



City-bound collective presents:

NEOutopia

November 26th - 27th
at the Centre for Creative Collaboration
16 Acton Street, London, Greater London, WC1X 9NG

NEOutopia is a collaborative research project centring on the problems of urban regeneration and utopia in the contemporary city. Initiated by City-bound – a cross-disciplinary collective of writers, artists and curators – the project exists as a collection of wall-based images, archival material and short films that relate to a fictional development plan for the area of Elephant & Castle in London.

As part of a 2-day event at the Centre for Creative Collaboration (C4CC), NEOutopia will be presented alongside a programme of talks and film screenings that complement, develop or challenge the ideas put forward by the project. With a focus on collaboration and discussion, City-bound's aim is to create an informal, yet intellectually engaged, event in which a variety of voices – from artists and academics, to writers, industry professionals and community activists – coalesce to consider the problems and possibilities of cities in today's neoliberal societies.

City
bound

ABOUT City-bound

City-bound is a cross-disciplinary collective of writers, academics, curators and practising artists. With particular interest in the problems and possibilities of cities, we produce and occupy interstices between realities and fictions; between the practices of communities and individuals, and the spaces created for them. Simultaneously acknowledging our fascination and frustration with everyday urban space, our work aims to reveal how cities both create and restrict social and spatial potentialities.

Through, and determined by, a simple curiosity in our surroundings, City-bound produce theoretically grounded projects that are presented in innovative or experimental ways. Oscillating between the fields of urban studies, critical spatial theory and visual cultures, our projects are materialised as live events, talks and exhibitions which openly acknowledge the collaborative nature of research and knowledge production. As such, our projects aim to dissolve the professional and epistemological distinctions between people involved or interested in the configuration of urban space and its aesthetic, cultural and social affects.

Central to City-bound's ambition is a desire to ignite and, to a certain extent, despecialise theory as an epistemological category. To us, theory is not merely a vehicle for articulating complex ideas; it offers opportunities for difference, experimentation and play that challenge the categories and claustrophobic conventions of everyday life in capitalist society. In this way, our work can be seen to destabilise the rhetoric of regeneration and debunk the myths of the global economy, by facilitating projects and events that test the givens of urban space and the needs and desires of those who use it.

More information: www.cityboundcollective.com

Contact: cityboundcollective@gmail.com

ABOUT NEOutopia

NEOutopia is a multi-faceted archive which reveals the problems of space with particular reference to urban regeneration and notions of utopia. Serendipitously discovered by two university lecturers in the year 2031, it is a fictional archive of collected fragments surrounding a proposed development plan created in 2011. Consisting of a 'Master Regeneration Plan', a DVD of found film footage, as well as marketing strategies, illustrative sketches and promotional imagery for NEOgate – a speculative mixed-use development designed to accommodate London's so-called 'Creative Class' – the fragments coalesce to create an intriguing, yet incomplete 'mapping' of a fictional 'neo-utopian' space that never came to fruition.

Inspired by the writings of theorists such as Henri Lefebvre, Doreen Massey and David Harvey, **NEOutopia** aims to expose the limits of utopian, architectural remedies and the proposed solutions of planners who, as Lefebvre suggests, fail to master the complex contortions and paradoxical properties of (social) space. Discussed through the fictive view point of two erudite academics, the project speaks of 'real space', 'blind fields' and the problematic relationship between the producers and inhabitants of space.

NEOutopia marks the culmination of a 2-month research residency at C4CC where City-bound members were offered a flexible space in which to develop this unique, multi-faceted project. Complemented by C4CC's focus on open innovation and cross disciplinary creativity, this collaborative event promises to provide a welcoming and unpretentious forum for debate, discussion and informal intellectual engagement.

About C4CC

C4CC is a neutral place where people from many different backgrounds - universities, large corporates, SMEs, freelancers - can work together on new things in the belief that real innovation happens at the edge and in the gaps between disciplines. The Centre for Creative Collaboration is an initiative of the University of London, working in collaboration with the Central School of Speech and Drama, Goldsmiths College, Royal Holloway and Complexity Partners (LLP). The project is also supported by the Higher Education Funding Council for England and by the London Development Agency.

More information: <http://www.creativecollaboration.org.uk/>

Find C4CC on Twitter: #c4cc

city-bound collective would like to extend a special thank you to:

Louis Moreno, Simon Harvey, Irit Rogoff, Bob Catterall, Samuel Kang Kim, Brian Condon, Debbie Davies and all the staff at C4CC, and all the speakers, artists and film-makers who have so kindly donated their work and time to make this event possible.

Programme: Saturday evening symposium – 6pm – 9.30pm

Each presentation will last for **10 - 15 minutes** and will be followed by a **5 minute period of discussion**.
A **30 minute 'floor discussion'** will be held at the end of the evening from 9pm, with some complimentary drinks provided.

Chair: **Emma Cummins** (city-bound collective)

6pm – 6.10pm

Welcome to *NEOutopia* at the Centre for Creative Collaboration
Sophie Nibbs (city-bound collective)

6.15pm – 6.30pm

NEOutopia
Katherine Stanley (city-bound collective)

6.35pm – 6.50pm

Poetry performance by *Angry Sam*
Sam Berkson



Sam is a performance poet based in Hackney. Since 2002, he has toured the UK and performed at festivals from Latitude, to Edinburgh, Hay-on-Wye, Secret Garden Party and Bestival. Sam also coordinates the Hackney branch of the successful performance poetry network, Hammer and Tongue. <http://www.hammerandtongue.co.uk/>

A series of Sam's poems are due to be published in the upcoming anthology *'Hackney: Acquired for Development By...'* in March next year. For more information see: www.hackneyinflux.com

For *NEOutopia*, Sam will perform a series of poems exploring the different realities and voices of London: from the corporate voice creating the truth of its visions, to those unrepresented voices struggling against, or threatened by, those visions; the voices whose conflicting truth is rarely heard in public discourse.

6.55pm – 7.10pm

On the Potential of Void
Francesco Sebregondi



Francesco is an architect and recent MA graduate from the Centre for Research Architecture at Goldsmiths College. His text *The Event of Void: Architecture and Politics in the Evacuated Heygate Estate* has recently been published in the department's online research archive. <http://www.mara-stream.org/research/the-event-of-void/>

For *NEOutopia*, Francesco will discuss how the Heygate Estate in Elephant & Castle presently exists as a dead piece of architecture – an empty corpse, a delimited void. Addressing the Heygate's recent exploitation as a factory of images, and exploring how the landscape thereby constructed operates, Francesco will assess the repressive/subversive potential of a void in the city. A direct intervention on its visible limits seeks to engage with the following problem: what are the conditions of *transformation* of the city, beyond its mere *regeneration*?

7.15pm – 7.30pm

The Hyperlieu: A Symbiotic Urbanity
Anisha Jogani



Anisha is an architectural designer, urbanist and curator. Anisha has recently completed a Masters degree at the Centre for Research Architecture at Goldsmiths College. Her text *The Ereignis & the Hyperlieu: A Symbiotic Urbanity* has recently been published in the department's online research archive. <http://www.mara-stream.org/research/the-ereignis-the-hyperlieu-a-symbiotic-urbanity-anisha-jogani/>

For *NEOutopia*, Anisha will discuss issues such as internal urban displacement and its spaces of exception, through a series of instances in cities of the global south and the post-colonies.

7.35 – 7.45pm

10 MINUTE BREAK

7.50pm – 8.05pm



'The City', Images and Post-urbanization
Bob Catterall

Bob is founder and Editor-in-Chief of the journal *City*, and the accompanying website <http://www.city-analysis.net>. *City* provides a crucial space for critical perspectives from around the world – on geography, urban studies, cities, culture, sociology and politics.

For *NEOutopia*, Bob will explore - with the help of Patrick Keiller's *Robinson in Ruins*- a small selection of photographs documenting recent socio-political events including the Greek Insurrection and Occupy Wall Street demonstrations.

8.10pm – 8.25pm

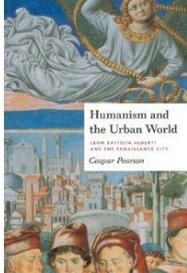


Acceptable Blockages
Matthew deKersaint Giraudeau

Matthew is an artist, writer and musician based in London. His recent exhibitions include 'Post-Industrial Revolution' at Wyspa Institute of Art, Gdańsk, Poland, 'Rhizomatic' at Departure Gallery, London, and 'The Festival', a solo exhibition at the The Royal Standard Liverpool. Examples of his art, writing and film-based work can be viewed at: www.dekersaint.co.uk.

For *NEOutopia* Matthew will present a short lecture based upon an archive of images that document the small, strange structures that exist in every city in the world. The lecture will focus on a breakdown of the language of the materials used to create these temporary structures, and a meditation on what the acceptance of these small, un-public spaces means in an age of constant re-development and regeneration.

8.30 pm – 8.45pm



Towards an Urban Middle Ages
Caspar Pearson

Caspar is a lecturer at the University of Essex, specialising in the art and architecture of the Italian Renaissance. He is author of *Humanism and the Urban World: Leon Battista Alberti and the Renaissance City*.

For *NEOutopia*, Caspar will discuss the themes of rebirth, regeneration and renewal; ideas that are constantly cited in the discourse of urbanism. In particular, he will explore the concept of 'renaissance', and the continuing influence of ideas about the Italian city-states on modern discussions regarding the city.

8.50 – 9.00pm

10 MINUTE BREAK

9.00pm – 9.30pm

FLOOR DISCUSSION

Programme: Sunday afternoon film screenings 3pm – 6.30pm

Each film will be followed by a short break, which will open space for comments and informal group discussion.

3pm – 3.30pm

Vertical Expectations, documentary 26mins
Simona Piantieri (2011)



Vertical Expectations is a short documentary that explores the nexus between architecture, development and society through an ethnographic analysis of the current building of the Shard in London Bridge. When completed in 2012, it will be the tallest building in the European Union and the 45th tallest building in the world.

Simona is a video artist and the owner of Simolab Creative AV. She has produced a wide variety of videos for museums and cultural institutions including the British Museum, the Science Museum, the Southbank Centre, BBC Big Screen, Corner House, the V&A, the Barbican Centre and the Museum of London.

<http://www.simolab-creativeav.co.uk/>

3.40 – 4.00pm

THE SQUARE, film, 20mins
Duncan Pickstock (2011)



The Square is a response to the events of early 2011 that became known as the Arab Spring. Confronting us with an array of reactions and impressions displaced from their original context, the film asks us to reappraise our own relationship with dissent, democracy and revolution.

Duncan is a London based artist and film maker whose work is broadly concerned with notions of belief and dissent. His films have been shown at many prominent cultural events and locations including The Freud Museum in London (2011), and 'The Believers', Thomas Hirschhorn's Biljmer-Spinoza Festival in Amsterdam (2009).

<http://www.duncanpickstock.co.uk>

4.10pm – 4.15pm

Ghost House, film, 5mins 10secs
Melanie Menard (2011)



Ghost House was shot at several abandoned houses in Ireland, whose last occupants most likely left between ten and thirty years ago. Traces of their lives and aspirations, and of the disillusionments and hardships that made them leave their homeland, remain in the form of scattered personal belongings.

Melanie is a digital artist who mainly works in photography and video. She investigates how an individual's mental state influences their perception of their experiences and surroundings, and the representation of space as psychologically and historically charged. In this year alone, Melanie has shown work at festivals such as the Brighton Photo Fringe Open '11, Optica Buenos Aires and the Adventures in Motion Festival at the BFI.

<http://www.melaniamenard.com/>

4.25pm – 4.40pm

Flood Light, film, 12mins 32secs
Constantine Gras (2010)



Flood Light is a poetic journey of discovery into the history of the Grand Union Canal and Westway (A40), inter-related transport and built environments in West London. A search through archives and museums leads to personal reflections on childhood, identity and the legacy of the artist's father; a Polish refugee who as a carpenter contributed to the rebuilding of post-war London.

Constantine is a multi-media artist whose interests include acoustic ecology, urban studies, migrant communities and identity in the context of the diaspora. He has worked with organisations including Arts Council England, Fuji Film, the V&A Museum and the London Metropolitan Archives.

<http://web.me.com/cgras>

4.50pm – 5.00pm



Disruptive Histories: Tatlin Tower, digital video, 9mins 19secs
Matthew deKersaint Giraudeau (2010)

Disruptive Histories: Tatlin Tower is a collaboration with the artists and activists Penny Whiteread and Daniel Simpkins that makes reference to the utopian building envisioned, but never built, by the Russian artist and architect Vladimir Tatlin.

Matthew is an artist, writer and musician based in London whose interests include the ideologies involved in urban regeneration and the psychology of political ideology. His recent exhibitions include 'Post-Industrial Revolution' at Wyspa Institute of Art, Gdańsk, Poland, 'Rhizomatic' at Departure Gallery, London, and 'The Festival', a solo exhibition at the The Royal Standard Liverpool.
www.dekersaint.co.uk

5.10 – 5.25



116 Coldharbour, film, 15mins
gethan&myles (2011)

116 Coldharbour is part of *Home*, a large participatory art project focusing on a new development on Coldharbour Lane in London. The film is a beautiful, complex, multi-layered representation of a community through the things they hold dear.

gethan&myles are collaborative artists and writers who have created several projects examining community, utopian visions, regeneration and identity. More information about their work can be found at: <http://gethanandmyles.blogspot.com/>

5.35 -5.45



Demonstration & Demolition, documentary, 9mins 56 secs
Archive for Change (2011)

Demonstration & Demolition documents an interview with Nicky & Steve Riches, who lived in Denton Gardens during the 1990s when 'Going for Growth', a radical urban regeneration scheme, was introduced. Going for Growth was a radical urban planning scheme that affected both the West End and East End of Newcastle. In this interview, they outline the politics of the scheme and the impact it had on their home, family and community.

Archive for Change is a film archiving project that aims to gather and exhibit some of the many stories of urban change from the West End of Newcastle upon Tyne, site of one of the largest regeneration areas in the UK. <http://archiveforchange.org/>

5.55 – 6.25



The Road to Blaydon (Parts 1&2), 30 mins
Archive for Change (1968)

The Road to Blaydon is a beautiful Tyne Tees production unearthed from the Northern Region Film & Television Archive (NRFTA). The programme chronicles the regeneration of Scotswood Road from the point of view of residents and small businesses affected by the changes. Interspersed with some dry comedy moments from the Tyne Tees Studio, this film shows another side to the glossy media frontage of early regeneration schemes in the UK.
<http://archiveforchange.org/>