



## ***Parallel (of Life and) Architecture*** **Contemporary reflections on the ideas and impact of Alison and Peter Smithson**

**The Edge, University of Bath, Claverton Down, Bath, BA2 7AY**

**Press tour: Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> September 2017, 4.45pm**

**Dates: Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> September – Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> November 2017**

*Parallel (of Life and) Architecture* will see three duos of architects, artists and designers offer new insight into the legacy of Alison and Peter Smithson. It explores their relationship with the avant-garde and 'architecture as a direct result of a way of life' (A+PS). Known for their progressive approach, the Smithsons were key figures in the Brutalism movement and had a great fondness for Bath and the surrounding area.

This exhibition brings together the work of Turner Prize winning collective Assemble & Simon Terrill, Warren & Mosley, and The Decorators and GOIG who will each take key developments in the Smithsons' oeuvre as creative departure points to highlight their impact and lasting relevance as radical thinkers.

The exhibition's title is taken from the seminal exhibition *Parallel of Life and Art*, staged in 1953 by the Independent Group - a collective in which the Smithsons were pivotal members with the likes of artist photographer Nigel Henderson and sculptor Eduardo Paolozzi. Echoing the methods and collaborative processes of the Smithsons during their breakthrough phase as architects in 1950s Britain, this exhibition will uniquely reveal their research and creative practices.

Though concerned with how we lived then, the Smithsons' ideas continue to influence how we live now and undoubtedly will in the future.

Jamie Eastman, Director of Arts, University of Bath comments, *Alison and Peter Smithson's approach to architecture, whether as radical arrivals on the post-war scene or as educationalists in the late 20th Century, is one so rich with ideas that taking any phase of their careers is inspirational. The University of Bath provides fitting context for the exhibition, as a place of constant innovation, where A+PS designed the beginnings of its 21st century arts complex, The Edge.*

Ruth Gooding, Exhibitions Manager, comments, *The artists' creative responses offer us real insight into Alison and Peter Smithson's architectural practice and audiences will be able to immerse themselves in these intriguing environments which include projections, print, historic models, sound, sculpture and much more.*

### ***A Nodding Acquaintance - A structure for talking while standing and leaning***

#### **Sophie Warren and Jonathan Mosley**

The Smithsons developed 'cluster' housing blocks to engender social relations within 'streets in the sky.' Warren & Mosley bring the streets down to earth, rescaling the cluster to the figure as a structure for talking and idling whilst sitting, leaning and standing. The installation references the street party, shifting social values and notions of nationhood from post-war to the present day.

### ***Transformations of the City***

#### ***Bath: a re-contextualized, re-scaled, re-enactment***

##### **The Decorators & GOIG**

This is a unique opportunity to experience the never-seen 1968 Milan Triennale and enter Alison and Peter Smithson's world of Urban Decoration. It was due to the students' revolts that year that the Triennale was never open to the public, and the Smithsons' piece was never seen, but now – in the fitting context of The Edge, University of Bath – audiences can experience it for the first time.

### ***The Ostrich and the Kipper***

#### **Assemble & Simon Terrill**

Echoing the collaborative and experimental approach of two of Britain's most recognised modernist architects - Alison and Peter Smithson and fellow travellers, Eduardo Paolozzi and Nigel Henderson, Assemble and Simon Terrill have created an installation that uses a variety of materials in a collage or 'glitch' of intriguing ideas, to unlock the characters of these avant-garde figures.

There will be a programme of events running alongside this exhibition including:

### **Harvest**

#### **Owen Griffiths**

*Harvest* is a new temporary open-air meeting and learning space, created using straw bales as building blocks. This exploratory project has developed in response to the legacy of post-war architects Alison and Peter Smithson, their connection to the University of Bath and in particular their installation *Patio and Pavilion*, 1956. Situated in the unique architectural context of the University, *Harvest* will operate as a 'free' space open to all and will host a series of events, discussions and workshops.

#### **Robin Hood Gardens Remembered**

##### **Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> November, 6.30pm**

An evening considering the much debated subject of Alison and Peter Smithsons' Robin Hood Gardens in London; a social housing offering scheduled for demolition. How will Robin Hood Gardens be remembered once it's gone?

#### **Alison and Peter Smithson: Ideas & Impact**

##### **Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> November, 11am – 4pm**

A very special symposium that draws together a variety of leading international architects, artists and thinkers to consider the ideas and impact of the Smithsons across urbanism, habitation and education.

Speakers include Simon Smithson, Peter Salter (2017 RIBA award winner and project architect for Alison and Peter Smithson), Assemble, Christine Boyer, David Turnbull, Keith Bradley, Juliet Bidgood, Dr Amy Frost (Bath Preservation Trust) and more.

*Parallel (of Life and) Architecture* will be the first exhibition in the autumn season – the finale of events at The Edge celebrating the University's 50th Anniversary year.

### **Notes to Editors**

Location	The Edge, University of Bath, Claverton Down, Bath, BA2 7AY
Opening Hours	Tuesday – Thursday, 11am-8pm Friday and Saturday, 11am-5pm Closed Mondays
Admission	Free.

Alison and Peter Smithson: Ideas & Impact costs £45 (including lunch and refreshments).

Getting there                   The nearest rail station is Bath Spa. The Edge is on the eastern edge of campus near the University main bus stop, the East car park and next door to the Sports Training Village.

Twitter                            @EdgeArtsBath

Website                          [www.edgearts.org](http://www.edgearts.org)

## **The Edge: Art, Research, Adventure**

The Edge is an arts and creativity hub informed by the context the University of Bath. We encourage and nurture arts/research collaborations, providing a place where artists, audiences, researchers and academics can find new perspectives and fertile ground to showcase new thinking and ideas. Here, Mechanical Engineers meet sculptors interested in moving structures, architects work with artists to shed new light on the nature of play and how architecture influences it, artists bring together inventing and engineering expertise to create artworks of scientific complexity.

Our year-round programme of exhibitions, performing arts presentations, talks, arts classes, family and community events, provide experiences of educational, emotional and intellectual stimulus, all based around our ethos of bringing together arts, research and adventure. Our focus is on participatory programmes and our belief is that everyone can be creative and contribute.

The state-of-the-art Edge building offers galleries, theatres, music and art studios, plus a lively café/bar – a destination that promotes the art in science and the science in art.

Peter Smithson taught architecture at the University of Bath and A+PS designed buildings for its campus, the most significant being 6 East, the University's Architecture and Civil Engineering building, and the theatre that is now part of The Edge venue.

All enquiries, high res images and further information:

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