The Autopoiesis of Architecture, Volume II: A New Agenda for Architecture

By Patrik Schumacher

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This is the second part of a major theoretical work by Patrik Schumacher, which outlines how the discipline of architecture should be understood as its own distinct *system of communication*. *Autopoeisis* comes from the Greek and means literally self-production; it was first adopted in biology in the 1970s to describe the essential characteristics of life as a circular self-organizing system and has since been transposed into a theory of social systems. This new approach offers architecture an arsenal of general comparative concepts. It allows architecture to be understood as a distinct discipline, which can be analyzed in elaborate detail while at the same time offering insightful comparisons with other subject areas, such as art, science and political discourse. On the basis of such comparisons the book insists on the necessity of disciplinary autonomy and argues for a sharp demarcation of design from both art and engineering. Schumacher accordingly argues controversially that design as a discipline has its own *sui generis* intelligence – with its own internal logic, reach and limitations.

Whereas the first volume provides the theoretical groundwork for Schumacher's ideas – focusing on architecture as an autopoeitic system, with its own theory, history, medium and its unique societal function – the second volume addresses the specific, contemporary challenges and tasks that architecture faces. It formulates these tasks, looking specifically at how architecture is seeking to organize and articulate the complexity of post-fordist network society. The volume explicitly addresses how current architecture can upgrade its design methodology in the face of an increasingly demanding task environment, characterized by both complexity and novelty. Architecture's specific role within contemporary society is explained and its relationship to politics is clarified. Finally, the new, global style of Parametricism is introduced and theoretically grounded.

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Editorial Review

Review
"The overall goal is to help those dealing with combat stress issues regain their health and well-being ... The chapters are easy to read, clearly outlining and fully discussing the techniques, and the appendixes are quite substantial." (Doody's, 27 January 2012)

"John Henden's previous book Preventing Suicide, on working briefly with suicidal clients, was a much needed addition to the field, and I believe that his latest Beating Combat Stress will be even more highly valued . . . I hope that it is widely read and the ideas are carried forward into practitioner training as well as practice." (Barry Winbolt Blog, 20 May 2011)

"Designed to be accessible and usful both to serving personnel and veterans and to the professionals and volunteers who are engaged in helping them, Beating combat stress is crammed with field-tested techniques and strategies to help deal with the psychological effects of combat . . . well designed and illustrated throughout by specially commissioned line drawings, the book opens with advice on how it shouuld be used." (RoSPA Occupational Safety & Health Journal, 1 June 2011)

"I have witnessed first-hand the major impact this condition can have – not just on those who suffer from it, but also on their friends, family and colleagues. The great thing about this user-friendly book is its strong emphasis on the 'how-to' when dealing with any situation. It covers the subject comprehensively, with plenty of case studies that readers will identify with. I am sure I would have benefitted greatly from reading it at that time, and I hope very much it will help others." —*Andy McNabDCM MM, Bestselling Author of 'Bravo Two Zero'*

"John Henden provides a much-needed perspective for addressing the problems of combat veterans. Those who have not worked with veterans will find this invaluable, and those who are experienced in working with soldiers will find new ideas in his practical suggestions."
—*Robert K. GiffordPh.D., Colonel, U.S. Army, Retired*

"At last! A nuts-and-bolts manual for those coping with normal reactions to abnormal events. John Henden delivers exactly what he says: 101 techniques of hope and help. This book is not a panacea – but it is the best of 'tailor-made' and 'off the peg' in one place, with something for everybody."
—*Bruce GordenMA AAMFT, Vietnam Veteran*

"Those whose injuries we see are just a small proportion of those who suffer in the course of duty. John Henden has consulted widely, thought carefully, and offers compelling advice in an area of life that has become much more open to receive it. In this regard he is a man for our times, and this book is a most welcome product. If used as intended, hope will be restored and many lives transformed."
—*General Sir Richard Dannatt GCB CBE MC DL, Former Chief of the General Staff, British Army*

From the Back Cover
It is well-known that the challenges of military combat can extend far beyond the battlefield. *Beating Combat Stress* is a one-stop handbook of 101 field-tested techniques and strategies designed to help service personnel and veterans deal with the psychological effects of combat and live life to the full.

The book equips readers with helpful tools, coping mechanisms and techniques organized into six sections: Triggers; Flashbacks; Unwelcome Thoughts; Dealing with the Lows; Meaning and Purpose in Life; and Disturbed Sleep. The overall goal is to help individuals dealing with the widest range of combat stress issues to regain maximum operational fitness and health as soon as possible. Avoiding psychological jargon, the author does not spend time exploring complex theories of why combat stress occurs. Instead he focuses on 'what works', providing the most effective advice for those who experience combat stress, their loved ones and those who help them professionally.

By promoting early intervention and a solution-focused approach, *Beating Combat Stress* equips active and returning troops, combat veterans and the professionals who help them with the means to defeat the enemy within, and to achieve a renewed sense of direction and purpose in life.

About the Author

Patrik Schumacher is partner at Zaha Hadid Architects. He joined Zaha Hadid in 1988. In 1996 he founded the 'Design Research Laboratory' with Brett Steele at the Architectural Association School of Architecture in London, and continues to serve as its co-director. He studied philosophy and architecture in Bonn, Stuttgart and London. In 1999 he completed his PHD at the Institute for Cultural Science, Klagenfurt University. His contribution to the discourse of contemporary architecture is also evident in his prior writings (*Digital Hadid*, London 2004) as well as in his work as a curator (*Latent Utopias*, Graz 2002). Currently he is working on an exhibition showcasing Parametricism.

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