-55.

Smithson, A. and P. Smithson, *Aesthetics of Change*, in: T. Dannatt (ed.), *Architects Year Book 8*, London 1957

Smithson, A. and P. Smithson, *Thoughts in Progress: the New Brutalism*, *Architectural Design* 1957, no. 4, April, 111-113

Smithson, A. (ed.), *CIAM Team 10*, *Architectural Design* 1960, no. 5; special issue with contributions by J. Bakema, G. Candilis, G. De Carlo, J. Coderch, R. Erskine, A. van Eyck, G.

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Grung, A. Josic, L. Kahn, L. Miquel, C. Polonyi, J. Soltan, A. and P. Smithson, K. Tange, J. Voelcker and S. Woods

Smithson, A., Byelaws for Mental Health, *Architectural Design* 1960, no. 9, September, 356-357

Smithson, A. and P. Smithson, Fix, *The Architectural Review* 1960, no. 766, December, 437-439

Smithson, A. and P. Smithson, Architecture and Art, *Le Carré Bleu*, 1960, no. 2

Smithson, A. and P. Smithson, Criteria for Mass Housing, *Forum* 1960, no. 1, 16-17

Smithson, A. (ed.), Team 10 Primer 1953-1962, *Architectural Design*, no. 12, December, special issue, 559-600; with contributions by J. Bakema, G. Candilis, J. Coderch, A. van Eyck, R. Erskine, G. Grung, A. and P. Smithson, J. Soltan, J. Voelcker and S. Woods

Smithson, A., The work of Team 10, *Architectural Design* 1964, no. 8, August, special issue, 373-393; with contributions by Van den Broek and Bakema, Candilis, Josic and Woods, R. Erskine, A. and P. Smithson, and S. Wewerka

Smithson, A. and P. Smithson, Criteria for Mass Housing, *Architectural Design* 1967, September, 393-394

Smithson, A. and P. Smithson, Density, Interval & Measure, *Architectural Design* 1967, September, 428-429

Smithson, A. and P. Smithson, Signs of Occupancy, *Architectural Design* 1972, no. 2, February, 91-97

## Additional Reading:

Boyer, M. Christine, *Not Quite Architecture Writing around Alison and Peter Smithson*, The MIT Press, 2017.

Eisenman, P., Book Review: Ordinariness and Light by Alison and Peter Smithson, *The Architectural Forum*, May, 1971.

Eisenman, P., Robin Hood Gardens, London E 14, *Architectural Design* 1972, no. 9, September, 557-573, 588-592

**Week 4**      **No class due to Core III travel**

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**Week 5      Oct. 10      Denise Scott Brown**

Brown, Denise Scott. *Having Words*. London: Architectural Association Publications, 2013.

Sanmartin, Antonio. *Venturi, Rauch & Scott Brown*. London: Academy Editions, 1986.

Venturi, Robert, Denise Scott. Brown, and Steven Izenour. *Learning from Las Vegas*. Cambridge Mass.: The MIT Press., 1972.

*Venturi Rauch & Scott Brown Associates on Houses and Housing*. Londres: Saint Martins Press, 1992.

*Venturi, Rauch and Scott Brown: A Generation of Architecture*. Urbana-Champaign, IL: Krannert Art Museum, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1984.

Brown, Denise Scott, and A. Papadakēs. *Urban Concepts*. London: Academy Editions, 1992.

**Week 6      Oct. 24      Lina Bo Bardi**

Bo Bardi, Lina. *Stones Against Diamonds*. London: Architectural Association Publications, London, 2012.

**Sofia von Ellrichshausen**

von Ellrichshausen, Sofia and Mauricio Pezo, *Spatial Structure*, Copenhagen: B Architecture publisher, 2016.

von Ellrichshausen, Sofia and Mauricio Pezo, *Naïve Intention*, New York: Actar, 2018.

A+u 513 13:06 Pezo Von Ellrichshausen, *Tokyo: A+U Publishing, 2013*

2G No. 61 Pezo Von Ellrichshausen, Barcelona, Gustavo Gili, 2012

**Week 9      Oct. 31      Madelon Vriesendorp**

Basar, Simon. *The World of Madelon Vriesendorp*. London: Architectural Association Publications, 2008.

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Koolhaas, Rem. *Delirious New York: a retroactive manifesto for Manhattan*, London: Thames and Hudson, 1978.

Sigler, Jennifer, Ed. *SMLXL: Office for Metropolitan Architecture*, Rotterdam: 010 Publishers, 1995

## Additional Reading:

Jacobs, Sam. If At First You Don't Succeed, Cry, Cry Again..., *The Architectural Review*, February 2018.

<https://www.architectural-review.com/essays/if-at-first-you-dont-succeed-cry-cry-again-madelon-riesendorp-on-being-written-out-of-history/10028475.article>

**Week 10**      **Nov. 7**      **Afaina de Jong**  
**In collaboration with Het Nieuwe Instituut in Rotterdam**

De Jong, Afaina, *For The People, By The People: A Visual Story On The Diy City, Ultra De La Rue* 2012

**Nov. 8**      **Anne Lacaton**

David Huber, Artforum International, "Beyond relief", USA, 2015, p. 344-347

Speech : affordable housing, "Interview Anne Lacaton - More space, more light, more green : a new vision of social housing", Denis Bocquet, Russie / Russia, 2014, p. 238-252

Reduce Reuse Recycle, Mathieu Wellner, Allemagne / Germany, 2012, Anglais / English, Muck Petzet - Florian Heilmeyer

**Week 11**      **Nov. 14**      **Momoyo Kaijima**

Kaijima, Momoyo, *Yoshi Tsukamoto, Atelier Bow-Wow - Graphic Anatomy 2*, Tokyo, Toto, 2014

Kaijima, Momoyo, *Yoshi Tsukamoto, Atelier Bow-Wow - Echos of Space*, INAX-Shuppan, 2009

Kaijima, Momoyo, *Yoshi Tsukamoto, JA85 SPRING 2012, House Genealogy Atelier Bow-Wow: All 42 Houses, Shinken-chiku-sha Co., Ltd, 2012*

## Additional Reading:



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Escher, Cornelia, *Atelier Bow-Wow: A Primer*, Walther König, Köln, 2013.

**Make Up      Nov. 16      Tatiana Bilbao (at Acts of Design Conference) morning session**

Bilbao, Tatiana, *Tatiana Bilbao: Perspectives*, Mexico City, Arquine, 2018.

Bilbao, Tatiana, *Landscape of Faith: Interventions Along the Mexican Pilgrimage Route*, Lars Müller Publishers, 2018.

Sample, Hilary, Afterward in *A House Is Not Just a House, Projects on Housing*, Columbia Books on Architecture and the City, 2018

**Week 12      Nov. 21      Farshid Moussavi**

Moussavi, Farshid. *The Function of Ornament*, ACTAR, Harvard Graduate School of Design, 2006

Moussavi, Farshid. *The Function of Form*, ACTAR, Harvard Graduate School of Design, 2009

Moussavi, Farshid. *The Function of Style*, ACTAR, Harvard Graduate School of Design, 2014

**Week 13      Nov. 28      Mariam Kamara**

Kamara, Mariam, *Being an African Architect in Africa*, February 2017,  
[http://www.ateliermasomi.com/blog/post\\_id-4](http://www.ateliermasomi.com/blog/post_id-4)

Kamara, Mariam, *Construction Magic*, August 2017,  
<http://www.ateliermasomi.com/blog/xzerh4a3gx8nx28c2nw3kaat92c3mp>

Kamara, Mariam, *Mind shifts: Limited means can yield greater beauty*, March 2015  
<http://www.ateliermasomi.com/blog/22>

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## Assignment One

In this first assignment, take the given bibliography and select one week's readings. Double the reading list with new citations. You will have two weeks for this work. It means, roughly, that you have one week per citation. It is meant to be an enjoyable and thoughtful exercise. You must

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read the texts. They can be any texts that you think expand upon the work of the chosen architect. (In other words, it does not have to relate directly, rather indirectly is OK.).

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## Assignment Two

Write an index. It can be one page with two columns. No more, no less. Think George Perec's *Space*.

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## Assignment Three

This assignment is a collective project. Each student is to provide a quote from the author on housing or houses. Email it to [hms2155@columbia.edu](mailto:hms2155@columbia.edu) and present it in class.

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## Assignment Four

Curate a set of drawings and visual materials around one project by one woman architect. Write 500-1,000 words to accompany the visual materials.

Present as a PDF.