

BOOM AND BUST: The Rise and Fall of Architecture

A behind-the-scenes, amid-the-foundations exploration of demolition

Hilary Powell

'It's just construction in reverse.'

Demolition is a critical yet oft-overlooked player in the processes of development and regeneration prospering through the mistakes of previous material use and design. Since 2011 Hilary Powell has been unofficial artist in residence on a demolition site bordering London's Olympic Park documenting the dismantling of late 19th Century industrial buildings. The demolition crews sheds light on the changing pace and economics of urban regeneration as Bobcat drivers harbour private archaeological collections and personal stories intertwine with the wider narratives of an ever-changing urban landscape - from slum clearances to the Olympic Dream.

These stories illuminate the processes, politics, economy, humour and strange poetry of the demolition trade as a critical and productive industry of architecture and cities, producing, recycling and transforming space and materials. They highlight wider issues surrounding the politics of demolition and erasure, the changing life cycle of buildings and our conflictual relationship with history.

Biography:

Dr Hilary Powell has just completed an AHRC Fellow in the Creative and Performing Arts at UCL Bartlett School of Architecture using cast-off demolition materials within etchings and pop-up books. She is now Leverhulme Artist in Residence in UCL Chemistry working with UCL Anthropology on the 'Material Stories' of the demolition site.

For work on progress on the demolition site see: www.demolitionsite.net

For glimpses of demolition and the etching and pop-up work made from the materials and images of the demolition site see: www.flickr.com/demolitionsite/sets