

Pessimist Utopia: Theo Crosby 1950-1990

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Pessimist Utopia: Theo Crosby 1950-1990

Abstract

This research explores previously overlooked interconnections in 20th century British architecture by triangulating discourses in post-war Modernism, Postmodernism and preservationist architecture. It uses the works of British-South African architect, designer, writer and exhibition curator Theo Crosby (1925-1994) as a lens to make apparent and reflect on these conjunctures. Known primarily as a founding partner of the multi-disciplinary design firm Pentagram, Crosby started his career in the milieu of the post-war Modernist and, in the 1960s, became a vocal advocate for architectural preservation. In the 1980s he was an advisor to Prince Charles for his populist and controversial interventions within British architectural discourse. The study of Crosby's multifaceted career provides a means to inquire as to how discussions on architectural language and environment in post-war Modernism changed the trajectory of British architecture during its Postmodern turn, and to reflect on the radicalising effect exerted by the paradigm of 'preservation' upon architectural and cultural discourse.

Drawing attention to experimental ventures in preservation and the nostalgic side of much-celebrated techno-utopian visions, this study reveals confluences currently overlooked in late 20th-century British architectural history. It brings to light many of the particularities of British post-war Modernism and its interwoven nature with Postmodernism and preservation.

This research critically evaluates other dimensions brought into view through the study of Crosby's career, such as architectural preservation's temporary turn to radical politics and information theory in the 1970s. This thesis connects Crosby's practices to the present day, in particular to the dilemmas encountered in preservation. His four-decade-long career is also used as a prism to reflect on how architects' attitude towards the past has been shaped by the economic, technological, industrial and political transformations in late 20th-century Britain.

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Author's Declaration

During the period of registered study in which this thesis was prepared the author has not been registered for any other academic award or qualification. The material included in this thesis has not been submitted wholly or in part for any academic award or qualification other than that for which it is now submitted.

Signature: Juliana Kei

Date: 19 June 2019

Pessimist Utopia: Theo Crosby 1950-1990
Introduction

INTRODUCTION

0.1 Introduction

This research explores previously overlooked interconnections between post-war Modernism, Postmodernism and preservationist architecture in Britain by examining the works of British-South African architect, designer, writer and exhibition curator Theo Crosby (1925-1994). Crosby started his career in the 1950s as a vocal supporter for Modernism but, by the mid-1960s, had turned his focus to the reuse, refurbishment and remodelling of old buildings and urban fabrics. Crosby's preservationist stance also found resonance with various stakeholders in British architecture and urbanism. For example, he became a member of the Preservation Policy Group (1970).¹ In 1973 he curated a seminal Arts Council-funded exhibition entitled *How to Play the Environment Game*, at the Hayward Gallery on London's South Bank, which championed inner-city preservation.

This study into the development of Crosby's preservationist attitude is underpinned by Miles Glendinning's major study *The Conservation Movement*.² In the earlier part of the 20th century, as Glendinning explains, the protection of ancient monuments was supported by the instigators of the Modern Movement affiliated with CIAM (Congrès Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne). Early Modernists sought to delineate the "old" from the "new," to enable the perpetual "progress" and "revolution" in Modern architecture to proceed, while at

¹ Theo Crosby, *The Necessary Monument* (London: Studio Vista, 1970).

² Miles Glendinning, *The Conservation Movement: A History of Architectural Preservation: Antiquity to Modernity* (London, New York: Routledge, 2013), 432. Glendinning's book does not explicitly distinguish the terms "conservation" and "preservation." In the book, Glendinning mostly uses "preservation" to denote the action of maintaining, protecting and re-using old buildings and towns; and the term "conservation" is more often used in relation to the various attitudes or ideologies in heritage protection. The present research uses the term "preservation" and not "conservation" in a different way from that of the Conservation Movement that Glendinning examined.

the same time safeguarding “old” monuments.³ This cordial relationship between the Modern Movement and heritage preservation, however, began to crumble in the 1970s. Glendinning observes “the urban conservation system was gaining in efficiency but losing in vitality” due to the increasing institutional and governmental control of the mechanism.⁴ Globalisation, Glendinning suggests, also leads to a paradigm shift in preservation, with a growing emphasis on individual memory and local identity. More important, Glendinning argues, was the emergence of Postmodern culture “with its corrosive effects on all authoritative discourses and linear Enlightenment concepts of progress – including the Conservation Movement’s own historical narrative of perpetual advance,”⁵ As a result, Glendinning observes, by the late 1980s and early 1990s the pursuit for authenticity was no longer the priority in preservation.⁶ The preservationist stance under review in this research correlates to what Glendinning describes as a conflation of old and new that replaced what he regards as the Modern Conservation Movement.⁷ In his study, he lists a few examples of architectural theory and practice that reflect such phenomena, and can, I argue, all be found in Crosby’s works. These are the remodelling of urban structure based on New Urbanism theory, the replication of notable historical buildings or styles in the form of facsimile reconstruction, and the refitting of old buildings for new uses and expansions under the framework of adaptive reuse.⁸

³ Glendinning, 199-202.

⁴ Glendinning, 344.

⁵ Glendinning, 413.

⁶ Glendinning, 429.

⁷ Glendinning sees the Modern Conservation Movement as a concept that emerged around the time of the French Revolution and should be seen as part and parcel of modernity. He summarises the Modern Conservation Movement thus: “Conservation was a part of modernity that travelled not at the front but at the side or the back, shifting and moulding itself, chameleon-like, in reaction to developments elsewhere. Often, it served as a mirror of modernity, developing its values in reaction to the mainstream – old as opposed to new, static as opposed to dynamic, mixed as opposed to segregated, and so forth.”

Glendinning, 4.

⁸ Glendinning, 325.

Another observation this research takes from Glendinning's study is that a more market-oriented approach to the protection and refurbishment of old buildings had emerged by the end of the Modern Conservation Movement. Glendinning points out that in the 1960s architectural preservation had aligned itself briefly with anti-modern radical politics. However, this temporary "participation" turn within preservation, Glendinning states, soon assumed "a politically right-wing rather than left-wing slant."⁹ He also draws a parallel between this shift and the popularisation and then commodification of building heritage.¹⁰ How these tendencies and transitions were manifested in Crosby's preservationist works will be a recurring and important theme in my investigation.

From the 1970s to the 1990s, Crosby also produced works that can be understood within the framework of Postmodernism.¹¹ He was involved in notable debates within Postmodern architecture in Britain through his role as an architectural advisor to Prince Charles.¹² The overlaps between Postmodernism and preservationist discourses have been examined by historians such as David Lowenthal, who labelled them "creative anachronisms" – processes of continuously inventing and reinventing the past to suit

⁹ Glendinning, 325.

¹⁰ Glendinning, 320–32.

¹¹ Examples include his interior design for Unilever House in London which can be described as an 'Art-Deco Revival.'

Theo Crosby, *Unilever House: Towards a New Ornament* (Pentagram: London, 1984).

His design of the Globe compound, which includes housing, offices and an entrance building can also be described as Postmodernist.

¹² The controversies surrounding Prince Charles' intervention in British architecture started in 1984 after his infamous Hampton Court Speech during which he condemned the architectural profession at a Gala of the Royal Institute of British Architects. The debate became heated when Prince Charles' opinion led to design changes in projects including the extension to the National Gallery (1984), Mansion House (1987), and Paternoster Square (1988). Crosby's advisory role had become public during the Paternoster Square debate. The British public had shown a more enthusiastic attitude to Prince Charles' view on architecture. "A Vision of Britain" was broadcast as a BBC One TV programme, which attracted more than two million viewers. Despite the positive public response, Prince Charles was accused by the architectural profession of sabotaging the democratic procedures of planning permission.

Charles Jencks, "Ethics and Prince Charles," *Architectural Design* 59, no. 5. 6 (1989): 24–29; Max Hutchinson, *The Prince of Wales: Right or Wrong?: An Architect Replies to the Prince of Wales* (London: Faber & Faber, 1989).

contemporary needs.¹³ Lowenthal suggested that the two phenomena could be attributed to similar causes, including a supposed “cultural amnesia” after the Modern Movement, the rise of nostalgia, and the manipulation of history as commodity.¹⁴ While there have been several studies of the shared ideological underpinning and cultural implications of preservationist and Postmodern architecture since the 1980s, I argue that there is more to be said.¹⁵ Most pertinent here is that few have closely examined the way architects’ and designers’ theories and practices contributed to and influenced this shift in late 20th-century architecture. How ideas were transposed between preservationist and Postmodern architecture is also worthy of further investigation, as I indicate below.

By constructing a partial intellectual biography of Crosby, this research examines the forces that drove his preservationist turn in the wider context of these debates. Focusing on the second half of Crosby’s forty-year career, I investigate how his preservationist architecture carried over ideas and methods from post-war Modernism. I also ask what the similarities are between Crosby’s preservationist works and contemporaneous discourses in Postmodern architecture. In short, this research uses Crosby’s unconventional career to triangulate discourses in preservation, Postmodernism and post-war Modernism, and shed light on previously overlooked similarities and interactions.

¹³ Lowenthal, *The Past Is a Foreign Country*, 384.

In *The Past is a Foreign Country*, Lowenthal uses the term Post-modern Classicism to denote the architectural culture found in the works of Charles Moore, Ricardo Bofill and Philip Johnson of the 1980s. This study’s use of Postmodern architecture encapsulates Lowenthal’s Post-modern Classicism and other tendencies in late 20th-century architecture. The definition of Postmodern architecture is discussed at more length later in this introduction.

¹⁴ David Lowenthal, 384.

Lowenthal writes, “Unwilling or unable to incorporate the legacy of the past into our own creative acts [referring to Modern and Postmodern architecture], we concentrate instead on saving its remaining vestiges...Because earlier modes of response to the past are now closed to use, because much of what survives is now foreign to us, preservation has become the principal, often the exclusive, way of deriving substance from our heritage.”

¹⁵ See for example Robert Hewison, *The Heritage Industry: Britain in a Climate of Decline* (London: Methuen, 1987).

Mario Carpo, “The Postmodern Cult of Monuments,” *Future Anterior* 2, no. 4 (2007): 51–60.

0.2 Research Subject: Theo Crosby

Crosby is perhaps best known as one of the founders of Pentagram (1972), the interdisciplinary design practice founded in London and later extended to the U.S. and Europe.¹⁶ He is also renowned for his tenure as the technical editor of the magazine *Architectural Design (AD)* (1953-1961). Crosby's editorship of *AD* is seen as key to the consolidation and dissemination of ideas developed by post-war Modernist architects, designers, and artists associated with the Independent Group (IG) and the Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA).¹⁷ Following his editorship, he was also known as the architect who brought six members of Archigram to work together on an unrealised design for Euston Station (1962-1963)¹⁸ (FIG 0.1). The following part of Crosby's career is frequently overlooked but it was at this time that Crosby shifted roles and devoted most of his energy to producing and promoting works that epitomised preservationist architecture (FIG 0.2). Besides creating books and exhibitions that championed the remodelling and reusing of old buildings, Crosby had completed a few relatively well-acclaimed preservationist projects including his refurbishment and expansion (1975) of John Nash's Ulster Terrace near Regent's Park.¹⁹ By the late 1980s and early 1990s, Crosby was involved in heated debates surrounding Postmodernism, most notably during his brief professorship at the Royal College of Art (1990-1991) and his behind-the-scenes role in writing Prince Charles' Ten Principles (1988-1990).²⁰ His role as the lead architect for the reimagining of Shakespeare's Globe, the 20th-century reconstruction of a

¹⁶ Pentagram opened its New York office in 1978. The number and locations of Pentagram international offices have changed over the years. At the time of writing, Pentagram has offices in London, New York, Austin in Texas and Berlin.

¹⁷ Reyner Banham, "Revenge of the Picturesque: English Architectural Polemics, 1945-1965," in *Concerning Architecture: Essays on Architectural Writers and Writing Presented to Nikolaus Pevsner*, ed. John Summerson (London: Allen Lane the Penguin Press, 1968), 266.

¹⁸ Simon Sadler, *Archigram: Architecture without Architecture* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2004). The redevelopment of Euston Station, with the destruction of the Euston Arch, was one of the key preservation debates of the 1960s.

¹⁹ Pentagram, *Living by Design* (Pentagram: London, 1978).

²⁰ David Walker, "Kensington Gore," *Building Design*, October 5, 1990. Interview with Jules Lubbock.

16th-century wooden structure, adds to his credentials as a postmodern preservationist (FIG 0.3).

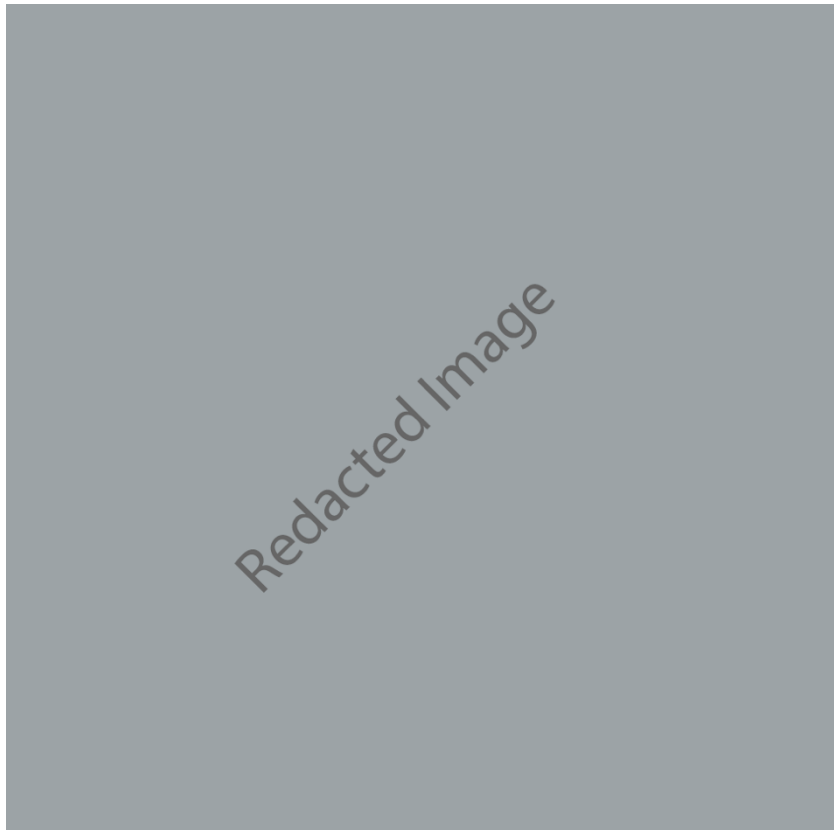


FIG 0. 1 Crosby's self-portrait, taken in the 1960s or 1970s.

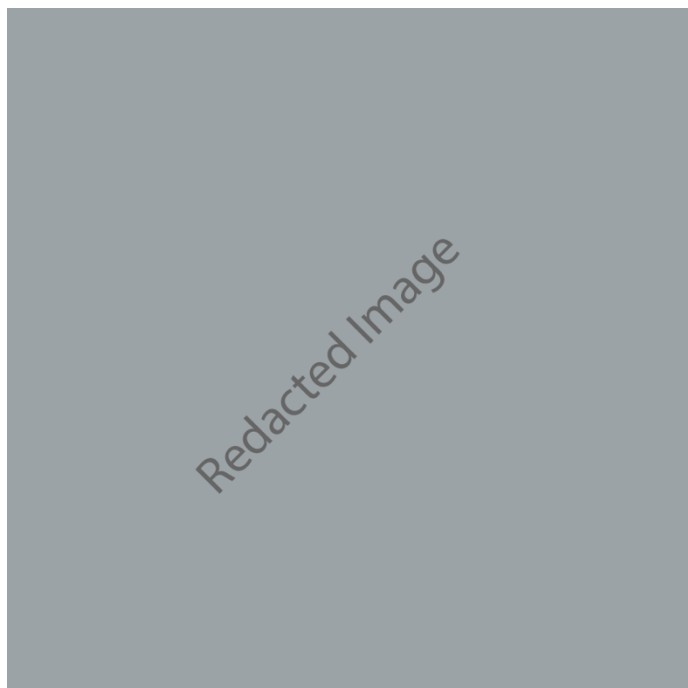


FIG 0. 2 Picture taken in 1974 when John McConnell (second from right) joined Alan Fletcher, Crosby, Mervyn Kurlansky, Kenneth Grange and Colin Forbes (from right to left) as a partner of Pentagram Design. The multidisciplinary office created sleek modern rebranding services for prestige clients including British Petroleum, Lloyds Bank, and IBM.



FIG 0. 3 Portrait of Crosby from the late 1980s or early 1990s by his wife, Polly Hope. The portrayal of Crosby with animals can be partly attributed to Hope's painting style, but it also revealed a more eccentric side of Crosby.

My interest in Crosby first developed during my graduate studies in architecture at Columbia University, New York, in the 2000s, when interest in post-war British architecture underpinned our studies. We read a great deal of Peter Reyner Banham's writings, learned how to draw from Michael Webb, and talked to Kenneth Frampton about Japanese Modernism. Like many of my classmates, I felt connected to debates in post-war Modernism and Postmodernism through this older generation of, mostly male, architects and historians who had come from or studied in Britain, including Frampton, Anthony Vidler and Peter Eisenman. Crosby and his influence appeared in many of the related texts from Alison and Peter Smithson, the IG, and Archigram, although he seemed to me an overlooked figure.²¹ In a seminar on "little" architectural magazines, I analysed Crosby's *Uppercase* magazine (1958-1961), a valuable early retrospective of post-war Modernism in Britain and beyond.²² It was through a deeper investigation into Crosby's career that I realised the relative lack of research on his work after his break with post-war Modernism.

Coincidentally, KPF London, the firm where I worked before starting at Columbia, had just completed the renovation of Unilever House (2007), a building first renovated by Crosby with Pentagram in 1983.²³ Other preservation debates that Crosby was involved in include the Paternoster Square debate, through his advisory role to the Prince of Wales' Institute of Civic Architecture between 1988 and 1991²⁴; the debates on the regeneration of Covent Garden that started in the late 1960s (shown in Crosby's 1973 *How to Play the*

²¹ Books published around the time includes:

Sadler, *Archigram: Architecture without Architecture*; Hadas Steiner, *Beyond Archigram: The Structure of Circulation* (London, New York: Routledge, 2009). Anne Massey, *The Independent Group: Modernism and Mass Culture in Britain* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995).

²² The course was taught by Craig Buckley, as a continuation of the research conducted into architectural magazines by Beatriz Colomina.

Beatriz Colomina, Craig Buckley, and Urtzi Grau, eds., *Clip, Stamp, Fold: The Radical Architecture of Little Magazines, 196X to 197X* (Barcelona, Spain: Actar, 2010).

²³ Crosby, *Unilever House: Towards a New Ornament*.

²⁴ Now renamed The Prince's Foundation for Building Community.

Environment Game exhibition); and the decades-long struggle, which Crosby joined as a volunteer, to revitalise Spitalfields Market. These were all still occupying a notable place in debates about London's architecture and urbanism in the 2000s. In other words, Crosby's career bridges two sides of the British architectural debates that I had been aware of and also made apparent some gaps in the existing discussions on late 20th- century British architecture.

0.21 Crosby in Existing Historiography

Possibly the first evaluation and summation of Crosby's contribution to British architecture came in 1968, in an article entitled "Revenge of the Picturesque" by Reyner Banham.²⁵ Banham, Crosby's collaborator on *This is Tomorrow*, and a rival voice in the New Brutalism debates, wrote

... combat was joined between a barely middle-aged architectural 'Establishment' armed with a major magazine [*AR*], and a generation of battle-hardened and unusually mature students.

But the student generation were without much means of public expression (until Theo Crosby joined *Architectural Design* in October 1953) and little of the polemic is visible in print.²⁶

More recently the historian Antony Vidler has pointed out the critical role that *AD* played in broadening the discourse around British post-war Modernism, under the editorship of Monica Pidgeon, with Crosby as technical editor (and also Kenneth Frampton, his successor).^{27,28} The

²⁵ Reyner Banham, "Revenge of the Picturesque: English Architectural Polemics, 1945-1965,"

²⁶ Banham, 266.

²⁷ Monica Pidgeon was the chief editor of *AD* after 1946. The role of technical editor was introduced to cover construction issues that Pidgeon was less familiar with.

Interview with Kenneth Frampton.

²⁸ Vidler writes: "*Architectural Design* (*AD*) under the editorship of Monica Pidgeon with Theo Crosby, and Kenneth Frampton, supported the Smithsons and their allies in Team X, but also, such widely disparate positions as those of Cedric Price, Archigram, as well as of John Turner, with his reports from Lima spearheading investigations into the potential reconstruction of the barrios, or the world ecological consciousness of John McHale, who edited a special issue in 1967 on '2001', reviewing the state of world resources and anticipating his seminal books *The Future of the Future* and *The Ecological Context*." Anthony Vidler, "Troubles in Theory Part I: The State of the Art 1945-2000," *Architectural Review* 230, no. 1376 (October 2011): 102-7.

framing of Crosby as a behind-the-scenes figure also corresponds with his personal view. In her memoir, Crosby's first wife Anne recalled a conversation she had with him in the 1970s, in which he described himself thus: "I much prefer the abstract to the intimate. I never was one for the hands-on approach. As you more than once remarked to me, I enjoy being an *eminence grise*."²⁹

Another reason for this singular portrayal of Crosby is that his architectural works have been regarded as, at best, mediocre – a view found as early as the late 1940s (through Maxwell Fry) and which lasted until the 1990s during Crosby's professorship at the Royal College of Art.³⁰ Even during the peak of his career, a certain scepticism about Crosby's architectural ability persisted. For example, in 1973, *Building Design* published an interview with Crosby, conspicuously entitled "Theo Crosby – Not Quite an Architect."³¹ In the article, he was instead depicted as a "self-effacing and modest South African" designer who was simultaneously opportunistic and idealistic:

He is naive enough (and this is no criticism) to be able to reconcile the old Ad-age and fashionable styling, not to mention some of the industrialised trivia of building, with an acute consciousness of the collective and individual environment – the necessary monuments and the needs of handicapped children.³²

The unconventional business model of Pentagram, described elsewhere as "[combining] the formal restraint of Swiss modernism with the wit of the Madison Avenue advertising

²⁹ Anne Crosby, *Matthew* (Philadelphia: Paul Dry Books, 2006), 87.

³⁰ Fry wrote to Drew in a 1953 letter, "The new buildings of the Ashanti college work better than the first dormitory with a large and slightly brutal lavatory block of Theo's that does not entirely scale with the rest." Architectural historian Jackson and Holland suggest Fry's statement and his use of the term "brutal" could be interpreted as his "evident dismay" at Crosby's affiliation with the IG and their "bountiful aesthetic." Iain Jackson and Jessica Holland, *The Architecture of Edwin Maxwell Fry and Jane Drew: Twentieth Century Architecture, Pioneer Modernism and the Tropics*, Ashgate Studies in Architecture (London: Routledge, 2014), 282. Quote RIBA Archive, F&D/18/13. Letter Fry to Drew, 9 August 1953 Walker, "Kensington Gore."

³¹ "Theo Crosby - Not Quite an Architect," *Building Design*, February 16, 1973.

³² "Theo Crosby - Not Quite an Architect."

industry,” also helps to reinforce the view of Crosby as a businessman-designer and a maverick architect.³³

In recent years, however, efforts have been made to reconsider Crosby’s contribution to post-war British architecture. For example, in a 2012 article published in the *Architectural Review* (*AR*), architectural historian Stephen Parnell suggests that Crosby’s involvement in New Brutalism, in comparison to Reyner Banham, was “just as important but in danger of being wallpapered over.”³⁴ In his PhD dissertation on the *AD*, Parnell also analysed Crosby’s intellectual and personal biography to better underscore Crosby’s voice in the magazine.³⁵ Architectural historian Craig Buckley, in his study of typographer Edward Wright, has constructed a comprehensive portrayal of Crosby as an architect, graphic designer, and exhibition organiser.³⁶ Buckley traced Wright and Crosby’s “shared attempts to use architectural concepts to structure graphic material and to deploy graphic surfaces architecturally,” which was manifested in the *AD*, *This is Tomorrow*, and the Congress pavilions of the 1961 International Union of Architects (Union Internationale des Architectes, UIA).³⁷ Although Buckley’s research investigates only a small fragment of Crosby’s early career, he outlines Crosby’s interest in expanding the understanding of the built environment from buildings to also include graphics, signage, and other arts.

³³ Emily King, “Obituaries: Alan Fletcher,” *The Independent*, September 25, 2006.

³⁴ Stephen Parnell, “Brute Forces,” *Architectural Review*, June 2012.

³⁵ Stephen Parnell, “Architectural Design 1954-1972” (PhD Dissertation, University of Sheffield, 2012), 147.

³⁶ Craig Buckley, “Graphic Constructions: The Experimental Typography of Edward Wright,” *October* 136 (2010): 156–81.

³⁷ Buckley, 181.

0.22 Crosby's Disappearance: the 1970s and onwards

While studies on Crosby's works from the immediate post-war era have continued to enhance our understanding of his early work, research into the later part of his career is by comparison sparse. Only three articles so far have taken Crosby's works after the 1960s as their subject matter, and all of them have focused on or ended with Crosby's 1973 Hayward Gallery exhibition *How to Play the Environment Game*. More importantly, all three articles focus on the methods rather than the propositions in Crosby's writings and curatorial works.³⁸ Both historian Simon Sadler and planner/educator Finn Williams remark on the popular and accessible quality of Crosby's works. Drawing a longer arc through Crosby's career, Sadler suggests that a consistent quality of "bottom-up pluralism" can be found in the three exhibitions that Crosby organised: *This is Tomorrow* (1956), *Living City* (1963), and *How to Play the Environment Game* (1973). Williams similarly applauds Crosby's effort to bring complex debates on architecture and urbanism to a major art gallery. Sadler touches upon the final two decades of Crosby's career, and concludes that the unleashing of late capitalism in late 1970s Britain has "drag[ged] Crosby's project ideologically ever rightwards."³⁹ Sadler ends by stating his regret that Crosby's "archaic guild culture would merge into a Thatcherite enterprise culture."⁴⁰

In January 2018, architectural theorist and educator Salomon Frausto published an article in the *AA Files* entitled "Sketches of a Utopian Pessimist."⁴¹ Frausto sheds light on Crosby's multi-disciplinary works and suggests that Crosby's seemingly disparate and

³⁸ Finn Williams, *Review: How to Play the Environment Game*, Autumn, Urban Design (6, 2012). Simon Sadler, "Theo Crosby's Environment Games 1956-1973," in *Exhibiting Architecture: A Paradox?*, ed. Eeva-Liisa Pelkonen (New Haven: Yale School of Architecture, 2014), 99–106.

³⁹ Sadler, "Theo Crosby's Environment Games 1956-1973," 106.

⁴⁰ Sadler, 106.

⁴¹ Salomon Frausto, "Sketches of a Utopian Pessimist," *AA Files* 75 (January 2018): 162–68.

ambiguous career was somehow maintaining “the modernist ideal of ‘integration of the arts’ while challenging the traditional, singular figure of the architect.”⁴² However, in speaking of Crosby’s questioning of “modernism’s confidence in rational planning” since the early 1960s, Frausto does not address Crosby’s simultaneously developing preservationist stance. The three studies by Williams, Sadler, and Frausto highlight Crosby’s complex personalities and pursuits. They portray him not merely as an effective organiser and collaborator, but also as a polemicist whose view of the built environment could be simultaneously insightful, visionary, anachronistic, pessimistic, playful, radical and opportunistic. The present research, instead, probes further into why and how Crosby took such a dramatic shift, in Sadler’s words, from “techno-utopianism” to “historicist utopianism.”⁴³

A more critical analysis of Crosby’s later works, curiously, is not found in the field of architecture, design or urbanism but in cultural studies. Patrick Wright dedicates nearly half a chapter in his book *A Journey Through Ruins: The Last Days of London* to Crosby’s Battle of Britain Monument proposal (1989) and regards it as an “instrument of oblivion” that disregarded and distorted the struggles in London’s post-industrial landscape.⁴⁴ Wright comments that by the late 1980s, “as those modish black pamphlets [Pentagram Papers] reveal, the most effective way of condemning modernism was to define it as the utilitarian ideology of the Welfare State.”⁴⁵ For Wright, Crosby epitomises British architecture’s break with its Welfare State vision and its transformation into a vehicle for profit-making urban regeneration. Wright also underscores how Crosby’s works reflect the symptoms of postmodernity: “in a world governed by ‘simulation,’ history finally disappears into its own

⁴² Frausto, 162.

⁴³ Sadler, “Theo Crosby’s Environment Games 1956-1973,” 101.

⁴⁴ Patrick Wright, *A Journey Through Ruins* (Radius: London, 1991), 221.

⁴⁵ Wright, 216.

image and the real can no longer be distinguished from the abject fake.”⁴⁶ In sum, Wright’s work offers a strong criticism of Crosby’s preservationist stance by accusing it of an obsession with monuments. However, what drives Crosby’s move and how he could transpose methods and ideas from Modernism in order to repudiate Modernism remain unanswered.

It is obvious that Crosby’s career cannot represent the breadth of British architectural debates as a whole in this period. First, Crosby was only moderately successful as an architect and his publications and exhibitions far eclipsed his architectural projects; consequently, as I suggest, he is seen as a mere adjunct to many others whose careers have made them more compelling figures in 20th-century British architecture. Second, he only ever worked in private practice and was never employed by, for example, local government authorities at a time when they were major employers of architects.⁴⁷ Pentagram was also a non-conventional architectural practice.⁴⁸ However, Crosby’s polymathic career as an editor, writer, urban designer, architect, artist and educator makes another sort of research inquiry possible by enabling us to circumvent disciplinary divides in studying the history of architecture, preservation, design, curatorship and urban development.

In my examination of Crosby’s chequered record in building design, I am in debt to Timothy Brittain-Catlin’s book *Bleak House*, in which he studies “architects who fell outside the canon – who were not particularly famous, at any rate outside their immediate circles ...

⁴⁶ Wright, 223.

⁴⁷ Ruth Lang, “Architects Take Command: The LCC Architects’ Department,” *Volume*, October 2014.

⁴⁸ At Pentagram, each of the design partners take charged of his/her own team and sessions to review each team’s work are held. In other words, as a partner in Environment Design, Crosby’s works would have been reviewed by other partners in information design, identity design and product design. Pentagram, *Living by Design*.

to see what we can learn from them.’⁴⁹ Brittain-Catlin suggests that there are many ways in which architects fail: their works do not suit prevalent trends, they are trying to hold on to a style that is becoming anachronistic as they continue to offer it, or they simply suffer from bad luck and fall victim to cost-cutting and political battles. Brittain-Catlin argues that there is more to be gleaned from these failures than from studying the good, successful, or influential who too often hold us enraptured. Despite Crosby’s polymathic activities, his influential role as editor, his proximity to the ‘centre’ of debates, the commercial success of Pentagram, and the high profile of certain projects such as the Globe Theatre, his career as an architect can be regarded as unacclaimed in comparison to that of some of his close colleagues and Crosby’s career was, arguably, characterised by ‘failure’ in Brittain-Catlin’s framework. But this allows the study to steer away from the heroic approach – celebrating the creative genius of an individual – that is often associated with biographical research. It also re-directs attention to figures such as Crosby who, despite certain notable completed projects, rather serve as an important link between various intellectual milieu in British architecture and urbanism, and as a facilitator in key debates.

Crosby’s moderate success as an architect, this research argues, also offers an intimate look into the way that market and regulatory constraints, as well as relationships with other stakeholders in British architecture and urbanism shaped an architect’s outlook. For this approach, I am in debt to John Walker’s summary of authorship, through film theorist Richard Dyer, for four distinct contributions: individual, multiple, collective and corporate.⁵⁰ My proposal is that these constraints and limitations should be regarded as part of the “corporate authorship” of Crosby’s works – they are indicative of “the organisations,

⁴⁹ Timothy Brittain-Catlin, *Bleak House: Disappointment and Failure in Architecture* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2014), 9.

⁵⁰ John A. Walker, *Design History and the History of Design* (London: Pluto Press, 1989), 48.

firms, or social structures ... for which, or within which, many individuals work.”⁵¹ This approach, I argue, is particularly important in the study of preservation debates which are often driven by authorities, institutions and political parties as well as local community groups who may take different approaches to architecture and urbanism.

0.3 Theoretical Framework: Operative History

One of the key premises of this research is that Crosby was a critic who considered his writing and editing, alongside building design, preservation advocacy and urban proposals, to be equally important creative outputs. More specifically, Crosby can be regarded as a critic and an “architect-historian” who brought his historical studies to bear on contemporary architectural debates. This tendency can be readily detected in his early writings in the *AD* and it persisted to the end of his career. Crosby also, at times, employed architectural history to explain and strengthen his arguments, including his 1970 publication *The Necessary Monument* which consisted of a detailed analysis of London’s Tower Bridge.⁵² In the four chapters of the present research the projects and writings selected all reflect to some degree Crosby’s practice as a critic and an ‘architect-historian.’

This interest in history should be attributed to Crosby’s intellectual upbringing. In his writings, Crosby often referred to forms of architectural history written to promote Modern architecture as his inspirations, including the works of Rudolf Wittkower, Nikolaus Pevsner and Sigfried Giedion.⁵³ He also emphasised the lasting influence of his teacher Rex D.

⁵¹ Walker, 49.

⁵² Crosby, *The Necessary Monument*.

⁵³ Theo Crosby, Alison Smithson, and Peter Smithson, “The New Brutalism,” *Architectural Design*, January 1955.
Crosby, “Night Thoughts of a Faded Utopia.”

Martienssen, a South African Modernist with expertise in ancient Greek town planning.⁵⁴ Even when Crosby became disillusioned about Modern architecture in the 1960s, he maintained his admiration for these historians and continued to use their works and methods in his preservation advocacy. Meanwhile, his career also became entangled with the investigations into the shaping of architectural thinking, debates, and design in the post-war era by modern historical studies. The present research takes as its point of departure Crosby's references to history.

From this point, it builds upon studies of “operative histories” in modern architecture, including the writings of Manfredo Tafuri, Anthony Vidler, and Panayotis Tournikiotis.⁵⁵ I employ the framework established by Tafuri in his *Theories and History of Architecture* and use Vidler's writing to link studies in operative history with existing discourses on post-war Modernism and Postmodernism. Tournikiotis' discursive analysis of operative history, meanwhile, adds clarity to these analyses of the historiography of modern architecture. The term “operative historians,” as Tournikiotis summarises it, refers to historians who celebrate “the victory of the architecture that was also the object of their historical research.”⁵⁶ The term has frequently been used to describe architectural historians from a German-Swiss art historical tradition including Nikolaus Pevsner, Emil Kaufmann and Sigfried Giedion.⁵⁷ The study of operative history has now expanded to include a generation of critics and historians, mostly active in the post-war era, who were critical of Modern architecture and yet, in the

⁵⁴ Theo Crosby, “Night Thoughts of a Faded Utopia,” in *The Independent Group: Postwar Britain and the Aesthetics of Plenty* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1990), 197–99.

⁵⁵ Manfredo Tafuri, *Theories and History of Architecture*, trans. Giorgio Verrecchia, 4th ed. (Granada: London, 1989); Anthony Vidler, *Histories of the Immediate Present* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2008); Panayotis Tournikiotis, *The Historiography of Modern Architecture* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1999); Another study into how architects are influenced by history that the present research consulted is Trevor Garnham, *Architecture Re-Assembled: The Use (and Abuse) of History* (London, New York: Routledge, 2013).

⁵⁶ Tournikiotis, *The Historiography of Modern Architecture*, 14.

⁵⁷ These historians either studied under or were influenced by the German art historian Heinrich Wölfflin. Their method and shared intellectual underpinning are key themes in Vidler's *Histories of the Immediate Present*.

process of their criticism, hoping to revitalise Modern architecture through reframing it in theoretical and philosophical discourse. I consider this conflicting and disillusioned view of Modernism, or what Tournikiotis called “derogative” history, to be an important characteristic of Crosby’s use of history.⁵⁸

Vidler’s *Histories of the Immediate Present*, meanwhile, establish a link between operative history and Postmodernism.⁵⁹ The focus of Vidler’s investigation is a group of writings produced between 1945 and 1975 by Kaufmann, Colin Rowe, Banham and Tafuri. Vidler’s study has particular relevance to this study since it interrogates the role played by operative history in the decline of Modern architecture in the post-war era and the emergence of Postmodernism. In Vidler’s research, he questions whether “the continued reliance on history by architects in the second half of the twentieth century should be seen as the apparently new phase commonly called ‘postmodernism’” or should be attributed to a kind of “*posthistoire* thought” that is ingrained in modernism.⁶⁰ Vidler’s study into the transition between post-war Modernism and Postmodernism also shed light on the intellectual context in which Crosby made his preservationist turn.

Although the present study has benefited from Vidler and Tournikiotis’ works, it is different from these in two notable ways. First, the social, cultural, and economic contexts in which Crosby used history are important to this study because preservationist sentiment is often seen as a response to the particular socio-cultural conditions in late 20th century Britain. Secondly, Crosby was not an academic architectural historian and was mostly known through his practice as an architect and a critic. In other words, although he conducted historical

⁵⁸ Tournikiotis, *The Historiography of Modern Architecture*, 14–15.

⁵⁹ Vidler, *Histories of the Immediate Present*.

⁶⁰ Vidler, 14.

research and participated in debates about history, his works are not usually regarded as part of the corpus of post-war architectural historiography. But Tafuri's *Theories and History of Architecture*, which argues that criticism, design, and history had merged, is of significant relevance to the present research. Moreover, I benefit from Tafuri's formulation that architecture is not only a profession but an "institution" and "ideology".⁶¹ This non-material discussion of architecture is relevant to my investigation of the developing preservationist consensus, which can be understood as a shift in the attitude to the relationship between humankind and architecture – a concept which I elaborate in the following section on 'Environment Design.'

For Tafuri, operative criticism was born from the loss of critical momentum in architecture, after the supposed success of Modernism, when 'pure' criticism lost its purpose.⁶² In fact, Tafuri had used New Brutalism as an example of a movement that emerged out of the stagnation which occurred when Modernism became the dominant architectural expression in which he mentions Crosby.⁶³ Tafuri writes,

But criticism, historicism (*malgre soi*) and *reportage* are not easily reconcilable. The acceptance of a given language – Le Corbusier's *materic* and *objectual* – leads to the coherent mannerism of the Japanese *new school* and to the too often frustrated aspirations of the English circle that will see Theo Crosby, one of the first instigators of the New Brutalism, trying new outlets in the *pop* fantasies of 'Archigram' and the Smithsons arriving at a dignified and agonistic professional integrity.⁶⁴

Although Tafuri acknowledges the positive influence of New Brutalism rhetoric in shaping post-war architectural culture in Britain and beyond, he also criticises it as "an example of non-rigorous criticism, compromised (but also vitalised) by partially developed ideological

⁶¹ Tafuri, *Theories and History of Architecture*,
Manfredo Tafuri, "Toward a Critique of Architectural Ideology," in *Architectural Theory Since 1968*, ed.
Michael K. Hayes (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1998), 2–35.

⁶² Tafuri, *Theories and History of Architecture*, 11,133.

⁶³ Tafuri, 125.

⁶⁴ Tafuri, 126.

superimpositions.”⁶⁵ I argue that this passage points out some of the weakness in Crosby’s works, but also establishes him as an operative critic and historian.

Tafuri considers that operative criticism “represents the meeting point of history and planning”; it “*plans* past history by projecting it to the future.”⁶⁶ In describing how the gap between criticism, design and history has been closed, Tafuri also mentions several of Crosby’s contemporaries: Louis Kahn, Geoffrey Copcutt, and James Stirling. Tafuri describes them as architects who “are not satisfied with structuring forms and functions.”⁶⁷ He writes “they aim, first of all, at making their approach to form readable, they want, in short, to *historicise* themselves and to lead to a deeply reflected historicised fruition.”⁶⁸ In the four chapters of this study, I return to these definitions to demonstrate they are integral to Crosby’s practice as an operative critic. I also argue that they can be found in Crosby’s works as he moved from a Modernist to a preservationist.

I am aware that part and parcel of Tafuri’s re-conceptualisation of architecture as an “institution” and “ideology” is intended to situate architecture in a broader critique of capitalist society. As evidence, many of the keywords in *Theories and History of Architecture* carry additional meaning. For example, by “operative criticism,” Tafuri refers not only to criticism that seeks to interfere with history and architectural culture but also to criticism that works within and for the structure of capitalism.⁶⁹ The same can be said about terms such as

⁶⁵ Tafuri, 125.

⁶⁶ Tafuri, 141.

⁶⁷ Tafuri, 132.

⁶⁸ Tafuri, 132.

⁶⁹ Tafuri discusses more explicitly his critique on the relationship between operative criticism and capitalism in another publication *Architecture and Utopia*. Manfredo Tafuri, *Architecture and Utopia: Design and Capitalist Development* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1976).

“Plan” and “Project” which Tafuri used in ways other than the usual in architecture.⁷⁰ These ambiguities of Tafuri’s writing may cause confusion, but also describe the kind of history and criticism that Crosby produced. One such example can be found in the chapter “Architecture as Indifferent Object and the Crisis of Critical Architecture” where Tafuri uses an axonometric drawing from Crosby and Archigram’s 1963 project Fulham Study.⁷¹ Although Tafuri does not study the project in any detail, he suggests that the design epitomises what he regards as the dissolution of architecture into the structure of the metropolis – a “pure object” that is readily absorbed by the governing logic of capitalism.⁷² These remarks by Tafuri suggest that acknowledging Crosby’s compliance with capitalism should be considered an integral part of understanding his practice as an operative critic/historian.

More specifically, Crosby’s works also manifest many characteristics of what Tafuri named “typological criticism.” Typological criticism, Tafuri observes, is not exactly historical, but manages to become so by “using instrumentally the results of historical criticism as a support for its current analysis.”⁷³ Typological criticism also has a tendency to take reality as a starting point and to break it down into “single components, or, in extreme cases, its fundamental laws.”⁷⁴ In other words, typological criticism refuses to make an overarching judgement on the complexity of urban structure. In addition, the studies of towns and urbanscapes produced through typological criticism are often influenced by theories and studies on the visual arts. These characteristics can be found in Crosby’s theorisation of urban

⁷⁰ Andrew Leach, “Choosing History: A Study of Manfredo Tafuri’s Theorisation of Architectural History and Architectural History Research” (PhD Dissertation, University of Ghent, 2006).

⁷¹ Tafuri, *Theories and History of Architecture*, 94.

⁷² Tafuri’s observation on Crosby’s tendency to create an architectural criticism that assumes the programme of capitalist production was, however, omitted from the translation. Crosby’s name is cited in the Italian and Spanish edition but was omitted from the English translation.

Tafuri also labelled the diagram “Project for a commercial centre in Montreal, 1964.”

Manfredo Tafuri, *Teorie e Storia Dell’architettura* (Bari: Editori Laterza, 1968).

Tafuri, *Theories and History of Architecture*, 95.

⁷³ Tafuri, *Theories and History of Architecture*, 162.

⁷⁴ Tafuri, 158–62.

renewal, published in *The Necessary Monument* and *How to Play the Environment Game*.⁷⁵

Typological criticism also manifests traits that are often associated with Postmodern architecture: it is “the very kind of appraisal of the renewing qualities of the formally and functionally complex and multi-valent” and “puts in question again the problems that functionalist literature had taken as already solved.”⁷⁶ This research employs Tafuri’s articulation of typological criticism as an additional critical lens through which to decipher Crosby’s works, and to magnify their similarities with other discourses in Postmodernism.

0.4 Methodology

0.41 Using Biography

Although this research takes into account Crosby’s biography (see Appendix I), its focus is his professional career. It differs from other biographies of architects in several ways. First, it is not an attempt to definitively sum up an influential architect’s designs, such as Amanda Reeser Lawrence’s study of James Stirling.⁷⁷ Nor is a reflection on an architect’s work through juxtaposing his/her works with personal life events, as in Mark Girouard’s *Big Jim: The Life and Work of James Stirling*.⁷⁸ Focusing on the shifts and changes in Crosby’s attitude to Modernism, the present research can be regarded rather as an intellectual biography. Yet, unlike Nigel Whiteley’s study of Reyner Banham, it is not an exhaustive study of the work done by an architectural writer. In the present study I approach Crosby’s career through a selection of projects and writings that seem to reflect best the exchanges between Modernist, Postmodernist and preservationist architecture.⁷⁹ One reason for this

⁷⁵ Crosby, *The Necessary Monument*; Theo Crosby, *How to Play the Environmental Game* (London: Penguin, 1973).

⁷⁶ Tafuri, *Theories and History of Architecture*, 158–62.

⁷⁷ Amanda Reeser Lawrence, *James Stirling: Revisionary Modernist* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013).

⁷⁸ Mark Girouard, *Big Jim: The Life and Work of James Stirling* (London: Pimlico, 2000).

⁷⁹ Nigel Whiteley, *Reyner Banham: Historian of the Immediate Future* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2002).

approach is it allows me to focus not on the qualities of Crosby's works, but the way in which these works refract the changing attitude to the past in late 20th-century British architecture.

The approach taken by this research is perhaps most similar to the approach of a recent publication by M. Christine Boyer, entitled *Not Quite Architecture: Writing Around Alison and Peter Smithson*, an examination of the writings produced by Alison and Peter Smithson from the 1940s to the 1990s.⁸⁰ Boyer's method of 'writing around' introduces broader contexts that were influential for the Smithsons or developed differently in response to their works. Through the many writings produced by this couple, and by their friends and collaborators (including Crosby), Boyer constructs an alternative framework for understanding British architectural culture from the late 1940s to the 1980s. She uses the Smithsons' works to enrich our understandings of the intersections within this framework.

This approach of "writing around" is one that is also found in design history and was instructive for steering the study away from the "heroic approach" to considering a person or a partnership.⁸¹ "Writing around" also resonates with methods in design history that have shifted away from the study of objects and people, to "a history of the translations, transcriptions, transactions, transpositions and transformation that constitute the relationships among things, people, and ideas", as design historian Kjetil Fallan puts it.⁸² This approach is particularly helpful for considering Crosby's role as a facilitator and his advocacy of cross-disciplinary collaborations.

⁸⁰ M. Christine Boyer, *Not Quite Architecture: Writing around Alison and Peter Smithson* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2017).

⁸¹ Hazel Conway, *Design History: A Student Handbook* (London, New York: Routledge, 1987), 9.

⁸² Kjetil Fallan, *Design History: Understanding Theory and Method* (London: Bloomsbury, 2009), 10.

The “writing around” approach has several other advantages. It allows the research to go both horizontally and vertically along the time scale. For example, Boyer’s book presents a fresh view of British architectural culture by spanning the debate on British Modern architecture that is bookended by the life of the Smithsons, as well as their international correspondence with the CIAM and Team 10 networks. Like Boyer’s study, this research seeks to demonstrate that architects’ ideas are often the superimposition of their intellectual upbringing, long-term pursuits and also impulsive reactions at a particular time. They also reveal that neither the finished proposals nor the built works necessarily represent the architect’s ideal in full. However, the limitations of this approach are that it has to rely on existing scholarship to paint a comprehensive picture of the architects, the period, or the movement they are exploring; and it focuses more on the method than the outcome of the architects’ creative outputs.

Other than “writing around,” this research also employs the method of using a career to reflect on a particular cultural and intellectual phenomenon. An example of this kind of study is Jessica Kelly’s recent dissertation on the *AR*’s long-term editor J.M. Richards, in which she uses a figure best known for his writing and editorial work in order to reconsider the particularities of British modernism.⁸³ My research also has features in common with studies that work across architectural and cultural history. Publications that share this method include Mark Crinson’s *Stirling and Gowan: Architecture from Austerity to Affluence*, and Claire Jamieson’s recent publication *NATØ: Narrative Architecture in Postmodern London*.⁸⁴ Crinson situates Stirling and Gowan’s partnership in the particular cultural and social

⁸³ Jessica Kelly, "To Fan the Ardour of the Layman": J.M. Richards, The Architectural Review, and Discourses of Modernism in British Architecture 1933-1972" (PhD, Middlesex University, 2013).

⁸⁴ Mark Crinson, *Stirling and Gowan: Architecture from Austerity to Affluence* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2012); Claire Jamieson, "NATØ: Exploring Architecture as a Narrative Medium in Postmodern London" (Ph.D, Royal College of Art, 2014)

conditions of Britain's post-war recovery. Jamieson's study uses the London urban culture of the 1980s as a framework in evaluating NATØ's unconventional cross-disciplinary practices. The present research, likewise, uses Crosby's works to direct attention to the period when preservationist sentiment came into prominence: the late 1960s and early 1970s. Like Crinson and Jamieson's studies, my research does not take the whole oeuvre of an architect as its subject matter but focuses on a period in a career to capture some characteristics of British architectural culture.

It also worth mentioning that the above works by Boyer, Crinson and Jamieson all look into the importance of collaborating, in relation to their subject. In particular, Jamieson's works pay significant attention to collaborative relationships between architects and non-architects through examining NATØ's experimentation with fashion and subculture. Nearly all the projects examined in the present research involved Crosby's collaborations with notable architects, artists, writers, and cultural institutions in British architecture and urbanism. This makes Crosby a good figure to follow through the nodes of the personal, intellectual, and professional network that contributed to the inception, cultivation, and dissemination of preservationist and Postmodern architectural discourse in late 20th-century Britain. This broadening approach, however, also comes with some limitation. The themes explored are often on the margin of various disciplines. To tackle this issue, the research, to add clarity and complexity, consults the considerable scholarship on post-war Modernism and Postmodernism and on urban regeneration in late 20th century Britain, together with preservationist discourse.

0.42 Reconsidering ‘Environment Design’

This study’s focus on the margins of various disciplines can also be seen as a reflection of the changes in architectural and design discourses. I argue that it also informs the history of ‘Environment Design’ – a term which meaning today is significantly different from what it was in Crosby’s time. In the 1976 Pentagram publication *Living by Design*, Crosby described himself as the partner who was in charge of ‘Environment design,’ writing,

Through his work on the environment, the designer exercises a major influence on our way of life. Civilised man first gave expression to a need to usefully perpetuate his purposes through agriculture and architecture. Of those two, it was architecture which was the first declared statement of ‘improved environment’ by which man sought to be judged. Designer or architect: the terminology matters little in the face of the enormous spread of environmental influences in which the designer has a hand.⁸⁵

In *Living by Design*, Crosby suggested four key aspects of environment design: planning, conservation, interiors and graphics. Conspicuous in its absence from the list was building design. Crosby’s writing can be understood as an indication of his distaste for the architectural profession and a call for a re-conceptualisation of the elements that constituted the urban environment.

In her *Design History: A Student Handbook*, published about a decade after *Living by Design*, Hazel Conway gives a definition that resembles but also clarifies Crosby’s description. Conway writes that the history of ‘Environmental Design’

is significantly different from the history of, say, town planning or architecture. Indeed in the context of the urban environment, it would almost be true to say that the subject is concerned with all those aspects of the environment that have not been claimed by the town planners, or the architects, as well as those that have.⁸⁶

⁸⁵ Pentagram. *Living by Design*. Pentagram: London, 1978, 164.

⁸⁶ Conway, *Design History: A Student Handbook*, 162.

In particular, this study falls into the realm of “Sense of Place” within Conway’s summation of Environmental Design. The “Sense of Place” encapsulates the thematic in urban regeneration and preservation, as well as debates about style and modernisation.⁸⁷ Some of the topics that Conway highlights within the realm of “Sense of Place” are events that Crosby had written about or would have known of, including the regeneration of Covent Garden and the London Docklands, as well as the Mansion House debate.⁸⁸ Other issues within her categorisation of Environmental Design, such as post-war planning and the growing influence of the mass media over the physical environment, are also Crosby’s preoccupations.⁸⁹ Some of the questions that Conway raises form useful frameworks for evaluating Crosby’s works:

Today's developments will form the urban environment of tomorrow and they illustrate the problem of establishing new uses for old areas and pose questions regarding how much of the old should be preserved...

If an old development provided accommodation that was cheap to live and work in, what will happen to those people and ventures in the new development? This in turn is not only a question of the urban qualities of the old areas, it is also a question of the range of activities that are viable in old areas and not in new.⁹⁰

Today, however, the term Environment Design is more often associated with the design of building services, comfort and sustainable performance. It also tends to be associated with either the science of building or landscape design. The notion of Environment Design as something related to urban context and everyday experiences, in the ways that Crosby and later Conway used it in their writings, has faded in professional, scholarly and public discourse.

⁸⁷ Conway, 169-180

⁸⁸ In *How to Play the Environment Game* exhibition (1973) Crosby discussed the regeneration of Covent Garden.

Crosby’s *Battle of Britain Monument* was proposed at Surrey Quay.

Crosby, *How to Play the Environmental Game*; Theo Crosby, *Battle of Britain Monument* (Pentagram: London, 1987).

⁸⁹ Crosby discusses this issue in his *Architecture: City Sense* and *How to Play the Environment Game*. He was also indirectly involved in an early critique of the mass media in British architecture and design through his curatorial role in *This is Tomorrow*.

⁹⁰ Conway, *Design History: A Student Handbook*, 177.

I am also aware that the use of the term “environment” by design historians and architectural historians’ is often reductive and simplified – as architectural theorist Necdet Teymur forcefully points out in his book *Environmental Discourse*.⁹¹ He argues that environmental discourse is “not simply about bricks and mortar. It was carrying with it overt or covert *assumptions* on society, on politics, on ‘human behaviours.’”⁹² Teymur suggests that environmental discourse is building upon a “man-environment relationship” that is constructed through different ideologies.⁹³ The contradictions found in Crosby’s evocation of the environment are discussed at greater length in the third chapter of this study. While beyond its present scope, it would be interesting to take these difficulties in using the term ‘Environment Design’ as a lead into considering the disconnection between discourses in the history of architectural design and preservation today.

0.43 Mixing the Archives

The methodologies chosen for this research – the formulation of ‘Environment Design’, the theoretical framework suggested by studies into operative criticism and the method of “writing around” prompt us to cross-examine Crosby’s design, his writings, and his correspondence. This study also reads Crosby’s works in conjunction with the historical texts that he cited, the articles and architectural projects published alongside them (to understand what he was responding to), and the drafts that may reveal how ideas were transposed and transformed (to underscore his intention). Hence, it relies heavily on primary sources and archival research. The primary sources examined include the above books,

⁹¹ Necdet Teymur, *Environmental Discourse* (London: Question Press, 1982).

⁹² Teymur, 13.

⁹³ Teymur, 19.

magazines and exhibition catalogues, and also Crosby's contributions to other arts and architectural journals. Crosby's publications and the various Pentagram Papers that he authored are also examined. Other important primary sources include the forewords and introductions that Crosby wrote for publications by colleagues and collaborators.

Crosby's uncatalogued papers at the Design Archive at the University of Brighton provide most of the archival materials for this research. The Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) also holds a small fraction of his drawings and sketchbooks from the Pentagram era. Materials from the Shakespeare's Globe archive and library are key to my last chapter, in which the building is studied in detail. The archive of authorities and advocacy groups that Crosby worked with are consulted, including the Arts Council Archive (part of the V&A's National Archives of Art and Design, held at Blythe House), the London Metropolitan Archive, the Whitechapel Art Gallery Archive, the Tate Archive Collection, and the Alison and Peter Smithson Archive at Harvard University.

This research is informed by but does not rely significantly on oral history, although it has benefited from many conversations with Crosby's colleagues, collaborators and students conducted as part of the research. One of the reasons was to limit the personal and biographical accounts of Crosby. Another reason is that an oral history research project for the British Library's National Life Stories has begun to chronicle the personal life and career of figures who were closed to Crosby; it has been consulted as part of the research.⁹⁴ Alan

⁹⁴ Crosby's first wife, Anne Buchanan Crosby, was one of the National Life Stories (NLSC)' Artists Lives interviewees.

Anne Buchanan Crosby, interview by Linda Sandino, 2003 2002, National Life Stories, <https://sounds.bl.uk/Oral-history/Art/021M-C0466X0142XX-0001V0>.

Crosby's works and life had also been discussed in the interviews of the Architect's Lives of NLSC, including Monica Pidgeon, Peter Smithson, and Trevor Dannatt.

Powers conducted interviews with Crosby's former collaborators and has been very generous in sharing his insights with me. He also shared some of his unpublished transcripts of an interview with Jules Lubbock.⁹⁵ This research has been informed by conversations with Mike Csaky, Kenneth Frampton, Jules Lubbock, Eva Jiricna, Peter Lloyd Jones, Sunand Prasad, Simon Sadinsky, and Jon Weallans; and email correspondence with Crosby's former students, including James Hart Dyke and Mijail Gutierrez. The discussions with other scholars studying Crosby, including Stephen Parnell, Simon Sadler and Salomon Frausto, have shed more light on Crosby's complex personality and aspirations. There have also been many informal conversations with academics, architects, historians, and designers who knew Crosby, and these have deepened my understanding of him and his milieu.

0.5 Critical Historical Context

0.51 Pessimist Utopia: Britain in the 1970s

As stated, this study is focused on the period between the mid-1960s and early 1970s when Crosby made his move to preservation. In his writings of the period, one can detect views that resonate with what Robert Hewison found when Britain was “in a climate of decline.”⁹⁶ Hewison suggests that the notion of decline emerged when the urban environment was perceived as “increasingly degraded and unfamiliar” as a result of large-scale post-war reconstruction and urban renewal projects.⁹⁷ Architectural and urban historian Richard J. Williams also observes that there was a lack of positive attitude to the urban environment in

Interview with Monica Pidgeon, vol. 3, 25 vols., National Life Story Collection: Architects' Lives (London, 1999), <https://sounds.bl.uk/Oral-history/Architects-Lives/021M-C0467X0039XX-0100V0>; Peter Smithson, Peter Smithson, interview by Louise Brodie, 1997, National Life Stories, <https://sounds.bl.uk/Oral-history/Architects-Lives/021M-C0467X0024XX-0100V0>., Trevor Dannatt, interview by Alan Powers, 2001, National Life Stories, <https://sounds.bl.uk/Oral-history/Architects-Lives/021M-C0467X0070XX-0001V0>.

⁹⁵ This was conducted in September 2015; I was also given access to Dr Powers' unpublished transcript of his interview with Jules Lubbock.

⁹⁶ Robert Hewison, *The Heritage Industry: Britain in a Climate of Decline*.

⁹⁷ Hewison, 38.

late 20th-century Britain; the decline in manufacturing industry and the urban population in the 1960s contributed.⁹⁸ By the latter part of the decade, the unstable economy, as reflected in the devaluation of the currency, the high inflation rate and the growing unemployment also had a considerable impact on the building industry.⁹⁹ On the one hand, existing housing stocks deteriorated, and major cities such as London faced housing crises. On the other, as historian Andy Beckett observes, market speculation and one-off government initiatives to boost the economy created feverish boom and price spirals.¹⁰⁰ The volatility of the urban conditions at the time in some ways explain the preservationist turn studied in this research.

Meanwhile, the 1960s and 1970s was also a period when Britain was seen as evolving into a ‘leisure society’, which Beckett attributes to diverse causes: “labour-saving technology, higher unemployment, the diffusion of hippy anti-work ideas and the dominance of union power.”¹⁰¹ There was also notable growth in the number of museums and leisure centres, and developments in shopping and other forms of entertainment.¹⁰² Beckett points out the contradictions between the ‘leisure society’ and the urban conditions of the time, writing “the energy and colour of British popular culture during the sixties and early seventies – the peacock rock stars, the outrageous boutiques – could not disguise the fact that much of everyday life took place on streets of worn-out brown and grey.”¹⁰³ These shifts in leisure, culture, and consumer pattern played an important role in the development of Crosby’s

⁹⁸ Richard J. Williams, *The Anxious City: English Urbanism in the Late Twentieth Century* (London, New York: Routledge, 2004), 6–8.

⁹⁹ Andy Beckett, *When the Lights Went Out: What Really Happened to Britain in the Seventies* (Faber & Faber: London, 2010), 127.

¹⁰⁰ Richard J. Williams, *The Anxious City: English Urbanism in the Late Twentieth Century*, 6,7.

Andy Beckett, *When the Lights Went Out: What Really Happened to Britain in the Seventies*, 127.

¹⁰¹ Andy Beckett, *When the Lights Went Out: What Really Happened to Britain in the Seventies*, 417.

¹⁰² From 1960 to 1980 the number of museums in Britain doubled. Governmental support for local arts associations and amateur groups also grew.

Hewison, *The Heritage Industry: Britain in a Climate of Decline*, 84.

John Pick, ed., *State and The Arts*, City Arts Series (Eastbourne East Sussex: J. Offord Publication, 1980)

¹⁰³ Andy Beckett, *When the Lights Went Out: What Really Happened to Britain in the Seventies*, 15.

preservationist stance, as I discuss below, through his Fulham Study project with Archigram (1963), and his publications *Architectural: City Sense* (1965) and *How to Play the Environment Game*.

My examination of Crosby's preservationist stance will also take into account the nature of the British environmental movement of the time. Historian Dominic Sandbrook suggests that the environmental movement appealed to a broad audience in Britain "as a reaction against modernity, industrialisation and big business, and as a celebration of the pastoral, the organic and the small-scale."¹⁰⁴ Sandbrook suggests E.F. Schumacher's *Small is Beautiful* (1973), which Crosby had read and cited, as the publication that best grasped the concern that "the nation had sold its soul for the promise of ever-expanding abundance."^{105,106} In short, this research regards Crosby's interest in both preservation and the environmental movement as derived from the reaction to post-war modernisation and to the instability of the British socio-economic situation.

0.52 Pessimist Utopia and Postmodernity

The critical historical context in which this preservationist consensus occurred, and its relationship with Postmodernism, can be inferred from a lecture Crosby delivered in 1973 at the RCA, entitled 'Pessimist Utopia'. Pessimist Utopia was the name of Crosby's developed theory on architecture, design and urbanism after his break with post-war Modernism.¹⁰⁷ In

¹⁰⁴ Dominic Sandbrook, *State of Emergency: The Way We Were: Britain 1970-1974* (London: Penguin Books, 2011), 284.

¹⁰⁵ E.F. Schumacher, *SMALL IS BEAUTIFUL: Economics as If People Mattered* (London: Blond & Briggs, 1973).

Dominic Sandbrook, *State of Emergency: The Way We Were: Britain 1970-1974*, 286.

¹⁰⁶ Theo Crosby, "The Pessimist Utopia" (Lethaby Lecture, 1973), 13, Theo Crosby Archive, University of Brighton.

¹⁰⁷ Crosby, 13.

the lecture, Crosby argued that the success of Modernism lay in its ability to incorporate the rationality and efficiency of industrialisation into a coherent movement in architecture, literature, design, music and other disciplines. The problem at stake, Crosby argued, was that the notion of the ‘mass’ had since become a dogma that dominated not only the realms of industry and the economy but also discourses on the arts and culture. Crosby recast the protection of historical buildings as a means of defying the status of this notion. He envisaged that the preservation of old buildings would counter the doctrinal adherence to mass production, mass planning and mass consumption, which he regarded as the reason behind the failure of Modernism.¹⁰⁸ In ‘Pessimist Utopia’ he also proposed to use “what was at hand”: to revisit theories and practices in the arts and architecture that had been undermined by Modernism including the incorporation of crafts and decoration in buildings.

Crosby also argued in ‘Pessimist Utopia’ that governmental control over planning and housing, producing the rigidity of the zoning and town planning system, was what rendered the British urban landscape monotonous and out-of-scale.¹⁰⁹ It is also worth seeing Crosby’s view as part of the criticism of governmental intervention in the shaping of British urban environment that had been gathering strength since the 1960s. According to the planning historian Gordon Cherry, the publication of Jane Jacobs’ *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* in the UK in 1962 – a book that Crosby read and cited repeatedly – should be seen as a threshold moment when “land-use rigidity was seen as excessive,” and the view that “the planners’ zeal for order went too far” came into prominence.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁸ Crosby, 11.

¹⁰⁹ Crosby, *How to Play the Environmental Game*, back cover.

¹¹⁰ Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (Vintage Books: New York, 1961).
Theo Crosby and Eric Lyons, “Two High Density Redevelopment Schemes,” *RIBA Journal*, February 1964;
Theo Crosby, *Architecture: City Sense* (London: Studio Vista, 1965).
G.E. Cherry, *Urban Change and Planning: A History of Urban Development in Britain since 1750* (G T Foulis: Oxfordshire, 1972), 212.

Some of the contexts in which Crosby developed his preservationist stance are discussed by David Harvey in his *The Condition of Postmodernity*.¹¹¹ The reaction against post-war modernisation, a growing suspicion of Enlightenment values, and a nostalgic return to history are all part of what Harvey designates “the passage from modernity to postmodernity in contemporary culture.”¹¹² As the title and structure of the book suggest, Harvey regards Postmodernism as a cultural shift which appeared in public consciousness in the early 1970s, and which itself forms part of the condition of postmodernity.¹¹³ The notion that Postmodernism is the cultural form that manifested, but also contributed to the conditions of postmodernity has been more or less clearly recognised by other prominent scholars of postmodernity including Fredrick Jameson.¹¹⁴ Both Jameson and Harvey consider postmodernity neither a break nor rupture but a development from modernity and more particularly a reaction to the changes in capitalism. They regard it as a shift to a more flexible, dynamic, and multi-national form of capitalism. Jameson observes that Postmodernism is the new form of culture that this development has given rise to, one that is “at one and the same time, and necessarily, an implicitly or explicitly political stance on the nature of multinational capitalism today.”¹¹⁵

Such formulations, meanwhile, indicate the convoluted nature of postmodernity and Postmodernism, as both Harvey and Jameson acknowledge in their publications. First, since the definition of modernity is contentious and always in flux, modernity and postmodernity are always challenging to distinguish. Moreover, those who discuss Postmodernism at times

¹¹¹ David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change* (Wiley Blackwell: London, 1991).

¹¹² Harvey, 3–39.

¹¹³ Harvey, vii.

¹¹⁴ Fredrick Jameson, *Postmodernism, or, the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (London: Verso, 1992).

¹¹⁵ Jameson, 3.

such as Jurgen Habermas and his formulation of an ‘unfinished modernity’ call for a redefinition of what modernity and modernism are.¹¹⁶ Perhaps more importantly, once we accept that culture and economics “collapse back into one another and say the same thing,” it becomes almost impossible to discuss one without a critique of the other.¹¹⁷

Architecture has been seen as the realm where Postmodern cultural shifts are most easily visible, and the theoretical discussion is most centred and articulated.¹¹⁸ Although Jameson focuses on particular examples of buildings and Harvey pays more attention to urbanism, they both allude to certain qualities that are commonly found in Postmodern architecture, such as eclectic, nostalgic, kitsch, populist, immersive, heterogeneous, simulacra, and multivalent.¹¹⁹ What is important here is that the dilemmas in discussing Postmodernism and postmodernity are also carried over to the discussion of Modern architecture. For example, Harvey considers Charles Moore’s Piazza d’ Italia (1978) both an outcome and a critique of the commercialisation, indulgence and dislocation associated with postmodernity; it is certainly a project that cannot be fully explained without referring to Modern architecture’s supposed dismissal of Classicism. And these dilemmas, one may also argue, are intrinsic to the “double-coding” and multivalent quality of Postmodern architecture that Charles Jencks, the early spokesperson of Postmodern architecture, labelled.¹²⁰ This cycle of referencing between Modernism and Postmodernism, together with the conflation of culture and economics, render the intellectual terrain of Postmodern architecture hard to discern.

¹¹⁶ Jürgen Habermas, “Modern and Postmodern Architecture,” in *Architecture Theory since 1968*, ed. K. Michael Hayes (New York: Columbia Book of Architecture, 1998), 416–25.

¹¹⁷ Jameson, *Postmodernism, or, the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*, xxi.

¹¹⁸ Jameson, *Postmodernism, or, the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*, 3,5. Although Harvey does not state it explicitly in his *The Condition of Postmodernity*, he starts the book by analysing the urban changes brought by postmodernity and dedicates notable energy to architectural and urban issues.

¹¹⁹ Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change*, 66-98,273.

¹²⁰ Charles Jencks, *The Language of Post-Modern Architecture* (Rizzoli: New York, 1977).

0.53 Architectural Postmodernism in Britain

Given this dilemma, the Postmodern architecture that will be discussed in this research brings in architectural theories and practices that are mainly tied to British culture or have emerged in Britain. Crosby's credentials as a Postmodernist have mostly become known through his role as an advisor in Prince Charles' architectural activities. For scholars such as sociologist Michael Rustin, the Postmodern debates provoked by Prince Charles are late 20th-century manifestations of an anti-modernist sentiment that had been ingrained in British architecture.¹²¹ Rustin comments that the architectural debates found in 1980s Britain should be understood as an attempted repudiation of modernism by 'traditionalists' and Postmodernists such as Robert Venturi (even though Venturi himself rejected the term).¹²² Entrenched in this debate, Rustin points out, was also a British tradition of "decent functionalism," as represented in the works of William Morris, the London County Council, and more recently to Terence Conran.¹²³ Crosby's involvement in Postmodern architecture, this research suggests, points to the conditions outlined by Rustin: Crosby's initial rejection of Modernism was fuelled by the view that functional architecture can exist independent of the mechanised aesthetic championed by the early 20th-century avant-garde.

This research is also influenced by studies into the political ambiguity of Postmodern architecture in Britain. Unlike its counterpart in the United States, Postmodernism in Britain

¹²¹ Michael Rustin, "Postmodernism and Antimodernism in Contemporary British Architecture," *Assemblage* 8 (February 1989): 88–103.

¹²² Rustin, 95.

¹²³ The term "Functionalism" was used by the *AR*, in the early 1950s to promote a softer Modernist aesthetic in Britain, as part of their Townscape/Picturesque campaign. Crosby, in the 1950s, was a vocal opponent of the *AR*'s campaign through his role as the technical editor of the *AD*.

was not always regarded as an appendage to corporate culture and capitalism.¹²⁴ The particularity of British Postmodern architecture has been pointed out by George Baird who suggests that it is hard to differentiate what is “progressive” from what is “conservative” in British architectural culture.¹²⁵ Baird observes that, due to the historical role of the land-owning class in caring for the environment and the workers, the assumed affiliation between Postmodern architecture, conservative politics and modern capitalism is not entirely appropriate in the British context. Another architect who can aptly illustrate the characteristics of British Postmodernism is Quinlan Terry who, despite his commercial projects, preferred to distance himself from 20th-century capitalist society and emphasised Christian values in his works.¹²⁶ These paradoxes, as the second chapter of this research demonstrates, are also displayed in Crosby’s various writings, culminating in the Ten Principles that he drafted for Prince Charles.

Another part of Postmodern architectural debates that this research considers comes through the works and legacy of Colin Rowe. Rowe’s articles “The Mathematics of the Ideal Villa” (1947) and “Mannerism and Modern Architecture” (1950) had a significant influence on Crosby and the post-war Modernist milieu.¹²⁷ Rowe’s later research, including *Collage City*, his 1979 publication with Fred Koetter, will be used to reflect on the similarities between Crosby’s arguments for preservation and contemporaneous discourses in Postmodern architecture.¹²⁸ It is worth recalling that in 1976, the republication of Rowe’s collected writings in *Mathematics of the Ideal Villa and other Essays* also mark a high point

¹²⁴ Mary McLeod, “Architecture and Politics in the Reagan Era: Postmodernism to Deconstructivism,” *Assemblage* 8 (February 1989): 22–59.

¹²⁵ George Baird, *The Space of Appearance* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1995), 293.

¹²⁶ Lynn Barber, “Shock of the Old,” *The Guardian*, March 7, 2004,

<https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2004/mar/07/architecture>.

¹²⁷ Colin Rowe, “The Mathematics of the Ideal Villa,” *Architectural Review*, March 1947.

Colin Rowe, “Mannerism and Modern Architecture,” *Architectural Review*, May 1950.

Robbins, *The Independent Group: Postwar Britain and the Aesthetics of Plenty*.

¹²⁸ Colin Rowe and Fred Koetter, *Collage City* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1978).

in Postmodern architectural debate.¹²⁹ Moreover, this research will also look into the features shared by a proposal in Crosby's *How to Play the Environment Game* and "The Formal Basis of Modern Architecture." (1963), a Cambridge dissertation by Colin Rowe's student and a chief instigator of Postmodernism, Peter Eisenman.¹³⁰ In short, the similarities between Crosby, Rowe, and Eisenman's writings will be used by the present research to triangulate discourses in post-war Modernism, preservation and Postmodernism.

0.54 Preservationist Architecture in Britain

Not unlike the discourse in Modernism and Postmodernism, preservationist architecture in Britain also manifested some characteristics peculiar to its national context. First, preservation had been seen as a relatively uncontentious issue. The discussion about memory and national identity in the post-WWII era also tended to attract little controversy.¹³¹ In the late 1970s, however, this seemingly British consensus about preservation began to draw criticism from some quarters. Reactions against nostalgic sentiment heightened when it became more and more a feature of popular events, notably after the popular 1974 V&A exhibition *The Destruction of the Country House* and, more widely, the 1981 television serial *Brideshead Revisited*.¹³² Some of the most detailed and also critical accounts of heritage preservation are produced by cultural critics and historians. Patrick Wright, for example, condemns the overwhelming nostalgic sentiments found in popular debate and policy shifts. In *On Living in an Old Country*, Wright suggests that policy changes, the intrusion of motorways and other modern kinds of infrastructure into the rural areas, and de-colonisation were among the factors that led to a country-wide re-imagination of the past.¹³³ At the centre

¹²⁹ Colin Rowe, *The Mathematics of the Ideal Villa and Other Essays* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1976).

¹³⁰ Peter Eisenman, *The Formal Basis of Modern Architecture* (Lars Muller: Baden, 2006).

¹³¹ Rustin, "Postmodernism and Antimodernism in Contemporary British Architecture," 96.

¹³² Robert Hewison, *The Heritage Industry: Britain in a Climate of Decline*, 51–82.

¹³³ Patrick Wright, *On Living in an Old Country* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

of this reminiscing about bygone days, Wright argues, is the domination of bourgeois values and the deliberate negation of the daily life of the working-class.

Cultural historian Robert Hewison arrived at a similar critique of the role of preservation in the commodification of the past; he laments the “farewells” to working-class culture engendered by this distorted and reductive reading of the past.¹³⁴ These criticisms of preservation were challenged by other cultural historians, such as Raphael Samuel. Samuel suggests that in spite of the sentimentality, the preservation mania found in Britain has enabled “a people’s history” to be produced.¹³⁵ He also argues that, although some aspects of the national past and identity are wrongly-emphasised or even fabricated, they nonetheless commemorate everyday life and can guide British people to better values.¹³⁶ The nuances of a fascination with old buildings and “Retrochic” objects, Samuel defends, should not be entirely discredited. The dilemmas about industrial change and the democratisation of history are points of contention in Crosby’s works too, most notably in his *The Necessary Monument* and design for the Globe theatre, which will be examined in the fourth chapter of this research.

Embedded in Crosby’s preservationist advocacy was an obsession with monuments.¹³⁷ Crosby’s fascination with monument may also be understood as part of his Postmodern tendencies. As architectural historian Mario Carpo suggests in *The Postmodern Cult of Monuments*, “architectural Postmodernism posited that architectural signs may refer to

¹³⁴ Robert Hewison, *The Heritage Industry: Britain in a Climate of Decline*.

¹³⁵ Raphael Samuel, *Patriotism: The Making and Unmaking of British National Identity* (London, New York: Routledge, 1989), xliv.

¹³⁶ Raphael Samuel, *Theatres of Memory: Past and Present in Contemporary Culture* (Verso: London, 2012), 162–64.

¹³⁷ Other than his propositions in *The Necessary Monument*, Crosby has also proposed new monuments. Crosby, *Battle of Britain Monument*.

meanings outside architecture proper, either through visual similarity (iconicity) or cultural associations (symbolism) – which is what Western monuments with commemorative value traditionally do.”¹³⁸ Hence, Carpo points out, the renewed interest in historical monuments and the emergence of architectural Postmodernism took place almost concurrently. They were signalled by the translation and publication in 1982 of a 1903 article by Alois Riegl, the Austrian historian, “The Modern Cult of Monument” in the journal *Oppositions*, an important platform for the debates of Postmodern architecture.¹³⁹ In this context, Riegl’s article also elicited a re-evaluation of notions of the *modern* and *classic* which formed an integral part of Postmodern architectural debate. The second and fourth chapter of the present study use Crosby’s obsession with monuments to draw out more of the shared threads between the Postmodernist and preservationist discourses.

0.55 Postmodernism and Technology

The discussions on Postmodernism and preservation, in this introduction, have so far focused on the cultural and societal contexts. It is perhaps also necessary to consider architecture not only as an art form but a science in its relationship with postmodernity. In his *Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, the philosopher of science Jean-Francois Lyotard argues that what defines the emergence of postmodernity is the end of “metanarratives”, which can be understood as institutional or ideological forms of knowledge through which scientific knowledge attains its legitimacy.¹⁴⁰ Without metanarratives, such as those of Renaissance Humanism, the Enlightenment, or Communism, Lyotard argues,

¹³⁸ Carpo, “The Postmodern Cult of Monuments,” 51.

¹³⁹ Alois Riegl, “The Modern Cult of Monuments: Its Character and Its Origins,” printed in *Oppositions: A Journal for Ideas and Criticism in Architecture* 25, no. Fall (1982): 21–56.

¹⁴⁰ Jean-Francois Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984).

science loses its means of legitimation.¹⁴¹ He observes, as part of this crisis of metanarrative, that technology and its principle of optimal performance replace traditional scientific knowledge. The point here is that technology, for Lyotard, is “a game pertaining not to the true, the just, or the beautiful, etc., but to efficiency” and hence it has displaced the previous pursuit of scientific knowledge.¹⁴² In this research, I will argue that Crosby’s works, in particular his 1961 UIA Congress exhibition and catalogue design, conspicuously entitled “The Architecture of Technology,” and the exhibition *How to Play the Environment Game* of 1973, epitomise the change in architectural culture brought by this ‘technical game’.¹⁴³

How the changes in scientific knowledge and technology have affected the valuation of historical buildings is addressed in Harvey’s *The Condition of Postmodernity*.¹⁴⁴ In the closing chapter of the book, Harvey discusses the rapid development of transportation and communication, as a result of capitalist penetration, that leads to “an annihilation of space through time.”¹⁴⁵ He then points out that with such flux and ephemerality historical continuity is lost. Evoking Marshall McLuhan’s “global village,” Harvey asserts the impossibility of maintaining any place-bound identity.¹⁴⁶ His diagnosis of the symptoms of postmodern time-space compression is worth quoting in full

At best, historical tradition is reorganised as a museum culture, not necessarily of high modernist art, but of local history, of local production, of how things once upon a time were made, sold, consumed, and integrated into a long-lost and often romanticised daily life (one from which all trace of oppressive social relations may be expunged). Through the presentation of a partially illusory past it becomes possible to signify something of local identity and perhaps to do it profitably.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴¹ Lyotard, 29,30,39.

¹⁴² Lyotard, 44.

¹⁴³ Theo Crosby, ed., *The Architecture of Technology* (Whitefrairs: London, 1961).

Crosby, *How to Play the Environmental Game*.

¹⁴⁴ Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change*.

¹⁴⁵ Harvey, 299.

¹⁴⁶ Marshall McLuhan, *The Gutenberg Galaxy: The Making of Typographic Man* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1962).

¹⁴⁷ Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change*, 303.

Harvey argues that turning to history and a more anachronistic manifestation of arts and culture was, in fact, a recognition of and a reaction to the sea-change brought by technological developments in the late 20th century. Harvey's elaboration serves as an important bridge between the discussion of technological advancement and an increasingly anachronistic-looking architectural culture. These paradoxes are elaborated further in the second and third chapters of this research, as they relate to Crosby's design for the Fulham Study (1963), his article "Ten Rules for Planners" (1971) and his *How to Play the Environment Game* exhibition (1973).

0.6 Structure of the Thesis

The structure of the thesis is informed by and makes use of Crosby's theorisation of a 'Pessimist Utopia' in 1973. Crosby's oxymoronic utopianism is an underlying theme in all four chapters of the present study. The first two chapters discuss the changes in professional, technological, cultural, and economic circumstances that culminated in Crosby's theorisation in 'Pessimist Utopia' and hence the development of his preservationist stance. They also illustrate his use of operative criticism. The third and fourth chapters focus on the reaction of his preservationist approach to the conditions of postmodernity and Postmodern architectural culture. Crosby's hybridisation of ideas runs through all four chapters: how he married techno-utopianism with architectural preservation, and his attempt to recalibrate late 20th-century consumerism and speculative development with 16th-century humanistic values.

The first chapter assesses Crosby's practice and influence as an architect-historian by filling in some gaps in the current studies of New Brutalism. This chapter seeks to understand his valuation of the past in anticipation of his advocacy of preservation, and the agendas for his use of history and tradition. How Crosby's use of history, criticism and design coalesced

will also be explored. The other three chapters of this research refer to the themes established in this chapter, including Crosby's use of history, his disillusioned view of Modernism, his critical attitude to the modern mass society, and his preoccupation with changes in architectural technology.

The second chapter examines Crosby's role as the behind-the-scenes writer of Ten Principles, published in Prince Charles' provocative 1989 publication *A Vision of Britain: A Personal View of Architecture*.¹⁴⁸ This chapter reveals that this Postmodern polemic was, in fact, a theory that Crosby had been developing since the late 1960s. How he had incorporated other influential architectural discourse from the post-war period into the formulation of then Ten Principles will also be demonstrated. By tracing the changes in Crosby's thinking and his agenda in publishing these writings, this chapter maps out how Crosby's use of history was intertwined with the architectural, economic, and political debates that had proceeded since the late 1950s. Another line of inquiry asks how Crosby used the Ten Principles in his preservation works. Apart from denoting the intersections between Postmodernism and preservation, this chapter explores how the perennial questions of 'language' and 'order' in architecture resurfaced in Crosby's preservation rhetoric.

Crosby's 1973 exhibition *How to Play the Environment Game* is the focus of the third chapter. The Arts-Council-funded exhibition was Crosby's declared break from post-war Modernism and one of his most comprehensive campaigns for preservation. Through this exhibition, I examine the multifaceted nature of architectural preservation in the 1970s including its interactions with the contemporaneous environmental movement. This study

¹⁴⁸ HRH The Prince of Wales Charles, *A Vision of Britain: A Personal View of Architecture* (London: Doubleday, 1990).

also addresses some of the conditions that would justify preservation's "conservative turn" in the following decade.¹⁴⁹ Through focusing on Crosby's criticism of Modernism coupled with his optimism about technology, this chapter also underscores how Postmodern and preservationist architecture were similarly informed and perhaps ensnared by the 1970s developments in media and computational technology.

The fourth and last chapter interrogates Crosby's obsession with monuments. Crosby's 1970 publication *The Necessary Monument* and his design for Shakespeare's Globe are examined.¹⁵⁰ Highlighting Crosby's unusual treatment of architectural monuments as prompts for urban renewal, his theory is challenged by competing strategies for renewing London's urbanism. Juxtaposing the Globe's decade-long planning deadlock with urban changes in London in the Thatcher era, this chapter also touches upon the way in which various interpretations of the city's past have shaped its present-day urbanism. At the end of the study, I discuss the contradictions between Crosby's preservationist propositions, his use of history, and the urban reality of late 20th-century Britain.

¹⁴⁹ Glendinning, *The Conservation Movement: A History of Architectural Preservation: Antiquity to Modernity*, 325.

¹⁵⁰ Crosby, *The Necessary Monument*.

Chapter 1:
New Brutalism's Ethics and Aesthetics

'When I hear the word contemporary, I reach for my revolver.' X.B.

The New Brutalism

In 1954, a new and long overdue explosion took place in architectural theory. For many years since the war we have continued in our habit of debasing the coinage of M. le Corbusier, and had created a style—'Contemporary'—easily recognizable by its misuse of traditional materials and its veneer of 'modern' details, frames, recessed plinths, decorative piloti. The reaction appeared at last in the shape of the Hunstanton School (by Alison and Peter Smithson) an illustration of the 'New Brutalism.' The name is new; the method, a re-evaluation of those advanced buildings of the twenties and thirties whose lessons (because of a few plaster cracks) have been forgotten. As well as this, there are certain lessons in the formal use of proportion (from Prof. Wittkower) and a respect for the sensuous use of each material (from the Japanese). Naturally, a theory which takes the props from the generally accepted and easily produced 'Contemporary,' has generated a lot of opposition. All over the country we have been asked to explain the new message. In the hope of provoking as many readers as possible to think more deeply about the form and purpose of their art, we asked the Smithsons, as the prophets of the movement, to supply a definition or statement, which, somewhat edited, appears below.

'Our belief that the New Brutalism is the only possible development *for this moment* from the Modern Movement, stems not only from the knowledge that Le Corbusier is one of its practitioners (starting with the "béton brut" of the Unité), but because fundamentally both movements have used as their yardstick Japanese architecture—its underlying idea, principles, and spirit.

'Japanese Architecture seduced the generation spanning 1900, producing, in Frank Lloyd Wright, the open plan and an odd sort of constructed decoration; in le Corbusier, the purist aesthetic—the sliding screens, continuous space, the power of white and earth colours; in Mies, the structure and the screen as absolutes. Through Japanese Architecture, the longings of the generation of Garnier and Behrens found FORM.

'But for the Japanese their FORM was only part of a general conception of life, a sort of reverence for the natural world and, from that, for the materials of the built world.*

'It is this reverence for materials—a realization of the affinity which can be established between building and man—which is at the root of the so-called New Brutalism.

'It has been mooted that the Hunstanton School, which probably owes as much to the existence of Japanese Architecture as to Mies, is the first realization of the New Brutalism in England.

'This particular handling of Materials, not in the craft sense of Frank Lloyd Wright but in intellectual appraisal, has been ever present in the Modern Movement, as indeed familiars of the early German architects have been prompt to remind us.†

'What is new about the New Brutalism among Movements is that it finds its closest affinities, not in a past architectural style, but in peasant dwelling forms. It has nothing to do with craft. We see architecture as the direct result of a way of life.'

1954 has been a key year. It has seen American advertising equal Dada in its impact of overlaid imagery; that automotive masterpiece, the Cadillac convertible, parallel-with-the-ground (four elevations) classic box on wheels; the start of a new way of thinking by CIAM; the revaluation of the work of Gropius; the repainting of the Villa at Garches?

* The Japanese film 'Gate of Hell,' showed houses, a monastery and palace, in colour for the first time.

† See Walter Segal's letter in 'Architectural Design,' February, 1954.

FIG 1.1 "The New Brutalism" article published in the January 1955 issue of the AD.

Chapter 1 New Brutalism's Ethics and Aesthetics

We were the first generation to come to the live study of architectural history uncorrupted by previous contact with Banister Fletcher. For us it was never the embalmed death-roll of mislabelled styles that old BF made it; for us it was always a snap-crackle-pop subject.¹

Reyner Banham

1.1 Introduction

This chapter establishes the structure of arguments and themes of this thesis. Although it will not discuss Crosby's preservation advocacies, it aims at understanding Crosby's practice as an architect-historian and his production of operative criticism. This inquiry begins by reinserting Crosby's voice into key events in British post-war Modernism including the debates over New Brutalism, and the *This is Tomorrow* exhibition of 1956. The study on New Brutalism will revolve around its indebtedness to Japanese architecture as declared in a 1955 *AD* article co-authored by Crosby and Alison and Peter Smithson.² (FIG 1.1) Next, by drawing attention to the similarities and differences between *This is Tomorrow* and the 1961 Union of International Architects (UIA) Congress curated and designed by Crosby, his shift away from the tenets of Modern architecture will be discussed. The two parts of this chapter—the discussion about Japanese architectural tradition and prefabrication—also unearth Crosby's contributions to post-war British architecture and critically re-read current historiography on the Independent Group milieu. This chapter also serves as an evaluation of the current scholarship on New Brutalism, dominated by the “Banham-Smithson axis.”³

Through the above studies, this chapter uses Crosby's operative criticism to understand the

¹ Reyner Banham, “World, the Book to Change,” *The Architects' Journal*, December 8, 1960, 810.

² Theo Crosby, Alison Smithson, and Peter Smithson, “The New Brutalism,” *Architectural Design*, January 1955.

³ Dirk Van den Heuvel, “Between Brutalists. The Banham Hypothesis and the Smithson Way of Life,” *The Journal of Architecture* 20, no. 2 (2015): 293.

forces that propelled British architecture's turn to Postmodernism and preservation in the following decade.

1.2 Revisiting New Brutalism

Crosby's reputation as an architectural editor and an effective *eminence-grise* was first established by Reyner Banham in his 1968 essay "Revenge of the Picturesque."⁴ However, two years before its publication, Banham denounced Crosby's intellect and his contribution to post-war British architecture in his *The New Brutalism: Ethic or Aesthetic?*⁵ In this 1966 publication, a book intended to be the definitive text on New Brutalism, Banham traced the development of New Brutalism through a series of statements and letters published in the *AD* from 1953 to 1957. Amongst the articles either written or edited by Crosby, Banham singled out an article co-authored by Crosby with Alison and Peter Smithson, published in the January 1955 issue of the *AD*, as the "manifesto" of New Brutalism.⁶ After establishing the importance of this one-page article, and citing it in full, Banham unleashed his harsh criticism:

Certain obvious points jump out from this text: the mixed naiveté and knowingness of the preamble, which can stand as a potted intellectual biography of the Crosby age group but is already out of date as far as the Brutalists' attitude to classical proportion was concerned.⁷

To emphasise his dismay, in the following paragraph, Banham used terms including "regrettable," "repertoire of cliché," and "confusing and/or misleading" to further debunk Crosby and Alison and Peter Smithson's claims in the manifesto.⁸ While it is not the intention of this research to offer an alternative concise reading of New Brutalism, Banham's conflicting view on this manifesto is worthy of more consideration. If we re-examine New

⁴ Banham, "Revenge of the Picturesque: English Architectural Polemics, 1945-1965," 266.

⁵ Reyner Banham, *The New Brutalism: Ethic or Aesthetic?* (London: Academy Press, 1966).

⁶ Crosby, Smithson, and Smithson, "The New Brutalism," 1.

⁷ Banham, *The New Brutalism: Ethic or Aesthetic?*, 48.

⁸ Banham, 48.

Brutalism in the light of Crosby's rhetoric in the *AD*, what ideas, knowledge and problems re-enter into the field of vision? How did Crosby, as Tafuri described "one of the first instigators of the New Brutalism" continue to develop its agenda?⁹ Then, how might we re-evaluate Crosby's later works through the lens of New Brutalism?

The January 1955 manifesto was the second article *AD* published on New Brutalism. The term was first coined in an article, written by Alison Smithson, two years earlier in the December 1953 issue in which she introduced an unbuilt house proposal in Soho.¹⁰ The article, published merely three months after Crosby became *AD*'s technical editor, reflected the changes Crosby brought to the magazine. The Smithsons' Soho House (1953) was presented alongside four other unrealised houses in Central London, which were to serve as implicit comparisons to a dozen built houses published in the previous issue. It was the *AD*'s attempt to demonstrate the nascent force in British Modern architecture. In the article, Alison Smithson declared the Soho House "the first exponent of the 'new brutalism' in England."¹¹ Her definition of New Brutalism was straightforward,

It is our intention in this building to have the structure exposed entirely, without internal finishes wherever practicable. The contractor should aim at a high standard of basic construction as in a small warehouse.¹²

In the article, Alison Smithson emphasised an honesty in construction and in the use of material. The focus of the discussion was not only on the appearance of the building but also how it was executed.

In the January 1955 *AD* manifesto, entitled "The New Brutalism," the discussion on material honesty continued. The manifesto was only a page long. It took the place of the

⁹ Tafuri, *Theories and History of Architecture*, 125.

¹⁰ Alison Smithson, "House in SoHo, London," *Architectural Design*, December 1953.

¹¹ Smithson.

¹² Smithson.

Editor's Note, signposting that the dissemination of New Brutalist ideas already occupied a semi-official position in the magazine. (FIG 1.1) The article included an introduction and closing paragraph written by Crosby, bracketing seven short remarks given by Alison and Peter Smithson as "a definition or statement" on New Brutalism.¹³ A preoccupation with building construction techniques becomes conspicuous when juxtaposing the two *AD* articles on New Brutalism. In the 1955 *AD* manifesto, they wrote,

But for the Japanese their FORM was only part of a general conception of life, a sort of reverence for the natural world and, from that, for the materials of the built world.

It is this reverence for materials — a realisation of the affinity which can be established between building and man — which is at the root of the so-called New Brutalism.¹⁴

In the 1955 *AD* manifesto, the three authors reinstated the importance of material by establishing it as an intellectual and spiritual apparatus. The pursuit for both ethics and aesthetics, an issue of fundamental importance in the New Brutalism debate, was presented here through the "reverence for materials" found in Japanese architecture. In the article, Crosby and Alison and Peter Smithson elucidated the process for making New Brutalism architecture: the appreciation of nature would engender a reverence for material in the architects, and this reverence would result in an architecture enhancing humans' affinity to their surroundings. Crosby and the Smithsons formulated an architectural proposition that recanted the discussion of FORM (stress from the original). At the end of the manifesto, they stressed that "What *is* new about the New Brutalism among Movements is that it finds its closet affinities, not in a past architectural style, but in peasant dwelling forms. It has nothing to do with craft. We see architecture as the direct result of a way of life."¹⁵ In short, Japanese

¹³ Crosby, Smithson, and Smithson, "The New Brutalism." Another noteworthy voice that appeared in this piece was Walter Segal, who would later be known for his self-built houses with standardised light-weight frame structure. Segal's contribution signposted an alternative genealogy of New Brutalism debates surrounding standardisation, pre-fabrication, and everyday dwellings.

¹⁴ Crosby, Smithson, and Smithson.

¹⁵ Crosby, Smithson, and Smithson.

architectural tradition served as a precedent for New Brutalism's approach of architecture as a process and a mindset.

However, what Crosby and the Smithsons meant by Japanese architecture was unclear. The evocation of Japanese architectural tradition, in the context of early 1950s Britain, was an odd detour from the discussion about building construction. As Anthony Vidler has suggested, New Brutalism can be read as a movement that was necessitated by post-war austerity. Vidler stated “the ‘rough poetry’ of New Brutalism was a feature of necessity, of the demand to ‘make do’ with whatever materials were available.¹⁶ This discussion of a “reverence of materials” could also be seen as the Smithsons’ attempt to echo and magnify Philip Johnson’s review of the Hunstanton School, published five months earlier in the *AR*.¹⁷ In the article, Johnson elaborated on the steel and brickwork of the Hunstanton School, stating it was in a “valuation of material” that the Hunstanton School could be seen as “probably the most truly modern building in England, fully accepting the moral load which the Modern Movement lays upon the architect’s shoulders.”¹⁸ The *AD* article’s emphasis on “intellectual appraisal” of materials also resonated with Johnson’s observation that New Brutalism was “not merely a surface aesthetic of untrimmed edges and exposed services, but a radical philosophy reaching back to the first conception of the building.”¹⁹ In other words, “reverence for materials” was an architectural proposition that directly responding to the economic and industrial reality of its time — and hence could be interpreted as “a general conception of life.” Johnson’s review of the Hunstanton School had also suggested the Smithsons were capable of turning these pursuits into built forms. So why did Crosby, and

¹⁶ Anthony Vidler, “Another Brick in the Wall,” *October* 136 (2010): 107.

¹⁷ Philip Johnson, “School at Hunstanton, Norfolk, by Alison and Peter Smithson,” *Architectural Review*, September 1954.

¹⁸ Johnson, 154–55.

¹⁹ Johnson, 153.

Alison and Peter Smithson talk about Japan at such length? What else did Japan represent besides a reverence for material?

1.3 Japanese Architecture

The first reason behind this emphasis on Japanese architectural tradition was the ambition for New Brutalism: it was posited as the “the only possible development *for this moment* from the Modern Movement.”²⁰ The discussion on the importance of the execution of buildings, through Japan, could be seen as intrinsic to the pursuit of establishing New Brutalism’s pedigree.²¹ Crosby, Alison and Peter Smithson argued that not only had New Brutalism inherited the essence of the Modern Movement, but “fundamentally both movements have used as their yardstick Japanese architecture — its underlying idea, principles, and spirit.”²² In the article, their description of Japanese architecture was elucidated through its influence on early 20th-century Modern architects:

Japanese Architecture seduced the generation spanning 1900, producing, in Frank Lloyd Wright, the open plan and an odd sort of constructed decoration; in le Corbusier, the purist aesthetic — the sliding screens, continuous space, the power of white and earth colours; in Mies, the structure and screen as absolutes. Through Japanese Architecture, the longings of the generation of Garnier and Behrens found FORM.²³

Establishing New Brutalism as not merely a follower, but as a parallel to the Modern Movement, the three were able to distinguish New Brutalism from other competing tendencies found in the post-war Modernism.

²⁰ Crosby, Smithson, and Smithson, “The New Brutalism.”

²¹ For example, in his *Studies in Tectonic Culture*, Kenneth Frampton argued that the “Poetics of Construction” had been fundamental pursuit in Modern architecture.

Kenneth Frampton, *Studies in Tectonic Culture: The Poetics of Construction in Ninetieth and Twentieth Century Architecture* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1995).

²² Crosby, Smithson, and Smithson, “The New Brutalism.”

²³ Crosby, Smithson, and Smithson.

At stake in their claim was that New Brutalism was the new and only direction for Modernism, Crosby, and Alison and Peter Smithson relied on a fabricated and inaccurate historiography of Japanese architecture. The aforementioned passage on how “Japanese Architecture seduced the generation spanning 1900” presented a highly selective historiography of Japanese architecture. It formulated Japanese architecture as a tradition that preserved the mathematical and geometrical rationality of Classical architecture while simultaneously promoting the Modernist pursuits for openness, flexibility, and material honesty. Japanese architecture, in Crosby and the Smithsons’ writing, was a rationalist architecture that stripped away the potential fallacies of the Modernist mechanised aesthetic.²⁴ In the discussion of the “reverence of material” and “the affinity between building and man,” Japan also offered an conduit for reintroducing the human-centric and spiritual element supposedly suppressed by the Modernist Functionalist orthodoxy.²⁵ By declaring architects of the Beaux-Arts tradition including Tony Garnier and Peter Behrens’ affinity to Japanese architecture, Crosby and the Smithsons were able to combine and vindicate the two seemingly disparate aspirations of New Brutalism: the Classical tradition and peasant dwellings. In this *AD* article, Crosby and the Smithsons not only offered a distorted history of the Modern Movement’s indebtedness to Japanese architecture, but they also forged a Japanese architectural tradition that they desired.

The highly selective historiography of Japanese architecture was not only used to legitimise New Brutalism as a new movement but was also to criticise contemporaneous

²⁴ Reyner Banham, “The New Brutalism,” *Architectural Review*, December 1955, 358.

²⁵ The challenge to Functionalism had already emerged in the 1940s when Sigfried Giedion, Jose Luis Sert, and Fernand Léger formulated “Nine Points On Monumentality” which called for a more human-centric approach to architecture and urbanism.

Sigfried Giedion, Leger Fernand, and Jose Luis Sert, “Nine Points On Monumentality,” in *Architecture, You and Me*, by Sigfried Giedion (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1958), 48–51.

developments in Modern architecture. Such intention was elucidated by Crosby in his introduction to the manifesto. He argued that the Hunstanton School, an illustration of the New Brutalism, was a reaction against and a critique of Contemporary Style architecture. Also nicknamed the Festival Style, Contemporary was an adaptation of Modernist design language that had been enthusiastically promoted during the Festival of Britain in 1951.²⁶ (FIG 1.2) The target of New Brutalism's criticism, however, went beyond other post-war Modernist architectural expressions. Crosby stated explicitly that the method of New Brutalism was "a re-evaluation of those advanced buildings of the twenties and thirties whose lessons (because of a few plaster cracks) have been forgotten."²⁷ In other words, New Brutalism aspired to be a movement to revitalise, renew, and reorient Modernism through the "yardstick" of Japanese architecture.

²⁶ Mary Banham and Devis Hillier, *Tonic to the Nation: Festival of Britain* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1976).

²⁷ Crosby, Smithson, and Smithson, "The New Brutalism."



FIG1.2 In 1949, Crosby, and Alison and Peter Smithson and Ron Sampson participated in the Vertical Feature competition for the Festival of Britain. The team's entry was poorly received. It did not win any awards but came to public attention through an article published in *The Architect and Building News* in January 1951. Their entry, along with a dozen other proposals, was selected by the News' editor to showcase "the state of anarchy in design," which left the public juries "gasping with either amazement or laughter."²⁸ Their scepticism of the Festival Style is readily discernible from this only surviving image from their competition entry: amongst the published works, theirs was the only one that did not include any proposed Festival of Britain buildings. The two sides of River Thames were rendered blank except for one building – the Palace of Westminster.

²⁸ "Vertical Feature Competition: THE FIELD," *The Architect and Building News*, January 27, 1950.

The multiple agendas set up in Crosby's introduction explained why Tafuri would later describe New Brutalism as a "partially developed ideological superimposition" and a "non-rigorous criticism."²⁹ The forged Japanese precedents was juxtaposed with a criticism to post-war British architecture and underlined by an evaluation of Modern architecture. More peculiar was that Crosby, in his introduction, not only righteously admitted their revision of history but also claimed their movement was inspired by history that were written to shape Modern architecture. He stated New Brutalism was indebted to "certain lessons in the formal use of proportion (from Prof. Wittkower) and a respect for the sensuous use of each material (from the Japanese)."³⁰

Rudolf Wittkower's 1948 *Architecture in the Age of Humanism*, as Wittkower himself observed had "caused more than a polite stir" in post-war British architecture.³¹ In the polemic publication, Wittkower re-examined the architecture of Alberti and Palladio, suggesting Classical architecture was not frozen geometrical rules but a set of principles that subjected to invention and innovation.³² Wittkower's study also exposed the tension between an architect's creative faculty and his supposed responsibility to the patrons and the cultural discourse of his place and time.³³ These arguments found in Wittkower's work served as an invaluable framework for the younger generation of architects to critically examine Modern architecture. The "stir" caused by *Architecture in the Age of Humanism* was further accentuated by debates initiated by Wittkower's student Colin Rowe's work on Modern Movement's indebtedness to Palladian architecture and Mannerism, including "The

²⁹ Tafuri, *Theories and History of Architecture*, 126.

³⁰ Crosby, Smithson, and Smithson, "The New Brutalism."

³¹ Rudolf Wittkower, *Architectural Principles in the Age of Humanism*, 3rd ed. (Wiley: London, 1998), 1.

³² Chapter II of *Architectural Principles in the Age of Humanism* discussed the progress and evolution of Alberti's design.

Wittkower, 33–35.

³³ Wittkower, 57–71.

Mathematics of the Ideal Villa” which was published in the *AR* in 1947.³⁴ Wittkower and Rowe’s studies, for the post-war architects, bore several efficacies: not only did they establish the Modern Movement as part of the living tradition of Classicism; they also injected new energy into post-war Modern architecture. Wittkower’s study, in particular, served as a means to reconcile the pursuit for rationality and the call for human-centric design in post-war Modernism.

How Wittkower and Rowe’s works shaped New Brutalism and other post-war British architectural discourses is beyond the scope this chapter, and has already been elucidated by historians including Anthony Vidler and Alina Payne.³⁵ Yet it is worthy to mention that a closer examination of the *AD* manifesto also revealed how Crosby and the Smithsons were influenced by Wittkower’s method in history writing: in order to justify their movement, the trio revisited distant pasts. In the article, they referred to two traditions that were not commonly seen as intrinsic to British Modern architecture: Japanese architecture and peasant dwelling forms, to emphasise the allegiance between New Brutalism and the early 20th century Modernists. They argued New Brutalism had inherited the congenital essence of the Modern Movement, even before their movement had been properly formulated.

This use of history as the model of New Brutalism marked the first split between *AD*’s and Banham’s view on New Brutalism. In the first paragraph of his 1955 *AR* “The New Brutalism”, Banham expressed his frustration of Wittkower’s and other historians overwhelming influence on the movement, questioning “What has been the influence of

³⁴ Rowe, “The Mathematics of the Ideal Villa,” March 1947.

³⁵ Vidler, *Histories of the Immediate Present*, 83.

Alina Payne, “Rudolf Wittkower and Architectural Principles in the Age of Modernism,” *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 53, no. 3 (1994): 339.

contemporary architectural historians on the history of contemporary architecture?”³⁶ In the article, Banham spent substantial energy dismissing the Miesian and Wittkowerian influences, deeming their geometrical principle as “only an *ad hoc* device for the realisation of ‘Images’.”³⁷ For Banham, opportunities for envisioning a radically new path for British architecture would be lost if New Brutalism could not truly part ways with Wittkowerian studies. At the same time, Banham was concerned that the energy of the movement would be consumed by the accusations of historicism and academicism.

In the 1955 *AR* article on New Brutalism, Banham’s focus had been a rebuttal of the Wittkowerian influence. He did not address the *AD* manifesto’s claim that Japanese architecture was the “yardstick” of both the Modern Movement and New Brutalism. In 1966, Banham revisited the *AD* manifesto in *The New Brutalism: Ethic or Aesthetic?* and declared the reference to Japan and peasant dwellings were “the most confusing and/or misleading.”³⁸ Banham pointed out the fact that neither Crosby nor the Smithsons had been to Japan by the time the article was written. Their understanding of Japanese architecture, according to Banham, originated from their casual reading of Bruno Taut’s already problematic 1936 study, *The Fundamentals of Japanese Architecture*.³⁹ The link between New Brutalism and Japanese architecture, Banham argued, should not be taken too seriously. He observed that Japan, for Taut, Crosby and Alison and Peter Smithson, merely served to

illustrate the sense of the sudden discovery of a whole culture capable of carrying, as naturally as clothes, a traditional architecture whose spatial sophistication seemed light-years beyond the capacity of the West.⁴⁰

Their evocation of “peasant dwelling,” Banham continued, was similarly originated from a

³⁶ Banham, “The New Brutalism,” 354.

³⁷ Banham, 361.

³⁸ Banham, *The New Brutalism: Ethic or Aesthetic?*, 48.

³⁹ Bruno Taut, *The Fundamentals of Japanese Architecture* (Kokusai Bunka Shinkokai: Tokyo, 1936).

⁴⁰ Banham, *The New Brutalism: Ethic or Aesthetic?*, 48.

biased understanding of Wittkower's study of Italy and the Mediterranean architectural heritage manifested in Le Corbusier's works.

Banham was unquestionably right in pointing out the *AD* article's flimsy interpretation of Japanese architecture. In fact, Crosby, and Alison and Peter Smithson admitted that their superficial understanding of Japanese architecture came from the 1953 film *Gate of Hell*, which "showed houses, a monastery, and a palace in colour for the first time."⁴¹ Banham's dismissal of Japanese traditional architectural influence, however, obscured a key aspect of New Brutalism. For Crosby and Alison and Peter Smithson, the significance of Japanese architecture laid in its ability to tie together several pressing issues in post-war British architecture. The question of *how* did Crosby and the Smithsons intend to transpose the Japanese architectural tradition is still worth exploring.

In her study of post-war British architectural magazines, historian M. Christine Boyer traced an alternative intellectual lineage of New Brutalism different from the one outlined by Banham.⁴² Boyer suggested that "peasant dwelling" in New Brutalism was not, as Banham had claimed, referring to the Mediterranean tradition but was indebted to the studies conducted by architectural historian E.A. Gutkind (1886-1968), including six articles on "How other Peoples Dwell and Build" published in the *AD* in 1953.⁴³ Exploring vernacular dwellings in the South Seas, Japan, China, Africa, Arab nations and Native America, Gutkind's study intended to be a critique to the Modern pursuit for a universal solution to

⁴¹ Crosby, Smithson, and Smithson, "The New Brutalism."

⁴² M. Christine Boyer, "An Encounter with History: The Postwar Debate between the English Journals of Architectural Review and Architectural Design (1945-1960)," in *Art, the Everyday and the Media* (Team 10 - between Modernity and the Everyday, Delft University, 2003), 135-63, <http://www.team10online.org/research/papers/delft2/boyer.pdf>.

⁴³ E.A. Gutkind, "How Other Peoples Dwell and Build 1-5," *Architectural Design*, 1953. Crosby has referenced Gutkind's work in his 1965 publication *Architecture: City Sense*. Crosby, *Architecture: City Sense*, 95.

housing. The importance of Gutkind's articles, Boyer stated, was they were written to encourage Modern architects "to think afresh about present-day architecture."⁴⁴ As Gutkind developed his account, Boyer observed, he "often drew comparisons between traditional settlements and modern architecture and spoke directly to architects."⁴⁵ Boyer concluded Gutkind's scholarship was indubitably appealing to the New Brutalists, as a rediscovery of alternative traditions and knowledge that could sustain and advance Modernism in post-war Britain.

The 1955 *AD* manifesto's statement that New Brutalism "has nothing to do with craft. We see architecture as the direct result of a way of life," according to Boyer, was a direct adaptation of Gutkind's outline of "How other Peoples Dwell and Build."⁴⁶ Examining the articles on New Brutalism published in the *AD* in the following years, Boyer pointed out Gutkind's influence persisted through the magazines' pages. The New Brutalism's tenet "as-found," Boyer suggested, was a synthesis of Gutkind's survey and the post-war concern about the "dangerous encounter with machine technology."⁴⁷ Another importance of Gutkind's studies was that they echoed and added to the post-war Modernists' preoccupation with the everyday life. New Brutalism's affirmation of the everyday life, as the current scholarships suggest, came from a wide trove of sources: including the working class ethnography study done by Judith Henderson and the photography by Nigel Henderson, as well as Peter Wilmot and Michael Young's influential 1957 publication *Family and Kinship*

⁴⁴ Boyer, "An Encounter with History: The Postwar Debate between the English Journals of Architectural Review and Architectural Design (1945-1960)," 144.

⁴⁵ Boyer, 144.

⁴⁶ Crosby, Smithson, and Smithson, "The New Brutalism."

Boyer, "An Encounter with History: The Postwar Debate between the English Journals of Architectural Review and Architectural Design (1945-1960)," 146.

⁴⁷ Boyer, "An Encounter with History: The Postwar Debate between the English Journals of Architectural Review and Architectural Design (1945-1960)," 150.

in East London.⁴⁸ (FIG 1.3) The interest in everyday life had also been reflected in the 1955 January issue of the *AD*: Team 10 members Georg Candilis, Alexis Josik, and Shadrach Woods' building project in Morocco which was published alongside the New Brutalism manifesto.⁴⁹ Crosby's South-African background and his previous works at Drew and Fry's office would have also strengthened his appreciation of vernacular architectural culture.⁵⁰ (FIG 1.4)



FIG1.3 Spread from issue 3 of *Uppercase*, a “little magazine” edited by Crosby, with photography by Nigel Henderson. The issue was dedicated to the works of Alison and Peter Smithson, and would serve as the basis of the Smithson's 1967 publication *Urban Structuring*.

⁴⁸ Peter Wilmot and Michael Young, *Family and Kinship in East London* (London: Routledge Kegan Paul, 1957).

⁴⁹ Alison Smithson and Peter Smithson, “Collective Housing in Morocco,” *Architectural Design*, January 1955.

⁵⁰ In the late 1930s, Crosby's teacher Rex Martienssen conducted research into ancient towns in Greek and South African vernacular houses in order to devise new strategy for Modernist architecture in South Africa. At Drew and Fry's office, Crosby was tasked to design a new town for *Ga* people in Ghana that could accommodate their polygamy community structure.

Gilbert Herbert, *Rex Martienssen and the International Style: Modern Movement in South Africa* (Cape Town: A. A. Balkema, 1975).

Theo Crosby, “Work in the Tropics,” *Architectural Design* 28, no. 2 (February 1958): 75–77.

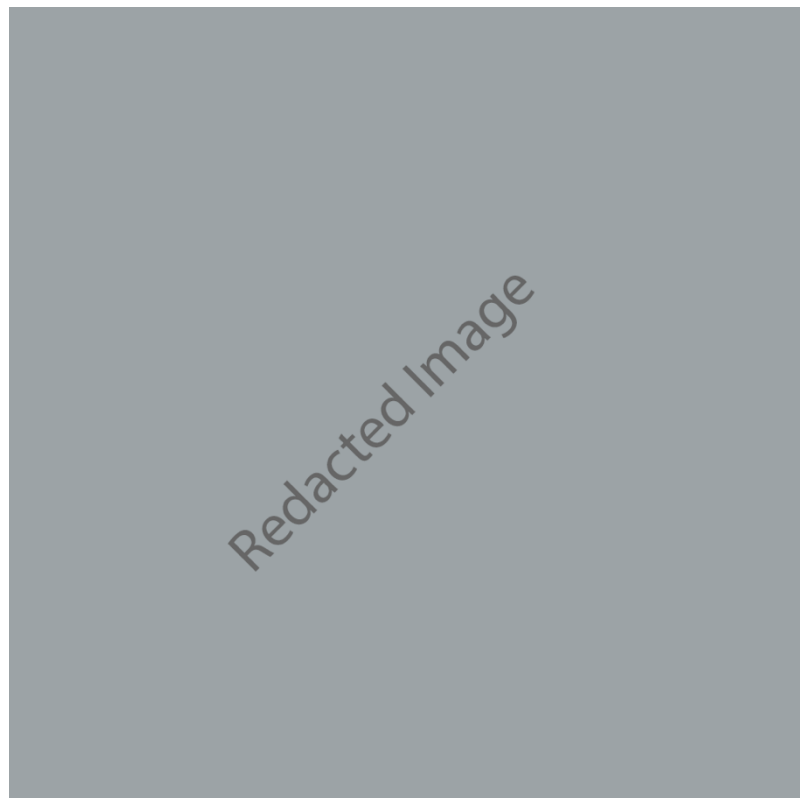


FIG1.4 Aerial view and street views of the Accra Community Centre designed by Crosby. Historian Iain Jackson and Jessica Holland suggested the mosaics were attempts of integrating local culture and identity to the Modernist architecture. There was also deliberate effort in devising Modern architectural elements that could respond to the Ghanaian climate.

In his study, Gutkind singled out Japan as “unique in its logical consequence and its identity of form and function” in “the whole history of architecture.”⁵¹ Japanese architecture, Gutkind stated, could directly inform the Western architect’s struggle with prefabrication and standardisation in architecture. He described Japanese architecture as:

The far-reaching standardisation of almost every structural part of the house, of the timber work, the matting, the screens, and other details have not resulted in a dull uniformity and inflexibility. On the contrary, it has prevented the lapse into the same uncultured cut-to-pattern houses which Western pseudo- architects offer as architecture. The standardisation of the Japanese house guarantees in any case an assured minimum of good proportions, simplicity and plain forms; and, beyond these pleasant qualities, clarity of construction and purposefulness of expression.⁵²

Through Japan, Gutkind offered his critique on the construction and execution of buildings. He encouraged post-war architects to face up to the challenges brought by advance in technology and industrial production. Gutkind stressed that Japanese architecture served as a reminder that “standardisation is by no means identical with uniformity and rigidity.”⁵³ The poor quality of pre-fabricated buildings in the name of speed and economy, Gutkind pointed out, was not due to any inherent problem with the technology but rather architects’ lack of imagination and creativity. At the end of the article, Gutkind stated explicitly that Japanese knowledge about standardisation could bring new energy to Modern architecture,

If ingeniously adapted to our needs, the principle which the Japanese have applied to their standardised houses may be an excellent vehicle for housing the masses of these islands, and at the same time for initiating a better architecture than we can show at the moment.⁵⁴

Gutkind’s discussion on standardisation resonated with New Brutalism’s initial interest in considering *how* buildings should be constructed. Not unlike their exploration into the reverence of material, standardisation and industrialised production of architecture was an

⁵¹ E.A Gutkind, “How Other Peoples Dwell and Build 1,” *Architectural Design* 23, no. 1 (1953): 31.

⁵² Gutkind, 33.

⁵³ Gutkind, 33.

⁵⁴ Gutkind, 34.

issue rooted in Crosby and the Smithsons' practices at the time. As a technical editor of the *AD*, Crosby was responsible for the content regarding building construction and technology which the magazine's long-term editor Monica Pidgeon was less knowledgeable about.⁵⁵ He was, therefore, directly and frequently exposed to developments in and criticism of post-war building construction. Meanwhile, the construction of the Hunstanton School also led Alison and Peter Smithson to encounter the opportunities and difficulties presented by standardisation, which had been elucidated by Johnson in his review of the building.⁵⁶

This discussion on standardisation and industrialised production of architecture cast new light for examining the two aspirations of New Brutalism: Japanese architecture and Wittkower's study. Published in 1949, Wittkower's *Architecture in the Age of Humanism* was immediately incorporated into debates about the mathematical rationality of architecture in post-war Britain.⁵⁷ Wittkower's study on Palladio's use of perfect numbers, proportion, and symmetry was put into contention with Le Corbusier's contemporaneous publication *Le Modulor*, which articulated an alternative mathematical rationale.⁵⁸ These debates were set against the backdrop of a rapid development in the standardisation and mass production of architecture. Therefore, one may conclude other than serving as a link between New Brutalism and the early 20th-century Modernist avant-gardes, Japanese architectural tradition was important to Crosby and the Smithsons as a viable precedent of standardised architecture.

⁵⁵ Interview with Kenneth Frampton, April 2014.

⁵⁶ Johnson, "School at Hunstanton, Norfolk, by Alison and Peter Smithson," 148.

⁵⁷ Eva-Marie Neumann, "Architectural Proportion in Britain 1945–1957," *Architectural History*, no. 39 (1996): 197–221.

⁵⁸ Le Corbusier, *The Modulor: A Harmonious Measure to the Human Scale Universally Applicable to Architecture and Mechanics* (London: Faber & Faber, 1954).

In the 1955 *AD New Brutalism* manifesto, Crosby and Alison and Peter Smithson superimposed at least two highly selective readings of Japanese architectural history to promulgate their new theory for standardisation. In addition to Gutkind's study, Bruno Taut's *The Fundamentals of Japanese Architecture*, meanwhile, brought an aura to New Brutalism.⁵⁹ In his twenty-page long and unapologetically biased historiography of Japanese architecture, Taut observed that flexibility and simplicity found in standardised architectural elements was what elevated Japanese vernacular structure into architecture.⁶⁰ (FIG 1.5) Using the Ise Shrine — a temple rebuilt every twenty years — as an example Taut argued that the “perpetual repetition” of the structure, both physically, ceremonially and spiritually, created an architecture that had no caprice of contradiction.⁶¹ This material and structural rationality, Taut suggested, was the essence of architecture found in both the Eastern and Western tradition:

Here one is dealing not with engineering but with architecture, such as is the case with the Parthenon where the last definite form has also been created — there in marble and here in wood and straw. Just as the Parthenon receives its form, as to proportions and profiles, from the clear and transparent air of Greece, so the Ise Shrine receives its form from the thickly humid and rainy air of Japan.⁶²

Taut portrayed Japanese architectural tradition as a knowledge that was familiar to Western civilisation. The rationality found in Japanese architecture, Taut claimed, was universal to classical architecture from different cultures and geographical conditions.

⁵⁹ Taut, *The Fundamentals of Japanese Architecture*.

⁶⁰ Taut, 13.

⁶¹ Taut, 15.

⁶² Taut, 15.



FIG 1.5 Diagram from Bruno Taut's *The Fundamentals of Japanese Architecture* that epitomised why the publication was a problematic study on Japanese architecture. In this diagram and the book, Taut delineated a "positive line" and a "negative line" of Japanese architecture through his Modernist lens. The "positive" was the Japanese architectural tradition that used exposed structure, open plan, and simple massing. The "negative line," according to Taut, was made up of architecture that had heavy usage of ornamentation. The book, despite its biased views, had significant influence and was credited with establishing the Katsura Palace in Kyoto as the ideal representation of Japanese architecture.

The passage's focus on materiality signposted Taut's influence on New Brutalism's tenet of "as found."⁶³ The "as found" ideal of reconstituting the relationship between building, people and the environment through material could be seen as a reverberation of Taut's analysis of the Parthenon and Ise Shrine. Through Japan, New Brutalism reunited with the Modernist tradition of integrating building construction, aesthetic quality, and ethical value of architecture. In the context of post-war Britain, through the lessons of Japanese architecture offered by Gutkind et al, they were able to incorporate these aspirations with development in mass manufacturing industry.⁶⁴

Gutkind and Taut's study of Japanese architecture also provided a model for the New Brutalists' call for an architecture that could respond to mass produced culture.⁶⁵ In both studies, Japanese architecture was used as a critique of Western consumerism. The Japanese house dwellers, according to both Gutkind and Taut, were only allowed to express their personality in the *tokonoma*, an alcove where arts and decoration are placed and changed seasonally. Taut presented the *tokonoma* as a self-evidential critique of the Western bourgeois interior:

No reminiscences attach to dark corners, and Western "cosiness" is lacking as well as much furniture, carpets, curtains, table-cloths, cushions, pictures, wall-papers and so forth. Just as the air in the room is completely changed by being open to the outside, so the reminiscences attached to the walls and corners — reminiscences which all too easily oppress the inhabitants — are erased as though impressed in dough.⁶⁶

⁶³ "Opinion: New Brutalism," *Architectural Design*, 1957.

⁶⁴ Another reference to Japanese architecture and standardisation can be found in March 1955 issue of *AD*. Referencing Werner Bischof and Robert Guillain's photography book of Japan, *AD* suggested that the flexibility of Japanese dwellings demonstrated what Gropius "called for the mass production of building elements so that they could be assembled in various formal compositions like boxes of toy bricks."

"The Modern House," *Architectural Design*, March 1955.

⁶⁵ Alison Smithson and Peter Smithson, "The New Brutalism; Alison and Peter Smithson Answer the Criticism on the Opposite Page," *Architectural Design*, April 1957.

⁶⁶ Bruno Taut, *The Fundamentals of Japanese Architecture* (Kokusai Bunka Shinkokai: Tokyo, 1936), 11.

In his praise for *tokonoma*, Taut offered an analysis that resonated with Walter Benjamin's criticism of the burdened cluttered Western bourgeois interior.⁶⁷ In light of the post-war consumerism boom, these criticisms had a new-found relevance to Crosby and Alison and Peter Smithson. The integration of *tokonoma* in a standardised Japanese construction demonstrated how to mediate the tension between mass-produced architecture and mass-produced culture. To examine how Crosby, and Alison and Peter Smithson put the lessons from Japanese architecture into practice, one can look at the now-canonised *This is Tomorrow* exhibition of 1956.

1.4 This is Tomorrow

In *This is Tomorrow*, Alison and Peter Smithson collaborated with Nigel Henderson and Eduardo Paolozzi on their exhibit, a simple wooden construction entitled "Patio and Pavilion." The team, often known as Group 6 of the exhibition, presented objects and images looked like archaeological ruins to signify art as "the fundamental necessities of the human habitat."⁶⁸ (FIG 1.6) Only one other team in *This is Tomorrow* created a similar composition of mass-produced architectural elements and primitive-looking objects: Group 1's Theo Crosby, Germano Facetti, William Turnbull, and Edward Wright. (FIG 1.7) The artworks in Group 1's exhibit were installed as stand-alone objects, encapsulated by a structural lattice roof designed by Crosby. In both exhibits, architecture was basic shelter constructed with mass-produced elements: prefabricated steel frame in Group 1 and corrugated roof in Group 6. In his description of Group 1's exhibit, Crosby stated their approach to the integration of

⁶⁷ Walter Benjamin, "Paris, Capital of the Nineteenth Century," in *Reflections. Essays, Aphorisms, Autobiographical Writings* (New York: Schocken, 1978), 155.

⁶⁸ Nigel Henderson et al., "Group 1," in *This Is Tomorrow Exhibition Catalogue*, ed. Theo Crosby (London: Whitechapel Art Gallery, 1956), n.p.

arts and architecture was through confronting the challenges brought by the industrialisation of architecture,

This group was concerned with presenting symbolically the world of tomorrow; the space deck roof symbolises the mechanical environment and its structural principles select those of the leaf skeleton which is used on one of the panels to symbolise the natural order. All the panels (blockboard, perspex and glass) are industrial products and are covered with photostats. Within this mechanical environment the sculpture represents the irrational, the element of chance.⁶⁹

An explicit reference to an elementary and long-enduring building culture was similarly found in Group 6's exhibit, which could be aptly described as a "primitive hut." Both exhibits could be described as attempts to reconstitute an architectural culture in a mechanised environment through upholding the essences of a human habitat.

⁶⁹ Theo Crosby, ed., "This Is Tomorrow," *Architectural Design* 26, no. 10 (October 1956): 335.

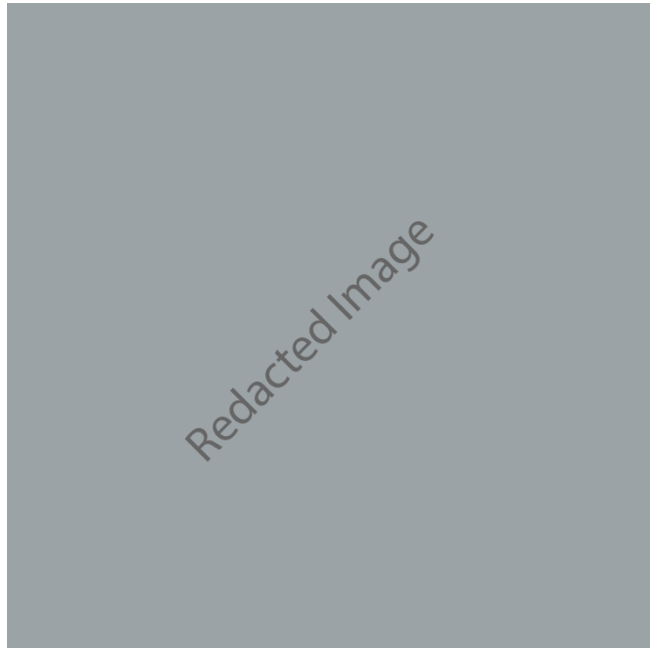


FIG 1.6 Group 6's exhibit "Patio and Pavilion" in the *This is Tomorrow* exhibition catalogue.

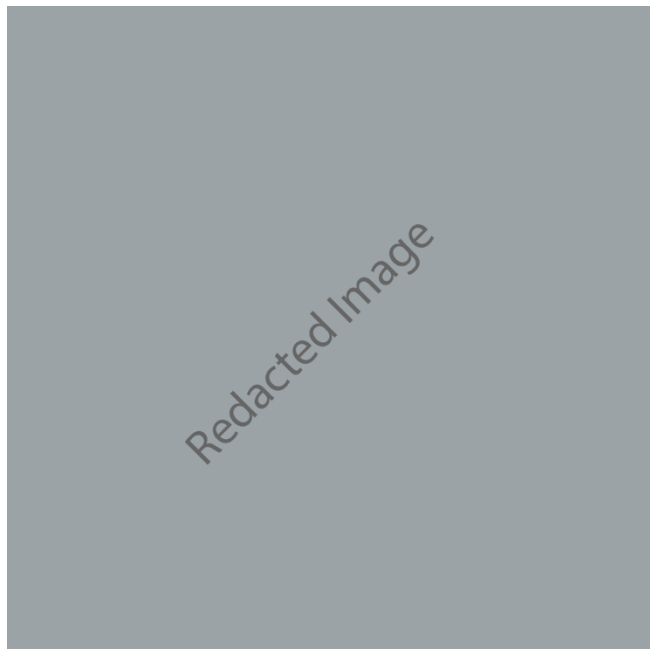


FIG 1.7 Group 1's exhibit in the *This is Tomorrow* exhibition catalogue. As in Group 6, there was a contrast between the standardised architectural products and the primitive-looking art works.

Group 1 and Group 6's use of standardised architectural parts stood out in an exhibition dedicated to the integration of arts and architecture. In the majority of other exhibits, the boundary between arts and architecture was blurred either through the foregrounding of the structural quality of sculptures (such as in the case of Group 3,5,7,8,11) or by attempts to create a holistic environment (as in the case of Group 2 and Group 10). In contrast, a sense of indifference and alienation between the architecture and the arts could be detected in both Group 1 and Group 6's exhibits. In Group 1, a totem by Turnbull stood off-centre in the space while several posters designed by Facetti and Wright were hung from the lattice frame. (FIG 1.8, FIG 1.9) In Group 6, objects selected and created by Henderson and Paolozzi were placed almost randomly in the space. (FIG 1.10)

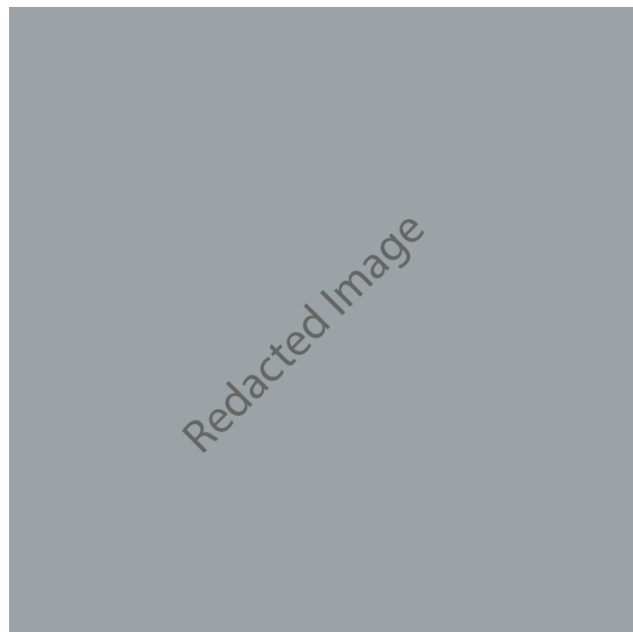


FIG 1.8 Installation view of Group 1's exhibit, showing the graphics designed by Edward Wright, poster by Germano Facetti, and a plaster sculpture entitled 'Sungazer' by William Turnbull.



FIG 1.9 Installation view of Group 1's exhibit.



FIG 1.10 Installation view of the Patio and Pavilion.

Visitors approached the exhibit by walking on the plywood flooring and looked at the objects that were placed in the sand pits, or on top of the corrugated roof. The distance between the visitors and the objects also distinguished Group 6's exhibit from other exhibits.

The delineation between art objects and architectural structures suggested the two groups' answer to the question of integration differed from the other groups. The artworks in Group 1 and Group 6 looked like they could be changed and replaced according to the dweller's taste, climate, and local customs; manifesting their indebtedness to Taut. Crosby made this distinction explicit in his commendation on Group 6's contribution:

As in Group 1, a symbolic environment, but here the interest is concentrated on the basic and timeless necessities. The group approach to the exhibition was that architects should provide the basic organisation, and that the artists should feed in the human interest.⁷⁰

This emphasis on the “basic and timeless necessities” and “feed in the human interest” resonated with Taut's critique of the bourgeois interior, where “reminiscences which all too easily oppress the inhabitants.”⁷¹ In comparison to other exhibits in *This is Tomorrow*, Group 1 and Group 6's works demonstrated a more nuanced and critical attitude towards consumer culture; unlike Group 2, they did not overtly celebrate the post-war boom in mass media and consumer culture. Yet they also did not share the nonchalance found in some of the Constructivists groups' works. In Crosby's words, their approach “to the problem of integration was that of antagonistic collaboration — a set of images and an object were placed in a context and left to fight it out.”⁷²

Tokonoma, an awareness that architectural space should always make accommodation for artworks at the first instance and not to isolate arts in a confined space, had particular importance for artists in the context of *This is Tomorrow*, too. The aim of the exhibition, as stated by Crosby, was to somewhat humble the architects, and to allow artists to “move beyond the narrow world of easel painting.”⁷³ The exhibition, in Crosby's words, was an

⁷⁰ Crosby, 335.

⁷¹ Taut, *The Fundamentals of Japanese Architecture*, 11.

⁷² Taut, 11.

⁷³ Crosby, “This Is Tomorrow,” 333.

opposition to the existing practice that artists were only incorporated “at a certain stage of architecture (to produce a project for a decoration at the end of the job).”⁷⁴ *Tokonoma*, as Taut suggested in his *The Fundamentals of Japanese Architecture*, could liberate the artists, too.

Comparing to Western ways of incorporating arts in dwellings, Taut wrote,

millions of pictures are being painted, but the artists do not know what the people who buy them will do with them, or where they will put them; while in the Japanese house their use and place are quite clear.⁷⁵

This clarity and dedication found in the Japanese way of incorporating arts and architecture, for Crosby and the Smithsons, was also an effective way to debunk the post-war approach of sacrificing arts in the name of economy and efficiency. The primitive and disjointed quality in Group 1 and 6’s works could be read as a reflection of their uncertainty about the development of arts and culture in a mass-produced society, but also reflected their commitment in bringing the ethic and aesthetic of Gutkind’s and Taut’s Japanese architecture into the post-war British context.

1.5 The Lingering Influence of Japanese Architecture

The retrieval of Crosby’s voice also shed light on an overlooked thread in the existing historiography of 20th-century British architecture: the Japanese architectural tradition continued to play a role in Alison and Peter Smithson’s later works. They returned to Japanese architecture multiple times to address the tension between modernisation and Modernism in architecture; including guest-editing, in 1961, a special issue of the *AD* entitled “The Rebirth of Japanese Architecture.”⁷⁶ (FIG 1.11) In 1977, Alison and Peter Smithson reused Japanese architectural tradition as the concept and representation in their proposal for

⁷⁴ Crosby, 333.

⁷⁵ Taut, *The Fundamentals of Japanese Architecture*, 11.

⁷⁶ Alison Smithson and Peter Smithson, “The Rebirth of Japanese Architecture,” *Architectural Design*, February 1961.

the Riverside Apartments Competition. (FIG 1.12) Again, they took pride in their superficial understanding of Japanese culture, stating that the Japanese figures in their drawings were cut out of a postcard from the Victoria and Albert Museum.⁷⁷ In the description of the project, they revisited the *tokonoma* ideal:

Layering, layers, screening: even support structures being consciously layered-up in space and capable of change and extension of meaning by further layers to be added or taken away. The dressing of seasons... the decoration by the event...these are some of our oldest established themes.⁷⁸

The competition entry, emphasising the regularity and openness of the plan, echoed explicitly Taut's description of Japanese architecture which "as the air in the room is completely changed by being open to the outside."⁷⁹ The Smithsons did not win the competition, and the surviving drawings were published as the back cover of the *AD* in 1977.⁸⁰ The Riverside Apartments competition, realised as Crown Reach Studio by architect Nick Lacey, was one of the largest open architectural competitions in Britain at the time and had attracted hundreds of entries. It was also seen as an opportunity to reflect on the state of British architecture.⁸¹ At the moment when the Modern architecture was declared dead by younger architectural polemicists, this reference to the origin of Modern architecture by the Smithsons garnered little attention in the British architectural field.⁸² Despite their emphasis that "these are some of our oldest established themes," Alison and Peter Smithson's reference to Japanese architectural tradition was once again ignored.⁸³

⁷⁷ Peter Smithson, "AD Profile: Milbank," *Architectural Design*, 1977, 529.

⁷⁸ Smithson, 529.

⁷⁹ Taut, *The Fundamentals of Japanese Architecture*, 11.

⁸⁰ "Millbank Finalists," *The Architects' Journal*, July 1977.

⁸¹ "Millbank Competition: Reflections on the State of British Architecture," *Architectural Design*, 1977.

⁸² Jencks, *The Language of Post-Modern Architecture*.

Charles Jencks, *Modern Movements in Architecture* (London: Anchor, 1973).

⁸³ Smithson, "AD Profile: Milbank," 529.



FIG 1.11 Page from a special issue of *AD*, in 1961, on “The Rebirth of Japanese Architecture.” In the article, Alison and Peter Smithson suggested that “for a proper understanding of Japanese architecture a visit to Le Corbusier’s India was an obvious prelude.” This claim was a recognition of the Corbusian influence on 20th-century Japanese architects including Kenzo Tange and Kunio Maekawa but can also be interpreted as a reverberation of their previous claim of the interwoven nature between Japanese architectural tradition and Modernism.



FIG 1.12 Alison and Peter Smithson's illustration for their entry to the Riverside Apartment competition. The interior of the apartment was rendered blank, except the few ancient Japanese drawings and artworks. The image was presented in a long linear format that resembled a Japanese scroll.



FIG 1.13 Spread from *Without Rhetoric's* where the Smithsons debunked Banham's claim in *The New Brutalism* (1966). In these pages, the Smithson showcased what they regarded as the essential reference of New Brutalism: Japanese architecture and gardens, Le Corbusier's *Unité d'Habitation* and the works of Georg Candilis, Shadrach Woods, Vladimir Bodiansky and Alexis Josik.

The most explicit and polemic statement on the relevance of Japanese architecture to New Brutalism was made in Alison and Peter Smithson's 1973 publication *Without Rhetoric: an Architectural Aesthetic 1955-1972*.⁸⁴ (FIG 1.13) The book also began with a reprinting of the January 1955 *AD* manifesto. The fact that this one-page article was reprinted twice, in both Banham's 1966 *The New Brutalism* and in *Without Rhetoric*, signposted its importance to the movement's main instigators. A footnote had been added to the discussion of Japanese architecture, where Alison and Peter Smithson clarified that New Brutalism has "not much to do with the Brutalism that popularly became lumped into the style outlined in Reyner Banham's *The New Brutalism*, Architectural Press, 1966."⁸⁵ This addition could be attributed to the shifting personal and intellectual affiliation between Alison and Peter Smithson, Banham, and Crosby; but it should also be understood as a reflection of the persistent relevance of Taut's and Gutkind's study of Japanese architecture.⁸⁶ By the mid-1970s the Modernist dominance in British architectural design had faded, and the rejection of hard-line aesthetic could be found in various realms of design.⁸⁷ At the same time, confidence in prefabrication technology, among practitioners and the public alike, was undermined when the Ronan Point Tower collapsed in 1968. The answer to consumerism's impact on architecture remained murky, while the economic climate of 1970s Britain seemed to pose a further challenge to the nation's continuing architectural development. The repeated

⁸⁴ Alison Smithson and Peter Smithson, *Without Rhetoric: An Architectural Aesthetic, 1955-1972* (Latimer New Dimension: London, 1973).

⁸⁵ Smithson and Smithson, 4.

⁸⁶ Dirk von den Heuvel points out that the Smithson were irritated by Banham because he published *The New Brutalism* without consulting them.

Van den Heuvel, "Between Brutalists. The Banham Hypothesis and the Smithson Way of Life," 297,306.

Anne Massey suggests that the Smithsons' break from Banham might contribute to the Smithson couple's absence from the film dedicated to the history of the Independent Group, *Father of Pop* (1979)

Anne Massey, *Out of the Ivory Tower: The Independent Group and Popular Culture* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013), 106–7.

In the early 1970s, Crosby and the Smithsons were also collaborating on a urban regeneration project at Cherry Garden Pier, Bermondsey.

Pentagram, *Living by Design*.

⁸⁷ Andrew Saint, "Review: Houses from the Factory: System Building and the Welfare State 1942-74," *Construction History*, no. 6 (1990): 85–89.

evocation of Japanese architecture could be interpreted as a regret that the agenda of New Brutalism remained unfulfilled.

If the lesson of Japanese architecture was one of the main aspirations of New Brutalism, why had it been so consistently overlooked in the existing vast scholarship on post-war British architecture? One reason for this neglect could be attributed to Banham's changed attitude to New Brutalism. *This is Tomorrow*, when lessons from Japanese architecture transpired in the public eyes, was also the moment when the intellectual split widened between Banham and Alison and Peter Smithson. Banham, only recently having been encouraged by the Smithsons' experimentation in the *Ideal Home* exhibition of the same year, criticised "Patio and Pavilion" as the New Brutalists at "its most submissive to traditional values."⁸⁸ For Crosby and the Smithsons, Japanese architectural language could be a potential means to achieve what Banham coined as "concrete images — images that can carry the mass of tradition and association."⁸⁹ Group 1 and Group 6's exhibits reflected some efforts in combining "the energy of novelty and technology, but resist classification by the geometrical disciplines by which most other exhibits were dominated" — an agenda championed by Banham.⁹⁰ However, for Banham, "Patio and Pavilion" manifested Alison and Peter Smithson's lack of commitment to a more techno-optimistic and a-formal vision of Modern architecture.⁹¹ Banham's subsequent withdrawal from New Brutalism significantly undermined the intellectual rigour of the movement.

⁸⁸ Reyner Banham, "This Is Tomorrow," *Architectural Review* 120 (September 1956): 186–88.

⁸⁹ Banham, 188.

⁹⁰ Banham, 188.

⁹¹ Van den Heuvel, "Between Brutalists. The Banham Hypothesis and the Smithson Way of Life," 297. Anthony Vidler, "Towards a Theory of the Architectural Program," *October* 106 (2003): 71.

At work here was also the convoluted nature of Crosby and the Smithsons' use of Japan as a critique on post-war British architecture. Their arguably timely and insightful criticism about standardisation and industrialisation of architecture became almost illegible due to the many historical, logical, and rhetorically contradictions found in the manifesto and their other evocations of Japanese architecture in the *AD*. The failure to convey their message reflected the Janus-faced outcome of their operative criticism. The history written by Taut, Gutkind, Wittkower et al offered a means for New Brutalism to explore pressing aesthetic, technological, economic and culture issues. However, entrapped by their self-imposed agenda of creating architecture that speaks of ethic and aesthetic, Crosby and the Smithsons continued to produce what Tafuri called "diffused criticism."⁹² Ensnared by the goal of re-igniting the Modern Movement's energy in unifying changes in arts, technology, and architecture, they somewhat moved further and further away from building construction. By the late 1950s, the excitement about the Hunstanton School had waned. Neither Alison and Peter Smithson nor Crosby had new major built works that could be used as the physical manifestation of the development in New Brutalism. The debates became more and more self-referential.

A divergence from the New Brutalism thoughts, after the *This is Tomorrow* experiment, was also found in Crosby's works. In March 1957, Crosby published in the *AD* a two-page article entitled "Thoughts in Progress: The New Brutalism."⁹³ Presented as a response to letters from readers, the article defended New Brutalism's use of operative

⁹² Tafuri, *Theories and History of Architecture*, 127.

⁹³ Theo Crosby, "Thoughts in Progress: The New Brutalism," *Architectural Design*, 1957, 111–13.

history and criticism. Firstly, Crosby pointed out that Banham and others' criticism of New Brutalism intellectual and rhetorical flimsiness was unfair, stating "most modern architects — Corbusier, Mies van der Rohe, Gropius and Frank Lloyd Wright among them — had written things which wouldn't stand up to even the simplest sort of literary analysis."⁹⁴ Crosby maintained that the contradictions found in New Brutalism should not be seen as flaws, but a means to expose the inherent paradoxes found in architectural propositions that seeks to address both ethic and aesthetic. What was "profound and brave" about New Brutalism, Crosby stressed, was its willingness to face up to these difficult issues intrinsic to modern arts and architecture.⁹⁵ He argued that despite the lack of built works and rigorous scholarship, one should still value New Brutalism for its "virtue."

One of the fundamental questions Crosby interrogates, in the "Thought in Progress" series, was what should be the role of architects. Crosby and the readers debated whether architects should be producing criticism, which sometimes would result in "a severe attack of verbal indigestion."⁹⁶ What rendered criticism problematic but also necessary, Crosby defended, was its responsibility to formulate what should be the regulating standard in architecture after the Modern Movement. The conversation continued in the October, November, and December 1957 issues of the *AD*, in three consecutive articles entitled "Thought in Progress: Summing Up."⁹⁷ These three "Summing Up" articles were intended to offer a conclusive account on debates that had been on-going in the year's *AD*, including New Brutalism. In the first "Summing Up," Crosby discussed his pessimistic view of the architectural profession:

...though it is perfectly possible for any individual architect to say 'What the hell,' to all of it and go his own way, we must recognise that the downgrading of

⁹⁴ Crosby, 112.

⁹⁵ Crosby, 112.

⁹⁶ Theo Crosby, "Thoughts in Progress: Summing Up 1," *Architectural Design*, October 1957, 344.

⁹⁷ Crosby, "Thoughts in Progress: Summing Up 1."

the architect to a modest, anonymous co-operator is something which a great number of architects — and especially those most concerned with contemporary problems — accept as being in the nature of things.⁹⁸

After establishing why a discussion on the role of an architect was necessary, in the second and third “Summing Up,” Crosby made a further attempt to incorporate this evaluation with existing discourse in New Brutalism. He wrote,

I think we must conclude that what the architect has to hold on to is no philosophy outside the architectural process, but something that can be said, if you like, to derive from the programme, if it is defined to include every single one of the social, economic, topographical, technical and architectural factors that will affect building, everyone of which have been called the ‘object found’.⁹⁹

The ideological leap that Crosby made in these series of articles was worthy of noting.¹⁰⁰ He transposed the “as found” pursuit of New Brutalism to a new “object found” approach. In the earlier discussions of New Brutalism, “as found” was mostly associated with what they called “reverence for materials.”¹⁰¹ Although Crosby had re-affirmed the importance of the qualities of material and the clear exhibition of structure to New Brutalism, he also superimposed a new agenda calling architects to face up to the social, technological and economic reality of his/her own time. At stake was that New Brutalism’s call for “architecture as direct result of a way of life” was ground down to a trivialised declaration that architecture and architects should take reality as a starting point in their design.¹⁰² By the end of this series of articles, Crosby drifted away from their original pursuit for establishing a closer relationship between human, buildings, and the environment, and turned to explore

⁹⁸ Crosby, 344.

⁹⁹ Theo Crosby, “Thought in Progress: Summing Up 2,” *Architectural Design*, n.d., 396.

¹⁰⁰ The evocation of “programme” in the “Summing Up” articles was a response to John Summerson’s “The Case for a Theory of Modern Architecture” that was presented early in the year. The influence of Summerson’s speech on Crosby’s works will be discussed more at length in the second chapter of this study.

John Summerson, “The Case for a Theory of Modern Architecture,” *RIBA Journal* 64 (June 1957): 307–10.

¹⁰¹ Crosby, Smithson, and Smithson, “The New Brutalism.”

¹⁰² Crosby, Smithson, and Smithson.

how architects should engage with architecture. More at stake was that in his attempt to reconceptualise Modern architecture, Crosby leaned on thin analysis and flimsy arguments, and hence in the process distracted and distorted the New Brutalism's agenda.

1.6 UIA Congress 1961

In the existing historiography of post-war British architecture, *This is Tomorrow* has often been seen as the concluding event of IG members' collaboration.¹⁰³ This supposed rupture crippled the investigation into how the Crosby, Smithsons, and some of the IG members continued to explore collectively the programme they set up in *This is Tomorrow*. As a result, how the instigators of New Brutalism furthered their course had been lost, too. In 1961, more than half of the exhibitors from *This is Tomorrow* would collaborate again at the UIA Congress in London, which was designed and curated by Crosby. (FIG. 1.14) There were sculptures by William Turnbull, Robert Adams, and Eduardo Paolozzi, an installation by John McHale, as well as a painting by Richard Hamilton.¹⁰⁴ Frank Newby was the structural consultant while Lawrence Alloway and Peter Smithson both contributed writings to the exhibition catalogue.¹⁰⁵ (FIG. 1.15) Constructivist artists who were part of *This is Tomorrow*: John Ernest, Anthony Hill, Mary and Kenneth Martin played important roles in the interior design of the UIA Congress Buildings.(FIG. 1.16)¹⁰⁶ The significant overlap between the contributors in the two exhibitions, as Lawrence Alloway wrote in a review, suggested that the UIA Congress should be seen as a reflection on *This is Tomorrow* after a

¹⁰³ Robbins, *The Independent Group: Postwar Britain and the Aesthetics of Plenty*, 213–20.

One of the reasons for this view was because the regular meetings of IG had ceased in the previous year.

¹⁰⁴ Theo Crosby, "International Union of Architects Congress Building, South Bank, London," *Architectural Design*, November 1961.

¹⁰⁵ Peter Smithson, "Untitled," in *Architecture of Technology*, ed. Theo Crosby (London: Whitefrairs Press, 1961), n.p.

¹⁰⁶ There were also artists not associated with the IG milieu who contributed to the exhibition, including the "situationist painters" Peter Stroud, Bernard Cohen and John Plumb. The abstract artist Antony Caro created a "tower" structure placed at the waterfront.

Crosby, "International Union of Architects Congress Building, South Bank, London," 486.

five-year hiatus.¹⁰⁷ Building a genealogy between *This is Tomorrow* and the UIA Congress, Alloway reinstated his previous summation of *This is Tomorrow* as an “antagonistic cooperation,” suggesting both exhibitions “opposed the ideal fusion of the arts, but accepted their competitive, short-term conjunction.”¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁷ Lawrence Alloway, “Criticism: 1961 UIA Congress,” *Architectural Design*, November 1961, 507.

¹⁰⁸ Lawrence Alloway, “Introduction,” in *This Is Tomorrow Exhibition Catalogue* (London: Whitechapel Art Gallery, 1956), n.p.



FIG 1.14 Aerial view of the 1961 UIA Congress designed and curated by Crosby. The building on the right is the Headquarter Building and the one on the left is the Exhibition Building. The majority of the IG members' artworks were placed in the courtyard of the Exhibition Building (far left corner.)



FIG 1.12 Spread from Peter Smithson's contribution to the exhibition catalogue. The use of Japanese traditional architecture as an illustration, for a Congress that dedicated to the discussion of standardised prefabrication, can be seen as a reverberation of E.A. Gutkind's analysis.



FIG 1. 13 View of the Headquarter Building with Mary Martin's mural integrated on the wall on the right. One can see Edward Wright's supergraphic facade of the Exhibition Building and Anthony Caro's sculpture behind.

FIG 1. 17 (next page) Edward Wright's scheme for the facade of the Exhibition Building.



The UIA Congress was an opportunity to advance the pursuit of integrating arts and architecture to stand-alone, albeit temporary, buildings and urban space. The collaborations between Crosby and artists and designers manifested in several degrees and forms, ranging from Crosby inviting the artists to create architectural elements in his buildings, designing spaces that accommodate art works, to simply placing the artists' existing works in the final building. Some of the collaborations in the UIA Congress did result in an integrated environment that exceeded what had been achieved in *This is Tomorrow*. One of such noteworthy collaborations was Edward Wright's design for the facade of the exhibition building. The facade super-graphics, according to architectural historian Craig Buckley, fully demonstrated the potential of Wright's pursuit for "environmental lettering."¹⁰⁹ (FIG 1.17)

However, Crosby's revision of their previous venture also signposted a further diffusion of the avant-garde energy in post-war Modernism. In his critical essay on the Congress, Alloway wrote:

Synthesis in the arts thrives in the 20th century, but only when the whole is expandable (however long-lived some of the individual ingredients might be). Synthesis needs to be seen apart from the trap of monumentality. It exists as a festival, as a tea ceremony, as an exhibition, on an occasional basis, as here.¹¹⁰

The consequence of Crosby's continued success as an exhibition curator was two-sided: on the one hand, it allowed a further theorisation and experimentation of the discourse formulated by the IG and the Constructivist artists; on the other hand, it also led their movement further away from the reality of buildings and constructions. As reflected in Alloway's review, they had withdrawn from the previous pursuit for a movement that could integrate art and everyday life. Integration become something that could only exist as a ceremony and on occasional basis. The UIA Congress therefore signposted a growing

¹⁰⁹ Buckley, "Graphic Constructions: The Experimental Typography of Edward Wright."

¹¹⁰ Alloway, "Criticism: 1961 UIA Congress," 507.

scepticism, among the post-war Modern artists, architects and designers, in their own ability to form a cohesive movement like the early 20th-century avant-gardes.

Crosby's designs for the two UIA pavilions, an Exhibition building and a Headquarter building for meetings, epitomised Alloway's diagnosis of architectural design as a ceremonial performance. Crosby stated in an *AD* article that the two temporary structures were allegories of two different existing approaches to standardised architecture.¹¹¹ The Exhibition Building could best be described as a magnified version of Crosby's Group 1 exhibit in *This is Tomorrow*. It consisted of a frame structure with two external courtyards, constructed with a prefabricated lattice deck roof structure. (FIG 1.18) The roof space frame was clad with polythene panels, which created overheating problems in an unexpectedly hot London summer.¹¹² The construction was austere: there were hardly any interior features apart from two curved brick walls that defined the exhibition's circulation. All the artist's contributions were placed in the courtyards at the two ends of the structure. None of the artworks was produced specially for the occasion. Instead, artists were asked to show their existing works closest to the Congress's theme "Technology of Architecture." (FIG 1.19)

Although the design language between the UIA Exhibition building and *This is Tomorrow* was similar, Crosby's view of the possibility of integrating arts in a mass-produced environment had shifted. In the Exhibition Building, according to his article in the *AD*, Crosby deliberately highlighted the poor integration between the artworks and the exhibition. Most of the visitors to the Congress could only catch a glimpse of the artworks through the glass walls of the pavilions. The Shell Tower under-construction behind the UIA

¹¹¹ Crosby, "International Union of Architects Congress Building, South Bank, London," 484.

¹¹² Crosby, 485.

Congress site also had an overpowering presence over the subdued, abstract artworks placed in the building's courtyards. There was also no interaction between the art works and the exhibition displays, which were photo and drawings of buildings mounted on colour-coded plexi boards. These installations were intended to create a fragmented and dissonant environment, illustrating the drawbacks when art served merely as an afterthought to mass-produced constructions. For Crosby, the exhibition building was to "demonstrate the plight of the architect in an increasingly mechanised building industry."¹¹³

To explain his change of mind, in his description of the Exhibition Building, Crosby reformulated his writing in *This is Tomorrow*,

The intention in the exhibition building was the various artworks be put in the courtyard and left to fight it out. Those that succeed best were those artists who were most involved: where they took troubles to find out what the others were doing, where they placed their own sculptures.¹¹⁴

Merely five years after *This is Tomorrow*, it had become clear Crosby had become increasingly sceptical of the possibility of a synthesis between the arts in an industrialised environment. This shift of attitude was also addressed by Alloway, who wrote,

I want to record that I still don't believe in integration as defined on de Stijl lines as "the annihilation of individual limitations' leading to 'a new style'. As a matter of fact, I don't believe Crosby subscribes to this either, for his approach to 'integration' was at all times empirical and non-absolutist.¹¹⁵

Alloway's evocation of de Stijl could be attributed to the similar use of primary colour and diagonal geometry in both the UIA Headquarter building and Cafe L'Aubette in Starsburg by Theo von Doesburg (1926) (FIG 1.20). It could, however, also be interpreted as a recognition that, although Crosby was not entirely pessimistic about the possibility of the integration of arts and architecture, he also no longer subscribed to the belief that Japanese architecture nor

¹¹³ Crosby, 486.

¹¹⁴ Crosby, 486.

¹¹⁵ Alloway, "Criticism: 1961 UIA Congress," 508.

the early 20th-century Modernist avant-garde could still serve as valid precedents for the integration of arts and architecture in 1960s Britain.



FIG 1. 18 View of the Exhibition Building in which the lattice grid roof has an overwhelming presence.



FIG 1.19 View of Richard Hamilton's painting in East Courtyard, against the Shell Tower that was under construction.



FIG 1.20 Interior view of the Headquarter Building of the UIA Congress, with contribution by William Turnbull.

In the design of the Headquarter Building, Crosby tested an alternative method for integrating arts and mass-produced architecture: by allowing architects and artists to involve “in the manufacturer’s end of the process.”¹¹⁶ The structure was a custom-made space frame with aluminium pyramids that served simultaneously as the roof and ceiling. (FIG 1.21) Crosby and engineer Frank Newby worked in close collaboration with a professor from Imperial College and the British Aluminium Company to develop the customised design.¹¹⁷ The lattice girder provided the structural integrity of the two-directional slab system, while the folded aluminium sheets offered additional stability. The result was an interior filled with diffused light, rendering a strong contrast against the Exhibition Building.¹¹⁸ A mural by Mary and Kenneth Martin’s *Mobiles* were commissioned specifically for the interior space, which was recognised by Alloway as the most successful integration of arts among all.¹¹⁹ The works by the Constructivist artists were seen by Alloway as a complementary element to the building, demonstrating the possibility of creating a uniquely expressive space should artists be involved early on in the design stage. (FIG 1.22)

¹¹⁶ Theo Crosby, “Conclusion: 1961 UIA Congress,” *Architectural Design*, November 1961.

¹¹⁷ Crosby.

¹¹⁸ Crosby.

¹¹⁹ Alloway, “Criticism: 1961 UIA Congress.”



FIG 1.21 Details of the Headquarter building. The building was to showcase the potential of customised design prefabricated parts. In his reports, the structural designer Frank Newby discussed the difficulties in designing a standardised building system from scratch. There were also many unforeseen construction issues that had to be resolved hastily on site.



FIG 1. 22 Page from 1961 AD showing the fabrication and installation process of the Headquarter Building structure.

In the UIA Congress, Crosby's inception for the two buildings was not based on circulation, space, light, comfort, safety, or the other factors that usually determined building design. The main function of the two UIA buildings was to provide critiques. In the Exhibition Building design, for the sake of operative criticism, Crosby even willingly allowed the building to fail. In the UIA Congress, Crosby's use of building as criticism was subsequently taken up by J.M. Richards, the Rapporteur-General of the Congress, as a means to reshape the organisation of production of British architecture in the 1960s. Through comparing the two buildings, Richards argued that the success of the Headquarter Building illustrated the importance of "the close co-ordination between industrialists and architects."¹²⁰ Crosby's design and Richards' remarks engendered the view that it would be the collaboration between architects and industrialists, not between architects and artists, that would drive the development of architectural culture of the 1960s.

The UIA Congress demonstrated clearly by the early 1960s, Crosby's operative criticism had evolved into one that, to borrow Tafuri's words, "functioned within the cycles of production and serve as stimulus in order to shift the Plan, to increasingly advanced levels."¹²¹ The two Congress buildings could be seen as aptly reflected what Tafuri called "architecture that is on the way to becoming metalanguage."¹²² In Tafuri's words, it was an architecture that,

either does not know how, or is unable, to go to the very end... to the dangerous test of an unprejudiced critical exploration, that prefers to punish itself masochistically rather than to open its eyes on itself and its own destiny. This architecture, therefore, wavers dangerously between unreality and play.¹²³

¹²⁰ J.M. Richards, "General Report," in *Final Report of the Sixth Congress of the International Union of Architects*, ed. Ralph P. Andrew and Anthony E. Brooks (London: Cement and Concrete Association, 1962), 157.

¹²¹ Tafuri, "Toward a Critique of Architectural Ideology," 31.

¹²² Tafuri, *Theories and History of Architecture*, 127.

¹²³ Tafuri, 127.

It was in this wavering between unreality and play that Crosby's criticism on existing state of British Modernism was incorporated by the dominating forces of the industry. In his own closing remarks, Crosby slightly repositioned Richards statements, suggesting that the integration of arts and architecture would have to be supported by industries:

The manufacturer is the new patron. He stands now at the fountainhead of the building industry. He has to make ever larger quantities of standard materials, and his responsibility for the environment these materials inevitably create is always increasing. He now makes the aesthetic as well as the technical and economic decisions.¹²⁴

Crosby then went on to celebrate the manufacturers and contractors who participated in the Congress, accrediting them as "having seized an opportunity and made a demonstration of patronage and intelligent participation at many levels."¹²⁵ Crosby's polemic rhetoric could be seen as lip-service paid to the manufacturers who sponsored his experimentation in both *This is Tomorrow* and the UIA Congress. His explanation for the poor performance of the Exhibition building could potentially be a post-rationalisation for his unsuccessful design. However, his surrender of architects' historical role as the "fountainhead" of architecture also suggested a radical shift away from the modern belief that architects would determine the physical manifestation of modernisation. Although formally and aesthetically, the UIA Congress and *This is Tomorrow* bore many similarities, the agonistic attitude to mass production found in the earlier exhibition dissipated. What led to this shift? Why this turn to the manufacturing industry?

1.7 Cold War Pre-fab Fever

The forces that drove Crosby and Richards' turn to the industrialists can be discerned through the discussions in the three-day plenary sessions of the Congress. The 1961 UIA

¹²⁴ Tafuri, 127.

¹²⁵ Tafuri, 127.

Congress, following the 1958 one in Moscow, was posited as an opportunity to use architecture to bridge the Cold-war divide.¹²⁶ Entitled “Architecture of Technology,” the 1961 Congress was also seen as an occasion to celebrate the progress in standardised prefabrication of buildings, which had been given a prominent place in the previous Congress when a new standard for Soviet mass housing was drafted.¹²⁷ For three days, the Congress brought together a diverse group of speakers and participants who held different interpretations and attitudes of industrialised architecture, including Henry Russell Hitchcock, Buckminster Fuller, Pier Luigi Nervi, and unflinching standardisation-advocates Ernest Neufert and Jerzy Hryniewiecki.¹²⁸ The 1961 UIA Congress was regarded as an opportunity to explore the role of manufacturing industries, whether it was controlled by the state or by private enterprises, in the formulation of 1960s architectural culture.

Other than the agenda of fostering an “architectural diplomacy,” the nuanced politics within post-war Modernism was also being played out in the UIA Congress. Since the inter-war era, the UIA had been a rival of the CIAM group, competing for the endorsement and project opportunities from the United Nations, which was awarded to the UIA.¹²⁹ CIAM continued to be the figurehead of Modern architecture, until the Team 10 revolt leading to its final dissolution in 1959.¹³⁰ The participation of Crosby, the Smithsons and other post-war architects—many once young followers of CIAM—in the 1961 UIA Congress reflected the

¹²⁶ Miles Glendinning, “Cold-War Conciliation: International Architectural Congress in the Late 1950s and Early 1960s,” *The Journal of Architecture* 14 (2009): 197–217.

¹²⁷ Greg Castillo, *Cold War on the Home Front: The Soft Power of Midcentury Design* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), 191.

¹²⁸ Ralph P. Andrew and Anthony E. Brooks, eds., “A Diary of Events,” in *Final Report of the Sixth Congress of the International Union of Architects* (London: Cement and Concrete Association, 1962), ix.

¹²⁹ Ellen Shoshkes, *Jaqueline Tyrwhitt: A Transnational Life in Urban Planning and Design* (London, New York: Routledge, 2016).

¹³⁰ Max Risselada and Dirk Dirk van Den Heuvel, eds., *Team 10 in Search of a Utopia of the Present 1953-81* (NAi, 2005).

reorientation and restructuring of Modernist architectural milieu.¹³¹ In the Congress' plenary sessions, International Style architecture, which had been a primary expression of Modern architecture since the inter-war era, faced fierce attacks. A paper delivered by Henry Russell Hitchcock was poorly received.¹³² Drawing a long arch of architectural history, Hitchcock maintained the Modernist mechanised aesthetics would not be replaced by developments in industrialised architecture. He concluded there could be room for development for partial prefabrication in architecture but deemed "the sociological and urbanistic results of a wide acceptance of such (factory-produced) dwelling units is too horrible to contemplate."¹³³ His paper was immediately met with vocal oppositions from architect representatives from both sides of the Cold-War divide, who claimed that the positive and inevitable outcome of modernisation would not be International Style architecture; but the mass production and industrialisation of architecture. Ernst Neufert, representing West Germany, simply dismissed Hitchcock's analysis as arcane and irrelevant, calling him "a thinking outsider — an art historian."¹³⁴ During this first keynote speech, International Style architecture, which had been the cornerstone of Western architecture since the inter-war period, was lamented by the Congress participants.

After declaring that International Style was no longer relevant, another classic was immediately being formulated in the Congress. Architects from both blocs concurred that

¹³¹ Crosby had explained their involvement in the dissolution of CIAM in the forewords to Alison and Peter Smithson *Urban Structuring*.

"At Dubrovnik it became evident that CIAM, with over 3,000 members, had become too diffuse to cover any subject other than by the merest generalisation. There was also a cleavage between the founders, old, famous and very busy, and the followers, young, underworked and ravenous for power..." Theo Crosby, "Introduction," in *Urban Structuring: Studies of Alison and Peter Smithson*, by Alison Smithson and Peter Smithson (London: Studio Vista, 1967).

¹³² Henry Russell Hitchcock, "A General Survey of Architectural Changes Caused by the Emergence of New Techniques and Materials," in *Final Report of the Sixth Congress of the International Union of Architects*, ed. Ralph P. Andrew and Anthony E. Brooks (London: Cement and Concrete Association, 1961), 1–7.

¹³³ Hitchcock, 10.

¹³⁴ Andrew and Brooks, "A Diary of Events," 12.

standardised prefabrication would be a truthful physical manifestation of the economic and industrial context it was produced in. Standardised prefabrication was hence crowned as the “Style of Truth” by Pier Luigi Nervi.¹³⁵ At stake was that architects from the two sides of the Cold War divide would spend the rest of the plenary sessions arguing their respective political and economic structure was the “Truth.” This articulation also engendered a view that it would be the economic and industrial condition, rather than the will of the architects, which determined the aesthetic expression of architecture. At the end of this Union of Architects, ironically, the delegates reached a consensus that architects would no longer be key driver in determining the outlook and execution of architecture.

The debate on “Style of Truth” could be regarded a reverberation of the 1959 “Kitchen-debate” where architectural and political debate were merged into one, but the withdrawal of architects from their authorial role was worthy of more elaboration. Following Josef Stalin’s death in 1952, the Soviet bloc instilled an “all-out drive” to mass industrialisation of architecture. The promise of industrialised production, for the Soviet architects, was found in its ability to liberate architecture from political manipulations. Standardised production, they claimed, could turn architecture into a science that was measured by speed, quantity, and flexibility.¹³⁶ The decoupling of the architect’s expression from architecture, through standardisation and industrialisation of architecture, seemed to offer a means to insulate architecture from traumatic cultural and political events. For Western architects, the industrialisation of construction was seen as a crucial task in light of the reduced, ageing, and poorly organised workforce in the immediate post-war period. In the

¹³⁵ Pier Luigi Nervi, “The Influence of Reinforced Concrete and Technical and Scientific Progress on the Architecture of Today and Tomorrow,” in *Union of International Architects. Final Report of the Sixth Congress of the International Union of Architects*, ed. Ralph P. Andrew and Anthony E. Brooks (London: Cement and Concrete Association, 1961), 53–62.

¹³⁶ Ralph P. Andrew and Anthony E. Brooks, eds., “Union of International Architects. Final Report of the Sixth Congress of the International Union of Architects” (London: Cement Concrete Association, 1962), 20–22.

wake of the 1960s population boom, the pursuit for industrialised mass production of housings persisted.¹³⁷ In Britain, for example, standard of housing was codified in the 1961 Parker Morris Report *Homes for Today and Tomorrow*.¹³⁸ Meanwhile, criticism towards the bureaucratisation of architecture been developing, and further gave strength to the challenges to architects' authoritative practice.¹³⁹ In short, the condition of politics and industry, in both the Western and Eastern bloc, induced a voluntary withdrawal of architects' authorial voices.

In his closing remark, Richards reinstated this conclusion derived from the plenary sessions, proposing it was time for architects to discard their "aesthetic intention." He stated,

But we have learnt that aesthetic intention can achieve nothing if separated from architecture's human and economic program, and one reason why I think we can take encouragement from our discussion is that we have been humble enough to concentrate less on how to produce great architecture than on how to create the conditions in which great architecture is possible.¹⁴⁰

Richards' summation further reflected that by formulating standardised prefabrication as the "Style of Truth," architects had surrendered their historical responsibilities. Architects from the two sides of the Cold War divide, in their attempt to repudiate previous stylistic blunders, cast aside their historical role as the master of space.¹⁴¹

¹³⁷ Nicholas Bullock, "'20,000 Dwellings a Month for Forty Years': France's 'industrialised Housing Sector' in the 1950s," *Construction History* 23 (2008): 59–76.

¹³⁸ Andrew Higgot, *Mediating Modernism: Architectural Cultures in Britain* (New York, London: Routledge, 2007), 18.

¹³⁹ "The Official Architect Climbs into the Saddle," *Architectural Design*, December 1954.

¹⁴⁰ Richards, "General Report," 157.

¹⁴¹ Architect's historical role as the "master of space" and responsibility in creating the physical manifestation of modernisation has been established in scholarship including Michel Foucault's "Space, Knowledge and Power" Michel Foucault, "Space, Knowledge, and Power," in *Power: Michel Foucault The Essential Work 3*, ed. James D. Faubion (New York: The New Press, 2001), 349–64.

This formulation of standardised architecture as the “Style of Truth”, in the 1961 UIA Congress, can be read as an early turn to what Jean-Francois Lyotard recognised as the Postmodern condition when technology took a dominate role in contemporary knowledge. Richards’ closing remark epitomised Lyotard’s diagnosis that technology is “a game pertaining not to the true, the just, or the beautiful, etc.”¹⁴² The “Style of Truth” coined by Nervi further underscored the conflation between efficiency and “good.” One may even argue the Congress had already announced this postmodern leap in knowledge through its title: The Architecture of Technology. While the call for efficiency had been part and parcel of the revolution waged by architectural Modernism, it was not the governing logic of Modern architecture – as reflected in Hitchcock’s speech. However, in the 1961 UIA this delineation has dissolved. The logic of maximising input and minimising input inherent to technology, one can argue, had permeated architectural culture.

How this Congress also engendered a shift in architects’ and the public’s views of standardisation; and eventually turning the construction method into a scapegoat of all sorts of social, planning, and economic injustices are beyond the scope of this research. The discussion found in the Congress, however, offered a new lens to evaluate the legacy of New Brutalism. It reflected that by the 1960s, the question of how standardised architecture could truthfully integrate humanistic expression and technological advancements, one that had been clumsily articulated in the 1955 *AD* New Brutalism manifesto, had garnered attention. However, Crosby did not seize the opportunity to reinstate New Brutalism’s aspirations. Instead, he echoed Richards’ summation that the aesthetic expression of architecture was no

¹⁴² Jean-Francois Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984), 47.

longer in the domain of the architects. He observed that in the post-war world, an architect had,

become a manipulator of prefabricated parts; his building is a collage of bits and pieces and he shows his inventiveness by taking some parts from technologies not strictly his own – in this case, scaffolding and polythene.¹⁴³

Crosby's statement should not be mistaken as a reiteration of Le Corbusier's famous proclamation for the *domino*.¹⁴⁴ On the contrary, it was a pessimistic diagnosis of the difficulties in integrating arts and technology with 1960s architectural practice. Crosby wrote,

So we tend to become a two-tier profession (in a slightly different sense than the current educational controversy): one tier concerned with architecture as art, the other with building. The artists have had an increasingly thin time, in spite of the star system and endless publicity. Frank Lloyd Wright, admitted by all to be the best of his time, never received an official commission. Le Corbusier still has to build a government building in his native France. In fact, the architect as artist is isolated in society, as all artists are, though as businessman-builder he is well rewarded and thoroughly integrated.¹⁴⁵

The architects who could determine the design, specification, and production of architectonic elements used in their buildings, according to Crosby, were artists. The rest of the architectural profession would be subsumed by industrialised processes. Ironically, in articulating these critiques of the architectural profession, Crosby also unwillingly solidified the strata between architects who had control over the execution of their design, and those who did not. His criticism, his use of history, and clever manoeuvring of institutional politics had put Crosby in the one tier of the professional spectrum where he had some agency in the ways his design was being executed.

¹⁴³ Crosby, "Conclusion: 1961 UIA Congress," 509.

¹⁴⁴ Le Corbusier, *La Ville Radieuse. Elements d'une Doctrine d'Urbanisme Pour l'équipement de La Civilisation Machiniste* (Paris: Fréal, 1964).

¹⁴⁵ Theo Crosby, "Experiment in Integration," *Architectural Design*, 1961.

At work here was an intellectualisation of architecture — one that could be found in, as early as 1953, when Crosby and the Smithsons stressed the use of material was an “intellectual appraisal” in their New Brutalism manifesto. As Banham’s critique and this chapter suggest, their “intellectual appraisal” was a superimposition of ideas that could probably be understood by those who were well versed in the scholarship on the early Modern Movement. In the UIA Congress, Crosby’s use of design as criticism furthered an abstraction and theorisation of architectural design. This intellectualisation of architectural design, ironically, could also be seen as a reason why New Brutalism’s affinity to Japan had remained obscured. Crosby and the Smithsons’ use of operative history and criticism to provide a theory for construction fell through the cracks between the disciplinary divides in the studies into history, technology, and theory of architecture.

1.8 Conclusion

The retrieval of Crosby’s voice offered a means to reflect on the current studies of New Brutalism. Through considering the critique of standardised architecture, one can also begin to reconsider the various existing competing interpretations of New Brutalism. For example, one can draw Banham’s well-known declaration, in the 1955 AR article, that the Smithsons were “no longer interested in geometry and proportion” into question.¹⁴⁶ Through the discussion on Japanese architectural tradition and standardisation, one can ask whether the Smithsons had transposed, instead of discarded, the Wittkowerian influence. The

¹⁴⁶ In 1958, for example, Crosby explained the importance of Wittkower’s study to the Team 10’s investigation into urbanism, of which he wrote, “But as the bureaucracy of New Town administration hardened and all experimental work was discouraged (as at Peterlee), by 1952 there was a definite reaction among younger architects. This was sparked by a seemingly innocent book by professor Wittkower, *Architectural Principles in the age of Humanism*; it provided a philosophy of order and formality, an incentive towards a classic environment...” Theo Crosby, “Contributions to CIAM 10,” in *Architects’ Year Book* (London: Elek Books, 1956).

discussion on Japanese architectural culture, despite its equivocalness, revealed an effort to recalibrate the changes brought by mass production of architecture and culture. The arguments in the *AD* manifesto also tied New Brutalism closer to other discourses that were specific to British Modernism. For example, in the much-praised Hertfordshire School Program of the late 1940s, one could find a similar attempt to produce buildings that could integrate the skills of the manufacturers, architects creativity and the demand of the user.¹⁴⁷ This pursuits for a less dogmatic interpretation of Modernism, through exploring construction methods, was also why New Brutalism had been at times compared to the Arts and Crafts Movement.¹⁴⁸ The critique on consumerism and standardisation through Japanese architecture could also be interpreted as a more historical, critical, and almost anachronistic articulation of an architecture of “expandability,” which was a recurring theme in the works of the IG and later Archigram.¹⁴⁹

The discussion about Japan and peasant dwelling found in the 1955 *AD* manifesto also revealed a continuum between Crosby’s affinity to New Brutalism and his later preservation advocacy. As Ben Highmore suggested, this preoccupation in the everyday life and peasant dwelling, for the New Brutalists, was an essential means to “see what values needed preserving so that any retrofitting of Victorian slums would modernise working-class life while maintaining age-old practices of collective conviviality.”¹⁵⁰ This instinct that ordinary old building fabrics would offer much-needed new energy to 20th-century

¹⁴⁷ Higgot, *Mediating Modernism: Architectural Cultures in Britain*, 97.

¹⁴⁸ Van den Heuvel, “Between Brutalists. The Banham Hypothesis and the Smithson Way of Life,” 304–5. Kenneth Frampton, *Modern Architecture: A Critical History* (Thames and Hudson, 2007), 263.

¹⁴⁹ In his “A Clip-on Architecture” Banham explained the idea of “clip-on” was a reaction against how “architecture of the establishment” had used and abused “the picturesque prefabrication techniques of the tile-hung schools of the CLASP system.” Written in 1965, “Clip-on” was both Banham’s evaluation of the post-war neo-avant-garde ventures and his declaration that Archigram would be the new bellwethers of British architecture of the 1960s.

Reyner Banham, “A Clip-on Architecture,” *Architectural Design*, November 1965.

¹⁵⁰ Highmore, “Street in the Air: Alison and Peter Smithson’s Doorstep Philosophy,” 90.

architecture, as the following chapters will illustrate, would remain Crosby's primary pursuits throughout his career.

Through reviewing Crosby's changing view towards mass production of architecture, one can also start to parse out the serendipity of forces that led to the Postmodern turn of architecture. The cross-examination of the design and discourse in the 1961 UIA Congress reveals at least three voluntarily withdrawals made by architects: from the pursuit for a genuine integration of arts and life, from the fountainhead of the building industry, and from their own aesthetic intents. The Congress also fortified the view that the architectural profession was tied to and would probably be subsumed by the logic of technology and the organisation of industries. We also witnessed a growing criticism of the architectural profession, a separation of 'first-tier architects' from the rest of the industry, an accentuation of play and unreality in architecture, as well as an increasing theorisation and intellectualisation of architecture — these were all themes that would later manifested in the debates and practices of Postmodern architecture.

Last but not least, the *AD* New Brutalism article also offered a means to re-conceptualise Postmodernism in architecture. In his essay "The Return of the Classical," Reinhold Martin claimed Postmodern architecture had become "an art form finally free from the burdens of meaning, or reason, and of history, and released into a dialogue with itself."¹⁵¹ He articulated two threads that led to architecture's dissipation into an "artful, empty game:" the use of history and the transformation of arts under neoliberalism. The first thread, Martin suggested, could be traced back to the Wittkowerian study of Palladian architecture which,

¹⁵¹ Reinhold Martin, "The Return of the Classical: Some Archaeological Fragments," in *Neo-Avant-Garde and Postmodern: Postwar Architecture in Britain and Beyond*, ed. Claire Zimmerman and Mark Crinson (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 315.

“by staging an artificial (and therefore all the more historically appropriate) “timelessness” without beginning or end.” rendered architectural history as “fiction.”¹⁵² The second thread, through historian Francis Fukuyama, Martin stated that arts and culture under neoliberalism had become harmless expressions in virtuosic games — an appropriate illustration of this empty contentless ritual would be Japanese arts and Tea Ceremony.¹⁵³ Martin summarised that in a neoliberal culture, through these two threads, architecture had become “reproduction and transgression (as “not classicism”), but not reinsertion into the battlefield of history.”¹⁵⁴ In his critique of architecture at the “end of history,” Martin relied on a thin line drawn on the contemporaneity between Fukuyama’s publication and architecture’s Postmodern turn to Classicism. The 1955 *AD* New Brutalism manifesto, in comparison, provided a clearer evidence of how architects, in the post-war period, had already manifested these two tendencies. This analogy between Classicism and Japanese culture, as this study on New Brutalism demonstrated, could also be traced back to Bruno Taut’s early writing that was pertaining to the early 20th-century Modern Movement.

Martin’s article also prompted more questions about the *AD* New Brutalism manifesto. One could view New Brutalism as an early critique of issues that would become central to Postmodern architecture — including the struggle found in elevating architectural discourses to theoretical or philosophical thoughts, the pursuit for a new humanism, as well as a scepticism towards a teleological view of history. In addition, one can ask whether New Brutalism was an early manifestation of the empty, formal game that anticipate the Postmodern turn of architecture. Was the 1955 *AD* “The New Brutalism” manifesto an early example of “the descent of artistic activity into the empty formalism of the traditional

¹⁵² Martin, 315.

¹⁵³ Martin, 314.

¹⁵⁴ Martin, 315.

Japanese arts” ?¹⁵⁵ Were the New Brutalists, through articulating Japanese architecture as a model of ethic and aesthetic, already reflected what Fukuyama described as the end of “all art that could be considered socially useful” at the end of history?¹⁵⁶

¹⁵⁵ Martin, 315.

¹⁵⁶ Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (New York: Free Press, 1993), 320.



FIG 1.23 Scene from the This is Tomorrow exhibition newsreel.

Chapter 2: Ten Principles

Chapter 2 Ten Principles

2.1 Introduction

Other than Japanese architecture, another main thread in Crosby's contribution to New Brutalism was a reverence, through Wittkower and other historians, to the Classical tradition. In the 1990s, more than four decades after the New Brutalism debate, "the passion for geometrical analysis," acquired from Wittkower's *Architectural Principles in the Age of Humanism*, was slow to fade.¹ He explained, for his generation of post-war British architects, Wittkower's study was their link to the first Modernists and Constructivists. This chapter continues the investigation into how the affinity to Classicism led Crosby to partake in contentious architectural discourses that bookended his career. In the late 1980s, Crosby was involved in heated debates in Postmodern architecture through his role as an architectural advisor to Prince Charles. His most noteworthy input was drafting Ten Principles, originally entitled "Ten Commandments for the Duchy of Cornwall."² As the title suggests, the document was intended to be a set of design guidelines for Poundbury (1993), an experimental planned community in Dorset. The "Ten Commandments" was broadcast on a BBC TV programme and later expanded in the Prince's 1989 publication *A Vision of Britain: A Personal View of Architecture*.³ Through mapping an anthology of Crosby's writings, this chapter demonstrates that Ten Principles was not only Prince Charles' "personal view of

¹ Crosby, "Night Thoughts of a Faded Utopia."

² In Crosby's archive at the University of Brighton, there are at least two complete drafts of Ten Principles. One was written in May 1988, two pages long, a few months before the BBC TV program *A Vision of Britain*. Another, in the same archive, was a much lengthier untitled version dated January 1990, consisting of 13 points. Theo Crosby, "Ten Commandments for the Duchy of Cornwall," London, Unpublished Manuscript. 17 May 1988.

Theo Crosby, "Principles." London, Unpublished Manuscript. January 1990. Theo Crosby Archive, Design Archive at University of Brighton. Box 47.

³ HRH The Prince of Wales and Christopher Martin, *A Vision of Britain: A Personal View of Architecture* (BBC, 1988).

HRH The Prince of Wales Charles, *A Vision of Britain: A Personal View of Architecture*.

architecture,” but rather a development from Crosby’s writings circulating since the 1960s. Responding to the first chapter’s examination of Crosby as an architect-historian, this chapter continues to look into how Crosby used Classical principles as a means to evaluate and criticise 20th-century British architectural culture.

This chapter is divided into two parts, beginning by clearly delineating Crosby’s contribution to *Ten Principles* and its impact on Postmodern architectural discourse. Crosby’s affinity to history and his preoccupation in reconsidering the role of the architect, discussed in the last chapter, will be the centre of investigation. How his attitude toward the past was shaped by the changes in British economy, culture, and politics will be understood through a comparison of his writings from the 1960s to 1990s. The second part of this chapter suggests that *Ten Principles* was not only a design code for building with Classical principles but also a method for preservation. Two of Crosby’s projects: Fulham Study (1963) and Ulster Terrace (1975) will be used to demonstrate how *Ten Principles* was transposed in his preservation works. The last part of this chapter suggests Crosby’s preservationist advocacies reflected a wider reconsideration of urban structure found amongst his generation’s architects and architect-historians. Their lingering influences on the present-day British urbanism will be considered, too.

2.2 Ten Principles and Poundbury

Prince Charles’ intervention in architecture has been seen as one of the most controversial architectural debates in late 20th-century Britain, and one that continues to

garner attention to this day.⁴ The contention began in 1984, at a RIBA Gala when Prince Charles delivered his infamous Hampton Court Speech during which he lamented the state of British architecture in front of a professional audience.⁵ Concerns about Prince Charles' forceful voice in British architecture heightened after he intervened in the design and realisation of several landmark projects in London, including the No.1 Poultry (formerly the Mansion House project), the extension to the National Gallery, the Paternoster Square development, and more recently the Chelsea Barracks development.⁶ Architects condemned Prince Charles' use of his power to sabotage the existing 'democratic' planning permission procedures.⁷ The Prince's affinity to Neo-Classical architecture has been accused of being as nostalgic and anti-modern.⁸ Although there had been some support for Prince Charles' advocacy in community architecture, the politics surrounding his initiatives continued to alienate British architects and architectural critics.⁹

Prince Charles' interference in British architecture is beyond the scope of this chapter and has already been elucidated by architectural journalists and academics alike.¹⁰ It is, however, worthy to point out that Prince Charles' powerful position and his sharp-tongued commentaries had successfully garnered public interest in British architecture. Even some of

⁴ In March 2017, for example, the Royal Institute of British Architect held the exhibition *Circling the Square* showcasing designs proposed by Mies van der Rohe and James Stirling on the controversial Mansion House site in the City of London. Prince Charles intervention was discussed and debated at length in the exhibition and its related events.

⁵ Martin Pawley, "A Precedent for the Prince," *Architectural Review* 187 (January 1990): 80–82.

⁶ Jonathan Glancey, "Life after Carbuncles," *The Guardian*, May 17, 2004.

Robert Booth, "Chelsea Barracks Trial Shines Light on Prince Charles's Interference," *The Guardian*, June 25, 2010.

⁷ Jencks, "Ethics and Prince Charles."

Hutchinson, *The Prince of Wales: Right or Wrong?: An Architect Replies to the Prince of Wales*.

"Few Share Prince's Faith in Tradition," *Architects' Journal*, September 6, 1989.

⁸ Rustin, "Postmodernism and Antimodernism in Contemporary British Architecture."

⁹ Rod Hackney, *The Good the Bad & the Ugly: Cities in Crisis* (London: Fredrick Muller, 1988).

¹⁰ Douglas Murphy, "Prince Charles's 10 Principles for Architecture-and 10 Much Better Ones," *The Guardian*, December 27, 2014.

For detailed analysis of the Prince's intervention in post-modern British architecture, see Francis H. Mikiriya, "Duchy Unoriginal: The Prince of Wales and Architecture" (PhD Dissertation, Architectural Association, 2011).

his sternest critics credited Prince Charles for bringing architecture back to a front-and-centre seat in British public discourses.¹¹ Meanwhile, Prince Charles' speeches and media appearances also energised a faction of British architects who had long felt disfranchised from the mainstream architectural discourse.¹² Among them was Theo Crosby, who became one of the Prince's architectural advisors in 1987.¹³ Crosby's role in the Prince's architectural advisory group became visible to the public since 1988 when he participated in the Paternoster Square Debates.¹⁴ Crosby's and Prince Charles' shared passion for preservation, disdain of the supposed Modernist orthodoxy, and scepticism of the existing structure of the British architectural profession was reflected in Ten Principles.

Although Crosby's contribution has never been publicly acknowledged, it has been addressed by figures including Jules Lubbock, the first director of Prince Charles' Institute of Civil Architecture. In Crosby's archives, there are two versions of Ten Principles: one from 1988 which predated the BBC programme and a lengthier version from 1990, a few months after the publication of *A Vision of Britain*.¹⁵ More importantly, as I will discuss in the later part of this chapter, one can see a continuity between Ten Principles and some of Crosby's writings from the early 1970s. The 1988 version of "Ten Commandments for the Duchy of Cornwall" is cited in full here:

1. **Scale:** The scale of new buildings should relate to existing buildings, to mediate between them and the occupant. Adjoining roof and cornice heights should be considered and always shown on proposal drawings.
2. **Increment:** Modern buildings are generally too large for their architects. All invention is usually exhausted in 10 metres of frontage. In large schemes this

¹¹ Hutchinson, *The Prince of Wales: Right or Wrong?: An Architect Replies to the Prince of Wales*, 6.

¹² Jencks, "Ethics and Prince Charles."

¹³ The earliest correspondence between Crosby and the Prince's Institute of Civic Architecture began in 1987. Prince's Institute of Civic Architecture, "Architectural Advisory Group" (Meeting Agenda, December 3, 1987), Box 47, Theo Crosby Archive, University of Brighton.

¹⁴ Prince's Institute of Civic Architecture, "Architectural Advisory Group"

¹⁵ Theo Crosby, "Ten Commandments for the Duchy of Cornwall" (May 1988), Theo Crosby Archive, University of Brighton.

dimensional increment should not be exceeded, unless a building demands a particular monumentality.

3. **Continuity:** The pleasure of cities comes largely from continuous enclosures, often of a very simple kind.
4. **Hierarchy:** There is inevitably a hierarchy of uses in any development; those elements with a public function should obviously be emphasised, but the idea of hierarchy is also helpful in dealing with very small and relatively unimportant structures. Thus entrances are differentiated, access points stressed, living spaces emphasised and purely private areas are not.
5. **Decoration:** The classical system provides a considerable decorative vocabulary and its appropriate use depends on the skill and taste of the architect. We live at the end of a period of austerity and sterility. There is now a demand for an urban decoration, an end to dullness.
6. **Art:** While decorative elements are encouraged and should normally be included in building cost, it is Duchy policy, in line with the Arts Council and UNESCO recommendation, to allow the Percent for Art in all new building. This percent is to be used for such items as fountains, clocks and sculpture, and they should be inextricably incorporated in the development. This percent is not to be omitted in the usual search for economies during the works.
7. **Signing:** Lettering in and on buildings is an important communication and must be considered at an early stage. The English classical lettering tradition is particularly strong, and due for revival.
8. **Colour:** The colours of buildings should relate, unless with very good reason, to the local, regional and traditional palette. All scheme proposals should include colour samples, and an analysis of local colour.
9. **Materials:** Materials, bricks, tiles, stone etc. should be related as closely as possible to the locality.
10. **Landscaping:** The landscape setting for a building is as important as the structure itself. Particularly in urban areas paving, planting, seating, water and sculpture are all indissolubly linked to the quality of place. Maintenance of public open spaces is critical: it must be simple, vandal-proof and easy to police. A blind person with a stick should be able to walk safely through any public space. Designers are requested to apply this simple test to their schemes.¹⁶

Crosby's one-to-two sentences commandments, in this draft, were expanded in *A Vision of Britain* in a conspicuously consistent manner. In the book, the Principles often began with a

¹⁶ Crosby.

precedent, either a place or a quote. Crosby's commandments would follow suit, sometimes in exactly the same wording. Most of the Principles in *A Vision of Britain* ended with a few sentences calling for actions and changes. (See table of comparison in Appendix II.) The order of the principles was shuffled, and a "Community" section was added to the book.¹⁷ "Colour" and "Material" were combined to make room for this addition.

The primary difference between Ten Principles published in *A Vision of Britain* and Crosby's draft was perhaps not their content but their tone. The Ten Principles published in *A Vision of Britain* were written with straightforward and provocative language: almost all of the principles included at least one paragraph starting with wording like "we should..." calling for immediate response and actions. Crosby's terse sentences were turned into more accessible and perhaps populist speeches.¹⁸ For example, Crosby outlined the discussion of "decoration" with "the classical system provides a considerable decorative vocabulary."¹⁹ In *A Vision of Britain*, the section started with a powerful dismissal of Postmodernist architects' "unfruitful" exploration in "symbolism" and "meaning."²⁰ After lamenting the architects, Prince Charles claimed that, regarding decoration, "the consumers are ahead of the professionals here."²¹ *A Vision of Britain* also evoked Celtic culture, the Arts and Crafts Movement as well as the DIY industry as evidences that British people could take design

¹⁷ This emphasis on Community should be attributed to another Prince Charles advisor Rod Hackney, who championed for community organisation in renovation and preservation of old neighbourhoods. Hackney, *The Good the Bad & the Ugly: Cities in Crisis*.

¹⁸ Charles Jencks, *The Prince and the Architects and New Wave of Monarchy* (London: Academy Editions, 1988), 41.

Prince Charles' style in speaking and writing was noted by Charles Jencks, who wrote, "Although he may depend on advisors and experts for large chunks of his talks, he puts an identifiable stamp all over them, especially noticeable at the beginning where there is usually an ironic note of self-deprecation, a hint of *lese-majeste* directed at himself... And if one is as powerful and unassailable as a prince, it is mandatory to convey vulnerability and hesitation every time one offers a strong, contentious opinion. Hence the constant "I think," or "I feel" which are sprinkled throughout the talks."

¹⁹ Crosby, "Ten Commandments for the Duchy of Cornwall."

²⁰ HRH The Prince of Wales Charles, *A Vision of Britain: A Personal View of Architecture*, 77.

²¹ HRH The Prince of Wales Charles, 77.

matters, away from the professionals, into their own hands.

In the same year, Ten Principles became the basis of “The Poundbury Code,” a set of alternative “Architectural Regulations” devised by Poundbury’s chief planner and architect Leon Krier. Both Ten Principles and The Poundbury Code were design codes used by Prince Charles and his advisors to criticise the existing building codes which were institutionalised, throughout the 20th century. Poundbury, from its urban planning structure down to the smallest architectural details, was used to demonstrate the validity of Ten Principles.

Designed based on a Neo-classical framework, the town adapted a poly-centric model where various groups of residential buildings are placed along a triplicating main axis. (FIG 2.1)

One of the distinctive characteristics of this planned community was having a few factories and office buildings incorporated into its development. This mixed programming was a deliberate criticism of the Modern formulation of zoning. It was, in Leon Krier’s words, an attempt to “put the city into suburbia.”²² Dotted amongst the clusters of homes are public squares, where one can occasionally find retail and restaurant pavilions. (FIG 2.2)

Following the Principles of “Increment” and “Hierarchy,” the only buildings that are taller than four storeys are those that stand along the main avenues, and are mostly used for commercial and office spaces.²³ (FIG 2.3) Different period styles can be found on the building facades, but all of the elevations are carefully controlled, especially regarding their heights, proportion, and the placement of the front entrances; thus fulfilling the Principle of “Scale”. The houses are organised to form “enclosures”— open spaces that are used as publicly-accessible courtyards, sculpture gardens or carparks. (FIG 2.4) All the buildings are constructed with “natural”

²² The Thursday Club, “The Transactions of the Thursday Club 1” (Newsletter, January 1992), 5–6, Box 31, Theo Crosby Archive, University of Brighton.

²³ Phase 4 of Poundbury development, started in 2014, includes some multi-storey apartment buildings along the main axis.

Duchy of Cornwall, “Poundbury Factsheet,” Factsheet (Duchy of Cornwall, 2013), 9, http://duchyofcornwall.org/assets/images/documents/Poundbury_Factsheet_2013.pdf.

materials such as brick, tile and stone, or at least clad with them.²⁴ The Ten Principles' call for the incorporation of decoration, signing, and arts can also be found in the development.



FIG 2.1 Aerial view of Poundbury, showing the mixed-scale mixed-use buildings. The third phase of the Poundbury development will be completed in 2025.

²⁴ Crosby, "Ten Commandments for the Duchy of Cornwall," 2.



FIG 2. 2 Smaller commercial buildings in one of the residential clusters. These buildings often also serve as a local visual and spatial focal point, and a means of way-finding in the development.



FIG 2.3 Buildings along the main avenue are significantly taller than ordinary houses. These buildings often have more ornate facade, too. The majority of retail, restaurants and commercial program are held in these buildings.

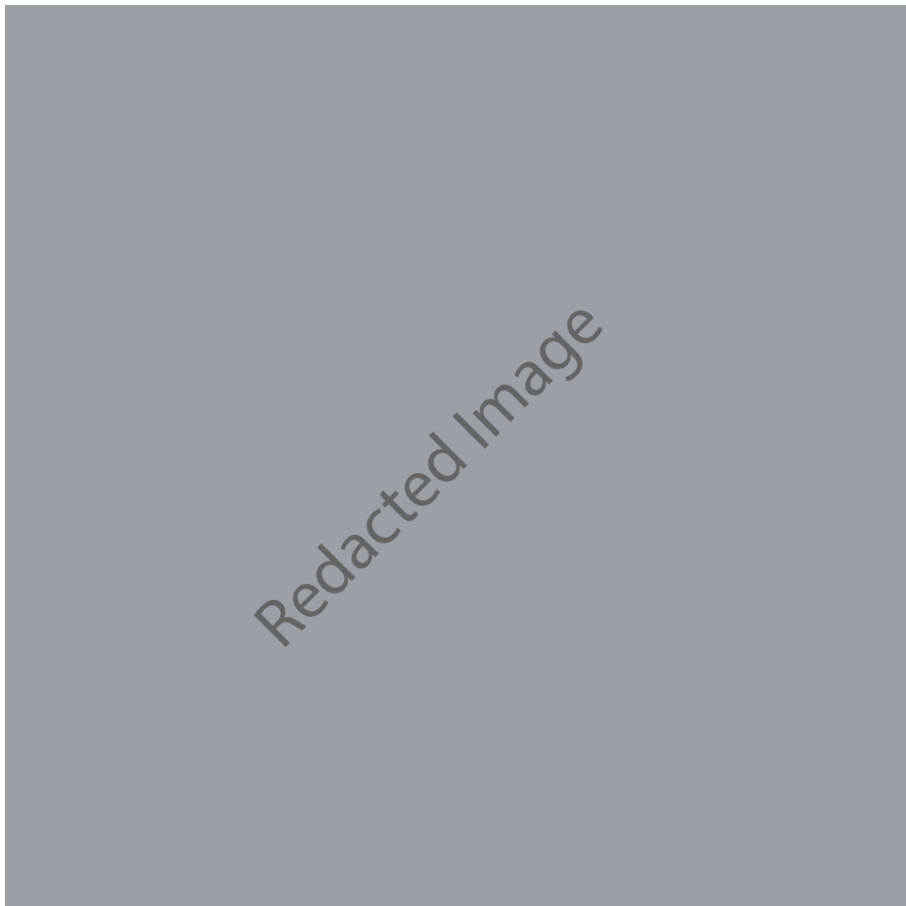


FIG 2.4 Although the houses have different architectural styles and had slight variation in heights and massing, the visual scale of the buildings is carefully controlled. For example, in this picture one can see that the floor to ceiling height, the level of the cornice, and roof line of the houses are responding to one and other.

Krier's role as its chief architect has brought Poundbury a reputation as a 20th-century Neo-Classical facsimile.²⁵ Critics of the development often compared it to a theme park, including Disney's contemporaneous experimental planned communities Seaside (1985) and Celebration (1990) in Florida.²⁶ Krier's involvement in Disney's Seaside and the fact that

²⁵ Oliver Wainwright, "A Royal Revolution: Is Prince Charles's Model Village Having the Last Laugh," *The Guardian*, October 27, 2016.

²⁶ Wainwright.

New Urbanism planning model were used in all three towns further strengthened such claim.²⁷ However, although Poundbury was inceptioned with an affinity to Classical tradition, not all of its buildings are built with Neo-classical facades. Neither Ten Principles nor The Poundbury Code indeed stipulates the use of Classical architectural elements. In her PhD dissertation on Prince Charles' architectural initiatives, Frances Mikuriya described Poundbury as "a composition of an ad hoc range of 'traditional' architectural elements that the Code permits and encourages."²⁸ Mikuriya drew a distinction between Disney's Celebration and Poundbury: in the former development the residents could only choose from five types of house design, while in Poundbury, they could select from a range of "approved building types" or a combination of "approved architectural elements."²⁹ The Classical affinity of the Poundbury development could perhaps be better described as what Alan Colquhoun labelled as "vernacular classicism"— a codified representational system "organised with a logic that was analogous to scholastic thought."³⁰ The buildings in Poundbury, while not always using Classical architectural elements such as the Orders, pediments and belt cornice, reflected the "underlying characteristic of classicism."³¹

The toxicity surrounding Prince Charles' involvement in British architecture, nonetheless, continued to fortify the image of Poundbury as a kitsch gated community. The realisation of Poundbury also exposed some of the shortcomings of Ten Principles. The least successful part of Poundbury, both spatially and functionally, is where the development meets the rest of Dorchester, constructed based on modern building and planning regulations. The abrupt change in the scale of the road, traffic patterns, and topography create a

²⁷ Joseph Rykwert, "Leon Krier," *Architectural Review*, June 2013, 118.

²⁸ Mikuriya, "Duchy Unoriginal: The Prince of Wales and Architecture," 219.

²⁹ Mikuriya, 219.

³⁰ Alan Colquhoun, "Vernacular Classicism," in *Modernity and the Classical Tradition: Architectural Essays 1980-1987* (Cambridge: MA: MIT Press, 1989), 25.

³¹ Colquhoun, 25.

bottleneck in both pedestrian and vehicular movements. The few buildings that stand at this intersection appear out of scale compared to their surroundings. The visual incoherence is accentuated by the use of rustication and highly symmetrical facade design. (FIG 2.5) In other words, the Classical language of Poundbury does not communicate well with the surrounding spaces stipulated by modern building codes. Krier had also reflected on the fact that a design code, on its own, could not guarantee the spatial experience of a town. Pointing out a potential fallacy found in Ten Principles' emphasis on visual experience, he stated:

People involved in the making of Poundbury will mathematically find out for how little money they can create your best image, so you get the image but you don't get the quality. It is very important that it's not just an image, therefore we have a technical code which requires traditional building techniques. You look at the private building market – it's all traditional image.³²

Unless significant changes were brought to the existing mechanism of property development, Krier concluded, one could hardly avoid the same kind of “fake, kitsch, make-believe” found in speculative real estate projects. He suggested that the visual and spatial qualities found in historical European townscapes could not be administered to 20th-century society simply through a design code that is derived from Classical principles. (FIG 2.6)

³² The Thursday Club, “The Transactions of the Thursday Club 1,” 7.



FIG 2.5 The edge between Poundbury and the rest of the Dorchester development.



FIG 2.6 The first Transaction of the Thursday Club. In 1992, a few of Prince Charles' advisors, including Christopher Martin (BBC Producer of A Vision of Britain), Jules Lubbock, Dan Cruickshank, and Theo Crosby, along with architect Alan Baxter, set up the Thursday Club which intended to be a "talk-shop" for architectural issues. The first meeting included a presentation by Leon Krier on Poundbury.

2.3 Evaluating Ten Principles

Krier's self-evaluation of Poundbury and Ten Principles, however, was by no means comparable to the harsh criticism received from the architectural critics. The most contentious and polemic criticism of Ten Principles came from Martin Pawley, who, in an article in the *AR* in 1990, compared it to a Third Reich planning guide entitled "A Nation Builds."³³ Drawing out the similarities between Ten Principles with images from "A Nation Builds" pamphlet, Pawley pointed out "six of the Prince of Wales' 'Ten Principles' applied to Nazi National Socialist architecture."³⁴ (FIG 2.7) The melodrama surrounding Pawley's accusation was further accentuated by Krier's contemporaneous controversial study on the works of Albert Speer, Hitler's chief architect.³⁵ Pawley argued that the dangerous nostalgic sentiment found in Ten Principles was not only in their affinity to Classical tradition, but also in its alarmingly anachronistic and reactionary exploration into architecture's social engineering ability.

The controversial comparison between Ten Principles and the Third Reich, however, could also be reinterpreted as a reframing of Ten Principles as an architectural manifesto aiming for eliciting changes in the societal organisation. The question of whether Ten Principles could be seen as a vision for modernisation was raised by *AR*'s Peter Davey, who claimed that he could not help noticing the "socialist agenda" found in Ten Principles.³⁶ The emphasis of "the community, the group," and "the small," Davey suggested, was something "that William Morris, Kropotkin and Schumacher would have welcomed."³⁷ Davey

³³ Pawley, "A Precedent for the Prince."

³⁴ Pawley, 80.

³⁵ Joan Ockman, "The Most Interesting Form of Lie," in *Opposition Reader: Selected Essays 1973-1984*, ed. Michael K. Hayes (NJ, Princeton: Princeton Architectural Press, 1998), 412–24.

³⁶ Peter Davey, "Prince's Political Manifesto," *Architectural Review*, August 1989.

³⁷ Davey, 9.

applauded the future Monarch and his advisors for “waging war” against the absolute power of the “bureaucrats, businessmen and every other breed of self-interest.”³⁸ He even went as far as claiming the Prince’s projects were “in direct opposition to Thatcherism which believes that there is no such thing as society, only individuals and families.”³⁹ Davey’s conflicted view was echoed by another architectural critic, Charles Jencks.⁴⁰ Jencks observed that the Prince and his advisors, ironically, represented an anti-Establishment stance much needed in the British architectural field. While Jencks objected to Prince Charles’ singular stylistic preference for Neo-classical architecture, he pointed out the Prince was, not unlike Le Corbusier or Picasso, “forcing his revolutionary message on the Establishment.”⁴¹ Prince Charles’ attack on speculative real estate development and his support for community action in planning, Jencks proposed, was something that most architects would hanker after.⁴²

Both Davey and Jencks’ remarks could be seen as the critics’ attempts to re-orient attention from stylistic debates to the societal role of architecture. It was also these debates that put Ten Principles at a front and centre role in the study of architectural Postmodernism in Britain since it manifested many of the characteristics and controversies associated with Postmodern architecture, including its claim of an architecture with “humanistic value,” its use of Classical principles as a form of “creative anachronism,” as well as the equivocal remarks on its “socialist” tendencies.

At heart in the conflicting views on Ten Principles was the question about freedom of choice. For Prince Charles and Crosby, the codification system enabled the expression of

³⁸ Davey, 9.

³⁹ Davey, 9.

⁴⁰ Jencks, “Ethics and Prince Charles.”

⁴¹ Jencks, 24.

⁴² Jencks, 29.

individuality while maintaining a visual coherence in the environment. They portrayed Modernist architecture as a top-down approach to the built environment that evaded the desire of ordinary British people. This celebration of the Classical code could be attributed to Crosby's experience – more than once his building proposals were rejected or significantly altered due to planning and building control.⁴³ Crosby's articulation that the Classical architectural language was a system of design that could truly reflect and respond to the cultural, social, and economic dynamism found in 20th-century British society could hence be read as a long-standing frustration towards existing building control system. The critics of Ten Principles, however, regarded it as a design code that could only offer nominal freedom but not genuine democratisation of architectural production. At worst, Ten Principles would become a threat to the public trust in the architectural profession, and a disguise to a desire for enacting an invented traditional townscape.

The Ten Principles' challenge to the role of architects was noted by the public and the architectural professionals alike. Unsurprisingly, a large portion of the architectural profession held low regard of Ten Principles. In a poll conducted by *The Architectural Journal (AJ)*, only one-third of the interviewees thought Ten Principles could bring positive changes to British architecture.⁴⁴ A quote published by the *AJ* claimed to exemplify the British architects' views on Prince Charles and Ten Principles: "he's sincere, he cares, but his lack of knowledge and sensitivity is an insult to the profession, and this frustrates and angers me."⁴⁵ In contrast, according to Martin Pawley, "no less than 75.5 percent of respondents answered 'yes' to the question 'do you agree with Prince Charles' view of modern architecture?'" in a public poll conducted by "a popular Sunday newspaper."⁴⁶ This

⁴³ Theo Crosby, "A Slight Case of Aesthetic Control," *Architectural Design*, April 1957.

⁴⁴ "Few Share Prince's Faith in Tradition."

⁴⁵ "Few Share Prince's Faith in Tradition," 10.

⁴⁶ "Few Share Prince's Faith in Tradition."

difference between the public and professional opinion could be seen as a ramification of Ten Principles' attempt to re-codify complex architectural and planning issues, in a way that would allow ordinary publics to understand spatial, architectural, and planning propositions without in-depth understanding of the language of architecture and urbanism. The emphasis on visual qualities in Ten Principles further lent weight to its claim of accessibility and legibility.

Ten Principles' potential in becoming a means to democratise architectural production was also noted by Charles Jencks.⁴⁷ He stressed that Ten Principles and The Poundbury Code demonstrated the possibility that, covered by a set of analogue rules, "anyone can design their own house and it will still add to the harmony of the whole."⁴⁸ Jencks' valuation of a design code, however, also exposed the contradictions found in Ten Principles. On the one hand, it was a manifesto calling for radical changes in British architectural culture and its production. On the other hand, its nature as a design code, through transposing Classical language, was arguably as inherently resistant to innovation and invention.⁴⁹ Ten Principles' emphasis on identities and local character also highlighted its affinity to the status quo. The association with the Monarch further problematised its call for liberating architectural production. Ten Principles' proposition for demolishing the rigid and dysfunctional building and planning regulations was thus often drawn into question.⁵⁰ These conflicting valuations of Ten Principles raised the question of what were Crosby's vision and agenda behind Ten Principles? What drove him to formulate this contradictory architectural proposition?

⁴⁷ Jencks, "Ethics and Prince Charles," 25.

⁴⁸ Jencks, 25.

⁴⁹ Adrian Forty, *Words and Buildings: A Vocabulary of Modern Architecture* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2000), 65–66.

⁵⁰ Peter Davey, "A Primer for the Prince," *Architectural Review*, December 1990, 19.



FIG 2.7 Martin Pawley's comparison between the Ten Principles with the Third Reich's 1940 "A Nation Builds" pamphlet. While his criticism was intentionally provocative.

Martin Pawley's captions: Six of the Prince of Wales' "Ten Principles" applied to National Socialist architecture — with HRH's own rhymes from "A Vision of Britain." All of the pictures are taken from "A Nation Builds", published by the German Information Office, Washington DC, 1940.

- 1. Hierarchy:** Housing at Ramersdorf near Munich built in 1938. "Let your architecture show all we ever need to know."
- 2. Decoration:** Housing at Berlin Zehlendorf built in 1939. "Cat or dog or crocodile; decorate and make us smile." (Note wall decoration in foreground.)
- 3. Harmony:** Model housing built for a 1936 Dusseldorf exhibition. "Cheek by jowl if building be, let them sing in harmony."
- 4. Community:** Housing built at Frankfurt-am-Main in 1938. "Don't let strangers always win. Plan, but let the people in."
- 5. Enclosure:** Model of proposal Adolf Hilter Platz, Weimar. Architect: Hermann Giesler, 1938. "Freedom, safety, peace are found where enclosing walls surround."

Firstly, it is worthy to note Crosby had expressed his affinity to the Classical tradition not because of its aesthetic superiority, but more due to the fact that it could function as a regulating instrument. In his introduction to the 1988 draft of Ten Principles, Crosby wrote:

A simple classical style is preferred, and architects are chosen because of their skill and dexterity in this mode. It is not the Duchy's intention to produce experimental buildings, nor even particularly monumental structures. The tasks are largely in the provision of a decent, honourable and decorative background to normal life.⁵¹

For Crosby, the primary importance of Classical language was it could offer a basic framework that guarantee the quality of building design. Such rhetoric was repeated in 1990 when Crosby, as a professor of architecture at the Royal College of Art, wrote:

The classical system is the only codified design system. It can be taught and examined. It provides the basis of a decent level of mediocrity in buildings, and the opportunity for the most complex and refined individuality.⁵²

The emphasis of “decent,” “honourable,” “normal” and “mediocrity” could also be read as a reverberation of decorum in the Classical tradition, as a proposition for architects to do what was fitting and appropriate.⁵³ Reverberating Alberti's declaration that “the thing most highly praised in the art of building is to judge well what is appropriate,” Ten Principles was a set of rules that could be applied with some flexibility, with changes and modifications as one saw fit.⁵⁴ Crosby warned against the danger of creating buildings that lacked dexterity. His polemic proposition of “a decent level of mediocrity” could also be seen as a reflection of his long-held scepticism of modern architects' authorial role and their aesthetic intentions.

⁵¹ Crosby, “Ten Commandments for the Duchy of Cornwall,” 1.

⁵² Theo Crosby, *To Look Is to Learn-If You Listen Carefully*, School of Architecture Mid-Term Reports (London: Royal College of Art, 1990), 1.

⁵³ Payne suggests that Alberti blended the idea of *distributio* (where planning needs and clients are matched) with *decor* (where ornament refers to specific “clients/god.” Through this articulation Alberti devised his approach to invention:

“Although his architect is allowed full freedom to create new forms — no slavish *imitatio* of the ancients or regard for an assemblage logic gives him pause — he cannot apply them indiscriminately.”

Alina Payne, *The Architectural Treatise in the Italian Renaissance: Architectural Invention, Ornament, and Literary Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 79.

⁵⁴ Tim Anstey, “The Danger of Decorum,” *ARQ*, 10, no. 2 (2006): 131.citing, Alberti, Leon Battista. *De re aedificatoria*, IX, 10, [173a.1].

2.4 The Anthology of Ten Principles

This convoluted nature of Ten Principles should, at least in part, be attributed to the fact that it was a culmination of Crosby's criticism about British urbanism since the early 1960s. The earliest articulation of the ideas found in Ten Principles could be detected in Crosby's 1965 publication *Architecture: City Sense*.⁵⁵ According to Crosby, *Architecture: City Sense* was his response to Jane Jacob's influential 1961 publication *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*.⁵⁶ Crosby synthesised the American journalist's writing in the context of 1960s Britain and elucidated the mistakes made by British planners and architects since the post-war era. In the book, propositions similar to Ten Principles "scale" and "increment" was stated as antidotes to Modernist large-scale top-down projects. For example, in the first section "Visual Order and Disorder," Crosby lamented architect's lost ability to play with symmetry and asymmetry since the Second World War. In the section on "Order and Responsibility," he criticised the division between artists, architects, and planners had hindered the visual and social dynamisms traditionally found in cities. The Ten Principle's plea for integrating art, signs and landscape could also be found in *Architecture: City Sense*. In short, *Architecture: City Sense* could be seen as Crosby's first pronounced departure from the New Brutalist aesthetic, advocating a 'softer' Modernism that was also sympathetic to preservation.

⁵⁵ Crosby, *Architecture: City Sense*.

⁵⁶ Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*.



FIG 2.8 Cover of *Architecture: City Sense*. The illustration on top of the map, in light brown, is Crosby's proposal for an urban regeneration project in Fulham.



FIG 2.9 Spreads from *Architecture: City Sense*.

At first glance, *Architecture: City Sense* could be read as Crosby's reconciliation with the Townscape Movement championed by the *AR*. The book's size, layout, and graphics also reminded one of *AR*'s long-term illustrator Gordon Cullen's *The Concise Townscape*, published four years earlier.⁵⁷ (FIG 2.8) In the book, Crosby also addressed two other thematics that were crucial to 1960s British architecture and urbanism. First, a reconsideration of the value of "order." In the first chapter of the book, Crosby claimed "the only thing that distinguished man from other animals is his capacity to create order."⁵⁸ This pursuit for order had created the corpus of Western arts and architecture, Crosby stated, but also resulted in the eradication of identity and variety in cities. Other important issues, Crosby stressed, were the unique challenges found in the affluent society of 1960s Britain. (FIG 2.9) This emphasis on the impact of technological changes, burgeoning consumerism, and industrial transformation suggested that Crosby was still adhering to his "object found" position, from the New Brutalism debate.⁵⁹ Therefore, *Architecture: City Sense* could not be simply summarised as Crosby's decisive break from his hard-line Modernist position, but rather as a shift that should be attributed to the intellectual and socio-economic climate of its time, which was further consolidated in his 1971 article "Ten Rules for Planners."⁶⁰

The title "Ten Rules for Planners" already suggested that it should be seen as a blueprint of Ten Principles. The fact that Ten Principles, a Postmodern architectural polemic, first appeared in *Architect's Yearbook*, once a hotbed for cultivating Modernist architectural culture in post-war Britain, was noteworthy, too.⁶¹ Crosby's summary of the Ten Rules was

⁵⁷ Gordon Cullen, *The Concise Townscape* (London: Architectural Press, 1961).

⁵⁸ Crosby, *Architecture: City Sense*, 7.

⁵⁹ Theo Crosby, "Thoughts in Progress: Summing Up 2," *Architectural Design*, November 1957.

⁶⁰ Theo Crosby, "Ten Rules for Planners," in *Architects' Yearbook 13*, ed. David Lewis (London: Elek Books, 1971), 65–69.

⁶¹ Established in 1945, the Architects' Year Book was first edited by Jane Drew and Trevor Dannatt. In their study on Jane Drew and Maxwell Fry, historians Iain Jackson and Jessica Holland described the Architect's Year Book as something which "took up the slack between" the polemics of the *AR* and *AD*, "and sought to galvanise the architectural community in post-war Britain."

as follows:

Rule One: Accept and delight in the past for its disruptive, its poetic role in the present.

Rule Two: Involvement of people in their environment as owners, possessors, is essential to the growth of identity, in the person, and in the place.

Rule Three: Posterity will not be grateful for our small economies.

Rule Four: Public art is a cultural insurance. Buy now. The artists need the money — and the practice.

Rule Five: Grass is the enemy of cities.

Rule Six: The private car must be reduced to the status of a luxury.

Rule Seven: Buildings over 20m in height begin to exert effects far beyond the immediate environment. Their position – and above all, their girth – should be rigidly controlled.

Rule Eight: The 10 metre rule: no architect should be allowed to deal with more than 10 metres of frontage. This distance contains all the architectural problems; anything more is always solved by mere repetition.

Rule Nine: Planning without ownership, without direct involvement, is inevitably fragmentary and frustrating.

Rule Ten: Someone has to live in it. What if it were you?⁶²

The first and last rules were related to Crosby's vested interest in preservation and computational technology, discussed more at length in the latter part of this chapter and in Chapter 3. The rest of "Ten Rules for Planners" could be broadly divided into two categories: one was opposition to Modernist architectural and urban design principles; the other was analyses of the economic and cultural forces that shaped British architecture and urbanism. Rules Three to Eight belonged to the former category: Rules Three and Four were arguments for more decoration and public arts in an affluent society; Rules Five and Six were attempts to debunk Corbusian *Ville Radieuse* ideal; Rules Seven and Eight were criticisms of large-scale construction that would form the basis of "Scale," "Increment," and "Hierarchy" in Ten Principles. (Appendix III - "Ten Rules for Planners")

The Ten Principles' anti-professionalism had also already taken shape in "Ten Rules

Jackson and Holland, *The Architecture of Edwin Maxwell Fry and Jane Drew: Twentieth Century Architecture, Pioneer Modernism and the Tropics*, 120–21.

⁶² Crosby, "Ten Rules for Planners," 1971.

for Planners.” In justifying why buildings should not be taller than 20m (Rule Seven), Crosby denounced the existing building control system:

The control of architectural form in cities is governed (in the UK) by plot ratios, light angles and such quasi-scientific methods, which were supposed to liberate the designer. In practice they produce precisely the forms considered desirable by the organisers of the legislation; stump blocks camping in a sea of asphalt. At least this misguided legislation has led us to appreciate and reevaluate the street, and the mandatory cornice heights and facing materials that were simple methods of building control in the past. The delusive freedom offered by the current regulations produces vast awkward profiles whose painful presences obtrude on every skyline; they appear everywhere, carelessly spoiling views carefully contrived during the centuries.⁶³

The criticism of the overwhelming scale of work bestowed by architects and planners and of the rigidity of modern building control system, by the early 1970s, were views shared by the British architectural professions.⁶⁴ At stake was that Crosby began to combine these Jane-Jacob-ish critiques into a more comprehensive attempt to challenge the Welfare State project.

Elaborating Rule Two, Crosby emphasised the importance of private ownership:

Physical environment is greatly affected by ownership, the pure sensation of possession. A house or object is more cared-for than something borrowed, given, or hired. Personal identity largely comes from possessions and we must create, in public authority housing projects, the possibility ownership and community involvement.⁶⁵

From Crosby’s passage, one could readily discern how a reaction against the post-war mass housing construction program had turned into a call that anticipated the Thatcher government’s Right to Buy Scheme.

A similar rhetoric was repeated in Rule Nine which discussed the importance of private ownership over open spaces and countryside. In “Ten Rules for Planners”, Crosby argued that the privatisation of dwellings, community facilities, and nature would rectify the

⁶³ Crosby, 67.

⁶⁴ Cherry, *Urban Change and Planning: A History of Urban Development in Britain since 1750*, 158.

⁶⁵ Crosby, “Ten Rules for Planners,” 1971, 66.

mistakes made in post-war reconstruction and urban renewal projects. Equally noteworthy was through this formulation, Crosby also postulated the view of land as equity and architecture as commodity.⁶⁶ In Rule Two, Crosby used the example of the British housing group Span to illustrate the benefit of selling lease and land as two separate products:

Given their (Span's) middle income market, they could not include adequate private gardens for the small houses they provided.... They solved the problem by selling 99-year leases, pooling the garden areas and leaving only a tiny patch for each house... At a stroke a communal involvement has been created, which also automatically ensures a high level of environmental maintenance.⁶⁷

The reason behind this juxtaposition of the ideas into a call for privatisation was partly explained by American architectural historian David Lewis, who edited the issue of *Architect's Year Book*, writing,

the architect-writers in this book have not left the streets of the cities they inherit; they see in the industrial pollution, in the shacks of the barrios, in the sprawl of suburbs, in inherited Victorian or medieval fragments, the very material at hand with which the complex forces of investment, politics, technological knowledge, historicity and individual human passion and expressiveness play, and out of which contemporary processes the future of cities "poised uneasily between affluence and oblivion" must evolve.⁶⁸

Referencing Crosby's arguments in *Architecture: City Sense*, Lewis argued that the Modernist had overlooked the multitude of forces at play in shaping 20th century urbanism. He championed the position held by Crosby and other contributors to the issue, entitled "The Growth of Cities," who advocated a less deterministic view of urban planning and design. The call for privatisation was portrayed as a viable means to free architecture and planning from the Modernist dogma. In his introduction to *Ten Rules for Planners*, Crosby took a more pessimist tone in justifying his advocacy for privatisation:

The architects' role in this cultural dilemma is limited. He is the merest creature

⁶⁶ Crosby, 69.

⁶⁷ Crosby, 66.

⁶⁸ David Lewis, "Introduction," in *Architects' Yearbook 13*, ed. David Lewis (London: Elek Books, 1971), 9.

of the Zeitgeist, propping his own tweedy identity with fantasies of power and social regeneration. His tried and true programmes, however, prevent the possibility of any radical change, and pressures of economy inhibit experiments. In any case little can be changed through a physical solution.⁶⁹

In “Ten Rules for Planners,” Crosby called for freeing architecture and planning from the control of the government. By liberating architectural production from the funding constraints of the state, Crosby argued, could the 1970s architectural culture truly reflect, and benefited from, the market dynamism of 1970s British society.

Lewis’ and Crosby’s writing suggested that “Ten Rules for Planners” should be understood as an operative criticism pertaining to the political and societal climate of the time.⁷⁰ The advocacy for privatisation and market forces would later earn Crosby the reputation of an architect who condemned Modernism by defining it as “the utilitarian ideology of the Welfare State” and a willing collaborator of Thatcher-era reforms.⁷¹ However, considering the intellectual and architectural discourses at the time when “Ten Rules for Planners” was written, Crosby’s proposition would not come as overtly radical. In fact, it would probably be interpreted as a timid translation of a planning manifesto published two years earlier by his former collaborator Reyner Banham, with Paul Barker, Peter Hall and Cedric Price: *Non-Plan*.⁷²

2.5 An Archaic Non-Plan?

Published in the *New Society* magazine in 1969, *Non-Plan* was a provocative call for British people to take control of their environment. At the heart of the *Non-Plan* manifesto

⁶⁹ Crosby, “Ten Rules for Planners,” 1971, 66.

⁷⁰ Conservative Party, “A Better Tomorrow” (General Election Manifesto, 1970), <http://www.conservativemanifesto.com/1970/1970-conservative-manifesto.shtml>.

⁷¹ Wright, *A Journey Through Ruins*, 216.

⁷² Reyner Banham et al., “Non-Plan An Experiment in Freedom,” *New Society* 338 (March 1969): 435–43.

was a polemic message: “people should be allowed to build what they like.”⁷³ The authors urged for privatisation of the countryside, lifting planning prohibitions, and releasing zoning control based on the needs of the market. They argued the government should no longer be prime driver for environmental changes. The demands of the market, the desire for leisure and spectacle, and modern technological advancements, they claimed, were superior to the planning visions devised by planners. Today, the legacy of *Non-Plan* is fraught. On the one hand, it is seen as a radical manifesto that embodied the spontaneity, adaptability and a-formalism found in the 1960s and 1970s British architectural culture. On the other hand, it has also been accused of being a particularly patent advocate for the neoliberal-turn of the British environment — favouring individual and market interests over collectiveness.⁷⁴ *Non-Plan* has often been cited as an inspiration for the London Dockland Development Corporation, and more specifically, the concept of the “enterprise zone” in the Canary Wharf development.⁷⁵

There are visible similarities when comparing “Ten Rules for Planners” and *Non-Plan*. Both articles posited themselves as planning propositions responding to the changing spatial needs of a population living in an affluent society.⁷⁶ Influenced by the contemporaneous ecological movement, the two articles cast aside the country/urban and nature/human-made divide. How infrastructural expansion, suburban development, and

⁷³ Banham et al., 443.

⁷⁴ Anthony Fontenot, “Non Design and Non-Planned City” (PhD, Princeton University, 2013).

⁷⁵ Paul Barker, “Thinking the Unthinkable,” in *Non-Plan: Essays on Freedom Participation and Change in Modern Architecture and Urbanism*, ed. Johnathan Hughes and Simon Sadler (London: Architectural Press, n.d.), 6.

Note that in the original article, the authors had actually specified that the experiment could not be carried out in London.

Banham et al., “Non-Plan An Experiment in Freedom,” 436.

⁷⁶ Banham et al., “Non-Plan An Experiment in Freedom,” 436.

“Development would be more scattered and less geometrically tidy than our present planners would like. It would be low-density — the apotheosis of exurbia. There would be more out-of-town shopping centres and drive-in cinemas, and Non-Plan would let them zoom to considerable size by the end of the century.”

commuting had reshaped the British environment were discussed at length in both articles.⁷⁷ More specifically, both regarded the privatisation of space and buildings crucial for the future of the British society. They respectively articulated private ownership as a rectification of the bureaucratisation of the Welfare State. They also expressed their sympathy to “negative planning” — obstructing building and planning projects potentially harmful to the environment, regardless of whether a better plan had been in place.⁷⁸ Moreover, both articles ended by announcing their optimism in the changes brought by information technology: in *Ten Rules for Planners* Crosby anticipated the use of Big Data in planning while *Non-Plan* envisaged that research in cybernetics would revolutionise architecture and the urban design apparatus.⁷⁹

The criticism to British planning profession and system, in both articles, emerged from the disappointment of two decades of post-war reconstruction and urban renewal. It can also be seen as a manifestation of the post-war generation’s architects and architectural writers’ frustration towards the conditions of Modern architecture in Britain. Merely a little more than a decade ago, Crosby had declared in the April 1957 issue of *AD* that “negative planning, which cuts at the creative roots of architecture and yet does not prevent suburban sprawl and untidiness, is hardly worth its considerable expense.”⁸⁰ At the time, Crosby regarded negative planning as deterrence of the New Brutalist aesthetic that they advocated. However, by the 1970s, negative planning became a tool for prohibiting the permeation of rigid monotonous large-scale construction that they detested. In both cases, Crosby posited

⁷⁷ Banham et al., 438.

⁷⁸ Banham et al., 438.

⁷⁹ Banham et al., 442.

In Rule Ten, Crosby wrote

“technology is capable of contributing something other than simplification. We are beginning to be able to handle very large quantities of data, and at last the possibility of individual choice in the environment might be considered, rather than the current reliance on statistical average...”

Crosby, “Ten Rules for Planners,” 1971, 69.

⁸⁰ Crosby, “A Slight Case of Aesthetic Control.”

himself as a polemist that challenged the status quo, as well as an antagonist to the dominant style and mechanism in British architecture.

Ironically, the resonance found in the two articles could also be seen as a formulation of a new *Zeitgeist* for a less deterministic valuation of the built environment. The reactions and the solutions found in these two planning manifestos were not nonsensical considering the socio-economic contexts in which they were produced. However, in spite of the similarity of their propositions, the two articles were written with opposite premises. *Non-Plan* was written for exploring “what would happen if there were no plan? What would people prefer to do, if their choice were untrammelled? Would matters be better, or any worse, or much the same?”⁸¹ Crosby’s “Ten Rules for Planners”, as it had stated in its title, was targeting planners and the professionals. In *Non-Plan*, the authors claimed the outcome of *Non-Plan* “would not look like a planner’s dream, but it would work.”⁸² For Crosby, the task at hand was for planners to change their dreams.

While one could dismiss “Ten Rules for Planners” as a hijacking of *Non-Plan*’s radical energy for conservative causes, the comparison also drew attention to a permissive attitude towards nostalgic sentiment found in *Non-Plan*. In their plea for radical changes to the British environment, the *Non-Plan* had also readily accepted the commercialisation, proliferation, and dominance of preservation. In the article’s conclusion, the authors stated,

If the Non-Plan experiment works really well, people should be allowed to build what they like. (Oh, and a word for the preservationists: much easier to relieve pressure on medieval town centres by letting the edges of the city sprawl, and give people chances to shop there in drive-in suburban superstores, than by brooding on inner-relief roads or whatever).⁸³

⁸¹ Banham et al., “Non-Plan An Experiment in Freedom,” 436.

⁸² Banham et al., 436.

⁸³ Banham et al., 443.

In “Ten Rules for Planners,” Crosby presented preservation as a fundamental aspect of “negative planning” and thus potentially an instrumental force in bringing radical change to the British built environment: “they provide obstacles to the casual obliteration of whole areas that is now technologically desirable.”⁸⁴ These two articles shed light on how a consensus or at least a permissiveness to preservation had been formulating in Britain since the late 1960s.

Perhaps more importantly, the comparison of the two articles also revealed how the permissiveness of the *Non-Plan* subjected it to mistranslations and manipulations. In “Ten Rules for Planners,” after establishing preservation as a radical planning apparatus, Crosby added two sentences that exposed his anachronistic apprehension of the urban environment: “Given a series of old buildings to incorporate he (the planner) can work with their scales and rhythms, to create the continuity of experience which is the joy of cities.”⁸⁵ The shift from a radical call for freedom, to obstructive tactics in planning, to the reverberation of Classical architectural tradition through “scale” and “rhythm” was noteworthy.

The transposition of ideas between *Non-Plan*, “Ten Rules for Planners” and Ten Principles provided more evidence of how operative criticism was defenceless against other agendas. Whether it was the incorporation by the interests of global enterprises and high finance institutions, or regressing into an archaic affinity to Classicism, the trajectories of these manifestos signposted the vulnerability of radical architectural visions in late 20th century Britain. The fragility of these two architectural intellectual explorations was alarming considering the relatively close-knit circle of writers involved in their production.⁸⁶ One

⁸⁴ Crosby, “Ten Rules for Planners,” 1971, 68.

⁸⁵ Crosby, 66.

⁸⁶ *Non-Plan*, according to Paul Barker, was inspired by Christopher Booker’s *The Neophiliacs* published in 1969. Four years later, in 1973, Booker would be involved in Crosby’s *How to Play the Environment Game*

could not overlook the fact that the two “midwives” of New Brutalism, Banham and Crosby, became advocates for privatising and deregulating the British environment in the late 1960s.⁸⁷

In his PhD dissertation, architectural historian Anthony Fontenot argued that New Brutalism should be seen as a forbearer of architecture under neoliberalism, through highlighting New Brutalism’s opposition to anything associated with rationalism, functionalism, and William Morris’ Socialism.⁸⁸ Fontenot’s analysis of New Brutalism, however, is based mostly on Banham’s interpretation of New Brutalism, and the broader intellectual milieu of the IG. As demonstrated in the previous chapter, there was an alternative articulation of New Brutalism by Crosby and the Smithsons which manifested a more sympathetic stance to history and tradition. Was there another path that led to New Brutalism’s turn to privatisation?

2.6 Programme and Language

Throughout his four-decade-long career, Crosby rarely discussed his political affiliation.⁸⁹ However, from the existing scholarship on the IG and New Brutalism, one could assume Crosby belonged to the “non-Marxist grouping” of architects and artists that Banham identified in the 1955 *AR* article on New Brutalism.⁹⁰ Crosby’s works also supported the view

exhibition, which will be studied in the next chapter.
Barker, “Thinking the Unthinkable,” 2.

Christopher Booker, *The Neophiliacs: Revolution in English Life in the Fifties and Sixties* (London: Collins, 1969).

⁸⁷ Parnell, “Brute Forces.”

⁸⁸ Fontenot, “Non Design and Non-Planned City.”

⁸⁹ Interview with Peter Lloyd Jones

⁹⁰ Banham, “The New Brutalism,” 356.

he shared the IG's opposition to "scientific planning" and "social engineering" and took a more positive regard to the nominal "chaos" of capitalism.⁹¹ His continuous challenges to functionalism and rationalism could be viewed as part and parcel of an affinity to an open-ended and heterogenic environment. The political ambiguity of Crosby's post-war milieu set the scene for his later more fundamental rejection of political ideologies. In the 1970s, Crosby had more than once declared that capitalism, socialism, communism were many sides of the same coin, claiming they were all constructed based on the modern affinity to the mass.⁹² In sum, Crosby's architectural thoughts and his politics were both tied to a distaste towards the mass society.

Crosby's advocacy for dismantling the state's control over the built environment could be found as early as 1957, in the "Thought in Progress: Summing Up" series published in *AD*.⁹³ These articles, as I have suggested in Chapter 1, were also where Crosby attempted to summarise the New Brutalism debate. In the December 1957 issue's "Summing Up," Crosby declared "this is no time for all-embracing nostrums" and emphasised "what we have called the 'object found' philosophy is only a philosophy in the lowest market-place sense, as a man might say: 'my philosophy is: do as you would be done by.'"⁹⁴ This strong advocacy for an open-ended architectural theory, in Crosby's writing on New Brutalism, was new; and should be regarded as a reaction to John Summerson's RIBA lecture "The Case for a Theory of Modern Architecture" delivered a few months earlier.⁹⁵ In the lecture, Summerson claimed that program, "a local fragment of social pattern", had replaced the antique, "a world of

⁹¹ Fontenot, "Non Design and Non-Planned City," 96, 97.

⁹² Theo Crosby, *The Pessimist Utopia* (London: Pentagram, 1974), 4.

⁹³ Crosby, "Thoughts in Progress: Summing Up 1"; Crosby, "Thoughts in Progress: Summing Up 2"; Theo Crosby, "Thoughts in Progress: Summing Up 3," *Architectural Design*, December 1957.

⁹⁴ Crosby, "Thoughts in Progress: Summing Up 3," 436.

⁹⁵ Summerson, "The Case for a Theory of Modern Architecture."

form”, as the “source of unity” of modern architecture.⁹⁶ Reciting a remark made by Bruno Zevi on “the organic conception of architecture is based ‘on a social idea and not on a figurative idea.’” Summerson stressed that the program was “the source not precisely of forms but of adumbrations of forms of undeniable unity.”⁹⁷ Although Crosby would have shared Summerson’s view that theory was necessary to the progression of architectural culture, he rejected Summerson’s non-discriminating adherence to “program” and the claim that there could be a unifying theory for Modern architecture.⁹⁸

For Crosby, Summerson’s proposition was collaborating with the “routine-Functionalist” that the New Brutalism detested.⁹⁹ He would probably be further aggravated by Summerson’s dismissal of Banham’s theory of topology, from the 1955 *AR* New Brutalism article, as a “red herring.”¹⁰⁰ In his lecture, Summerson stated that “you certainly cannot have two sources of unity” and failing that, architecture would have “regressed” into “classicism or neoclassicism, or to put the finest possible point on it, crypto-neoclassicism.”¹⁰¹ In the *AD*’s “Thought in Progress,” Crosby attacked Summerson through the historian’s adherence to the modern duality between “classic” and “modern”, writing,

something more is needed than a conglomeration of social programmes. But we want not only a sound set of general ideas, but also an architectural language. We are told that a language is impossible and that our feeling that the lack of it is a serious matter is due to a failure to understand the current architectural revolution... The classical system had in itself a plastic and emotional content; the modern architect has to inject such a content himself. No wonder he so often fails completely.¹⁰²

⁹⁶ Summerson, 309.

⁹⁷ Summerson, 309.

⁹⁸ Summerson, 309.

⁹⁹ Banham, “The New Brutalism,” 358.

¹⁰⁰ Summerson, “The Case for a Theory of Modern Architecture,” 310.

Vidler, “Towards a Theory of the Architectural Program,” 60.

¹⁰¹ Summerson, “The Case for a Theory of Modern Architecture,” 310.

¹⁰² Crosby, “Thoughts in Progress: Summing Up 1,” 344.

In defence of New Brutalism's "as-found" philosophy, Crosby borrowed his ammunition from the Classical tradition. Ironically, in his opposition to "a conglomeration of social programs," Crosby began to drive his arguments away from the *ethics* of architecture once fundamental to New Brutalism manifesto. In these articles, Crosby had paradoxically fortified the delineation between "social program" and "architectural language" that was put forward by Summerson.¹⁰³ Ensnared by the dualism of "program" versus "language," Crosby continued to postulate the open-endedness of New Brutalism.¹⁰⁴ In these arguments, he reformulated the "as found" philosophy into a more laissez-faire attitude about the built environment. In the series of writings, he had also engendered the view that individual interests, rather than the program of Modern architecture, would be a better means to drive environmental changes.

Through these series' of "Summing Up," Crosby contrived architectural "language" as something that was adaptable, flexible, and free of the doctrinal social programming of Modernism. In his opposition to Summerson's universal "program," Crosby had somewhat unleashed an all-embracing critique of Modern architecture and mass modernisation projects carried out by the post-war Welfare State. His distaste for the Functionalist orthodoxy had also driven him further away from the rationality and "ruthless logic" once integral to New Brutalism.¹⁰⁵ At the end of these responses to Summerson's "The Case for a Theory of Modern Architecture," one could detect a formulation of Classical architectural "language" as an opposition to the Welfare State "program." In the last issue of "Summing Up," Crosby wrote,

I think we should begin by saying that of course the architect's relation to society

¹⁰³ John Summerson, *The Classical Language of Architecture* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1963).

¹⁰⁴ Crosby, "Thoughts in Progress: Summing Up 3," 435.

¹⁰⁵ Banham, "The New Brutalism," 358.

is important. He must understand the problems raised in building in this country and the difficulties and opportunities of the Welfare State, in which the client is very likely to be a public body, where architecture has nearly always to fulfil a general social purpose and where the need for economy in expenditure is always present. He must learn to agree nobly with necessity and accept the fact there is no scope whatever in England for him to be a latter-day Lutyens, producing *recherché* and allusive masterpieces for a small body of lavish clients.¹⁰⁶

Crosby criticised the Welfare State for negating the possibility of continuous growth of the Classical tradition, which had, in turn, led to a stagnation found in Modern architectural thoughts. An irreconcilability between the modernisation program carried out by the Welfare State and the Classical tradition had been developed in Crosby as a result of this debate about language and program. What we have witnessed here was also an assemblage of a frustration towards post-war Modernist construction and a belief in the relevance of the Classical tradition that later formed the outline of architectural Postmodernism.

2.7 Fulham Study

The three “Summing Up” articles also signposted Crosby’s growing affirmation of architectural preservation. Arguing that since Modernist architectural language was unable to provide a “plastic” and emotional content, Crosby urged architects to retreat to the safeguarding of old structures that had communicative quality. Here we found Crosby directly reusing the vocabulary of Modernism, such as “plastic,” in formulating his propositions for preservation.¹⁰⁷ The decoupling of “language” and “program” had led to

¹⁰⁶ Crosby, “Thoughts in Progress: Summing Up 3,” 435.

¹⁰⁷ Crosby, 435.

In speaking of “plastic,” Crosby was referring to Le Corbusier’s call for a “synthesis of major arts.” In his *Oeuvre Complète*, Le Corbusier did clearly speak about how plastic art was at risk, “The situation of the plastic arts appeared to be inextricable: innumerable painters and sculptors each with his own viewpoint: architects indifferent to plastic phenomena and to the spirit of the age, or not finding any useful contact with them. One idea was to provide a “place for the building of Synthesis” with the object of bringing painters and sculptors into contact with tasks of an architectural nature. The point was not to carry out specific orders, but to orientate the painters and sculptors who felt a calling towards the architectural, and to give them a chance to prove themselves.”
Le Corbusier, *Oeuvre Complète 5, 1946-1952* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1953).

another change in Crosby's architectural thoughts: the New Brutalist pursuit of an architectural honesty had faded away. In 1963, at Taylor Woodrow, Crosby tested out his theory of language in an urban renewal feasibility study for the Fulham area. (FIG 2.10, 2.11) Commissioned by the London County Council, the Ministry of Housing and Local Government and the Fulham borough, the Fulham Study was a pilot project looking into alternative urban renewal methods after more than a decade of large-scale reconstruction and redevelopment.¹⁰⁸ At first glance, the Fulham Study proposal seemed to exemplify the post-war Modernist affiliation of Crosby's team, which include the Archigram group and Robin Middleton. The proposed housing for the town centre could be best described as an adaptation of Alison and Peter Smithson's Golden Lane "street-in-the-air" model.¹⁰⁹ (FIG 2.12) The public space and circulation design of the Fulham town centre also bore resemblances to the Smithson's Berlin Hauptstadt Competition. In his study on Archigram, Simon Sadler summarised that the Fulham Study's architectural design reflected the "shifting influence of British modernism."¹¹⁰ The post-war architectural language devised by the Smithsons and Erno Goldfinger, Sadler observed, were "skilfully blended with the stylistic devices of the youngsters."¹¹¹

¹⁰⁸ Taylor Woodrow Group, *Urban Renewal: Fulham Study* (Taylor Woodrow: London, 1964).

¹⁰⁹ Sadler, *Archigram: Architecture without Architecture*, 84.

¹¹⁰ Sadler, 84.

¹¹¹ Sadler, 84.



FIG 2.10 Front cover of the Fulham Study report, which focuses on a proposed Stamford Bridge Stadium that resembled a Buckminster Fuller Dymaxion dome. The stadium is connected to apartment blocks that designed based on the Smithson’s “street-in-the-sky” model.



FIG 2.11 Detail of the Fulham Study design. This proposal still reflects the optimism in multi-level pedestrian access and the segregation of vehicular and pedestrian traffic that was found in post-war planning.



FIG 2.12 Housing design in the Fulham Study. The scheme was set to challenge the 136 People Per Acre density control for the Greater London area.



FIG 2.13 Map analysis of building condition and house value of the Fulham area. The scheme suggested it was more possible to maintain and renew the buildings through government subsidy to home owners for area with higher housing price. In area where housing prices was lower, they suggested demolition and redevelopment would be a more viable method.

Upon closer examination, however, Archigram's techno-utopian vision was infused with a commitment to preservation. The team conducted studies to locate existing buildings that were worthy of renovating and upgrading.¹¹² (FIG 2.13) The report suggested that the preservation of these structures would provide the necessary backdrop for a less deterministic appropriation of urban spaces. In order to mediate the change of scale between the existing 19th-century houses and their proposed structures, Crosby's team invented a facade system where cell-like prefabricated window protrusions were attached to the proposed slab blocks.¹¹³ (FIG 2.14) The size and proportion of these protrusions were designed based on the geometry and proportion found on the facades of the nearby Georgian terrace houses. These protruded windows units, they argued, were devices that enable a visual dialogue between the proposed slab blocks and their surrounding old houses. Crosby and his team also claimed that the window variations were not only a strategy for preserving existing urban fabric in Fulham but were also a response to the changing 1960's lifestyles. These protrusions, according to Crosby, provided additional floor areas allowing residents to appropriate spaces for their individual needs, to "accommodate every family size, and preferably every taste, hobby or idiosyncrasy" of a "living city."¹¹⁴ (FIG 2.15)

The facade system in the 1963 Fulham Study helped bridge Crosby's intellectual preoccupations. On the one hand, the facade protrusion was a customised standardised unit that reflected the advance in customised prefabrication technology of the time.¹¹⁵ It was an

¹¹² Taylor Woodrow Group, *Urban Renewal: Fulham Study*.

¹¹³ Taylor Woodrow Group, 14,15,20.

¹¹⁴ Taylor Woodrow Group, 46.

It is worthy to note that the evocation of "living city" was probably a reference to a contemporaneous exhibition created by the Archigram members at the ICA, of which Crosby helped secure its funding and venue.

Peter Cook, "Introduction," in *Living Arts*, ed. Theo Crosby and Jon Bodley, vol. 2 (London: Institute of Contemporary Art, 1963):2.

¹¹⁵ Crosby, "International Union of Architects Congress Building, South Bank, London."

architectural solution explicitly geared toward the changes in everyday British life brought by industrialisation and consumerism, and a device to rectify Modernist design. Other than its ability to resonate with the existing urban fabric, Crosby argued the modulated facade was also a means to mediate the societal issues of the 1960s. He observed that the development in consumerism and media technology had cultivated a more individualistic and internalised social life. In light of this decline of the public realm, Crosby argued, the protrusion would be an architectural element that re-connected the internalised social life with the outside world.¹¹⁶

Particularly noteworthy in the Fulham Study was that the language of Classical architecture was used as an apparatus to campaign for liberating planning and urban renewal opportunities from the grip of governmental agencies.¹¹⁷ In 1964, Crosby presented the Fulham Study scheme in a RIBA seminar, where he posited it as a challenge to the rigid density control, sun angle and ventilation provisions, and building distances.¹¹⁸ In the seminar, Crosby used the merits of old buildings to challenge the modern pursuit for health and hygiene that have been a prime concern in British post-war housing design.¹¹⁹ He described the project as such:

...we looked for the profits of intelligent enterprise to supply the subsidy required for some housing. And to get the conditions where enterprise can *make* money you have to fulfil Jane Jacobs' four conditions of city life.¹²⁰

This formulation of the inter-relationship between old buildings and profit-making seemed to be thin. However, at the time of the Fulham Study, they were seen as possible outlets to

¹¹⁶ Crosby, *Architecture: City Sense*, 60–64.

¹¹⁷ Crosby, 56,57.

¹¹⁸ Crosby and Lyons, "Two High Density Redevelopment Schemes."

¹¹⁹ Simon Pepper, "The Beginning of High-Rise Social Housing in the Long 1940s: The Case of the LCC and Woodberry Down Estate," in *Architecture and the Welfare State*, ed. Mark Swenarton, Tom Avermaete, and Dirk von den Heuvel (London, New York: Routledge, 2014), 69–92.

¹²⁰ Crosby and Lyons, "Two High Density Redevelopment Schemes," 60.

redeem the mistakes made in post-war reconstruction and urban renewal projects. After a decade of state-driven mass reconstruction and rebuilding, there had been noticeable discontent about the government's inability to create an urban environment that could allow commerce and trade to flourish.¹²¹ The Fulham Study was one of the pilot projects to test out whether the involvement of a private enterprise — in this case, Taylor Woodrow — could bring constructive input to urban renewal initiatives. Therefore, Crosby's call for the loosening of building and planning control, the preservation of old buildings, and the accommodation of market interests would not be too surprising for his audience. Although the project was not realised, the Fulham Study served as a window to look into the political, intellectual, architectural, and economic conditions that induced the privatisation and deregulatory turn of British architecture in the following decades.¹²² It served as an odd precedent to the Public-Private-Partnership model that would later significantly transform British urbanism.

¹²¹ Cherry, *Urban Change and Planning: A History of Urban Development in Britain since 1750*, 158.

¹²² Another scheme proposed under the same initiative was the World's End Estate in Chelsea designed by Eric Lyons.



FIG 2.14 Diagram comparison between the facade of Georgian houses and Crosby's team's proposed facade design.



FIG 2.15 Plan and section of the Fulham Study housing design showing the variety of units generated by the window protrusion permutations.

2.8 Ulster Terrace and Ten Principles as a Proposition for Preservation

Almost a decade later, Crosby revisited the Fulham Study's facade design system and applied it to a building rehabilitation design for Ulster Terrace, a row of three-storied terrace houses originally designed by John Nash in 1824.¹²³ (FIG 2.16) Standing on the south side of Regent's Park, Ulster Terrace was designed as a complement to the more iconic Park

¹²³ Pentagram, *Living by Design*, 179.

Crescent and formed an integral part of Nash's plan for the area. The building was listed as a heritage building in 1970, and its historical importance meant that the massing and the front elevation of the structure could not be altered significantly.¹²⁴ (FIG 2.17) Crosby's more visible intervention was therefore dedicated to the rear facade, which faced a typical London mews. Crosby filled in the jagged massing at the back of the building and brought the whole row of terrace houses to an even height. (FIG 2.18) He designed an undulating facade addition created by changes in the building massing, the degree of facade protrusion, and window sizes. The increase in both building height and depth from Crosby's addition rendered the Ulster Terrace taller and larger than the other buildings in the mews. The renovated building, however, did not have an overwhelming presence after the addition, mostly due to the variation in the facade protrusion which brought a sense of lightness and delicacy to the building.

Designing his facade variation based on the proportions and geometry of the surrounding buildings, Crosby successfully negotiated the difference in scale between the renovated building and the nearby two- and three- storied houses. The varied protuberance also brought a sculptural quality to the facade. Still adhering to the *Gesamtkunstwerk* ideal, Crosby collaborated with Peter Lloyd Jones, a scientist-turned-artist at Kingston University, to devise a decorative detail.¹²⁵ Peter Lloyd Jones created a variety of precast concrete corbels mounted on the cornice of the new facade. (FIG 2.19) Crosby's indented facade design was also a skilful juxtaposition of sentimentality and rationality in design. On the one hand, the shifting volumes of the addition bore a resemblance to the irregularity found in the back facades of typical London terrace houses, evoking local memory. On the other hand, the

¹²⁴ Pentagram, 179–80.

¹²⁵ Interview with Peter Lloyd Jones, 14 November 2016

variance in building volume, protrusion and window sizes were rationalised through a sophisticated use of mathematical principle. The Ulster Terrace project had thus been regarded as a successful example of synthesis of science in art in the 1970s.¹²⁶



FIG 2.16 Front facade and map of the Ulster Terrace showing its relationship with the more famous Park Crescent, also designed by John Nash.

¹²⁶ Elizabeth Goldring, "Desert Sun/Desert Moon and the SKY ART Manifesto," *Leonardo*, 1987.



FIG 2.17 Before and after picture of the Ulster Terrace after Pentagram's 1975 renovation. The alteration made to the front facade had been minimal. The listed document described the Ulster Terrace as, "Symmetrical composition with Ionic colonnaded ground floor theme reflecting that of Park Crescent q.v. but with distinctive feature of pairs of 3-storey bows to end pairs of houses." These elements are maintained and made more visible through Pentagram's renovation.



FIG 2.18 Before and after picture of the Ulster Terrace after Pentagram's 1975 renovation, showing Crosby's addition to the back facade. The original five-storey building has been extended to become seven.



FIG 2.19 Crosby's design for the back facade of Ulster Terrace. In Pevsner's *The Building of England*, the Ulster Terrace renovation is described as such, "Converted to offices in 1975 by Green Lloyd & Adams and Pentagram Design, with a large rear extension, visible only from the mews, somewhat roguishly designed: Victorian (or perhaps oriental) in its inspiration, with six tiers of arched windows, building up both from below and from each side into two projecting parts. The detail is handled with unusual care" (1991, 618)

In fact, only the first two floors of the renovated building were turned into offices and the upper floor retained its residential uses.

At stake was also that Crosby concealed a 20th-century real estate profit-making interest behind the Ulster Terrace's Neoclassical facade. During the renovation, Crosby subdivided the back side of the building from the original three storeys to five storeys. (FIG 2.20) The shifts in building volume, protrusion and window sizes had been successful in making such expansion less notable. The protrusion also further increased the interior floor spaces of the building, making the largest addition conveniently located on the top floor where the real estate value was highest. Crosby's understanding of Classical architectural principles and by-law planning also brought an aura of politeness to the renovation. The renovated indented facade does not ostensibly look like a 20th-century addition but more like the result of decades of continuous alteration, just like every other 19th-century building in London. The renovation was seen as successful and received the European Architectural Heritage Year Award in 1975.¹²⁷ Crosby continued to cultivate his and Pentagram's reputation of rehabilitating old buildings. For example, another project, the renovation of the Unilever House in London completed in 1983, was the case study for a 1985 RIBA symposium conspicuously entitled "Profitable Rehab."¹²⁸ (FIG 2.21)

The recognition given to Crosby's architecture of disguise should partly be attributed to the depressed economic and industrial conditions of the time. The architectural department of the GLC (formerly the LCC), once the largest employer of architects in the country, had been downsizing since the mid-1960s.¹²⁹ The urban condition was equally dire; London's population decline since the post-war years rendered new construction commissions even harder to come by.¹³⁰ Renovation of old buildings, as a cost-saving way of property

¹²⁷ Pentagram, *Living by Design*, 177.

¹²⁸ Royal Institute of British Architects, "Profitable Rehab: A One Day Seminar Held at the Royal Institute of British Architects" (London: Royal Institute of British Architects, 1985).

¹²⁹ Lang, "Architects Take Command: The LCC Architects' Department."

¹³⁰ Richard J. Williams, *The Anxious City: English Urbanism in the Late Twentieth Century* (London, New York: Routledge, 2004), 4.

investment, emerged as a new viable means of real estate development. In Pentagram's 1978 publication *Living by Design*, Crosby had clearly stated his view that preservation and rehabilitation of buildings would be the much-needed remedy, both architecturally and economically, for British societies of the 1970s:

In the city, a building can often be saved by a change of use to a higher value use which can bring in the increased return necessary to satisfy the owner. This is the commercial answer, and one very difficult to get around. To bring a new life to a very large old building requires a creative and complicated structure of uses, within which trade-offs of various values can be made which utilises the potential of the building fully – and does not distort its qualities...that marks our period, and is its saving grace.¹³¹

In his usual provocative voice, Crosby forged a proposition for extending the past in order to reach the future. Manifested in these works was not only Crosby's practice as an operative architect-historian and also his ability to postulated how his propositions were socially, environmentally, and professional responsible.

¹³¹ Pentagram, *Living by Design*, 175.



FIG 2.20 Section of the Ulster Terrace renovation. The section revealed the significant increase of floor area by Pentagram's renovation.

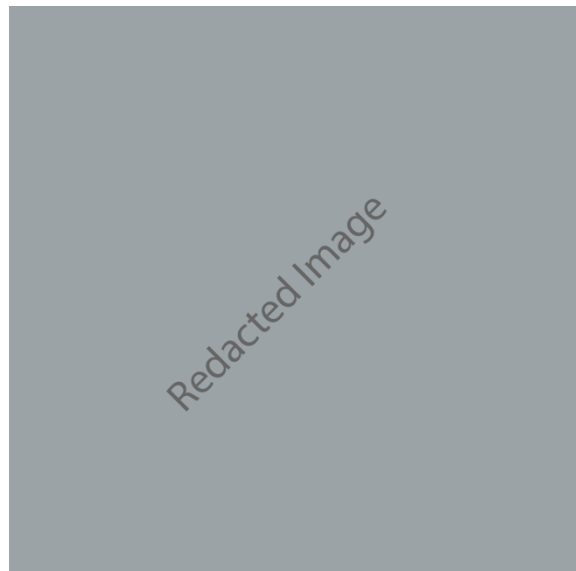
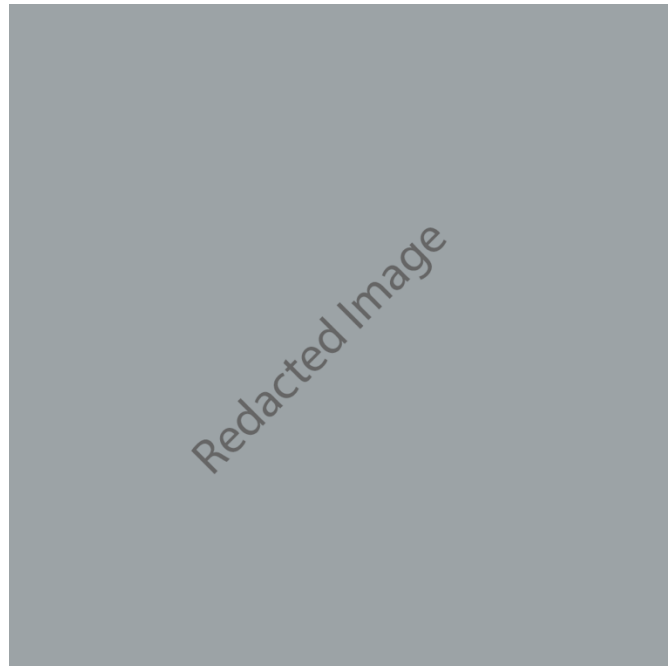


FIG 2.21 Unilever House before and after Crosby's renovation, which introduced two more floor of spaces on the top of building. In the planning permission proposals, Crosby argued that 12 statues created by artist Nicholas Munro could accentuate the facade's geometry and cover the punched windows. The statues have since been removed during a 2004 renovation by Kohn Pederson & Fox.

In Ulster Terrace, not only had Crosby used a similar strategy to the Fulham Study's facade system, but a closer examination of Crosby's design also revealed many key tenets of Ten Principles. The "material" and "colour" of the facade retained the original character of a typical mews. The integration of arts and decoration was similarly reflected in the facade design. The collaborative practice was also consistent to the propositions for "Art" and "Decoration" found in "Ten Rules for Planners" and Ten Principles. An even more clear resonance was found between the Ulster Terrace design and the revised 1990 version of Ten Principles. In this unpublished iteration of Ten Principles, the most substantial expansion was a two-page section entitled "Zoning, Work and the Noble Dwelling."¹³² This addition indicated the importance of its content to Crosby, and that the rhetoric found in this section was probably not of Prince Charles' interest. Like many of Crosby's other writings, "Zoning, Work and the Noble Dwelling" started out as an evaluation of the effects of Modernist reconstruction and renewal. Crosby explained that zoning regulations, or what he coined "the legislation for segregation," were reasonable strategies for 19th-century industrialising cities for the sake of health and hygiene.¹³³ Their drawbacks, such as infrastructural expansion, segregation and monotonicity in urban spaces, was justifiable in comparison to the hazards inherent to early manufacturing industries. For Crosby, the problem was that architects and planners, since the first part of the 20th-century, had been uncritically embracing these zoning regulations which led to a significant degradation in the programmatic and visual complexity of cities.

After a long preamble, Crosby speculated about British housing in the future; the

¹³² Theo Crosby, "Principles" (Unpublished Manuscript, January 1990), 29, Theo Crosby Archive, University of Brighton.

¹³³ Crosby, 29.

reduction of work and commuting hours, Crosby imagined, would lead to “a proliferation of the arts of peace: literature, poetry, cooking, arts and crafts, every kind of hobby...”¹³⁴ In anticipation of the significant economic and technological shift brought by the industrial transformation, Crosby envisaged,

The ‘smart’ house of the future will contain a basic computer that will monitor all the services, read the meters and pay the bills, look after security and economy....In short, the need will be variety, and intensity and history has much to teach us in how to put many activities into a building, and to make it pleasurable.¹³⁵

This 1990 document was a rare occasion when Crosby made a clear description of his vision of an ideal home. The image of the “smart” house portrayed by Crosby could best be described as a techno-utopianism from the other end. While no image was provided, Crosby listed the spaces found in the “smart house”:

a storage loft, a wine cellar as well as offices and workrooms. The garden will take on a new dimension of importance... roof spaces and terraces become valuable as land becomes expensive and intensely used. Conservatories provide huge gains in solar heating as well as providing fruit and flowers.¹³⁶

In short, the future “smart house” would look just like existing London houses or apartments built in the past few centuries. The evocation of “roof spaces, terraces, and conservatories” suggested that Crosby was writing this with 18th- and 19th-century terrace houses in mind.¹³⁷ Portraying a vision of the future similar to William Morris’s *News from Nowhere*, Crosby envisioned a lifestyle of a technologically-advanced future which did not necessarily have to look drastically different from the current day.¹³⁸ If buildings and infrastructure from the past could fulfil the needs and desires of today’s and tomorrow’s residents, Crosby declared, they should be re-used and perhaps favoured over newly-constructed buildings.

¹³⁴ Crosby, 30.

¹³⁵ Crosby, 30.

¹³⁶ Crosby, 30.

¹³⁷ Crosby, 30.

¹³⁸ William Morris, *News from Nowhere and Other Writing* (London: Penguin Classics, 1993).

2.9 The Use of Disorder

The development from Fulham Study, “Ten Rules for Planners,” Ulster Terrace to Ten Principles could be seen as Crosby’s slippage into an increasingly dishonest and regressive view in architectural design. However, the adaptive use of Classical architectural language could also be seen as a reverberation of scholarships that championed the mediating and normalising value of Classical architectural language, including Colin Rowe and Fred Cotter’s *Collage City*.¹³⁹ In this 1978 publication, Rowe and Koetter bemoaned the improvisation in contemporary cities, and the inability of the Modern Movement to espouse a new classic. They argued that the pressing issue faced by Western cities in the late 20th century was the loss of references. By comparing architecture with literature, Rowe and Koetter criticised the Modernist pursuit for continuous revolution and innovation. They made a similar affirmation, as Crosby, for an architecture of mediocrity, stating “if the notion that all speech should approximate to literature is, *ipso facto*, assured and would, in practice, be intolerable, much the same may be said about building and architecture.”¹⁴⁰ Manifested in both Crosby’s, as well as Rowe and Koetter’s works was a view that Classical architectural language could speak of order and disorder, sentimentality and rationality, mediocrity and innovation.

Another shared trait between Crosby and Rowe was their continued interrogation into the role of an architect. Their affinity to Classic architectural tradition could be seen as a continuation of their disillusionment about the Modernist orthodoxy after “le style Corbu,” one that had been developing since the post-war era.¹⁴¹ In Rowe’s other writings, he expressed

¹³⁹ Rowe and Koetter, *Collage City*.

¹⁴⁰ Rowe and Koetter, 101.

¹⁴¹ Colin Rowe, “The Mathematics of the Ideal Villa,” in *The Mathematics of the Ideal Villa and Other Essays*. (Cambridge: MA: MIT Press, 1976), 104.

scepticism in the agency of architects. For example, in his 1971 publication *Five Architects*, a key text in Postmodern architecture, Rowe asked: “Is the architect simply a victim of circumstance? And should he be? Or may he be allowed to cultivate his own free will? And are not culture and civilisation the products of the imposition of will?”¹⁴² Rowe’s interrogation and pessimistic view about the role and agency of an architect were not unlike Crosby’s critique found in the 1957 *AD* “Summing Up.”¹⁴³ For Crosby, the creativity of an architect and the program of modern mass society was almost irreconcilable. However, he maintained that architecture should always respond to the social, economic, technological and political conditions of its own time. Under such a dilemma, Crosby regarded Classical architectural language the only appropriate outlet for architects to explore their artistic license.

In his *Collage City*, Rowe stressed an ideal cityscape could not be established solely through an orderly or disorderly vision of a city, but through the negotiation between the various tendencies.¹⁴⁴ In the Fulham Study and Ulster Terrace project, one could find resonance with Rowe’s call to embrace the conflicts between the traditional and the Modern in order to create a heterogenic urbanscape. In both Crosby and Rowe’s writings, there was also a constant challenge to the zeal of an urban order, a pursuit that had been an integral part of Western architectural culture since the Enlightenment. In the 1970s this changed mentalities towards the organisation of urban structure had significant socio-political implication, too. In 1970, American sociologist Richard Sennett published *The Use of Disorder*, in which he lamented the affinity of order in Modernist architectural and planning doctrines.¹⁴⁵ He suggested this mentality was one of the underlying causes of the dire state of

¹⁴² Colin Rowe, *Five Architects: Eisenman, Graves, Gwathmey, Hejduk, Meier* (New York: Wittenborn, 1971).

¹⁴³ Crosby, “Thoughts in Progress: Summing Up 3,” 435.

¹⁴⁴ Rowe and Koetter, *Collage City*, 196.

¹⁴⁵ Richard Sennett, *The Uses of Disorder: Personal Identity and City Life* (New York: W.W.Norton, 1970).

the Western metropolis. The book, not unlike Crosby's "Ten Rules for Planners", was written as a critique of the decaying and declining cities in developed nations. In the period, New York, where Sennett was based, was on the brink of bankruptcy. Witnessing the injustices and contradictions manifested in the modern metropolis, Sennett's writing manifested a romantication of the solitary and tolerance that was supposed to be found in the traditional city.

Signposted by these writings was also a change in the appraisal of urban social structure amongst Western intellectuals. City was no longer interpreted as a hierarchical structure, but in Sennett's words "a social order of parts without a coherent, controllable whole form."¹⁴⁶ Through this articulation of urban structure, Sennett called for a less deterministic, and more democratic vision for the city. A similar view could be seen in the works of other influential architectural and urban writers including Kevin Lynch, as well as Alison and Peter Smithson, and in the aforementioned *Architect's Year Book*.¹⁴⁷ Yet in championing this valuation of cities as organic entities, these writers had also expressed a somewhat *blasé* attitude towards the inherent social, economic and political injustice ingrained in the structure of cities. In other words, in their respective visions for re-ordering the urban realm as a "social order of parts", they had also inadvertently overlooked and turned away from the social hierarchy and civil order that were still at play in 20th-century cities.¹⁴⁸ This reformulation and then depoliticisation of urban structures could also be found in the Fulham Study design, where the window protrusions was used as an apparatus to

¹⁴⁶ Sennett, 116.

¹⁴⁷ Kevin Lynch, *The Image of the City* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1960).
Smithson and Smithson, *Urban Structuring: Studies of Alison and Peter Smithson*.
David Lewis, ed., *Architects' Yearbook*, vol. 13 (London: Elek Books, 1971).

¹⁴⁸ Forty, *Words and Buildings: A Vocabulary of Modern Architecture*, 242–44.
Jules Lubbock, *The Tyranny of Taste: The Politics of Architecture and Design in Britain* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 25–54.

dissolve the socio-economical hierarchy embedded in historical urban fabric.

This indifference to the social hierarchy in architecture has implications on preservation as well. In 1990, Sennett published *The Conscience of the Eye: The Design and Social Life of Cities* which supposed to be a re-iteration of *The Use of Disorder*.¹⁴⁹ Part and parcel of Sennett's critique was also an opposition to the figure of a master-architect. Noteworthy was that in *The Conscience of the Eye*, Sennett championed ideas that have been seen as going against the grain of Enlightenment values: he reminisced "civility," which he defined as the "bodily behaviour that forthrightly represents inner character. Civilisation, in the later age of wigs, was about the virtues of a certain kind of disguise."¹⁵⁰ The Enlightenment value that detested this "mask of virtue," Sennett argued, had led Western society to become a culture of differences rather than of unity.¹⁵¹ Sennett's works could be used to reflect Crosby's developing fidelity to Classical architectural tradition, and his use of history as a disguise for profit-making. The challenge to the authoritative role of an architect, the valuation of historical urban fabric, and the Modern doctrine of "form follows function" found in Sennett's writings' were to various extents realised in Crosby's designs. However, this call for "civility," one could argue, was what enabled the alternative kind of facadism that was reflected in Crosby's Ulster Terrace design. Concealed behind the thin veil of civility and politeness was the subdivision and gentrification of space.

Crosby's works also exposed another contradiction in Sennett et al's call for a mediation between order and disorder. Manifested in the Ulster Terrace design was a reverted interpretation of flexibility: instead of creating an adaptable and flexible space, old buildings

¹⁴⁹ Richard Sennett, *The Conscience of the Eye: The Design and Social Life of Cities* (W. W. Norton: New York, 1990).

¹⁵⁰ Sennett, 79.

¹⁵¹ Sennett, 79.

would be manipulated in all sorts of ways, as long as the facade was polite, and the program is financially sound. The economic and environmental rationale for preservation, ironically, was also based on a modern belief in the constant reorganisation of the means of production. The result was buildings that maintain their collaborative roles in the constant regeneration of the real-estate market without initiating new architectural dialogue.

The proposition for an environment of disguise continued to have a broad appeal in late 20th-century British society. Projects like Pentagram's Ulster Terrace and Unilever House could be seen as part of the force propelling such trends. Undeniably, these works had played a visible role in the preservation of British historical urban fabrics, and probably had limited ostentatious architectural experimentations. However, the fallacy of the urbanism of disguise and decorum has also become increasingly apparent. Architectural critic Owen Hatherley, for example, observed a "London Brick Phenomenon," where buildings use the similar material, colour, and geometrical principles as existing Georgian houses.¹⁵² This camouflaging of new buildings, Hatherley suggested, was partly a result of the New London Housing Design Guide issued by Boris Johnson's Mayor of London office in 2010.¹⁵³ At stake was that these "well-mannered" and "well-constructed" buildings disguise and neutralise the rampant real estate price surge occurring all across London. Disguised behind normalising brickwork is the wide gulf between the socio-economic status of its residents, and the impact brought by gentrification. Hatherley decried that "It is as if the response to the housing crisis was to make housing less conspicuous, less of an aggressive imposition on the eyes of the unfavored. It says "look, we live in normal brick houses, just like you."¹⁵⁴ There

¹⁵² Owen Hatherley, "London's New Typology: The Tasteful Modernist Non-Dom Investment," Dezeen, August 21, 2014, <https://www.dezeen.com/2014/08/21/owen-hatherley-london-housing-typology-yuppie-flats-tasteful-modernist-investment>.

¹⁵³ Design for London, "London Housing Design Guide" (London: London Development Agency, 2010), https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/interim_london_housing_design_guide.pdf.

¹⁵⁴ Hatherley, "London's New Typology: The Tasteful Modernist Non-Dom Investment."

has also been architectural critics, such as *The Guardian*'s Oliver Wainwright, suggesting these housing schemes were pertaining to the taste of the Prince.¹⁵⁵ (FIG 2.22)

A closer examination of the *New London Housing Design Guide* reflects a remarkable similarity with Ten Principles. The Design Guide's proposition of "a new London vernacular." The word "vernacular," in this context, should be read as a euphemism for 18th- and 19th-century buildings built on Classical principles. The *Design Guide* had made such preference explicit by stating its goal to devise the architectural strategy befitting the "successful residential environments with enduring appeal."¹⁵⁶ In its discussion of desirable living environments, the Guide stressed that only "the best of 20th-century development" would be considered as part of London's valuable urban fabric consisting of "terrace houses, squares, and streets."¹⁵⁷ The first three "Standards" of the Housing Design Guide are "shaping good places," "housing for a diverse city," and "front street to front door."¹⁵⁸ They resonate, to various extents, with Ten Principles' "Harmony," "The Place," "Scale," "Enclosure," and "Community."¹⁵⁹ The Guide's call for respecting "the character and legibility of the area and local pattern of building, public space, landscape and topography" also echoes the frequent evocation of the "visual code" by Crosby and other Prince Charles' advisors. Other recommendations, such as providing play and informal recreation spaces and allowing residents to "get to a station or bus stop, shop for food or relax in a park, café or pub within a comfortable walking distance of their home," are some rhetoric taken directly from the Poundbury guidebook.¹⁶⁰ Crosby's vision on "Zoning, Work, and the Noble Dwelling"

¹⁵⁵ Oliver Wainwright, "The Tories New Design Guide Backs Tiny, Unliveable, Backward-Looking Homes," *The Guardian*, April 2, 2015.

¹⁵⁶ Design for London, "London Housing Design Guide," 5.

¹⁵⁷ Design for London, 5.

¹⁵⁸ Design for London, 11–13.

¹⁵⁹ Crosby, "Ten Commandments for the Duchy of Cornwall," 1–2.

¹⁶⁰ Design for London, "London Housing Design Guide," 21,31.

can also be found in the Guide's recommendation "dwelling plans should demonstrate that all homes are provided with adequate space and service to be able to work from home."¹⁶¹ In sum, the preservation of pre-20th-century urban fabrics, and the adaptation of design codes based on Classical principles have now permeated through the everyday British urban fabric. The alternative societal vision that Davey and Jencks bestowed to the Ten Principles, however, did not come into fruition.

¹⁶¹ Design for London, 15.



FIG 2.22 Example of “London Brick Phenomenon” where new private luxurious home in Camden adapted the similar appearance to existing buildings.

2.10 Conclusion

Crosby's writings from the 1960s to 1990s and his projects revealed how Classical language and principles found in Victorian and Georgian houses were first used to promote a less deterministic appreciation of urban spaces but were soon incorporated into a call for decorum and appropriateness in architectural and urban design. Reviewing Crosby's works in conjunction with writings by authors like Sennett, Rowe and Krier also reveal how this turn to appropriateness was found not only in discussions in preservation but also in Postmodern architecture. These discussions on appropriateness and decorum also engendered a further disintegration of form and content which was once integral to both Classical and Modernist architectural discourses.¹⁶² Moreover, they also manifested a shift from the Modernist quests for a universal architectural and planning solutions for the mass society, which was also found in Crosby's works discussed in the last chapter.¹⁶³

The analysis of Crosby's works also raised the question of whether it has become more difficult to discern the societal implication of architecture in late 20th-century Britain. In Fulham Study, one could already notice that veil of propriety has rendered it harder and harder to scrutinise building preservation and rehabilitation projects. In other words, Crosby and his team conceived a design mechanism that created an obstacle for eliciting public discourse through architecture. The formulation of facade as a modular "system" has further decoupled architects from the program of buildings they designed. Physically, the kind of "negotiation" celebrated by Rowe, and "civility" championed by Sennett has been more or

¹⁶² Payne, *The Architectural Treatise in the Italian Renaissance: Architectural Invention, Ornament, and Literary Culture*, 56.

¹⁶³ Tim Anstey, *Architecture and Rhetoric: Persuasion, Context, Action*, ed. Katja Grillner, Rolf Hughes, and Tim Anstey (Black Dog: London, 2007), 23.

Architectural historian Tim Anstey has suggested that since the 19th and 20th century, the idea of decorum had been incorporated by the Modernist, turning "trope of appropriateness" into "societal 'needs'." As a result, Anstey observed, "modern debate and criticism was thus played out on a field that, to a certain extent, took the moral authority of 'the fitting' as its given topography."

less realised. However, a new kind of segregation through gentrification and continuous industrial and technological transformation has emerged. Ironically, Crosby's ability to locate places where profit-making opportunities and architectural contingency collided, rendering the urban context that he cherished most vulnerable. Spitalfields, an area where Crosby had spent decades proposing revitalisation schemes with entertainment and cultural activities, is now one of the most gentrified areas in London. His call for flexible working, dwelling and leisure spaces is now an innovative real estate apparatus for million-dollar corporation like WeWork, that are concealed behind the polite facade of dis-used industrial warehouses. It is under the guise of diversity, creativity, and differences that these 21st-century real estate development strategies sprouted.

Chapter 3

How to Play the Preservation Game

Chapter 3 How to Play the Preservation Game

A generation ago, it was ‘The Machine’ that let architects down - tomorrow or the day after it will be ‘The Computer,’ or Cybernetics or Topology.¹

Reyner Banham, 1960.

3.1 Introduction

The retrieval of Crosby’s voices allows a re-appraisal of current studies of British post-war architecture. For example, the study of Fulham Study in the previous chapter can be used to review Archigram’s polemic of “make new possibilities available and new sensations experienced.”² It propose a more careful examination of the group’s works, of the same period, and thus shed lights on references to the care of historical urban fabric. Peter Cook, for example, stated in his foreword to the *Living City* exhibition (1963) that:

we are in a long-established European city, of now established precedents and no clear way for us to build upon them. The re-creation of environment is too often a jaded process, having to do with densities, allocation of space, fulfilment of regulation: the spirit of cities is lost in the process.³

Cook then went on to cite Jane Jacobs and William H. Whyte, and left a remark that sounds preservationist: “The problem facing our cities is not just that of their regeneration, but of their right to an existence.”⁴ A similar observation can be made from the well-known Archigram proclamation that “when it is raining in Oxford Street the architecture is no more important than the rain.”⁵ The rest of the passage, by Dennis Crompton, also reflected their

¹ Reyner Banham, “The Science Side: Weapon Systems, Computers, Human Sciences,” *Architectural Review*, March 1960.

² Higgot, *Mediating Modernism: Architectural Cultures in Britain*, 131.

³ Peter Cook, “Introduction,” in *Living Arts*, ed. Theo Crosby and Jon Bodley, vol. 2 (London: Institute of Contemporary Art, n.d.).

⁴ Cook.

Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*.

William H Whyte, *The Organisational Man* (New York: Simon& Schuster, 1956).

⁵ Dennis Crompton, “City Synthesis” (London, 1994), 76.

interest in the past: “the city lives equally in its past and its future, and in the present where we are.”⁶ One can begin to ask whether Archigram’s “new” encapsulated everything that was previously unseen, including those past buildings that were forgotten and undervalued? Meanwhile, how can we reconsider Crosby’s works through exploring his radical visions and his techno-utopian ventures?

Archigram’s expanded articulation of the environment which included the rain, the buildings, the signs, the people, as well as the future, the present and the past will be used as a lens for examining Crosby’s 1973 exhibition *How to Play the Environment Game*, in which the group took part.⁷ This evaluation is also a continuation of the examination on Crosby’s pursuit for an expanded and less hierarchical appreciation of buildings and urbanism in the previous chapters. Through this exhibition, this chapter explores the development of a preservation consensus in 1970s Britain. Held at a time when concerns about environmental protection reached a climactic point, the exhibition was an ambitious campaign to call for public action on the British built environment. The first half of this chapter investigates how, in the exhibition, antagonism to Modernist architecture enabled a collective call for preservation. How the exhibition put together an unlikely alliance between authorities, architects, community groups, and the squatter movement will be discussed. The multifaceted effects of such cooperation will be explored, too. *How to Play the Environment Game* also offers a window to look into how architecture employed toolkits from other disciplines after parting ways with Modernism. How radical politics and ecological movement of the period shaped Crosby’s preservationist rhetoric will be considered.

⁶ Crompton, 76.

⁷ Pentagram, *Living by Design*, 156–59.

Crosby, *How to Play the Environmental Game*, 66.

The second half of this chapter examines how Crosby's appraisal of architectural "language," which I have discussed in Chapter 2, evolved in the 1970s. Through mapping the inspirations drawn from system theory and media technology, this chapter explores the shared trajectory taken by the discourse in Postmodernism and preservation. How architects' valuation of the past was shaped by this turn to Information Theory will also be discussed. Finally, this study proposes that *How to Play the Environment Game* has raised a critical discourse about the environment that is still worthy of consideration today.



FIG 3.1 Entrance of the Hayward Gallery during *How to Play the Environment Game*. The poster described *How to Play the Environment Game* as “an Arts Council exhibition which explains the theory, stakes, ploys and gambits which are manipulating and corroding our environment.”



FIG 3.2 Cover of *How to Play the Environment Game* Penguin Special paperback.

3.2 Exhibition as Criticism

In April 1973, Crosby revealed his *How to Play the Environment Game* exhibition at the Hayward Gallery in the South Bank Centre of London. (FIG 3.1) The Arts Council-funded exhibition was Crosby's most ambitious anti-Modernist architecture campaign to date. Not only did the exhibition take over the entire two floors of the Hayward Gallery, but it also travelled to various Arts Council galleries across Britain, and was later sent to Sweden.⁸ In order to maximise its outreach in Britain and abroad, the content of the exhibition was also consolidated as a Penguin paperback.⁹ (FIG 3.2) Crosby declared his zeal for an all-embracing evaluation of Modernist architecture and planning doctrines. He wrote on the back cover of the Penguin paperback:

Our environment changes rapidly, continually; landmarks disappear overnight, communications are broken up, families displaced, whole neighbourhoods transformed through 'redevelopment.' We find the process bewildering and regret most of its results.

But who is responsible? How does it work? Why, when social knowledge and technological skills might seem to place Utopia within our reach, are the results almost always bad? Whose failure is it?¹⁰

The provocative nature of the exhibition was also reflected in its title. Echoing Nigel Calder's dystopian theory, *The Environment Game*, the exhibition tried to borrow the energy of the ecological movement.¹¹ The exhibition also manifested architecture's Cold War

⁸ Tour dates and locations of the exhibition
15 Sept-13 Oct 1973 Birmingham, Ikon Gallery
27 Oct-25 November: Sheffield, Mappin Art Gallery
8 Dec-20 Jan: Liverpool, Walker Art Gallery
2 Feb-16 Mar: Bristol, City Art Council
30 Mar- 28 Apr: Southampton, Art Gallery
11 May-9 Jun: Newcastle, Laing Art Gallery
29 Jun- 27 July: Aberdeen

Bengt Jonhansson, "Letter from Bengt Jonhansson of Sveriges Arkitekturmuseum to Joanne Drew" (Letter, November 26, 1974), ACGB/121/363, Box 1, Arts Council of Great Britain Archive.

There was also plan made to send the exhibition to Canada.

"Letters from F.R Carey of Community Arts Council of Vancouver to Joanne Drew (September 1974)" London, Arts Council of Great Britain Archive, ACGB/121/363, Box 1.

⁹ Crosby, *How to Play the Environmental Game*.

The book was distributed in the U.K., Australia, New Zealand, and Canada.

¹⁰ Crosby, 6.

¹¹ Nigel Calder, *The Environment Game* (London: Secker Warbug, 1967).

preoccupation in Game Theory.¹² Crosby's ambition found resonance in the architectural field. Reviewers from *Architects' Journal* and *Housing Review* emphasised the timeliness of the exhibition — there had not been any large-scale exhibition investigating housing and urban planning issues since the MARS Group's *New Architecture* exhibition of 1938.¹³ *How to Play the Environment Game*, held at a time when public and professional support to post-war Modernism had crumbled, was recognised as a long-overdue evaluation of the British built environment and an opportunity to articulate a new vision for British architecture and urbanism.

The timing of the exhibition also could not have been better (worse). When *How to Play the Environment Game* was travelling to other Arts Council galleries in the winter of 1973, travelling was not easy. The oil crisis caused by the tense situation in the Gulf countries had further accentuated the immediate nature of the ecological movement.¹⁴ By then, the idea that the built environment and the natural environment were both parts of the human-made milieu had been circulated and accepted. The call for ordinary citizens to be responsible for the changes found in both the built and the natural environment would also be familiar to the 1970 audience.¹⁵ However, in the exhibition, Crosby did not clearly define what the term “environment” was supposed to mean. In the introduction to the exhibition catalogue, Crosby only stated

The book argues that the only means to tackle population growth and resources scarcity is to concentrate all the human population and left the rest of the earth as uninhabited “wilderness.” Calder also championed synthetic food thus to reduce the agricultural land imprint.

¹²Other uses of Game Theory in architectural and urban project of the era included Cedric Price's Fun Palace and Buckminster Fuller's World Game.

Stanley Mathews, “The Fun Palace as Virtual Architecture: Cedric Price and the Practice of Indeterminacy,” *Journal of Architectural Education* 59, no. 3 (February 2006): 39–40.

Reinhold Martin, “The Last War: Architecture and Postmodernism, Again,” *New German Critique*, 99 (Fall, 2006 (n.d.): 63–82.

¹³ Wright, *A Journey Through Ruins*.

¹⁴ Mirko Zardini and Giovanni Borasi, *Sorry! Out of Gas* (Montreal: Canadian Centre for Architecture, 2007).

¹⁵ The publication of Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*, a decade year, had already put environmental discourse front and centre in the public discourse of the time.

Every day everyone plays the environment game, simultaneously actor and spectator; every action is part of the complex interaction that makes a place and a community. There are no unilateral decisions – everything relates to everything else. Form and idea follow each other into the past, or laterally into a maze of contemporary happenings.¹⁶

The titles of the exhibition sections, with their elusive titles such as “stakes” and “ploys”, also did not help clarify what Crosby meant by the “environment.” What one can interpret from the above paragraph is that, for Crosby, the environment meant anything that was external to a human body and perhaps their most intimate and private surroundings. This definition of the environment, however, was a departure from Crosby’s discussion on “Environment Design” in Pentagram’s *Living by Design* published five years earlier. In *Living by Design*, Crosby emphasised the influence on designers’ influence on the everyday built environment. In *Living by Design*, it was also clear that Crosby’s discussions on the environment were limited to aspects that designers and architects had control over: planning, conservation, interiors and architectural graphics.¹⁷ In *How to Play the Environment Game*, the discussion on the environment had expanded to encapsulate taxation, resources, and other more intangible issues. To borrow Crosby’s words “seen as a whole the environment is life itself, ourselves, attitudes and aspirations externalised.”¹⁸ How did Crosby organise and showcase this all-encompassing articulation of the environment in an exhibition?

How to Play the Environment Game comprised of twenty-one sections with over a thousand images and a dozen video displays. (FIG 3.3) Additional panels were erected in order to accommodate the prints and their accompanying short texts. (FIG 3.4) Almost all of the images were black and white photos and diagrams mounted on colour-coded walls. (FIG 3.5) Visitors were supposed to read the texts mounted above and between the images to

¹⁶ Crosby, *How to Play the Environmental Game*, 9.

¹⁷ Pentagram, *Living by Design*, 164,5.

¹⁸ Crosby, *How to Play the Environmental Game*, 10.

understand what the problems at stake in their environment were. Although the use of orange, red, blue and green paint had slightly altered the visual experience in the Hayward Gallery, *How to Play the Environment Game* was seen as a monotonous and relentless exhibition. One reviewer, George Freeman, suggested in *Designer* magazine that exhibition visitors would need “enormous stamina, both physical and intellectual,” in order to “managed to complete the course thoroughly at one session...”¹⁹ The exhibition drew only 500-600 visitors per week, a relatively low number compared to other Hayward Gallery exhibitions of the time and Crosby’s previous exhibitions.²⁰ The dull outlook of *How to Play the Environment Game* was particularly noteworthy given the team of talents involved in its production. It was the first major exhibition that Pentagram created in Britain since its formation in 1972 — after the successful collaboration Crosby, Alan Fletcher, Colin Forbes and Bob Gill had in the 1965 Milan Triennial.²¹ Crosby and Pentagram were, by the 1970s, well-versed in the world of exhibition design and technology. For example, in 1967, Crosby successfully used video projection and screen wall installations to create an exhibition of immersive experience in the Industrial Section of the British Pavilion at Montreal Expo ‘67.²² (FIG 3.6) (FIG 3.7)

Why did Crosby take a step back when the knowledge and technological skills for creating a visually appealing exhibition was available? The limitation of budget aside, another explanation for the exhibition’s static format could be Crosby’s preoccupation in producing criticism.²³ In *How to Play the Environment Game*, Crosby quite literally hung all

¹⁹ George Freeman, “Review: How to Play the Environment Game,” *Designer*, August 1973.

²⁰ The low visitors in the opening week was commented by the Arts Council Chairman in a letter to Arts Director of the Council:

“Letter from Chairman of the Arts Council of Great Britain, 19th April 1973, To Robin Campbell (cc. Lord Escher of RCA)” London, Arts Council of Great Britain Archive, ACGB/121/363, Box 1.

Sadler, “Theo Crosby’s Environment Games 1956-1973,” 105.

²¹ Pentagram, *Living by Design*, 156–59.

²² Pentagram, 160–64. Interview with Mike Csaky.

²³ The budget for the whole exhibition production was GBP 25175, which covered the wall construction, the research time and the printing of the panels (GBP 14.5 per panel, there were more than 800 panels) “Budget”, London, Arts Council of Great Britain Archive, ACGB/121/363, Box 1.

268 pages of content from the Penguin paperback on the gallery walls. (FIG 3.8) The intensity of the exhibition could also be understood through Simon Sadler's comparison of the exhibition to "a very good undergraduate course with exceptional visiting speakers - like Joseph Rykwert, Andrea Branzi, Peter Cook, and former government minister Lord Kennet."²⁴ The exhibition installation exposed Crosby's shortcomings as a curator but also reminded one of his previous role as a successful magazine editor. He had solicited contributions from stakeholders in British architecture of all stripes: architects, academics, activists, journalists, government ministers, and developers. Based on the themes of the essays from the contributors, Crosby and Pentagram produced the visual material and additional textual descriptions for each of the sections. Although almost complete autonomy was given to the contributors, Crosby was directly involved in the editing and representation of content.²⁵ The monotony of the exhibition, ironically, could also be seen as a by-product of this streamlined production of exhibition content.

Moreover, Crosby was unable to steer away from his tendency to rely on academic studies to support his criticism — he had even created a book list for the exhibition.²⁶ (FIG 3.9) However, not unlike Crosby's other ventures, his intellectual interrogation into history, economy, and environmental science were not rigorous. As Crosby stated, the exhibition was "a work of propaganda rather than scholarship."²⁷ The lack of intellectual rigour had been noted by reviewers of the exhibition. The review published in *New Scientist* magazine, for example, stated that the exhibition "Start with Egypt and Greece... from here the exhibition continues to give us a potted history of architecture."²⁸ In seeking a balance between a

²⁴ Sadler, "Theo Crosby's Environment Games 1956-1973," 105.

²⁵ Interview with Mick Csaky.

²⁶ Crosby, *How to Play the Environmental Game*, 256.

²⁷ Crosby, 256.

²⁸ David Cohen, "Exhibition: The Environment Game," *New Scientist*, April 19, 1973.

thorough interrogation and covering more grounds, Crosby opted for the latter. Topics including land lease rules, taxation, technological advancements, industrial changes, building prefabrication, urban renewal, natural resources, public arts, identity, and community action were raised. This curatorial method of expanding and then compartmenting the built environment also reflected Crosby's "typological critic" tendencies. Inevitably, some sections were conspicuously reductive. The discussion on mobility, for example, was concluded by a few pages of images of cars and female nudity, inspired by J.G. Ballard's novel *Crash* published in the same year.²⁹ (FIG 3.10)

How to Play the Environment, in spite of its rather lacklustre presentation, was a noteworthy experiment which formulated an intellectual and professional alliance, on architecture and planning issues, through an exhibition. The array of contributors also reflected the widespread antipathy to Modernist architecture at the time. The exhibition illustrated the Modern architecture's inability to fulfil its promise of efficiency, economy, and mass housing availability.³⁰ Modern architecture was also criticised for crippling the expression of identity in everyday architecture — the loss of *genius loci*.³¹ Many of these criticisms of the Modern architecture, by the time of the exhibition, would be familiar to British architects and public alike.³²

One aspect that distinguished the exhibition from other anti-Modernist discourses of the time, ironically, was Crosby's incapability to resist the lingering influence of the early

²⁹ Cohen.

³⁰ Crosby, *How to Play the Environmental Game*, 172–217.

³¹ Crosby, 244–56.

³² The publication of Oscar Newman's *Defensible Space* in 1972, for example, was an all-embracing harsh criticism towards Modernist architecture. Prejudice against Modernist arts and architecture could also be found in popular fiction and films of the time, including Stanley Kubrick's film adaptation of *A Clockwork Orange* (1973).

Oscar Newman, *Defensible Space; Crime Prevention Through Urban Design* (London: Macmillan, 1973). Stanley Kubrick, *A Clockwork Orange*, 1973.

Modernist avant-gardes. In the exhibition, not only were Crosby's comments on Le Corbusier a mix of fear, denunciation, and hero-worship; his attitude to technological changes inspired by Modernist utopianism was similarly ambiguous.³³ One of the most revealing pieces of evidence of Crosby's deeply-rooted affinity to Modernism was the images used in the exhibition. Amongst the hundreds of large-format photographs, many were taken from aerial views, offering top-down visions of cities. The views from above, the use of images in pairs, and the terse sentences all seemed reminiscent of the methods deployed by the first generation of Modernist architects and historians. In his study on the exhibition, Crosby's affinity to the early 20th century Modernist aesthetic was also noted by Simon Sadler, who wrote:

Through curatorship, Crosby was able to retain the authority of Le Corbusier's hovering hand (I am thinking of the famous 1925 photograph of the *Plan Voison* model), even though Crosby had no model at which to point – only tackboards, effects, collages, inventories, history lessons.³⁴

In its criticism of Modernist architecture, *How to Play the Environment Game* still used the visual and rhetorical apparatus first developed to justify the Modern Movement in architecture. The modern tendency of rejecting the immediate past could be found in the exhibition and the publication. The exhibition was also imbued with the Modernist practice of generating new architectural theory based on the advance in technology and industry.

³³ Crosby, *How to Play the Environmental Game*, 32-37, 169-171, 265.

³⁴ Sadler, "Theo Crosby's Environment Games 1956-1973," 105.



FIG 3.3 Floor plan of the exhibition showing all the 21 sections. The double height gallery was turned into full-height projection rooms. Note that the exhibition sequence started with the smaller rooms on right-hand side, and the visitors would only reach the visually more exciting elements at the end of the exhibition.



FIG 3.4 Installation view of the exhibition.



FIG 3.5 Installation views and details of the exhibition. Black and white photos and diagrams were held in place on the walls with a simple pin and eyelets system designed by Pentagram. This system also allowed the panels to be stacked and held in a custom-designed box when touring to other Arts Council galleries outside of London.

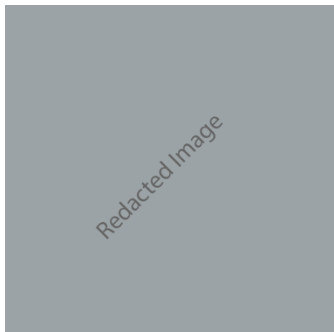




FIG 3. 6 Crosby's design for Montreal Expo '67



FIG 3.7 Crosby's design for Milan Triennial 1964.



FIG 3.8 Spread from *How to Play the Environment Game*'s Penguin paperback catalogue. The installation view from the same section shown below indicates the remarkable similarity between the exhibition and the book.



FIG 3.9 Crosby's book list for *How to Play the Environment Game*. In the list, Sigfried Giedion took a pre-eminent place and there are works by other historians, including, John Summerson, Manfredo Tafuri, and Reyner Banham.



FIG 3.10 Spread from the “Carcass” section of the book, illustrating Crosby’s oscillation between a popular and an academic tone in the exhibition.

3.3 “Game Theory” and “State of Play”

In spite of his seemingly dated visual representations, Crosby did introduce some new ideas. The first two sections of the exhibition borrowed terms from influential scientific and social theories of the time: the first was entitled “Game Theory” and the second “State of Play.”³⁵ However, there was a conspicuous disjunction between the title and the section’s content; indicated by the fact that the “Game Theory” was written by architectural historian Joseph Rykwert, then Professor of Art at the University of Essex. In this first section, Rykwert’s writing was accompanied by an illustrated historiography of architecture from

³⁵ Crosby, *How to Play the Environmental Game*, 11–37.

antiquity to the post-war era. The focus of the article was to criticise Modernist architecture's inability to communicate with the past.³⁶ In other words, this section was not dissimilar to Crosby's previous use of operative history: history was rewritten to justify his criticisms and the tenets of Modern architecture were used against itself.

Then why was the section entitled "Game Theory"? In neither Rykwert's essay nor Crosby's analysis was there mention of any mathematical principle. There was also no discussion on human interaction, control, or self-interest.³⁷ The only reference to "Game Theory" was found in a three-paragraph text Crosby added to the end of Rykwert's essays, where he presented a rather convoluted interpretation of Game Theory:

In the environment there is no single game theory, but a series of concepts and systems which structure the conflicting factors, superimposed in time. They mesh in many ways, but each embodies a set of cognitive, technical or economic requirements.³⁸

This short paragraph signposted that Crosby's use of "Game Theory" was a label which represented the dynamism supposedly found in cities. The term was thus no more than a convenient and fashionable slogan for Crosby to encourage exhibitor visitors to evaluate and envisage cities in a different light.

Crosby's casual adaptation of provocative popular terms continued in the second section of the exhibition, entitled "State of Play."³⁹ The content of the section was not responding to Johan Huizinga's influential 1938 publication *Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play Element in Culture*.⁴⁰ Neither was it an echo of Constant Nieuwenhuys' New Babylon

³⁶ Crosby, 34–37.

³⁷ L.H. Summers, "Operational Games in Architecture and Urban Design," *Journal of Architectural Education* 33, no. 1 (September 1979): 3–6.

³⁸ Crosby, *How to Play the Environmental Game*, 11.

³⁹ Crosby, 38.

⁴⁰ Huizinga, *Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play Element in Culture*.

project that Crosby would have known of.⁴¹ Crosby's use of "play" meant the control the governments and other large stakeholders had over the built environment. The term was used to imply ordinary citizens' rights as "players" had been suppressed. The section consisted mostly of images and description on the bleak state of British architecture and urbanism. Crosby explained briefly the underlying forces that led to the failures in post-war construction. The first two sections laid bare that "Game Theory" and "Play" were not propositions for a radical reimagining of alternative urban structures and hierarchies. They were, not unlike New Brutalism's "Japan," discussed in Chapter 1, rhetorical apparatuses for pointing out the inadequacy of the dominating architectural design and planning method of the time.

Aside from being an unconvincing adaptation of the theory of "Game" and "Play," these two sections also reflected Crosby's growing pessimism. In these two sections, Crosby and his collaborators condemned Modernist architects for fabricating a universal theory to justify their singular architectural and artistic vision. Ironically, not unlike his Modernist predecessors, Crosby was also ensnared by an obligation to the truth. Through terms like "Game Theory" and "Play," he instantiated a new "truth" that the built environment was so complex as to be beyond any architect's apprehension. What emerged here was a discussion similar to the one on standardisation found in the 1961 UIA Congress, when technology and technological truth became determinants of architecture. What one witnessed was a continued erosion of the supposed historical role of architects in ensuring the aesthetic and social value of buildings and cities through a volunteering submission to technology. In *How to Play the Environment Game*, it also became apparent that this adherence to technology also hindered

⁴¹ The Babylon project was published in the *AD* in 1964
Constant Nieuwenhuys, "New Babylon? An Urbanism of the Future," *Architectural Design* 34 (June 1964): 304–5.

Crosby from offering any holistic re-envisioning of British built environment. In the exhibition, Crosby struggled to formulate how British architecture and urbanism could be significantly improved. Ensnared by his own rejection of a concrete vision, Crosby could only produce criticism.

3.4 Pessimist Utopia

Other than the flimsy adaptation of technological logic, one could also notice other mentalities that would direct the Postmodern-turn in British architecture in the first two sections of the exhibition. The criticism of building regulation and zoning control, which Crosby had articulated in his 1971 “Ten Rules for Planners”, could be found in the exhibition. Much of the ideas from “Ten Rules for Planners” were reiterated in the section entitled “Pessimist Utopia,” which consisted of 13 bullet points of Crosby’s diagnosis of the existing state of British architecture and urbanism.⁴² (Appendix IV). This Pessimist Utopia section should be seen as a synthetic element of the exhibition and was expanded in a speech that Crosby delivered in the annual Lethaby Lecture at the Royal College of Art in the same year.⁴³ In the lecture, Crosby explained what he regarded as the inherent fallacies of Modern architecture, and his proposal for how to rectify their mistakes. The success of Modern architecture in early 20th-century, Crosby observed, lay in its ability to inspire development in arts, architecture, literature, design and other realms through a coherent philosophy “that scientific logic and processes could be applied to resolve social and cultural problems.”⁴⁴ Crosby claimed at stake was that this “scientific logic” had become the dominating concern of Modern architecture. In the second half of the 20th century, it had evolved into a dogmatic

⁴² Crosby, *How to Play the Environmental Game*, 98.

⁴³ Crosby, “The Pessimist Utopia,” 1973.

The lecture was part of an annual lecture series on arts, architecture and design in honour of W.R. Lethaby who was a professor at the Royal College of Art. It was also published as an issue of the Pentagram Paper.

⁴⁴ Crosby, 4.

adherence to mass society,

From industry we have learned to deal with mass, and the intellectual mechanism, and assumptions about management, work methods and scale of operation now permeate and dominate our mind.⁴⁵

It was this affinity to the notion of “mass,” Crosby stressed, that led Modern architecture to a dead-end. It had also given rise to the segregation among art, architecture, and the everyday life.

In the lecture, Crosby spoke at length of the organisation of design industry and education, warning against the danger of “middle management” and disappearance of “masters” from art schools.⁴⁶ He advocated a return of a “thread of sensibility” found in the works of “Blake, Pugin, Ruskin, (and) Morris.”⁴⁷ The “tactics” for improving the everyday British environment, Crosby proposed, was to revisit “those threads which have been ignored by the Modern Movement.”⁴⁸ These propositions could also be seen as an attempt to revive the incorporation of decorations and crafts that had been subsumed by the adherence to efficiency and economy. At stake was that, once again, after a provocative criticism that seemed to resonant with the revolutionary energy of early Modernist avant-gardism, Crosby continued to justify the manipulation of past architectural styles, historical architectural treatises and old buildings for contemporary needs. Preservation was established as a “new” architectural programme that would displace the supposed Modernist orthodoxy – not unlike how Modernism once positioned itself as a repudiation of past architectural styles.

⁴⁵ Crosby, 4.

⁴⁶ Crosby, 18,19.

⁴⁷ Crosby, 10.

⁴⁸ Crosby, 9,10.

Noteworthy was Crosby's critique of the modern construct of mass society, infused with critical social theories of the time.⁴⁹ In the lecture, Crosby painted his version of "one-dimensional men" who were unable to escape from the industrial thinking,

We have, on the basis of the modern movement, created a vast structure of laws and rules, and our surroundings are now created by these rules: there is a regulation for every possible or impossible circumstance... They codify our culture and they literally create our environment. The rules are administrated by an army of bureaucrats.

If there was a revolution tomorrow, almost anything might happen, and oceans of blood run in the street, but you could be sure only one thing: that army would all be at their desks at 9am, as usual.⁵⁰

In this passage, not only had Crosby expressed a pessimist view of 1970s society, but he also evoked controversial political speeches of the time. The term "ocean of blood" for example, was a conspicuous nod to Enoch Powell's 1968 controversy statement "Rivers of Blood," in which the politician criticised potential mass immigration from Commonwealth countries.

However, Crosby's commitment to political discourses stopped at borrowing their evocative slogans. In the Pessimist Utopia lecture, after revealing architecture's subjugation by the mass society, Crosby immediately proposed to decouple architecture from political engagements. He argued that existing prominent political ideologies could not provide a solution for the dilemma found in the built environment. He railed against socialism, Marxism, and capitalism. These political doctrines, according to Crosby, were all invalid because they tended to think "of people in term of mass (mass housing, mass mobility and so on), an attitude which betrayed their nineteenth-century industrial origins."⁵¹ One can argue

⁴⁹ For example, Crosby knew about Herbert Marcuse's works and had cited it in an interview that was conducted before 1972.

Theo Crosby, Undated interview on Crosby|Fletcher|Forbes (1965-1972). Box 23. Theo Crosby Archive, Design Archive. University of Brighton.

Herbert Marcuse, *One-Dimensional Man: Studies in the Ideology of Advanced Industrial Society* (London: Routledge Kegan Paul, 1964).

⁵⁰ Crosby, "The Pessimist Utopia," 1973, 9.

⁵¹ Crosby, 4.

Crosby's criticism was not entirely false — it broadly resonated with the critiques of the mass society found in social theories of the time. His call for identity and individuality was not misplaced, too. However, in both the exhibition and the lecture, Crosby did not spend much effort developing these critiques further through spatial or environmental means. In the lecture, after claiming that all modern political ideologies and architectural visions had been exhausted, Crosby wrote,

The pessimist will, therefore, conclude that no political action will make any difference, and observe that the product of private enterprise and public authority look remarkably alike, and equally dislikeable. He will, therefore, proceed to create his utopia by stealth, by a strategy of games... The first essential of the game is to establish a new attitude to the past. History must be rewritten to legitimate our new needs.⁵²

This passage can also be regarded as Crosby's explanation of how and why he developed a preservationist stance.

Crosby's lack of commitment to political discourse did not necessarily invalidate his architectural propositions. In fact, contemporaneous collaborations between philosopher Henri Lefebvre and architects already revealed the difficulties in translating radical social theory into architectural and urban visions.⁵³ At stake was in his critique of the mass society, Crosby developed an opposition to the modernisation project carried out by the Welfare State. He argued that the future outlook of British society should be left to the consumers.⁵⁴ In the lecture, he also discussed the socio-economic implication of "subsidies" in housing, the arts, and education.⁵⁵ In "Pessimist Utopia" and *How to Play the Environment Game*, Crosby's at times insightful criticism was once again ended with a too-ready embrace of the supposed dynamism of the market. Through a selective reading of radical social theory,

⁵² Crosby, 9.

⁵³ Mary McLeod, "Henri Lefebvre's Critique of Everyday Life: An Introduction," in *Architecture of the Everyday*, ed. Steven Harris and Deborah Berke (Princeton Architectural Press, 1997), 9–29.

⁵⁴ Crosby, "The Pessimist Utopia," 1973, 17.

⁵⁵ Crosby, 15–19.

Crosby further consolidated his call for individual choice over collectiveness in determining changes in British architecture and urbanism.

In his attempt at being radical without genuine engagement with political debates, Crosby also reduced his critiques to become mere skirmishes with institutions and individuals. Crosby dedicated the fifth section of the exhibition, entitled “Counters,” to pointing fingers at companies and individuals whom he thought should be held responsible for the degradation of British architecture and urbanism.⁵⁶ Crosby accused the British government of misspending funds on Cold-war space and military race rather than on housing assistance. He also called out developers and suppliers who he regarded as monopolising or manipulating the market. The target of his attacks included the usual suspects including the developer Harry Hyams, but also other industrial giants such as the Pilkington Brothers.⁵⁷ These attacks, for Crosby, were part and parcel of his goal of liberating the knowledge about the built environment from the grasp of the big government and large corporations. However, these populist propositions did not result in constructive discussions. Architectural historian Robin Middleton, for example, pointed out in his review that the exhibition did not offer any solution of what an alternative supply-chain for buildings would be like, other than romanticising the virtue of small business.⁵⁸ There was more caveat to Crosby’s manoeuvring of politics. In the exhibition, Crosby accused the Brick Company of monopolisation and price-fixing, which led the Brick Company to sue the Arts Council for defamation.⁵⁹ The legal dispute was eventually settled when Penguin Books agreed to black out part of the content in the 10,000 circulating copies of the exhibition catalogue. (FIG 3.11)

⁵⁶ Crosby, *How to Play the Environmental Game*, 99–124.

⁵⁷ Crosby, 99–124.

⁵⁸ Robin Middleton, “Review: How to Play the Environment Game,” *Designer*, August 1973, Theo Crosby Archive, University of Brighton.

⁵⁹ “Letter from Deputy Secretary-General to Art Director, 18 April 1973” London, Arts Council of Great Britain Archive, ACGB/121/363, Box 2.

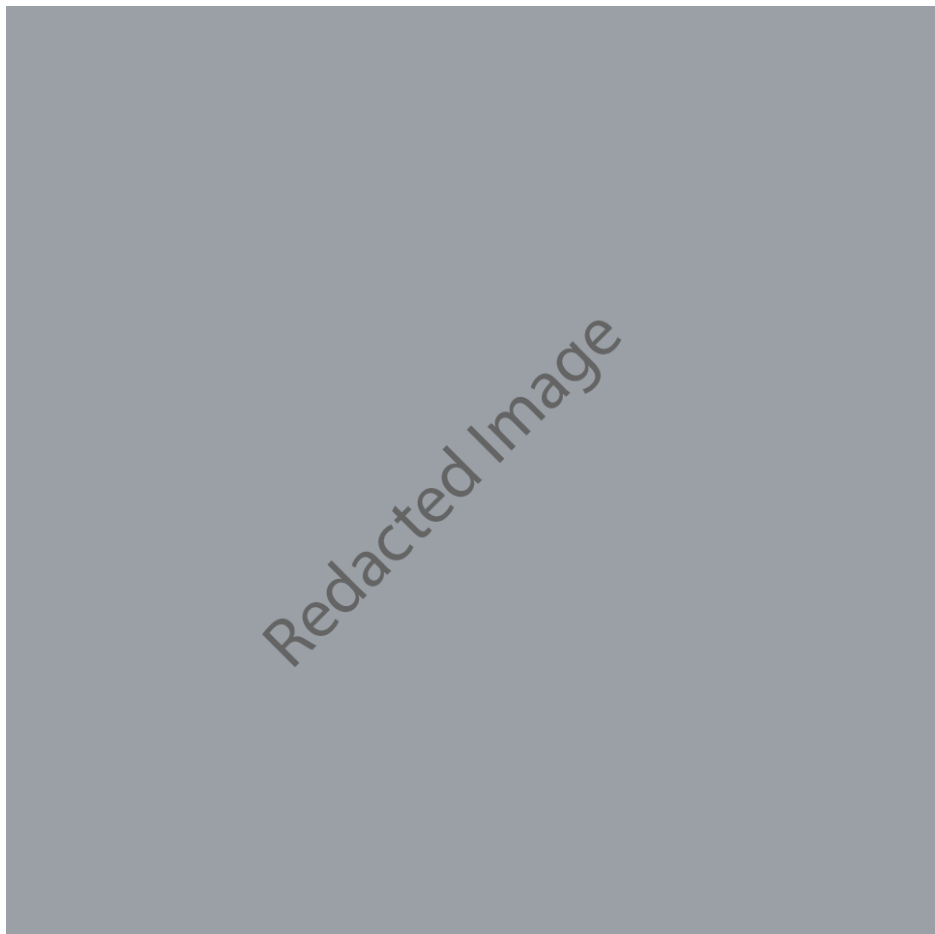


FIG 3.11 Pages from the “Polys” section of the book. The page shown above was partially redacted due to the legal action was taken by the London Brick Company.

Not only did Crosby’s “radicalism” end with legal blunders, but it also crippled his ability to formulate viable solutions to British urban issues. Preoccupied with revealing the forces at play behind the production of British architecture, Crosby’s propositions did not truly depart from the conditions that he sought to denounce. Such neglect could clearly be found in Crosby’s closing remark to the exhibition where he declared that “Rule *can* be changed.”⁶⁰ After the twenty-one sections and thousands of images, one might expect Crosby

⁶⁰ Crosby, *How to Play the Environmental Game*, 263.

would finally reveal some new mechanism that could lead to substantive changes. The proposal that followed, however, was conspicuously modest: “A housing estate can be brought to life by the introduction of new elements, particularly at ground level — a shop, or studio, a theatre, club, pub, or nursery school... these elements need opportunity more than subsidy.”⁶¹ This contradiction between Crosby’s daring criticism and weak proposition, ironically, echoed the movement that Crosby borrowed for the exhibition’s namesake — the ecological movement. The ecological movement was used by philosopher Michel Foucault to illustrate what he meant by a movement that could never be able to formulate knowledge outside of the conditions they opposed. Foucault’s critique of the ecological movement could be used as an appropriate summation of the contradictions found in *How to Play the Environment Game*:

one can only do so by playing a certain game of truth, by showing its consequences, by pointing out that there are other reasonable options, by teaching people what they don’t know about their own situation, their working conditions, and their exploitation...⁶²

In other words, Crosby conflated accessibility to information with the ability to solicit public action. Refusing to engage in more thorough and confrontational political debates about built environments, Crosby’s arguments remained merely a critical analysis of the existing conditions. At times, his criticism also became unwitting forces that cave in to existing societal and economic structures that he condemned.

Criticism on the in-cohesiveness in *How to Play the Environment* could go on and on. And the cogency of Crosby’s rhetoric, arguably, did not really matter. Revealed in *How to Play the Environment Game* were both Crosby’s flawed adaptation of influential theories of

⁶¹ Crosby, 263.

⁶² Michel Foucault, *Ethics, Subjectivity and Truth*, ed. Paul Rabinow (New York: The New Press, 1994), 296.

the time and also a more widely found fraught engagement between architecture and radical theory in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Crosby's use of radical theories of the time would, one could argue, probably not escape what architectural theorist Tahl Kaminer called "the contradictions of participatory architecture" which he summarised as "the anti-state stance resulted in the post-political condition and in the empowering of markets. The demands for freedom ended up in expanded individual freedoms at the expense of collective freedoms."⁶³ The evocation of Game Theory and the exhaustive amount of information provided in the exhibition also signposted the emergence of what Douglas Spencer called "prototypical neoliberal figures of subjectivity -- cultural consumer, the informationally enfranchised citizen."⁶⁴

3.5 Arts Council and the Built Environment

In spite of its contradictory messages, *How to Play the Environment Game* was, in fact, an exhibition created for specific agendas. Firstly, it was part of the Arts Council's initiatives in defending the development of fine arts and culture in 1970s Britain. The Arts Council had been criticised as being patronising and elitist, due to their positioning as the promoter of the "high arts."⁶⁵ Such criticism climaxed in the 1960s when calls for "democratising British arts" had garnered increasing public support.⁶⁶ Facing such demands the Council had since then broadened their sponsorships to amateur arts and community performances.⁶⁷ However, the Council was not entirely comfortable with this "democratising" exercise. They were reluctant to support art forms that were regarded as "technical" —

⁶³ Tahl Kaminer, "The Contradictions of Participatory Architecture and Empire," *Arq* 18, no. 1 (2015): 36.

⁶⁴ Douglas Spencer, *Architecture of Neoliberalism* (London: Bloomsbury, 2016), 121.

⁶⁵ Robert Hutchinson, *The Politics of the Arts Council* (London: Sinclair Brown, 1982), 82.

⁶⁶ Willat, "How the Arts Are Promoted."

⁶⁷ Hutchinson, *The Politics of the Arts Council*, 53.

including photography, film, and video arts.⁶⁸ In light of the overwhelming growth in mass media, the Arts Council's scepticism of these art forms had also been growing, as they deemed them a threat to the future development of British arts and culture.⁶⁹

To defend what they regarded as "fine arts" while answering to the call of "democratisation", the Arts Council looked for mediators in other forms of arts and culture. For example, the Arts Director at the time, Robin Campbell, promoted developments in art theory and criticism, which he believed could safeguard the appreciation of fine arts.⁷⁰ He also advocated producing "topical" exhibitions thus to reflect the Council's attention to everyday life.⁷¹ The Council also turned to architecture: they championed closer collaborations between artists and architects. Murals, public sculptures, and experimental children's playground were produced as a result of these initiatives. *How to Play the Environment Game* was an exhibition indicative of these shifts found in the Arts Council's policies at the time.

The anti-Modernist rhetoric of the exhibition was largely indebted to Crosby's beliefs, but it could also be attributed to a commonly-found prejudice against International Style architecture found amongst the Arts Council board members.⁷² According to Crosby, the exhibition was conceived in an Arts Panel meeting when participants were "complaining about ghastly modern buildings and how they didn't seem able to fit into the city or to relate

⁶⁸ Robin Campbell, "State Support for the Visual Arts: Some Problems," in *State and the Arts*, ed. John Pick, City Arts Series (Eastbourne East Sussex: J.Offord Publication, 1980), 121.

⁶⁹ Hutchinson, *The Politics of the Arts Council*, 82,88-91.

⁷⁰ Campbell, "State Support for the Visual Arts: Some Problems," 121.

⁷¹ Patrick Gibson, "Letter from Chairman of the Arts Council of Great Britain, 19th April 1973, To Robin Campbell (Cc. Lord Escher of RCA)" (Letter, n.d.), ACGB/121/363, Box 1, Arts Council of Great Britain Archive.

⁷² Arindam Dutta, "Marginality and Metaengineering," in *Governing by Design: Architecture and Politics in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Timothy Hyde (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2012), 216-36.

to each other.”⁷³ The bleakness of the everyday British built-environment, for the Arts Council, would become an obstacle to their promotion of a greater appreciation of arts and culture. However, in spite of their criticism of Modernist architectural development, the Arts Council directors and panel members also shared Crosby’s ingrained admiration for early 20th century Modernist avant-gardes. Not only was the Arts Panel simultaneously planning a large-scale Walter Gropius retrospective, but they also still adhered to the tenets of modern art.⁷⁴ In their attempt to combat the degradation of British culture brought by consumerism and mass media, for example, the Council members conspicuously turned to the ideal of *Gesamtkunstwerk*.⁷⁵

Crosby’s pursuits in architecture and curatorial experience rendered him an ideal candidate for curating an exhibition that represented the Arts Council’s position on the built environment.⁷⁶ His long-term advocacy for the integration of arts and architecture resonated well with the Council’s initiatives. More crucially, he was uniquely equipped to deliver an urgent message from the Arts Council at the time: the preservation of performance arts venues in central London. Part and parcel of the Arts Council’s members’ anti-Modernist stance was the belief that large-scale commercial developments had eroded much of London’s historical urban core. By the 1970s, the changes in the real estate market had

⁷³ Theo Crosby, “Inaugural Speech” (Transcript, 1990), Box 26, Theo Crosby Archive, University of Brighton.

⁷⁴ Norbert Lynton, “Letter from Art Director Norbert Lynton to the Chairman” (Letter, n.d.), ACGB/121/363, Box 1, Arts Council of Great Britain Archive.

In the 1990s, when speaking about the Globe project, Crosby also called the Arts Council members as “modernists” who regarded the idea of a reconstructed theatre too “post-modern.”

Theo Crosby, “The Globe Theatre: Shakespeare’s Theatre Reconstruction in London,” *Zodiac*, 1998, 94.

⁷⁵ John Allen, “The European Perspective,” in *State and the Arts*, ed. John Pick, City Arts Series (Eastbourne East Sussex: J.Offord Publication, 1980), 138.

⁷⁶ In 1970, Crosby curated *Kinetics* at the Hayward Gallery. The exhibition, according to arts historian John Walker was critically acclaimed.

John A. Walker, *Left Shift: Radical Art in 1970s Britain* (London: I.B Tauris, 2002), 29.

Due to the success of the exhibition, in 1972, Crosby convinced the Arts Council to place a kinetic sculpture by young artists Philip Vaughan and Roger Dainton on the Hayward Gallery, which formed part of the iconic London skyline for the following 26 years.

Interview with Mick Csaky.

speeded up the eradication of spaces used for performing arts and their cottage industries. In a letter written to Crosby in summer 1972, Arts Director Robin Campbell cited an Arts Council paper entitled “Threats to the Theatre Industry in Central London.”⁷⁷ The study stated that theatre districts, including Covent Garden, Bankside, and the area near the Old Vic, were all subjected to speculative real estate development.⁷⁸ *How to Play the Environment Game*, Campbell suggested, should come as a strong backup for the Arts Council’s effort to “prevent London being destroyed” and made “its voice heard in public and in private.”⁷⁹ Campbell encouraged Crosby to take a stern oppositional stance against commercial real estate developments, writing “it seems that the GLC would welcome some pressure from the Arts Council to give them ammunition to use on the developers.”⁸⁰ The intentionally provocative tone found in *How to Play the Environment Game* was part of Crosby’s and the Arts Council’s campaign to fend off speculative urban redevelopment projects. (FIG 3.12) Therefore, the exhibition was not only an evaluation of British Modernist architecture but also propaganda for the preservation of old theatre districts.

⁷⁷ Robin Campbell, “Letter from Robin Campbell to Theo Crosby” (Letter, July 14, 1972), ACGB/121/363, Box 1., Arts Council of Great Britain Archive.

⁷⁸ Campbell.

⁷⁹ Campbell.

⁸⁰ Campbell.



FIG 3.12 Letter from Arts Director Robin Campbell to Crosby.

3.6 Preservation and Action

With the urgent task of safeguarding London's old theatre district at hand, *How to Play the Environment* aimed at soliciting immediate action on preservation. Crosby developed collaborative relationships with advocacy groups including SAVE Piccadilly and the Covent Garden Community Group.⁸¹ The exhibition had support from authoritative figures in the British government. The former Environmental Minister Lord Kennet, who was the chair of the Preservation Policy Group, contributed an essay to the exhibition.⁸² In *How to Play the Environment Game*, one could find an extensive constellation of forces supporting inner-city preservation through the odd bedfellows Crosby brought to the exhibition. He gathered dozens of short films interrogating societal matters ranging from twilight areas development in Liverpool, community organising in Canada, to campaigns for banning Christmas.⁸³ (FIG 3.13) The list of videos reflected the cross-fertilisation between architectural preservation, the environmental movement, anti-consumerism campaigns, and community organising efforts of the time. Among the video contributors, it was not unusual to find artists and activists who expressed anti-Establishment and anti-authority stances.⁸⁴ In the exhibition, preservation had become an issue that could bridge political, class, and cultural divides.

⁸¹ Crosby, *How to Play the Environmental Game*, 260.

⁸² Crosby, 92.

Crosby, since 1967, had been a member of the Group.

It is also worthy to note that the Arts Council's interest in preserving old theatre districts reverberated with the Preservation Policy Group's initiative in promoting the maintenance of historic urban fabric.

Glendinning, *The Conservation Movement: A History of Architectural Preservation: Antiquity to Modernity*, 312.

⁸³ "Budget" (Exhibition Budget, 1970), ACGB/121/363, Box 1, Arts Council of Great Britain Archive.

⁸⁴ The short films that were shown in the exhibition including "People and Power", which was an introduction the American community organiser Saul Alinsky, who has been well know for his 1971 *Rules for Radicals*.

Alinsky is still a divisive figure in American politics today.

S.D Alinsky, *Rules for Radicals: A Pragmatic Primer for Realistic Radicals* (New York: Vintage, 2013).



FIG 3.13 List of films that were shown in the exhibition.

Provocative messages advocating preserving London's urban fabric were consolidated in a 30-minute documentary entitled *Playing the Environment Game*. The film was commissioned for the exhibition and produced by two young filmmakers Mick Csaky and Mick Gold.⁸⁵ The film was to serve as an appendix to the exhibition and to “examine

⁸⁵ Mick Csaky and Mick Gold, *Playing the Environment Game* (Arts Council, 1973), <http://artsonfilm.wmin.ac.uk/filmsuk.php?a=view&recid=0>.

some of the issues raised by the exhibition.”⁸⁶ It was an attempt to provide more in-depth investigations into specific case studies and to look “behind the appearance of our cities and name the forces that shaped them.”⁸⁷ Unlike the exhibition, the film was capable of visually expressing how London’s historical urban fabric was at risk. In its first few frames, the film juxtaposed footage of the bulldozers, monotonous International Style curtain-wall buildings, and sentimental recordings from a mass demonstration. In the rest of the film, the camera followed demonstrators, activists, and squatters into various London neighbourhoods, revealing how urban renewal projects had eradicated small business and destroyed communities. (FIG 3.14)

Playing the Environment Game also exposed the dilemma found in urban renewal policies. By the 1970s, funding for construction from local councils began to dry up, and the introduction of the Housing Finance Act of 1972 had further decapitated the local council’s ability to build homes.⁸⁸ In light of the shortage of funding, local councils either had to raise rents on their estates or to trade valuable land with developers to obtain cash. Meanwhile, the property market was booming — prompting speculative developers land-banking in inner-city areas. As a result of these changes, residents in traditionally working-class housing areas were evicted from their homes without adequate compensation or satisfactory rehousing solutions. The film suggested that one of the underlying causes of London’s housing crisis was depopulation and the subsequent decay of viable housing stocks. According to the film, new construction could not stop this vicious cycle, and the dissatisfying living units provided by urban renewal projects would only worsen the crisis. *Playing the Environment Game* further suggested that the urban renewal projects in London, and its demolition-rebuilding

⁸⁶ Csaky and Gold.

⁸⁷ Csaky and Gold.

⁸⁸ James Goudie, “Councils and the Housing Finance Act,” Pamphlet, Young Fabian Pamphlet (London: Fabian Society, 1972).

mechanism, were based on unfounded rationales.

In the film, the nuances in planning policies, local Council politics and housing provisions led to London's housing crisis were eloquently explained by two journalists-turned activists — Bennie Gray and Christopher Booker, founder of *Private Eye* magazine. As part of their activism, Gray and Booker founded a real estate company to block developers from acquiring the land of Tolmers Square in the Euston area. The film also celebrated the squatter's movement in Tolmers Square, one of the longest-running squatter movements in Britain.⁸⁹ *Playing the Environment Game* documented how squatters organised carnivals, community kitchens and bookshops to bring life back into the supposedly dilapidated housing area. A similar community-driven effort to safeguard the Covent Garden area was also showcased in the film. In *Playing the Environment Game*, preservation of these old neighbourhoods was also being articulated as a way to maintain racial and economic diversity in cities. (FIG 3.15) In the film, the demolition of 18th and 19th-century urban fabrics was portrayed as a threat to urban life and citizen rights.

⁸⁹ Sacha Craddock, "Tolmers United," in *Goodbye to London: Radical Arts & Politics in the 70s*, ed. Astrid Proll (Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz Verlag, 2010), 34.



FIG 3.14 Scenes from *Playing the Environment Game* (1973), dir., Mick Csaky and Mike Gold



FIG 3.15 Scenes from *Playing the Environment Game* (1973), dir., Mick Csaky and Mike Gold



FIG 3.16 Scenes from *Playing the Environment Game* (1973), dir., Mick Csaky and Mike Gold

The message broadcast through the dire urban scenes in *Playing the Environment Game* was not entirely a pessimistic one. The coalition of parties that advocated preservation seemed to suggest positive changes would be imminent. The discussion on housing rights and local politics also signposted an awareness of the political nature of preservation and housing issues. It also reflected that authorities and institutions such as the Arts Council were willing to take a more active role in resisting speculative urban developments. This confidence was not entirely misplaced. The contemporaneous Dutch squatter movement, for example, had a visible impact on the country's housing policy.⁹⁰ However, the housing and planning conundrums pointed out in the film did not attract much attention in Britain. The coverage on the squatter movement did not lead to further interrogations on issues like homelessness and social exclusion. Squatting was instead presented as a cultural phenomenon in which its non-hierarchical appropriation of arts and space should be celebrated.⁹¹ In the exhibition, there was almost no serious discussion about housing affordability, job availability or other intangible issues that underlay the dilemma of preservation and urban renewal. In sum, *How to Play the Environment Game* was an opportunity lost in the British discourse on inner-city preservation. In the following decade, London would witness the physical preservation and then immediate rampant gentrification of its historical urban fabric in areas like Covent Garden and Notting Hill, both were featured in *Playing the Environment Game*. The buildings and squares had been maintained but old business and communities were displaced. By the 1980s, these areas would become sought-after real estate commodities for the Thatcher-era yuppies.

⁹⁰ Hugo Priemus, "Squatters in Amsterdam: Urban Social Movement, Urban Managers or Something Else," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 7 (1983): 417–27.

I am also grateful for the conversation with Mr. Priemus in the International Architecture Biennale Rotterdam of 2016.

⁹¹ The bourgeois nature of London's squatter movement was described in Craddock, "Tolmers United," 34.

One of the underlying reasons for the disappointing outcomes of *How to Play the Environment Game* was, ironically, the desire to formulate a consensus. In order to coalesce under the all-embracing banner of preservation, individuals and institutions involved in *How to Play the Environment Game* compromised and discarded pressing concerns in their respective advocacies. While the collaboration between activist groups and the Arts Council amplified both voices, it also convoluted their messages. The suspicion in this alliance of preservation was recalled by a Tolmers Square squatter some forty years after their resistance. He pointed out that one of the frequently asked questions, amongst the squatters, was who were supposed to be their “enemies.” He recited the question: “But what was our responsibility? We discussed this all the time: If we were to fight (the developer) Joe Levy, would we work with the Council? Should we launch a different campaign, were we talking about squatting or housing?”⁹²

This confusion was manifested in *How to Play the Environment Game*, too. In the exhibition, Crosby criticised both the government and developers for the degradation of the British built environment yet solicited contributions from both. In their respective essays, the developers and the government, unsurprisingly, pointed at each other as the threat to British architecture and urbanism or redirected the blame elsewhere.⁹³ As a result, not only was it hard to determine what could be the initial steps to amend the British built environment; it also fortified the view that preservation would be the only way forward in such confused and complicated situation. In addition, the institutionalisation of the vocabulary and visual representation from radical movements had thinned out their thrust. When terms like “London Belongs to the People” and “guerrilla warfare” were broadcasted in the Hayward

⁹² Craddock, 34.

⁹³ Crosby, *How to Play the Environmental Game*, 92–93, 102–4.

Gallery, they were turned into slogans for protecting old buildings and streets; their political implications obscured. In formulating a consensus in the physical safeguarding of historical urban fabric, *How to Play the Environment Game* also unwittingly contributed to the depoliticisation of preservation.

In the exhibition, the toolkits of spontaneity and informality found in community activism were incorporated by a more conservative approach to the environment. In the final section of the exhibition entitled “Where the action is,” Crosby offered a list of suggestions for the audience to reclaim their stakes in the British environment.⁹⁴ (FIG 3.17, FIG 3.18) He urged the British public to “join the team of your choice,” and not unlike his other rhetoric, this provocation was immediately followed by an unapologetically contrarian comment.⁹⁵ He stated existing social structure could not be altered because “few propositions (for new developments) are energetic enough to overcome opposition in Hampstead or Belgravia. Applied to an intellectually defenceless area like Poplar or the Costa Brava the results are predictably disastrous.”⁹⁶ After submitting to the existing social hierarchy and class divide, Crosby’s advice to his audience was to lobby their local MPs, join their local Amenity Societies, and speak to their local press.⁹⁷ The list of organisations that Crosby introduced further exposed the contradictions between the exhibition’s radical tone and its conservative stance. It consisted solely of groups advocating preservation and conservation of built heritage and natural resources. There was almost no mention of other contentious issues related to preservation and urban renewal, such as urban inequality, community sustainability, or demographic diversity.⁹⁸

⁹⁴ Crosby, 257.

⁹⁵ Crosby, 262.

⁹⁶ Crosby, 264.

⁹⁷ Crosby, 264.

⁹⁸ Crosby, 264.



FIG 3.17 The last section of the exhibition, “Where the Action is”, dedicated spaces for visitors to bring their advocacy leaflets and posters, emphasising the participatory nature of the exhibition.

I am aware of the supposed radical roots of SPAB but the society, by the 20th century, had been focused predominantly on the protection of old buildings and structures.

E.P Thompson, *William Morris: Romantic to Revolutionary* (London: Merlin, 1977).

Astrid Swenson, *The Rise of Heritage: Preserving the Past in France, Germany and England, 1789–1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).



FIG 3. 18 The “Action checklist” suggested by Crosby at the end of the exhibition.

3.7 The Technology of Preservation

In the exhibition, Crosby strengthened his attack Modernist architecture by showcasing contemporaneous radical architectural discourses. The third section, entitled “New Theory,” started by introducing well-known techno-utopian projects including those by Archigram, Archizoom, and Reyner Banham and Francois Dallegret.⁹⁹ The only architectural proposition in this section not made by Crosby’s former collaborators was an “Art History” segment, contributed by a team of art historians at University College London, led by Adrian von Buttlar. Von Buttlar and his fellow researchers put forward a method to analyse “the visual value of historic architecture.”¹⁰⁰ The basis of their analysis, von Buttlar suggested, was “the treatment of architecture as a message, its elements being signs selected from a vocabulary.”¹⁰¹

Their proposition, at first glance, was not unusual considering the debates on the semiotics and semantics of architectural language that were happening at the time.¹⁰² However, in his introduction, von Buttlar claimed their work was different from existing scholarship that favoured “symbolic information.”¹⁰³ By “symbolic information” they meant how beholders could “read” into the message conveyed by historic architectural languages. Their method, instead, would offer analysis on the transmission of “aesthetic information,” which was independent of background knowledge in culture and history. “Aesthetic information,” according to the team, concerned “the stimulation of perception itself cause by the variety and number of architectonic elements belonging to a historical vocabulary.”¹⁰⁴

⁹⁹ Crosby, *How to Play the Environmental Game*, 57–76.

¹⁰⁰ Adrian von Buttlar, Heinz Selig, and Alexander Witzig, “The Visual Value of Historic Architecture,” in *How to Play the Environment Game*, by Theo Crosby (London: Penguin Books, 1973), 74–76.

¹⁰¹ von Buttlar, Selig, and Witzig.

¹⁰² Forty, *Words and Buildings: A Vocabulary of Modern Architecture*, 77–79.

¹⁰³ von Buttlar, Selig, and Witzig, “The Visual Value of Historic Architecture.”

¹⁰⁴ von Buttlar, Selig, and Witzig.

When speaking of communication, von Buttlar and his team were not looking into the meaning of architectural language but seeking to quantify visual complexity in architecture.

The team introduced their formula as such:

“...information as a cybernetic term means a mathematical description of a field of elements in a certain state of probability, decoded into binary digits and measurable in BIT.”¹⁰⁵

The mathematical formula for this operation is

$$I_{tot} = \sum_{i=1}^n N_{(xi)} - 2 \log \frac{1}{p(x_i)}$$

I_{tot} = total information

n = number of different elements in this vocabulary

$N_{(xi)}$ = frequency of an element (i)

$p_{(xi)}$ = probability of an element (i)¹⁰⁶

In the formula, von Buttlar brought together many well-known studies in information theory that had been made available since the post-war period: the unit “BIT” was borrowed from mathematician Claude Shannon’s seminal research.¹⁰⁷ The team’s differentiation between “symbolic” and “aesthetic information,” meanwhile, was indebted to German architect Manfred Kiemle’s 1967 dissertation *Aesthetic Problems of Architecture under the Aspect of Information Aesthetic*.¹⁰⁸ Kiemle suggested that humans’ perception went through stages of “simplification” when they encountered visual information. Humans turned groups of signs or elements into “supersigns.” Based on this method, von Buttlar et al. argued that historical

¹⁰⁵ von Buttlar, Selig, and Witzig, 75.

¹⁰⁶ von Buttlar, Selig, and Witzig, 75.

¹⁰⁷ Claude Shannon, “A Mathematical Theory of Communication,” *The Bell System Technical Journal* 27 (July 1948): 379–423, 623–56.

¹⁰⁸ Manfred Kiemle, *Asthetische Probleme Der Architektur Unter Dem Aspekt Der Informationsästhetik* (Quickborn: Schnelle, 1967).

buildings, which tended to be more ornate, enable more stages of “simplification” and thus were more visually captivating. (FIG 3.19)

This use of Information Theory for preservation, as Lance Wright from *Architectural Review* pointed out, was too self-explanatory.¹⁰⁹ Wright criticised von Buttlar of going through a complicated process to reach one basic, well-established view about the built environment: Modernist buildings were often not as visually complex as pre-20th-century buildings.¹¹⁰ One can, however, interpret the implication of this re-codification of architecture for preservation in two other ways: on the one hand, it could be seen as a resistance against the practice of architectural design as “black box,” — building design was accessible to non-architects only after the architect has fixed its principles parameters.¹¹¹ Through this formula, any member of the public with access to a calculator could nominally decide whether a building should be demolished or preserved. The mathematic formula, as Lance Wright from the *AR* suggested, could also be used to hold architects accountable when designing new buildings.¹¹² On the other hand, in light of the exhibition’s consistent adherence to the status quo, one could also question whether this rhetoric of democratisation was genuine, whether this techno-libertarian strategy was yet another attempt made by British institutions and authorities to “educate” and “elevate” the British public’s understanding of their everyday environment?¹¹³

¹⁰⁹ Lance Wright, “How Many BITS,” *The Architects’ Journal*, 1973.

¹¹⁰ Wight, 252.

¹¹¹ Anton Picon, Emmanuel Petit, and Lucia Allais, “The Ghost of Architecture,” *Perspecta*, no. 35 (2004): 8–19.

¹¹² Wright, “How Many BITS,” 252.

¹¹³ The fraught history between design and paternalism of the British state in the 20th-century, see: Lubbock, *The Tyranny of Taste: The Politics of Architecture and Design in Britain*, 299-300, 313-324. Arthur Marwick, *British Society Since 1945* (London: Penguin, 1982).



FIG 3.19 Diagram from *How to Play the Environment Game* showing how the human brain simplified the visual information received from a building. In each of the processes, the human brain would group visual information into “supersigns” in order to understand and memorise this information. This diagram suggested that not only would historical buildings provide more steps of simplification, the degree of simplification was also more drastic than a Modernist building. A historical building could capture human attention for a longer time. Von Buttlar and Crosby suggested that this formula proved the aesthetic superiority of pre-20th-century buildings.

The evocation of Information Theory in *How to Play the Environment Game* demarcated a trajectory shared by Postmodernism and preservationism in the 1970s. In the existing historiography of 20th-century architecture, Kiemle's Ph.D research had often been tied to Peter Eisenman's 1963 Cambridge dissertation *The Formal Basis of Modern Architecture*.¹¹⁴ Both were seen as important studies that engendered the architect's interest in the "automatic generation of aesthetic systems."¹¹⁵ These researches were part of a movement that re-oriented attention to an analysis of architecture as discrete forms. In the existing historiography of late 20th-century architecture, these two publications were not only seen as significant benchmarks in the development of Postmodernism but were also regarded as forebears of computational design in architecture.¹¹⁶ In spite of their deficiencies, von Buttlar's use of "supersigns" theory served as an important link between preservationism and Postmodern architectural discourses¹¹⁷

In *The Formal Basis of Modern Architecture* and *How to Play the Environment Game*, the abstraction and codification of architecture were also used as a means to grapple with the difficulties in the discussion of history after Modernism. In Eisenman's case, it was to generate a theory of Modern architecture that resisted the burden of its early revolutionary impulse and societal missions, and to reorient attention to geometric and visual principles. In *How to Play the Environment Game*, it was to cast new value on old buildings that were threatened by modernisation. Both projects could also be regarded as development from

¹¹⁴ Eisenman, *The Formal Basis of Modern Architecture*.

¹¹⁵ Christian Derix, "The Space of People in Computation," in *AD: Empathic Space: The Computation of Human-Centric Architecture*, 2014, 17.

¹¹⁶ Reinhold Martin, "Environment, c. 1973," *Grey Room* 14, no. 2 (2004): 78–101.

Andrea Gleiniger and Georg Vrachliotis, eds., *Code: Between Operation and Narration* (Basel: Birkhauser, 2010).

¹¹⁷ For example, their calculation for visual complexity did not account for additional information created by anomalies, such as asymmetries. It also did not consider the direction and approach of the beholders — ideas that had already been well researched and published by György Kepes at the MIT's Centre for Advanced Visual Studies.

Martin, "Environment, c. 1973."

Colin Rowe's works.¹¹⁸ *The Formal Basis of Modern Architecture* was Eisenman's attempt to build on Rowe's formal analysis of architecture but also to move "to a more linguistically based formal discourse."¹¹⁹ In *How to Play the Environment Game* Crosby, through van Buttlar et al.'s research, arrived at a conclusion similar to Rowe's contemporaneous works on Contextualism. In the pages following van Buttlar et al.'s formula, Crosby suggested the formula "helped establish the individual character and atmosphere of a place as well as our psychological involvement."¹²⁰ He emphasised the formula's value to the discussion on urbanism, stating,

As in the perception of a single house, the visual image of a city has been built in our minds as a hierarchy of characteristic units, places or districts of unique identity. To a considerable extent orientation depends on architectonic signs.¹²¹

Based on this formula, Crosby advised, one could have a better understanding of the visual hierarchy and coherence found in the street and even a neighbourhood. These discussions resonated with Rowe and Koetter's analysis in *Collage City* and shed light on how the debates and discussions on post-war Modernism had evolved and formed the groundwork for architectural Postmodernism and preservation in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

Von Buttlar's formula also revealed an obscure consistency in Crosby's intellectual pursuits. The term BIT would have been familiar to Crosby since the 1950s when Group 12's exhibit in *This is Tomorrow* paid deliberate homage to Claude Shannon's works.¹²² Crosby's name could also be found in other places in the existing historiography of information theory in design: his little magazine *Uppercase* was the first publication in English that featured

¹¹⁸ Martin.

¹¹⁹ Eisenman, *The Formal Basis of Modern Architecture*.

¹²⁰ Crosby, *How to Play the Environmental Game*, 79.

¹²¹ Crosby, 79.

¹²² Buckley, "Graphic Constructions: The Experimental Typography of Edward Wright," 163. Robbins, *The Independent Group: Postwar Britain and the Aesthetics of Plenty*, 38.

works from the Ulm School of Design.¹²³ Crosby's persistent interest in informational technology also reflected how preservation discourse in the later part of the 20th-century was formulated, not unlike other architectural thoughts of the time, under the long shadow cast by the modern affinity for rationality and scientific truth. In his work, Crosby also tended to present preservation as an architectural proposition inspired, driven, and facilitated by the latest technological developments. Reviving the Modernist's tenet of rationality as beauty, Crosby and his collaborators used mathematics — the "truth" — to justify old buildings should be universally admired and be preserved. Through the research in cognitive science and cybernetics, Crosby suggested, architecture could rekindle its historical roots and its experiential qualities. In the exhibition, technology, science, architectural history and the Classical tradition coalesced as an opposition to Modernism. At stake was this analogy, between architecture and scientific study of language, again contributing to an abstraction of architectural language. The re-codification of Classical architectural language through modern day technology, as previously seen in Fulham Study, had continued to bring discussions on urban renewal further away from the socio-economic hierarchy that was embedded within historical building and urban fabrics.¹²⁴

In *How to Play the Environment Game*, we witnessed how preservation, similar to Postmodernism, was drawn into a similar renewal, widening and subsequent reduction of the meaning of existing architectural language. It offered an additional lens to look into how the 1960s and 1970s "radical" and "progressive" turn of preservation had lost its thrusts — not only it did not resist the domination by a more conservative culture, the casual use of linguistic metaphors also functioned as a distraction from the socio-political and socio-

¹²³ Theo Crosby, ed., *Uppercase 5: Ulm HfG* (London: Whitefrairs Press, 1961).

Alex Seago, *Burning the Box of Beautiful Things* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 171.

¹²⁴ Lubbock, *The Tyranny of Taste: The Politics of Architecture and Design in Britain*, 32–42.

economic implication of preservation.¹²⁵

3.8 The Environment

It is tempting to summarise that the turn to information theory, in 1973, demarcated a threshold in architecture's withdrawal from its societal commitments. However, there are other effects brought by this turn to information theory. Information theory had enabled architects to develop a more interdisciplinary approach to design, considering buildings as just one part of "environmental design arts."¹²⁶ This articulation of the environment as a signifying system was manifested in influential architectural writings of the time, including Reyner Banham's *Los Angeles: The Architecture of Four Ecologies* (1971) and Robert Venturi, Dennis Scott Brown and Steven Izenour's *Learning from Las Vegas* (1972).¹²⁷ In *How to Play the Environment Game*, one could detect similar advocacy for a less deterministic and hierarchical valuation of architecture through a reconceptualisation of the environment.

Springing out of the well of information theory was also an emphasis on communication – one that was also found in the aforementioned publications. *How to Play the Environment Game* exhibition, as discussed earlier in this chapter, was imbued with the

¹²⁵ Glendinning, *The Conservation Movement: A History of Architectural Preservation: Antiquity to Modernity*, 353.

In *The Conservation Movement*, Miles Glendinning spoke of the "Right-turn" of preservation, "What was more important was (The Destruction of the Country House) signaled a new, right-wing activist upsurge within the Conservation movement in Britain. This development was symbolised by the rise to prominence of "SAVE Britain's Heritage", a society founded in 1975 by country-house activist and various helpers. SAVE positioned itself from the start within the SPAB and Georgian Group tradition of publicity seeking protest, although it had a simpler agenda than SPAB's anti-restorations, straightforwardly attacking Modernist redevelopment and demolitions."

¹²⁶ Martin, "Environment, c. 1973," 81.

György Kepes, ed., *Arts of the Environment* (New York: George Braziller, 1972).

¹²⁷ Reyner Banham, *Los Angeles the Architecture of Four Ecologies* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971); Robert Venturi, Dennis Scott Brown, and Steven Izenour, *Learning from Las Vegas* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1977).

Arts Council's scepticism about the influence of mass media on the development of British arts and culture. This effort to defend British citizens against the seduction of mass media was carried out by the community arts group Inter-Action.¹²⁸ Founded in 1968 by American social activist ED Berman, Inter-Action's primary preoccupation was to democratise theatre, a supposed high art.¹²⁹ The Group devised various mobile vehicles and performance formats that enabled them to bring theatre performance to unexpected spaces including the "twilight areas" of Islington and Notting Hill to conduct interactive plays and art workshops.¹³⁰ In their effort to democratise theatre performance, the group also developed a vested interest in a less hierarchical apprehension of space and architecture. In the existing historiography of 1970s British architecture, the Group was known for their various fruitful collaborations with another maverick architect, Cedric Price.¹³¹ The Group's headquarter the Inter-Action Centre, now demolished, has been seen as a prototype of Price's Fun Palace and later the Generator Scheme.¹³² What was less known was the Group's preservationist stance. Influenced by Guy Debord and the *Situationist International*, Berman and his Group believed that old neighbourhoods were where accidental encounters and spontaneous actions could flourish.¹³³

¹²⁸ Inter-Action's contribution to *How to Play the Environment Game*, the Media-Van, was generously funded by the Arts Council. The budget for the Media-van tour was £16,000, a significant sum compared to the total budget of the exhibition of £26,000.

"Budget."

Claire Gaskell, "Letter from Claire Gaskell of Arts Council to Gail Engret" (Letter, September 13, 1973), ACGB/121/363, Box 2, Arts Council of Great Britain Archive.

¹²⁹ Claire Bishop, *Artificial Hell: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship* (Verso: London, 2012).

¹³⁰ Louis Hellman, "Housing and Participation," *Built Environment*, June 1973.

¹³¹ Douglas Moffat, "AD/AA/Polyark: Benevolent Irritants and Distributed Feedback," in *The Other Architect: Another Way of Building Architecture*, ed. Giovanni Borasi (Montreal: Canadian Centre for Architecture, 2015), 177,389.

In 1973, Inter-Action group also contributed to Cedric Price's AD/AA/PolyArk Bus Tour. Inter-Action devised the workshop material for the tour, which aimed at fostering discussions about architecture that had been neglected by mainstream university pedagogies. Since the 2010s, the AD/AA/PolyArk Bus Tour and the Fun Art Bus had garnered significant scholarly attention; and have been re-enacted in Canada and London respectively.

¹³² Reyner Banham also made comparison between the Inter-Action centre and the Centre Pompidou, where he criticised Pompidou lacked the "casually innovatory quality" of the Inter-Action Centre.

Reyner Banham, "Enigma of the Rue Du Renard," *Architectural Review*, May 1977.

Cedric Price, "Inter-Action Center, Kentish Town" (Drawing), Canadian Centre for Architecture, accessed April 28, 2018, http://www.cca.qc.ca/en/search?page=1&query=inter-action&_=1493369630025.

¹³³ On Debord's influence on Inter-Action Group, see

Bishop, *Artificial Hell: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship*.

In *How to Play the Environment Game*, Inter-Action Group and Pentagram collaborated on converting a 16-seat minivan into a red Media-van that would tour across Britain to elicit public discourse about the built environment. The van had two television screens mounted on its red exterior wall, showing videos produced by community members of all stripes. The British public was encouraged to use a radiophone installed in the van to call their local MPs or mayors to express their opinion about the built environment. The conversations were broadcast through the van's audio system to make sure the receiving end would not brush off the conversation. The Media-van was thus jokingly called "the world's largest telephone kiosk."¹³⁴ (Fig 3.20) There were also plans to create a live broadcast of the interviews in the Hayward Gallery, but this was cancelled due to technical issues. The Media-Van was simultaneously a production and propaganda element of the exhibition — the material gathered was shown in the travelling exhibition. The country-wide tour of the eye-catching Media-van also provided publicity for the exhibition.

When introducing the van, Berman articulated a correlation between the media and the built environment. (FIG 3.21) He described a "cycle of deprivation-inarticulateness-deprivation," where the bleakness of the built environment forced ordinary citizens to turn to films, magazines, and television for escape.¹³⁵ He pointed out that the media realm and the architectural field were both dominated by professionalism, rendering ordinary citizens "passive receivers, not active participants in their own communities."¹³⁶ The lack of active public engagements brought about more deprivation in the urban environment. The task of

Debord's sympathetic stance for preservation, see M. Bernstein, G.E Debord, and G.J Wolman, "PROTESTATION AUPRÈS DE LA RÉDACTION DU TIMES," in *POTLATCH Bulletin d'information de l'Internationale Lettriste* (Paris: Les Éditions Allia, 1996).

¹³⁴ Justin Wintle, "A Media Van," *New Society*, April 12, 1973.

¹³⁵ ED Berman, "Inter-Action Media-Van" (News release, 1973), Arts Council of Great Britain Archive.

¹³⁶ Berman.

the Media-van was therefore to break this vicious cycle. It would, Berman suggested, liberate the production of mass media contents such as newspaper, radio, and video; and allow the ordinary British public to voice their discontent towards their everyday surroundings.

The correlation established between the media and the built environment could be seen as an echo of Marshall McLuhan's call for artists to "make environment visible as a medium."¹³⁷ Yet more than just addressing the link, the Media-van campaign stressed the importance of public participation and engagement in the built and media realms. Unlike McLuhan, Inter-Action argued that it was not only the artists and architects who had the ability to evaluate their surroundings. The only way to successfully challenge the existing means of production in both mass media and architecture, the Media-van campaign recognised, was through cultivating a critical attitude amongst ordinary citizens.¹³⁸ The campaign also seemed to share the optimism outlined by Jurgen Habermas in his seminal 1962 publication *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* in which the philosopher envisaged media and communication technology reviving the public sphere.¹³⁹ Crosby, the Arts Council, and Inter-Action's collaboration also outlined an alternative trajectory for 20th-century architecture: it could take a more active role in the design and functioning of the media milieu thus bringing betterment to the physical environments. Why did these insights not attract more attention in the British architecture and planning realm? How did this critical discourse on the environment recede?

¹³⁷ Marshall McLuhan and Fiore Quentin, *The Medium Is the Massage: An Inventory of Effects* (Penguin: London, 1967), 89.

¹³⁸ Berman, "Inter-Action Media-Van."

¹³⁹ Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, ed. Thomas Bruger (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1962).



FIG 3.20 Image from the Media-van tour and its press release.



FIG 3.21 Collage for the Media-van campaign emphasising the importance of public participation in mass media production. At the time, Inter-Action also owned a Fun Art Bus which used mimes and spontaneous theatre to disturb quotidian life in urban centres.

One reason for the lack of attention paid to this articulation of the environment could be attributed to Berman and Crosby's preservationist bias. Footage of the Media-van journey revealed that it showed preference to areas with 18th and 19th-century housing stocks. Berman also shared the same prejudice as Oscar Newman and other critics of Modernist architecture at the time — he regarded tower blocks construction a threat to community bonds that were usually formed by neighbours who live next to instead of above or below each

other.¹⁴⁰ Inter-Action's valuation of old buildings and their view of the environment as a signifying system was clearly reflected in Berman's interview for *How to Play the Environment*, where he stated that "by building upwards, we are building an incommunication(sic) system, modern towers of Babel."¹⁴¹ This selective journey had crippled the possibility of engendering a more comprehensive evaluation of the British built and media environment.

Perhaps more problematic was the Media-van campaign also submitted to the notion that architecture was no longer the key medium for social engagements. Instead of plazas, squares, and streets, social activities and political participation would only be found in media technology: camera, recorder and Xerox machines. This disillusionment about the social role of architecture was clearly stated in Crosby's writing in the exhibition catalogue,

In a world becoming, through technology, more and more introverted, where social life (or life in the pub) is constantly eroded, where there are very few meeting places, our remaining public selves are easily occluded. Yet the very process of technological changes created its own opposition groups and thus restore the possibility of a public role to the citizen.¹⁴²

In Crosby and Berman's writings, architecture could no longer be the reflection of civilisation. Not only had architecture lost its historical importance, but its future was also at risk. In formulating the "cycle of deprivation-inarticulateness-deprivation," Berman mapped out a bleak future where architectural culture would be subjected to the health of the media realm. This radical undermining of architecture's societal role was all at once too forward-looking and regressive thus hindering the effective delivery of Crosby and Berman's message.

¹⁴⁰ Wintle, "A Media Van," 84.

¹⁴¹ Wintle, 84.

¹⁴² Crosby, *How to Play the Environmental Game*, 259.

The problem associated with an in-grained proclivity for old buildings aside, the lack of attention paid to this alternative environmental discourse should also be attributed to its self-diffusion: everything had become the environment, and the environment had become everything. This turn to a “*total* environment” was similarly found in the works of Crosby’s former collaborator the Archigram group, which was described by Anthony Vidler as,

a program and aesthetic for the *total* environment...an environmentalism that worked with every aspect of the contemporary environment, from consumer desire to ecological demand, from media to medium, from dream to dream machine, from the suburban kit to the electronic tomato.¹⁴³

In this diffusion of environmentalism, the many intellectual, technological, and societal considerations imbued within it dissipated.¹⁴⁴

3.9 Conclusion

Despite its many flaws, *How to Play the Environment Game* offers a critical reflection for questioning whether radical environmental proposition should be equated with progressive political, social, and cultural agendas. The above passage from Vidler, for example, represented a widely circulated view of why Archigram’s works are still appealing and relevant some fifty years after they were first envisioned. *How to Play the Environment Game*, in comparison, demonstrated that a similar radical formulation of a “total environment” could be motivated by a very different aesthetic and architectural intention. At the same time, the exhibition also revealed a currently overlooked “techno-utopian” side of

¹⁴³ Vidler, “Towards a Theory of the Architectural Program,” 68.

¹⁴⁴ Another similar critique of the term environment, in architectural discourse, can be found in the writings of scholars of the built environment including Bill Hillier and Adrian Leaman, who suggested the term had “acted as a ‘basin attractors’, drawing other meanings and concepts into itself, as a river draws tributaries as it defines, and is defined by, the landscape through it passes.”

Ben Hillier and Adrian Leaman, “The Man-Environment Paradigm and Its Paradox,” *Architectural Design*, August 1973, 507.

preservation. The use of information theory could be seen as an attempt to liberate preservation from the grasp of the professionals and experts. Any member of the public with access to a calculator could nominally decide whether a building should be demolished or preserved. The mathematic formula, arguably, could also be used to hold architects accountable when designing new buildings. This discussion on technology, history, and communication, and the recodification of architecture offered a new frame for examining the many convergences of Postmodernism and preservation in 20th-century architecture. It also demonstrates the continued transposition and translation of Classical architectural language for various agendas.

In the exhibition and the Media-van campaign, one also witnessed the dissolution of the previously cordial relationship between Modernism and preservation. Despite its affinity to information theory and other scientific research, Crosby's exhibition contributed to the split between preservation advocacies and Modernist architectural discourses. The success of the Victorian & Albert Museum exhibition *The Destruction of Country House* in the following year suggested that the early 1970s should be seen as a threshold moment when preservation accelerated the Postmodern-turn of British architecture and the eradication of post-war Modernism.¹⁴⁵ (FIG 3.22) The contrasts between the two exhibitions also shed light on preservation's short-lived technological turn before being overwhelmed by nostalgic sentiments.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁵ Roy Strong, Marcus Binney, and John Harris, *The Destruction of the Country House 1875-1975* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1974).

¹⁴⁶ By the 1980s, there would already been a wide trove of scholarships that attacked the nostalgic sentiment found in preservation campaigns of the time:

David Lowenthal, *The Past Is a Foreign Country* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

Eric Hobsbawm, *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

Hewison, *The Heritage Industry: Britain in a Climate of Decline*.



FIG 3.22 Installation view from *The Destruction of Country House* exhibition.

The contradictions manifested in *How to Play the Environment Game* could also be used as a summation of Crosby's practice as an operative critic who produced "typological criticism," and its effects on his preservation advocacy.¹⁴⁷ In the 21-part organisation of the exhibition, in the array of collaborators enlisted in the exhibition, and in Crosby's *Pessimist Utopia* speech, one can see how Crosby was "in favour of concentrating the analysis on limited sector-environments."¹⁴⁸ For Crosby, the compartmented analysis of urban conditions would enable the articulation of new urban theories that could more effectively hinder the wholesale destruction of historic fabrics. There was also a resistance to an overarching societal and environmental vision which was also found in contemporaneous discussion in Postmodern architecture. In *How to Play the Environment Game*, there was not one leading

¹⁴⁷ Tafuri, *Theories and History of Architecture*, 159.

¹⁴⁸ Tafuri, 159.

cause for preservation, but a coalition of different interest groups who championed preservation based on different rationales. The consequence of this interest-driven approach to urban changes was multi-faceted: in an earlier part of this chapter we have already witnessed how the critiques and energy of the different groups were diluted due to the need of a consensus. In the next chapter, in the examination of the Shakespeare Globe, we will discuss more at length the political and planning stagnation, as well as cultural division exacerbated by such an approach.

Chapter 4
The Necessary Monument:
Shakespeare's Globe



FIG 4.1 Aerial view of the Globe Theatre.

Chapter 4 The Necessary Monument: Shakespeare's Globe



FIG 4.2 Shakespeare's Globe from the River Thames.

4.1 Introduction

Standing between the Southwark Pier and the Tate Modern Museum, the Shakespeare's Globe has a prominent presence on the Thames Bankside. (FIG 4.1, FIG 4.2) It is best known for its outdoor theatre, a 99-meter diameter wooden structure, constructed based on a current-day understanding of the original Globe, once owned by Shakespeare. The photogenic wooden "O" theatre is, in fact, only part of the International Shakespeare Globe Centre (1973-1997) designed by Crosby. Within the complex, there is also a museum, an indoor theatre, a restaurant, a cafeteria and gift shop area, and a back-of-house building for the Globe Theatre Company. (FIG 4.3) Part of the reconstructed theatre's appeal as a tourist attraction today lays in its use of 16th-century building materials and construction

technology.¹ A similar claim of “authenticity” has been made for the indoor theatre, now named Wanamaker Playhouse (2014), which is constructed based on an Inigo Jones theatre design blueprint, discovered at the University of Oxford in the 1980s.² (FIG 4.4)

This chapter moves beyond the examination of the Globe theatre’s architectural characteristics and focuses on understanding the Globe compound as one of the earliest cultural institutions proposed on the Thames Bankside, east of the Blackfriars Bridge. The two-decade-long process of its realisation, spanning from the 1970s to 1990s, suggests the building was a witness of North Southwark’s post-industrial transformation. This study builds on the premise that Crosby’s design of the Globe should be understood as an urban renewal vision. The first section of this chapter explains how the Globe reflects Crosby’s theorisation of monument, preservation and urban regeneration in his 1970 publication *The Necessary Monument*.³ Through considering Crosby’s involvement in the demolition of Euston Arch (1962), this part of the study interrogates the fraught relationship between monuments, Modern architecture and modernisation in 20th-century Britain. How these tensions manifested in the Globe’s planning process will be discussed in the second half of the chapter. It investigates how Crosby’s theory of monuments and urban renewal interacted with the urban reality of a de-industrialising Southwark. The Globe will be used as a stage to demonstrate Crosby’s and the Southwark community’s different interpretations of the area’s past. How changes brought by the Thatcher-era economic reforms had accentuated tension between the Globe and the local community will also be discussed.

¹ Crosby, “The Globe Theatre: Shakespeare’s Theatre Reconstruction in London,” 94.

² Rowan Moore, “Sam Wanamaker Playhouse-Review,” *The Guardian*, January 12, 2014.

³ Crosby, *The Necessary Monument*.



FIG 4.3 Diagrammatic plan of the International Shakespeare Centre, showing the Globe Theatre, the Sam Wanamaker Playhouse, the museum, the Swan bar and the foyer of the centre. The back-of-house building facing Park Street is not shown on this plan.



FIG 4.4 View of the Globe Theatre. In the original design, the theatre ground was not paved. However, after a season of performance, it was decided that the mud floor was too dusty and was covered with concrete.

4.2 Brief History of the Globe Theatre (1969-1997)

Other than its architectural anomaly, the Globe's promotional material, museum displays, and guided tours often cited the project's unusual origin to reinstate its identity as a 20th-century revival of Shakespearean humanism.⁴ The project was initiated by American director and actor Sam Wanamaker in the late 1960s. Between the 1970s and 1994, the Globe project was a self-funded project which received no financial support or endorsement from the Arts Council or other British authorities. The Arts Council, at the time, had no interest in creating a competitor against the well-established Royal Shakespeare Company at Stratford-upon-Avon; there was also a consensus that any resources made available for Shakespearean performances on the Southbank should be put into the National Theatre, which was opened in 1976.⁵ There were also accusations that Wanamaker was using the Globe as a decoy for speculative real estate "land-grab."⁶ Another reason behind the authorities' indifference to the Globe, allegedly, was due to prejudice against the Globe's nature as a reconstructed theatre. In a special issue of *Zodiac* magazine, Crosby wrote,

The idea of a reconstruction was a rather too post-modern a concept for the modernist ideologues in the Arts Council, so that any gentle suggestions for a subsidy were always turned down flat... The government has always been full of encouragement but has never contributed.⁷

In publications that are more sympathetic to the Globe, Wanamaker's self-driven quest for reviving the memory of the playwright to the Southwark area has been regarded as a manifestation of Shakespearean spirit in the 20th century.⁸ The obstacles in the realisation of

⁴ Shakespeare's Globe, "The Third Globe," Education Brochure (London: Shakespeare's Globe, 2017), https://www.shakespearesglobe.com/uploads/files/2015/04/reconstructed_globe.pdf.

⁵ Barry Day, *This Wooden "O"* (London: Oberon, 1997), 38–42.

⁶ Paul Prescott and Cary Mazer, "Sam Wanamaker," in *Poel, Granville Barker, Guthrie, Wanamaker*, vol. 15, *Great Shakespeareans* (London: Bloomsbury, 2010), 151–201.

⁷ Crosby, "The Globe Theatre: Shakespeare's Theatre Reconstruction in London," 94.

⁸ Prescott and Mazer, "Sam Wanamaker."

the project are now being used as a means to emphasise the Globe's authenticity and hence its cultural values.

The many changes found in the Globe project's site acquisition, planning, design, and funding procedures are briefly listed as follow,

Inception (1969- early 1970s): In 1969, Wanamaker began his quest for building a cultural complex that commemorated Shakespeare's activities on the South Bank. Despite the lack of official support and recognition from the British arts and culture institutions, Wanamaker established the fund-raising, promotion, and educational infrastructure for the Globe project during this period.⁹

First Design Phase (1970s): After forming the Shakespeare's Globe Trust in 1970, Wanamaker invited architects and architectural historians to draft initial plans for the Globe Theatre.¹⁰ The most significant contribution Crosby brought to the project, in this early design phase, was to convince Wanamaker that the Globe should be constructed in a historically authentic manner.¹¹ Since then, Crosby had been working closely with two theatre historians, Andrew Gurr and John Orrell, to determine the dimension, the orientation and detailed structural configuration of the Globe Theatre.¹² During this period, Wanamaker secured a site on the Bankside by arranging a "planning-gain" agreement with a developer.¹³

Second Design Phase (1980s): By the 1980s, the design of the wooden theatre had been finalised. However, the project was caught in the planning policy changes following the 1979 and 1982 elections. The political antagonism between the Globe Trust, the Southwark Council and the developer was resolved in 1986 in a three-party lawsuit.¹⁴

⁹ Day, *This Wooden "O,"* 60.

¹⁰ Day, 30,33.

¹¹ In early 1973, Wanamaker was still open to three different options for the Globe, As accurate as possible a "Replica Theatre."

Ditto, but perhaps demountable and erected for seasons within a general all-purpose exciting-packaged "hanger."

A Globe Theatre Mark 3, predominately designed for Shakespearean production, but capable of other types. Day, 68.

¹² Day, 72-108.

¹³ Day, 42,59.

¹⁴ Day, 137-54.

Self-Built Phase (1992 to 1994): The discovery of the archaeological site of the original Rose Theatre and later the Globe Theatre in 1990 had led to unexpected changes to the Globe's design. The archaeological digs also garnered significant public support for the Globe project.¹⁵ The construction of the Globe compound, however, went to a halt in 1991 due to the lack of funding. In 1992, Crosby devised a self-building scheme that circumvented contractors and contractual bonds. This scheme enabled the Globe to be constructed in a piecemeal way.¹⁶

Construction and Completion (1994-1997): Soon after Crosby and Wanamaker's deaths in 1994, the Globe Trust finally received a 12.4 million pounds grant from the Lottery Art Fund which covered its remaining construction costs.¹⁷ The Globe complex was completed and opened to members of the public in 1997.

This chapter will focus on the Second Design Phase (1980s) and Self-Build Phase (1992 to 1994) to examine the Globe's peculiar position in the discourse of London's urban post-industrial regeneration.

4.3 Globe in Shakespearean Scholarships

The story of creating a theatre based on 16th-century design, material, and construction technology has been documented and analysed by scholars who had been directly or indirectly involved in the project, including an volume edited by J.R. Mulryne and Margaret Shwering entitled *Shakespeare's Globe Rebuilt*.¹⁸ The two theatre historians who acted as consultants for the Globe theatre, Andrew Gurr and John Orrell, have both published books and articles detailing their research into the historical location, design, and structural

¹⁵ Simon Blathewick, "The Archaeological Evaluation of the Globe Playhouse," in *Shakespeare's Globe Rebuilt*, ed. J.R. Mulryne and Margaret Shwering (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

¹⁶ Crosby, "The Globe Theatre: Shakespeare's Theatre Reconstruction in London," 95.

¹⁷ Day, *This Wooden "O,"* 302.

¹⁸ J.R. Mulryne and M Shwering, *Shakespeare's Globe Rebuilt* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

details of the wooden theatre.¹⁹ They have discussed how Crosby translated the Elizabethan theatre into a structure that could fulfil the fire safety, structural and hygienic requirements stipulated by 20th-century building regulations.²⁰ Jon Greenfield, the Pentagram architect who completed the project after Crosby's death in 1994, has also elaborated on their collaboration with skilled builders and craftspeople who had mastery in historic building technology.²¹ These publications further strengthened the Globe's claim of authenticity and establish it as an internationally important centre for the study of Shakespearean performance, history, and theatre design.

Publications by theatre scholars who were not involved the Globe project are often more critical of the project. Joanne Schmitz, a performance art scholar from UC Davis, for example, scrutinises the Globe project through the lens of authenticity. Schmitz regards the Globe as "a postmodern pastiche more than a reconstruction based on archaeological and/or scholarly evidence."²² Although she is sympathetic to the unavoidable alterations made to the theatre design in accordance with 20th-century building regulations and material availability, Schmitz finds the Globe theatre regrettably "a 'historical' building looking authentic to those expected to pay to support it, than to actually be authentic."²³ One illustrative example Schmitz gives for this is the wooden structural frames of the theatre. Despite the fact that the

¹⁹ Andrew Gurr and John Orell, *Rebuilding Shakespeare's Globe* (London: Routledge, 1989).

John Orell, *The Quest for Shakespeare's Globe* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

²⁰ Andrew Gurr, "A History of Reconstruction and Some Reasons for Trying," in *Shakespeare's Globe Rebuilt*, ed. J.R. Mulryne and Margaret Shewring (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 28–47.

²¹ Jon Greenfield, "Design as Reconstruction/Reconstruction as Design," in *Shakespeare's Globe Rebuilt*, ed. J. R. Mulryne and Margaret Shewring (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 97–120.

²² Joanne Schmitz, "Millennial Reconstruction of Shakespeare's Theatre" (Ph.D Dissertation, University of California, Davis, 2001), 84.

²³ Both Gurr and Schmitz have given details again on the modern imposition on the design of the Globe. For example, Gurr discussed the design imposition made by Crosby due to the differences in physical sizes of contemporary human and the Elizabethan audiences.

Gurr and Orell, *Rebuilding Shakespeare's Globe*, 163.

Schmitz talks about the theatre's yard paved with cement instead dirt due to the latter's health and hygienic hazards.

Schmitz, "Millennial Reconstruction of Shakespeare's Theatre," 82–83.

structure was completely covered with white lime plaster in the Elizabethan time, Schmitz observes, the structural frames are now exposed for a modern-day preference of material and structural “honesty.”²⁴ In short, Schmitz suggested the Globe’s “authenticity” should be understood as a gambit pertaining to the taste of 21st-century visitors.

More at stake, Schmitz argues, is that the Globe presents a reductive and singular reading of the original theatre. The open-air theatre, Schmitz criticises, is a touristic ploy and a negation of 21st-century theatre audience’s viewing experience and comfort.²⁵ She describes the Globe, borrowing Jean Baudrillard’s terms, as “a simulacrum (a copy of a building that no longer exists), a simulation (a copy or “recreation” based on scholarly and archaeological evidence of the first Globe(s)).”²⁶ Schmitz also draws a link between these characteristics of the Globe with 1980’s British culture, which she summarises thus,

through the recovery of Elizabethan theatre convention as dictated by Tudor architectural structures that could then infiltrate a correct commercial theatre practice as well as satisfy some contemporary desire ranging from nostalgic (regressive), cultural placement or class affiliation (politically associative and manipulative), to monumentalization (commemorative).²⁷

. The Globe, she suggests, is emblematic of a stagnant architectural culture where sentimentality eclipsed an accurate and critical understanding of the past. A similar criticism, also through Baudrillard, has been made by theatre and performance historian Dennis Kennedy.²⁸ Kennedy observes that “in the edutainment trade, the International Shakespeare Globe Centre is the most obvious example of commodified heritage, predicated upon concepts of cultural tourism analogous to those of the Lascaux copy or Disney world.”²⁹

²⁴ Schmitz, “Millennial Reconstruction of Shakespeare’s Theatre,” 84–85.

²⁵ Schmitz, 86–88.

²⁶ Schmitz, 11.

²⁷ Schmitz, 17.

²⁸ Dennis Kennedy, “Shakespeare and Cultural Tourism,” *Theatre Journal* 50, no. 2 (May 1998): 175–88.

²⁹ Kennedy, 181.

Kennedy laments that Globe, “wrapped up in a user-friendly, consumerist package,” is no more than a “heritage property” that is “determined by late monopoly capitalism.”³⁰ These critiques of the Globe suggest it is not only a theatre but also a structure, or even a landmark, associated with the heritage and edutainment industry in post-industrial Britain.

In Schmitz and Kennedy’s criticism of the Globe, they have respectively pointed at the Globe’s fraught relationship with its surrounding industrial sites and working-class community. Kennedy highlights the Globe theatre’s contradictory attitude towards class. He questions whether the Globe can be a genuine attempt to democratise theatre, in light of the inherently “high art” nature of Shakespearean theatre.³¹ The Globe, Kennedy criticises, is more likely to be a disingenuous and romanticised structure that “implies the abolition of class” for the tourists’ gaze.³² This criticism of the Globe’s paradoxical relationship with class resonates with previous chapters’ evaluation of Crosby’s other projects.

Although the Globe’s multifaceted performance as a cultural tourism destination has been discussed, Schmitz and Kennedy do not elaborate on the Globe’s interactions with the surrounding industrial and urban transformations since the 1970s.³³ Moreover, in the existing scholarship of the Globe, it has mostly been understood as a reconstructed theatre; and few have looked into its other identity as a cultural institution and a rare structure of the heritage industry built in central London. This research, through retrieving the Globe’s planning and construction process, seeks to better understand the contradictions found in the preservation

³⁰ Kennedy, 181.

³¹ Kennedy, “Shakespeare and Cultural Tourism,” 11.

³² Kennedy, 11.

³³ The accusation of the Globe as a disguise for speculative land-grab has been discussed by Paul Prescott and Barry Bay. However, both theatre historians focused on defending Sam Wanamaker’s intends, and did not further explore how the Globe reflected the urban changes of de-industrialising London. Prescott and Mazer, “Sam Wanamaker.” Day, *This Wooden “O,”* 129.

advocacies in late 20th-century Britain. In this effort, this chapter discusses the different interpretations of the past held by the Globe Trust – including Crosby, and the North Southwark community. It serves as an alternative lens to look into how urban policy and politics in late 20th century London interacted with contemporaneous debates in preservation and Postmodern architecture.

4.4 Globe as a Postmodern Architecture

The Globe bears witnesses to many notable policy changes, events and physical transformations during London Southwark's de-industrialisation. Proposed in the late 1960s and completed in the late 1990s, the history of the Globe's realisation pivoted on the two ends of Southwark's post-industrial redevelopment. When the idea of creating a centre dedicated to Shakespeare was first initiated by Sam Wanamaker in 1969, north Southwark was still part of London's active industrial areas. (FIG 4.5) The Globe since witnessed the dockland's decline and the subsequent transformation brought to its nearby Docklands through the Thatcher-era reforms.³⁴ In the cultural realm, the project was one of the earliest beneficiaries of the Lottery Art Fund established in 1994.³⁵ Not long after its completion in 1997, the Globe would again find itself in the centre of the urban changes driven by the economic and cultural policy devised by the New Labour government. As a result of the heavy government subsidy injected in arts and culture programme as a means for urban regeneration, the Globe has since been surrounded by architectural spectacles constructed for the new Millennium.³⁶ In architectural publications that celebrate Britain's face-lift, the

³⁴ The London Dockland Development Corporation was established in 1981 and closed in 1998.

³⁵ Catherine Slessor, "London's Gamble," *The AIA Journal*, October 1997.

³⁶ Paul Barker, "The New Statesman Profile - Southwark Borough," *The New Statesman*, December 13, 1999, <https://www.newstatesman.com/node/150435>.

Globe was published alongside and stood out amongst the sleek streamline facades of the Jubilee Line stations (1999), the London Eye (1998), and the City Hall (2002).³⁷

The Globe was an oddity amongst these millennium constructions. Its positioning as a cultural heritage touristic site rendered it an odd reminder of Britain's pasts: not only of the Elizabethan-era but also the "preservation mania" and "heritage industry" of the previous decade.³⁸ The sense of confusion is accentuated by the design of the Globe compound, which reflected Crosby's long-held belief that an ideal urbanscape was a result of a sedimentation of and negotiation between buildings of various periods and styles.³⁹ Each part of the Globe complex bared different historical architectural styles: towards the east of the wooden theatre, there is the pub and restaurant building in a 16th-century Mannerist style with chimneys and balconies that looked like 19th-century additions. (FIG 4.6) Attached to the wooden theatre is a white concrete cube museum entrance with flat roof. The foyer had an Art-Deco-ish façade, but the back of house building was a distinctively 1980s construction highlighted by its engineered brick-clad façade and terra cotta roof. (FIG 4.7)

³⁷ Kenneth Powell, ed., *London: World Cities* (London: Academic Editions, 1993).

³⁸ Raphael Samuel observed that the National Trust had become Britain's largest mass-membership organisation, which was indicative of the "preservation mania" found in the country. Samuel, *Theatres of Memory: Past and Present in Contemporary Culture*, 139.

A more critical view about the growing interest in preserving the past can be found in Lowenthal, who discussed the disorientation brought by heritage industry as,

"I acquit heritage of historians' charges not because heritage is guiltless of deforming history but because its function is to do just that."

David Lowenthal, *Possessed by the Past: The Heritage Crusade and the Spoils of History* (New York: The Free Press, 1996), 106.

³⁹ Crosby, *How to Play the Environmental Game*, 172–79.

In the Globe complex, not only there was various recreations of “olds,” but they were also constructed with varying degrees of authenticity and accuracy. It was, in short, a fragmented and disorienting grouping of references to the past. Its site context further underscored the conflation between old and new: the plurality of past created by Crosby have to respond to the nearby “real” urban relics from the 16th century, including the Cardinal Walk alley and a house where Christopher Wren allegedly lived.⁴⁰ (FIG 4.8) The fragmentation and disorientation of time found in the compound, one can argue, is what rendered the Globe as a Postmodern building. In Crosby’s words, the Globe is,

an ultimate and rather terrifying test bed for a possible 21st-century architecture; popular, monumental, eclectic, historicist, romantic, academic. All the forbidden words but where the challenge lies in a world with time and money to visit and enjoy buildings.⁴¹

Crosby’s unapologetic architectural eclecticism and populism also resonated with some of the Postmodern architectural experiments conducted in London in the same era.⁴²

⁴⁰ Gillian Tindall, *The House by the Thames, and the People Who Lived There* (New York: Random House, 2007), 58–59.

⁴¹ Day, *This Wooden “O,”* 129.

⁴² Owen Hopkins, “Postmodernism Revisited,” in *The Return of the Past: Conversation on Postmodernism*, ed. Owen Hopkins and McKellar Erin (London: Sir John Soane Museum, 2018).



FIG 4.5 View of the Thames Bankside in 1964, showing the Bankside Power station and the active industrial areas.



FIG 4.6 Diagram of Crosby's design for the International Shakespeare Centre (1990s). All the proposed structures, except the apartment block on the right, have been realised.

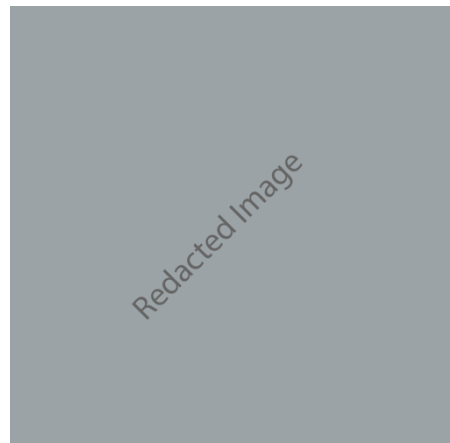


FIG 4.7 Elevation along the back-of-house building of the International Shakespeare Centre, from Silk Market Place. The tower on the right, in the realised building, was clad with engineered brick instead of sandstone.



FIG 4.8 View showing no. 49 Bankside, the entrance to Cardinal Walk and the Globe Museum entrance. In Crosby's proposal, the museum entrance would be a four-storey apartment building with ground floor retail spaces.

4.5 Globe as an Urban Regeneration Vision (1970-73)

The Globe's present-day anomaly should be attributed to the fact that it was a building that was designed from the 1970s and realised in the late 1990s, a delay that was partly due to a suspicion that the theatre was Wanamaker's scheme for speculative "land grab."⁴³ Such suspicion, ironically, was in part engendered by the first newsletter of the International Shakespeare Centre, published by Wanamaker. In this 1973 publication, the goals of the project were stated as:

1. To reclaim Southwark's Thames Bank, universally recognised as an historic area of international interest...
2. To purpose a redevelopment plan, bounded by Blackfriars and London Bridge, and River Thames and Southwark Street, to become an area of culture, education, and entertainment with related amenities in a harmonious relationship of housing, offices and hotels.
3. To construct a third Globe Playhouse on or its near original site with a comprehensive development concept appropriate for the area...⁴⁴

Only after these three propositions on urban redevelopment did Wanamaker move on to introduce the various performance and educational programs. In the early iterations of the project, there was no specific plan for a wooden round theatre, let alone a historically-accurate recreation of the Elizabethan structure. (FIG 4.9)

⁴³ Prescott and Mazer, "Sam Wanamaker."

⁴⁴ Shakespeare's Globe Trust, "Bankside Globe," Newsletter (London: the International Shakespeare Globe Centre, Spring 1973), Shakespeare's Globe.

What further heightened the suspicions of Wanamaker's project was in the early proposals, the International Shakespeare Centre consisted of a series of loosely-themed office, residential blocks, conference facilities, and hotel buildings. The vision, according to Wanamaker, was to utilise Shakespearean humanism to inject new energy to the de-industrialising Southwark. He also claimed that the memory of the playwright would be used as an apparatus to calibrate relentless market-driven developments found in London at the time. The contrast between the commercially oriented proposal and Wanamaker's rhetoric about the Shakespearean memory continued to draw criticism to the project, and the credibility of this self-funded self-initiated project was often drawn into question.⁴⁵

The suspicious initial proposal of the International Shakespearean Centre, in fact, was a part of another ambitious and influential urban regeneration vision. The initial masterplan was produced by the engineering firm Ove Arup, before Crosby took over the project's chief architect role in 1972. Having worked on the Hayward Gallery and Queen Elizabeth Hall in the 1960s, Arup had a vested interest in expanding the company's portfolio along the south side of the Thames. They regarded the Globe part and parcel of their culture-led "meta-engineering" of the South Bank.⁴⁶ The initial ambitious proposals devised by Arup portrayed a complete regeneration of the Thames Bankside from the Blackfriars Bridge to London Bridge. (FIG 4.10) For Arup, the goal of the regeneration was to designate the north Southwark area as an extension to the City of London, as indicated by the proposed travellers over the London Bridge and the then unused Blackfriars Railway Bridge. Arup's vision, according to architectural historian Arindam Dutta, was a ramification of the economic and cultural reform instigated by the founder of the Arts Council, economist John

⁴⁵ Day, *This Wooden "O."*

⁴⁶ Dutta, "Marginality and Metaengineering," 240–41.

Maynard Keynes.⁴⁷ This proposal could also be seen as a reverberation of Patrick Abercrombie's plan for London drafted in 1944 where north Southwark was seen as an extension of the City.⁴⁸ Arup's masterplan suggested the Globe and its auxiliary programs would only account for three out of the thirty-one structures proposed for the area. It is also worthy to mention that Arup held a noticeably different approach to past and history from Wanamaker. In a 1972 symposium for the Thames-side developments, there had been no mention of Shakespearean cultural or other histories of the Southwark. Taking a macroscopic-scale view of London's regeneration and different apprehension of time scale, Arup suggested the "past" they valued would be archaeology and geology.⁴⁹

⁴⁷ Dutta, 240–41.

⁴⁸ As early as 1944, Patrick Abercrombie's London Plan had already designated the part of Bankside, where the Globe stands, as where the West-end meets the City on the south side of the Thames. However, no specific plan had been made for any cultural institution east of the Blackfriars Bridge until the 1980s.

⁴⁹ The only mention of existing social condition of Southwark was made by the director Michael Duncan on the last page of the report, of which he wrote,

"The south bank lacks the clerkish tradition. For it, offices, hotels, cultural centres, luxury flats are a new experience. This manifest itself in abolished roads, new river lines and increased scales. Eventually the people and the complete feel of the area will change."

Arup Partnership, "Report from the Thames-Side Symposium" (Thames-side Symposium, London: Arup Partnership, 1972).



FIG 4.9 Early scheme for the International Shakespeare Centre from the early 1970s.



FIG 4.10 Arup's comprehensive regeneration scheme published in the first newsletter of the Globe. The Globe Theatre is marked as no.12 and is a square-shape building.

The “meta-engineering” proposal by Arup was poorly received, and in 1972 Crosby (along with his newly-founded Pentagram design) took over the role as the Globe’s chief architect. Although Crosby’s contribution to the Globe had been well-documented and analysed, accounts of how he became its lead architect remained murky. The most detailed record can be found in a book entitled *This Wooden “O”* by Barry Day, a former director of the Globe.⁵⁰ Day described Crosby “sitting in a meeting of the Architectural Association minding his own business when Sam Wanamaker erupted into his life.”⁵¹ Day recalled that Crosby offered to design more professional-looking brochures for Wanamaker’s fund-raising campaign, but was instead brought into the project as its lead architect. In the following twenty-two years, Crosby would be a key driver for Globe’s realisation. This convoluted history of how Crosby got involved in the Globe was corroborated by Jon Greenfield’s report that Crosby was simply being “drawn into the project.”⁵² This kind of serendipity and the unlikely alliance was, nonetheless, a peculiar yet consistent aspect of Crosby’s practice, seeking balance between idealistic experimentations and business interests.⁵³

The schemes devised by Crosby reflected a pursuit for a visual complex urbanscape, by juxtaposing old and new, that was different from Arup’s “meta-engineering scheme.”⁵⁴ Crosby’s interest in incorporating arts into the everyday environment would probably resonate better with Wanamaker’s vision of a Shakespearean Village.⁵⁵ (FIG 4.11) Another reason Crosby was a compelling candidate for designing the Globe was that, in 1970, he published a rather well-received book, *The Necessary Monument*, in which he discussed the

⁵⁰ Day, *This Wooden “O.”*

⁵¹ Day, 125.

⁵² Jon Greenfield, “Design as Reconstruction/Reconstruction as Design,” 81.

⁵³ Pentagram, *Living by Design*, 6.

⁵⁴ Dutta, “Marginality and Metaengineering.”

⁵⁵ In the 1970s, in order to better engage with the local community and for publicity, Wanamaker had been holding annual Shakespearean performances in the Bankside area. “Globe Aspiration,” *Commerce International: The Journal of the London Chamber of Commerce and Industry*, July 1973.

urban regeneration of Southwark at length.⁵⁶ Using Tower Bridge and Grand Central Station in New York as examples, Crosby argued for the importance of architectural monuments in late 20th-century society. His call for revitalising these old structures, Crosby explained, was a reaction to the Modernist doctrine of “elementary simplicity.”⁵⁷ The visual, programmatic, historic, and engineering complexity of the 19th-century monuments, Crosby declared, was what could bring a rekindling of arts and life in 1970s Britain.

Not unlike Crosby’s other writings, *The Necessary Monument* consisted of a reactionary and paradoxical analysis through a selective history of architecture.⁵⁸ Towards the end of the book, Crosby proclaimed that the step forward was to look for the reverse of whatever the Modern Movement was championing,

In effect, the whole of architectural history can be seen as an alternation between ideas of elementary simplicity (virtue) beloved by the theorists and historians, and periods of tangled complexity, which are always somehow more popular, and challenging, for the practitioners. Each periodic recall to virtue results in the neglect and decay of the buildings of the previous period.⁵⁹

In this passage, Crosby described architectural history as an hour-glass— aspiration in architecture were repeatedly turning upside down. By regarding architectural history as cyclical, Crosby justified his call for preserving structures that were not widely appreciated at the time of writing. This articulation of alternation rather than progression of history also allowed Crosby to argue that monuments should not only be seen as commemorations of the past, but structures that could have economic, cultural, and urbanistic functions in the present

⁵⁶ Crosby, *The Necessary Monument*.

The book received positive reviews from newspapers and magazines in both Britain and the U.S. and was translated into Italian.

Theo Crosby, *Il Monumento Necessario* (Bari: Dedaldo, 1980).

⁵⁷ Crosby, *The Necessary Monument*, 87.

⁵⁸ In the book, Crosby examined a few monuments, including the Tower Bridge, the Paris Opera by Charles Garnier, and the Grand Central Station. He stressed Louis’ Kahn’s admiration for the Penn Station and the Grand Central Station.

Crosby, *The Necessary Monument*.

⁵⁹ Crosby, 87.

day and the future. Written at almost the same time when Crosby became the lead architect of the Globe, these arguments in *The Necessary Monument* should also be regarded as the design incentives behind Crosby's Globe proposals.



FIG 4.11 Sketches by Crosby (perhaps with his wife Polly Hope) for a horse carriage. He had also produced design for furniture, lamp posts and landscape features for the Globe compound in order to recreate an authentic 16th-century ambiance in 20th-century Southwark.

4.6 Modernisation and Monument

Crosby's *The Necessary Monument* was also a proposal to resolve issues in contemporary architectural production. Written in the late 1960s, Crosby's prime concern in the book was the economic decline and de-industrialisation found in Western developed countries. He began the book by claiming that monuments, through the example of Charles de Gaulle's regeneration of Paris, were "excellent investments".⁶⁰ Crosby observed the initial expenditure paid by the French government to renovate their state buildings had yielded significant returns in the form of increased private investments and economic growth. It also promoted tourism which brought additional income that was crucial to the economic sustainability of a de-industrialising society.⁶¹ Crosby suggested that the care for the monuments could become a trigger for revitalising old neighbourhoods and thus enable the preservation of the other historical structures and urban fabrics, too.

This emphasis on the economic function of monuments signposted a contradiction found in Crosby's theory. For architecture, Crosby argued that history was cyclical, and buildings should be preserved even though they did not readily appease the current-day taste. Yet in his discussion on economy and industry, Crosby adhered to the modern belief in constant progress and renewal. At stake in his proposition for monument and preservation, Crosby no longer regarded economic and industrial growth as necessitating the cultivation of new architectural culture. This skewed view of modernisation had manifested itself in Crosby's design for the Globe, in which the vitality of Southwark in the 20th-century was built upon a conjured-up 16th-century urban life.

⁶⁰ Crosby, 4–6.

⁶¹ Crosby, 4–6.

This complicated dynamic between monument, modernisation, and preservation articulated by Crosby could be seen as a ramification of his earlier involvement, albeit tangentially, in the destruction of a 19th-century monument. From 1962 to 1964, Crosby led a design team in the builder's company Taylor Woodrow to design a new Euston Station. The project brief also included an ambitious redevelopment plan for the area. (FIG 4.12) In the current historiography of post-war British architecture, the Euston Station project has been reminisced as the first architectural project which all six members of Archigram worked together.⁶² However, at the time of its design, the Euston Station redevelopment was more often associated with the destruction of the Euston Arch, a Doric Propylaeum stood at the southern entrance of the old station.⁶³ (FIG 4.13) The Arch, designed by architect Philip Hardwick in 1846, was a monument that demarcated the historically important industrial link between London and the Midlands.⁶⁴ In 1962, British Railways decided to demolish the structure to make way for an extended station, in anticipation for the complete electrification of trains.

As recently as 2010, the demolition of the Euston Arch is still being described as “probably the greatest single act of civic and cultural barbarism in Britain between the end of the Second World War and the Beatles’ first LP” by *The Guardian*’s architectural critic Jonathan Glancey.⁶⁵ The demolition sparked the consolidation of pressure groups such as the

⁶² Sadler, *Archigram: Architecture without Architecture*, 46.

Steiner, *Beyond Archigram: The Structure of Circulation*, 21.

Beatriz Colomina, Craig Buckley, and Urtzi Grau, eds., *Clip, Stamp, Fold: The Radical Architecture of Little Magazines, 196X to 197X* (Barcelona, Spain: Actar, 2010), 283–84.

Peter Cook in his discussion with Beatriz Colomina remembered the Taylor Woodrow days as,

“...it was a weird day job because Theo Crosby was there and brought in a whole series of people... Then, as soon as the lights went out, we would turn two of the tables around and make Archigram 4.”

⁶³ Martin Pawley, “The Euston Story,” *Architectural Design*, June 1966.

⁶⁴ Alison Smithson and Peter Smithson, *The Euston Arch and the Growth of the London Midland & Scottish Railway* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1968).

⁶⁵ Johnathan Glancey, “Raise the Euston Arch-and Get Railway Architecture Back on Track,” *The Gaurdian*, March 15, 2010, <https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2010/mar/15/euston-arch-railway-architecture>.

Victorian Society.⁶⁶ It was also a moment when Modernist architects, writers, and intellectuals formed a vocal alliance to petition for architectural preservation. The poet laureate John Betjeman initiated a preservation campaign for the Euston Arch, which garnered support from eminent architectural historians Nikolaus Pevsner and John Summerson.⁶⁷ These modernists opposed the presumption that the “ancient” should be sacrificed in the name of “modern” progress. The demolition of the Arch even bridged two generations of architectural Modernists who spent the previous decade panning each other: in 1968 Alison and Peter Smithson published an illustrated volume on the Euston Arch, in which Pevsner wrote its foreword.⁶⁸ Another key proponent of the English Modern Movement and preservation, J.M. Richards also wrote a sentimental account of how public opinion had been evaded before the demolition. He condemned bureaucratic indifferences for negating the possibility of preserving or re-erecting the Arch.⁶⁹ Richards expressed his frustration of the authorities’ complacency, detailing how British Railways, the London County Council, and the Transport Commission all had respectively claimed that preservation of monument was not within their jurisdiction and refused to respond to the public petitions. It was these nonchalant attitudes towards architectural heritage, Richards suggested, that rendered the demolition of the Euston Arch a traumatic event in British urban history.⁷⁰

⁶⁶ The Victorian Society was founded in 1958 and John Betjeman was its first secretary. The demolition of the Euston Arch and later plan of demolishing the St Pancras Station, however, was what led to a wide-spread public support to the society’s cause of protecting 19th century buildings.

⁶⁷ Glendinning, *The Conservation Movement: A History of Architectural Preservation: Antiquity to Modernity*, 317.

The destruction of the Arch has also often been remembered as the event that preceded and eventually enabled the successful preservation of the St Pancras Station.

⁶⁸ Smithson and Smithson, *The Euston Arch and the Growth of the London Midland & Scottish Railway*.

⁶⁹ J.M. Richards, “The Euston Murder,” *Architectural Review* 131 (April 1962): 224–38.

⁷⁰ Richards.



FIG 4. 12 Taylor Woodrow's plan for the Euston Station design. The complex consisted of four office buildings and a hotel development. The British Rail argued that they would use the towers for their regional headquarters, but the LCC suspected they were intending for commercial uses. The scheme was finally cancelled due to the "Brown Ban" and planning deadlocks.



FIG 4.13 Page from J.M. Richards' article in the April 1962 issue of *AR*. The article began with a provocative image of the tapered Arch and the scattered marble capitals.

Although Crosby's team were not directly involved in the demolition of Arch, their design reflected a conspicuous disregard of the history of industrialisation that the old station and the Arch was imbued with. The proposed station design championed a life of leisure in an affluent society, because automation and de-territorialisation of work had resulted in more free time and increased mobility. (FIG 4.14) The proposed station was described by the design team as an "entertainment-oriented" transportation hub and had a designated "entertainment level" situated just above the concourse. Facilities including a suspended

cinema, a Turkish bath and a banqueting hall could be found in the proposal. (FIG 4.15) The concourse was also packed with an overflow of activities: the main concourse level would contain more than 80 cell-like retail units. The various atrium spaces, resonating Archigram's preoccupation in techno-communication, were labelled as "Office and Entertainment Circuit" or "Hotel and Banquet Circuit."⁷¹ In these plans, Crosby and the Archigram group suggested that the main function for railway transportation would no longer be facilitating trade and industry, but to offer mobility, leisure, and excitement for the 1960s affluent society.

Despite the optimism manifested in the design, the scheme was shelved in 1963 due to the "Brown Ban" administered by the LCC to temper speculative commercial development.⁷² Critic Martin Pawley observed the Taylor Woodrow scheme "was subtly altered, twisted and finally cast aside" and "Crosby's initial team had gradually drifted apart."⁷³ The disappointment from the cancellation of the Euston proposal that was once met with "magical" expectation and enthusiasm, and the other Taylor Woodrow projects, contributed to Crosby's growing pessimism in the existing British planning mechanism.⁷⁴ Crosby's preoccupation in monuments could be understood as his retreat from envisaging buildings that could directly and positively face up to the challenges found in 20th-century Britain. Despite his supposed withdrawal from devising a new architectural language for contemporary society, Crosby maintained a reductive and romanticised reading of progress and modernisation. In his writings, Crosby had only spoken about "enforced leisure" brought by de-industrialisation and automation, but he also never mentioned other potential societal

⁷¹ Theo Crosby et al., "T7 Entertainment Level Plan" (Drawing, 1963), Archigram Archive, University of Westminster.

Sadler, *Archigram: Architecture without Architecture*, 46.

⁷² Sadler, *Archigram: Architecture without Architecture*, 45.

⁷³ Pawley, "The Euston Story," 267.

⁷⁴ Pawley, 267.

issues associated with unemployment and underemployment.⁷⁵ For Crosby, the changing economic structure could not deter Britain from the promises of individuality, freedom, and opulence. Crosby's reductive view of de-industrialisation, however, was not unique and could be seen as emblematic of what historian Martin J. Weiner observed as the "decline of the industrial spirit" found in 20th-century Britain.⁷⁶ A preference for non-manufacturing works, Weiner observed, had been developing in Britain since the middle part of the 19th century and formed what he called "a century of psychological and intellectual de-industrialisation."⁷⁷ The industrial and economic depression found in 1960s and 1970s Britain, for some, was an endorsement of the country's pioneering role in industrialisation (and thus de-industrialisation). Crosby's rhetoric echoed what Weiner noticed as a peculiar pride and pleasure originated from Britain's leading role in encountering manufacturing decline in the 20th century.⁷⁸

Tendencies that would anticipate the preservation and Postmodern-turn of British architecture was also found elsewhere in the Euston Station design. Crosby's re-conceptualisation of the relationship between industry, work, and architecture should also be understood as a precursor of the "heritage industry" and "global cultural industry" in the following decades.⁷⁹ Articulating building as a network of events, the design team championed a spontaneous, non-hierarchical and participatory appropriation of space. The portrayal of a train station — a key driver of industry and modernisation — as a centre for leisure, also demarcated the paradigm shift in the dematerialisation of labour found in late

⁷⁵ Crosby, *The Necessary Monument*.

"We have, as a by-product of automation and of enforced leisure, lately grown a vast number of independent craftsmen. It is a healing reaction to mechanisation, a kind of antidote... Such generous and public spirited projects can provide endless convivial work, of many kinds. They move us to another level of social order."

⁷⁶ Martin Weiner, *English Culture and the Decline of the Industrial Spirit 1850-1980* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 157.

⁷⁷ Weiner, 158.

⁷⁸ Weiner, 160.

⁷⁹ Celia Lury, Deirdre Boden, and Scott Lash, *Global Culture Industries* (London: Wiley, 2007).

20th-century British society.⁸⁰ Meanwhile, the skirmish about the Arch's demolition and then the hasty construction of a new station designed by Richard Seifert, contributed to the diminishing public faith in the British state's ability in caring for the built environment.

However, one could also argue that Euston Station redevelopment merely reflected the maelstrom of modernity. The demolition of the Euston Arch, a monument of modernisation, in the name of progress epitomised the contradictions of modernity that was diagnosed by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels.⁸¹ The transformation of a train station into an entertainment centre could be seen as part of the modern condition of "constantly revolutionising the instruments of production, and thereby the relations of production, and with them the whole relations of society."⁸² The excruciating realisation of "all that is solid melts into air" was found amongst British architects, too.⁸³ The project exposed the irony behind the modern teleological view of history. If every architectural event and innovation should be seen as irreplaceable and inevitable, it would become impossible to know which structures were worthy of remembering and preserving. Crosby's and the other Modernist architects and architectural writers' advocacy for preservation could be interpreted as a recognition that the structures and architectural culture they created, as a physical indication of post-war modernisation, could soon suffer the same fate as the Arch.

⁸⁰ Smithson and Smithson, *The Euston Arch and the Growth of the London Midland & Scottish Railway*.

⁸¹ Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto* (Penguin: London, 2015), 6.

⁸² Marx and Engels, 6.

⁸³ Marx and Engels, 6.



FIG 4.14 Crosby's sketches for the Euston Station design. During the two years design period, Crosby spent substantive energy in devising a pneumatic roof structure for the Station. In his notebooks, he only mentioned "preservation" once, regarding safeguarding the iron gates and other artefacts from the old station.



FIG 4.15 Upper floor plan of the Euston Station proposal. In this plan the key entertainment programs, such as the cinema and the Turkish bath, would be floating “blurbs” that could be seen from the lower concourse. The entertainment floor also contained office programs and an “open air game deck above.”

4.7 The Necessary Monument

The confusion brought by the modern forward groping of time, and the awakening to “all that holy is profaned” was reflected in Crosby’s *The Necessary Monument*, too. In the book, Crosby presented monuments as solutions to the urban issues found in 1970s Britain and a driver for economic progress. He declared *The Necessary Monument* was not only a study of historical structures but also a new “planning theory which allows us to make complex decisions in a sophisticated way, to escape the elementary logic of economics and technology.”⁸⁴ In the second half of book, Crosby elaborated on the dilemma found in urban regeneration projects in 1970s Britain. He observed that the local councils, due to shortage of funding, had to sell their land to the highest bidders. At a time of high cost and great uncertainties, the developers would only construct low-cost and conventional buildings in order to minimise risk. Crosby went on to explain that smaller firms or individuals who might have held an alternative approach to architecture and planning would not fare better due to the constraints posted by the financing structure and insurance policies. Facing this conundrum, Crosby proposed, the only way forward was

the introduction of something other, an element which is random or illogical, may be a good beginning. It is this function which is filled by the monument; and the Tower Bridge is an excellent example of a trigger mechanism.⁸⁵

Although this vision of “plant a seed to grow a city” was not new, the urban regeneration mechanism formulated by Crosby was specifically catering to the cultural and urban conditions of 1970s Britain.⁸⁶ In light of the lack of funding, Crosby suggested that the most economical means would be to renew or construct an architectural monument. The initial

⁸⁴ Crosby, *The Necessary Monument*, Back cover.

⁸⁵ Crosby, 67.

⁸⁶ Crosby, 95–101.

In speaking about “plant a seed to grow a city,” Crosby stated in the late 1960s, the Ministry of Technology had proposed seven “Technocentres” in Britain to “provide a spectacular growth node for a new town or a way of reviving an old one.” The ministry was dissolved in 1970 after Edward Heath was elected prime minister.

investment would be relatively small compared to large-scale urban renewal projects through demolition and reconstruction. The monument, Crosby claimed, would bring new economic opportunities and activities through tourism, retail, and entertainment industry. The vibrant commercial life would not only revitalise the decaying neighbourhoods, Crosby argued, but also generate more funding for the preservation of other architectural monuments.⁸⁷ In the book, Crosby envisaged a future cityscape created through this continuous rediscovery, renewal, and reconfiguration of the spectacles. (FIG 4.16)

Crosby's theorisation of monument was based on an assumption that, despite the weakening industries, Britain was an affluent society that could sustain a vibrant consumer economy. This contradictory view of Britain's economic future continued to manifest itself elsewhere in the book. He suggested that since the River Thames would no longer be used for transporting goods, the docks and warehouses should be transformed into leisure and tourism uses.⁸⁸ In his detailed account on how to "plant a seed to grow a city," Crosby stressed that it was the responsibility of architects to draw attention to attractions that could appeal to tourists and ordinary Londoners.⁸⁹ Crosby's proposition for preservation, therefore, was not based upon the historical value of the buildings, but in search of a past that would drive economic growth in late 20th-century capitalism.

⁸⁷ Crosby, 63.

Crosby argued that the vitality of the South Bank relies on the continuation of commercial activities. Using the example of the Old London Bridge, he claimed: "the lack of this lifeline, this vital link, is probably the main cause of the catastrophic decline of the South Bank in the nineteenth century." Only shops, small scale commercial activities, could help resist the "cultural monoliths, isolated in a few acres of concrete."

⁸⁸ Crosby, 47,48,67.

⁸⁹ Crosby, 99–101.



FIG 4.16 Collage of the architectural landmarks in *The Necessary Monument* showing an assemblage of 20th century architectural monuments.

Crosby envisaged that one of the triggers for a comprehensive redevelopment of the South Bank would be a refurbished engine room and accumulators of the Tower Bridge. These new tourist attractions, Crosby proposed, could rejuvenate existing activities and ordinary structures on the site: “the area could be cleaned up and the vast brewery on the east side might be persuaded to provide a pub, a balcony and a pier for river craft.”⁹⁰ His proposal was emblematic of what cultural historian Raphael Samuel diagnosed as the “Retrochic” fascination found in Britain since the 1960s.⁹¹ The widespread interests in the everyday

⁹⁰ Crosby, 49.

⁹¹ Raphael Samuel, “Introduction: Exciting to Be English,” in *Patriotism: The Making and Unmaking of British National Identity*, ed. Raphael Samuel (London, New York: Routledge, 1989), xiii.

activities and objects of the past, according to Samuel, was a reaction to the country's cultural and political decline.⁹² This fidelity to crafts, small business, and people's history, Samuel argued, was also a collective re-invention of a nation's past at a time of uncertainties and changes.⁹³ By tying tourist activities not only with important landmarks but also with small business and local fabric, Crosby's theory in *The Necessary Monument* could also be seen as an precursor of "urban making" or "city branding" strategies.⁹⁴ In *The Necessary Monument*, there was also a celebration of "enterprise culture," which would be a key theme of the Thatcher government economic reform administrated later in the decade. The tendencies manifested in *The Necessary Monument*, in short, suggested it is a theory that is pertaining to both preservation and Postmodern urbanism.

In the book, Crosby argued that monuments, in the 20th century, were no longer signifiers of power, pride, and domination. They were instead "elements of physical identity which create the necessary climate of social involvement."⁹⁵ He went on to suggest that "great buildings help to produce great cities, fill citizens with pride, help to subsume private ambition within the collective, because they stand as symbols of the collective."⁹⁶ At stake was that in speaking of the "collective," Crosby was pointing to imaginary citizens of the 1970s affluent society and international tourists. In Crosby's discussion on the various urban issues found on the two sides of Thames, there was a noticeable neglect to the local population. Crosby's abstract and reductive formulation of collective was also reflected by the monuments he examined in *The Necessary Monument*: they were all infrastructure buildings that demarcated the industrial progress and technological advancement —

⁹² Samuel, 1.

⁹³ Samuel, xix.

⁹⁴ G.J Ashworth and H Voogd, *Selling the City: Marketing Approaches in Public Sector Urban Planning* (London: Belhaven Press, 1990).

⁹⁵ Crosby, *The Necessary Monument*, 99.

⁹⁶ Crosby, 99.

structures that could be considered as “universal” heritage that had little political, racial and class connotations. This ignorance of the nuance in 20th-century British urban culture and social fabrics signposted a clear inadequacy in Crosby’s theory of urban regeneration. In *The Necessary Monument*, Crosby did not only produce an urban theory pertaining only to commercial interests, but he also formulated a transvaluation of monuments. In his discussion of the Tower Bridge, the “age value” and “use value” of monuments, to borrow historian Alois Riegl’s articulation, was turned not only into commercial value but also real estate value of its surrounding areas.⁹⁷ How did this transvaluation of monument reflected in the Globe project? What other paradoxes will come into the field of vision when we understand Crosby’s intent of the Globe as a gentrifying force?

4.8 The Globe and “West-endisation”

The site acquisition process for the Globe, from an early stage, reflected the economic changes and planning conundrum that Crosby had outlined in *The Necessary Monument*. By the 1970s, the industries had dwindled, and the North Southwark area became a target of speculative “land grabbing” due to its proximity to the City.⁹⁸ Resonating with the Arts Council initiatives in preservation, discussed in Chapter 3, the Southwark Council regarded the injection of arts and culture activities as an effective means to fend off profit-driven urban renewal projects. From 1971 to 1974, the Southwark Council explored the option of introducing “West-End” programmes such as theatre, restaurants, and retail spaces to the North Southwark area.⁹⁹ Echoing the Council’s initiative, Sam Wanamaker offered the Globe

⁹⁷ Riegl, “The Modern Cult of Monuments: Its Character and Its Origins,” 21–56.

In his 1903 essay, Riegl distinguished “commemorative values” and “present-day values” of Monuments in the modern age. “Age value”, for Riegl, was part of the commemorative value but is also associated with the taste of the present day educated class. By “use value,” Riegl meant buildings that were old but could still function as it was intended to be, such as the St Peter’s Cathedral.

⁹⁸ John McCathy, “The Evolution of Planning Approaches: North Southwark 1971-1994,” *Land Use Policy*, 1996, 149.

⁹⁹ McCathy, 149.

project as a “planning gain” element for an office development on the Bankside.¹⁰⁰ By doing so, Wanamaker could acquire land for the Globe Theatre for free, while the developer who entered the contract would be more likely to get planning permission. The Council, meanwhile, could justify selling off their land by claiming the potential long-term economic and cultural benefits brought by the mixed-use development. Under this supposedly mutually beneficial arrangement, Wanamaker and the developer Freshwater Group purchased a site on the former Greenmoor Wharf, which sat between the Bankside and Emerson Street. (FIG 4.17) The Greenmoor Wharf was regarded as an ideal site due to its proximity to the River Thames and the rumour that it was the location of the original Globe. (FIG 4.18)

This contractual arrangement between Wanamaker and the Freshwater Group drew immediate suspicion from the North Southwark residents. Although the scope of the project had been drastically reduced when Crosby took over the project from Ove Arup in 1973, a new tension between the Globe and the local community emerged. Crosby argued that in order to cultivate an authentic experience, the theatre would be surrounded by spaces for dining, drinking, and other entertainments. In Crosby’s vision, the Globe development would revitalise the North Southwark area through reviving its historical role as London’s entertainment district. This vision of North Southwark as an area of libidinal activities, however, further aggravated Southwark community. The local population, still relying on manufacturing jobs and docks activities, found little condolence in this idiosyncratic re-imagination of their shrinking job opportunities and decaying surroundings. A local planning pressure group, the North Southwark Community Development Group (NSCDG), was

¹⁰⁰ Taner Oc and Steven Tiesdell, “The London Docklands Development Corporation (LDDC), 1981-1991: A Perspective on the Management of Urban Regeneration,” *The Town Planning Review* 62, no. 3 (July 1991): 311–30.

The “planning gain deals” is a model that was first instilled in America where the traditional activism for housing and economic rights was incorporated into the planning process. That was, in order to be granted planning consents, the developer had to demonstrate there would be gains for the existing local community.

formed to resist the Council's and the Globe's "West-endising" scheme of Southwark. The goal of the Group was also to maintain and re-activate the area's manufacturing industry. The suspiciously elitist and high-profile Globe project became its main target.¹⁰¹ In 1974, not long after the Globe secured their agreement with Freshwater Group, the NSCDG blocked the project's planning permission by appealing for a Compulsory Purchase Order that would revert the Greenmoor site to future Council housing uses.¹⁰²

¹⁰¹ Hugh Baeten, "From Community Planning to Partnership Planning. Urban Regeneration and Shifting Power Geometries on the South Bank, London," *Geo Journal* 51, no. 4 (2000): 293–94.

¹⁰² This compulsory purchase power of the Council was stipulated by a "Community Land Act" passed by the minority Labour government in 1974. Described by planning historian V.H. Blundell as "a half-way house to land nationalization," the act enabled local authorities to reclaim sites that they deemed crucial for the future development of the area.

V.H. Blundell, "Labour's Flawed Land Acts 1947-1976," Paper presented at Labour Land Campaign (London: Labour Party, 1993), 7.



FIG 4.17 Site plan of the Globe complex (ISGC) in 1988. The plan shows that Globe was still surrounded by warehouses at the time. The waterfront promenade was not yet constructed.

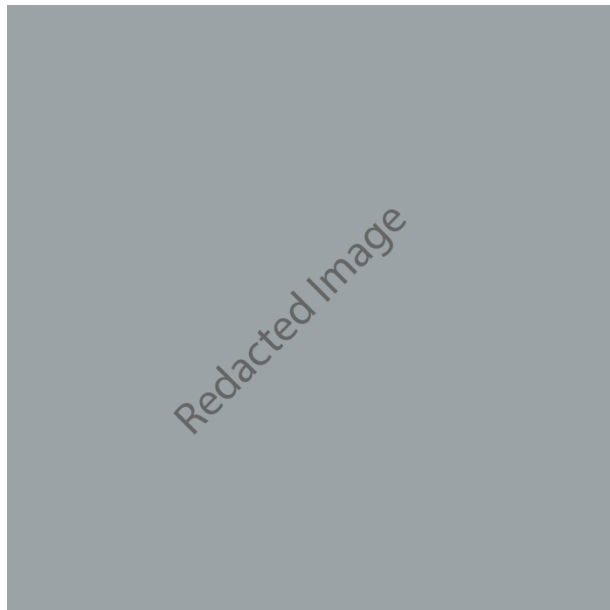


FIG 4.18 Part of 'Long View of London from Bankside' by Wenceslaus Hollar, 1647. In this and other historical etchings, the Globe are often portrayed as standing by the river front, thus led to the belief that the Greenmoore Wharf could be the original site of the Globe.

Although the Order never came into effect due to the Southwark Council's lack of funding, it had successfully deterred the Freshwater Group's development plan.¹⁰³ The developer withdrew from the agreement with the Globe. This first blockade by the NSCDG led to seven "wilderness years", during which the Globe had neither a site nor adequate funding to acquire one.¹⁰⁴ However, in this period, the Southwark Council was still in principle supporting the Globe project and promised that some future development on the Bankside would accommodate a Shakespearean theatre.¹⁰⁵ At the time, Crosby and Wanamaker believed that the blockage from NSCDG could eventually be resolved by demonstrating the Globe's commitment to local memory and culture. They also assumed the binding power of the tentative agreement with the Southwark Council. The research, design, and fund-raising efforts of the Globe continued.

Crosby and Wanamaker's optimism were not entirely misplaced. In the early 1970s, the Globe and NSCDG's agenda did not appear to be completely irreconcilable. The two groups, respectively, argued that the future of the North Southwark area would be depending on a revitalisation of the area's past. The Globe and the NSCDG were both actively interacting with the local residents, claiming respectively that their proposal could re-activate the strong community bonds found in the Southwark area. (FIG 4.19) The two sides could have been united through their shared strong objection to large-scale office development in the area. For the NSCDG, the construction and maintenance of warehouses and factory buildings was the only means to secure the economic and industrial future of the area.¹⁰⁶ For

¹⁰³ Blundell, 7.

The Community Land Act came under stringent pressure as early as 1976 when the budget cut limited the borrowing capacity of local authorities. It was immediately repealed in 1979 when the Conservatives came into power again.

¹⁰⁴ Day, *This Wooden "O,"* 109.

¹⁰⁵ Sam Wanamaker, "Statement for the 1984 Legal Case against Southwark Council and Derno, JDMJ1739L" (Statement, 1984), 45, Shakespeare's Globe.

¹⁰⁶ Baeten, "From Community Planning to Partnership Planning. Urban Regeneration and Shifting Power Geometries on the South Bank, London," 293–94.

Crosby and Wanamaker, the construction of modern office buildings would shatter their dream of creating a Shakespearean village. However, under the similar slogan of preserving the memory of Southwark, the two parties stood in opposition against each other. For the Globe, the future of the Southwark in a post-industrial Britain would be depending on its Shakespearean heritage. For the NSCDG, the task at hand was to hold on to the area's fading identity as a manufacturing and logistics centre. (FIG 4.20)

At heart of the Globe and the NSCDG's conflict, ironically, was also two competing formulations of "elitist" versus "populist." The NSCDG criticised the Globe's dedication to the "elitist" arts of Shakespearean theatre which had no relevance to the working-class culture of the area. Wanamaker and Crosby, in response, argued the Globe would democratise theatre and more importantly, create space for a more participatory approach to arts and culture.¹⁰⁷ Expanding upon his rhetoric in *The Necessary Monument*, Crosby had also been presenting the Globe, a monument, as a seed from which a regenerated Southwark would grow. This approach, as Crosby argued in *The Necessary Monument*, could be an antidote to the patronising top-down planning strategy instilled by the Greater London Council and local Councils.

¹⁰⁷ "Globe Aspiration."

Participants of the annual Southwark Fair included Inter-Action's Fun Art Bus, a community group dedicated to the promotion of amateur theatre and participatory art. (See Chapter 3). Shakespeare's Globe Museum.



FIG 4.19 Temporary Globe theatre erected for the 1973 “Southwark Festival.” This annual summer performance was, for Wanamaker, a means to draw visitors to Southwark while encouraging local residents to explore Shakespearean theatre. In the first few “summer seasons,” he offered performances at a discounted price for the Southwark residents.



FIG 4.20 Cover of 1977 NSCDG Report. The Globe site (red circle) is shaded as potential site for “family housing for the riverside)

4.9 People's Plan

The conflicts between the Globe and NSCDG can also be seen as an epitome of the disorientation found in postmodern culture. The impossibility of knowing which past was important and worthy of preserving, found in the Euston Station project, resurfaced here. The competing notion of “elitist” versus “populist” between the Globe and the NSCDG was also symptomatic of the debates found in Postmodern architecture.¹⁰⁸ In 1979, the skirmish between the Globe and NSCDG was drawn into contention with another modernising force in late 20th-century Britain: the election of the Conservative government under Margaret Thatcher. The decaying London Docklands was put into the government’s priorities as part of their comprehensive restructuring of the British economy. The confidence in the real estate market was revived temporarily, and the Globe Trust soon entered a new agreement with developer Derno, again as the “planning gain” for an office development on the Greenmoor Wharf site.¹⁰⁹ Meanwhile, reacting to the 1979 election result, many Labour-controlled local councils, including Southwark, used local democracy as resistance to Thatcherite economic reforms.¹¹⁰ They deviated from policies of the Conservative government and continued to implement planning agendas of the previous Labour government.¹¹¹ The 1982 by-election further reflected the Southwark community’s antagonism to Thatcherism when the members from the NSCDG took over the control of the Council.¹¹² Politically, this by-election turned the Southwark Council from “a blushing pink to a choleric red,” and any commercial

¹⁰⁸ The debates between “elite” and “popular” culture, according to Mary McLeod, was a significant aspect of discourse in Postmodern architecture. She wrote, “At the heart of this conflict was the critics’ relation to the mass opinion: the issue of elitism vs populism. Did the masses know what they wanted or were social aspirations to be determined only by a critical, educated elite shrewd to the forces of capital? Or were the so-called populists denying the masses’ needs by restricting their vision to the image presented by a media culture? It was exactly over this issue that architectural debate took its most acerbic form.”

McLeod, “Architecture and Politics in the Reagan Era: Postmodernism to Deconstructivism,” 28.

¹⁰⁹ Wanamaker, “Statement for the 1984 Legal Case against Southwark Council and Derno, JDMJ1739L,” 44–45.

¹¹⁰ McCathy, “The Evolution of Planning Approaches: North Southwark 1971-1994,” 149.

¹¹¹ McCathy, 149.

¹¹² McCathy, 149.

development was subjected to severe scrutiny.¹¹³ Witnessing the radical redevelopment plans that were being instilled by the London Dockland Development Corporation, the newly elected Southwark Council regarded architecture and planning issues as a front line of their opposition. Hindrance to commercial development was turned into the “official policy” of the Councils and the local Labour Party.¹¹⁴ In a revised North Southwark Plan of 1983, provocatively entitled “People’s Plan,” the Globe’s site once again reverted to council housing and open space uses.¹¹⁵

Previously, the NSCDG’s objection to the Globe focused on its contractual tie with commercial office development. By the 1980s, the NSCDG declared that they would oppose any building project that was not designated for industrial uses and council housing.¹¹⁶ The discussion on housing provision, in fact, was another contentious issue between the Globe and the Council. For the Globe Trust, they regarded the NSCDG and the Southwark Council’s proposal for housing a blatant act of sabotage: the site was too small and the construction cost was too high to justify any Council housing construction.¹¹⁷ Meanwhile, in all of Crosby’s proposal, he had maintained the incorporation of residential units, in order to create an urban cluster that would be active both during the day and at night. As a result of

¹¹³ Day, *This Wooden “O,”* 139.

¹¹⁴ Wanamaker, “Statement for the 1984 Legal Case against Southwark Council and Derno, JDMJ1739L,” 49. Barker, “The New Statesman Profile - Southwark Borough.”

Barker described the Southwark Council and Globe’s conflict, in a press that is largely sympathetic to the left, as, ‘When it was run by old Labour, Southwark was the stupidest borough in London. The turn-round to common sense began under the political leadership of Jeremy Fraser. Fraser remembers that as new-broom councillor he had to sign a £13 million cheque in 1990 for the borough’s legal costs in defending a ludicrous local plan. This had designated the entire riverside for industry and warehousing; Sam Wanamaker’s proposed new Globe theatre was rejected as a bourgeois ruse. “If that was a socialist victory,” Fraser says, “I was determined it would be the last.”

¹¹⁵ McCathy, “The Evolution of Planning Approaches: North Southwark 1971-1994.” Day, *This Wooden “O,”* 174–75.

¹¹⁶ Wanamaker, “Statement for the 1984 Legal Case against Southwark Council and Derno, JDMJ1739L,” 47–59.

¹¹⁷ Due to the proximity to the Thames, a retaining wall had to be constructed for the site, which cost more than a million pounds in the 1980s.

the 1981 contract with Derno, Crosby produced a series of new plans, which included a four-story residential block on the west side of the theatre. (FIG 4.21) The mixed-use scheme was also Crosby's attempt to generate a "pattern" for the area's future development. In the building design, Crosby sought to devise a strategy that could translate 16th-century architectural language for modern-day functions. He made use of the geometrical principles found in Mannerist architecture which allowed some flexibilities in manipulating the window sizes and height variations of the buildings to accommodate the proposed housing and retail program.

For the NSCDG, Crosby's housing design, offering only a dozen units, seemed only to confirm their scepticism that the Globe was "spurious, a façade, something out of Disneyland."¹¹⁸ The Council's Deputy Leader Tony Ritchie, in 1986, told the *Sunday Times* that he regarded the Globe as a "lot of tosh" and his goal was "solving the problems of unemployment, the provision of more council housing and to overthrow elitism."¹¹⁹ The aggregation eventually led the Southwark Council to stage a forceful blockade on the Globe project. A few clauses in the 1981 agreement provided the ammunition for the Southwark Council to reclaim the Greenmoor Wharf site. The agreement stipulated that developer Derno would have to find an alternative space for a road sweeper's depot that was on the site, and the land assembly process should be completed by 1983.¹²⁰ By purposefully rejecting all the alternative site proposals for the depot, the Council was hoping the agreement would eventually expire. In light of a less optimistic real estate market, the developer also took a passive stance to the Southwark Council's blockade.¹²¹ However, for the Globe, the

¹¹⁸ Day, *This Wooden "O,"* 139.

¹¹⁹ Toomey, "If Shakespeare Moves in 'Ere, I Am Moving out': Dispute between London's Shakespeare's Globe Trust over Construction of Memorial Theatre."

¹²⁰ Building Design, "Building Design Looks at Sam Wanamakers' Plans to Recreate Shakespeare's Globe Theatre on Its Original Bankside Site in Southwark," *Building Design*, May 15, 1987.

¹²¹ Building Design.

dissolution of this agreement did not only mean that the project would again go into the “wilderness,” but it also implied that they would lose the Greenmore Wharf site for good. By the end of 1984, a three-party lawsuit was filed, with Derno suing the Southwark Council and the Globe suing both Derno and the Southwark Council for breaching the 1981 agreement.¹²² The court’s decision was largely in favour of the Globe’s case, and a settlement was reached in 1986. The Globe had, at last, secured the Greenmoor Wharf site and also the planning permission. As a result of the court case, the Southwark Council was charged with nine million pounds of legal fees as well as compensation and had to sell its land holding.¹²³ The immediate site south to the Globe was sold to a bank, thus shattering Crosby and Wanamaker’s dream of eventually creating a Shakespearean village.

This confrontation between the NSCDG and the Globe demarcated a fleeting moment in London’s late 20th-century political and planning history. In 1983, when at the beginning of the blockade, the NSCDG’s militant approach had some support from the Labour political apparatus at the time. The Greater London Council, under the energetic leadership of “Red Ken” Ken Livingston, endorsed the Southwark’s battle against the suspiciously elitist Globe project. For example, in a planner’s consultation letter issued by the GLC in support of the Southwark Council, it stated that “I have always thought history was overrated.”¹²⁴ This forceful blockade of the Globe project, however, could also be interpreted as a reaction to the diminishing power of the council. The complete closure of the Port of London in the early 1980s meant that the Thames riverfront was subjected to imminent redevelopment.¹²⁵ The Council felt increasingly squeezed by the growing unemployment rate, the pressure from the

¹²² Building Design.

¹²³ Day, *This Wooden “O,”* 149.

¹²⁴ Day, 149.

¹²⁵ Peter Hall, *London Voices, London Lives: Tales from a Working Capital* (London: Policy Press, 2007), 59–60.

London Dockland Development Corporation, and the shortage of funding to initiate any building project.¹²⁶ (FIG 4.22) It was only at the Globe Theatre, where the project's peculiarity hampered the speed of real estate profit-making, that the Council was able to stage a fight. When the Globe legal case was concluded in June 1986, the situation had changed again. The Greater London Council had been dissolved, marking an end to a period when local authorities could implement effective deviations from central governmental policies.¹²⁷

¹²⁶ McCathy, "The Evolution of Planning Approaches: North Southwark 1971-1994," 149.

¹²⁷ McCathy, 150.



FIG 4.21 Crosby's design for the residential block. Crosby envisioned the flats would share the same entrance plaza as the theatre. For Crosby, the ambiance created by the entertainment and living quarters would differ from other modern development where strict zoning regulation forbid the mix of program and would be more similar to what it was in the Elizabethan time.



FIG 4.22 Extracts from a GLC minutes held on 11 February 1981 on the Globe's proposal with developer Derno. The conversation epitomised the decade-long structure the Globe had with the NSCDG, during which Globe's proposals were constantly being challenged, opposed, and even ignored.

Ironically, the Globe's history also offers a window to look into the Janus-face impact of "negative planning" that Crosby championed in the previous decade.¹²⁸ Partly as a result of the NSCDG's blockade, the North Southwark area remained relatively untouched throughout the 1980s and early 1990s. When the New Labour government came into power in 1997, the area became a ready site for their experimentation. The dissolution of local politics and resources meant that there was little resistance to the urban regeneration scheme, through exploiting arts and culture, instilled by the New Labour government. When the Globe compound was completed in the same year, the refurbishment of the Bankside Power Station into Tate Modern Museum was underway, suggesting that Wanamaker's dream of turning the Bankside into a new "cultural zone" could soon be realised. The London Dockland Development Corporation was dissolved in the following year, signposting a paradigm shift in the government's approach to urban regeneration. Ove Arup also returned triumphantly with their vision of Bankside regeneration, acting as the consultant for the Tate Modern, the Millennium Bridge and the City Hall/MORE London development.¹²⁹ By the year 2000, Crosby's vision of a skyline comprised of architectural ostentations, portrayed in *The Necessary Monument*, had somewhat been realised. The Globe, a proposal in place since the 1970s, is arguably a seed where London's cultural tourism sprouted. The transvaluation of historical architecture's "age value" into real estate value could also be found along the River Thames, at the nearby Hay Galleria and Butler's Wharf.¹³⁰ Crosby's claim that industrial sites and manufacturing had become obsolete, in *The Necessary Monument*, also became a self-fulfilling prophecy.

¹²⁸ Theo Crosby, "Ten Rules for Planners," in *Architects' Yearbook 13*, ed. David Lewis (London: Elek Books, 1971), 65–69.

¹²⁹ Dutta, "Marginality and Metaengineering," 240.

¹³⁰ Riegl, "The Modern Cult of Monuments: Its Character and Its Origins," 20–55.

The skirmish between the Globe and the NSCDG offers an alternative frame to examine the agency of the past in late 20th-century British architecture and urbanism. In his design for the Globe Theatre and its auxiliary programs, Crosby used monuments and historical architecture as a means to criticise existing planning and building mechanism. But in his call for reconnecting arts and life through returning to a distant past, Crosby was conspicuously repeating the Modern mistake of “overturn(ing) the work of the previous generation rather than adding to it.”¹³¹ The future of London, presented in his schemes, was a city as if 20th century modernisation and industrialisation had never happened.

The paradox in Crosby’s valuation of the past was most clearly shown in a set of proposals Crosby created in 1989. In these plans, Crosby discarded his previous calls for preserving monumental structures of modernity: he proposed to demolish the Bankside Power Station in order to make ways for his “Rose Village” proposal. (FIG 4.23) In Crosby’s call for using monument as a trigger for urban regeneration and preservation, he was also inadvertently suggesting a rupture from the recent past. Southwark Council’s ideological position was similarly paradoxical and problematic. They were seeking to freeze the Borough in the stage of industrialisation, which was a social and economic structure that inherently resisted such stabilisation. In the Council’s call for safeguarding the warehouses and the factories, they were also going against the grain of industrial cultural that assumed constant disturbance and renewal. These contradictions eventually led to the dissolution of their cause.

¹³¹ Theo Crosby, *Let’s Build a Monument* (Pentagram: London, 1986), 1.



FIG 4.23 An alternative master-plan proposed by Crosby in the 1980s when the Bankside Power Station was defunct. In this plan, Crosby envisioned a “Shakespearean Village” standing on the site of the demolished Bankside Power Station. The masterplan consisted of office, hotel and residential program, and an opera house as the focal point of the development. There was also a proposed bridge connecting the development and St Paul’s, where the Millennium Bridge currently stands.



FIG 4.24 Images from architectural magazines emphasising the unusual nature of the Globe project — its self-build scheme, its timber frame structure and thatched roof construction.

4.10 Labour and Crafts

Not only did the Globe reveal how arts and culture had fostered the displacement of working-class community in late 20th-century Britain, it also served as a weird object that demarcates the changing attitude towards manual labour. By 1991, as a result of significant delays and inflation, the Globe Trust could no longer afford contracting with a construction company. Crosby turned to his vision of idealised labour: he proposed a self-building scheme

in which the Globe Trust would bypass the contractors and directly employed a site agent and a team of tradespeople.¹³² Under such arrangement, the Globe could circumvent the large upfront payments to the contractor. It also allowed the Globe to be constructed based on the availability of material and labour, rather than following standardised procedures.¹³³ By maintaining some progress on site, the built structures and materials were better protected, too. The building progress was also crucial for sustaining the Globe Trust's publicity and fund-raising campaigns.

The self-building scheme turned the Globe's funding crisis into an opportunity. In articles published in major architectural presses such as *The Architectural Journal*, *Country Life* and *Zodiac*, Crosby suggested that this self-building scheme rendered the Globe not only physically but also atmospherically similar to the original Elizabethan theatre.¹³⁴ The construction workers, Crosby emphasised, were able to be involved in the decision-making process of the Globe's construction. Echoing John Ruskin, Crosby argued that the workers had acquired a sense of pride and pleasure from their manual labour.¹³⁵ The "authenticity" of the Globe was to be found not only in its appearance and building technology but also by the process in which it was constructed. Iconic images of a small team of workers laying the thatched roof and erecting the wooden frameworks permeated the claim that the Globe was a structure constructed by dignified labour. (FIG 4.24) The economic recession of 1991-1992 also strengthened Crosby's argument that the self-building scheme was an alternative temporary employment opportunity.¹³⁶

¹³² Crosby, "The Globe Theatre: Shakespeare's Theatre Reconstruction in London," 94–95.

¹³³ Much of the material of the Globe had been donated by sponsors. Some of the oak timber, for example, came from the estate of the Royal Family. Day, *This Wooden "O,"* 151.

¹³⁴ Crosby, "The Globe Theatre: Shakespeare's Theatre Reconstruction in London," 94–95.

¹³⁵ John Ruskin, *The Stone of Venice*, vol. 2 (London: Smith & Elder, 1867).

¹³⁶ Crosby, "The Globe Theatre: Shakespeare's Theatre Reconstruction in London," 94–95.

The scheme was mostly a successful execution of an experimental model of construction. It could even be seen as a realisation of Crosby's "Pessimist Utopian" vision. However, one could not ignore the fact that the public recognition of the scheme was constructed upon the dissolution and displacement of manual labour in London and in Britain. The Globe's "artistic value", to borrow again Alois Riegl's words, through the self-building scheme should in fact be seen as a "newness value" due to the disappearance of industrial culture — the old and the obsolete had become a new "new."

Crosby also presented his romanticised and reductive view of labour as a model of innovation. In his contemporaneous projects, such as the Unilever House renovation (1979-1983), Crosby argued that this alternative contractual and construction mechanism was a system that could be applied to ordinary architecture, such as corporate office buildings. To renovate the Unilever House, a building constructed in the 1930s, Crosby devised an alternative contractual system in which craftspeople, artists, and tradespeople were directly hired by the client and worked as collaborators of the architect.¹³⁷ The architect, in this system, served as a coordinator who controlled the visual coherence, quality, and working schedule of the renovation.¹³⁸ Another key task of the architect was to ensure the design incorporated building service systems required by the multinational enterprise. This alternative work system resulted in a highly decorative and original renovation, which was unified through a series of Art Deco-style geometrical motifs. (FIG 4.25) The project was well-received by the British architectural journals, which regarded it as a valuable comparison and contrast to PoMo style architecture.¹³⁹ Crosby's collaborations with

¹³⁷ Timothy Olster, "Working with Artists: 3 Case Studies," *The Architect's Journal*, February 1984.

¹³⁸ Olster.

¹³⁹ John Stokdyk, "Maverick with Message," *Building*, May 1988.

craftspeople seemed to promise alternative decorative designs that were not merely facade treatments but a “genuine” method of introducing colour, symbols and decoration. The architectural community’s recognition of the Unilever House design and the Globe’s construction method also signposted a diverging apprehension of Postmodern and preservation buildings, with the latter claiming the tropes of “authenticity” and “honesty.”

However, Crosby’s call for incorporating crafts and ornaments in architecture can be seen as a commercial strategy — customised design parts were often more expensive and thus more lucrative for the architects. More at stake was that through this use and celebration of manual labour, the past was being distorted and depoliticised. One of the most ostentatious examples was Crosby’s call for the Unilever’s international subsidiaries to contribute artworks and crafts objects that best represented their local culture.¹⁴⁰ (FIG 4.26) The design was well-published in architectural journals and in the Pentagram pamphlet *Towards a New Ornament*.¹⁴¹ It had been regarded as a successful demonstration of incorporating workmanship and craft and corporate identity in the design of a modern headquarter office spaces.¹⁴² However, in this celebration of the manual labour, the well-known and contentious history behind Unilever’s planting and extraction of palm oil, through slavery and colonisation, had been conveniently overlooked.¹⁴³ The decorative elements became a means to trivialise the company’s fraught history with labour.

¹⁴⁰ Geoffrey Jones, *Renewing Unilever: Transformation and Tradition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

¹⁴¹ Crosby, *Unilever House: Towards a New Ornament*.

¹⁴² Gavin Stamp, “Inner Light,” *The Architects’ Journal*, February 1982.

¹⁴³ Kenneth Brozen, “British Expression,” *Interior*, August 1983.



FIG 4.25 Crosby's design for the Unilever House renovation.



FIG 4.26 Pages from Crosby's *Towards a New Ornament*, a Pentagram pamphlet that documented the Unilever House project. Unilever's problematic relationship with imperialism can be discerned from these objects.

4.11 Conclusion

At work in both the Globe and Unilever House project was a re-articulation of the co-relation between manual labour and authenticity. In the Globe, the association was necessitated by the building's claim for historic accuracy. In the Unilever House, manual labour and crafts presented the "aura" of the building through the "one-timeness" of the decorative elements.¹⁴⁴ These two projects, not unlike Crosby's other works, problematise architecture's societal function in late 20th-century Britain. They, however, can also be applauded for the energy put into considering the architectonic and construction procedures.¹⁴⁵ They were rare instances when the clients, architects, and builders were actively engaged in considering the execution of building. The cross-disciplinary collaborations were undeniably valuable in an increasingly compartmentalised building industry. One could even argue that they reverberated with what Crosby formulated as "object-found" approach in the late 1950s.¹⁴⁶

Crosby's *The Necessary Monument* and the Globe design proposals, triangulating history, criticism and design, were examples of operative criticism that emerged out of decades-long production and dissemination of operative criticism in British architecture. They were also produced in a time when the early 20th-century Modernism no longer served as a recent past for them to react against. What we found in *The Necessary Monument* and the Globe design was Crosby's turn towards a mythification of the past. This turn to myth-

¹⁴⁴ Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," in *Illuminations*, by Walter Benjamin, ed. Hannah Arendt (New York: Schocken, 1968), 217–51.

¹⁴⁵ Kenneth Frampton suggested that industrialisation, since the early 18th century, gave rise in a series of crisis in architecture and led architecture further and further away from the building tectonics. Subsumed by industrial value architecture, Frampton argued, could not regain its role in human culture. Kenneth Frampton, "Industrialisation and the Crisis in Architecture," in *Oppositions Reader: Selected Essays 1973-1984*, ed. Michael K. Hayes (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1998), 39–64.

¹⁴⁶ Crosby, "Thought in Progress: Summing Up 2," 396.

making is epitomised in the “quest” for original sites and design of the 16th- century Globe Theatre. It can also be found in the current emphasis on Crosby’s reconstructed theatre over the archaeological sites that are nearby. The success of this myth-making process also revealed more tension between preservation and Postmodernist discourses in British architecture. Crosby’s Unilever House was an illustrated example of how, draped in a veil of heritage and authenticity, renovated old buildings challenged Postmodern architecture’s dominance in corporate architecture. By inhabiting a “genuine” old façade, rehabilitated old buildings not only seemed to answer to the call for memory and meaning in architecture, but was also immune from the accusation of kitsch and pastiche, and also the lack of social conscience.

The rhetoric surrounding these two projects also offered a mirror to critically reflect 21st-century architectural culture. The making of building has become a new frontier for projecting sentimentality. Buildings that incorporate participation, manual labour, and the memory of construction are often being regarded as socially, aesthetically, culturally, and architectural praiseworthy without further scrutiny. In recent preservation works, such as Stanton Williams’s renovation of the Granary Building, the trace of past is painstakingly maintained through modern technology and financial apparatus. In new structures, such as FAT’s A House for Essex, buildings are elevated into an art form through exposing the presence of the builders and labour. While the site, scale, and function of these projects varied, the history of the Globe can still serve as a reminder to draw the values of manual labour into question.

Conclusion

Conclusion

5.0 Conclusion

Triangulating discourses in Post-war Modernism, preservation, and Postmodernism, this research demarcates two themes in Crosby's work that were at the time important to both preservation and Postmodern architecture: language and the environment. Both themes, I argue through examining Crosby's writings from the 1950s to 1990s, were developed as part of an evaluation of architectural Modernism. This study hence reveals that the leading cause of his turn to preservationism was not nostalgia but an evaluation of architectural Modernism through design proposals such as Fulham Study (1964) and Ulster Terrace (1975) and his exhibition *How to Play the Environment Game* (1973). His preservationist advocacies were also not geared to reinstating the value of the architectural heritage of any particular type or period, as discussed in the previous chapter with reference to *The Necessary Monument* (1970) and the Globe (1972-1997). This study into Crosby's career thus adds to the diversity and complexity of the theory and practices of preservation in late 20th-century Britain.

5.1 Language of Preservation

In the four chapters of this research, I illustrate the origin of these two themes within the debates on post-war Modernism that Crosby was a contributor to. In so doing, I examine three inter-related perspectives, namely, his reevaluation of the social responsibility of architecture developed in the late 1950s; his opposition to the Modernist affinity to the mass society articulated in the early 1970s; and his attempted repudiation of the Modernist tenet of "form follows function" in his works since the mid-1970s. These views can be traced back to Crosby's early attitudes in for example, the debates on the New Brutalism and the *This is Tomorrow* exhibition examined in the first chapter of this study. I argue that Crosby's experimentations with the standardised architecture and prefabrication technology of the

period played a role in his break with post-war Modernism. In the early 1960s, he developed a belief in the supposed freedom of choice offered by the market, which is revealed through my study of his contribution to the UIA Congress. In the following decades, Crosby started to argue that preservation through the free market could respond better to the needs of the people. He also framed preservation as a way to counter-balance the allegedly monotonous and out-of-scale urbanism created by architectural Modernism. Subsequently, Crosby continued to develop this rhetoric in his writings, including *The Necessary Monument*, “Ten Rules for Planners” (1971), and “Ten Commandments for the Duchy of Cornwall” (1988) which are examined in the present study.¹

In these writings, Crosby posited his preservationist approach as a counterblast to the Modernist programme of devising a universal architectural solution for a mass society.² In Chapter 2 of the present study, I trace the origin of this idea through revisiting Crosby’s response to John Summerson’s “The Case for a Theory of Modern Architecture” (1957).³ I argue that the debate surrounding Summerson’s lecture, published in the “Thought in Progress” section of the *AD*, should be understood as a critical point in which an irreconcilability between language and programme was formulated.⁴ This debate should also be considered as an event that set in motion both preservationist and Postmodern architecture in late 20th-century Britain. In the existing studies on Postmodern architecture, language has been seen as essential to the movement, acquiring different nuances through studies in semiotics/semantics, structuralism and deconstructivism.⁵ This research also shows that Crosby legitimised the preservation and remodelling of old buildings for current-day uses

¹Crosby, *The Necessary Monument*. Crosby, “Ten Rules for Planners,” 1971.

² Crosby, “The Pessimist Utopia,” 1973.

³ Summerson, “The Case for a Theory of Modern Architecture.”

⁴ Crosby, “Thoughts in Progress: Summing Up 2”; Crosby, “Thoughts in Progress: Summing Up 3.”

⁵ Jencks, *The Language of Post-Modern Architecture*.

through prioritising the importance of language over programme. An implication of this debate, I suggest, was that Crosby discarded the Modernist tenet of “Form Follows Function.” The potential efficacy of this decoupling of language and programme can be found in his building rehabilitation projects, such as that of Ulster Terrace examined in Chapter 2, where the merit of the renovation was assessed through the innovative response to the architectural language found in John Nash’s original design. However, this shift can also be understood as part of the conflation of “old” and “new” in late 20th-century preservation.⁶ This study, through reconsidering Crosby’s works, may also stand as an additional account to Glendinning’s study on the dissolution of the Modern Conservation Movement.

Another similarity found in the discourse of Crosby’s preservationist works and Postmodern architectural discourse is that, unlike the language of Modern architecture, it shows that Classical principles can provide more room for variations and creativity. The first two chapters of this study also demonstrate that this idea can be attributed to the influence of studies by Wittkower and Rowe in the post-war era.⁷ Its formulation can also be found in seminal works of architectural Postmodernism including Robert Venturi’s *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture* (1966).⁸ Roughly at the same time, Crosby was arguing that building design based on Classical principles would allow more individual expression and freedom of choice. He also proposed that designs referencing the past could respond to the needs of British people in the affluent society of the 1960s and 1970s, which was discussed in his *Architectural: City Sense* (1965) and *The Necessary Monument* (1970).⁹ This view was also reflected in his Fulham Study proposal, where he devised a capsule-like building façade

⁶ Glendinning, *The Conservation Movement: A History of Architectural Preservation: Antiquity to Modernity*.

⁷ Wittkower, *Architectural Principles in the Age of Humanism*; Rowe, “The Mathematics of the Ideal Villa,” March 1947; Rowe, “Mannerism and Modern Architecture.”

⁸ Robert Venturi, *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1966).

⁹ Crosby, *Architecture: City Sense*; Crosby, *The Necessary Monument*.

design based on the proportion and symmetry of Georgian houses, as a means of introducing more variety and flexibility in housing. Through drawing out the similarities between Fulham Study and Ulster Terrace (1975), Chapter 2 of the present research addresses Crosby's belief in the market value and economic potential of building designs, including preserved structure, devised from Classical principles. This claim of the freedom and adaptability offered by Classical principles, I also argue, has had an enduring influence on British architecture and urbanism: it has underpinned the design of new buildings, based on symmetry and proportion and constructed with traditional materials that are commonly found in Britain today.¹⁰

This study also illustrates that, as part of the interest in language, both preservationist and Postmodern architecture have been influenced by studies in Information Theory developed in the post-war era. This conjuncture was analysed in the intellectual underpinning shared by a proposal in Crosby's *How to Play the Environment Game* exhibition to quantify the visual complexity of old buildings, and Peter Eisenman's *The Formal Basis of Modern Architecture* (1964).¹¹ My analysis, also informed by Reinhold Martin's study on Postmodern architecture, found that Crosby tried similarly to abstract and then complicate architecture and urbanism through Information Theory in his preservation work.¹² Through this process of reformulating architecture, Crosby and his collaborators also reinforced the claim that a universal architectural solution for the mass society could not be validated. The third chapter of this research therefore suggests that this parallel turn to Information Theory can also be seen as part of architecture's withdrawal from its supposed social role and a further repudiation of the programme of architectural Modernism.

¹⁰ Hatherley, "London's New Typology: The Tasteful Modernist Non-Dom Investment."

¹¹ Crosby, *How to Play the Environmental Game*. Eisenman, *The Formal Basis of Modern Architecture*.

¹² Martin, "Environment, c. 1973."

Within Crosby's works was also a discourse on order and disorder in architecture, which can be found early on in *This is Tomorrow*, studied in the first chapter. Through a re-appraisal of Crosby and the Smithsons' contributions to the exhibition, I examine their use of Japanese architecture as an example of a standardised environment that could accommodate individualistic expression. The second chapter of this research reveals that, by the 1960s, the discussion on order and disorder was consolidated in Crosby's *Architecture: City Sense* (1965), which was a study of urbanism.¹³ A similar argument for the importance of disorder in architecture and urbanism can be found in the writings of contemporary architects and critics of different schools, including Reyner Banham, Colin Rowe, and Richard Sennett.¹⁴ In Chapter 2, I argue that these discussions should also be understood as part of the expression of postmodernity at a point when the reverence for order was being contested.¹⁵ These discussions were also examined within the socio-economic context of the late 1970s and early 1980s, when major cities in the developed world were perceived to be in decline. This reevaluation of disorder, this research observes, strengthened the influence of preservationist and Postmodern architectural thought at the time.

In this study, I illustrate that Crosby's preservationist architecture had evolved in response to the changes in British manufacturing industry.¹⁶ As I argued in Chapter 1, Crosby's interest in history and Classical principles was related to the growth of mass production and standardised construction in the post-war era. Later on, in his 1970 publication *The Necessary Monument*, Crosby wrote at length on the importance of

¹³ Crosby, *Architecture: City Sense*.

¹⁴ Banham et al., "Non-Plan An Experiment in Freedom"; Rowe and Koetter, *Collage City*; Sennett, *The Uses of Disorder: Personal Identity and City Life*.

¹⁵ Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change*.

¹⁶ McLeod, "Architecture and Politics in the Reagan Era: Postmodernism to Deconstructivism."

preservation to the de-industrialising Western economies.¹⁷ Embedded in his use of ornament and bespoke artworks was also an attempt to revitalise manual labour when British manufacturing industry was in rapid decline, as seen in his designs for Unilever House, Ulster Terrace and the Globe. However, one can also find in his work a romanticised and nostalgic interpretation of manual labour, as described in Hewison’s critique of the “heritage industry.”¹⁸ Crosby’s fascination with craft, I argue, functioned more as an idiosyncratic response to or even a distraction from the environmental and socio-economic challenges brought by de-industrialisation. It may also continue to fortify a “two-tier system” in architectural practices which Crosby observed in the 1961 UIA Congress: one of an architecture with the creative license offered by privileged clients accompanied by another with ordinary, characterless constructions.¹⁹ In projects such as the Ulster Terrace and Unilever House, historical preservation was also used to disguise the subdivision and gentrification of real estate. To put it more bluntly, Crosby transposed ideas from the debates on architectural language to provide an intellectual veneer for designs which sought to extract value from old buildings and urbanscapes.

5.2 Preservationist Environment

Another important thread that ties together post-war Modernism, Postmodernism and preservationism in this research is the term “environment.” As I argue in Chapter 1, this discussion emerged as early as the 1950s, in the debates regarding the New Brutalism, when Japan is used to illustrate an environment that could reconnect human activities with materials, nature and architecture. In *This is Tomorrow*, the collaborations between artists,

¹⁷ Crosby, *The Necessary Monument*.

¹⁸ Hewison, *The Heritage Industry: Britain in a Climate of Decline*.

¹⁹ Crosby, “Conclusion: 1961 UIA Congress.”

architects and designers were also considered as a means for creating a more communicative and holistic environment. In the 1960s, as Crosby grew increasingly frustrated about the conditions of post-war Modernism, his understanding of the environment moved closer to the rhetoric found in *AR*'s Townscape campaign: to reclaim the value of familiar objects, signs, materials, and urbanscapes.²⁰ Such a shift in Crosby's attitude was most clearly manifested in his 1965 publication *Architecture: City Sense*.²¹ This interest in the overlooked and undervalued in the everyday environment underscored Crosby's turn to preservation. It should also be understood as part of a bigger trend to move beyond a hierarchical valuation of architecture and urbanism. Crosby's view of an expanded "environment" found in the Pentagram book *Living by Design* of 1978, for example, was almost concurrent with the publication of Venturi, Scott Brown and Izenour's *Learning from Las Vegas* (1977).²²

Another similarity between Crosby's preservationist works and Postmodern architectural discourse including *Learning from Las Vegas*, was their populist tone. This tone is also manifested in Crosby's 1973 *How to Play the Environment Game* exhibition, analysed in Chapter 3. In the exhibition, Crosby presented preservation as a way to attain a more enjoyable, democratic and identifiable everyday environment. In addition, he argued, modern-day technology such as video cameras and computers could facilitate preservation and engender a more democratic approach to the built environment. This research also reveals that this populist and techno-optimistic preservationist attitude was not unique to Crosby but could be found in Inter-Action and other community artist groups. Though beyond the scope of the present research, Inter-Action groups' contemporaneous

²⁰ Townscape's influence on Postmodernism has also been discussed by scholars including Mathew Aitchison. Mathew Aitchison and John Macarthur, "Pevsner's Townscape," in *Visual Planning and the Picturesque* (Los Angeles, CA: Getty Publications, 2010), 29.

²¹ Crosby, *Architecture: City Sense*.

²² Pentagram, *Living by Design*.
Venturi, Brown, and Izenour, *Learning from Las Vegas*.

collaboration with another maverick architect, Cedric Price, suggests that there is more to be gleaned from the intersections between preservation and the radical architecture of the 1960s and 1970s.

Other than the parallels between Crosby's preservationist works and Postmodern architectural discourses discussed above, this research also reveals some previously overlooked conjunctures in 20th-century British architecture. For example, it sheds light on the importance of the 1961 UIA Congress exhibition, curated by Crosby, which can be interpreted as a partial revision of the now canonised *This is Tomorrow* exhibition. Moreover, in Chapters 2 and 3 of the present study, I discuss the similarities between the works of Crosby and Banham, two prominent supporters of the New Brutalism in the 1960s and 1970s. Although their interests and advocacy grew more distinct, they were both found to be advocating a more democratic and less hierarchical approach to the urban environment, as seen in Banham's 1969 *Non-Plan* manifesto (co-authored with Baker, Hall and Price) and Crosby's *Ten Rules for Planners* (1971).²³ Banham's study of Los Angeles (1971), a re-articulation of architecture and urbanism as "ecologies," also resonated with Crosby's formulation of the "environment."²⁴ The discussions in the present study also offer re-interpretations of notable architectural debates in late 20th-century Britain, through evaluating Crosby's contribution, including New Brutalism, the Globe and the Ten Principles.

²³ Banham et al., "Non-Plan: An Experiment in Freedom"; Crosby, "Ten Rules for Planners."

²⁴ Banham, *Los Angeles the Architecture of Four Ecologies*.

5.3 Epilogue: *Ritorniamo*

As the end of the present research, I used two Pentagram pamphlets written by Crosby in the late 1980s as an alternative lens through which to consider how the development of preservationism and Postmodern architecture were entangled. In 1986 and 1987, Crosby published two manifestos for a Battle of Britain Monument, to be constructed on the Isle of Dogs (FIG 5.1). At first glance, this proposed monument is not dissimilar to Crosby's previous projects: the obelisk-like, 150m-tall monument was to commemorate the Second World War but at the same time to create a landmark in London's post-industrial landscape. However, a closer examination of the pamphlet suggests that the design of the Monument was in fact based on an illustration in a 16th-century romance *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* — a book attributed to Alberti.²⁵ Translated into English as *Poliphilo's Strife of Love in a Dream*, the book is an assemblage of descriptions forming a dreamlike journey into imaginary spaces.²⁶ Crosby used the illustration's original caption as the basis for his rhetoric: it reads, "*ritorniamo*" — suggesting 'turning back/circling back' in Italian.²⁷ (FIG 5.2). This proposed Monument, I argue, should be understood as an autobiographical account of Crosby's architectural journey, a view that he stated more explicitly in the pamphlet *Let's Build a Monument*. Crosby observed the unsatisfactory result of reconstruction and redevelopment based on Modernist principles and found:

The political answer has been to shut down the programmes, sell off the council houses and hand every decision back to the speculative builder. It was just so in 1935.

Then, the disastrous consequences, ribbon development, uncontrolled and casual building called for Planning legislation. We have, in a sense, come back to the beginning."²⁸

²⁵ Liane Lefaivre, *Leon Battista Alberti's Hypnerotomachia Poliphili: Re-Cognizing the Architectural Body in the Early Italian Renaissance* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005).

²⁶ Francesco Colonna, *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili: The Strife of Love in a Dream*, trans. Joscelyn Godwin (London: Thames and Hudson, 2005).

²⁷ Metropolitan Museum of Art, "Hypnerotomachia Poliphili," Museum, *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History* (blog), n.d., <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/365313>.

²⁸ Crosby, *Let's Build a Monument*, 3.

By the late 1980s, after more than three decades of calling for resistance to the dogmatic adaptation of Modernist planning and architectural design, Crosby observed that the achievement of Modernism had almost collapsed. However, the desirable and dynamic architecture and urbanism that he envisaged was yet to be found.

Perhaps more troubling was that, after more than 20 years of campaigning for the old buildings and the urban fabric to be safeguarded, Crosby noticed that a new preservationist orthodoxy had been formed. In the same pamphlet, he observed that every year millions of tourists were moving around the world “in search of ideal cities.”²⁹ The “lust” for ideal cities and urban form, Crosby bemoaned, had turned the “old cities of Europe and the Mediterranean into playgrounds.”³⁰ He concluded that preservation could no longer engender or maintain the ideal townscape; and that people could no longer use structures from the past to reflect critically on contemporary architectural culture. Crosby’s “coming back to the beginning” also coincided with changes in the architectural culture of Postmodernism. According to historian Mary McLeod, the economic boom of the mid-1980s should be seen as a moment when the critical energy of Postmodernism waned. She observed that architects had by then stopped “writing and theorising; most reached hungrily to the opportunities to build.”³¹ The architectural language of Classicism, once esteemed for its communicative value, was being subsumed by corporate culture and reduced to “the edifice complex.”³² In short, by the late 1980s, architects including Crosby came to realise that, although architectural Modernism had been rejected, no satisfactory alternatives in architectural and urban design had been found. Finally, this “coming back to the beginning” can also perhaps

²⁹ Crosby, 6.

³⁰ Crosby, 6.

³¹ McLeod, “Architecture and Politics in the Reagan Era: Postmodernism to Deconstructivism,” 29.

³² McLeod, 29. Cited

Joann Krotz, “The Edifice Complex: Does Attention Getting Design Sell Buildings,” *Avenue*, November 1987.

be seen as the outcome of Crosby's practice as an operative critic who projected into the future through rewriting the past.



FIG 5. 1 Crosby with the Battle of Britain Monument model.



FIG 5.2 Pages from *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* showing “ritorniamo.”

Appendix

Appendix

Appendix I

A Brief Biography of Theo Crosby

Crosby was born in 1925 to a mining family in Mafeking, a town outside of Johannesburg, South Africa. In 1941, Crosby was enrolled at the University of Witwatersrand, which was a bastion of South African Modernist design during the inter-war era.¹ Through his teacher Rex Martienssen, a member of the Transvaal Group, Crosby developed an acute awareness of the relevance of Classical architecture to the Modern Movement.² Crosby's architectural education was interrupted by the War when he was enlisted in 1944.³ Arriving in Italy rather late in the War as part of the Allied Army Occupation, Crosby's war-time experience was dominated not by combat but by the powerful impression he gained of the historical Italian townscape.⁴ In 1948, Crosby relocated permanently to London and found himself in the centre of a transnational exchange of post-war Modernism: he worked in Jane Drew and Maxwell Fry's office where he designed buildings for British colonies in West Africa.⁵ He renovated No. 36 Old Church Street, a house built by Walter Gropius in partnership with Maxwell Fry, during the former's brief stay in London.⁶ Like many of his generation, Crosby was also enchanted by the English publications written by Germanic émigré architectural historians, including Sigfried Giedion, Nikolaus Pevsner and Rudolf Wittkower, all of which served as an

¹ Gilbert Herbert, *Rex Martienssen and the International Style: Modern Movement in South Africa* (Cape Town: A. A. Balkema, 1975).

² As a committed acolyte, Martienssen followed Le Corbusier's journey to the Athenian Acropolis to look for models of town planning. In his 1935 PhD dissertation entitled "*The Idea of Space in Greek Architecture, with Special Reference to the Doric Temple and its Setting*", which was intended to be a research into Greek townscape in order to inform 20th-century South African town planning. R.D Martienssen, *The Idea of Space in Greek Architecture* (Johannesburg: University of Witwatersrand Press, 1956).

³ I am in debt to Dr. Stephen Parnell for pointing out the exact dates when Crosby was enlisted.

⁴ Theo Crosby, "Inaugural Speech" (Transcript, 1990), Box 26, Theo Crosby Archive, University of Brighton. In an interview in the late 1980s, Crosby would describe his war-time experience as "terrific fun, the best experience a young man could have."

Martin Pawley, "Reaching for the Sky," *The Guardian*, September 8, 1987.

⁵ Iain Jackson and Jessica Holland, *The Architecture of Edwin Maxwell Fry and Jane Drew: Twentieth Century Architecture, Pioneer Modernism and the Tropics*, Ashgate Studies in Architecture (London: Routledge, 2014).

⁶ Jackson and Holland, 73.

introduction to architectural heritage.⁷ Meanwhile, the influence of Le Corbusier was still looming large in Britain.⁸ Through Drew and Fry's connection, Crosby participated in events organised by the CIAM and also contributed to *Architects' Yearbook*.⁹ The interests in history and the Modern Movement fostered Crosby's close friendship with the "bell-wethers of the young" in 1950s British architecture: Alison and Peter Smithson.¹⁰ The three shared a house in Bloomsbury, London from 1949 to 1955, and collaborated on writings, architectural and urban design works until the 1990s.¹¹

Under the long shadow cast by the South African Transvaal Group and Le Corbusier, Crosby also procured a life-long commitment to the integration of arts with architecture. In the early 1950s, he contemplated the idea of becoming an artist and was active at the ICA and the Central School. He also became a fellow traveller of the IG.¹² In 1953, Crosby left Drew and Fry's office and took up the technical editor position at the *AD*, which allowed him to take a sculpture class in the afternoon.¹³ This half-day job, however, not only resulted in one of Crosby's most influential and well-regarded roles but also significantly altered the terrain of post-war British arts and architecture. During Crosby's eight-year tenure, the *AD* was transformed into a magazine, through both its content and visuals, representing the neo-avant-garde position. It challenged the English Modernism championed

⁷ Theo Crosby, "Night Thoughts of a Faded Utopia," in *The Independent Group: Postwar Britain and the Aesthetics of Plenty* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1990), 197–99.

⁸ Peter Smithson, "The Golden Lane Experience," in *Half Term Report* (London: Royal College of Art, 1990), 10. In discussing the late 1940s and early 1950s, Smithson wrote, "It seemed during all that time there was only one building in Europe. The technical and popular magazines carried its construction step by step. We were a generation completely saturated by information about the Unite (d' Habitation)..."

⁹ Theo Crosby, "The Relevance of Greek Planning Today," in *Architects' Yearbook 11* (London: Elek Books, 1965), 282–86. Theo Crosby, *Ten Rules for Planners*, 13th, edited by David Lewis ed., *Architects' Yearbook* (Elek Books: London, 1971).

¹⁰ Reyner Banham, "Revenge of the Picturesque: English Architectural Polemics, 1945-1965," in *Concerning Architecture: Essays on Architectural Writers and Writing Presented to Nikolaus Pevsner*, ed. John Summerson (London: Allen Lane the Penguin Press, 1968), 270.

¹¹ Crosby, "Night Thoughts of a Faded Utopia."

In 1973, Crosby collaborated with Alison and Peter Smithson, Trevor Dannat, Robert and Margaret Finch on the design of Cherry Garden Pier, a mix-used urban regeneration scheme in Bermondsey, South London. Pentagram, *Living by Design* (Pentagram: London, 1978), 168. When Crosby became Professor of Architecture at the Royal College of Art in 1990, Peter Smithson taught a studio.

¹² David Robbins, ed., *The Independent Group: Postwar Britain and the Aesthetics of Plenty* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1990).

¹³ Crosby, "Night Thoughts of a Faded Utopia."

by the *AR*.¹⁴ Crosby also formed a fruitful collaborative relationship with *AD*'s long-term editor Monica Pidgeon.¹⁵

Crosby's other editorial works have also been seen as instrumental in promoting the works of post-war modernist artists, architects and designers. From 1958-1961, Crosby edited a little magazine entitled *Uppercase*, which contained retrospectives of the early works by IG members including Magda Cordell, William Turnbull, Eduardo Paolozzi, Alison and Peter Smithson, and Edward Wright.¹⁶ It was also the first English magazine that published works from the Ulm School of Design.¹⁷ In 1959, he edited the catalogue for the exhibition *Le Corbusier: Architecture Painting Sculpture Tapestries*.¹⁸ In the current historiography of post-war British architecture, the exhibition is seen as a noteworthy moment when a younger generation of architects, among them Colin St John Wilson, reoriented their attention to the previously overlooked "Other Tradition" of Modernist architecture.¹⁹ Another short-lived journal edited by Crosby was *Living Arts* (1962-1964), a one-time official publication of the ICA.²⁰ The three-issue publication is now best known for its second issue which included the catalogue of Archigram's 1963 exhibition *Living City*.²¹ These ventures established Crosby as a prolific architectural writer and editor, and more importantly, an effective *eminence-grise* in post-war British architecture.

¹⁴ M. Christine Boyer, "An Encounter with History: The Postwar Debate between the English Journals of Architectural Review and Architectural Design (1945-1960)," in *Art, the Everyday and the Media* (Team 10 - between Modernity and the Everyday, Delft University, 2003), 135-63, <http://www.team10online.org/research/papers/delft2/boyer.pdf>.

¹⁵ Interview with Monica Pidgeon (Part 3 of 25) in *National Life Story Collection: Architects' Lives*. (<http://sounds.bl.uk/Oral-history/Architects-Lives/021M-C0467X0039XX-0300V0>) The two also co-edited a book Monica Pidgeon and Theo Crosby, eds., *An Anthology of Houses* (London: Batsford, 1960).

¹⁶ Theo Crosby, ed., *Uppercase 1: Eduardo Paolozzi* (London: Whitefrairs Press, 1958). Theo Crosby, ed., *Uppercase 2* (London: Whitefrairs Press, 1959). Theo Crosby, ed., *Uppercase 3: Alison and Peter Smithson*, *Uppercase 3* (London: Whitefrairs Press, 1960). Theo Crosby, ed., *Uppercase 4: William Turnbull* (London: Whitefrairs Press, 1961). Theo Crosby, ed., *Uppercase 5: Ulm HfG* (London: Whitefrairs Press, 1961).

¹⁷ Interview with Kenneth Frampton, April 2015. Crosby, *Uppercase 5: Ulm HfG*.

¹⁸ Theo Crosby, ed., *Le Corbusier: Architecture, Painting, Sculpture, Tapestries* (Liverpool: Walker Art Gallery, 1959).

¹⁹ Anthony Vidler, *Histories of the Immediate Present* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2008), 96. Stephen Kite, "Softs and Hards: Colin St. John Wilson and the Contested Visions of 1950s London," in *Neo-Avant-Garde and Postmodern: Postwar Architecture in Britain and Beyond*, ed. Mark Crinson and Claire Zimmerman (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 55-77.

²⁰ Theo Crosby and Jon Bodley, *Living Arts*, vol. 1-3 (London: Institute of Contemporary Art, 1962-1964).

²¹ Peter Cook, "Introduction," in *Living Arts*, ed. Theo Crosby and Jon Bodley, vol. 2 (London: Institute of Contemporary Art, 1962).

In the first two decades of his career, in addition to architectural practice, editing, writing, graphic design, and sculpturing, Crosby also organised exhibitions—including the now canonised *This is Tomorrow* exhibition of 1956. The realisation of *This is Tomorrow*, according to the 1990 IG retrospective exhibition, was only made possible through Theo Crosby’s “willingness to undertake the organisation.”²² He was also responsible for procuring the funding, venue, and construction materials for exhibition.²³ The success of *This is Tomorrow* also reflected Crosby’s character as a pragmatic idealist: he insisted on producing an expansive—both content-wise and price-wise—exhibition catalogue and was able to subsidise the printing cost by selling adverts and doing design work for the printers’ company.²⁴ Since then, Crosby continued to further his reputation as an exhibition designer, through the 1961 UIA Congress in London, the British Industrial Section in Montreal Expo’ 67, and the British pavilion for the Milan Triennial 1964, at which he won the *Gran Premio*.²⁵ Meanwhile, Crosby maintained an active presence at the ICA, including taking part in a 1960 exhibition featuring his sculptural work alongside the works of artists Peter Blake and John Latham.²⁶

Crosby’s practice in architecture and urban design, however, reflected a more chequered record. From 1961 to 1964, he headed a small experimental design team at the builder’s company Taylor Woodrow, where he worked with a younger generation of British architects, including six members of Archigram and Robin Middleton.²⁷ The team was given various ambitious projects including a redesign of the Euston Station, an urban regeneration pilot study for Fulham, and an urban design for Harlow New Town.²⁸ All, however, were unrealised.²⁹ The planning and bureaucratic

²² Alison Smithson and Peter Smithson, “The ‘As Found’ and ‘Found,’” in *The Independent Group: Postwar Britain and the Aesthetics of Plenty*, ed. David Robbins (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1990), 201.

²³ Smithson and Smithson, “The ‘As Found’ and ‘Found.’”

²⁴ Alistair Grieve, “‘This Is Tomorrow’, a Remarkable Exhibition Born from Contention,” *Burlington Magazine* 136, no. 1093 (April 1994): 225–32.

²⁵ “For the Record,” *Official Architecture and Planning*, March 1964.

²⁶ “Theo Crosby: Sculpture, Peter Blake: Objects, John Latham: Libraries,” Exhibition Catalogue (London: Institute of Contemporary Art, 1960).

²⁷ Simon Sadler, *Archigram: Architecture without Architecture* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2004), 47–49.

²⁸ The Archigram Archival Project, the University of Westminster. (<http://archigram.westminster.ac.uk/>, accessed April 2018).

²⁹ A signal tower which was part of the Taylor Woodrow scheme had been realised but is not publicly accessible.

deadlocks Crosby encountered during this period had drastically altered his outlook on British architecture and urbanism. The publication of Jane Jacobs' *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* in 1961, came at a time when Crosby was disappointed by the dogmatic Modernist architectural and planning mechanism, further strengthened his affinity to architectural preservation.³⁰ Following his tenure at Taylor Woodrow, Crosby went into another short hiatus from building design that lasted until the early 1970s. During this intermission, he published two books that articulated his vision for architectural preservation: *Architecture: City Sense* (1965) and *The Necessary Monument* (1970).³¹

In 1965 Crosby co-founded Crosby/ Fletcher/ Forbes, a multi-disciplinary design practice that would later become Pentagram, when Kenneth Grange and Mervyn Kurlansky joined the firm in 1972.³² Pentagram adapts an alternative business model in which each of the partners is in charge of a different department and maintained his/her design autonomy. The profits, meanwhile, is shared amongst all the departments.³³ The quality of the works is guaranteed through design review sessions and evaluation meetings. This non-hierarchy partnership model, according to Crosby, was incepted through his early experience in organising *This is Tomorrow*.³⁴ The various design departments within the firm offer clients a streamlined service from branding, graphic design, product design, to offices renovations. As the partner leading Environment Design, Crosby focused on devising renovation and rehabilitation projects, mostly for private estates and corporative offices. Successfully carving out a market niche in the depressed economy of 1970s Britain, Pentagram later evolved into a multinational design company and is still seen as the pedigree of British design in the 21st-century.

³⁰ Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (Vintage Books: New York, 1961).

³¹ Theo Crosby, *Architecture: City Sense* (London: Studio Vista, 1965); Theo Crosby, *The Necessary Monument* (London: Studio Vista, 1970).

³² Pentagram, *Living by Design*.

³³ Pentagram.

³⁴ Theo Crosby, "The Painter as Designer," in *Edward Wright Graphic Work and Painting*, by Edward Wright (London: Arts Council, 1985).

Since the 1960s, Crosby's social and professional circle had also changed and expanded: he became a board member of the Arts Council and of the Preservation Policy Group.³⁵ In the early 1970s, Crosby curated two exhibitions at the Hayward Gallery: *Kinetic* in 1970 and *How to Play the Environment Game* in 1973. The latter exhibition was presented as a comprehensive evaluation and criticism of the British environment after two decades of reconstruction and renewal based on Modernist visions.³⁶ Crosby's preservation advocacy and collaboration with the arts and cultural Establishments, in this period, did not imply a direct turn to conservative politics. In the 1970s, he worked closely with community arts and advocacy groups that often-expressed anti-Establishment anti-consumerism views. Situations in Crosby personal life also led to unexpected ventures: due to his son's disability Crosby designed the MacIntyre School for children with special needs in Westoning.³⁷ In the 1980s, he moved with his second wife, Polly Hope to a renovated brewery building in Spitalfields. They were both actively engaged in the community activities of the area and sought to revitalise the then derelict Spitalfields Market. These works had engendered the view that Crosby was a maverick architect with egalitarian pursuits.³⁸

At Pentagram, Crosby continued to work for prestige clients including the Unilever Group, Reuters, NMB Banks in the Netherlands, and the Royal Academy.³⁹ In these projects, Crosby demonstrated the possibility of rehabilitating old structure for modern taste, needs, and uses. These projects contributed to Crosby's and Pentagram's financial success and enabled him to indulge in seemingly wayward projects such as a proposal for a Battle of Britain Monument.⁴⁰ Other unconventional but arguably far-sighted ventures Crosby conducted in the 1980s and 1990s included a preservation campaign for Stonehenge and an attempt to digitalise all building facades in Britain.⁴¹

³⁵ Crosby, *The Necessary Monument*.

In 1982, he was elected an associate of the Royal Academy and a Royal Academician in 1990.

³⁶ Theo Crosby, *How to Play the Environmental Game* (London: Penguin, 1973).

³⁷ Anne Crosby, *Matthew* (Philadelphia: Paul Dry Books, 2006).

³⁸ John Stokdyk, "Maverick with Message," *Building*, May 1988.

³⁹ "Theo Crosby, Practitioner of Symbolic and Monumental Architecture, Dies," *Building*, September 16, 1994.

⁴⁰ Theo Crosby, *Let's Build a Monument* (Pentagram: London, 1986).

⁴¹ Theo Crosby and Peter Lloyd Jones, *Stonehenge Tomorrow* (Kingston University: Kingston, 1992).

From 1979 until his death in 1994, Crosby was preoccupied with the design and construction of Shakespeare's Globe — a 20th-century reconstruction of a 16th-century theatre. His pursuit of incorporating ornaments, decoration and crafts in architecture also accentuated his eccentricity. In the current historiography of late-20th century British architecture, these works, however, have often been submerged by the toxicity surrounding his advisory role in Prince Charles' initiative in architecture.⁴² Crosby's unfortunate professorship at the Royal College of Art (RCA) had further tarnished his reputation.⁴³ His attempt to instil Classical training, including drawing and architectural history classes, were met by stern oppositions from the students.⁴⁴ The poor relationship between the students, Crosby, and the then RCA Rector Jocelyn Stevens also accentuated the bitterness of his merely a year-long Professorship.⁴⁵ When Crosby passed away in 1994, he was commonly recognised as a "rain-maker" or "a quiet magician", but not as an architect who held critical insights into British architecture and urbanism.⁴⁶ Crosby's multifaceted career, I argue, offers an alternative prism to reflect on British architectural and preservation historiography.

Theo Crosby and Peter Lloyd Jones, Spitalfields Inventory. Bishopgate Institute Archive.
Interview with Jules Lubbock.

⁴² HRH The Prince of Wales and Christopher Martin, *A Vision of Britain: A Personal View of Architecture* (BBC, 1988).

Martin Pawley, "A Precedent for the Prince," *Architectural Review* 187 (January 1990): 80–82.

⁴³ Peter Westmacott and Brian Hanson, "Memorandum from Peter Westmacott and Brian Hanson" (Correspondance, June 13, 1990), Box 47, Theo Crosby Archive, University of Brighton.

⁴⁴ "Royal College of Art Quashes Student Row Over Course Policies," *Design Week*, October 18, 1990.

⁴⁵ Chris Maume, "Sir Jocelyn Stevens: Newspaper Executive Who Helped Rescue the 'Evening Standard' and 'Daily Express' and Funded Radio Caroline," *The Independent*, October 14, 2014, <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/people/news/sir-jocelyn-stevens-newspaper-executive-who-helped-rescue-the-evening-standard-and-daily-express-and-9792348.html>.

⁴⁶ "Obituary: Theo Crosby RA," *Royal Society of Arts Journal*, December 1994, 21. For example, in describing his approach to architectural design in his obituary, the Journal of Royal Society of Arts used an anecdotal account: "He was utterly free of the dogma that commonly besets the architectural profession. Alan Fletcher once asked him how he judged what is good in architecture, 'It's good if I like it,' was his guileless reply."

Appendix II Comparison between 10 Principles in A Vision of Britain and Crosby's 1988 "Ten Commandments for the Duchy of Cornwall"

10 Principals in A Vision of Britain	Theo Crosby's "Ten Commandments for the Duchy of Cornwall"	Differences
<p>Scale "In London, for example, helpful by-laws and building acts from the 1890s until the 1950 imposed height limits. The rules made for an orderly and elegant skyline. Above a continuous cornice-line rose turrets, domes, spires and cupolas that we can all appreciate." "sometimes a great public building may dominate a city, but it will be the sort of building that reflects our aspirations."</p>	<p>Scale The scale of new buildings should relate to existing buildings, to mediate between them and the occupant. Adjoining roof and cornice heights should be considered and always on proposal drawings.</p>	
<p>Harmony "Because of the scale of our country it is more necessary to respect our indigenous roots than to imitate transient international architectural fashions. Our older towns cannot easily absorb the most extreme examples of outlandish modern design."</p>	<p>Increment Modern buildings are generally too large for their architects. All invention is usually exhausted in 10 meters of frontage. In large schemes this dimensional increment should not be exceeded, unless a building demands a particular monumentality.</p>	
<p>Enclosure "The scale can be large or small, the materials ancient or modern, but cohesion, continuity and enclosure produce a kind of magic."</p>	<p>Continuity The pleasure of cities comes largely from continuous enclosures, often a very simple kind.</p>	<p>Crosby stressed the importance of owner-occupied house and maintenance of private property.</p>
<p>Hierarchy "There are two kinds of hierarchy which need concern us here. One is the size of buildings in relation to their public importance. The other is the relative significance of the different elements which make up a building – so that we know, for instance, where the front door is!" "Building should reflect these hierarchies, for architecture is like a language. You cannot construct pleasing sentence in English unless you have a thorough knowledge of the grammatical ground rules."</p>	<p>Hierarchy This is inevitably a hierarchy of uses in any development; those elements with a public function should obviously be emphasized, but the idea of hierarchy is also helpful in dealing with very small and relatively unimportant structures. Thus entrances are differentiated, access point stressed, living spaces emphasized and purely private areas are not.</p>	<p>Prince Charles blamed architects "Nowadays the dogma of modernism ensures a deadening uniformity." Crosby, in its stead, attacked the ways buildings, especially houses, were being created.</p>

Decoration

“Many people think that a revival of classicism can help. It is certainly a universal language but it is not one that can be applied easily unless it is thoroughly learned. It is not the simple pastiche that some critics claim it to be: learning the classical language of architecture does not mean that you only produce endless neo-Georgian-style houses. Classicism provides an incredibly rich inventory of infinite variety.”

“We need to reinstate architecture as the mistress of the arts and the crafts. I would suggest that the consumers are ahead of the professionals here.”

Art

“When decoration is concerned with repetition and pattern, a work of art is unique.”

“Architects and artists used to work together naturally, today they are worlds apart.”

“The principles by which art and architecture are taught need to be revised.

There should be common disciplines taught to all those engaged in the visual arts.

Signs

“Good lettering must be taught and learned; its quality is timeless and classical in broadest sense.”

“Many great cities of the world have retained a magic quality at night due to incandescent lighting. We should bury as many wires as possible and remember that when it comes to lighting and signs the standard solution is never enough.”

Decoration

The classical system provides a considerable decorative vocabulary; its appropriate use depends on the skill and taste of the architect. We live at the end of a period of austerity and sterility. There is now a demand for an urban decoration, an end to dullness.

Art

While decorative elements are encouraged and should normally be included in building cost, it is Duchy policy, in line with the Arts Council and UNESCO recommendations, to allow the perfect for Art in all new building. This percent is to be used for such items as fountains, clocks and sculpture, and they should be inextricably incorporated in the development. This percent is not to be omitted in the usual search for economies during the works.

Signing

Lettering in and on buildings is an important communication and must be considered at an early stage. The English classical lettering tradition is particularly strong, and due for revival.

Crosby used this part to promote his Arts and Architecture initiative and its Percent for Art campaign.

Material and Colour

“Britain is one of the most geologically complicated countries in the world, and as a result it is one of the most beautiful.”

“To enable new buildings to look as though they belong, and thereby enhance the natural surroundings, each district should have a detailed inventory of its local building materials and the way in which they are used. This should become a bible for local planning authorities and should be held up as a model to developers and their architects. “

“we must also encourage our traditional craftsmen – our flint-knappers, our thatchers, our blacksmiths – and involve them in the building of our future. This will in time engender an economic revival which is not dependent on centralized industries but which is locally based.”

Place

“New Building should not dominate the landscape but blend carefully with it. Often large buildings can be separated into elements which humanize the scale, give a gentler skyline and enhance the picturesque quality of our landscape. We must protect the land. We need, for all sorts of complex historical and psychological reasons, to keep a sense of wilderness.”

“The green belts are valuable contribution to the preservation (even if sometimes this is an illusion) of the countryside... There’s no point, as I see it, in having green belts unless they are genuinely green.”

Community

“Legislation tries to make it possible for people to share some of the complex processes of planning, but participation cannot be imposed: it has to start from the bottom up.”

“Too many areas of our towns and cities have suffered from the mentality of planners who zoned everything, keeping works and home miles apart and encourage commuting. Good communities are usually small enough for people to get together to organize the things they want.”

Material

Material, bricks, tiles, stone etc. should be related as closely as possible to the locality.

Colour

The colours of buildings should relate, unless with very good reason, to the local, regional and traditional palette. All scheme proposals should include colour samples, and an analysis of local colour.

Prince Charles combined material and colour into one principle.

Landscaping

The landscape setting for a building is as important as the structure itself. Particularly in urban areas paving, planting, seating, water and sculpture are all indissolubly linked to the quality of place.

Maintenance of public open spaces is critical: it must be simple, vandal-proof and easy to police. A blind person with a stick should be able to walk safely through any public space. Designers are required to apply this simple test to their schemes.

Crosby talked about both rural landscape and urban public spaces. There was no particular discussion made by Prince Charles on public spaces.

Probably addition from another advisor Rod Hackney. The evaluation of zoning laws, however, was consistent with Crosby’s other writings, in particular “Ten Rules for Planners” and “A Pessimist Utopia.”

Appendix III Crosby's 1971 "Ten Rules for Planners"

One

In such a situation we need a tactical holding operation to produce the political, social and economic strategies that might heal the cultural dilemma. In the environment we must hold to what we have and oppose change brought about simply for short-term profit. The reaction of the public in many countries against the effects of property speculation is the most healthy sign for many years. The preservation of old buildings, of anything that provides an example of another way of life, should be a prime social objective. Such buildings now provide us with much needed elements of identity in a city, but more important, they provide obstacles to the casual obliteration of whole areas that is now technologically desirable. If a planner is presented with a series of untouchable elements his reaction to the situation is inevitably more complex and intelligent than when presented with a clean slate. In the latter case he turns to elementary geometry and current styling. Given a series of old buildings to incorporate he can work within their scales and rhythms, to create that continuity of experience which is the joy of cities.

Rule one: Accept and delight in the past for its disruptive, its poetic, role in the present.

Two

In those newer areas where technology has run its course, the housing estate now bursting with unplanned-for vehicles, the subdivisions of little boxes on the city outskirts, we shall need to create elements of identity. Identity grows through variety.

The first need is to create a variety of uses, of owner-ships and of involvements outside the communications media. Physical environment is greatly affected by ownership, the pure sensation of possession. A house or object is always more cared-for than some-thing borrowed, given, or hired.

Personal identity largely comes from possessions and we must create, in public authority housing projects, the possibility of ownership and community involvement. The experience of Span, the British housing group, is instructive in this context. Given their middle income market, they could not include adequate private gardens for the small houses they provided, because the land would be so cut about with fences as to be impossibly unsightly. They solved the problem by selling 99-year leases, pooling the garden areas and leaving only a tiny patch for each house. Each owner is a member of the committee which is responsible for the maintenance of the gardens and the regular painting of the houses and garages. At a stroke a communal involvement has been created, which also automatically ensures a high level of environmental maintenance.

In such a context the next stage of increasing identity, the individuation of separate groupings, becomes possible. Joint actions can provide communal facilities as they become popular, as a reflection of higher living standards: saunas and swimming pools, party rooms, studios and workshops, sculptures and fountains. Without a communal responsibility and the sense of ownership, these elements are inevitably vandalized out of protest or boredom.

Rule two: Involvement of people in their environment as owners, possessors, is essential to the growth of identity, in the person, and in the place.

Three

While certain areas of technology bring a high return on capital investment, those areas, such as oil, electronics or transport, set the economic tone for a culture. The construction industry, where returns are low, is under enormous pressure to improve productivity. This is done mainly by stringent economies, substitution of cheaper materials, and the elimination of frills. Fortunately the modern movement had a slogan ready for just this occasion, and constantly demanded the elimination of decoration. Buildings based on the ideal of economy ('maximum cover, mini-mum weight' or 'less is more') result inevitably in anonymity, because they inevitably rely on endless repetition of a single, simple unit. This seldom endears them to their occupants.

Rule three: Posterity will not be grateful for our small economies.

Four

It is a characteristic irony of our time that we have more artists and art schools, more people trained in the visual arts than at any time in history, and that they are quite uninvolved with our daily surroundings. The latter become every year more ugly; cities once famous for their beauty are despairingly accepted as 'ruined'; vast areas of landscape and sea coast have been carelessly despoiled as if by blind giants. The artists are nicely segregated into the art galleries or put to work on the magazines or in television studios. The advertisements in any issue of Vogue contain infinitely more visual expertise than any new town can display, yet the involvement of any of this talent in the environment is never contemplated. It is largely due to the changing order of patronage. In a highly taxed society the individual is unable to pay for works of art on a public scale. Government and the corporations, by their corporate nature, seldom have the nous or talent for patronage. Besides, they are always pleased to make an obvious economy, and the arts are, in the short term, always expendable. The public and private bureaucracies have thus done very little. As a result we have bred, for the first time in thirty centuries, a generation of artists who have no experience of public art; who are so conditioned by the requirements of commercial galleries for the bizarre and extraordinary, as to be quite out of touch with the ordinary public. The separating, specializing requirements of technology have thus demonstrably spread over the most precious elements of our whole society. To cure such a primary cultural unbalance requires a large social investment, now.

Rule four: Public art is cultural insurance. Buy now. The artists need the money — and the practice.

Five

City growth is inseparable from general cultural tendencies. While the primary function of cities (conversation, communal enterprise) is undermined by technology we can expect no growth in the same format as in the past. Technology simplifies problems in order to understand them. We have simplified our cities (the 'four functions' of CIAM's Athens Charter: housing, industry, leisure, transport) and have now discovered that it was the mutual interaction of these, and many other 'trace' elements, which made them work. By taking the organism apart, we have extinguished its life. By forcing 'adequate' areas of open space into overcrowded districts we have often increased social violence, and produced social sterility. Most of the data on open space requirements are many years obsolete, belonging to a period when participation in sport was a mechanism for transcending the barriers of class, or when allotment gardening was considered an adequate weekend occupation for working fathers. Today sport is, like everything else, highly professional and television keeps fathers off the streets and out of the pubs.

Rule five: Grass is the enemy of cities.

Six

The Athens Charter, by raising transport to the level of a major urban activity, at once recognized and sanctified a new, independent and unpredictable force in the city. This first breach in the theoretical wall has allowed the flood of automobiles to sweep us and our cities away. By forcing adequate roads into our city centres, we have destroyed the very places we intend to visit. Above all the automobile is an obviously primitive and dangerously inefficient vehicle, gulping our oxygen and killing our children on the roads. We must hold the situation until a more suitable vehicle is produced, silent, non-polluting, and capable of social control. The strategy should be to tax cars, petrol and parking, and spend heavily on sophisticated public transport.

Rule six: The private car must be reduced to the status of a luxury.

Seven

The control of architectural form in cities is governed (in the UK) by plot ratios, light angles and such quasi-scientific methods, which were supposed to liberate the designer. In practice they produce precisely the forms considered desirable by the organizers of the legislation; stumpy blocks camping in a sea of asphalt. At least this misguided legislation has led us to appreciate and reevaluate the street, and the mandatory cornice heights and facing materials that were the simple methods of building control in the past. The delusive freedom offered by the current regulations produces vast awkward profiles whose painful presences obtrude on every skyline; they appear everywhere, carelessly spoiling views carefully contrived during the centuries.

Rule seven: Buildings over 20m in height begin to exert effects far beyond the immediate environment. Their position, and above all, their girth should be rigidly controlled.

Eight

In our passion for economy, we have used the various regulations (e.g. permissible distances to fire stairs) as economic determinants. Modern buildings are therefore always as large as possible, to squeeze the maximum advantage from the particular set of rules operating at the moment. Most buildings are thus simply too big for their architects. Where once a street was an encounter with many minds, now a single mind is stretched over a whole block. The technology already available allows a single mind to be spread over several square miles. In a situation without technological limitation, a civilized society must invent a set of rules for decent behaviour.

Rule eight: the 10 metre rule: no architect should be allowed to deal with more than 10 metres of frontage, This distance contains all the architectural problems; anything more is always solved by mere repetition.

Nine

Those countries with wide land-use controls have undoubtedly benefited enormously in recent times. The British countryside, though ravaged, has not been destroyed, as have large areas of the USA. Negative controls have prevented the worst excesses of speculation and exploitation in the countryside, and retained an asset of immense touristic, social and psycho-logical value. They must stay. Positive planning is much more difficult, because local authorities lack finance and know-how to intervene in their own town centres. Thus they are forced to auction off their statutory powers to the highest bidder: the developer whose profits depend on increasingly large-scale operations. Where a small firm might make a significant architectural contribution in a city, the developer wishes to deal only with a giant corporation or supermarket chain which will lease his whole speculative building with the least trouble. This administrative convenience carries a heavy price, of boredom and triviality, which is paid by the public. The basic elements are the cost, the difficulty of acquisition of land, and the very great differentials in city values. Most land is too cheap, and is thus used carelessly. The planner's task is to equalize values. For this he needs access to capital.

Rule nine: Planning without ownership, without direct involvement, is inevitably fragmentary and frustrating.

Ten

No plan can hope to succeed unless those planned are thoroughly committed to it. Plans are easy but implementation is always difficult. Long years of involvement and persuasion are necessary. In areas where compulsion forms an element of the plan (in public authority housing for example) the result is often a diminution of the quality of life, and resentment is externalized in the treatment of the environment. Elegant new housing is often reduced to a shamble, occasionally through no fault of the architect. He never knows his clients, only the housing committee, and is seldom able to learn anything from them afterwards. The result is the endless repetition of elementary mistakes, of standards methods and forms, for new information seldom percolates into the system.

Yet this is an area where technology is capable of contributing something other than simplification. We are beginning to be able to handle very large quantities of data, and at last the possibility of individual choice in the environment might be considered, rather than the current reliance on statistical averages. We have used our technology always to bring material economies, to reduce individual decisions; and seldom considered the social gains that come from increased involvement, in work and in everything else.

Rule ten: Someone has to live in it. What if it were you?

Appendix IV The Pessimist Utopia

In spite of technology our affluence is unlikely to be short-lived, because of the rapid consumption of world resources. Meanwhile we destroy the very things that make affluence and mobility worthwhile: coasts and beaches, beautiful cities and landscape, for short-term profits.

Twelve points towards a more intelligent attitude towards our resources.

1. No plan can succeed unless those planned are thoroughly committed to it. Public consultation, involvement and acceptance is basic to our survival. Present procedures are inadequate and tedious. Adequate technology is available for us all to be able to vote, on every issue.
2. Land use controls have saved the countryside. They must stay. Planning is impossible without ownership of land. It should be nationalized forthwith. The leasehold system could provide a legal mechanism for personal involvement and social contact.
3. Existing buildings are an enormous national asset, not to be lightly discarded. The right to casually demolish any unlisted building should be withdrawn.
4. High levels of production are achieved in the construction industry by substitution of cheaper materials, or the elimination of frills. The resulting anonymous buildings do not endear themselves to their occupants. Posterity will not be grateful for our small economies.
5. Open spaces is going to be increasingly valuable. It should not be wasted. New forms of public transport are not workable at low densities and access distances should be short, covered and warm.
6. The private automobile is a primitive and dangerously inefficient vehicle, gulping our oxygen and killing our children on the roads.
We would get better value by investing more sophisticated public transport.
7. Most buildings are simply too big for their architects. Where once a street was an encounter with many minds, now a single mind is stretched over whole block. In a situation without technological limitations a civilized society invents rules for decent behaviours.
8. Personal identity comes largely from possessions and we must create in all housing the possibility of ownership and community involvement. Without ownership the dwelling is not maintained or improved. Without communal responsibility, gardens, fountains and sculpture are vandalized out of protest or boredom.
9. Our new building controls supposedly framed to free the designer are actually intended to produce stumpy blocks camping in a sea of asphalt. They must be revised.
Buildings over 20m in height exert effects far beyond their immediate surroundings. Their position, and above all, their girth, should be rigidly controlled.
10. Great buildings act as landmarks, elements of identity and they create commercial value all around them. Vast numbers stand all round us hidden under layers of grime and difference, reminders of other ways of life. Accept and delight in the past for its disruptive, its poetic, role in the present.
11. Each city should be a unique experience, somewhere to visit. New buildings should retain a memory of their predecessors, respond and relate in scale and material to their surroundings.
12. We have bred, for the first time in 5,000 years, a generation of artists with no experience of public art. Conditioned by the requirements of the commercial galleries for the bizarre and extraordinary, they are out of touch with the public. To cure such a primary cultural imbalance needs a large social investment.
Now.

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Film

Playing the Environment Game (1973) Mick Csaky and Mick Gold dir., Arts Council Film Collection: ACE042
A Clockwork Orange (1973) Stanley Kubrick dir.,
Fathers of Pop (1979) Julian Cooper dir., Arts Council Film Collection: ACE085
A Vision of Britain: A Personal View of Architecture. HRH The Prince of Wales. BBC, Oct. 28, 1988.

Interviews

Kenneth Frampton (April 2015)
Simon Sadinsky (May 2015)
Alan Powers (November 2015)
Mick Csaky (April 2016)
Jules Lubbock (April 2016)
Jon Weallan (June 2016)
Eva Jiricna (July 2016)
Sunand Prasad (October 2016)

Online Resources

Interview with Anne Buchanan Crosby in National Life Story Collection: Artists' Lives. (Part 8-15)
(<https://sounds.bl.uk/Arts-literature-and-performance/Art/021M-C0466X0142XX-0008V0>)
Interview with Monica Pidgeon in National Life Story Collection: Architects' Lives. (Part 3)
(<http://sounds.bl.uk/Oral-history/Architects-Lives/021M-C0467X0039XX-0300V0>)
Interview with Trevor Dannatt in National Life Story Collection: Architects' Lives. (Part 11)
(<https://sounds.bl.uk/Oral-history/Architects-Lives/021M-C0467X0070XX-0011V0>)
Interview with Peter Smithson in National Life Story Collection: Architects' Lives. (Part 7)
<https://sounds.bl.uk/Oral-history/Architects-Lives/021M-C0467X0024XX-0700V0>

List of Archives

Theo Crosby Archive, Design Archive. University of Brighton
Shakespeare's Globe Library
Alison and Smithson Archive, Graduate School of Design, Harvard University
RIBA Special Collection for Crosby's Pentagram notebooks
Whitechapel Art Gallery Archive for This is Tomorrow
Archigram Archival Project, University of Westminster
London Metropolitan Archive for materials about Fulham Study and Shakespeare's Globe
Arts Council of Great Britain Archive, Blythe House for How to Play the Environment Game
Canadian Centre for Architecture for materials about Inter-Action Group
Tate Archive Audiovisual collection for BBC reviews on This is Tomorrow
Bishopgate Archive for the Spitalfields Inventory

