Practice Research Symposium
Ghent - 16-19.04.2015

Candidate Abstracts

Keynote Speaker
Paul Robbrecht

Guests
Prof Carole Gray
Dr Boris Jensen
Dr Adam Jakimowicz
Prof Christophe Barlieb
Dr Annacaterina Piras
Thibaut Verhoeven
RMIT as a university of design is pioneering design practice research – research in the medium of design practice itself – as a radically innovative, game-changing research paradigm in the tertiary sector globally, with particular relevance for universities of technology and design. The model’s prime aim is to release the ‘sealed cognitive research capital’ in creative practice of venturous practitioners with an established mastery in their fields. The basic premise of design practice research is to make explicit and voice research knowledge which is per default implicit and tacit in ongoing design practice.

RMIT’s design approach radically re-defines the concept of ‘embedded research’ and introduces a paradigm shift in the way of bridging the gap between the private and public sectors, industry and academy world-wide. The paradigm operates on a cutting-edge supra-disciplinary research platform across a range of established and merging design areas in architecture, landscape architecture, urban design, industrial design, interior design and creative art practices.

RMIT sits at the very forefront of research in this field worldwide and leverages RMIT’s already acknowledged flagship research capabilities within practice-based research. Engagements outside of Australia, with nodes in Asia and Europe (including ADAPT-r as an EU Marie Curie Program funded research training scheme) form part of RMIT’s universally acknowledged research program.

Prof Marcelo Stamm
RMIT PRS-EU Director
PhD COMPLETIONS by

Dimitri Vangrunderbeek
FROM ORDINARY OBJECT TO SCULPTURE -
Exploring Form, Matter and Space through Sculptural Acts
16.04. @ 15.00 pm - Netwerk, Aalst

Corneel Cannaerts
NEGOTIATING AGENCY -
Computation and Digital Fabrication as Design Media
17.04. @ 10.00am - Fabriek, Ghent

Lucas Devriendt
PAINT IT BLACK -
My research into the Black Plastic as a (self-) portrait in the Cabinet
Devriendt (2007 - 2014)
17.04. @ 14.30 pm - House Ligy - Berinde de Bruyckere, Ghent

OPENING LECTURE by PAUL ROBBRECHT
‘Robbrecht and Daem’s collaboration with artists’
17.04.2015 @ 18.00 - LUCA-Raadzaal, Hoogstraat 51, Ghent
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Art as simulation for alternative societal and economic infrastructures

Valentina Karga

Valentina Karga is an artist with a background in architecture based in Berlin. She will introduce her practice and give a short glimpse of upcoming and future projects. Often through collaborative actions, her work addresses issues such as autonomy, education, sustainability, communication, the DIY and the commons. Valentina’s projects encourage engagement and participation, some times ending up imagining alternatives for societal structures, such as economy and pedagogic institutions. Among her projects is the “Summer school for Applied Autonomy”, a research initiative interested in capturing the technical know-how but also the social, political and affective aspects involved in autonomous living. She is working on a series of participatory projects that employ methods of society modeling and simulation, creating thus the base of a narrative and vocabulary for a different understanding of the world.

Disciplines: arts
Beyond architectural programming and representation.

Gitte Juul

Public space is under pressure worldwide, and at the same time architects draw pretty images of the future focussing on the values of the consuming society. But the world is not homogenous and different futures are needed to suit different places and different people. Can we use architecture to investigate the future? - An investigation that can tell us about our behaviour, our gathering and our outlook towards the world via presenting a situation - instead of representing the future. The present can be defined as motion, - as a passage from past to future. To experience the present can be about transforming the invisible into the visible and to connect different social, political and aesthetical spheres and layers.

Institution: University of Ljubljana
Phase: PRS 2
Disciplines: architecture, arts, and urbanism
Bridge – a contextual event

Villem Tomiste

In the second PRS I will explore my community of practice through the lens of the “streets”. I will analyse one street type — the bridges — and explain through this how I observe and practice and what the role of my community of practice is in this. A contemporary bridge serves the energy that is vital for the survival of the contemporary city — the energy of a curious city dweller. The flaneur, thanks to slower tempo, brings the bridge back its functional diversity. Todays bridges have been designed as unprecedented spatial phenomena to experience time, views, light or even taste. I claim that a bridge is a contextual event.
Eurythmy

Dermot Boyd

Architecture depends on Order, Arrangement, Eurythmy, Symmetry, Propriety and Economy. 
Chapter II, Fundamental Principles of Architecture, Ten Books of Architecture, Vitruvius, 1 BC

Eurythmy is a considered three-dimensional proportionality. It is a well-tempered and judged spatial condition where the careful determination of length, breadth and height become dependent on each other in the formation of architectural volume. Eurythmy is aesthetic judgement. It is not based on mathematical or harmonic formulae. Eurythmy involves spatial adjustment that is not quantifiable but is qualitative in both abstract and concrete terms. The architect can be both outside and inside a space, when eurythmy is conceived or perceived.

Institution: RMIT Europe
Phase: PRS 3
Disciplines: architecture
Finding Middle Ground: Integrating Architectural Practice into the North American Mass Housing Market

John Brown

Up to 95% of the single family houses built, and being built, in North America have not been designed by an architect. The result is what the Sierra Club calls the ‘Dark Side of the American Dream’ - a vast, formless, undesigned place where almost everyone lives. This research program explores potential strategies for architects to meaningfully engage this middle ground. It builds on a twenty year career in unconventional forms of practice that encompasses real estate, construction, architecture, interior design, retailing, writing, lecturing, video production, blogging, social media engagement, and public education. The project explores a new model of practice for the author’s Western Canadian residential design/build practice.

Institution: RMIT Europe
Disciplines: architecture
FRAMEWORK as activator and condition for revealing cultural and ecological landscapes

Karin Helms

The formless physical and ecological conditions are for me the first conditions of a place, the first conditions for a project. My mode of practice is a understanding of the ecological dynamics in a landscape through the prism of Design.

what if the designer’s role is to materialize, organize, connect, «cross fertilize » the space in a cohesive culturally created condition to form new landscapes?

The parallel question could also be the condition I apply in teaching: The parallel question could also be the condition I apply in teaching: what if the teacher’s role is to materialize, organize, cross-fertilize, connect the concepts, ideas of the students to create for future designers? What if this mode of practice envision’s new landscapes?

Institution: RMIT Europe
Disciplines: landscape architecture
Inflection and Resolution

Cian Deegan

There has been a recurring theme in our previous PRS presentations of things which are inflected, impure and multiple in nature. I have explored the fragments and facets of the practice’s work and its influences.

In this PRS I now wish to explore and document further the way these discreet facets come together to make up the work, in other words I wish to explore ‘the whole’ and how it comes about.

I wish to make this exploration in a practice-based context in order to reveal the tacit processes of a number of example jobs which might reveal how we work and how these multiple facets are resolved.

Institution: RMIT Europe
Contributing authors: Cian Deegan Alice Casey
Phase: PRS 4
Disciplines: architecture
Interiorities in Material Culture

Steve Larkin

PRS 4
Following from previous research we develop the dual themes in our project based research, “objects and their associative sets” and “spatial construction”, identified in the early design stages. I now examine how the early stage influences and ambitions evolve into the construction detailing of the project. In addition we conduct similar project based research on a brownfield city site in order to test the influence of landscape on the early design stages. Finally we continue to explore how cultural landscape, real and imagined, are manifest in the work and practice.

Institution: RMIT Europe
Phase: PRS 4
Disciplines: architecture
Intersecting Frames: Everyday Cultural Propositions

ADAPT-r and Sam Kebbell

I have recently been developing an overarching view of the practice at the intersection of everyday things and broader cultural propositions. I have been developing this understanding of the practice through analytical diagrams of individual case study projects, and groups of projects. In addition to researching projects I am currently analysing material presented in articles and interviews over the life of the practice; people and ideas that surround the practice through my contacts database, client list, and book collection. This reflective research has been complemented by testing ideas in a project completed late last year which also highlighted particular questions around craft and control at the intersection of these two frameworks: everyday things and broader cultural propositions.

Institution: University of Westminster
Phase: PRS 1
Disciplines: architecture
Kontekst lexicon

Karli Luik

I am looking onto my practice that has been there for 12 years. I see it as a field of concepts that are discernible in the body of works. Some of them are quite well compatible with others, some tend to be creating conflicts and misunderstanding. Researching this field could explain the progress of my practice that after 10 years of creating Salto architects has led to establishing Kontekst studio in 2014.

Extracting and explaining this vocabulary will create a personal lexicon that can be extended throughout the research and could be a valuable tool for conducting the investigation. I will present a selected field of works illustrating the process of unearthing the entries of the lexicon.

Institution: RMIT Europe
Phase: PRS 1
Disciplines: architecture
Lost Armatures and Found Forms

Andrew Clancy

Abstract Conversation and the Contingent

This research takes the form of a review of ideas, artefacts, spaces and process which act to continually inform and re-inform the work of Andrew Clancy and by extension that of the practice he runs with Colm Moore, Clancy Moore Architects. This paper will examine montage, superimposition and asymmetric resolution as strategies in the making of work in the practice. It builds on previous papers which identified an ongoing concern of the practice in each project being a contingent of discretely resolved and interdependent elements.

Andrew Clancy PhD Reflective Practice (invited)

Institution: RMIT Europe
Disciplines: architecture
Non Determinate Resolution

Colm Moore

I intend on developing further the account of the kind of conversation that houses the creative processes of our practice. The account that is being formulated and tested on projects in the office relates to Eisensteins' theory of attractions and his montage method. It provides a new formulation of the way in which mental frames can be brought together where confusion can be regarded as a positive mental attitude enabling connections the logical mind would over rule. The emphasis is now on how this newly identified state of mind operates when new projects are undertaken and developed. Specifically this will focus on the idea of a non determined resolution which produces creative and spatial tension in our work.

Institution: University of Westminster
Phase: PRS 4
Disciplines: architecture
ON LONGING [A consciousness accommodated by a collapse of time in space]

Ephraim Joris

As I work through methods of mediation I aim at developing representational strategies or visualisations of an architecture through historical recollection actively negating any possibility for the drawing to become mere illustration and instead strategise drawing as a generator of thought. Post facto representations are avoided in order to develop drawing as a primary investigative resource or indeed a mode of thinking where the cerebral act cannot be separated from aesthetic experience.

Institution: RMIT Europe
Phase: PRS 6
Disciplines: architecture, drawing, and historic recollection
Open due to construction

Bart Brands

A landscape architect works with living materials in an environment that constantly changes and most of the time in a complex system of geographic, hydrologic, edaphic, cultural, historical layers. These factors makes a fixed end-condition difficult to define. But by starting the construction off a possible solution you encounter the gaps naturally, theory and praxis coming in interaction (Giambattista Vico). The usual sharp division into design, execution and management is the undoing of this way of working. Out projects often have a strong compositional component, seemingly in contradiction with this idea of an open and process orientated approach. This research focus on, through different lenses, how the work of the office deals with this balance between lasez-faire and top-down.

Institution: RMIT Europe
Phase: PRS 2
Disciplines: landscape architecture
ORIGENS OF A SENSIBILITY

Alan Higgs

As a creative individual, I have an aesthetic sensibility. It is this which informs my design work and which is 'bought' by clients. This is therefore at the core of my practice. I have been exploring the building blocks of my values and interests, formed up until I was 30. Mostly these memories are of buildings, but include gardens, art and interior landscapes. I have also distilled some key works of mine and looked for signs in them of these early life influences.

Institution: RMIT Europe
Disciplines: architecture
PECULIAR ECOSYSTEMS

Marti Franch Battlori

CONFLUENCES

By writing the Mid-Candidature-Review I have taken a journey upstream searching to understand the sources and confluences from where EMF’s modes-of-practice sprang and took shape. At the same time, the self-commissioned, research-based ‘Girona’s shores project’, keeps flowing downstream exploring new pictorial-literary forms and on-site interventions to construe and construct itself as a new transient approach to project making at the city shores.

This two-direction journey, analytical and proactive, reflexive and speculative, is hopefully leading to renew the research on EMF’s constellation of modes of practice.

Through Girona’s design by management shore project, PRS.04 will unfold EMF’s modes of practice.

Institution: Glasgow School of Art
Performance Engine

Bruno Martelli and Ruth Gibson

Since the 1980’s artists have been creating interactive worlds with Virtual Reality. VR refreshes expectations, offering new avenues for original interface and environment design. Running concurrently has been a growing interest in the integration of somatic-based movement practices within the domain of performance practice.

Our practice focusses on new approaches to combining technology and choreography with an emphasis on site specific, virtual and augmented reality. Through examination of relationships between figure and landscape we collaborate to discover new performance spaces.

Our recent research explores the use of haptic interfaces and physical recreations of computer generated environments to question how the sense of dislocation and immersion can enhance viewer experience.

Institution: RMIT Europe
Phase: PRS 1
Disciplines: arts, Augmented Reality, Choreography, interaction design, media art, Performance, and Virtual Reality
Helen & Hard is exploring a relational design; constellations of human, material, contextual resources, concepts and procedures which are responsive to feedback during the development while at the same time serving as a creative guideline to developing a substantial and unique project. What interest me are on one side the capacities we as architects perform in these design processes, and on the other side the different levels and properties of the design which are supporting these procedures of development.

Going through projects from different epochs I try to reveal the wider context in which they are conceived including the background of my partner and myself and how these constellations are unfolding and resonating in the projects as part of a design process.

In parallel Im exploring free hand drawing as a medium of becoming aware of my own reflective and creative process. As this work is giving new insights I have chosen to give it most attention and time in the last period.

Institution: Aarhus School of Architecture
Phase: PRS 4
Disciplines: architecture
PhD Ammission

Matias del Campo and Sandra Manninger

Based on the catalogue of recent projects elaborated by SPAN (Matias del Campo & Sandra Manninger) this presentation strives to describe the gravitational forces shaping the work of the practice. The rigorous exploration of opportunities inherent in specific geometric systems form as much the design ecology of the practice as cultural implications. The understanding of Gothic and Baroque lineages in architectural productions as well as conversations about strange phenomenologies serve as catalysts for speculations on contemporary architecture. The architecture of SPAN oscillates between abstract machines, spatial genealogies, moody objects and sensible materializations – celebrating the formation of space based on speculative territories. These territories are formed by an ontological framework of architectures based on geometry, computational matter and computer controlled machines.

Matias del Campo and Sandra Manninger

Institution: RMIT Europe
Phase: PRS 1
Disciplines: architecture
Some thoughts on current work

Denis Byrne

Following on from PRS 1-3, which looked at past work, PRS 4 now turns to look at current work in the light of understandings and insights gained so far.

- Sacred Space: an exhibition and publication
- Irish National Diaspora Centre: a study and report
- Other projects

Institution: RMIT Europe
Contributing authors: Photograph by Eugene Langan
Disciplines: architecture
Systemic Architecture: from cyber-gardens to bio-cities

Marco Poletto

Agenda: This research explores the convergence of biotechnologies and advanced digital design with the ambition to articulate a synergistic relation of machine and nature. We radicalize the ideal of adaptive architecture away from the dichotomy natural vs. synthetic to focus on a new cybernetic design framework where biologic, human and digital systems co-evolve.

Method: To test these synergies we design apparatuses which combine biological computation, distributed sensing / data gathering, digital prototyping. Key series are the ecoMachines, MetaFollies, cyberGardens and BioCities.


Institution: RMIT Europe
Contributing authors: Claudia Pasquero
Phase: PRS 1
Disciplines: architecture, Bio-digital architecture, Systemic architecture, and urbanism
The Academy as Venturous Practice

Sally Stewart

Three constellations shape our academy, influence our thinking, and define the rootstock of our creative practice. Two are historical, (though neither could be considered dead), the third only becoming apparent at a point of catastrophe.

Mapping these communities is not straightforward, and making meaningful marks that capture their thinking more difficult still.

If creative practice begins with the unknown and works towards the known the absence of conventional evidence is no disadvantage, merely recognition that what was once explicit has become tacit, latent even.

The knowledge I seek to quote Smith and Dean may be “unstable ambiguous and multidimensional, can be emotionally and affectively charged, and cannot be conveyed by the precision of a mathematical proof”.

Institution: RMIT Europe
Contributing authors: sally stewart
Phase: PRS 4
Disciplines: architecture and arts
The Game of Architecture

Anthony Hoete

Games are a form of structured play bounded by rules. Since architecture is bound by a myriad of rules, this opens up the possibility to ‘play architecture’. How, then, does WHAT_architecture fit into this game? Research is ordinarily a rearward-looking activity. For WHAT_architecture, this has yielded a surprising number of revelations including: only 10% of our projects are built; 19% of our London office personnel are Polish nationals; the office undertakes, or opportunistically creates, a new project on average every 2.6 weeks. These reflections in turn raise questions: if 90% of our projects are unbuilt, then what the hell have we been doing? Were these building projects? For WHAT_architecture, ultimately, what is the Game of Architecture?

Institution: RMIT Europe
Phase: PRS 7
Disciplines: architecture, game design, game design research, and gamification
WALKING: Aalst Station to Netwerk, Houtkaai 15, 9300 Aalst
16. April 2015, 15:00 Examination Dimitri Vangrunderbeek
BY BUS: Aalst Station to Netwerk, Houtkaai 15, 9300 Aalst
16. April 2015, 15:00 Examination Dimitri Vangrunderbeek
TRAM (24): Sint Lucas to Fabriek
17. April 2015, 10:00 Examination Corneel Cannaerts, Fabriek - Scheldekai 27, Ghent
TRAM (22,24) Fabriek to House Ligy
17. April 2015, 10:00 Examination Corneel Cannaerts
Fabriek - Scheldekaai 27, Ghent
17. April 2015, 14:30 Examination Lucas Devriendt
House Ligy - Onderbergen 2, Ghent
WALKING: Fabriek to House Ligy
17. April 2015, 10:00 Examination Corneel Cannaerts
Fabriek - Scheldekaai 27, Ghent
17. April 2015, 14:30 Examination Lucas Devriendt
House Ligy - Onderbergen 2, Ghent
WALKING: Sint Lucas to House Ligy
17. April 2015, 14:30 - Examination Lucas Devriendt, House Ligy - Onderbergen 2, Ghent
17. April 2015, 18:00 - KEYNOTE PAUL ROBBRECHT, LUCA-Raadzaal, Hoogstraat 51, Ghent
ADAPT-r partners

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Belgium

Aarhus School of Architecture
Denmark

The Glasgow School of Art
Scotland

Estonian Academy of Arts
Estonia

University of Ljubljana
Faculty of Architecture
Slovenia

RMIT University
Spain

The University of Westminster
England

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