



# Dialectic VIII

## Subverting - Unmaking Architecture

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- Architecture is always playing in the favour of the elites, the rich and powerful, as a stabilising cultural force. Hence it seems nearly impossible to imagine its relationship to subversion beyond critique, avant-gardist gestures of rebellion, and stylistic change (aka: 'disruptive innovation'). Yet this is exactly what this issue of *Dialectic* asked authors to imagine, explore, perform, draw out, and sometimes steal

The VIII issue of *Dialectic* asks the reader to imagine possible ways to subvert architecture. Or to employ architecture as means of subversion. In this issue seven articles from international authors and two guiding editorials invite the reader to reflect upon the various ways of how architecture, normally conceived of as expression of power and elites, undermines and undoes exactly this taken-for-granted affirmatively. Divided in three sections the articles in the first part explore lessons from scholarship and design from the 'field school' in Milwaukee, from social housing in Brussels, and from informal open-air bazars in Ukraine. Section two critiques instrumentalised architectural knowledge, such as sustainability and the medium of drawing, particularly from an indigenous perspective. Finally, section three wrestles with fundamental concepts of the architectural discipline, with the male, normalised, de-sexualised body and architecture's relationship with the ground being two of the most fundamental ones.

**Michael Abrahamson** is an architectural historian and critic whose research explores the materiality of buildings and the methods of architectural practice across the 20th century. His Ph.D. dissertation at the University of Michigan centred on the important late modernist architectural firm Gunnar Birkerts and Associates, and Michael has also written about the Detroit firm Albert Kahn Associates as well as Brutalism in North America. In these and other research projects, he explores the systems of creativity, subordination, and legitimization that underwrite the creation of architecture. Michael is currently Visiting Assistant Professor of Architecture at the University of Utah.

**Ole W. Fischer** is an architectural theoretician, historian, critic, curator, and associate professor as well as associate director of the University of Utah School of Architecture. Before his appointment in 2010, he taught at the ETH Zurich, Harvard GSD, MIT, and RISD, and since then held visiting appointments at the TU Vienna and the TU Graz, Austria. He lectured and published internationally on history, theory, and criticism of architecture, amongst others in: *Archithese*, *Werk*, *JSAH*, *MIT Thresholds*, *Arch+*, *AnArchitektur*, *GAM*, *Umeni*, *Beyond*, *West 86th*, *Framework* and *log*. He contributed chapters to various books, such as *The Handbook of Architectural Theory* (London: 2012) and *This Thing called Theory* (London: 2016). He is the author of *Nietzsches Schatten* (Berlin: 2012) and co-editor of the peer-reviewed architecture journal *Dialectic* (since 2011/12).

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