## Horror in the Modernist Block - Introduction Melanie Pocock 2023

Horror in the Modernist Block is an exhibition that explores the relationship between architectural modernism and horror. It takes Birmingham, a city renowned for its brutalist architecture, as a starting point, bringing together work by contemporary artists which unpacks the troubled legacy of modernist buildings around the world. Spanning film, photography, sculpture, installation, painting, drawing and printmaking, the exhibition connects motifs of horror with qualities of modernism, evoking the brutality and fear often associated with its design and materials. Horror tropes such as darkness, illusions in reflective glass, and feelings of being watched often surface in the history and identity of modernist architecture. The roots of these fears run deep, reinforced by the perceived failure of modernism to fulfil the utopian visions of architects [1], and its links to social violence and authoritarian regimes.

The focus of the exhibition on contemporary art reflects the critical role of the artistic imaginary in forming modernism's brutal image. Since the 1950s, high-rise towers, modernist buildings and estates have formed the backdrop to terrifying representations of dystopias. In J.G. Ballard's novel High-Rise (1975), the social hierarchy and compartmentalised topography of a modernist tower foster apathy and resentment among residents, who, emboldened by their isolation from wider society, spiral into anarchy [2]. In 1971, Thamesmead - an estate built in south-east London in the 1960s became famous as the set to Stanley Kubrick's film adaptation of Anthony Burgess' book A Clockwork Orange (1962), which follows protagonist Alex and his gang of 'droogs' as they engage in wanton violence under the watch of a totalitarian state [3]. Such chilling tales are not limited to British culture: in Italy, Bernardo Bertolucci's film The Conformist (1970) situates the beginning of Alberto Moravia's original story of a repressed bureaucrat in buildings of the EUR, a district in Rome built in the 1930s as a homage to Benito Mussolini's fascist regime [4]. In Brazil, architect Oscar Niemeyer turned to painting to express his horror at the military coup in 1964, through compositions that depict the modernist buildings he designed for the city of Brasília as dismembered ruins.

The military's seizure of Brasília just four years after its inauguration as the country's new federal capital only increases the pathos of Niemeyer's paintings. Their

date, like these films and novels, is significant, indicating the relatively quick demise of post-war modernist architecture at the hands of shifting politics and architectural culture. A development from the concrete pavilions of early modernism such as Le Corbusier's Villa Savoye (1931), post-war modernist architecture was characterised by large, imposing structures constructed with swathes of concrete, steel and sheet glass [5]. Though often built by the same architects (or others trained in their schools of thought), its large scale, robust design, and repetitive forms were distinct, and symptomatic of the immense imperative to re-construct cities that were bombed during the Second World War. The principles of modernism – that the function of a building should be reflected in its forms, and the materials used in its construction transparent - captured for many architects and post-war governments the values of the progressive societies they hoped to rebuild [6].

However, for writers like Ballard, the hard-edged geometry and industrial materials of modernist architecture created harsh environments that were difficult for residents and users to navigate [7]. Almost as soon as they were erected, the appeal of modernist buildings amongst architectural critics, the media and public faded. Cold interiors, their ubiquitous, dull, grey concrete, and in modernist homes – the voyeurism encouraged by floor-to-ceiling glass were just some of the criticisms levelled at its architecture [8]. For many, the concept of the self-sufficient modernist estate was equivalent to a hermetic enclave, sealed from the outside world and its laws. The social isolation and crime which have become a feature of modern estates invariably stem from these architectural and design elements; a violence that has in turn led to the stigmatisation of residents [9]. The casualties caused by the partial collapse of the Ronan Point residential block in London in 1968, for example, forms one such case; a disaster which contributed to the British public's loss of confidence in high-rise towers [10]. In the banlieues of French cities such as Paris and Lyon – captured in nocturnal photographs by Karim Kal in Horror in the Modernist Block- dilapidated concrete passageways mark the divide between these cities' affluent centres and maligned suburbs; a racial and socioeconomic cleavage so significant that it has been equated to a form of apartheid [11].

The descriptive vocabulary of modernist architecture reflects its aesthetic severity and association with social depravation and violence. Terms such as 'ugly' and 'violent' are often accompanied by grotesque allegory, such as the notion of modernist blocks as 'concrete monstrosities'[12]. Even brutalism, the genealogy of which comes from the

French for raw concrete (béton brut), has somewhat become a misnomer, with the terms 'brutal' and 'brutalist' often used pejoratively to critique the movement's harsh aesthetics [13]. Human metaphors describing modernism as 'soulless' and 'bloody-minded' evoke its alienating effects, as well as an image of architects and commissioners as bullish or disturbed [14]. All-encompassing visions and aspirations of efficiency have reinforced this image, criticised as overly functionalist and – in extreme cases – immoral [15]. For, if Mussolini and his government employed modernism's stark form to strengthen the ideological hold of fascism over the Italian people [16], town planners in Britain utilised its streamlined designs to organise people into ways of living and working that would be productive for society and the economy [17].

For artists in the exhibition, social and political agendas form the backbone to international histories of architectural modernism. A result of the widespread influence of architects such as Walter Gropius, Le Corbusier and Mies van der Rohe, The International Style - also known as internationalism - adapted modernism's core values of material and functional transparency to local conditions, incorporating elements of vernacular design [18]. In Horror in the Modernist Block, prints by Seher Shah and sculptures by Ruth Claxton draw inspiration from the shadows, texture and surface illusions of Le Corbusier's Unité d'Habitation – a prototype for the architect's Capitol Complex in Chandigarh, India – and Louis Kahn's National Assembly in Dhaka, Bangladesh, respectively. The geometrically shaped wall cavities and concrete slats of these buildings protect their interiors from outside heat and humidity. In a visual sense, these features also create the impression of hollowed cages shielding interior caverns which, anatomically, recall the image and function of skeletons. For Shah and artist Shezad Dawood, the shadows cast by internationalism's aesthetics were not only architectural, but political. It was the partitioning of India in 1947, for instance, which led to the establishment of Chandigarh and Le Corbusier's commission; a context which gives the architect's Capitol Complex an air of neo-colonialism.

In Pakistan, buildings like the former United States consulate, designed by American architects Richard Neutra and Robert Alexander, formed a part of Cold War politics and the US government's ideological war against Soviet communism [19]. In reality, architectural modernism was employed by countries on both sides of the Cold War divide as a means of championing national socialist and western liberal values. In her sculpture An Early Road Before a Modern One (2022) and video The Line That Follows

(2022), Ola Hassanain shows how the 'modernisation' of Sudan's landscape by the British paved the way for the Soviet Union's investment in modernist infrastructure from the late 1950s, precipitating the destruction and displacement of indigenous settlements.

Invariably, the most extreme instrumentalisation of architectural modernism occurred under fascist governments. In Monelle (2017) by Italian artist and filmmaker Diego Marcon, the Casa del Fascio (1936) in Como – once the local office of the National Fascist Party (PNF) – epitomises the PNF's use of modernist architecture as a form of political theatre (p. 60). Designed by Giuseppe Terragni, the palazzo's cavernous marble hall is impressive and intimidating, its interior and exterior balconies implying the watchful eye of the state [20]. A sense of panopticism – the theory developed by Michel Foucault to describe how prison watchtowers and cells were arranged to 'carry out disciplinary power through knowledge of surveillance' [21] - also emerge in sculptures and drawings by Amba Sayal-Bennett. The forms of her sculptures and drawings recall architectural maquettes and masterplans, while their prototypical scale points to the omnipotence and seemingly infinite reach of architecture constructed by authoritarian regimes. Firenze Lai's paintings of figures in abstract landscapes are similarly infused with feelings of oppression and tyranny. Their equivocal compositions bring to mind the kind of dense urbanism that weighs on individual and collective bodies, their figures variously entrapped and corralled by their surroundings.

In the Philippines, brutalist architecture commissioned by the Marcos regime similarly incarnated fascist values. Under the helm of President Ferdinand Marcos and his wife Imelda, the regime which lasted from 1965 to 1986 – ordered the construction of more than a dozen large-scale buildings, including the Cultural Center of the Philippines (1966) and Philippine International Convention Center (1974). Combining tenets of classicism, modernism and traditional architecture, these huge concrete buildings not only symbolised the absolute power of the Marcos regime but its illusion of economic prosperity [22]. Spurring the construction of this architecture was what art historian Gerard Lico describes as the Marcoses 'edifice complex, '... an obsession and compulsion to build edifices as a hallmark of greatness' [23]. This megalomaniac aspiration reached grotesque levels with the Manila Film Center (1982), a brutalist Parthenon that was commissioned by Imelda Marcos as the venue for the Manila International Film Festival. Part way through its construction, a section of scaffolding collapsed, resulting in the deaths of more than 160 workers. Refusing to stop the

construction, Imelda Marcos reportedly ordered the workers' bodies to be covered in concrete - entombed in its edifice so that the centre could be completed on time [24].

Today, many Filipino people believe the centre is haunted; a mythology which feeds into local artists' associations of modernist architecture in the country with political and physical horror [25]. In Maria Taniguchi's film Mies 421 (2010), Mies van der Rohe's Barcelona Pavilion (1929) forms the setting for an ambiguous horror narrative. The film's bullet-like metronome soundtrack gives the black-and-white images of the pavilion an unsettling undertone, as if – like the Manila Film Center – cinema and architecture were about to converge to some lethal end. Spectres of impending doom or death are also referenced in Polish artist Monika Sosnowska's series of black steel sculptures and wall reliefs. The contorted forms of works such as Tower and Truss (both 2019) are inspired by the hyperboloid structures of Vladimir Shukhov, an avant-garde designer who was active at the time of Vladimir Lenin's Soviet Russia [26]. During the fabrication of one of the architect's commissions for a radio tower, the process of fatiguing metal that was required to twist it failed, resulting in the collapse of the tower and the deaths of several workers [27]. Despite the tragic accident, Shukhov's tower was completed in 1922, and is widely regarded today as an important example of Leninist Soviet architecture. A photograph of the partially collapsed tower from 1921 nonetheless forms a haunting memento of the workers who perished during its construction.

Certainly, construction-related deaths are not unique to modernist architecture. Yet they often feel horrific because of the politics and power behind them, in which the lives of working- class or ordinary people seem expendable. There is also a sense of regret - that such tragedies could have been avoided if safe and ethical methods of construction had been implemented. A similar mourning surrounds the deaths of residents of modernist tower blocks caused by architectural faults and incendiary material. In 2017, a fire – provoked by flammable insulation and cladding – claimed the lives of 72 residents of Grenfell Tower in west London. A poignant reminder of the lethal nature of insulation which clads many modernist towers in Britain, Grenfell's fire was also evidence of the kind of horror brought about by political negligence [28]. Through his artistic practice, Abbas Zahedi subtly and explicitly touches on these issues by reworking infrastructural elements within and around the sites where he works. By shifting the vocabulary of the built environment, Zahedi reminds us how we can resist the neglect of these estates by local authorities, and the negative impact this neglect has on the people

who live in them. In the case of the fire at Grenfell, it is now recognised that insulation and cladding companies willingly exploited the local authority's failure to vet their products according to accepted safety standards.

Currently, the charred remains of Grenfell are wrapped in scaffolding and scrim, printed with text that honours the victims of the fire. In its integral form, the tower no longer exists; a fate which applies to many modernist blocks and estates. Whether due to their faulty design or maligned public image, the absence or demolition of these buildings creates an inverse form of horror that of erasure. While some might find the continued presence of Grenfell in London's urban landscape unsettling, others would be traumatised by its demolition, because of its status as a memorial to the people who died in the fire. Indeed – if the Manila Film Center reminds people in the Philippines of a regime they would rather forget, its continued existence forms a reminder to younger generations of the perils of authoritarianism [29].

The question of demolition is not only relevant to modernist architecture marred by tragedy. Many buildings revered by community groups and architects have been torn down because of modernism's negative image in the public and media [30]. Nowadays, architecture of this kind is earning listed or protected status from city councils and heritage bodies like UNESCO, which are keen to safeguard what they increasingly perceive as cultural heritage [31. In many cases, modernist architecture is simply demolished so that urban developers can profit from the value of the land it occupies [32]. Somewhat ironically, the privatisation of several modernist estates, such as the Barbican in London, has also led to their gentrification, so that they are now seen as desirable residences [33]. In this sense, the 'horror' of modernist architecture can lie in its removal. Undoubtedly, processes of demolition are scary to watch. Despite attempts at cordoning, demolition sites are often highly visible, the detonation of explosives and wrecking balls creating the impression of a war zone.

Tensions between the redevelopment and razing of modernist buildings surface in Kihlberg & Henry's film Slow Violence (2018- 22). In the film, the utopic premise of architectural modernism is re-translated for a contemporary era through the language of advertising, digital simulations of 'ideal' homes, and destructive rhetoric. In many ways, cycles of destruction and reconstruction are integral to the conceptual and physical foundations of modernist architecture. For writer and journalist Owen Hatherley, the demolition of modernist buildings not only enacts the latter's promise of renewal but

provides evidence for the precocious nature of modernism's vision. To quote Hatherley, it was as if modernist architects already had '[its] ruins... in mind: a death-drive architecture, where ... the corpse has been designed before the living body [34].

Perhaps no-where is the 'death drive' of modernism more apparent than in Birmingham, where brutalist architecture survives alongside contemporary developments. Home to maverick designs such as the Signal Box (1964) and Muirhead Tower (1971), the city's landscape is equally marked by the absence of modernist icons, notably the Central Library (1974), designed by local architect John Madin. The Central Library formed part of a complex known as Paradise Circus, which was intended to transform Birmingham's city centre into a pedestrianised zone of accessible, public buildings. Although the Central Library - an inverted ziggurat structure made of concrete was arguably Madin's greatest achievement, it was also his most vilified [35]. Thus, in 2015, just forty years after opening, the Central Library was deemed 'no longer fit for purpose' and demolished to make way for a contemporary building [36]. Whilst the original library was criticised for its convoluted layout and the safety of its underpasses at night, these same spaces were also highly valued by the city's young, counter-culture generation for the freedom of expression these infrastructures enabled [37]. For Birmingham-born artists Richard Hughes and Simon & Tom Bloor, the concrete fabric of the city has had a lasting impact, its textures and traces of humanity mimicked and cast into their sculptural installations. Indeed, Hughes himself remembers growing up in Birmingham and skateboarding with friends in the concrete 'underbelly' of the Central Library (i.e. the former Paradise Circus). In this way, both modernism and brutalism form an inherent part of the city's cultural identity and mythology.

In addition to absent and extant modernist architecture, Birmingham has a large number of neo-gothic buildings. A legacy of the city's industrial past, this architecture would, at first, seem to have little to do with its modernist equivalent. Yet, as the descriptive vocabulary of modernism shows, ideas of modernism as 'monstrous' originate in Victorian horror and the 'uncanny' spirits written into its architecture [38]. Several architects and academics also trace the simplified and repetitive forms of modernism to the 19th century factory, and its scale to the exponential development of industrial capitalism [39]. For architect Joshua Comaroff, increases in the speed of production and flourishing consumerism resulted in 'the manic repetition of bits' that characterise early modern skyscrapers, such as the former Pullman Building in Chicago [40]. In the

documentary Bunkers, Brutalism and Bloodymindedness: Concrete Poetry (2014), British poet Jonathan Meades also draws links between the sublime qualities of Victorian neogothic architecture and brutalism, highlighting how buildings in both styles were similarly derided by critics as 'coarse', 'violent' and 'ugly' [41]. For Meades, these visual parallels extend to their parallel affects, with neo-gothic buildings serving as 'the emotional precursors' of brutalism'; '... antecedents which provoked the same mood' and that caused inhabitants and onlookers 'to shiver with the same undoubted horror' [42].

At Ikon, such links between Victorian architecture and modernism are pertinent because of its neo-gothic building. While the gallery's contemporary interior has a certain neutrality, features from the original building such as steel beams and arched ceilings remain. Painted white, they have the absent/present quality of a ghost; remnants from the past which haunt the present. In Horror in the Modernist Block, the building inevitably becomes a subject, and our movement within it heightened. As a result, many artists in the exhibition have created or configured work that dialogues with its architecture. Ismael Monticelli's paintings referencing the erasure of vernacular culture in Brazil by modernism, for instance, are arranged in the form of a pyramid which extends to the full height of the gallery. Laëtitia Badaut Haussmann's installation interacts with an existing niche, creating a 'para-architecture' that mimics tropes of high modernism. Works such as these recall the affects of modernist architecture – how its design and materials make us think and feel – and the ways in which these might trigger a sense of foreboding or marginalisation.

For Comaroff, this affective dimension of modernist architecture is integral, but one that is rarely addressed in architectural research [43]. Through the sensory realm of aesthetics, artists in the exhibition explore this emotive quality of modernism. The first section of the exhibition iterates this emphasis on affect, inviting viewers to enter a darkened space where they encounter a sequence of moving image and film installations. Projected in a timed sequence in different areas of the space, the audience experiences one work at a time. Playing with tropes of horror such as suspense and darkness, the unobvious order of the sequence reminds us of the role of human projection and imagination in filling gaps in knowledge and space. While the unknown sequence might provoke concern in some viewers, others will undoubtedly take pleasure in its element of surprise. There is also a magical quality to the sequence, the illuminated projections operating like ghosts that mysteriously manifest when the audience is present.

In NT's new film BRUTAL (2022), tower blocks in the modernist estates of Druids Heath and Aston New Town in Birmingham appear as if they are emerging from the dark, surreptitiously captured by the artist's camera. Filmed entirely at night, the film's soundtrack transforms the dormant estates into agents of the imagination. Ho Tzu Nyen's video installation The Cloud of Unknowing (2011) similarly takes viewers on a magical realist journey through various floors of a residential block in Singapore. Towards the end of the work, the walls and ceilings of flats entrap residents, a monsoon downpour penetrates the interior, and a cloud engulfs the building. The meaning of the cloud is uncertain; an ambiguity which is implied in the work's title. As real as it appears, the cloud is also a fiction; a conclusion reinforced by the characters' seeming obliviousness to its presence.

Horror, as the exhibition shows, is not one, but many things. In works of horror, tragedy, trauma, seduction and the sublime often converge, the incongruity of these emotions increasing their terror. Politicians and governments have often exploited such incongruities, the power of many liberal, fascist and postcolonial states reinforced by the impervious nature of modernism's geometry and material. Throughout history, we see how horror is literally in modernist architecture - its faulty structures and concrete blocks. It is a horror that is shaped by place and culture, as well as shared internationally through the global propagation of the modernist idiom. In Birmingham, horror and modernism have a particular resonance, borne from the city's past as a crucible of industrialisation and gothic culture. Yet the contemporary fate of the modernist block - one that is not mired in local politics and capitalist agendas – is possible to reimagine. With the help of the artists in Horror in the Modernist Block, audiences can feel and observe multiple horrors of modernism, as well as its fictions. In this way, the exhibition forms both an invitation and provocation; a statement of fact as much as doubt. It is a building in progress; a narrative to be retold.

<sup>[1]</sup> Nathaniel Coleman, 'The Problematic of Architecture and Utopia', Utopian Studies 25, no.1 (2014): 3-4.

<sup>[2]</sup> JG Ballard, High Rise, (Plymouth: Firebird Distributing, 1975).

<sup>[3]</sup> A Clockwork Orange, directed by Stanley Kubrick (Warner Bros, 1971).

- [4] The Conformist, directed by Bernardo Bertolucci (Mars Films, 1970).
- [5] In his book Theory and Design in the First Machine Age, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1980), English architectural critic Reyner Banham identified the difference between architecture (as well as design and visual art) of the 'first machine age' and the 'second machine age. In the former-centred on the 1920s and 1930s Banham argued that architecture was characterised by industrial production and motorised transportation, as opposed to the consumer technologies and images that defined the latter. J.G. Ballard also identified what he saw as the distinction between 'the heroic period of modernism from 1920 to 1939' and its post-war iterations, embodied in '... motorways and autobahns, stone dreams that will never awake, and in the Turbine Hall at that middle-class disco, Tate Modern a vast totalitarian space... so authoritarian that it overwhelms any work of art inside it'. J.G. Ballard, 'A Handful of Dust, The Guardian, 20 March 2006, www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2006/mar/20/architecture.communities.
- [6] Brent Brolin, The Failure of Modern Architecture (New York: Van Nostrad Reinhold Co, 1976).
- [7] Ballard was a vocal critic of post-war modernist architecture. His novels The Atrocity Exhibition (1970), Concrete Island (1974), and Crash (1973) led to the coining of the term 'Ballardian, which refers to 'dystopian modernity, bleak manmade landscapes and the psychological effects of technological, social or environmental developments: See Chris Hall, 'J.G. Ballard: 1930-2009, Architects' Journal, 6 May 2009, <a href="https://www.architectsjournal.co.uk/archive/j-g-ballard-1930-2009">www.architectsjournal.co.uk/archive/j-g-ballard-1930-2009</a>.
- [8] See Reyner Banham, 'The New Brutalism, first published in The Architectural Review in December 1955. Regarding the Hunstanton School in Norfolk, England, designed by Alison and Peter Smithson, Banham describes how 'it [was] the ruthless logic more than anything else which most hostile critics [found] distressing. See The Architectural Review, online edition, <a href="https://www.architectural-review.com/archive/the-new-brutalism-by-reyner-banham">www.architectural-review.com/archive/the-new-brutalism-by-reyner-banham</a>. Beatriz Preciado also describes how floor-to-ceiling glass in architect Mies van der Rohe's Farmsworth House transformed the domestic interior into '... an intensive surveillance post that obliges the eye living in the house to stay open 24 hours a day'. 'MIES-CONCEPTION: The Farmsworth House and the Mystery of the Transparent Closet, Multitudes 1, no.20 (2005): 53.
- [9] Paul Watt, 'Territorial Stigmatisation and Poor Housing at a London 'Sink Estate", Social Inclusion 8, no. 1 (2020): 20-33.
- [10] Richard Nelsson, 'The Collapse of Ronan Point, 1968- in Pictures, The Guardian, 16 May 2018, <a href="www.theguardian.com/society/from-the-archive-blog/gallery/2018/may/16/ronan-point-tower-collapse-may-1968">www.theguardian.com/society/from-the-archive-blog/gallery/2018/may/16/ronan-point-tower-collapse-may-1968</a>.
- [11] See Christina Horvath, 'Banlieue Narratives: Voicing the French Urban Periphery, Romance Studies 26, no. 1-2, 1-4; and Angelique Chrisafis, 'Nothing's Changed: 10 Years After French Riots, Banlieues Remain in Crisis; The Guardian, 22 October 2015, www.theguardian.com/world/2015/oct/22/nothings-changed-10-years-after-french-riots-banlieues-remain-in-crisis.
- [12] 'The Brutalist Divide: Concrete Monsters or Architectural Icons?'; BBC Arts, 12 October 2018, <a href="https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/articles/1CPtMYghnVMJVV1YphFrWDc/the-brutalist-divide-concrete-monsters-or-architectural-icons">www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/articles/1CPtMYghnVMJVV1YphFrWDc/the-brutalist-divide-concrete-monsters-or-architectural-icons</a>; and Bunkers, Brutalism and Bloodymindedness: Concrete Poetry with Jonathan Meades (BBC, 2014).
- [13] Reyner Banham describes how brutalism was originally used as 'a term of Communist abuse... intended to signify the normal vocabulary of Modern Architecture-flat roofs, glass, exposed structure considered as morally reprehensible deviations from 'The New Humanism" For

Banham, the latter comprised the style of 'picturesque' architecture that involved brickwork, segmental arches, pitched roofs and small windows. 'The New Brutalism', <a href="www.architectural-review.com/archive/the-new-brutalism-by-reyner-banham">www.architectural-review.com/archive/the-new-brutalism-by-reyner-banham</a>.

- [14] Bunkers, Brutalism and Bloodymindedness: Concrete Poetry with Jonathan Meades (BBC, 2014).
- [15] Banham highlights how modernist architects' commitment to pure functionalism led to what was widely perceived as an 'abdication of architectural responsibility' 'The New Brutalism, www.architectural-review.com/archive/the-new-brutalism-by-reyner-banham.
- [16] Lucy M. Maulsby, 'Material Legacies: Italian Modernism and the Postwar History of Case del Fascio, Cambridge University Press, 7 May 2019, <a href="https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/modern-italy/article/abs/material-legacies-italian-modernism-and-the-postwar-history-of-case-del-fascio/B3A403544469BE225578C7BCF238B2D1">https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/modern-italy/article/abs/material-legacies-italian-modernism-and-the-postwar-history-of-case-del-fascio/B3A403544469BE225578C7BCF238B2D1</a>.
- [17] For example, town planner and city engineer Sir Herbert Manzoni played a key role in the modern re-design of Birmingham, including the Inner Ring Road and Central Library. His plans envisaged a 'single-path solution' to the 'complex social, economic and architectural problem' of the city following its bombing after the war. Stephen Bayley, 'It's All Change in the Second City.... Again, The Observer, 29 June
- $2008, \underline{www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2008/jun/29/architecture.regeneration.}$
- [18] Henry-Russell Hitchcock, The International Style, revised ed. (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1997).
- [19] This tendency echoes a similar movement in art, literature, film and music, in which Western modernism was employed as a tool of cultural diplomacy through traveling exhibitions, touring musical shows and publishing. See Greg Barnhisel, Cold War Modernists: Art, Literature, and American Cultural Diplomacy (New York City: Columbia University Press, 2015).
- [20] Interview with Diego Marcon by Eva Fabbris, 'Lack of Light, Mousse 62 (February-March 2018): 182-193.
- [21] Michel Foucault, Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison (New York City: Vintage Books, 1979): 201.
- [22] Gerard Lico, Edifice Complex: Power, Myth, and Marcos State Architecture (Quezon City: Manila University Press, 2003): 51.

[23] Ibid.

[24] Ibid. 81, 122.

- [25] See Nicai de Guzman, 'The Mysterious Curse of the Manila Film Center, Esquire (Philippines), November 2019, <a href="www.esquiremag.ph/long-reads/features/manila-film-center-haunted-a1729-20191107-lfrm2">www.esquiremag.ph/long-reads/features/manila-film-center-haunted-a1729-20191107-lfrm2</a>. My conversations with artist Maria Taniguchi about Marcos state architecture and its association with political violence informed the theme of Horror in the Modernist Block. Email correspondence with the author, 30 April 8 September 2020.
- [26] Adam Heardman, 'Monika Sosnowska (Review), Art Monthly (September 2019): 28.

[27] Ibid.

- [28] In an article published in The Sunday Times Magazine on the fifth anniversary of the fire at Grenfell Tower, journalist Martina Lees outlines several failures of the British government to prevent the tragedy. Faults in safety tests allowed cladding products with a highly flammable core to be coated with a thin fireproof surface and still pass. Tests on the foil surface of insulation instead of the foam insulation itself also enabled insulation products to achieve a Class O fire rating. 'Grenfell: An Investigation', The Sunday Times Magazine (12 June 2022): 10-23.
- [29] It is worth noting that Ferdinand 'Bongbong' Romualdez Marcos Jr. the son and heir of Ferdinand and Imelda Marcos became the 17th President of The Philippines in June 2022. Many Filipinos see his election as the product of a misinformation campaign that sought to whitewash the crimes of the first Marcos regime. Michael Beltran, 'Disinformation Reigns in Philippines as Marcos Jr Takes Top Job', 29 June 2022, <a href="www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/6/29/disinformation-reigns-in-philippines-as-marcos-jr-takes-top-job">www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/6/29/disinformation-reigns-in-philippines-as-marcos-jr-takes-top-job</a>.
- [30] Rowan Moore, 'How Britain is Failing its Modernist Masterpieces', The Observer, 29 May 2011, <a href="https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2011/may/29/modernist-architecture-demolished-listed-buildings">www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2011/may/29/modernist-architecture-demolished-listed-buildings</a>.
- [31] Examples include 'Ove Arup and Partners' brutalist bus station in Preston, which earnt Grade II listed status in 2013 following a public campaign to preserve it, and Le Corbusier's Capitol Complex in Chandigarh, which achieved UNESCO World Heritage Status in 2016.
- [32] See, for example, the case of Hotel Kyjev in Bratislava, an icon of Slovak modernist architecture, which was demolished to make way for urban development of the area. Charlotte Arden, 'Jewel of Modernist Architecture Slated for Demolition', The Slovak Spectator, 18 March 2008, <a href="www.spectator.sme.sk/c/20028723/jewel-of-modernist-architecture-slated-for-demolition.html">www.spectator.sme.sk/c/20028723/jewel-of-modernist-architecture-slated-for-demolition.html</a>.
- [33] Colin Wiles, 'A Tale of Two Brutalist Housing Estates: One Thriving, One Facing Demolition', The Guardian, 13 January 2016, <a href="https://www.theguardian.com/housing-network/2016/jan/13/brutalist-housing-estates-private-barbican-social-london">www.theguardian.com/housing-network/2016/jan/13/brutalist-housing-estates-private-barbican-social-london</a>.
- [34] Owen Hatherley, Militant Modernism (Zero Books, 2009): 49.
- [35] Paradise Lost, History in the Unmaking, directed by Andy Howlett (2021).
- [36] Nick Clark, 'First Look: Birmingham's New £188m Library a Sparkling Cornerstone of the City's Rebirth', The Independent, 29 August 2013, <a href="www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/architecture/first-look-birmingham-s-new-ps188m-library-a-sparkling-cornerstone-of-the-city-s-rebirth-8788527.html">www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/architecture/first-look-birmingham-s-new-ps188m-library-a-sparkling-cornerstone-of-the-city-s-rebirth-8788527.html</a>.
- [37] Paradise Lost, History in the Unmaking, 23:20 to 26:02.
- [38] In the 19th century, the myth of the haunted house was popularised in works such as Edgar Allan Poe's short story The Fall of the House of Usher (1839). The sense of a strange 'atmosphere' that all is not as it seems is evidence of what Anthony Vidler describes as 'the architectural uncanny! This 'uncanny power' is all 'the more disquieting for the absolute normality of the setting, its veritable absence of overt terror'. Anthony Vidler, The Architectural Uncanny (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992): 18.
- [39] Owen Hatherley emphasises the genealogy of modernist architecture in 'the factories and mills of the 19th century. He cites Nikolaus Pevsner's study Pioneers of Modern Design (1936), which features a photograph 'that proves that Mies van der Rohe's glass grids, that dominate our skylines still, existed in embryo in 1850s Britain in the form of Sheerness Boatstore'. Hatherley,

Militant Modernism, 19. Le Corbusier also published Illustrations of 19th-century American grain elevators and factories in his book Towards a New Architecture (1923). According to academic Maros Krivý, the attraction of factory design for Le Corbusier and Walter Gropius (who visited the US in 1935 and 1928 respectively) was its 'embodiment of social progress [...] rooted in and driven by the rationality of science, technology and engineering'. Maroš Kriv 'Industrial Architecture and Negativity the Aesthetics of Architecture in the Works of Gordon Matta-Clark, Robert Smithson and Bernd and Hilla Becher', The Journal of Architecture 15, no. 6 (2010): 829.

[40] Joshua Comaroff and Ong Ker-Shing, Horror in Architecture (Novato, CA: ORO Editions, 2013), 39.

[41] Bunkers, Brutalism and Bloodymindedness: Concrete Poetry.

[42] Ibid (Part 1), 6:15-7:07.

[43] Horror in Architecture, 7-44.

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