



FELICITY SCOTT

'A Straighter Kind of Hip'



Felicity D. Scott is director of the PhD program in Architecture (History and Theory), and co-director of the program in Critical, Curatorial and Conceptual Practices in Architecture (CCCP) at the Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation, Columbia University. Seeking to expand and complicate the subject matter and methodological frameworks through which modern and contemporary architectural practices are addressed, her academic work pays attention to the institutions, discourses, and media-technical formats (exhibitions, publications, time-based media, etc.) that, along with broader social, economic, scientific, environmental, political, and geopolitical forces, have helped shape and define the discipline.

In the wake of Haight-Ashbury's legendary Summer of Love in 1967 and the People's Park movement in Berkeley a few years later, and in the midst of the ongoing US-led war in Indochina, California hippies did not only head back-to-the-land when seeking to experiment with alternative environments and forms of life. In June 1970 a disillusioned group from the Bay Area rented a vacant six-story industrial warehouse in downtown San Francisco and founded Project One as an urban commune of architects, artists, filmmakers, musicians, craftspeople, and, in turn, video and media collectives and computer programmers. Like other aspects of the California counterculture, Project One was haunted both by war and technologies born of the Space Race, and it served as an intense environment—at once architectural, social, and informatic—for negotiating communal ways of life and the networks to which they gave rise. Focusing on Resource One—a group of computer programmers within the commune who remarkably acquired an SDS940 computer—along with the media collective Optic Nerve and their 1972 video, Project One, this lecture will trace how Project One served, for a short while, as a key spatial node within the emerging communication networks of the 1970s. "A Straighter Kind of Hip" is thus a story about the refunctioning of urban industrial spaces at a moment when communications technologies, a knowledge economy, and postindustrial labor were increasingly coming to reconfigure social, economic, and urban relations in America, including collapsing living and work spaces and forging new topologies born of remote access. I will also put this story in dialog with British critic Reyner Banham, who in 1971, and with typical lyrical flair, incisively revealed the limitations of ideals of alternative networks and emergent models of participation in architecture.

DATE: THURSDAY 31 MAY, 2018

TIME: 6.30-7.30PM

DOORS OPEN AT 6.00PM

LOCATION: RMIT SWANSTON ACADEMIC

BUILDING 80.01.002

BUILDING 80, LEVEL 1

ROOM 2 LECTURE THEATRE

445 SWANSTON STREET, MELBOURNE