

Jane Rendell is Professor of Architecture and Art at the Bartlett School of Architecture, UCL. Her research is transdisciplinary and crosses architecture, art, feminism, history and psychoanalysis. She is the author of *Site-Writing* (I.B.Tauris, 2011), *Art and Architecture* (I.B.Tauris, 2007) and *The Pursuit of Pleasure* (2002), and co-editor of *Pattern* (2007), *Critical Architecture* (2007), *Spatial Imagination* (2005), *The Unknown City* (2001), *Intersections* (2000), *Gender, Space, Architecture* (1999) and *Strangely Familiar* (1995).

'In the calculated destruction of tower blocks, the malignant neglect of communal housing and the greedy manipulation of the housing market, Jane Rendell witnesses both the losses of architecture and the death throes of an idea – the idea that architecture is a social good. Jane refuses to become melancholic or defeated. Instead, she seeks the resources that might allow us to generate spaces and times that can move us forwards. This book is a recognition of losses to be found in the rubble and ruin of our cities, but attempts to serve a more hopeful architecture, tuned to the needs of individuals, of communities, and of wider society. *The Architecture of Psychoanalysis* is a beautiful braiding of provocative architectural criticism and evocative psychoanalytic insight. This book revels in the possibilities, both political and personal, that this braiding offers.'

Steve Pile, Professor of Human Geography, The Open University

Cover image: The Narkomfin Communal House, Moscow (1928–9).  
Photograph: Jane Rendell (July 2012).



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# The Architecture of Psychoanalysis

Spaces of Transition

Jane Rendell

The Architecture of Psychoanalysis

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How do external, material environments and the inner world of emotion, memory and imagination influence each other? In *The Architecture of Psychoanalysis*, Jane Rendell explores how architectural space registers in psychoanalysis. Building on the spatial writing methods employed in her previous works, *Art and Architecture* and *Site-Writing*, Rendell develops several different strands of enquiry – each with a distinctive 'voice' – interweaving them throughout the structure of the book.

Addressing the concept of architecture as 'social condenser' (a Russian constructivist notion that connects material space and community relations), *The Architecture of Psychoanalysis* traces this idea's progress from the Narkomfin Communal House in Moscow (1928–9), to Le Corbusier's *Unité d'Habitation* in Marseilles (1947–52), to the Alton West Estate in London (1954–8), showing how interior and exterior meet in both psychoanalysis and architectural practice. The book investigates both the inherently spatial vocabulary of psychoanalysis and ideas around the physical 'setting' of the psychoanalytic encounter, with reference to Sigmund Freud, D. W. Winnicott and André Green. Models of psychoanalysis as a 'transitional' and 'overlapping' intersubjective space are shown to offer new approaches for understanding how subjects, objects and physical locations relate in architectural research and practice.

Rendell does not merely use psychoanalysis as a theoretical tool for interpreting architecture; instead, she demonstrates how understanding psychic processes can help to enrich other professional and creative endeavours. Illuminating a novel field of interdisciplinary enquiry, this innovative, evocative book breathes fresh life into notions of social space.

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