

THE REPRESENTATION OF THE WELFARE CITY PROGRAMME FOR THE SEMINAR ON 9–10 MARCH 2023

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This seminar is the second of two events that aim to critically discuss the representation of the welfare city. In this context, the term ‘welfare city’ refers to the concept for urban areas developed in Scandinavian countries during the second half of the twentieth century. The seminar is conceptualized and organized by the transdisciplinary international IRFD-funded research network The Representation of the Welfare City. Hosted by the National Museum of Denmark in Copenhagen and ArkDes in Stockholm respectively, the events will embrace discussion on museums, archives, and collections, as well as canons, history, and historiography as a construction. More specifically, however, they will raise questions about how and why to present and represent architecture. With a focus on mass media as a primary site for developing architectural discourse, the events will reflect on these media and their mediatic characteristics. They will include photography and architectural drawings/renderings in the daily press, magazines, journals, books, and exhibitions, as well as films and television programmes.

The research network The Representation of the Welfare City wishes to stimulate interaction between researchers and promote research exchange, with the aim of bringing forward new perspectives and knowledge that can contribute to development in architectural research.

Seminar 2: The Representation of the Welfare City

The idea of urbanity and the city is inseparable from its narrative forms. Society's perception of architecture and its discourse is conditioned by the media and the epistemology through which society understands it. The Nordic welfare model is internationally renowned; it is a concept and a commodity that has been distributed globally. This also applies to Nordic architecture from the middle of the twentieth century. Different media and types of representation (e.g., photography and books) have played a crucial role in this distribution process.

In recent years, much research has been carried out on the welfare city and its World War II legacy. Astonishingly enough, however, not much attention has been paid to the representation of the welfare city in mass media. This field of knowledge has so far been largely ignored by architects, architectural historians, and theoreticians. It calls for a study that, more generally and in a historical perspective, looks at which collective images and narratives we as a society attach to the welfare city, exploring how they are constructed, how they work, and in which ways they circulate, are exchanged, and handed over by people and institutions, such as museums.

Hosted by ArkDes, the Swedish Centre for Architecture and Design, which holds Sweden's largest collection of architectural representations, this second seminar will embark on a discussion about the institutions that are responsible for collecting and preserving our national treasures. We will look into how museums write history and why they write it the way they do. We will reflect on formats such as exhibitions, archives, and collections, on how they work and are curated. With a focus on the Nordic welfare city and its legacy, we will discuss in what way it is—or will be—presented and represented in the exhibitions at ArkDes. Taking our point of departure in the above-mentioned areas—and a wide-ranging presentation of different cases—we will investigate what kind of imagery is and has been connected to the post-war city of the Scandinavian welfare state in mass media. Against this backdrop, we will also look into what makes the Scandinavian model different from

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other welfare state models—such as, for example, the British one—and examine whether the Scandinavian model has influenced its own representation.

Programme

Thursday, 9 March 2023

Venue: ArkDes, Exercisplan 4, 111 49 Stockholm

10:00

Registration and coffee

10:30

Welcome by Kieran Long, Director, ArkDes and Anne Elisabeth Toft, PhD, Associate Professor, Aarhus School of Architecture

Frida Rosenberg, Curator of 20th Century Architecture, ArkDes / Carlos Mínguez Carrasco, Chief Curator, ArkDes, ‘New exhibitions at ArkDes’

Anna Lundvall, Guest Researcher, ArkDes, ‘The Magazine *Hem i Sverige* and the Utby Project: The Single-Family Home as Norm and Experiment’

Questions and discussion

12:00

Lunch break

13:30

Frida Melin, Curator of Collections, ArkDes, ‘Working with the Archives at ArkDes’, along with a visit to the archive (group divided into two)

Thordis Arrhenius, Professor, KTH Stockholm, ‘Photographing the Welfare State’

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Ane Hjort Guttu, Artist, Filmmaker, Professor, Oslo National Academy of the Arts, 'To Live in a Satellite City'

Questions

15:30

Coffee break

16:00

Discussion, 'The Image of the Welfare State Now and Then'

17:30

End of programme

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Friday, 10 March 2023

Venue: ArkDes, Exercisplan 4, 111 49 Stockholm

09:30

Welcome, Anne Elisabeth Toft, PhD, Associate Professor, Aarhus School of Architecture

Andrew Higgott, MA (Cantab), AA, Grad Dipl., PhD, 'The Development of the Architecture of the British Welfare State: Considering Fifteen Critical Images'

Owen Hopkins, Curator and Director, Farrell Centre, Newcastle University, 'Brutalism Revisited'

Michelle Provoost, PhD, Architectural Historian, Crimson Historians & Urbanists and International New Town Institute, 'Back to the Future: Revisiting the Cities Everybody Loves to Hate'

Questions and discussion

12:00

Lunch break

13:00

Tina Maria Roden, Architect, PhD, City Planner, Albertslund Kommune, ‘Albertslund in Transition: Developing the Welfare City’

Jennifer Mack, PhD, Associate Professor, KTH Royal Institute of Technology, “‘Daddy Is a Computer’”: The Unruly Ontologies of the Swedish Million Program’

14:00

Coffee/tea, discussion, including about Seminar 3 in Aarhus in 2023

16:00

End of seminar and goodbye

Attending the seminar is free of charge, but there is a limited number of seats. Registration required. Write to Jannie Rosenberg Bendsen, jrb@aarch.dk.

The Representation of the Welfare City

The international research network *The Representation of the Welfare City*, a transdisciplinary project funded by the Independent Research Fund Denmark (IRFD), was initiated in 2021 by Anne Elisabeth Toft, PhD (Network Project Leader), Associate Professor, AAA; Jannie Rosenberg Bendsen, PhD (Network Coordinator), Independent Researcher, AAA; Tom Nielsen, PhD, Professor, AAA; Claus Peder Pedersen, PhD, Professor MSO, AAA; Morten Nielsen, PhD, Professor, National Museum of Denmark; Thordis Arrhenius, Professor, KTH; Michelle Provoost, PhD, Professor, Crimson Architectural Historians / Institute for New Town; Karen Olesen, Associate Professor, AAA; and Anders Troelsen, Professor Emeritus, AAA. The network aims at investigating the welfare city’s image in society and how it is constructed. It will uncover and discuss the major factors that are at play in this context.

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