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The Future of the Already Built

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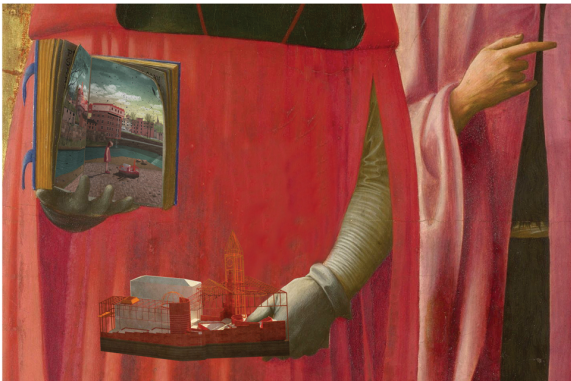
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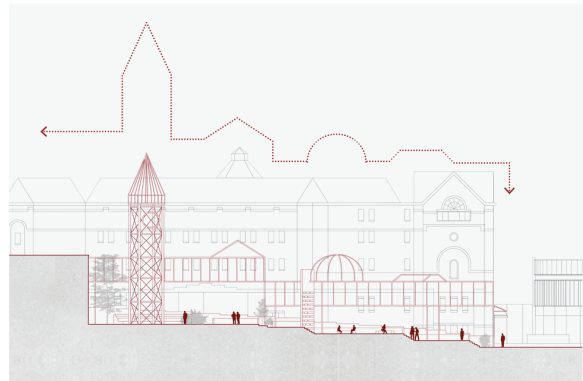
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The University of Westminster
The School of Architecture and Cities

The Future of the Already Built



From 'Saint Jerome & John The Baptist' Painting By Masaccio, 1428-9



Section from Bell Street Competition, our first intervention in Rochdale



Natura Morta 1939, G. Morandi



Massing Study @ 1500

Continuity in Architecture: Rochdale Reimagined 2019 by students Zhou and Ives

PhD by Published Work
Sally Helen Stone

Supervisors: Dr Ro Spankie and Dr Kate Jordan
October 2023

Declaration: I confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.

Sally Stone, February 2024

The Future of the Already Built

I believe a lot in the revelatory capacity of reading...if one is able to interpret the meaning of what has remained engraved, not only does one come to understand when this mark was made and what the motivation behind it was, but one also becomes conscious of how the various events that have left their mark have become layered, how they relate to one another and how, through time, they have set off other events and have woven together our history.

Giancarlo de Carlo, 1990¹

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¹ Zuchi, B. *Giancarlo De Carlo*; Butterworth Architecture, Oxford, UK, 1992

At the risk of sounding too partisan and biased, I would say that even in historic times documents were not always available, and buildings (monuments, vernacular constructions, and public works) are themselves important texts, often providing the first and most lasting impression of a culture.

Jorge Silvetti²

ABSTRACT

The submitted publications, projects, and commentary demonstrates the foundation of a sustained forward-thinking approach to the development of the existing built environment, combined with innovation in the pedagogical approach to the teaching of architecture, adaptive reuse, and interiors. I am one of the first authors to discuss adaptive reuse as a stand-alone theoretical and pedagogical subject, rather than as a peripheral adjunct to architecture or interiors, as such I have received global recognition as an authority on the subject. This emphasis upon future of the already built is supported by publications and projects that cross the boundary between installation-art, architecture, interiors, and adaptive reuse. It is further reinforced by publications about the directly connected pedagogy.

This body of work demonstrates an acute grasp of the shifting social, cultural, and ecological contexts within which the subjects of architecture and interiors are understood and taught, while also reflecting the future-orientated, sustainable, and cultural heritage informed nature of the disciplines in the twenty-first century. The basis of my contribution to the understanding of the *Future of the Already Built* is development of the principles of adaptive reuse, the creation of a methodology for adaptive reuse as a recognised architectural practice, the construction of a proven pedagogical system for the teaching of architecture, adaptive reuse, and interiors, and from these, the development of a definition for the adaptive reuse.

² Silvetti, J., *Interactive Realms*, in von Hoffman. Ed. Form, Modernism and History. Cambridge, 1996

OUTPUTS

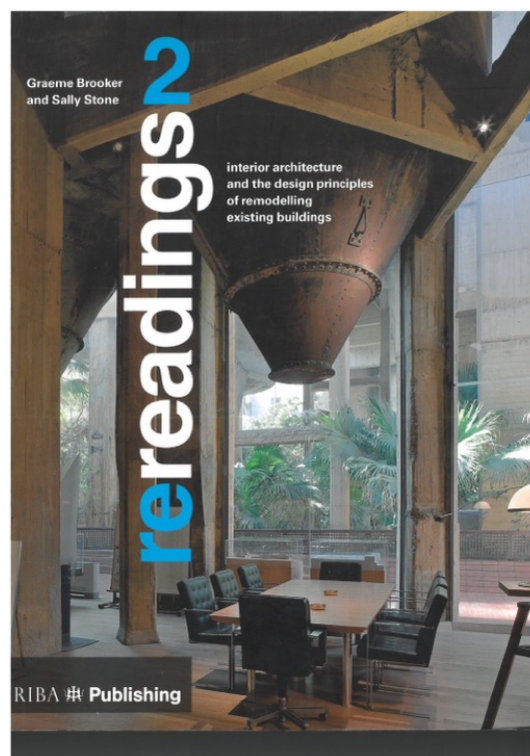
... theme should not retain its distance from the spectator, it should be brought close to him, penetrate and leave an impression on him...

Herbert Bayer³

OUTPUT 1:

ReReadings: The Principles of Interior Architecture and the Reuse of Existing Buildings Volume 2, RIBA Enterprises, London, 2018.

With Graeme Brooker



This is the second of two volumes, and within this book, we endeavour to develop the concept of adaptive reuse / interior architecture further than was possible in Volume 1 - with discussions of sustainability, digital design, methods of occupation and widening geographical scope. This pushes the argument beyond the normal bounds of architecture and interiors and embraces many of the cross-disciplinary and diverse aspects of the subject.

³ Bayer, H. 1937 Fundamentals of Exhibition Design. Rare Division Books. 1937.P.17

When the first volume was published it broke new ground, it proposed ideas that although part of a continuity, were quite radical. The urgency of the book combined with the lack of easily available information meant that it has a very Western focus. There were few case-study projects beyond Europe and the USA. The reflection made possible by the decade and a half between the publication of the two volumes allowed for a more relaxed and inclusive approach to the selection of case-studies. Diversity is demonstrated through the selection of the projects. The focus is still predominantly European, but projects in Malaysia, China, Japan, Taiwan, Brazil, and Australia are also presented.

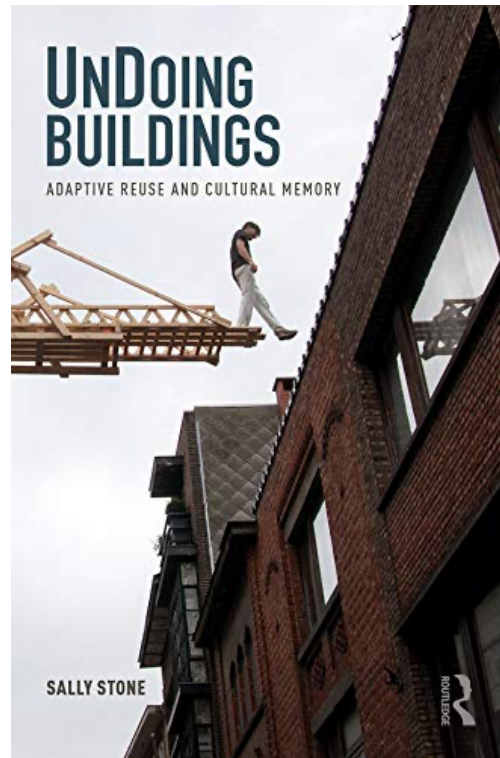
ReReadings 1 and 2 address the zeitgeist of the twenty-first century – the imperative to provide for everyone’s basic needs without damaging the planet, to stop uncontrolled expansion on green-field sites, to embrace different ideas and cultures, and to understand the importance of environmentally sound development. *ReReadings Volume 2* makes clear that the process is intrinsically sustainable; that the three tenets of sustainability are a fundamental part of adaptive reuse. It built upon the urgent need for densification - unlimited horizontal development is no longer ecologically acceptable, therefore the built environment must learn how to build in on itself, to become more dense, more compact and more productive. Community sustainability is reinforced through the retention of structures and the lack of decimation of existing community patterns, thus, the collective memories that are tied up in the place are not lost. Economic sustainability is supported through a reduction in fuel bills, the promotion of a skilled workforce, the attraction of built heritage, and the not uncontroversial process of gentrification, while environmental sustainability is shown through the retention of embodied energy, and the use of environmentally friendly materials and processes.

When I reflect upon this output, I am undoubtedly pleased with the manner in which it pushes the adaptive reuse agenda, the diverse collection of case-studies and the inclusion of an extra chapter specifically dedicated to sustainability. The production values are high, the illustrations are very good, and the buoyancy of the first book is reflected in the second.

OUTPUT 2:

UnDoing Buildings: Adaptive Reuse and Cultural Memory, Routledge, 2020

Single Author Book



The book is based upon the accumulation of 30 years of my research and teaching; the synthesis of this developed position is contained within 13 chapters plus an introduction. Each section develops an argument or position, which is expanded and illustrated through discussed examples. This collects intersectional research about sustainability, digital, spatial agency, architectural and urban approach, conservation, detailing, history, occupation, and installation art.

UnDoing Buildings: Adaptive Reuse and Cultural Memory uses extensive research sources from the primary evidence of the buildings themselves, to personal interviews, and archival materials. It is organised as a series of discussions, which begins as a critically researched comprehensive overview of the history, theory, and methodology of the reuse of existing buildings and situations, and progresses into the intimate details of remodelling the existing situation. Thus, the first chapters provide an outline of the interdisciplinary practice, the history of the subject, and the different methodologies employed

in the practice. The second part of the monograph is dedicated to cross-disciplinary connections. Building reuse is a relatively young practice, and as such encompasses many different aspects and networks, so this part includes chapters on critically important issues such as the connection between adaptation and sustainability, smartness⁴, and inter-disciplinary areas such as installation art and spatial agency. The final chapters concentrate upon the more traditional aspects of architecture such as conservation, materials, construction and detailing.

The book argues that the proactive remodelling is a healthy and environmentally friendly approach. Issues of heritage, conservation, sustainability, and smartness are at the forefront of architectural discussions, and adaptive reuse of buildings and situations offers the opportunity to reinforce the particular character of an area using modern-day digital and construction techniques for a contemporary population. Issues of collective memory and identity combined with ideas of tradition, history and culture mean that it is possible to retain a sense of continuity with the past as a way of creating the future. Each section develops an argument or position, which is expanded then is illustrated through examples and studies.

The nature of this book allowed discussion about adaptive reuse to be developed much further than was possible in ReReadings. The depth of argument is more expanded and explicit, and there are significant, culturally relevant, and timely ideas discussed.

⁴ A smart city is a place where traditional networks and services are made more efficient with the use of digital solutions for the benefit of its inhabitants and business. A smart city goes beyond the use of digital technologies for better resource use and less emissions. It means smarter urban transport networks, upgraded water supply and waste disposal facilities and more efficient ways to light and heat buildings. It also means a more interactive and responsive city administration, safer public spaces and meeting the needs of an ageing population. https://commission.europa.eu/eu-regional-and-urban-development/topics/cities-and-urban-development/city-initiatives/smart-cities_en (accessed 27.02.2024)

OUTPUT 3:

UnDoing: Exhibition at the Manchester Castlefield Gallery 2019.

With Laura Sanderson



Undoing Exhibition Opening, Castlefield Gallery, March 2019

Sally Stone

This exhibition opened at almost the same time as the monograph *UnDoing Buildings: Adaptive Reuse and Cultural Memory* was published. This fortuitous collision was something that evolved rather than being deliberately planned. The curatorial approach developed through my publications was exploited in the curation of *UnDoing*. I had previously, of course, curated many student exhibitions, both on and off campus, but this was an opportunity to use my research to select, organise, and display, thus create the event of knowledge.

There were two driving factors for the *UnDoing* exhibition: places of previous occupation and the city of Manchester, UK; for it was important that the qualities of surrounding constructed environment were an explicit part of the exhibition. This was combined with attitudes towards existing structures and places – from the future-thinking architectural process of adaptive reuse to the creative interpretation of places of previous occupation.

Carefully selected architects, designers and artists were invited to contribute – those who pursued a particularly contextual approach; whose practice explored the manner in which buildings, places and artefacts are re-used, reinterpreted, and remembered. This ranged from extraordinary architectural propositions, memories of the legendary Haçienda nightclub, artwork created from discovered and manipulated photographs, a celebrated window from Wittgenstein’s Hut, and importantly, the reuse of the remnants of the previous exhibition.

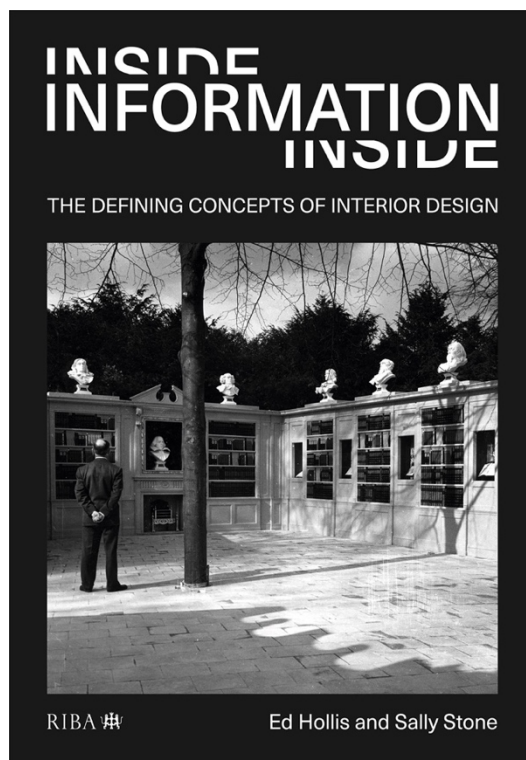
Through the act of curation this research uncovered a series of different approaches to constructed sites and existing buildings, from the layered juxtaposition found in a number of the artworks, the refusal to undo, the intervention of new elements in architectural works, to academic projects that examined even more abstract themes - like imagined futures and spaces now lost. Curation offered the opportunity to consider works of architecture and works of design through the same lens, it allowed for direct comparisons to be made, and the influence of one upon the other to be comprehended. *UnDoing* exploited this by not just placing these works next to each other but using one to frame another and allowing new themes to arise. The juxtaposition and new classifications created by the exhibition encouraged visitors to look at art, architecture and the city in a different way, to grasp the direct relationship between the qualities of the city and the exhibits. It also reinforced the idea of sustainable adaptation by commissioning an artist to reuse the structures that had been made to support the previous exhibition. The exhibition discussed how the process of examination that the architect employs is similar to that the artist may use; it is about the understanding of a place, and from this synthesis, creative interpretation. However, despite the similarities in the starting position, the elucidation developed by the artist can be vastly different to that of the architect.

UnDoing was supported by a catalogue and a series of curated walks.

OUTPUT 4:

Inside Information: the Defining Concepts of the Interior, RIBA Publications, 2022.

With Ed Hollis



This book explores the nature and meaning of the interior through 26 stories, each with its own focus, yet with considerable overlap, and woven into the fabric of this are threads of discussion about adaptive reuse.

The storytelling format was liberating. Stories have a beginning, middle and end, as opposed to a narrative, which is open-ended with the possibility of being infinite. The stories discuss ideas but don't offer exact definitions; they contextualise these ideas and attitudes. Today nearly all information is accessible just by pressing a few buttons on a phone or computer, but there is a lack of contextualisation of this information, of how it relates to other knowledge in the great array of information in the world. So, the contents of the book are carefully curated, and the story-telling manner of each chapter means that way it is read depends upon the previous experiences of the reader. This liberates it from the normal sequential driven narratives to create an opportunity for further exploration.

This shows that interiors in not an isolated subject, but it is fundamentally related to the way in which the earth is inhabited. So, for example, “Chapter 14: Commons”, connects the public interior of the shopping mall or airport to the arcade, the development of which is intrinsically related to: the infrastructural development of drains, women’s suffrage, the privatisation of public space, the Napoleonic wars, the banking industry, Non-Place, and the Nolli-plan of Rome. Similarly, “Chapter 4: Quotidian”, begins with an examination of the Northern-European Beguinage – a radical community of women from the mid-second millennium, then moves through the political and social focus of ergonomics, 21st century gender-mainstreaming, before calling for a more inclusive design approach.

All the stories are generated by a specific aspect of interiors yet provide information that enables the reader to comprehend the encompassing nature of the subject and situate it within a wider social and cultural aspect. The themes do not retain distance from the reader but are intended to bring them closer and leave an impression.

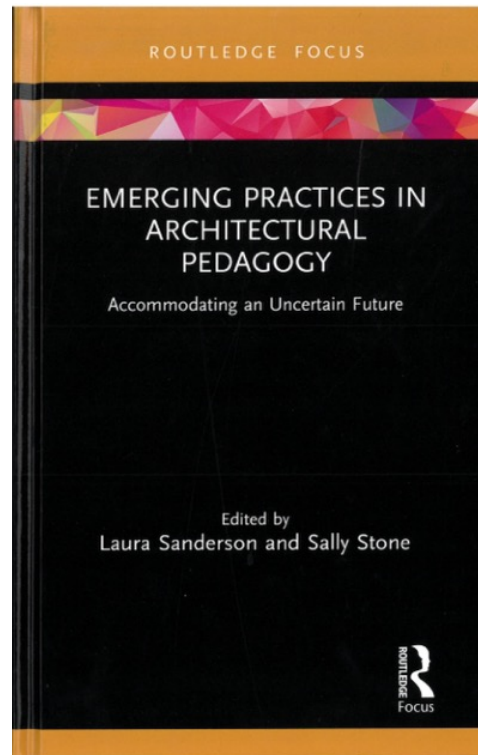
This book was a long time in discussion, maybe 10 years from first casual conversations to publication.⁵ The process was much more egalitarian than the previous co-authored outputs, and selective - each partner discussing practices closer to own interests and obsessions. My reflection is that the quality of the production of this book is beautiful, the full-page images that bleed from the page provide the book with a contemporary and generous quality. The editor was exacting, insisting upon the 2000-word limit for each chapter – which means there are no flabby descriptions, no long explanations, the stories are acute and focussed. I do think that working with such an erudite co-author, whose interests did not always overlap with mine allowed the structure of the book to be more expansive. Discussion between us was about subject matter rather than quality of the prose.

⁵ Initially the idea was to create a lexicon, so intense and productive conversations attempting to define interiors through 26 non-explicit words were held over brandy on the long night of the 2014 Scottish Independence Referendum. (18.09.2014) RIBA Publications had been pursuing me for the next book, so the proposal was developed directly with the commissioning editor, although it was still sent out for peer-review.

OUTPUT 5:

Emerging Practices in Architectural Education: Accommodating an Uncertain Future, Routledge, 2020

With Laura Sanderson



This output discusses the pedagogical approach of my atelier *Continuity in Architecture* at the Manchester School of Architecture. The atelier is research informed and outward facing, and reflections upon a decade of student projects form the basis for the “Introduction” and “Chapter 5: Pedagogy + Policy: Rochdale Reimagined” (of 6) in the edited book.

The theme of the book is based upon this approach. The substantial introduction was an opportunity for an expansive discussion about the future of architectural education. The discussion highlights how much architectural education is changing; inclusive practices, wicked problems⁶, participation, cooperation, and

⁶ A wicked problem is a social or cultural problem that’s difficult or impossible to solve because of its complex and interconnected nature. Wicked problems lack clarity in both their aims and solutions, and are subject to real-world constraints which hinder risk-free attempts to find a solution. <https://www.interaction-design.org/literature/article/wicked-problems-5-steps-to-help-you-tackle-wicked-problems-by-combining-systems-thinking-with-agile->

problem-based-learning. Schools of architecture and design are laboratories for exploration and as such they have a responsibility to provide a workshop as well as a studio in which to extrapolate futures.

My chapter, *Pedagogy and Policy: Rochdale Reimagined* discusses the use of the *Remember Reveal Construct*⁷ methodology of the atelier, but develops this further through an exploration of the research-through-design practices conducted by the students. Research-through-design is an activity signified by the gathering of insights about an object of research; the aim of this process is the collection of knowledge. This knowledge is then analysed and appropriated through the actual design process. Thus, knowledge is gained through the analytical process of design rather than the pure collection of facts. This activity is a mixture of peer-to-peer conversations, interactive discussions, and shared experiences combined with continual reiteration of the process of designing itself; that is, answering the design question and producing an architectural proposal. As part of learning process, the practise of design, a fundamental part of the architectural culture, becomes the first and most significant area of investigation. Its informal structure and the lack of parameters based on the relationship between performance and results means that the creative process is prioritised over the quality of the final product.⁸

The discussion describes the approach to the complex problems of heritage and context which was refined through a decade of funded knowledge-exchange projects with strategic external partners including neighbourhood planning groups, town councils, and other pressure groups to help understand the opportunities connected with the redevelopment of towns around Manchester; this included the problem of the future of the High Street. These stakeholder partners included Rochdale, Bradford, Bollington, Shrewsbury, Accrington, and Preston. The projects not only delivered high-quality outcomes for students, added value to the economy and society, and have influenced relevant policy. Other key professionals were invited to contribute as consultants to the

methodology#:~:text=A%20wicked%20problem%20is%20a,attempts%20to%20find%20a%20solution.
(accessed 27.02.2024)

⁷ This is expanded upon in the commentary

⁸ EAAE Charter on Architectural Research at <http://www.eaae.be/about/statutes-and-charter/eaae-charter-architectural-research/2012> [last accessed January 2021], 2012, 148.

⁸ Ibid, 19.

individual stages of the project. These cross-disciplinary collaborations included geographers, archaeologists, historians, poets, preservationists, as well as local architects, planners, and designers. The key stakeholders also made a highly important contribution, the residents of the place of architectural interest under investigation, members of the town council, planners, and developers all of whom have vested interest in the place and were included in the mapping, design and the knowledge generation process.

This research has effected positive change, and some examples of the impacts that have been created are, firstly, the 2020-21 connections with Bradford established a strong relationship with the City of Culture bidding team. This extended to a large exhibition of the student work, plus catalogue, in the gallery beneath their city-centre headquarters. This was in a key position for the judges to examine and contributed towards the City of Culture award. In 2019-20 we worked by invitation with Rochdale Town Council. Their Heritage Action Zone grant funded us to develop a series of creative projects that investigated the qualities of the immediate neighbourhood. The student projects were exhibited in the Town Library, encouraged local people to expect more from their built environment, and the council used many of the ideas generated as the basis for their discussions with developers. While Bollington Town Council chose to implement ideas developed by my atelier to create traffic calming measures and public spaces in the town centre, thus creating a much more sustainable and people-friendly environment.

This pedagogical research extends further than this edited book and chapter to include keynote presentation at the *Teaching Learning Research* conference (2020) plus the published proceedings (edited by Sanderon, L. and me): *Teaching-Learning-Research* conference (2021). Two further book chapters document projects: “Oddments and Epigrams: The Neighbourhood Planning Agenda for Bollington in Housing Solutions Through Design” (2017), and “The Way We Live Now: How Architectural Education can support the Urban Development of Small Settlements”. (2018)

COMMENTARY

Fragments of a vessel which are to be glued together must match one another in the smallest details, although they need not be like one another. In the same way a translation, instead of resembling the meaning of the original, must lovingly and in detail incorporate the original's mode of signification, thus making both the original and the translation recognizable as fragments of a greater language, just as fragments are part of a vessel.

Walter Benjamin⁹

INTRODUCTION

This curated collection of outputs has built into an assemblage of likeminded but not necessarily identical projects that have developed a meaningful trajectory through the architectural and interiors debate of the early twenty-first century. This has generated a mature compilation of discussions that gather influences from a multitude of linked subjects around the theme of the future of the already built environment.

My 2013 edited publication, *From Organisation to Decoration: An Interiors Reader*¹⁰ discusses how interiors can generally be divided into three areas: “decoration”, “design” and “architecture”. This does approximately encompass the different aspects of the subject of interiors; from the decoration of spaces, the selection of finishes to issues of diversity and methods of occupation; through branding especially retail and office design; to interior architecture, that is, the remodelling of existing buildings. My body of work crosses these divisions, most of it is positioned within interior architecture or adaptive reuse as it is now generally known (and is discussed later), but the book: *Inside Information: The Defining Aspects of Interior Design*¹¹ includes many of the more ephemeral aspects of the subject.

⁹ Benjamin, W. (1996) *Selected Writings: Volume 1 1913-1926*. M. Bullock & M.W. Jennings (Eds). Cambridge MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University, 1996, p. 260

¹⁰ Brooker, G. and Stone, S. *From Organisation to Decoration: An Interiors Reader*. Routledge, Oxon, 2013

¹¹ Hollis, E. and Stone, S. *Inside Information: The Defining Aspects of Interior Design*, RIBA Publishing, London, 2022.

The common link throughout my body of work is the connection with place: discussions of place as a design and a pedagogical tool. The idea that the authenticity of place, the reality of a tangible situation, and the sensory connection with the actual physical certainty of somewhere substantial and quantifiable can not only create a connection with the past but can also generate a new future. In an anxious world of continual surveillance, virtual realities that are not necessarily real, and the uncertainty that the advent of AI brings, this connection with the actual physical situation of a definite place provides a sense of certainty that is not often readily available elsewhere. Adaptive reuse and the design of the interior creates a real connection with place; the relationship is real and tangible, it is authentic and contains certitude.

Adaptive reuse and the design of the interior respond to the situation that they are directly connected with. This is both a tangible physical connection with the material reality of the environment, and also with the intangible collection of forces that have formed it. Whether these are cultural, climatic or geographical, man-made or natural, they are elements that make up the situation of the place, they inform its character and the way in which people react to it. The crisis within the contemporary city¹² means that continued horizontal development can no longer be supported; the built environment needs to build in on itself, to be more dense, more productive, and more resilient. Buildings, situations, neighbourhoods are in a continual state of flux, they are altered, updated, maybe rehabilitated, but rarely do they exist in a state of unchanging permanence; the built environment is continually evolving. This incessant renewal is an opportunity to accommodate the needs and aspirations of those who occupy the place, hopefully before they even realise that they need the change. The connection with place as exemplified by how intricately these elements are linked together, how this connection can create a ripple through the continuity of existence, and how it can build a better future.

This idea that the built environment, which initially appears to be permanently fixed in an unchanging static and immobile state, and yet is actually a constantly evolving entity, hurrying from one manifestation to the next to avoid the process

¹² Madden, D. *Polycritical City?*, City, 2023, DOI: [10.1080/13604813.2023.2232682](https://doi.org/10.1080/13604813.2023.2232682)

of petrification was discussed by the Irish architect John Tuomey. He suggests that “when we say that we think of a building as a permanent thing, that is not to say it must stand intact forever or that it cannot be changed”.¹³ Throughout history, places, buildings and situations have been reused and adapted: they can survive as cultures and civilisations change. The city is created as layers of archaeology, formed one upon another - a palimpsest of discourse, alterations and networks. The buildings may radically change, but the underlying nature of the place is still present within the street patterns, the position of the river, the direction of the wind, the predominant patterns of the surrounding hills, the building materials and the accents and the actions of the residents. Tuomey then deliberates upon this relationship with the past by invoking Seamus Heaney, who:

“has described one function of memory as a kind of disassembly and remaking of the past in which parts of our history are dismembered in order to be remembered in a way which is useful to our present.”¹⁴

My research and publications have built upon a diverse collection of influences, binding together traditional and non-traditional architectural stimuli to create a coherent body of work. The impetus for the ordering and dissemination of these evolving ideas was generated through my teaching. The process for the systematic enquiry into the future of the already built was rigorously developed and tested within the enquiring yet controlled atmosphere of the design studio: *Continuity in Architecture*. Despite the growing interest in the practice of adaptive reuse at the time of my first publications, the available literature was limited. To fulfil my teaching and research demands, I had to search out sources that could be adapted to my needs, that discussed other areas and yet were appropriate to the subject. These motivating texts, buildings, interiors, artifacts, and artistic approaches shaped my sustained approach to the development of the already built.

¹³ Tuomey, John. *Architecture, Craft and Culture*. Gandon Editions. 2004. P. 31.

¹⁴ Ibid.

Continuity in Architecture: Teaching Informed Research

The methodology expounded in my first internationally distributed book, *ReReadings: Volume 1*, and then refined over further publications, was generated by research-informed-teaching, and teaching-informed-research.



Continuity in Architecture: Rochdale Reimagined 2019 by students Zhou and Ives

This research and design approach was developed at the Manchester School of Architecture, within my post-graduate atelier, “Continuity in Architecture”. I established the atelier in the mid-1990s and it demonstrates the intersection of my research with the academic programme. The atelier is based in a school of architecture, and yet the sustained focus is on the sustainable evolution of the historic built environment – with particular attention to adaptive reuse and interiors, combined with master-planning and limited new constructions.¹⁵

Continuity in Architecture (1993-2023) was a post-graduate studio for teaching, research, knowledge exchange, and professional activity. It was research informed, outward facing, and professionally aligned, and as a research group it contained up to 80 students, 8 academics, plus visiting professionals all of whom contributed to the work produced. Importantly the approach went beyond the university studio to sustain the students throughout their professional lives. This means that approximately 1500 professional architects in Manchester and beyond, have used and many still do use the Continuity in Architecture methodology to develop the built environment.

¹⁵ Just two years ago professors from universities in Sheffield and Tampere published an article about the need for change in architectural education, specifically how accreditation bodies and regulators should use rapid and firm action to ensure that adaptive reuse is included in all education agendas. This situation is compounded by a recent article in *Architects Journal* (06.12.2022) bemoaning the number of students who did not engage with modifications to existing buildings. I have been teaching this to my students for 30 years!

Continuity in Architecture is a concept that has its roots in *contextualism* – which is a methodology rather than a style¹⁶. It is an approach to the development and redevelopment of the built environment that uses the process of understanding and analysis of the nature and the qualities of place to develop new elements. The original building or site is investigated as an intense collection of tangible and intangible elements, an assembly of real and virtual parts that gather together to form a coherent image of the structure or place, and it is to these that the interventions of redevelopment and reuse respect and respond. The reading of the original, that is the analysis and understanding of the existing is a distinct and necessary process that provides the project with substantial depth and the impetus for an intense coalescence of architecture with the world. This analysis embraces things that are nearby and far away. The account that is created from these forms a narrative or impetus for redevelopment. So, the physical or actual reality of the appearance of the building may begin the story but buried within the character or virtuality of the structure is the information that completes the tale. “Purely actual objects do not exist. Every actual surrounds itself with a cloud of virtual images.”¹⁷ The *virtual* cloud of ideas and the physical *actual* are partners in the construction of the idea of the whole (or what is referred to as the *real*). Thus, the individual narrative of the building is a collection of different factors, some physically apparent, others virtually real.

Within the atelier I encouraged my students and colleagues to look beyond architecture: to search out precedents from other fields; to study interiors, arts and heritage; to connect with subjects on the periphery of architecture such as installation art, public art, land art, as well as to embrace literature, history, heritage, and geography, hospitality and tourism; to study the environment and welcome sustainability.

This research and design methodology proposes a close reading of place before making changes to the built environment. The process is broken into easily understandable steps, which then informs the subsequent remodelling of the

¹⁶ Kate Nesbitt recounts Schumacher’s recollection that Contextualism is a conflation of Context and Texture. The term he suggested, was first used by Steven Hurtt and Stuart Cohen. In (ed) Nesbitt, K. *Theorizing a New Agenda for Architecture an Anthology of Architectural Theory 1965-1995*, Princeton Architectural Press. New York. 1996, P. 294

¹⁷ Gilles Deleuze and Claire Parnet, *Dialogues II*; Columbia University Press, 2002, p.148.

building, site, or environment. To aid the students, I developed a motto. It is a three-step seemingly simple mantra; a little saying that explains the educational process, is appropriate to use within every situation or project, and also serves to sustain the designer or architect throughout their professional life: “Remember Reveal Construct”.¹⁸

Remember the characteristics of the site, look closely at the attributes, explore the nature of what is there, examine the place and find out what it is saying.

Reveal the situation, analyse the findings of the investigation, and discover what it means. Use these to exploit the very qualities of the situation.

Construct new elements that are appropriate to the situation, that heighten the experience of what is there, that become part of the continual evolution of the place.

This approach goes beyond the educational establishment to support the active learning community when they enter the profession, thus the generation of architects that I have taught are using and transferring this approach and,

¹⁸ Remember Reveal Construct, conference presentation, REHAB 2019, Guimaraes

Remember generates an argument for site reading at various scales as a process for the design of architecture and interiors. The main source of this architecture is the place itself. It reflects upon the persistence, usefulness and emotional resonance of particular places and structures. It looks at the qualities of places that have persisted and propose a reading of place that stresses the permanence of tradition as the subject of architecture. Tradition in architecture, in this context, is the embodied meaning of buildings and cities produced by centuries of lived experience. Embodied meaning can be interpreted through building. Discovery and recognition are a vital part of the design process – the architect and the designer have a duty to carefully analyse and describe a place before altering it. Thus the legibility of architecture be increased through the establishment of continuity with situation and place.

Reveal concentrates the process of the interpretation the notion of site. The tactics employed within the construction of a new building or situation, or the adaptation of an existing one can be seen as the manipulation of the elements or details in support of the strategy. These elements are an expression of the use and of the character of a building. It is these elements that distinguish or make different one place from another. They provide character; they define the quality and provide the features of a building. It is this tactical deployment of them that gives the building its individual nature in response to the site. How an architect or designer choose what elements of site are useful are pragmatically and poetically relevant to the final building.

Construct means the methodology of implementation, how architects and designers have constructed buildings that meet the needs of the contemporary user and use technology and construction methods of the twenty first century yet retain the direct connection with place. Construct includes the cultural, economic, sustainable, and technological challenges of the design of site-specific projects around the world. It includes detailed design, materials and surfaces. Construct in a university setting also includes the construction of the means of communication, including models and drawings that also convey the inherent meaning of the context.

significantly this methodology has formed the highly influential basis for the organisation of a number of my books.

*ReReadings (Vol 1)*¹⁹ was written as a direct response to the lack of accessible information available for the students in *Continuity in Architecture* that was specifically about the process of adapting existing buildings. I needed to be able to reference publications that not only discussed the subject in a theoretical manner, but also methodically explained the process. *ReReadings Volume 1* which was published in 2004, took the “Remember-Reveal-Construct” methodology as the basis for the organisation of the book. The structure maps directly onto this motto, so Remember generated the Analysis chapter, Reveal produced Strategy, and Construct became Tactics. Each chapter is sub-divided, analysis is divided into the different categories of exploration that I provided for my students. While Strategy differs, it was generated through discussion with my co-author. This easy-to-follow methodological subdivision makes the book revolutionary because it provides an accessible template for the remodelling of existing buildings. It is a simple idea that disentangles the complex process so that it becomes straightforwardly accessible.²⁰

The pedagogical approach of the atelier also generated a number of research outputs. These discuss the place-based agenda of the atelier as an architectural and pedagogical tool, and describe the research-through-design process as a method that transforms particular design solutions into *objects of reflection*. This frames them within the wider context in order to generate more than just anecdotal claims based upon a particular project. Since design and research are inextricably linked, there is a direct relationship between knowledge production and the design process. Thus, the aim of a research-through-design project within a school of architecture is to construct knowledge through the acquisition of insight and understanding. Output 5, *Emerging Practices in Architectural Education: Accommodating an Uncertain Future* discusses this position.

¹⁹ Brooker, G. and Stone, S. *Re-Readings: The Principles of Interior Architecture and the Re-use of Existing Buildings*, RIBA Publishing, London, 2004, Reprinted 2010

²⁰ Chapter 1, ANALYSIS, is divided into: Form and Structure, Context and Environment, History and Function, and Future Function. Chapter 2 breaks the STRATEGY into degrees of relationship with the existing building, While Chapter 3 TACTICS discusses intimate detail and materials, it has eight sections. The final chapter examines six case-studies in detail using the analysis, strategy and tactics approach.

CURATION

Memory and anticipation are a forceful combination that create associations, connections, and affiliations. Places that exist and places that we imagine will exist, (or indeed we imagine did exist) induce a sense of melancholia; that is a longing for a half-forgotten past, for a time just before memory begins.

Stone and Sanderson, 2019²¹

Curation plays a significant role in my collection of published works. Firstly, within the individual books, especially those that are case-study based - each output gathers selected compatible contributions from seemingly diverse subject areas. While the chapter organised books are thematically driven, thus each chapter explores a different idea, and these are meticulously tied together through the curation process that underpins the book. The complete collection of publications and projects can also be regarded as being curated; assembled evidence that supports the argument defines all the research. These carefully curated arguments are a fundamental part of the discourse, and as such, both support the discussions and drive it. The early books developed a theme which is explored further within the later ones. This has generated a developed trajectory of discussions that gather influences from a collection of linked subjects around the theme of the future of the already constructed built environment.

Curation can be broadly defined as the action or process of selecting, organising, and looking after the items in a collection or exhibition. Bhaskar suggests that “Curation is where acts of selecting and arranging add value.”²² however, Liz Wells in her curation of Facing East asserts that:

“research comes to underpin curatorial *voice* which operates through initial definition of field and identification of key research questions, through selection of work, through the *theatre* of exhibition which is

²¹ Stone, S.; Sanderson, L. 2019. UnDoing: Buildings. Published in UnDoing, 2019. MSA Press.

²² Bhaskar, M. Curation: The Power of Selection in a World of Excess. Piakus, London. 2016. P 85

fundamental to rhetorical affects, and through ways in which the project and the work of individual artists is contextualised.”²³

This idea is also explored by Jane Rendell who compares the roles of the editor and the curator, stating that:

“... while texts and books traditionally prioritise sequence, where arrangements tend to be structured according to the *before* and the *after*, objects and sites allow for more spatial possibilities in arrangement, allowing multidirectional aspects of production and reception to come to the fore particularly through simultaneity and juxtaposition.”²⁴

Thus, exhibitions are greater than the mere display and dissemination of already existing artefacts, nor the reproduction of knowledge, but the “exhibition is a site for the generation of new knowledge”.²⁵ Therefore, and in a similar way to adaptive reuse, the purpose of an exhibition is to express ideas, to convey meaning across strict discipline boundaries, and to suggest new connections.

Curation is a three-part process. The first action is the selection of the object to be displayed, the second is the placement of the object within a new environment, and the third is the reclassification of that object within the new system. This three-part process was exploited in my publications and exhibitions. The precedent was selected because it exhibited specific characteristics, that I as the curator, found valuable. This was then placed within the new order of the book, thus, positioning it within a new order. However, there is a difference between curation and the curatorial act, that is, there is a shift between the setting up an exhibition and the actual event of that knowledge. The selected artefacts can be collected and displayed, but the manner in which they are received by the audience is a different experience.²⁶ My research has never only pursued architecture and interiors examples as the vehicles for study, but has always included art, literature, culture, and history.

²³ Wells, L. 2007. Curatorial Strategy as Critical Intervention: The Genesis of Facing East. Published in ‘Issues in Curating Contemporary Art and Performance’

²⁴ Rendell, J. 2007. Critical Spatial Practice: Curating, Editing, Writing. Published in ‘Issues in Curating Contemporary Art and Performance’ Rugg, J. & Sedgwick, M. (eds), 2007. Intellect Books.

²⁵ Macdonald, D. Basu, P. (eds) Exhibition Experiments Blackwell Publishing, 2007. P2

²⁶ Keynote presentation by Irit Rogoff, Exhibition as Interior, MIRC, Kingston 22.02.23

This supports the idea that the curator is always biased, always partial; they enforce their own agenda onto the objects that are displayed. The exhibition or publication is a vehicle for their agenda, to communicate the message that they want to convey, and the image they want to project. They create artificial assemblages brought together for the purpose of communicating a message; thus, disseminating knowledge; the meaning of which is situated both within the individual exhibits, and within the relationship between the exhibits. Thus, exhibitions are greater than the display and dissemination of already existing artefacts, nor the reproduction of information, but the creation of new knowledge.

Adaptive Reuse is a very young subject, and this lack of history allows for a wide acceptance of different influences. I have always considered this diverse basis as an asset. This mutability shows how the understanding and development of the subject can embrace the heterogeneous background. This desire to acknowledge and support the disparate basis is my partiality.

COLLABORATION

Buildings are not the rigid structures we take them for. They are always on the move.

Diana Rowntree²⁷

Four of the five considered outputs are collaborative.²⁸ Each was developed and implemented in association with a single partner. Collaborative research contains *dialogic turn*,²⁹ in that dialogue is created among participants with the aim of co-produced knowledge. Importantly, within this process, communication is not a one-way flow, that is, not from experts to less knowledgeable groups, but it is a collaboration or dialogue based upon different knowledge forms. It is the cyclical nature of the conversation or dialogue that is crucial to this process. So, collaboration can improve the way people work together and solve problems. This may lead to more innovation, efficient processes, increased success, and improved communication.

Collaborative research exists in two forms, *synchronous*, where interaction is in real time, and *asynchronous* where interaction is time-shifted. My collaborations contain both aspects. Initial discussions, planning and basic organisation used the synchronous approach, but the intense process of writing was conducted individually, with asynchronous discussions happening remotely.

ReReadings falls into this dual category. After initial discussions that generated the concept, research was conducted by both authors, some of which was written in note form by the co-author and then rewritten by me. In contrast, *Inside Information* contained much more individual and distinct contributions. It was developed synchronously, with initial place-based discussions; this developed the outline of the book, the chapter titles and very brief precis of chapter contents. The titles were then divided between the two authors based on interest and knowledge; my co-author was interested in the more conjectural aspects of the subject, while my curiosities were more architectural. The book

²⁷ Rowntree, D. *Interior Design: A Penguin Handbook*. Penguin. 1964. P. 114

²⁸ The word is derived from the Latin *com-* "with", and *laborare* "to labour", "to work".

²⁹ Phillips, L, Kristiansen, M, Vehviläinen, M & Gunnarsson, E (eds) 2012, *Knowledge and power in collaborative research: A reflexive approach*. Routledge Advances in Research Methods, Taylor & Francis. P. 240

was then developed asynchronously, via email discussions of the work in progress. However, the introduction and the final chapter were written as a team. The written documents were passed between the co-authors each adding or subtracting elements until both parties were content with the extent and the quality of the content. The exhibition *UnDoing* and the co-edited book *Emerging Practices in Pedagogy* were both created with an early career researcher, so although the collaboration did to a certain extent contain a dialogical turn, in practice the development was much less cyclical and more linear.

The synchronous nature of the initial discussions for the four outputs was extremely beneficial. Given that with all these outputs, the underlying knowledge of what was to be included was in place, but it was the way it was organised and displayed that became the subject of collaborative conversations. For example, the initial concept for *Inside Information* was developed over several conversations, while the determination of the exact contents took place over two intense days. All the subject areas to be included were collected on sticky labels, these were then systematically collated into 26 distinct groups. (Some areas were deliberately included in more than one group.) While the introduction and chapter in *Emerging Practices in Architectural Pedagogy* was based upon reflections upon 30 years of atelier teaching, and the *UnDoing* Exhibition was developed from the contents of the *UnDoing Buildings* and *ReReadings* books. Within these outputs it was the initial discussions, the development of the outline of the publication or exhibition that was highly collaborative, while the labour of writing the books or delivering the exhibition was a much more individual task.

MOTIVATION

As the space of collective memory, the city constructs itself as a material artefact.

Aldo Rossi



Manchester City Centre:
Townhall Extension and Library

<https://www.architectsjournal.co.uk/archive/aj-exclusive-ian-simpson-lands-prize-manchester-town-hall-job>
<https://manchesterhistory.net/manchester/tours/tour4/area4page5.html>



Manchester City Centre
The Arndale Centre

A collection of diverse influences generated the development of this informed methodology. The influence of Post-modern eclecticism meant that as a young Manchester based designer and academic, I was ready to embrace the environment of the already built, and therefore, beginning to question the primacy of new build construction. This change in attitude was also informed by an intransigent attitude by the building authorities in Manchester, who were determined not to repeat the mistakes of the recent past.

There was an extraordinary period for architectural development in Manchester, England, during the last couple of decades of the twentieth century. The massive influence of the heritage and conservation movements was felt throughout the city, for the city planners had deliberately made the decision that it was a red-brick Victorian environment. Developments that did not conform to this ideal were just not constructed. The city looked to its industrial past, to a time when Manchester was one of the most affluent and influential places on earth, of belonging to an almost mythical industrial society where everyone was happy and fulfilled in their shared community values.

However, this created opportunities to work with the existing built situation, to create radical new environments within the confines of the Victorian buildings.

It is easy to understand why the council had decided upon such an unreceptive path, one had only to look at the failure of such massive modernist utopias as the infamous Hulme Crescents and the huge fifteen acres blemish of the Manchester Arndale Centre, which was once described as the “biggest public toilet in Northern Europe”.³⁰ The council authorities were not prepared to risk anything like that happening again. Developments that were permitted to go ahead included Oxford Court, which is within a stone’s throw of such magnificent constructions as Alfred Waterhouse’s Town Hall and Vincent Harris’s Central Library. Oxford Court was constructed by Leach Rhodes and Walker in 1989, as a series of small self-contained brick three-storey offices that were designed to emulate the last few remaining original Georgian houses in the city. Such was the lack of confidence among the architectural community, that it felt at the time that these were greeted with both approval and relief.



Manchester: Red Brick City

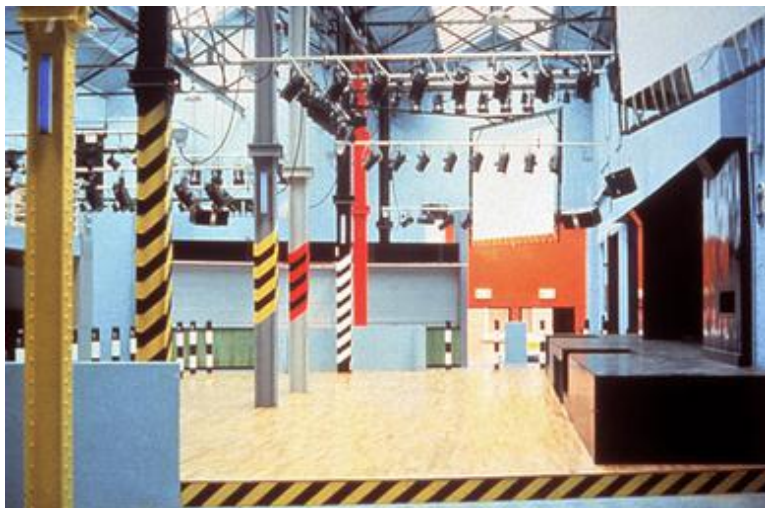


Manchester: Oxford Court

As part of the design community of this northern city, we were not frustrated by this lack of opportunities for new build, we aligned ourselves with the contextual movement and developed an attitude towards the remodelling of existing buildings. The architectural culture of Manchester in the 1990s was receptive to this contextual approach. Developers started to advance the city from the inside out. The intransigent attitude of the city council opened the way for designers to embrace the remodelling of factories, warehouses, industrial units to

³⁰ Parkinson-Bailey, J. (2000), *Manchester: An Architectural History*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, UK, p. 211

provide spaces for the post-industrial population to live, work and relax in. Young people, for whom the industrial was beginning to be a distant and romantic memory, wanted to populate these buildings of production. This led to a particularly creative approach, one which could not have existed anywhere else. Examples include the collection of interiors developed by Ben Kelly for Factory – the Hacienda, Dry Bar, and Factory Headquarters. Local practices such as Stephenson’s, OMI, MBLC, Hodder Associates, and Provin and Makin were all working with existing buildings, and of course, Manchester is the birthplace of the radical development company: Urban Splash. The massive and often magnificent brick Victorian warehouses, many of which still occupied prominent positions within the city were remodelled, reshaped, re-ordered. Their importance to the history and culture of the city was never in question, and so the development of ideas about their regeneration were part of local architectural life.



Manchester:
Ben Kelly The Hacienda, 1989
<http://benkellydesign.com/hacienda/>



Manchester:
Ben Kelly Dry 201
<http://benkellydesign.com/dry-201/>

LITERATURE REVIEW

A Collection of Texts, Buildings, Interiors, and Installations

There are two factors that tie this collection of texts, buildings, interiors, and installations together. The first is the intrinsic relationship between the built form and the environment that it inhabits. Contextualism (which is a design tool/approach rather than a style) connects all the sources discussed. Adaptive reuse projects (and so do many interiors) enjoy the double dialogue of the context of surrounding area of occupation, plus the conditions of the host building.

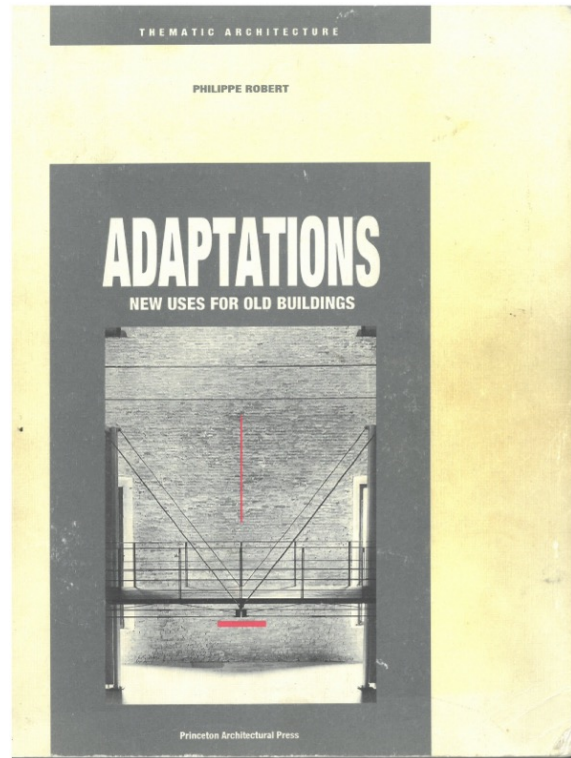
The second factor is the attention to detail. The original building is an intense collection of tangible and intangible elements, and to be able to alter a building, the designer needs to develop an intimate understanding of individual parts. The list of areas of understanding is long: materials, methods of construction, structural system, rhythm of spaces, position of the openings, circulation and many more, all of which contribute to the physical conditions of the existing building. This is combined with alternative narratives; that is, the more intangible components connected with the culture of those who first constructed the building, those who occupied it and those who will occupy it. To develop an intense dialogue between old and new, the designer needs a personal relationship with the old and the new at an intimate scale, for these are not abstract buildings on greenfield sites, but are an exquisite coming together of two allied but not identical individual surfaces that flex and deform, soften and align, to create a union of convergence.

Significant Publications on Adaptive Reuse

At the beginning of the 21st century, there were books full of case studies, books that discussed the practicalities of the subject, picture books that tickled the surface of the subject, books that just about included the area as a periphery to the focus of the discussion, essays that touched on it, but just two publications that systematically analysed and discussed the process, approach or methodology of adaptive reuse: Rodolfo Machado's *Old Buildings as Palimpsest*, and Philippe Robert's *Adaptations*.



Rodolfo Machado
Old Buildings as Palimpsest
 Progressive Architecture. 1976



Philippe Robert
Adaptations: New Uses for Old Buildings
 Princeton Architectural Press. 1989

Probably the most relevant is Rodolfo Machado's *Old Buildings as Palimpsest*³¹. The USA Journal, *Progressive Architecture* published the four-page essay in 1976, initially it was relatively unknown but over the last half-century it has become a recognised approach and indispensable source. Machado's use of the palimpsest as an analogy for the process of adaptation perfectly describes the pluralism inherent within the approach. The essay also introduces the concept of *form following form*. Machado declared that "...the form/form relationship is the primary consideration within remodelling activity".³² This turned the established mantra *form follows function* on its head. The idea that the influence of the enclosing buildings is so great that it becomes the primary driver for the methodology of reuse was revolutionary and far from the prevailing idea that the relationship between old and new was secondary to the proposed function and the ego of the architect.

³¹ Machado, R. *Old Buildings as Palimpsest*. Progressive Architecture. 1976

³² Ibid

The other important publication was *Adaptations: New Uses for Old Buildings* by Philippe Robert³³. It was initially published in the French *Architecture Thematic Series* by Editions du Moniteur in 1989, it was translated into English by Murray White and published by Princeton University Press in 1991. The book is organised in a simple tri-part order: 1. introduction; 2. detailed case studies illustrated with photographs, measured drawings and sketches; 3. a small catalogue of recently constructed *landmarks*.

The very short introduction is rich and powerful. Conversion, the author declares, can be considered as a “normal architectural practice”.³⁴ A distinctly early proclamation for what is now a ubiquitous approach. Later in the same paragraph, Robert asserts that the renewed awareness of the history of architecture includes the “history of buildings that have been altered”. This of course coincides with the postmodern ideas of the return of history, the importance of the individual, the embracement of pluralism, and the search for eclecticism.

Within the density of the introduction, Robert also discusses the idea of the palimpsest as a metaphor for adaptive reuse. Machado is not listed in the bibliography, but this idea, and that of the form-form relationships are analysed. In fact, Claude Soucy is listed as the source for this and quoted thus:

"Out of the encounter between old envelope and new requirements and means, a unique object will be born-one which is no mere juxtaposition, but a synthesis from the point of view of both construction and architecture."³⁵

An innovation in the intense opening chapter is the classification of the different approaches to adaptation. Robert lists seven strategic types of approach: “Building within”; “Building over”; “Building around”; “Building alongside”; “Recycling materials”; “Adapting to a new function”; and “Building in the style of”. Regardless of how intriguing I found this inventory, it was also unwieldy and

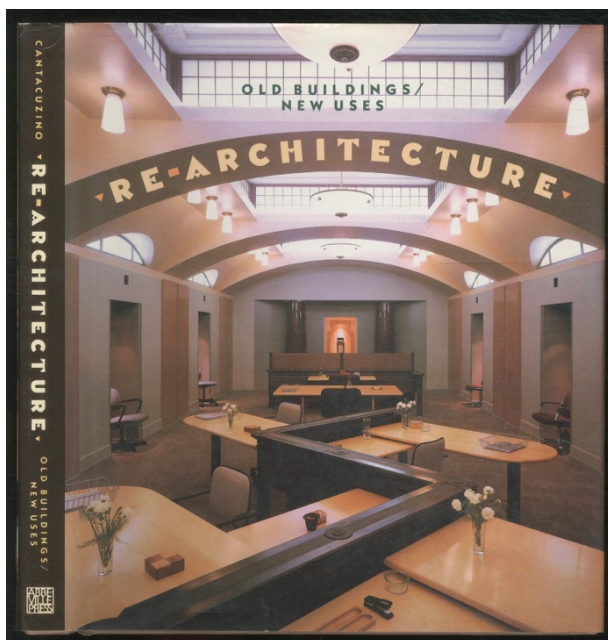
³³ Robert, P. *Adaptations: New Uses for Old Buildings*. Princeton Architectural Press. 1989

³⁴ Ibid. P. 6

³⁵ Ibid. p9

messy – the taxonomy seemed ambiguous, lacked focus and appeared incomplete.

Despite the creative originality in the classifications, it is difficult to place a number of key buildings within any category. For example, a more exact group was needed to house Scarpa's masterpiece Castelvecchio Museum (Verona 1956-1973) and his ethereal Querini Stampalia Foundation (Venice 1963), - a grouping that would recognise the scraping away of parts of the building and the addition of a series of new elements. The Tate Modern (Herzog and de Meuron, London 1999) is difficult to classify, as is the Irish Film Centre (O'Donnell and Tuomey, Dublin, 1992), which is the conversion of nine connected buildings. The book is radical, it broke new ground, it was progressive and as the front runner very important, however, it is incomplete, the categories are either insufficient in number, or insufficiently defined. As I discussed the subject with my students, I found myself mentally adding categories to accommodate specific buildings.



Sherban Cantacuzino
Re/Architecture
Thames and Hudson, 1989



Kenneth Powell
Architecture Reborn
Laurence King: London, 1999

There are a couple of other books that are focussed upon adaptive reuse, and certainly at a time of scarcity were of great use, but this has faded over time.

The 1989 publication, *Re/Architecture* by Sherban Cantacuzino³⁶ is a beautifully illustrated book with over 50 case studies. It contains six chapters and is organised by the function of the original building, so for example, the first chapter examines public buildings and the first case study is the conversion of the Helsinki City Hall for multi-use purposes, and the second is the transformation of the Gare d'Orsay in Paris into a national museum. Each chapter is prefaced by a well informed and accessible introduction. The main introduction to the book discusses the importance of the stock of existing buildings as an opportunity for urban regeneration, but also useful for “sound economic, social and ecological reasons”.³⁷ A far-sighted prophesy indeed! The structure of the book means that it is difficult to elevate it beyond a resource. It could not be used as a guide or methodology because the approach that the architects takes towards the remodelling is not analysed, it is just the results that are shown. Kenneth Powell's *Architecture Reborn: The Conversion and Reconstruction of Old Buildings*³⁸ takes a similar approach to the structure of the book but uses the transformed function rather than the original use as the subject for each chapter. The book is very well researched and engagingly written; it is big and dense with well-produced photographs and supported by architectural drawings. Powell's introduction, as Cantacuzino, begins with an historical survey, but ends with a call to arms. “The issue is no longer about new verses old”, he declares, “... but about the nature of the vital relationship between the two.” The introduction concludes with an assertive quote from David Chipperfield:

“We must inhabit an ever-evolving present, motivated by the possibilities of change, restricted by the baggage of memory and experience.”³⁹

Other Publications that Discussed a Contextual Methodology

Postmodern pluralism, new urbanism, and contextualism all played an important role in the rise of specific adaptive reuse theory. There were a number of highly influential books which did not discuss adaptive reuse per-se, but

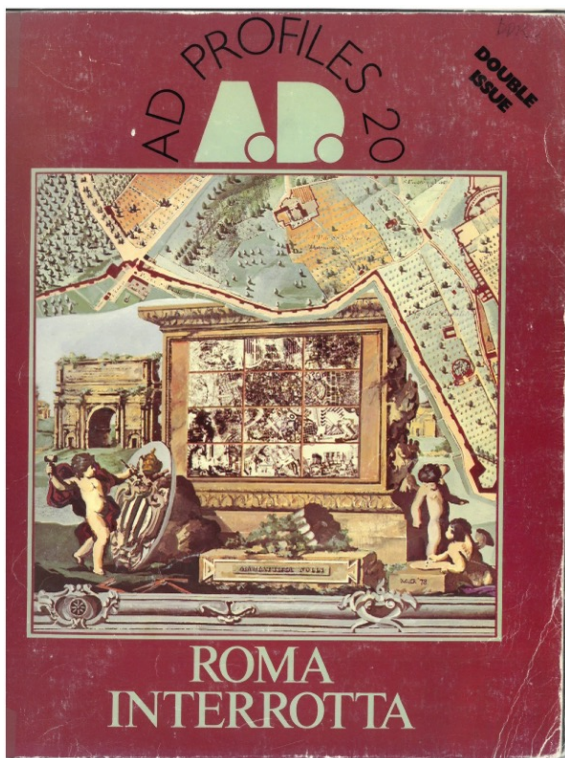
³⁶ Cantacuzino, S. *Re/Architecture*. Thames and Hudson, 1989. Cantacuzino also published a much earlier book – *New Uses for Old Buildings* in 1975, which was organised in a similar fashion.

³⁷ Cantacuzino, S. *Re/Architecture*. Thames and Hudson, 1989. p. 9

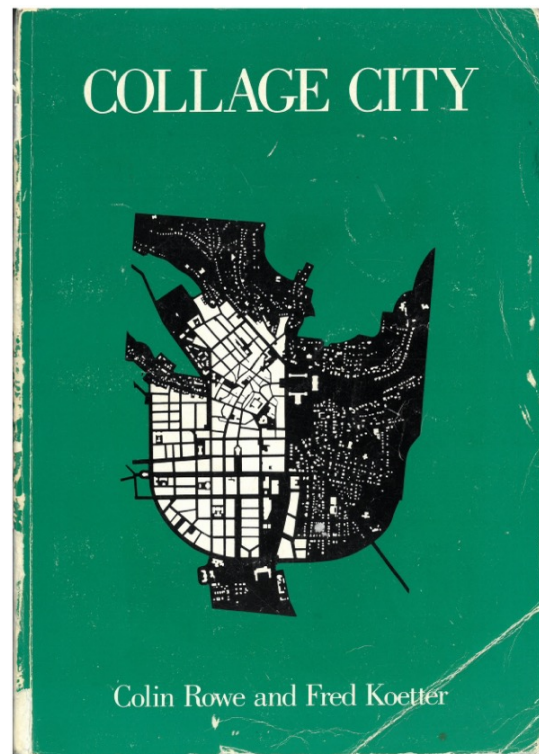
³⁸ Powell, K. *Architecture Reborn: The Conversion and Reconstruction of Old Buildings*; Laurence King: London, UK, 1999

³⁹ Ibid p.19

certainly included it among the searching ideas for a new urbanism. Seminal publications, such as Jane Jacobs' *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*;⁴⁰ Colin Rowe and Fred Koetter's *Collage City*;⁴¹ Aldo Rossi's *Architecture of the City*;⁴² Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown's *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture*;⁴³ and Michael Graves' guest editorship of the *Roma Interrotta*⁴⁴ edition of *Architectural Design* all promoted the idea of the city as an eclectic mix of old and new that together could create a progressive and harmonious future. All of these ideas dealt with the development and redevelopment of the existing built environment, and so were easily extended to the adaptation of existing buildings and the formation of the interior.



Michael Graves, M. (ed)
Roma Interrotta
Architectural Design, Vol 49 No 3-4, 1979



Colin Rowe and Fred Koetter
Collage City
MIT, 1984

⁴⁰ Jacobs, J. *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*; Random House: New York, NY, USA, 1961.

⁴¹ Rowe, C.; Koetter, F. *Collage City*; MIT: Cambridge, MA, USA, 1984.

⁴² Rossi, A. *The Architecture of the City*. MIT: Cambridge MA, USA, 1982.

⁴³ Complexity and Contradiction Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture. 2nd ed. London: The Architectural Press. Robert Venturi is credited with the authorship of the book, but Denise Scott Brown's contribution is now so recognised that she is normally listed as co-author.

⁴⁴ Graves, M. (ed) *Roma Interrotta*; Architectural Design, Vol 49 No 3-4, 1979.

Graves's editorship of *Roma Interrotta*, 1979 documented the project that was invented and developed by Piero Sartogo⁴⁵, which took the breath-taking Nolli Plan as inspiration. Sartogo asked 12 prominent architects to reimagine it, each taking a proportional section of the great drawing as both the starting and the finishing point. So, the drawing was complete at the beginning of the process, and whole once again at the end, but, as a palimpsest, it had been rubbed away and redrawn during the course of the project. The Roman Interventions interrupted the drawing, they did not obliterate the grain of the city, the organisation of the streets and squares, the position of the buildings and the arrangement of the interiors, instead the architects worked with these attributes, producing what was then a then radical fusion of old and new.

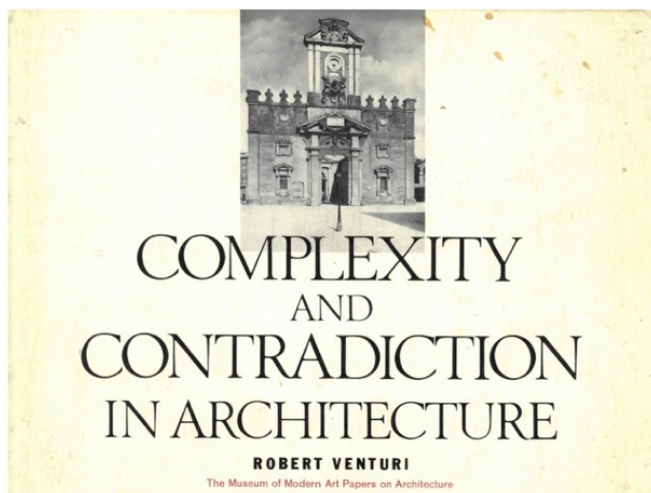
Colin Rowe, who was one of the guest contributors to the reimagined Nolli Plan, together with Fred Koetter had published *Collage City* just a year earlier. This narrative discussed the crisis within the modern city, the obliteration of history and the need for a more contextual approach to architecture. The book which starts as a methodical undoing of the prevailing attitudes towards architecture and urban design, continues as a rallying call for a new approach, and ends as a handbook of inspirational approaches to guide the way forward.

Rowe and Koetter discuss such romantic suggestions as the apotheosis of the collision, the search for bricolage, and the reconquest of time. A significant discussion is the comparison between le Corbusier's monumental Unité d'Habitation and Giorgio Vasari's Uffizi Palace in Florence.⁴⁶ One is the inverse of the other, so while the Unité is a solid monolith, so the Uffizi is a void. Thus the area of land surrounding the Unité is deformed to accommodate the regular building, and conversely the building surrounding the void, or Vasari's Corridor (as it is known) is deformed to accommodate the space, so undermining the Modernist ideas of the primacy of form and opening up the possibilities of building in and around existing structures.

⁴⁵ In the first paragraph of the introduction to *Roma Interrotta*, Michael Graves credits Piero Sartogo as the instigator for the exhibition. Sartogo is the author for the first illustrated proposal: Nolli: Sector 1.

⁴⁶ Rowe, C. and Koetter, F. *Collage City*. MIT. 1984. P.69

The idea of *Contextualism: Urban Ideals and Deformations* was further explored by one of Rowe's students, Thomas Schumacher⁴⁷. He treads very much the same path as his tutor, but in nine intense pages that call for some sort of middle ground between an artificial incarnation of the past and the brutalising and dominating system of Modernism.⁴⁸ "An ideal form can exist as a fragment *collaged* into an empirical environment."⁴⁹ Contextualism, he asserted was a design tool that could be abstracted to any given situation.⁵⁰



Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown
Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture
The Architectural Press, 1977

9. The Inside and the Outside

The external configuration is usually rather simple, but there is packed into the interior of an organism an amazing complexity of structures which have long been the delight of anatomists.

The specific form of a plant or animal is determined not only by the genes in the organism and the cytoplasmic activities that these direct but by the interaction between genetic constitution and environment. A given gene does not control a specific trait, but a specific reaction to a specific environment.*

Contrast between the inside and the outside can be a major manifestation of contradiction in architecture. How-

Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown's⁵¹ *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture*⁵² used historical precedents to propose a methodology for moving forward; an attitude that suggests that everything is valid, that there is a need to move away from the tabula rasa approach, and even more so, away from the primacy of the monumental volume. The opening section, entitled: Nonstraightforward Architecture: A Gentle Manifesto, called for elements that

⁴⁷ Thomas L. Schumacher, Contextualism: Urban Ideals and Deformations. Cassabella no. 359-360(1971): 79-86

⁴⁸ Ibid. p.297

⁴⁹ Ibid p. 301

⁵⁰ Kate Nesbitt recounts Schumacher's recollection that Contextualism is a conflation of Context and Texture. The term he suggested, was first used by Steven Hurtt and Stuart Cohen. In (ed) Nesbitt, K. *Theorizing a New Agenda for Architecture an Anthology of Architectural Theory 1965-1995*, Princeton Architectural Press. New York. 1996, P. 294

⁵¹ Robert Venturi is listed with the authorship of the book, but Denise Scott Brown's contribution is now so recognised that she is normally credited as co-author.

⁵² Venturi, R.: Scott Brown, D. *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture*; The Architectural Press: London, UK, 1977.

are "...hybrid rather than pure, distorted rather than straightforward, ambiguous rather than articulated ...".⁵³

Especially relevant to this literature review is chapter 9, on the importance of the interior, and the understanding that the exterior and the interior could have different personalities; that the interior is much greater than the mere consequence of the containing exterior walls. Venturi and Scott Brown railed against the modernist orthodoxy of the continuity between the inside and the outside, that one should slip easily into the other to create a *oneness*.⁵⁴ (This attitude later caused the great interior theorist Fred Scott, to suggest that "the interior had escaped from the building"⁵⁵)

Venturi and Scott Brown supported the idea that the exterior and the interior of a building could be different, and this separation, they argued, emphasised the identity of both. They reasoned that contradiction may be further emphasised through the use of detached linings, which can leave spaces in between the structure and the interior, thus providing opportunity for interpretation. They were not explicitly discussing adaptive reuse but more provided the springboard for further consideration. This exploration of difference was an incentive for remodelling. Importantly this is greater than a book about urbanism, it is about comfort of enclosing space rather than significance of epic building, a pursuit of modesty, about the understanding of how a collection of intricate details can create a greater whole, of how the environment of the already built could provide the impetus for future development, and how all of these could appear to have always been there but are so obviously of the now.

Another significant publication that opened as an attack on the principles and aims that have shaped modern, orthodox city planning and building, then evolves into a manifesto for an exuberant and diverse city is Jane Jacobs' *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*.⁵⁶ Her far-sighted call for new to mingle with old, for building to address the street, for places to serve more than just

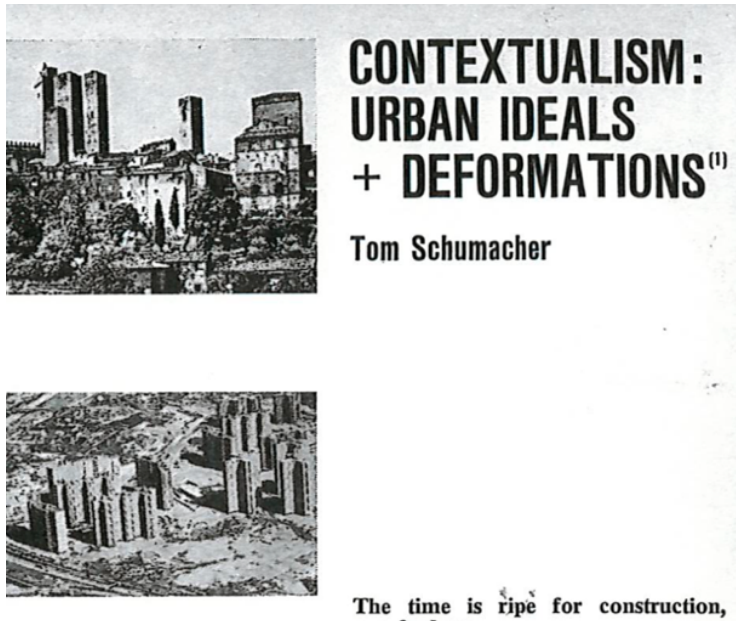
⁵³ Ibid. p. 16

⁵⁴ Venturi, R.: Scott Brown, D. *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture*; The Architectural Press: London, UK, 1977. p. 70

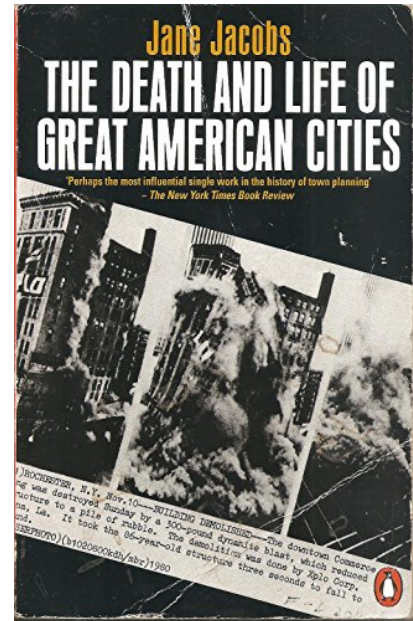
⁵⁵ Stone, S. *UnDoing Buildings: Adaptive Reuse and Cultural Memory* Routledge. 2020 P.15

⁵⁶ Jacobs, J. *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*; Random House: New York, NY, USA, 1961.

one primary function, and for density of population⁵⁷ is now acknowledged as an astute recognition of how to address the 21st century concern with the sustainable population growth in cities. Some 60 years after publication, densification conducted through the adaptive reuse of the stock of existing buildings is the established approach to development.



Thomas L. Schumacher
Contextualism: Urban Ideals and Deformations
Cassabella 1971



Jane Jacobs
The Death and Life of Great
American Cities
Random House 1961

These texts were important to the development of a methodology for adaptive reuse, they regarded the built environment as an evolving situation of discourse and the ideas developed and discussed were as relevant to individual buildings as they were to larger urban environments.

⁵⁷ Ibid. p. 150-151

Art, Architecture and Design



Carlo Scarpa
IUAV Venice School of Architecture
Sally Stone



Carlo Scarpa
Fondazione Querini Stampalia
Sally Stone

As important as the publications was the work of specific architects and designers who pursued a contextual approach in their work combined with a love of heritage and history. They also searched for narratives and fables, and wrapped these in a postmodern sensibility. Buildings shown in such journals as *Blueprint* or *Journal of Interiors* combined with visits to the places were often more important than the texts that discussed them. Architects and designers included: Carlo Scarpa; Group 91; O'Donnell and Tuomey; Hans Hollein; John Outram; Nigel Coates; James Stirling; Vittorio Gregotti; Aldo Rossi; Robert Venturi and Denise Scott-Brown; Ron Herron; Aldo Van Eyck; Rafael Moneo; Co-op Himmelblau; Ken Bell; David Chipperfield; Memphis ...

Carlo Scarpa is generally regarded as the master of adaptive reuse⁵⁸, yet his work was often dismissed as lacking architectural intent. This epitomised the idea that the practice of adaptive reuse was long seen as having limited worth and

⁵⁸ Wong, L. *Adaptive Reuse: Extending Lives of Buildings*, Birkhauser: Basel, Switzerland, 2017, p. 6 and *Building in the Existing Fabric: Refurbishment, Extensions, New Design* edited by Christian Schittich 2003 p.9

beneath the interest of many architects. Even as late as 1993, Richard Murphy, in his highly detailed and intense discussion of the Fondazione Querini Stampalia, questioned the veracity of the design and asked whether Scarpa's work was "merely interior design".⁵⁹



Hans Hollein

Retti Candle Shop

<https://www.hollein.com/eng/Architecture/Nations/Austria/Retti>



Hans Hollein

Schullin Jewellery Shop

Dominic Roberts

And yet young architects were beginning to establish a reputation with such projects. David Chipperfield's early shop interiors (for example the Issey Miyake boutique, Sloane Street, London, 1985) were formative little projects that combined careful craftsmanship with an exploration of complex spatial relationships. Hans Hollein created a series of daring yet refined individual shops in Vienna (for example the Retti Candle Shop 1966, or the Schullin Jewellery Store, 1974). These long narrow stores that appear to be simply slotted into the available space, are exquisitely executed interiors – as would be expected in the birthplace of the Secessionist movement. Charles Jenks, that great documenter of Postmodernism, wrote a rapturous review of Hollein's early work:

⁵⁹ Murphy, R. *Querini Stampalia Foundation, Venice 1961–63*, Phaidon Press Ltd, London, 1993, p3.

“So much design talent and mystery expended on such small shops would convince an outsider that he had at last stumbled on the true faith of this civilisation.”⁶⁰

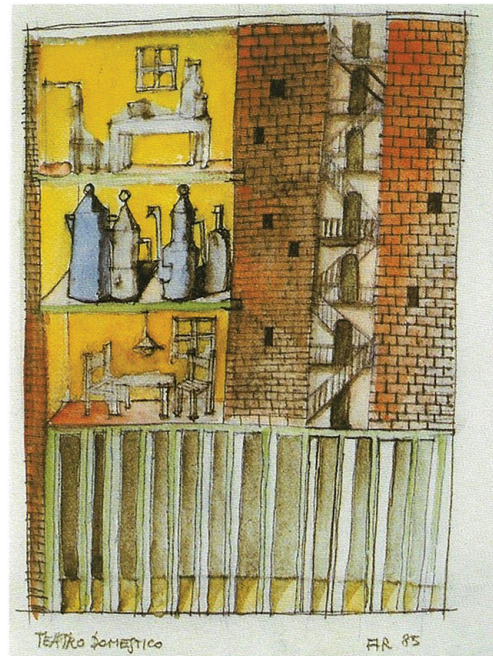


John Outram

Harp Heating Head Quarters 1985

<https://c20society.org.uk/lost-modern/harp-heating-hq-swanley-kent>

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/353772222_Resolving_the_Theoretically_Irreconcilable_Aldo_Rossi%27s_Giant_Kitchenware_Models_as_Generative_Object--Subjects/figures?lo=1



Aldo Rossi

Teatro Domestico, Milan, 1985

The radical post-modern architect John Outram is recognised for the groundbreaking Pumping Station in the Isle of Dogs (London, 1986). His buildings, which are borne from ancient myths and modern parables, invoke the inherent romance of Claude Lorraine’s landscapes. The Pumping Station contained columns that conceptually penetrate hundreds of feet through the mud and silt to connect with the bedrock, while the roof of the Kensal Road Housing swoops gracefully from above to gently land upon the building. He also completed the transformation of an ordinary two storey 1960’s concrete-framed office block into an articulate yellow brick clad building which was seemingly supported by great bulbous columns with flaming capitals. But the Harp Heating HQ, in Kent, UK 1985, was more intelligent than a mere cosmetic revamp. All of the services were diverted into ducts hidden within the fat columns, and those that did not

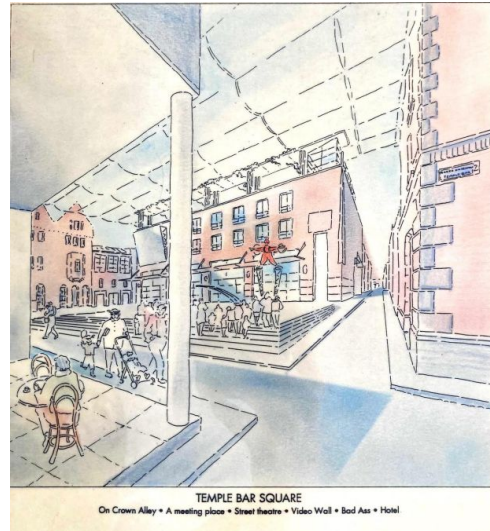
⁶⁰ Jencks, C. *The Language of Post-Modern Architecture*, London, Academy Editions, 1977, p32.

contain such facilities performed other useful services – the coffee machine, the filing cabinets, the fire extinguishers.



Temple Bar, Dublin
Group 91

<https://www.architectural-review.com/buildings/dublin-renaissance#:~:text=Unlike%20the%20ambitious%20superstar%20master,those%20involved%20in%20urban%20repair>



Temple Bar Square

The Temple Bar Framework Plan of 1996 in Dublin by Group 91⁶¹ was equally influential. The substantial area next to the river Liffey had been earmarked for a huge bus station, in fact in 1977 Skidmore Owings and Merrill Architects produced a scheme for a great spiralling monolith to completely fill the site. Years later when this unbuilt proposal was abandoned, the city council held an architectural competition for the complete neighbourhood. The winning project proposed to regenerate the area through the construction of a series of cultural buildings, which would tuck into the urban grain of the area, thus allowing the natural rhythm of the place to be retained. The scheme proposed a mixture of new buildings and adaptations, the most notable being the Irish Film Centre. O'Donnell + Tuomey were individually responsible for this amalgamation of nine different existing buildings set deep within the city block.

⁶¹ The project won the 1996 European Union Prize for Contemporary Architecture: Mies van der Rohe Award. The award is justified on the website: '*Group 91's Temple Bar Architectural Framework Plan was widely welcomed as a visionary approach to creating a new "cultural quarter" for Dublin in one of the most historic areas of the city. Not since the 1963 Planning Act came into force had any such three-dimensional plan been produced for a city or town in Ireland.*' Available online: <https://www.miesarch.com/work/2752#:~:text=Group%2091's%20Temple%20Bar,city%20or%20town%20in%20Ireland> (accessed on 1 August 2023)

Another seminal adaptation, especially relevant to my Manchester heritage, and perhaps the last to mention here is the *Hacienda* (Manchester 1982) - once described as the “most famous night club in the world”⁶². Ben Kelly’s joyful, post-industrial, post-modern approach to adaptive reuse was absolutely revolutionary, and his paradigm-changing design for the interior of the nightclub has become part of a powerful cultural legacy rooted in both the city’s and the era’s industrial aesthetic; it has proved to be internationally influential.



Gordon Matta-Clark retrospective at the Serpentine Gallery
<https://www.serpentinegalleries.org/whats-on/gordon-matta-clark/>

It is also important to discuss the influence of installation artists to the development of adaptive reuse. Artists can experiment with existing buildings and spaces without the pressure of the needs of the end users and the exacting regulations connected with construction, therefore they are often in the position to push ideas further and more quickly than the architect can.

The Gordon Matta-Clark retrospective at the Serpentine Gallery in 1993⁶³ was a timely and powerful exploration of the impact that considered dissection can

⁶² Stone, S. *The Hacienda: The Manufactured Image of a Post-Industrial City*, in *Interiors*, V5, Issue 1, Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, London, 2014, p. 37

⁶³ Matta-Clark at the Serpentine. Available online: <https://www.serpentinegalleries.org/whats-on/gordon-matta-clark/>, accessed on 1 August 2023.

have upon existing buildings. Matta-Clark cut holes in buildings, whether to create connections that didn't previously exist, to reveal unfound associations, and in one piece, *Splitting*, he actually cut a timber house in half, to expose the flimsy insubstantial nature of the structure and maybe also of inhabitation itself. The exhibition caught the mood of many young architects and designers of the time who were beginning to question the dominance of the creation of new buildings when perfectly good strong and useful ones still existed, of the removal of built heritage, and the prevailing lack of legacy that resulted. The other important aspect of Matta-Clark's work was the conceptual idea of the subtraction of stuff. This was tantamount to an anti-heroic architectural move; it was exactly the opposite of the progressive and productive monument to the exaltation of the architect.

There was another installation of equally massive impact in the same year as that exhibition; *House* by Rachel Whiteread. This installation uncovered the actual space within the interior of a single house in a soon-to-be-demolished terrace in London. Whiteread used the structure as a mould to create a three-dimensional representation of the interior of the rooms, by spraying the inside of the exterior walls with concrete then removing the walls thus leaving the insides exposed. This included the reverse of the mouldings around the doors and windows, the reverse of the windows and the significantly, the patina of time and use on the walls themselves.

The artists, although a generation apart, were equally radical. They questioned the substance that buildings were constructed from, and by extension, the basis of the society that constructed those buildings. The exposure of the insides of Rachel Whiteread's *House* was deemed to defile the people who had once lived there, while Gordon Matta-Clark's *Splitting* was seen as a comment about the frail lives of those who occupied it. Despite their shock appeal (and by the end of the twentieth century it was getting very difficult to shock people) their work was beautiful, poised and knowing – about architecture, structure, balance, and life.



Rachel Whiteread
House 1993



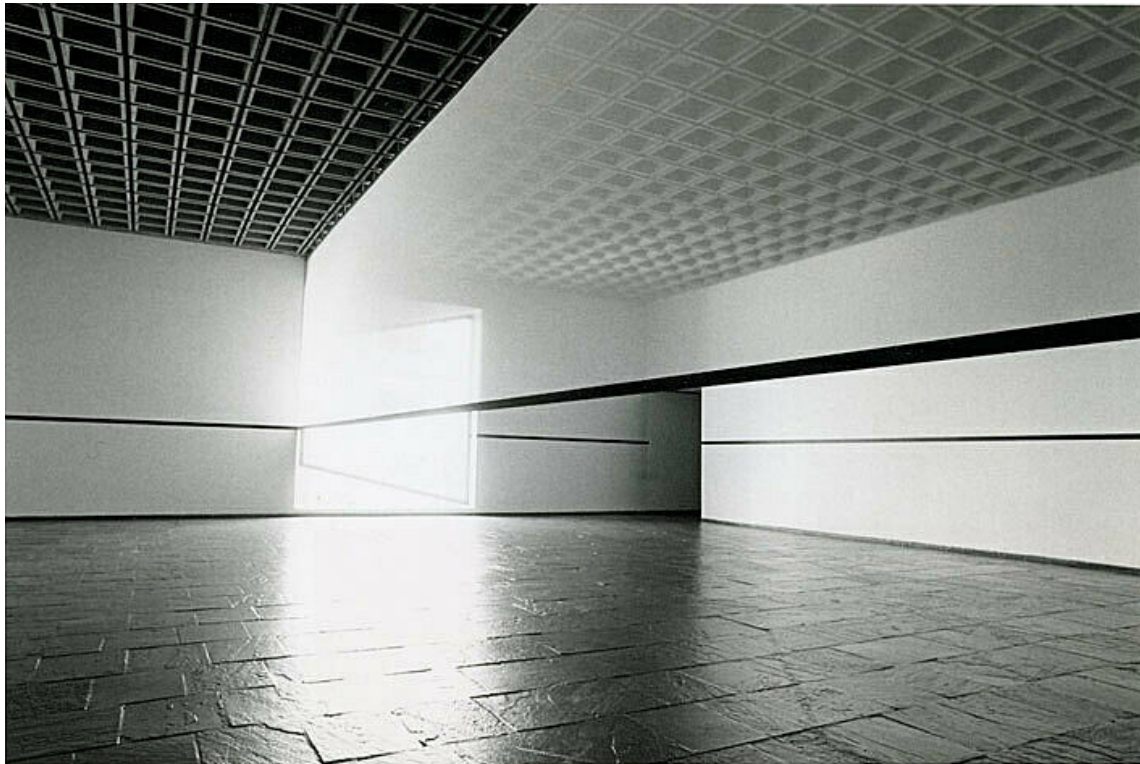
Cornelia Parker
Cold Dark Matter: An Exploded View 1991
Sally Stone

<https://www.artsy.net/article/artsy-editorial-rachel-whitereads-house-unlivable-controversial-unforgettable>

There are other artists who were also important including Cornelia Parker, whose installation *Cold Dark Matter: An Exploded View* 1991 is the exposed violence of a detonated shed. It uses an existing structure, and the beauty of the resultant installation creates impact and questions the strength and permanence of the built structures around us. Robert Irwin creatively defined space within seeming ambiguous and non-contained areas. He coined a reply to Gertrude Stein's 60-year-old quote "There is no there there", by retorting, "There is no there there until you see there there."⁶⁴ James Turrell created exquisitely clever installations with pure light. Richard Wilson, whose installation of a huge treacherous tank of thick dark reflective oil in the Sachi Gallery, gave the space an ambiguous shape and size; and Alison Turnbull, whose manipulated images were generated by seemingly randomly discovered

⁶⁴ Robert Irwin, *Being and Circumstance – Notes Toward a Confidential Art*, 1995, Reproduced in Stiles, K and Selz, P., (eds) *Contemporary Art: A Sourcebook of Artists Writing*, University of California Press, London, 1996, p. 572

architectural drawings that were subjected to alterations that, like the palimpsest, retained the essence of the original, but created a completely new proposal. These artists explored existing spaces and forms, then attempted to heighten the impact of these given places through considered interventions.



Robert Irwin

Scrim veil—Black rectangle—Natural light.

Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 1977

<https://whitney.org/exhibitions/robert-irwin>

These were the conditions that generated the atelier *Continuity in Architecture*, then *ReReadings*. The book built upon a synthesis of these texts and precedents, it was at the forefront of an oncoming movement that placed much greater emphasis upon the already built, that valued history and heritage, that used a post-modern sensibility to create a new future that learnt from the past but equally considered the need and aspirations inherent in the future.

The past provides the already written, the marked 'canvas' on which each successive remodelling will find its own place. Thus the past becomes a 'package of sense' of built up meaning to be accepted (maintained), transformed or suppressed (refused).

Rodolfo Machado⁶⁵

After the Millennium: An Examination of the Canon - Books about Adaptive Reuse

This was the situation that motivated a pedagogical approach, which in turn generated the development of a collection of publications that began the creation of a canon of thought about adaptive reuse. Given the relative youth of the subject, the books are spare and focussed, but it is interesting to observe that as the 21st century progresses, how the depth and diversity of the subject is being explored. This part of the literature review will discuss the evolution of adaptive reuse as a distinct, documented subject, and, rather than separating my contribution, and to ensure that their position within the continuum is appreciated, it will be woven into the discussion.

The lack of easily available material (that is, books and documented buildings) meant that pioneering writers had to draw upon other sources—those beyond established architectural discussions. Therefore, these early authors were not limited by the strictures of an already established subject but were able to collate information from a variety of sources. Thus, adaptive reuse draws upon a collage of different sources, many beyond pure architecture, including installation art, fine art, curation, interior design, and urban design.

ReReadings may have been at the vanguard, but there were significant books not far behind. Over the last 20 years the number of books specifically about adaptive reuse has proliferated. Given that much of my work is nomenclatural, this seems an appropriate moment to classify these 21st century publications. The majority of books can be easily divided into two categories. Those, just like ReReadings, that make extensive use of case-studies to illustrate themes or processes (Frank Peter Jäger, Christian Schittich, Graeme Brooker and Sally Stone, David Littlefield and Saskia Lewis, Johannes Cramer and Stefan Breitling),

⁶⁵ Machado, R. *Old Buildings as Palimpsest*. Progressive Architecture. 1976

and those that carefully build the argument through a series of illustrated discussions or chapters (Fred Scott, Lilian Wong, Sally Stone, Bie Plevoets and Koenraad Van Cleempoel).

Case-Study Books

It is inevitable that the case-study books should use a similar organisational approach to those published before the turn of the millennium, but the focus for the studies differ; from quite technical explorations, through poetic interpretation, to books that shout about the urgency of the situation. The system of classification, rather like a translation, is always partial and emphasises the interests and obsessions of the author(s). This subjective process of taxonomy is determined by the culture and experiences of the individual(s) who make the selection, thus, there are both different selections of buildings, and different interpretations of the chosen buildings. Keith Jenkins explains that the base to this emphatic system of interpretation is the morals imposed by contemporary society, and that:

“...given that interpretations of the past are constructed in the present, the possibility of the historian being able to slough off his present to reach somebody else’s past on their own terms looks remote.”⁶⁶

To extend this further, the preoccupations of the authors guide the taxonomic process. This is doubly complicated, as the process of bringing a building from a past existence into the present can be seen as a work of translation (Scott, Stone, Van Cleempoel), as the inspirational equivalent of transcribing from one language to another.

It is within the discussion of the introductions that the differences are revealed. Jäger, whose criteria for case-study selection is architectural quality, describes the process as “A Gift from the Past”⁶⁷; Schittich, whose selection is deliberately optimistic, describes it as “Creative Conversions”⁶⁸; Cramer and Breitling pursue

⁶⁶ Jenkins, K. *Re-thinking History*, Routledge, Oxfordshire, UK, 1991, p. 40

⁶⁷ Frank Peter Jäger, *Old & New – Design Manual for Revitalizing Existing Buildings* Birkhäuser, Basel, 2010P. 11

⁶⁸ *Building in the Existing Fabric: Refurbishment, Extensions, New Design* edited by Christian Schittich 2003

clarity – in both the intellectual process and construction techniques⁶⁹; Stone and Brooker pursue an architectural approach⁷⁰; while Littlefield and Lewis place adaptive reuse among a great artistic tradition of decay and rebirth⁷¹.

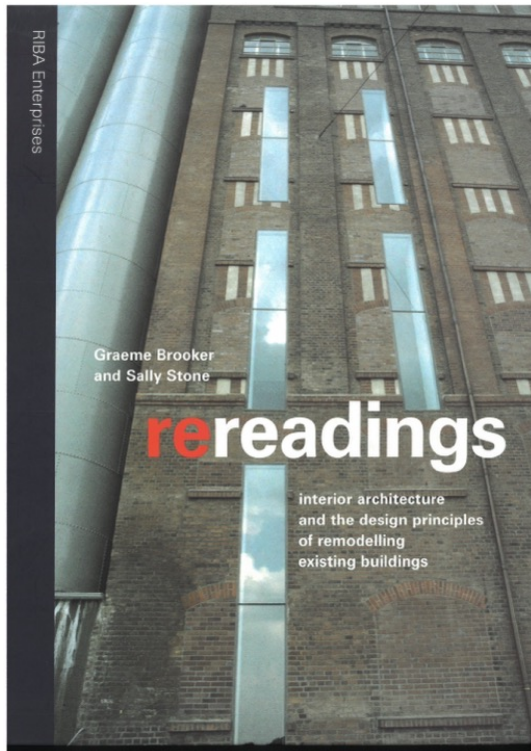
ReReadings: The Principles of Interior Architecture and the Reuse of Existing Buildings, Volume 1, 2004, developed from a combination of the pre-twenty-first century texts and precedents. But unlike much of the previous literature *ReReadings* presented a methodology for the future of the already built. The book assembled the collection of impulses and arranged them in a comprehensible order that made the process accessible to all involved. It set this out in easy stages, and so a process that had previously been seen as slightly impenetrable, complicated and difficult to read was rationalised.

When the first volume was published it broke new ground, it proposed ideas that although part of a continuity, were quite radical. The urgency of the book combined with the lack of easily available information means that it has a very Western focus. There were few case-study projects beyond Europe and the USA. The reflection made possible by the decade and a half between the publication of Volume 1 and Volume 2, *ReReadings: The Principles of Interior Architecture and the Reuse of Existing Buildings Volume 2 (2018)*, allows for a more relaxed and inclusive approach to the selection of case-studies. Diversity is demonstrated through the selection of the projects; this was an opportunity to expand the geographical areas discussed. The focus is still predominantly European, but projects in Malaysia, China, Japan, Taiwan, Brazil, and Australia are also presented. Discussions of sustainability, digital and methods of occupation, plus a much less Western-centric selection of case-studies pushes the argument beyond the normal bounds of architecture and interiors and embraces many of the cross-disciplinary and diverse aspects of the subject.

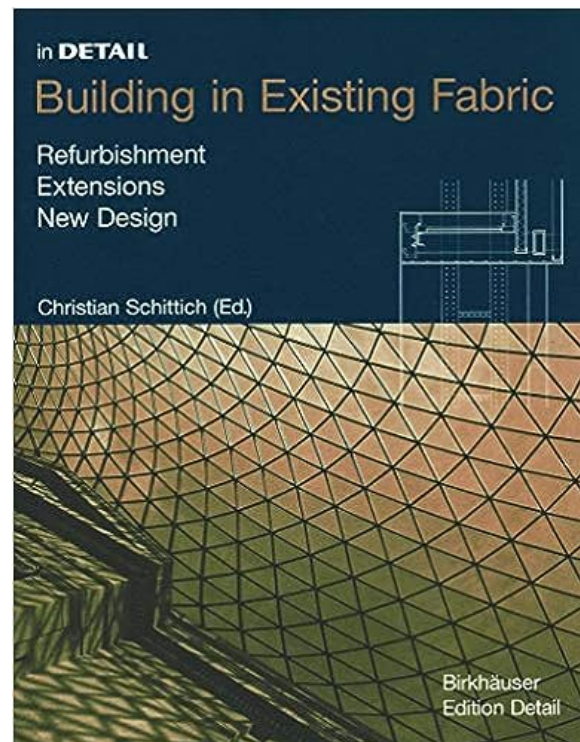
⁶⁹ Johannes Cramer and Stefan Breitling. *Architecture in Existing Fabric: Planning, Design Building*, Birkäuser 2007 p. 9

⁷⁰

⁷¹ *Architectural Voices: Listening to Old Buildings*. David Littlefield and Saskia Lewis. Wiley 2007 p.15



Graeme Brooker and Sally Stone
 ReReadings: The Principles of Interior
 Architecture and the Reuse of
 Existing Buildings
 RIBA 2004



Christian Schittich (ed)
 Building in the Existing Fabric:
 Refurbishment, Extensions, New Design
 Birkhauser 2003

Building in the Existing Fabric: Refurbishment, Extensions, New Design edited by Christian Schittich 2003 expresses very similar sentiment to those discussed in ReReadings, that a turning point in our attitude towards existing buildings has been reached and conversions are, the authors declare, the “New Normal”.⁷² He suggests that conversion and renovation is no longer seen as a “necessary evil”⁷³, things have changed and the process has become one of the “most creative and fascinating tasks in architecture”⁷⁴. The introduction astutely states that “For a long time, Carlo Scarpa’s refurbishment of the medieval Castelvecchio in Verona (1956-1964) was considered the benchmark for all creative conversions”⁷⁵, and also suggests that none of its vitality has been lost. 24 good examples of adaptive reuse are described, and each is accompanied by good photographs and detailed drawings. *Architectural Voices: Listening to Old*

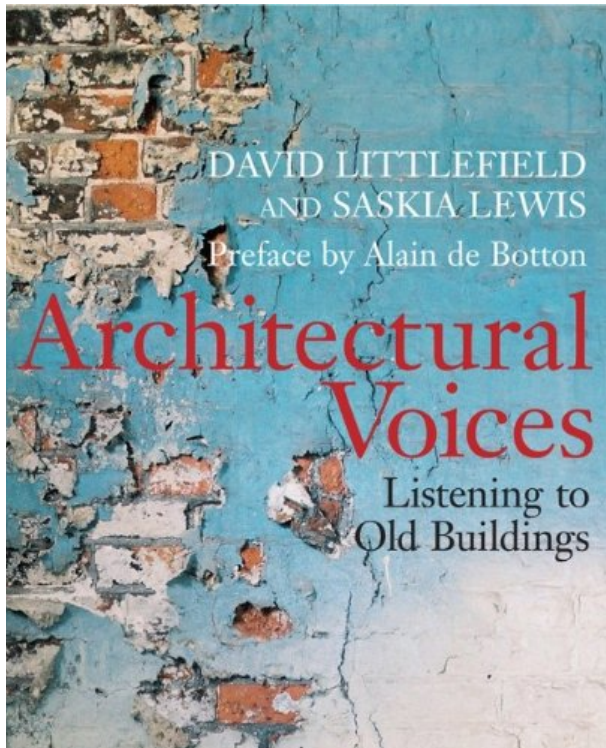
⁷² Building in the Existing Fabric: Refurbishment, Extensions, New Design edited by Christian Schittich 2003 p.9

⁷³ Ibid p.9

⁷⁴ Ibid p.9

⁷⁵ Ibid p.9

Buildings by David Littlefield and Saskia Lewis, 2007, again catalogues a well-researched and insightfully described collection of case-studies which are prefaced by a nostalgic introduction that almost wistfully looks for traces of romance within the history and patina of the existing structure. The bibliography reinforces the lack of available literature in these first few years of discovery, with just one book about adaptive reuse⁷⁶



David Littlefield and Saskia Lewis
Architectural Voices: Listening to Old Buildings
Wiley 2007



Peter Jäger
Old & New – Design Manual for Revitalizing Existing Buildings
Birkhauser 2010

Frank Peter Jäger's *Old & New – Design Manual for Revitalizing Existing Buildings*⁷⁷ utilises three groupings: “Addition”, which discussed new elements within or around the existing; “Transformation”, which represents a change of appearance, and “Conversion”, which denotes a change of use. The case-studies are well illustrated, the discussions certainly have technical depth, and there is an emphasis on projects that contain aspects of the socio-political, but the

⁷⁶ *Architectural Voices: Listening to Old Buildings*. David Littlefield and Saskia Lewis. Wiley 2007 p.232. The book referenced is ReReadings.

⁷⁷ Jäger, F.P. *Old & New – Design Manual for Revitalizing Existing Buildings*, Birkhauser 2010

classifications do seem somewhat arbitrary. Johannes Cramer and Stefan Breitling's *Architecture in Existing Fabric: Planning, Design Building, 2007*, uses case-studies grouped into chapters each with in-depth discussion. The order of these is ingeniously dictated by the design process itself, so the chapters begin with the "Planning Process"; then "Preparatory Investigations"; followed by "Design Strategies"; "Detail Planning"; "Building Works"; and concluding with "Sustainability".



Graeme Brooker and Sally Stone
 Basics Interior Architecture: An Approach
 Bloomsbury, 2007 -2016

The internationally translated series, *Basics Interior Architecture: An Approach* also fits into this chapter-driven illustrated case-study category. I co-authored three of the four books in the collection.⁷⁸ The methodology for these is informed by the *Remember Reveal Construct* maxim (the analysis of the existing situation combined with a developed approach to the changes proposed by the architect), but this time it is referenced twice. Firstly, through the organisation of each book - the chapters are labelled, "Existing"; "Methods" and "Elements", but it is the same basic principle. However, more importantly, the *Remember* aspect of the motto is the driver for those three publications. The process of reading the existing building can be divided into three basic categories: *Form*

⁷⁸Brooker, G.; Stone, S. *Basics Interior Architecture 01: Form and Structure: The Organisation of Interior Space*; Bloomsbury: London, UK, 2007, 2016.

Brooker, G.; Stone, S. *Basics Interior Architecture 02: Context & Environment*; Bloomsbury: London, UK, 2008.

Spankie, R. *Basics Interior Architecture 03: Drawing Out the Interior*; Bloomsbury: London, UK, 2009.

Brooker, G.; Stone, S. *Basics Interior Architecture 04: Elements & Objects*; Bloomsbury: London, UK, 2009.

and Structure (2007 reprinted 2016), Context and Environment (2008), and Elements and Objects (2010). Suzie Attiwill has a point when she describes the organisation of ReReadings (and this could also apply to this series) as rather “like a curated exhibition, various examples are selected to illustrate each category”.⁷⁹

Books that Build the Argument through Themes

A number of the books divide the argument into chapters. These books embrace the dramatic change in attitude towards adaptation; from the architects and designers that intervene within the buildings, the developers who have begun to appreciate the value inherent within the already built, to the legislators who have realised the importance of continuity to the mental and physical wealth of a community.

Within these publications, the chapters are generally stand-alone and can be read as individual discussions, however, the books do tend to construct this as a narrative or journey; so my *UnDoing Buildings*⁸⁰ starts with the strategic approach, advances through peripheral yet influential issues such as conservation and installation art, towards resolution within the details. Fred Scott’s *On Altering Architecture*⁸¹ commences by making the case for reuse, and each chapter reinforces this, before the book concludes with some resolutions. Lilian Wong’s book *Adaptive Reuse: Extending the Lives of Buildings*⁸² contains 15 informed chapters that each tackle a different aspect of the subject, but equally and individually each makes the case for reuse; while Bie Plevoets and Koenraad Van Cleempoel⁸³ regard themselves as problem-solvers whose very well-informed survey of the subject provides the motivation for the organisation. The final book to be discussed is my co-authored book: *Inside Information: The Defining Aspects of Interior Design*⁸⁴ This is conveniently divided into 26 chapters, each has a title that begins with a different letter of

⁷⁹ Working Space: Interiors as provisional compositions Suzie Attiwill RMIT University, Melbourne, Australia. Proceedings of the Conference held at the University of Brighton 2-4 July 2009

⁸⁰ Stone, S. *UnDoing Buildings: Adaptive Reuse and Cultural Memory* Routledge. 2020

⁸¹ Scott, F. *On Altering Architecture*; Routledge: Oxon, UK, 2008.

⁸² Wong, L. *Adaptive Reuse: Extending Lives of Buildings*; Birkhäuser: Basel, Switzerland, 2017

⁸³ Plevoets, B. and Van Cleempoel, K. *Adaptive Reuse of the Built Heritage: Concepts and Cases of an Emerging Discipline*, Routledge, 2019 Routledge

⁸⁴ Hollis, E. and Stone, S. *Inside Information: The Defining Aspects of Interior Design*, RIBA Publishing, London, 2022.

the alphabet, but they not structured in the expected order. The book is not solely dedicated to adaptive reuse, but it is woven through the fabric of the narrative.

Possibly the most romantic in this collection is *On Altering Architecture* by Fred Scott, published by Routledge in 2008. Scott had already an established reputation for bringing a radical and intellectual approach to his teaching of interiors,⁸⁵ and rumours of this book circulated long before publication - so it was eagerly awaited.⁸⁶ Scott locates adaptive reuse within a wider cultural framework, he places the subject with art conservation; the search for authenticity; the nature of the copy and the reproduction; the ruins of modernity; and importantly he exposed the transgressive nature of remodelling, therefore moving the subject from beneath the authority of the assured architect towards the more disruptive nature of the designer or artist.

Scott speaks with the authority of long academic experience combined with deep knowledge. He develops a sound theoretical underpinning for the subject, the argument, which is developed over 12 chapters, begins with a call to move away from the repressive process of pure conservation towards the progressive, or even transgressive attitude of adaptation.⁸⁷ The book continues with discussions of attitudes and practises, and it concludes with resolutions – against pastiche and gratuitous improvement.⁸⁸ All buildings are “in an imperfect state” and therefore meaning, he suggests, can be created through the “play between the new occupation and the original use”.⁸⁹

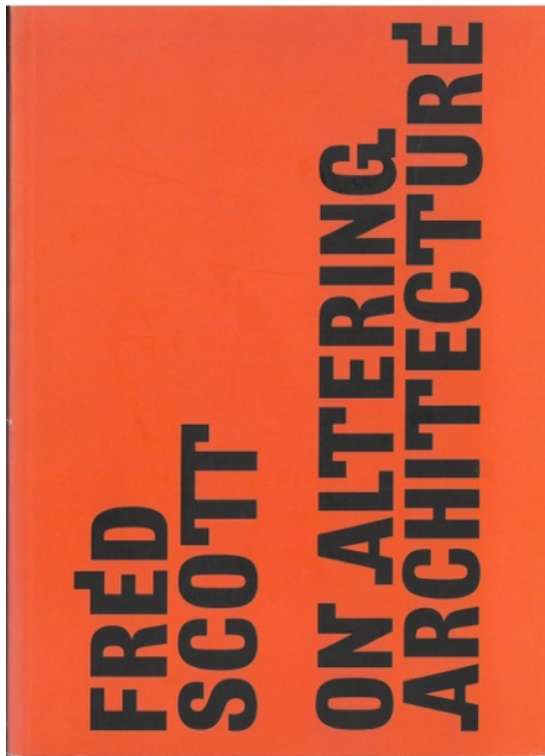
⁸⁵ Fred Scott led the BA(Hons) Interior Design programme at Kingston University.

⁸⁶ Discussions about the imminent book were had at the Inside the Box conference (2005) some three years before publication. Apparently, Scott was troubled by feeling that the book was incomplete, and in the acknowledgement, he actually thanks Elena Massucco for letting him know ... ‘the trick by which I could bring myself to at last let go of the text’. Page xiv

⁸⁷ Scott, F. *On Altering Architecture*; Routledge: Oxfordshire, UK, 2008. P. 11.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.* p.167

⁸⁹ *Ibid.* p.167



Fred Scott
On Altering Architecture
Routledge 2008.



Lilian Wong
Adaptive Reuse: Extending Lives of Buildings
Birkhäuser 2017

Adaptive Reuse: Extending Lives of Buildings Lilian Wong. Birkhäuser 2017 is a collection of insightful discussions, it is stylishly produced and holds a wide-ranging collection of examples. The book is deliberately provocative, and although erudite, it is also engagingly angry. Angry about the reuse of plunder,⁹⁰ about lack of considered care for ancient monuments;⁹¹ the exploitative nature of facadism;⁹² tax incentives as the driver for reuse;⁹³ the dominance of the intervention over the impassive host;⁹⁴ the false historicism produced by zealous preservation;⁹⁵ and so on. The architect or designer must negotiate a path, she argues, between Frankenstein-like creations of a self-interested monster⁹⁶ and

⁹⁰ Wong, L. *Adaptive Reuse: Extending Lives of Buildings*; Birkhäuser: Basel, Switzerland, 2017p.67. It is worth noting that given the colonial connotations connected with the term spolia, in the uncompromising discussion of plunder, Wong is careful to never use that term.

⁹¹ Ibid. p.90

⁹² Ibid. p.116

⁹³ Ibid. 1p.55

⁹⁴ Ibid. p.174

⁹⁵ Ibid p.216

⁹⁶ Ibid p.244

that of the compassionate role of the second violinist – supporting the melody of the host building.⁹⁷

At the very beginning of the book is a list of quotations alphabetically classified by their focus. The inclusion of this is both innovative and amusing⁹⁸, so Ruskin, Douglas, and ICOMOS are all cited under Repair; Watson, and the British Standards Institution under Addition; and the US Department of the Interior, and Eugene Viollet-le-Duc under Restoration. The very early statement that Carlo Scarpa's Castelvechio is *timeless*⁹⁹ is questionable. I would contend that although it is undoubtedly a masterpiece and definitely ground-breaking, as a piece of design it is firmly placed within the Late-Modernist era of the second half of the twentieth century; the practice of adaptive reuse has evolved from Scarpa's contrast and analogy approach to one that pursues the concept of *wholeness*.¹⁰⁰

My monograph *UnDoing Buildings: Adaptive Reuse and Cultural Memory 2020*¹⁰¹ is a comprehensive study of adaptive reuse. The book begins with an overview, travels through a discussion about a developed methodology for adaptation, discusses the influence that peripheral areas such smartness, spatial agency, and conservation have, before concluding with an examination of the details and intimate processes of adaptive reuse. The book is comprehensive, thorough and informed. It collects disparate influences and collates them into an organised and influential argument. The publication makes it clear that the process is intrinsically sustainable, and this is a fundamental part of adaptive reuse. It built upon the urgent need for densification - unlimited horizontal development is no longer ecologically acceptable, therefore the built environment must learn how to build in on itself, to become more dense, more compact and more productive. The three tenets of sustainability are discussed, Community Sustainability is reinforced through the retention of structures and the lack of decimation of existing community patterns, and the collective memories that are tied up in the place are not lost. Economic Sustainability is supported through a reduction in

⁹⁷ Ibid p.246

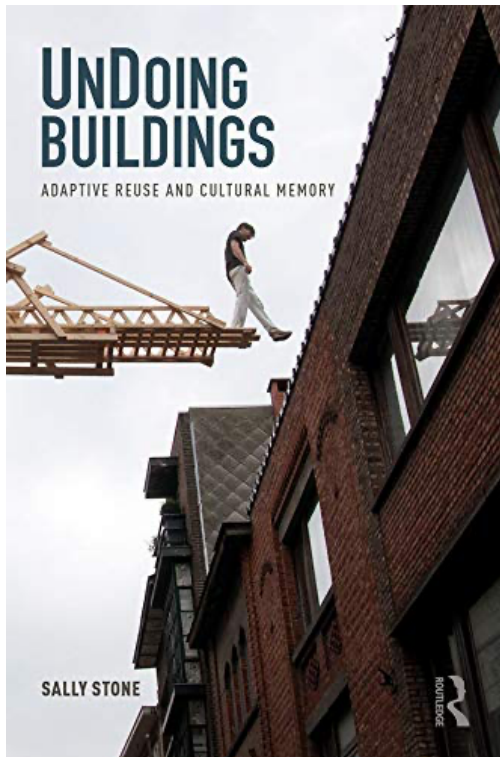
⁹⁸ Ibid. p.13-28. Was this because there were a lot of quotations left over after the book was complete, or was it deliberate? Either way, it is a refreshing way to start the book.

⁹⁹ Ibid. p.6

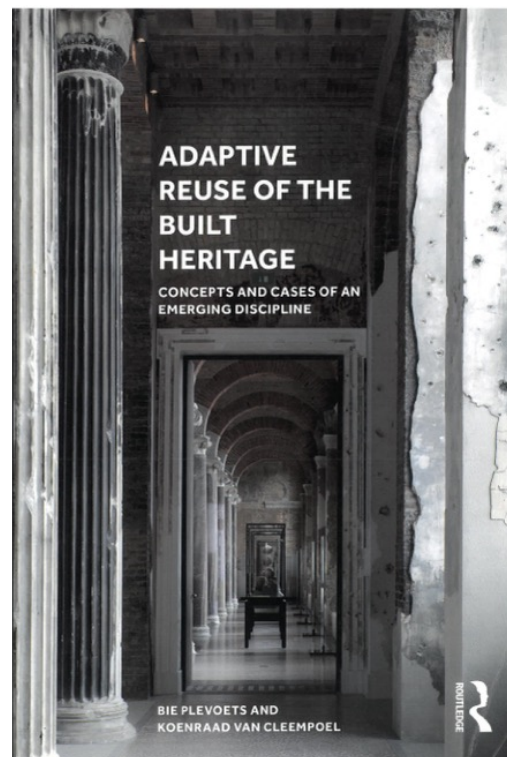
¹⁰⁰ Stone, S. *UnDoing Buildings: Adaptive Reuse and Cultural Memory*, Routledge. 2020 Chapter 12 p. 183-197

¹⁰¹ Stone, S. *UnDoing Buildings: Adaptive Reuse and Cultural Memory*, Routledge. 2020

fuel bills, the promotion of a skilled workforce, the attraction of built heritage and the not uncontroversial process of gentrification, while Environmental Sustainability is shown through the retention of embodied energy, and the use of environmentally friendly materials and processes.



Sally Stone
UnDoing Buildings:
Adaptive Reuse and Cultural Memory
Routledge 2020



Bie Plevoets and Koenraad Van Cleempoel
Adaptive Reuse of the Built Heritage:
Concepts and Cases of an Emerging Discipline
Routledge 2019

Adaptive Reuse of the Built Heritage: Concepts and Cases of an Emerging Discipline, Routledge, 2019, by Bie Plevoets and Koenraad Van Cleempoel makes a very well-informed argument for the primacy of the discipline, it has become “increasingly important as an urban, architectural, and conservation strategy”.¹⁰² The survey of the historical background and strategic approaches is encompassing, but in reality the authors are romantics. Theirs is a search for authenticity, for the fundamental poetry inherent within the patina of time and place. Traces, tradition, and empathy activate the “creative moment of

¹⁰² Plevoets, B. and Van Cleempoel, K. *Adaptive Reuse of the Built Heritage: Concepts and Cases of an Emerging Discipline* 2019 Routledge p.1

transformation”¹⁰³ thus they contend, the patina of the palimpsest evolves into an essential part of the design methodology. Plevoets and Van Cleempoel manage to combine both systems; the first half of this extremely influential book is composed of five chapters of built discussion, while the second half is 19 case studies.

¹⁰³ Plevoets, B. and Van Cleempoel, K. *Adaptive Reuse of the Built Heritage: Concepts and Cases of an Emerging Discipline* 2019 Routledge p.99

REFLECTIONS ON THE LITERATURE REVIEW

For such a long established and deeply entrenched subject, adaptive reuse has a remarkably short history. It is a practice that stretches back to almost the first constructed buildings themselves; for structures have perpetually been altered to accommodate the needs of their different occupants,¹⁰⁴ and yet has continually lacked the written theoretical and historical recognition of new-build architecture. This could be based upon the prejudice inherent in the concept that interior design was regarded as a respectable profession for women, combined with the lack of perceived worth in adaptive reuse within the modern and late-modern world. However, the agenda of the twenty-first century has ensured that adaptive reuse was beginning to be accepted as a professionally relevant and creative way of developing the built environment. This built towards this century's environmental urge to adapt, transform, and build human experiences, rather than construct new things. The current mantra: reuse reduce recycle is an indication of this massive shift in attitude. Adaptive reuse is now seen as one of the most significant issues within the architectural profession.

Adaptive reuse is still so new that an exact term has yet to emerge (nor an exact definition). Adaptive reuse does seem to be evolving into the settled term for the subject. Certainly, there are many terms to describe it; ReReadings described it as "interior architecture", while Scott, and Robert both use the single word; "adaptation". Adaptive reuse can also be referred to among others as: "interior architecture"; "remodelling"; "building reuse"; "retrofitting"; "conversion"; "adaptation"; "rehabilitation"; "reworking"; "repurposing"; or sometimes "refurbishment". These terms are deferential, possibly transgressive or subversive, but do not exhibit overt authority, so it is interesting that the

¹⁰⁴ Dora P. Crouch. *History of Architecture: Stonehenge to Skyscrapers*. McGraw Hill US. 1984

Dora Crouch discusses historic remodelling of existing buildings to accommodate new use in Chapter 9 entitled Early Christian Architecture: Adaptive Reuse. An example of early remodelling for reuse are some of the major early Christian buildings, which are the result of adaptation of older structures to suit different needs. The first Christians had not established exactly what a church should look like, and until about the 4th century and the end of some of the persecution, worship had necessarily taken place in borrowed buildings. This often took place in the tombs of martyrs, with the tomb itself used as the altar. Thus, the form of the first churches was a basilica with an apse, and a typical example of this, states Crouch, is St Agnese in Rome.

website, “Building on the Built”¹⁰⁵ refers to the practice as *interventional work*; this is an assertive term that seems to elevate the approach into a much more proactive, definite, and less deferential activity.

The act of working with the already built implies compromise, it suggests that the designer, rather than imposing their own vision upon a specific place, must first understand the agenda of the building before presuming to change it. This implies negotiation, agreement, and conciliation. But adaptive reuse is also transgressive; it undermines the primacy of the original architect, makes secondary their agenda, and overlays this with new meaning.

Even as late as last year, there was still ambiguity about the title and the definition, Lanz & Pendlebury in a 2022 essay called: *Adaptive Reuse: A Critical Review*¹⁰⁶ declare that... “there is no common and shared agreement on what adaptive reuse precisely is and what it entails”. Fred Scott describes the subject as *alteration*, which he defines as “the mediation between preservation or demolition”¹⁰⁷. Plevoets and Van Cleempoel propose that it is “altering existing buildings for new or continuous use”.¹⁰⁸ Cramer and Breitling suggest that it is “architecture within existing built contexts”.¹⁰⁹ James Douglass: “Any work to a building over and above maintenance to change its capacity, function or performance”.¹¹⁰ The ICOMOS definition is: “Adaptation means the processes of modifying a place for a compatible use while retaining its cultural heritage value. Alteration processes include alteration and addition”.¹¹¹ While the Burra Charter says that “Adaptation means changing a place to suit the existing use or a proposed use”.¹¹² Within my book *UnDoing Buildings*, adaptive reuse is

¹⁰⁵ <https://www.buildingonthebuilt.org>. Accessed 01.10.2023

¹⁰⁶ Lanz, F. & Pendlebury, J. Adaptive Reuse: a Critical Review,”*The Journal of Architecture* volume 27, no. 2 (September, 2022): 441-462, 2023/01/20, DOI: 10.1080/13602365.2022.2105381

¹⁰⁷ Scott, F. *On Altering Architecture*; Routledge: Oxfordshire, UK, 2008. P. 17.

¹⁰⁸ Plevoets, B. and Van Cleempoel, K. *Adaptive Reuse of the Built Heritage: Concepts and Cases of an Emerging Discipline* 2019 Routledge p.1

¹⁰⁹ Johannes Cramer and Stefan Breitling. *Architecture in Existing Fabric: Planning, Design Building*, Birkäuser 2007 p. 9

¹¹⁰ Douglas, J. *Building Adaptation*. Routledge 2006

¹¹¹ ICOMOS:

https://www.icomos.org/images/DOCUMENTS/Charters/ICOMOS_NZ_Charter_2010_FINAL_11_Oct_2010.pdf

¹¹² BURRA Charter: <https://australia.icomos.org/wp-content/uploads/The-Burra-Charter-2013-Adopted-31.10.2013.pdf>

described as “strategies that are applied not as a reaction but in anticipation”.¹¹³ Phillippe Robert suggests it is “the story of the successive layers, of the reshaping of monuments, and of the additions that bear testimony to each succeeding age”¹¹⁴, and Frank Peter Jager simply states “work with existing buildings”.¹¹⁵

By the third decade of the twenty-first century, the adaptation of existing buildings has evolved into a completely normal approach for the development of the built environment. This collection of books makes the case for reuse so vehemently, that do I wonder if the next generation, for whom adaptive reuse will be commonplace, will consider them a little over emphatic?

Adaptive reuse is no longer regarded as a difficult, undesirable approach but has moved to the centre ground of the development of the built environment. It is recognised as inherently sustainable, as a healthy, friendly, and economically beneficial approach to the development of the built environment. Adaptive reuse addresses the zeitgeist of the 21st century—the imperative to provide for the basic needs of everyone without damaging the planet, to stop uncontrolled horizontal development, to embrace different ideas and cultures, and to understand the importance of environmentally sound development. It has become the expected approach rather than the exception, the first thought rather than the last resort.

The issues of memory and anticipation that drove the contextual movement have had a direct influence on the evolution of a theory of adaptive reuse. These have encouraged architects and designers to embrace a pluralistic agenda that encompasses the anticipated needs and aspirations combined with an understanding of place. The architect reads the qualities of the building and hears what it has to say.

This emphasis upon the distinct qualities of adaptive reuse has coincided with the rise of diversity in architecture—a subject that has evolved far from le Corbusier’s aphorism *masterly, correct, and magnificent play of masses brought*

¹¹³ Stone, S. *UnDoing Buildings: Adaptive Reuse and Cultural Memory* Routledge. 2020 p. 1.

¹¹⁴ Robert, P. *Adaptations: New Uses for Old Buildings*. Princeton Architectural Press. 1989 p. 4.

¹¹⁵ Jager, F.P. *Old and New*. 2010 p.7.

together in light but now encompasses much greater scope. The diverse foundations of the subject have allowed an expansive attitude that is more inclusive, embraces difference, is sustainable, but is also creative, technologically advanced, and radical. There is now an expectation that the subject is taught in schools of architecture. Adaptive reuse provides a tangible reality in a world that is increasingly distorted by digital interactions and the rise of AI.

The quantity of these writings reflects the position of the subject within the building industry, and beyond that into the wider cultural society, and, as the discussions about adaptive reuse have matured, so the scope is moving. It is becoming less Western-centric, technology is developing, and sustainability in all its forms is directly influencing the evolution of the subject. However, as the discussion about the subject has evolved, so these distinct, pluralistic influences have remained. The contextual base for adaptive reuse, combined with an understanding of the needs and aspirations of the users, has proved to be the starting point for discussion and design. This is a young subject that is not entrenched with long-established doctrines, but has the advantage of gathering influences and ideas from a wide range of sources.

This is an opportunity for me to articulate the scope, the reach and thus the definition of adaptive reuse, one that acknowledges the future orientation of this heritage embedded subject:

Definition

Adaptive reuse is a creative approach that recognises heritage and culture, combined with a positive vision for the future that can make an environmentally sound contribution to the development and redevelopment of the existing built environment, and so provide a better, useful and more appropriate place for a population whose needs and attitudes are rapidly changing.

Buildings are engrained with the stories and histories of the people who use them, the people who made them and those who have edited them along the way

Sally Stone ¹¹⁶

CONCLUSIONS

This commentary has examined the distinct methodology utilised within five publications that accompany this submission. These are works that explore the use of context as a stimulus for the development of the built environment.

The analysis and employment of place underpins my work. As discussed, the contextual ideas that were developed in the last quarter of the 20th century and have proved to be so influential today, are at the heart of my developed position – within adaptive reuse, interiors and pedagogy. The connection with place has proved to be the foundations of adaptive reuse theory. The ideas of memory and anticipation that are implicit within any built environment are the generators for new developments. It is this position that was developed in my teaching atelier to create an innovative and effective teaching methodology, which was further exploited and reflected upon in my publications.

The breadth of my work – across architecture, interiors and pedagogy, has facilitated new thinking about the development of built environment. It has normalised the connections across the subject to include the influence of areas including such areas as art, archaeology, history, and geography. The collection and curation of different subject areas has allowed for cross-fertilisation of disciplines, and the acceptance of diverse influences upon architectural creation.

My work has been at the forefront of the development of ideas about adaptive reuse, the teaching of place-based architecture and the relationship between interiors and the wider world. The influence extends beyond the five outputs presented for consideration here, but also includes the hundreds of students whom I have personally taught, and those who have used my publications for their own design approach.

¹¹⁶ Stone, S. and Sanderson, L. *UnDoing* (MSA Press, 2020), p. 21.

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