

# Beautiful and Brutal: 50 years in the life of Preston Bus Station Conference Saturday 9th November, 10.00am - 4.00pm The Harris Museum, Art Gallery and Library



It was an ambitious vision of Preston's future – like a giant spaceship which had landed in the middle of Preston.

But this was not an alien structure that had arrived from another planet. It was a piece of architecture that was of Preston, by a Preston architecture practice, Building Design Partnership, which now designs buildings around the world. Most of the components were supplied by local companies such as Glasdon's of Blackpool and Shaws of Darwen, and many of the people who worked on the construction were from Lancashire.

Preston Bus Station was built after Beeching's railway cuts – in an era when the future of transport was deemed to be all about roads and

motorways. It was the largest bus station in Europe, with 80 bus bays, a taxi rank, and space for 1000 cars, all located next to Preston's newly-developed ring road. The building was saved from demolition after a 13 year campaign initiated by the people of Preston which resulted in it gaining Grade II listed status. It has been revitalised through an extensive – and soon to be completed – restoration programme by building owners, Lancashire County Council, and John Puttick Associates architects. Its beautiful and brutal form has regained its former glory – loved by many and loathed by some.

Whatever your opinion, it is one of Preston's most distinctive pieces of architecture, and is a place where the daily life of the city takes place.

This interdisciplinary conference will investigate the life of the brutalist building, Preston Bus Station, and what has led it to play such a significant part in the development and creative life of the city. It will also consider the building's role within the wider context of urban design and development of cities in the 21st Century. How did a brutalist building in Preston inspire so many people to campaign to save it from demolition?

We'll examine what made it distinctive enough to be listed, and how it ended up with its curved balustrades. We'll look at the challenges of restoring it 50 years after it was built, the role of arts in the campaign to save it, and the building's significance to the people of Preston.

Image courtesy of BDP

## Speaker Biographies

### **Chris Harding** **Chair, BDP**

Chris is an architect and was appointed Chair of BDP in January 2017. He is responsible for giving direction to the firm over the next few years, both as a business and in design.

Previously Chris led the architecture profession and the education sector, where his leadership focused design teams on producing inspiring, student-centred, learning environments for schools and higher/ further education buildings.

Attracted by BDP's socially progressive ethos, he has been with the firm since 1989 and worked on some of its best known projects, including the Channel Tunnel, St Peter's Campus for the University of Sunderland, the Millennium Building for the All England Lawn Tennis Club, Bournemouth Public Library and several leading research centres for the University of Cambridge.

### **Lee Ivett** **Course Leader, Grenfell-Baines School of Architecture, UCLan**

Lee Ivett is an architect from Preston. His practice is intensely generative, developing low-budget socially-focused projects with communities that improve agency and capacity. Lee has been recognised internationally for the impact and quality of his work and was selected for inclusion in New Architects 3 - a survey of the best British architects to have set up practice since 2005 and has recently produced critically acclaimed award winning work at the 2018 Venice Architecture Biennale.

### **Dr. Christina Malathouni** **School of Architecture, University of Liverpool**

Dr Malathouni is an architect and architectural historian with extensive experience in the heritage sector, specialising in twentieth century architectural heritage. She studied at the School of Architecture, National Technical University of Athens, and also holds a MSc and a PhD degree from The Bartlett, University College London. Malathouni is registered with the Architects Registration Bureau (ARB, UK); is full member of the Technical Chamber of Greece (Registered Architect), the Institute of Historic Building Conservation (IHBC, UK) and ICOMOS-UK, and an Associate Member of ICOMOS-ISC20C.

### **Professor Adrian Friend** **Grenfell-Baines School of Architecture, UCLan**

Professor Adrian Friend is an architect, researcher and educator. Whilst Senior Tutor, Royal College of Art and lead scientist of the EU Marie Curie TRADERS research project, Friend headed the MA Architecture Live Project research repository delivering an annual student-led collaborative project with public bodies and industry sponsors such as the pop-up Helix Studio that was Highly Commended in the 2015 Wood Awards.

Friend has taught and lectured throughout the UK and was Studio Leader in Architecture at the University of Nottingham from 2004–11 and Course Leader in Architecture at Norwich University of the Arts from 2011–13 where he wrote a new course framework and curriculum, returning the study of architecture to the city after a 50-year absence.

### **John Puttick** **Architect**

John Puttick Associates was founded five years ago with the competition winning entry for the refurbishment and extension of the Grade II listed Preston Bus Station. The Brutalist landmark re-opened to the public in 2018 and was selected by both the BBC and The Observer as one of the architectural highlights of the year. The project has also won National and Regional RIBA awards and was long-listed for the 2019 Stirling Prize.

The success of the Bus Station has led to work on a number of other public buildings including a museum remodelling in Hertfordshire, the refurbishment and extension of a Grade II\* Listed Charles Barry-designed church in Brighton and a series of new build youth centres across the country for a charity specialising in providing young people with inspiring community buildings. The first of these opened in South London in September 2019.

**Ann Vanner**  
**President, North Lancashire Society of Architects**

Ann is a qualified Architect and Architectural Technologist and has worked at UCLan since 2009. She is currently the Degree Apprenticeship Lead for the School of Art, Design and Fashion. Prior to that, she was the course lead for the BSc (Hons) Architectural Technology Programme. The course was described by the then external examiner as 'the best in the county' and students from the programme have won awards both national and regional, most recently Darren Nelson won the CAIT AT Awards for Report 2018, for his dissertation on 'In situ reinforcement of timber of beams in a conservation setting'.

Her research interests lie in social enterprise/cooperatives and how these might provide alternative approaches to design, procurement, construction and use of building, and how materials used in the built environment can have an impact on occupant's wellbeing particularly with regard to acoustics and sound pollution.

**Sally Stone**  
**Reader of Architecture, Manchester School of Architecture, Manchester Metropolitan University**

Sally Stone is the Programme Leader for the MArch Architecture programme and Director of the Continuity in Architecture Atelier in the Manchester School of Architecture. Her work is concerned with urban regeneration, building re-use and the relationship between interior architecture and installation art. They are programmes for the design of new buildings and public spaces within the historic city and interventions within existing structures. The atelier believes in the importance of place and that the design of art and architecture can be influenced by the experience and analysis of particular situations. She was a founder member of Gate 81, a project established to find creative uses for Preston Bus Station as opposed to its proposed demolition.

**Professor Charles Quick**  
**Co-curator, In Certain Places**

Professor Charles Quick is a Professor of Public Art Practice at the University of Central Lancashire with over 40 years' experience as a teacher, artist/researcher and curator in the public realm. He has contributed permanent and temporary arts projects to cities across the United Kingdom. In 2003 he co-founded 'In Certain Places' and has since worked with regional, national and international artists to develop works for Preston, revealing, critiquing and provoking new understandings of a place and its peoples. The Henry Moore Institute and Leeds City Art Gallery hold this work in their collections and he has recorded his artistic life through the British Library sound archive, Artist's Lives project. The Guardian, The Daily Telegraph, Art and Architecture Journal, Arts Professional, A-N Magazine and the Sculpture Magazine, amongst others, have written about his projects. Over the years, he has won awards from Arts Council England, the British Council, and Higher Education Funding Council England. Recently he became the Chair of the Arts and Place national consortium. Charles also sits on the board of a number of arts organisations in the North West.

**James Arnold**  
**History Curator, Harris Museum, Art Gallery and Library**

James Arnold is a historian and curator with over 14 years of experience in the museum sector. He studied archaeology at the University of Birmingham and is an Associate of the Museums Association. He previously worked for Lakeland Arts at Blackwell, the Arts and Crafts House, Abbot Hall Art Gallery and The Museum of Lakeland Life & Industry, where he curated historical exhibitions and worked with artists such as Richard Skelton to reinterpret social history items and exhibit them in contemporary art settings. He was also involved in the development of the interpretive themes at Windermere Jetty, a Heritage Lottery Fund project to redevelop the Windermere Steamboat Museum. He has worked at the Harris for four years where he is responsible for the historical collections. At the Harris he has curated exhibitions that include Streets of Change: Beattie's Preston & Beyond, which investigated the changing architecture of Preston, as well as collaborating with Charles Quick on Beautiful and Brutal: 50 years in the life of Preston Bus Station.

# Conference schedule - Saturday 9th November

## Beautiful and Brutal: 50 years in the life of Preston Bus Station

9.30 - 10.00	<b>Registration and Refreshments</b>	
10.00 - 10.10	<b>Welcome</b> by Maria Murray, Head of School of Art Design and Fashion, UCLan	
10.10 - 10.30	<b>Introduction</b> by Chris Harding, Chair, BDP	
10.30 - 12.30	<b>Panel One</b>	<b>The Architecture of Preston Bus Station</b> Chair: Lee Ivett, Course Leader, Grenfell-Baines School of Architecture, UCLan
		<b>The Listing Story</b> Dr. Christina Malathouni, School of Architecture, University of Liverpool
		<b>Why the Curves?</b> Professor Adrian Friend, Grenfell-Baines School of Architecture, UCLan
11.20 - 11.40	<b>20 minutes break &amp; refreshments</b>	
		<b>The Restoration of a Brutalist Icon</b> John Puttick, John Puttick Associates
		<b>Panel discussion</b>
12.30 - 1.20	<b>Lunch</b>	
1.20 - 2.00	<b>Curator tour of Beautiful and Brutal exhibition</b> with co-curators Professor Charles Quick and James Arnold	
2.00 - 3.40	<b>Panel Two</b>	<b>The Relationship with the City</b> Chair: Ann Vanner, President, North Lancashire Society of Architects
		<b>The Campaign to Save a Bus Station</b> Sally Stone, Reader of Architecture, Manchester School of Architecture, Manchester Metropolitan University
		<b>Brutalist Architecture and the Arts</b> Professor Charles Quick, Co-curator, In Certain Places
		<b>The Building's Social Connections</b> James Arnold, History Curator, Harris Museum, Art Gallery and Library
3.40 - 4.00	<b>Closing remarks</b>	

**BDP.** Conference Sponsor

with thanks to Lady Grenfell-Baines

**#Brutiful**

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