REMATERIALISING HERITAGE

Cristina Garduño Freeman, Antonia Fredman, Vicki Leibowitz

The Rocks is one of Sydney's premier tourist locations; its identity largely founded on the perception of it as a historically significant site. This perception is steeped in complex notions of the 'authentic tourist experience offered at The Rocks, which arguably originates from the retention of some of the early streets and architectures of the area. However, implicit in the act of retention is also the act of deletion. Throughout the area of The Rocks, gaps exist. These are the spaces where buildings, houses, outhouses, lanes and indeed whole streets have been eradicated to make way for urban progress or to redefine areas of the city according to political or economic aims. Heritage here is constructed, not only from that which is retained and preserved but also from that which is deleted and destroyed. This paper seeks to examine the fate of one particular street in the Rocks - Princes Street - that was eradicated in 1927 to make way for the Sydney Harbour Bridge. The physical demolition of the street and subsequent erasure of any material sign of it has effectively allowed the street to disappear. The predominant historical narrative that results reveals the extent to which current notions of the past are fundamentally understood through the existence of the material artefact. Yet this paper argues that definitions of the past can be drawn, not only from the material or architectural object that operates as historical proof but also from the social, performative and touristic acts that might be undertaken around the object, the architecture or even its representation.

In 1900, the outbreak of bubonic plague combined with The Rocks' perception as a slum, meant that it was subject to cleansing operations, wherein many cottages, shacks, back lanes and areas of urban decay were guarantined and destroyed. 1 Princes Street, which ran parallel to Cumberland Street and Kent Street at the level of Darling Harbour and between Cumberland Street and Upper Fort Street as it approached Dawes Point, was among those areas slated for resumption. In 1927 the entire street comprising almost 300 dwellings was demolished, the fabric sold as building material and inhabitants relocated without compensation. ² However, some of the buildings slated for demolition were recorded in a series of albums titled Condemnations and Demolitions or Demolition Books which contain over a thousand photographs, taken between 1900 and 1949 by the City of Sydney Council. 3



Fig 1. (1927). 56 - 62 Princes Street, The Rocks

Fig 2. (1922). 134 Princes Street. The Rocks

These photographs, while not architecture in the sense of bricks and mortar, can communicate a specific kind of heritage. They offer a vision of the past that reflects an impoverished, domesticated history of The Rocks. This is described by the nature of the architectures slated for demolition and the spontaneous character of the people represented in the images. 4 Sue Doyle notes that although the images were premeditated, their human subjects were captured opportunistically. People that feature in the photographs are presented undertaking activities of the everyday; activities not normally considered worthy of record. These images expose a marginalised population living in a long-forgotten corner of the city. In fact Princes Street was the site of a community, details of which can be gleaned through children's correspondence to a Catholic newspaper the Freeman's Journal, which was disenfranchised by its destruction in the name of urban development. ⁵ The destruction of this community, as evidenced by the ready demolition of its material form, provides a sharp counterpoint to more popularised encounters of the Rocks, largely dictated by touristic behaviours of consumption and entertainment. The Demolition Books, which reveal spectres of this domesticated, working-class world can be understood as an archive of collective memory. The photographs reveal an almost eradicated vision of the past, glimpses of which suggest a whole street almost unremembered. The existing architectures of The Rocks, by virtue of their retention and preservation, collude with deliberate cultural forgetting. 6

In this respect Sydney's heritage makes manifest memory theorist Pierre Nora's notion of "lieux de mémoire". ⁷ A sense of the past is constructed from a specific entity - the material object, which forms the basis of dominant narratives of historic Sydney. While contemporary narratives do not deny the working class nature of the Rocks, the touristic encounters proffered here are largely engaged with through modes of consumption, gastronomic as well as cultural, reveal a vision constructed at the expense of an alternative narrative.

In the 1970s The Sydney Cove Redevelopment Authority (SCRA), 'refashioned' The Rocks from abandoned buildings and impoverished homes into a potent recreation of historic Sydney. ⁸ This agenda, to create the identity of The Rocks as Sydney's 'first neighbourhood' is achieved through refurbishment and retention of specific buildings around The Rocks. ⁹ The creation of so-called 'authentic' place through the formal retention of material artefacts and the deliberate destruction of others assists in the construction of an environment that dovetails into generally accepted notions of what constitutes heritage and historical 'place'. The identity of such heritage places is largely achieved through a collection of architectural tropes rooted in the material artefact. These include a generic palette of cobbled lanes, wooden floors, roughly hewn sandstone, narrow streets and a muted palette of 'heritage' colours curated in order to achieve very deliberate social, political and economic aims. ¹⁰ A touristic reading facilitated by these tropes only partially acknowledges the lived reality of the Rocks that engenders a form of cultural amnesia. This selective recollection eradicates the community and traces of its existence at Princes Street. Consequently, these retained architectures become artefacts through which notions of heritage are constructed providing a means of entertainment and an opportunity for consumption. ¹¹

Such prescriptive understanding of historical Sydney is experienced with a degree of detachment, which is achieved by the genericisation of places such as the Rocks, so that the history revealed fits within widely-held perceptions of the past. This argument is well documented by scholars such as John Urry, ¹² Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett ¹³ and Bella Dicks. ¹⁴ The intersection between places of consumption and entertainment and those that have heritage significance raises complex questions about preservation, conservation, integrity and authenticity. Commoditising of the past, both in terms of experiences and objects such as postcards and souvenirs that represent those experiences is implicit in this kind of engagement. ¹⁵ Architecture becomes the primary vehicle through which narratives of the past are communicated and experienced. However this paper argues that some of the very behaviours of consumption for which tourists are so-often

castigated can in fact be considered an alternative way of constituting heritage. Notions of heritage that are not centred around the material artefact such as photography and social media, offer a less prescriptive means of engaging with past and allow for a more fluid interpretation of place. Consequently a construction of heritage that is based on both existent architectures and the engagements that occur around them may provide some revised historical narratives, less sanitised and more inclusive.

Laurajane Smith, Critical Heritage theorist, defines heritage as "a cultural process or performance of meaning making, in which identity and cultural and social values are negotiated, affirmed or rejected." ¹⁶ She argues that notions of heritage are determined *entirely* through active engagement positing that there is "no innate value in a heritage item". ¹⁷ This argument potentially leaves architecture at a loss. Kester Rattenbury describes architecture as "driven by a belief in the nature of the real and the physical: the specific qualities of one thing - its material, form, arrangement, substance, detail – over another. It is absolutely rooted in the idea of the thing itself." 18 Here, on the verge of Princes Street, we witness the intersection of these two modes of determining heritage and suggest that the interaction of both the material architecture and the social and performative acts that occur around these sites may in fact be inscribing a new reading of heritage.



Fig 3. The Lost Street. interactions at the exhibition

Fig 4. The Lost Street, Laser cut models

The Lost Street project undertaken at the Rocks Residency attempts to key into some of these fundamental ideas and can be understood as a form of Pierre Nora's "milieux de mémoire", wherein the past emerges from lived history and social practice. Such an interpretation reinforces the Critical Heritage definition of heritage as a dynamic social and cultural process while still acknowledging the centrality of the material artefact, even if it no longer exists. 19 In the creation of miniature vignettes of the street, the pop-up cards recall both the souvenir and the traditional postcard. They invite the visitor to engage with the historic street in a multitude of ways.

Firstly they invite a degree of scrutiny to situate the street geographically around the Rocks site. Secondly they encourage a close examination of the photographic archive of the *Demolition Books* and elicit a comparison between the models and the photographs. Thirdly they allow the visitor to engage with this absent heritage in very contemporary ways. Through the very act of constructing the card, each visitor enables the materialisation of a part of historic Sydney, one as fleeting and ephemeral as collective memory. Furthermore the visceral engagement with the card and its treatment as a souvenir allows the visitor to draw historic Sydney into a contemporary sphere, treating it as one might a physical, material heritage site. This form of engagement is furthered through the discussions around the site precipitated by social media and the re-photographing of the models to be posted on line. This rich form of engagement demonstrates the ease with which

non-material aspects of architecture can be readily drawn into both traditional heritage and tourist practices. While the ready performance that occurs around these ghostly objects raises many questions around the creation of simulacra and the lack of authenticity evident in touristic practice, it also identifies the extent to which contemporary notions of heritage must take into account social and performative practice.

The renewed story that it tells of The Rocks offers an enriched understanding of Sydney's past. Not only can we trace a different form of the city fabric, but we can understand the city's origins in a more nuanced way. The architecture of Princes Street can be re-projected onto a contemporary reading of the heritage of The Rocks. This more readily acknowledges the contradictions inherent in both the production and maintenance of heritage and the extent to which tourism contributes to that. This alternative narrative does not erase or undermine the existing readings of the site as touristic encounter, or as a significant representative of Sydney's heritage, but rather provides an additional level of engagement with the place of Sydney. In this way Critical Heritage offers architecture new opportunities. Instead of focusing on the result of heritage practice – the conserved fabric of a building - and thereby imbuing the material with inherent value, reframing heritage as a cultural process gives import to the activities and forms of engagement undertaken in the present day. It resituates the value of places of heritage significance, such as Princes Street in The Rocks, from the material fabric of its architecture to the processes of engagement carried out by architects, tourists and local residents. The Lost Street is not erased. Through the photographs in the Demolition Books, and further, through other forms of representation, it becomes rematerialized as a locus and an opportunity for additional cultural engagement.

- ¹ City of Sydney Archives and Robert Freestone. (2009) Royal Commission for the Improvement of the City of Sydney and its Suburbs, 1909. Retrieved: 12/10/2013, from: http://www.photosau.com.au/CoSMaps/scripts/displayIndex. asp?Index=RC1909.
- ² Douglas. (2010) How Plaque Almost Demolished Historic Sydney. Australian Geographic Journal and Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority. (2010). The Rocks Heritage Management Plan, p. 7.
- ³ The photographs had no propagandistic or aesthetic intent, and it seems they were probably commissioned as legal documents for Council use. The City of Sydney Archives website cites an example of owners selling a property without informing the buyers of the condemnation notice. The photographs were to serve as a record, not only of unremarkable dwellings listed for resumption, but also of buildings thought to be of interest to 'old citizens' City of Sydney Archives. 'Demolition Books 1900-1949.' Retrieved: 12/10/2013, from: http://tools.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/Al2/Entity. aspx?Path=%5CSeries%5C51.
- ⁴ Sue Dovle, Doomed streets of Sydney 1900-1928: Images from the City Council's Demolition Books Journal of Media Arts Culture, accessed Wed 10/10/2013 1.44pm http://scan.net.au/scan/journal/display.php?journal_id=64
- ⁵ LETTERS. (1922, October 26th). Freeman's Journal (Sydney, NSW: 1850 1932), p. 46. Retrieved November 18, 2013, from http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article116747056
- ⁶ According to Maurice Halbwachs this is an integral part of collective memory. Maurice Halbwachs. (1992). On Collective Memory. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Pierre Nora. (2007/1989). Between Memory and History: Les Lieux De Mémoire. In Cultural Heritage: Critical Concepts in Media and Cultural Studies, Edited by Laurajane Smith. Vol. 2. Critical Concepts in Media and Cultural Studies. London: Routledge.
- ⁷ Pierre Nora. Between Memory and History: Les Lieux De Mémoire. In Cultural Heritage: Critical Concepts in Media and Cultural Studies, Edited by Laurajane Smith. Nora. Between Memory and History: Les Lieux De Mémoire.
- ⁸ Sydney Cove Redevelopment Authority (1970-1991)/Sydney Cove Authority (1991- 1999). State Records Archives Investigator. Retrieved: 19/10/2013, from: http://investigator.records.nsw.gov.au/Entity.aspx?Path=%5CAgency%5C440.
- ⁹ Gordon Waitt. (2000) Consuming Heritage: Percieved Historical Authenticity.' Annals of Tourism Research. 27 (4), p. 836.
- ¹⁰ Waitt. Consuming Heritage: Percieved Historical Authenticity.
- " The complexities around the re-presentation of the past as occurs within tourist sites is a subject of intense academic scrutiny and The Rocks is no exception, however such a discussion is beyond the scope of this paper. See for example, T Bennett, 'History on the Rocks', in The Apprehension of Time, D Barry and S. Muecke (eds) pp 222-240 Sydney Local Consumption Publications, 1988. G Morgan, 'History on the Rocks' in Packaging the past: Public Histories, J Rickard and P. Spearitt, eds, pp78-87, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1991.
- ¹² John Urry. (2002). The Tourist Gaze. 2nd ed. London: Sage; John Urry. (2007/1996). 'How Societies Remember the Past.' In Cultural Heritage: Critical Concepts in Media and Cultural Studies, Edited by Laurajane Smith. Vol. 2. London: Routledge; John Urry. (2007/1990). 'Gazing on History.' In Cultural Heritage: Critical Concepts in Media and Cultural Studies, Edited by Laurajane Smith. Vol. 3. London: Routledge.
- ¹³ Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett. (1998). Destination Culture: Tourism, Museums, and Heritage. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- 14 Bella Dicks. (2003). Culture on Display: The Production of Contemporary Visibility. Edited by Stuart Allan, Issues in Cultural and Media Studies. Maidenhead, UK: Open University Press.
- ¹⁵ David Lowenthal. (1985). *The Past is a Foreign Country*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- ¹⁶ Laurajane Smith. (2007). General Introduction. In Cultural Heritage: Critical Concepts in Media and Cultural Studies. Critical Concepts in Media and Cultural Studies. London: Routledge, p. 4.
- ¹⁷ Smith. General Introduction, p. 4.
- ¹⁸ Kester Rattenbury. (2002). *Introduction. In This is Not Architecture: Media Constructions*, Edited by Kester Rattenbury. New York: Routledge, p. xxi.
- ¹⁹ Pierre Nora. Between Memory and History: Les Lieux De Mémoire. In Cultural Heritage: Critical Concepts in Media and Cultural Studies, Edited by Laurajane Smith. Nora. Between Memory and History: Les Lieux De Mémoire.

IONS PROJECT

BENEBSE

EDITORS: Claudia Perren, Sarah Breen Lovett

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INTRO DUCTION

OUTSIDE IN

Sarah Breen Lovett, Claudia Perren

Since 2010 Expanded Architecture has been part of Sydney Architecture Festival, its first iteration was held at the Clubhouse in Performance Space, Sydney. This was an inquiry into interdisciplinary practices between architecture and the moving image. As Australia's first international architectural film festival it showcased over 40 single screen works, from artists, architects and filmmakers. Following on from this in 2011, Expanded Architecture expanded its direction to include multiscreen, interactive and projection art, in the architecturally, historically and socially engaging foyer space of CarriageWorks, Sydney. CarriageWorks is a renovated rail workshop yard, that has now become one of Sydney's premiere performance venues.

In 2013, Expanded Architecture at The Rocks broadened its horizons yet again to become a residency, exhibition and symposium, focusing on the interdisciplinary practices of architecture and art. In this format proposals for site-specific works and academic papers were selected from an open call out, by an esteemed advisory board and double-blind peer review process concurrently. This process ensured that only works which duly considered the 2013 brief of Reverse Projections were selected. Reverse Projections is the potential of multifarious aspects of the urban environment to be drawn into site-specific practices. Instead of projecting ideas and art works out into the urban space it draws them inward, condensing and concentrating various potent aspects of the built environment.

The residency for Expanded Architecture at The Rocks took place in a heritage listed building as part of the Rocks Pop Up program, at 136-138 Cumberland Street in The Rocks, Sydney. The Rocks Pop Up program is an initiative of the Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority to activate temporarily vacant buildings by providing the creative community with access to affordable space to create work and host unique events, while a long term tenant is secured. This building, built in 1882, was a three storey Victorian Italianate style terrace house, with 10 separate rooms. While historically interesting, and aesthetically beguiling, the heritage listing on the building placed many restrictions upon the site-specific works for the exhibition. This meant that the artists and architects in residence had to think of new ways to engage with the building, leaving no trace of their interactions. The results of the residency were presented in a one-night only exhibition, where each work had various aspects of architectural engagement through moving image, installation and performance. Some works engaged with the notion of Reverse Projections in a historical manner, such as Between The Lines and The Lost Street which looked at the anguished history, and social narrative of The Rocks, deemed a slum area in part because of its hanging laundry, sections of it were demolished to make way for the Harbour Bridge. While other works such as In(scape): Film, looked at a layered experience of the building, that is: how the decisions made in the past, such as selection of building colour and occupation of the building manifest into the experiential nature of the architecture today. Other works had more of an immediate architectural engagement, such as A Room An Eye, which as a Camera Obscura reflected the surrounding city skyline back into the building. Aural Vision had sound samples from the local area, re-configured into an analogue sound scape with moving images projected into windows (only visible from the interior), and A Library of Living Structures saw a collaboration with various urban thinkers to collate a knowledge base for creating the built environment.

The symposium became a platform for many of the artists and architects in the exhibition to explore and communicate their works in a more detailed manner, this was combined with papers from other academics, artists, architects and curators not involved in the exhibition. All were exploring the common notion of *Reverse Projections* through critical investigations of theoretical, historical and contemporary content. The papers introduced new perspectives to the potential for aspects of an urban environment to be re-presented through site-specific engagement. At the end of each session an open dialogue format allowed for the discussion of positions and contrapositions in theme, technique, method, concept, material, and perception. The presenters and the audience shared an interest in place production, site critique, spatial figuration of scenes, memory, transgression of limits, the contraction of content, densification through layering, new ways of combining architectural elements, questioning the inherent logic of architectural approaches as well as site specific phenomena and atmospheres.

In many ways it was the experience of the residency and exhibition, combined with the symposium and open discussion format that intensified the intent of *Expanded Architecture at The Rocks*. For the duration of one month, 136 Cumberland Street became a creative hothouse drawing in, and mixing together various artists, architects, curators and academics and their ideas on *Reverse Projections*. The following pages present in detail the site-specific practices presented at the exhibition, as well as the academic papers presented at the symposium. We hope you enjoy reading through them in detail, as we begin to make plans for the next iteration of *Expanded Architecture*.



This catalogue is published in conjunction with the artists/architects residency, exhibition and symposium.

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Exhibition and Symposium

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Zanny **Begg** is a Sydney based curator, cross-disciplinary artist, writer and organiser. Her work uses humour, understated drawings and found cultural artifacts to explore ways in which we can live and be in the world differently. Zanny often works collaboratively and her work seeks a dialogue with the communities within which it is based, the people who inform it and/or its viewers. Her work probes the social and spatial architecture of life in urban environments and questions what it means to be political today. Zanny is the Director of Tin Sheds Gallery at the Faculty of Architecture, Design and Planning, The University of Sydney.

Thea Breizek is Professor for Spatial Theory at the University of Technology Sydney and a PhD supervisor in the Theatre Studies Department at the University of Vienna. Thea Brejzeks research focus is on transdisciplinary practices and the politics of space in performative environments. In 2013, Thea Brejzek is Visiting Professor at Bartlett School of Architecture.

Rachel Couper and Ivana Kuzmanovska began collaborating during the Masters of Architecture, Sydney University, when they developed a design for a temporary theatre for the Digital Architecture Studio and the Sydney Festival. This culminated in the installation of a prototype, the Spritz, in the Sydney Festival Exhibition 'youtopia' in January 2012. Kuzmanovska and Couper were awarded the Australian Institute of Architects Digital Innovation Prize for the design and the prototype formed the basis of the design for the Mirador, a sculpture exhibited in Sculpture by the Sea 2012.

Campbell Drake completed a Bachelor of Architecture at RMIT University in 2005 and a Masters of Research Architecture at Goldsmiths University, London in 2010 and is currently a PhD candidate at RMIT University. In 2010, Campbell co-founded Regional Associates, an architectural practice specializing in unconventional, sustainable design solutions in environmentally sensitive locations. Campbell is a sessional lecturer at the School of Architecture & Design, RMIT University and Monash School of Art Design and Architecture. Campbell has given master classes at the University of South Australia, the Lae Technical University, Papua New Guinea and has been invited to lecture at the Technical University of Berlin, Uganda Martyrs University, Uganda and the Architectural Association in London.

Kate **Dunn** has been a practicing artist and designer for the last 14 years. Dunn's work is in numerous private collections and institutional collections including The University of Western Sydney and the Australian National University (ANU). Commissions include The Hayman Island Resort Group and Sydney City Council. Kate has been an artist in residence at ANU and a quest lecturer at New York University. She has exhibited at SOFA Chicago three times in the last 10 years and been a participant in Sculpture by the Sea four times. Kate is a PhD candidate at The University of Sydney.

Cristina Garduño **Freeman**, Vicki **Leibowitz** and Antonia **Fredman** are interdisciplinary scholars and practitioners, with experience in architecture, design, heritage and art. Garduño Freeman's PhD research investigates the social value of the Sydney Opera House through Flickr, Pinterest and the Utzon Memorial website. Garduño Freeman has worked on innovative projects such as Sydney Olympic Ships 2000 with Tim Williams Architects and more recently on Super Sydney 2013. Leibowitz is currently completing a PhD on contemporary additions to Australian war memorials. Previously Leibowitz has been engaged with art and curation in a variety of forms, while residing in New Zealand. Leibowitz's prior research examines the role of architecture in the construction and eradication of memory in post-Apartheid South Africa. Fredman is a designer with a background in film, television and theatre, and was recently awarded her Master of Art Curatorship from the University of Sydney. Fredman's animated films draw on real estate, tourism and home renovation media to question the *authorship* of urban space. Collectively, their research focuses on the representation of, and the social engagement with, architecture: as an object of art, of memory, and of heritage.

Sonia van de Haar completed a BA in Visual Arts (Painting) in 1993 and a BArch in 2003. She studied painting at the Canberra Institute of the Arts, architecture at UNSW and fresco painting at the Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, India. Sonia founded Lymesmith in 2004, undertaking a range of work from architecture and colour consultancies, to large-scale public art and infrastructure projects in Australia and the UK. Recent public art projects include design of the Plant and Tri-generation chimneys at the Prince Alfred Park Pool Upgrade, with Neeson Murcutt Architects, and the complete exterior re-paint of seven buildings for Parramatta City Council.

Yvette **Hamilton** is a photographic, video and installation artist. Her work focuses on the resonant links between place and consciousness, primarily concentrating on the ineffable, the immaterial and the temporal. She has exhibited widely in Australia, at galleries such as Australian Centre for Photography, First Draft, Gaffa and The Centre for Contemporary Photography and she has also exhibited in London and Slovenia. She is currently a Master of Fine Arts (Research) candidate at Sydney College of the Arts.

Rochus Urban **Hinkel** is an architect, academic, curator, publisher, based in Stockholm and Melbourne. His practice has won architecture and design awards, and has been published and exhibited in Europe, Asia and Australia. Rochus curated several exhibitions and urban events, and convened colloquia on *Homefullness* (Stockholm), *Relational Participation* (Berlin), and *Urban Interior* (Melbourne and Berlin). He taught at RMIT School of Architecture and Design, Melbourne; the Academy of Fine Arts, Stuttgart; the University of Stuttgart and the TU Berlin. Rochus is completing his PhD by creative works at the University of Melbourne; he is series editor of AADR–Art Architecture Design Research (Spurbuchverlag).

Victoria **Jackson Wyatt** is an architectural graduate, and PhD candidate at the Faculty of Architecture Design and Planning, University of Sydney. She is an artist and architectural practitioner working in both Australia and New Zealand. The current working title of her doctorate research is *Architectures of Difference* and focuses on the relationship between literature and architecture.

Edward **Leckie** is an electronics engineer educated at the University of Sydney. He is also a video artist, electronic music producer, and co-developer of the LZX Visionary Analogue Video Synthesizer system. His video artwork has been widely exhibited, from Sydney's SerialSpace to the Hyperlink Festival at the Tate Modern, London. Recently Ed provided live experimental visualisations for Africa Hitech (Warp Records). His music duo Bleepin' J Squawkins is a stalwart of the Club Kooky events in Sydney.



14.02.14
To Whom it May Conceren,
This is to confirm that for Expanded Architecture 2013: Reverse Projections Symposium all papers were double blind peer reviewed on the abstract and the full paper before being presented at the symposium and included in the catalogue publication of the symposium proceedings.
Sincerely,
Sarah Breen Lovett PhD Candidate