

**The University of Newcastle -
Professor of Architectural Design - Inaugural Lecture Series**

From City to Detail

A daytime lecture series by Professor Steffen Lehmann, open to all students and practitioners, and part of the 4th Year program.

The lecture series commences in Semester 2. It is a series of thought-provoking talks given by the incoming Professor of Architectural Design in the School of Architecture and Built Environment, Steffen Lehmann, centring on his areas of research interest.

While new design networks are rapidly transforming architectural research into increasingly interdisciplinary fields, it is the architectural discipline that can make a unique contribution and lead such research teams. The talk series aims to stimulate and expose the students to a broad range of issues and ways of approaching architectural thought, with an understanding of the current change occurring in the design professions. The macro and micro topics of the talks shift along a broad range of scales from the urban (city) to the interior (detail), and back again, to reveal the intersection between research, teaching and practice. If the design process is a network of decisions which affect each other, the architect needs to move with ease from one scale to the next, backwards and forwards, to test and evaluate those decisions. However, since there is no formula, the outcome of any design process is uncertain.

Each talk will be for approximately 90 minutes, as a lecture series connected to the Design Studio teaching in Year 4 (in ARBE4221). Further details will be given week by week.

7 Talks in Semester 2, Wednesdays from 26 July to 20 September 2006.

Time: 1:00pm, for a 1:10pm start

26 July, 1:00pm. Lecture 1: *'Architecture greater than Architecture: Designing in an interdisciplinary Setting'*, room GP1-1

In this first talk, Steffen gives an introduction to the series of talks, which will take place over 7 weeks. It is designed to introduce students to a wide range of theoretical

positions. Steffen will show some of his own works and discuss the thought process behind his teaching, research and practice. He will address how the linkage of practice-based and university-based research will change the future of architecture in a post-industrial era. Design is a form of research. Beyond the creation of consumer products and consumer experiences, design is not only about producing a product or outcome, but about examining a relevant research question.

02 August, 1:00pm. Lecture 2: *'Eco communities and Eco buildings. ESD principles in Urban Design — and a vision for Newcastle's City Centre'*, room LSTH.

This talk will discuss solutions that can be found when architects team up with engineers, sociologists and ecologists to design buildings that contain the vocabulary for a new, forward-looking and sustainable architecture. If we look at energy consumption to operate buildings, we realise that climate-responsive architecture plays a major role in achieving an overall sustainable development: an inclusive ecological urbanism. So what will the City of the Future look like? Is there an overarching vision for Newcastle's city centre, towards a Sustainable/ Compact/ Heritage/ Waterfront City?

09 August, 1:00pm. Lecture 3: *'Other Modernisms — towards the recognition of different Modernisms. Modernism and Regionalism in their intercultural (local and global) context'*, room LSTH

Steffen considers the way in which Modernism has constructed a history of architecture, and how post-colonial identities (eg. in Brazil, Mexico and India) are constructed. He presents an argument for the end of the Modern Movement in architecture, the end of a kind of adolescent confidence in linear scientific thinking. The notion of a plurality of Modernisms, including 'Dynamic Regionalism' is introduced. Architectural history is no longer considered as a grand-narrative but as a multiplicity of identities.

16 August, 1:00pm. Lecture 4: *'Design of Infrastructure: Foot Bridges... urban promenade and city gateway'*, room LSTH

Infrastructure elements, such as bridges, streets and waterfronts, have a huge impact on the built environment and are, therefore, an important design task. We can

identify that great cities have great structures such as bridges, but what of foot bridges? Foot bridges are an exciting way to improve a cities' connectivity and to link-up public spaces. Foot bridges need to have an appropriate structural system and might be expressed in three qualities: being slender, transparent and memorable.

06 September, 1:00pm. Lecture 5: *'The city assembled: Towards a new Architecture?'*, room LSTH

This talk looks at the importance of architectural theory and the question: What is it that one needs to know in order to be a good architect (or architecture student)? Architecture, as part of culture, constantly transforms itself – and so does the definition of essential knowledge and skills. However, university offers a space of exploration where the questions of practice can be encountered in an open context and reformulated. How can we best revitalise the important leadership role that the architect has to play? This talk will also look at urban design and housing, the development from walled cities into fragmented cities, climate-appropriate design, and the role of the architecture model and the drawing in representing an architectural idea.

13 September, 1:00pm. Lecture 6: *'The Creative City: Art + Architecture partnering - absolutely public'*, room LSTH

This talk is about creative culture and the making of place: Interdisciplinary crossovers between artists, architects and other related fields have been applied to transfer techniques and working principles between these different knowledge domains. Site-specific installations in public space can offer a new view of the city, reveal the unique character of a place, and be an important resource for urban renewal. Partnerships and teams are created because today's problems are too complex to be solved by one person, whereas teamwork tends to bring about holistic approaches. In teams we can share resources and take action that would be too difficult to do alone.

20 September, 1:00pm. Lecture 7: *'The question of Indigenous Housing - a perspective for remote Aboriginal communities'*, room LSTH

The last talk in the series will continue to examine some ideas developed in previous talks. How can we make good design available to poor people and disadvantaged minority groups? The remote Indigenous community of Palm Island (Queensland) is an interesting case study on how self-governance, participation and economic empowerment might help to improve the living conditions of these disadvantaged people as culturally and climatically more appropriate housing design is explored. Design-build projects, such as the ones of the 'Rural Studio', offer us a great example to aspire to.

Professor Steffen Lehmann

PhD (TU Berlin), AADipl (AA London), DiplDes (Univ.Appl.Sc. Mainz), Aff RAIA, BDA

Since July 2006, Professor Steffen Lehmann has held the Chair of Architectural Design at The University of Newcastle. Steffen is an award-winning German architect whose architecture is often praised for its poetic use of materials, sculptural quality and sustainable logic. In December 2002, he was appointed to a Chair position at Queensland University of Technology, where he was Professor of Architecture for three years, leading the architecture discipline. Prior to this, he worked for fifteen years as a practicing architect and urban designer, ten of those years with his own ideas-driven practice in Berlin (1993-2002). He has built from single houses to multi-storey projects; he worked on complex urban developments, such as the Potsdamer Platz in Berlin, the urban renewal of Hamburg; and as consultant to Brisbane City Council and Queensland Government. Steffen's particular expertise is in designing high-quality large buildings that are ecologically sustainable. After completing his architectural studies at the Architectural Association School in London (1990), Steffen worked with James Stirling & Michael Wilford in London, and Arata Isozaki in Tokyo. He received his doctorate in architecture at the TU-Berlin in Germany.

Steffen is an established scholar, internationally recognised for his research and vision, with a critical ability to meaningfully address the pressing problems of the human-made environment. Throughout his career he has been involved in teaching architecture at various universities (in England, Austria, Germany and China), where he has held numerous Visiting Professorships and Fellowships. As a committed teacher, he brings a dynamic mix of practice, research and theory into design education. Steffen is currently preparing the 'Back to the City' collaborative exhibition project and a book on Brazilian Modernism. He is a member of the EU-funded 'STaR' research team for the sustainable future of the city, and a founding member of s_Lab Space Laboratory, a collaborative research cluster for the advancement of architectural research and design. For further information see: www.slabslab.com.au

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