

Symposium program

New Babylon

the value of dreaming the city of tomorrow

Faculty of Architecture / TU Delft – 26 & 27 January 2000

Wednesday 26 January – day 1

'New Babylon and the end of the avant-garde'

Constant's project serves as a point of departure in a series of lectures and an end-of-day debate. An attempt will be made to pinpoint New Babylon's antecedents and sources, and to explore to what extent it reflects the main currents of artistic and architectural production of its day. Also, critical architectural work that borrows from New Babylon and the Situationist International will be discussed.

Morning session

Exploring New Babylon

Venue: Main Auditorium, Faculty of Architecture. Doors open at 9:00

9:30 **Word of welcome**

10:00 **John Heintz**

Architectural theorist, Delft university of Technology.

J. Heintz's lecture will explore the character of Constant's ideal world in relation to More's original discription of Utopia: '*New Babylon: Problems of interpretation*'

Break

10:50 **Mark Wigley**

Architectural theorist, Princeton University

Mark Wigley will present his view on the relevance of Constant's project for the present: '*The Hyper-architecture of Desire*'

11:40 **Jean- Clarence Lambert**

Art historian, artist, poet

J.-C. Lambert will focus on the development, the intellectual and ideological foundation and the recurring themes in the work of Constant: '*New Babylon - Art and Utopia*'

Afternoon session:

*Avant-garde, experiment and critique in urban planning, art, architecture
1950-1970*

13:45 **Simon Sadler**

Architectural historian, Trinity College Dublin

Simon Sadler will explore the background and significance of the Situationist International, the last of the avant-garde movements: *'Indeterminate Utopias'*.

14:40 **Thilo Hilpert**

Architectural historian, FH Wiesbaden
'The polemics of Homo Ludens'

Break

15:35 **Peter Cook**

Architect, dean of the Bartlett School of Architecture in London, professor at the Städelschule Frankfurt/Main. Co-founder of 'Archigram'
Peter Cook will speak about the relationship between the work of Archigram and the ludic-situationist concept employed by Constant. The role of the media, the emergence of mass culture in the '60s and the artist's and architect's response to the social changes of the era will be explored.
'Archigram - Fun and flexibility, designing a social critique'

16:15 **Adolfo Natalini**

Architect, professor at the university of Florence. Founding member and spokesperson of the experimental architects collective 'Superstudio'.
Natalini will look back upon his work from the Superstudio period and reflect on its socio-critical and utopian content. Also, Natalini will cast light on the change of direction his work has taken since the end of the 1970s: *'Superstudio'*.

Panel discussion

Chairperson: **Bart Lootsma**

Special guest: **Simon Vinkenoog**

Author, poet, collaborator of Constant on the journal 'New Babylon Informatief'. Editor and publisher of various literary magazines, most notably 'Blurb' (1950- 1951) en 'Randstad' (1961 - 1969).

Thursday 27 January – day 2

'Utopia and the city of tomorrow'

The second day of the symposium will explore the relationship, in past and present, between utopian thought and architecture and urbanism in a broader sense. Drawing from their own theoretical work, a number of prominent architectural theorists and practitioners will cast their light on the topic. The closing panel discussion will be a forum for debate.

Morning session:

Utopia, architecture and urbanism

Venue: Main Auditorium, Faculty of Architecture. Doors open at 9:00

9:30 **Hans Achterhuis**

Philosopher, University of Twente, the Netherlands
'Two sides of Utopia'

10:20 **Franziska Bollerey**
Professor of architectural and urban history at Delft University of Technology.
Franziska Bollerey will explore the notion of 'Babylon': *'Exploring Babylon'*

Break

11:20 **Hilde Heynen**
Architectural theorist, Catholic University of Louvain, Belgium
'New Babylon and the antinomies of utopia'

Afternoon session:

Building New Babylon today; dreaming the city of tomorrow

13:40 **Elia Zenghelis**
Architect, Gigantes Zenghelis Architects, form. OMA

15:30 **Kas Oosterhuis**
Architect, Oosterhuis Associates

Break

16:30 **Léon Krier**

Architect and urbanist.

Concluding Panel discussion

Designing the spaces of human existence: Prinzip Hoffnung?
Dream and praxis: exploring the significance and role of utopian thought in
architecture and urbanism today.

Chairperson: **Chris Dercon**
Director of Museum Boymans-van Beuningen, Rotterdam

Special guests:

Françoise Choay
Urban theorist and historian, Paris

Constant Nieuwenhuys
Artist