

Wednesday 2 May 2012 - 12.00 PM

Lecture by **Owen Hatherley**, researcher in political aesthetics (UK)

A call to have the courage to be modern against all the current postmodern pieties of exhaustion and fragmentation, Owen Hatherley's brilliant reactivation of the utopian impulses of the modernist avant-garde is Brecht meeting Ballard to create the science-fiction of socialism.

The talk will try and discuss the fate of urbanism and architecture in the UK in the desolate new world of savage public-sector cuts, when government funds are withdrawn and the Welfare State abdicates. Hatherley explores the urban consequences of what Conservatives privately call the "progressive nonsense" of the Big Society and "the localism agenda," the putative replacement of the state with charity and voluntarism; and the completion of the last great Blairite schemes, from London's Shard to the site of the 2012 Olympics. The possible effects of the new protest movements will also be briefly discussed.

Owen Hatherley, researcher in political aesthetics at Birkbeck College, London (Publications includes: *Militant Modernism + A Guide to the New Ruins of Great Britain*)