



THE CYPRUS
INSTITUTE



University
of Cyprus

HOUSED by CHOICE, HOUSED by FORCE - Homes, Conflicts and Conflicting Interests

January 21 – 22. 2016

Architecture_MPS, University of Cyprus; Cyprus Institute

Abstract / Initial Proposal Form:

- 1. Paper / Proposal Title:** Port of Trade and Place of Protest; The Eviction of Millers Point
- 2. Format:** Written Paper + Conference Presentation
- 3. Author(s) Name:** Thomas Cole
- 4. Email contact details:** Thomas.cole@uts.edu.au
- 5. University or Company Affiliation:** The University of Technology Sydney
- 6. Abstract (300 words):**

This research will chart specific intersections of politics and place to address paradoxes in rapid gentrification and the use of capital-driven tenancing in the restoration of historical architecture at the expense of a historic community.

Separated by the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans, the British Settlement of Sydney was born reliant on a seafaring infrastructure. Initially a colony, the cove of Circular Quay and adjoining Millers Point formed the arrival for convicts, penal guards and supplies. By the mid-19th century, with the growing number of emancipated settlers and the arrival of foreign prospectors, the state instituted *Responsible Government*. This establishment was spatialized by dividing the city, situating bureaucratic command east of Bridge Street and the free settlers against the wharves of the western peninsula¹; a industrial port of trade now evolved as a cultural precinct within the 'spectacle' of contemporary Sydney.

Australia's Federation (1900CE) shares its date with the compulsory acquisition of Millers Point and the formation of The Waterside Workers Union.² This spatial-political calcification generated public, maritime-specific housing that would repel attacks on working conditions and community land for the remainder of the century. In 2014, with the working harbour vacated and public-tenancy removed from union administration, the State Government began leasehold sale of worker cottages at market price, citing disrepair and unsuitable capacity as reasons for eviction.³ Less than a decade beforehand, a draft Conservation Management Plan authored by the government partially attributed the success of Millers Point to public-ownership, tenanted by 'a community with strong bonds with the place.'⁴

¹ Cantrill, P 2013, 'Forming Sydney', in P Thalys (ed.), *Public Sydney; drawing the city*, Historic Houses Trust of New South Wales, Sydney, NSW. and Content, The Faculty of the Built Environment, University of New South Wales, Sydney NSW., p. 44.

² Fitzgerald, S & Keating, C 1991, *Millers Point; The Urban Village*, Hale & Iremonger, Erskineville, NSW., p. 68-69,88

³ Power, J 2014, 'Resident refuses to move as government sells off Sydney public housing at Millers, Dawes Points', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 12 July, viewed 7 October 2015, <http://www.smh.com.au/>

⁴ Housing NSW, *Conservation Management Guidelines Housing NSW Properties Millers Point: Volume One Final Draft October 2007*, viewed on 10 October 2015, <http://www.housing.nsw.gov.au/NR/rdonlyres/DACBDD25-5410-4027-9441-F35316230CE3/0/CMGMillers...>, p. 6.

This paper will explore the key social movements, strikes and bans within the urban development and labour laws in Australia. I will suggest that the maritime community born in Millers Point, holds history beyond its Victorian walls; a history not too distant from the first-hand memory of its formalization.

7. Author(s) Biography (200 words maximum for all authors): Thomas is a Lecturer in the Interior and Spatial Design program at The University of Technology Sydney. In 2009 Thomas won the Byera Hadley Travelling Scholarship for his research proposal 'The Politics of Memory; Authenticity and the Artifice'. The project examined urban palimpsests as a generative mechanism in architectural design, and grounded a research interest in radical transformations of public space. Tom has worked for architecture firms in both Sydney and the Peoples Republic of China where he has been involved in a wide spectrum of projects including restoration in Beijing's Hutong districts, residential architecture as well as a number of art installations and exhibitions. His work within his own practice, LeeshTagTom, has previously been exhibited in The Sydney Architecture Festival and the Lisbon Architecture Triennale as well as group shows in The Gwangju Design Biennale and The Prague Quadrennial.

Submit forms to: admin@architecturemps.com