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twentytwentyone present Brutalism screenprints

twentytwentyone celebrate Brutalist architecture through the work of Simon Phipps.

The term Brutalism was derived from the French 'béton brut', or raw concrete, and the expression became associated with a movement emerging in postwar British architectural offices. The British public share a love-hate relationship with this strong architectural language. The monumental Preston bus station by BDP is the most recent dispute on the value of Brutalist architecture. Significant buildings such as Robin Hood Gardens and Birmingham City Library await demolition. Others such as the 'Get Carter carpark' by the Owen Luder Partnership have already been eradicated.



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Simon Phipps has captured an essence of this building and others through a quartet of screen prints. The works display a reverent and appreciative consideration of an important architectural niche. His photographic approach to the architecture provides a unique perspective and portrays Brutalist architecture in a sensitive, realistic and distinctive manner. The imagery is screen-printed directly onto brushed aluminium panels that when hung float from the wall, the whole concept reflecting a careful deliberation.

The prints are each an edition of 25.

50x50cm, half-tone screen print onto 1.5mm gauge satin brushed aluminium, with a 12mm deep split-batten hanging bar and spacer affixed to rear.

Priced at £275 inc. Vat each

To raise awareness and draw attention to the potential plight faced by Brutalist architecture Simon Phipps and twentytwentyone will donate 5% from the sale of each print to the Twentieth Century Society.



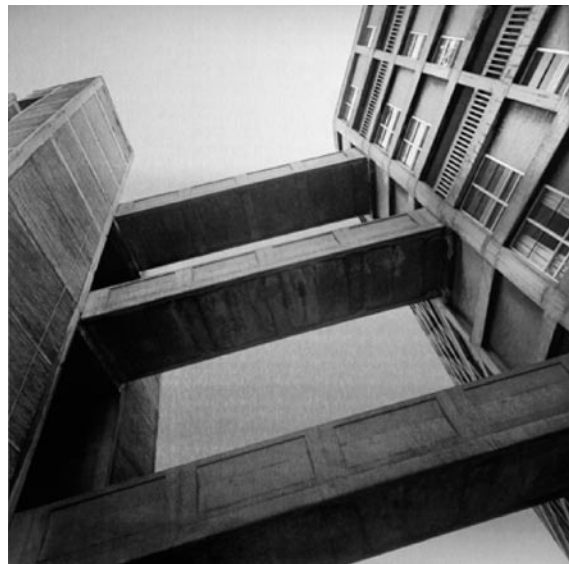
The Barbican Estate, London, 1965-1976. Architects Chamberlin, Powell and Bon



Trinity Square Car Park, Gateshead, 1962-1967. Architect: Rodney Gordon for the Owen Luder Partnership



Post Office Tower, London, 1961-1964. Architects: Eric Bedford and G. R. Yeats, Ministry of Public Building and Works



Park Hill, Sheffield, 1957- 1961. Architects Jack Lynn and Ivor Smith for Sheffield City Council

The Brutalist Prints, by Simon Phipps

'New Brutalism' was the term used to define a direction within British Architecture closely associated with Alison and Peter Smithson and in particular their work during the period spanning the construction of Hunstanton School, 1954 and the Robin Hood Gardens Estate, 1972.

The paradigm shift associated with Hunstanton was widely recognised as being radical and transformative and was seen as an attempt to re-define the direction of the modern movement.

Brutalism's properties were characterised by the critic Reyner Banham in the Architectural Review, December 1955:

- 1, Formal legibility of plan;
- 2, Clear exhibition of structure,
- 3, Valuation of materials for their inherent qualities "as found".

Banham further argued that great architecture derives from the correct interaction of structure, function and form whilst also requiring a necessary conceptual element in order to have 'memorability of image'.

Although the brutalist tendency in post-war British Architecture has been assailed both by derision and real antipathy, Brutalist Architecture as realised by such practitioners as Erno Goldfinger, Sir Denys Lasdun and Rodney Gordon is now universally recognised for its expressed structure and exposed materials of concrete, block and brick. These qualities sitting alongside a-formality and anti-geometric plans allow for the necessary conceptual content that makes some of these building 'great' and provides 'memorability of image'.

I have photographed a number of buildings that sit within a loose Brutalist principle and rather than present them as photographic prints have produced them as monochrome images printed directly onto an aluminium substrate. I felt this would capture the idea of 'valuation of materials "as found"', whilst aluminium also resonates with concrete as a material in its visual neutralness.

In 1957 Gio Ponti argued that architecture both as 'plastic and abstract fact, is colourless'. Concrete as a material would seem to have the neutral qualities to illustrate this observation and it is this very lack of colour in the brutalist prints that allow us to judge the forms as architecture.

The photographer Albert Renger-Patzsch reflected on the capacity of photography to 'capture the magic of material things', within the enhanced materiality of the brutalist prints I have attempted to do just that.

Simon Phipps has an MA from The Royal College of Art.

In 2008 he completed 'The Oldest and The Greatest', a comparative study of football clubs at the extreme ends of the spectrum, Sheffield FC and Real Madrid. His work was exhibited in Switzerland, Madrid and London. More recently as part of his current project 'Africa Express' he has exhibited at the Hôtel de Ville in Paris. He lives and works in London



The Twentieth Century Society

"Simon's images capture the excitement and dynamism of some of the most daring buildings of the post war period. Part elegy, part celebration these prints record some of my favourite buildings and ones which have been key campaigning cases for the C20 Society.

The very deliberate decision to print onto brushed aluminium reflects the architects' own intense interest in materials and the detailed quality of surface textures."

Catherine Croft, C20 Society Director

"A great celebration of some of our finest architecture"

Elain Harwood, author and C20 Society Trustee

The C20 Society campaigns for the preservation of all styles of post -1914 architecture and design in the UK. It is a charity, lobbies central and local government, and has a statutory role in the planning system. It has been instrumental in the reappraisal and growing appreciation of Brutalism, and continues to press for recognition of the best examples via listing. It publishes journals and monographs, and its magazine regularly features the work of artists and photographers inspired by C20 buildings. It organizes an extensive programme of walks, tours and lectures, in the UK and abroad.

Income donated from the sale of these prints will contribute to its ongoing casework and vital research.

The Society welcomes new members. For further information, and details of how to join, see

www.C20society.org.uk

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