

The Work of David & Mary Medd

Aoife Donnelly, Kristin Trommler

Aoife Donnelly & Kristin Trommler's research and practice focus on the generation of sensitive and carefully composed projects that engage with questions around the democracy of place or space and value the experience of the user. In the conference *Architectures of Education*, the duo presented the pioneering work of Mary and David Medd, a model for collaborative research and design, in terms of its radical ideas spatially and pedagogically.

The Medd's work originated in the golden post-war period in England, a time of optimism and experimentation, when governments 'increased their commitment to the building or renewal of democracies through public schooling'. These fertile conditions produced a body of work described as 'humane functionalism', that greatly influenced subsequent thinking regarding design for education in the UK. Proposals were informed by careful observation of teaching activities and learning experiences, part of a close collaboration between architect, educator and policymaker, an atypical arrangement that allowed the wider dissemination and implementation of their findings and built work through the Building Bulletins. In this talk, the scene from which the

Medd's work emerged will be set, its enduring value discussed, as a model for collaborative research and design, in terms of its radical ideas spatially and pedagogically and the tangible architectural heritage left behind.

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