



Written by Teresa Stoppani
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**Greenwich Architecture Open Lecture Series 200607
Identities and Representations**

- University of Greenwich School of Architecture & Construction
- Mansion Site, Avery Hill Campus
- Bexley Road, Eltham, London SE9 2PQ
- Norbert Singer Lecture Theatre (M055)
- Thursday 30 Nov 2006 17.30

**Oren Safdie playwright New York in conversation with Kieran Long,
University of Greenwich
Private Jokes or Public Places: finding a voice (in architecture)**



'Do architects design for themselves or the public? As an architecture student at Columbia University in the early 1990s, the pendulum seemed to swing in the direction of free expression and personal narrative. This was compounded by the introduction of the CAD system, which gave students the tools to come up with designs that were ever more spectacular. Today, those studio projects are being celebrated as buildings in a culture that can sometimes be described as the "Hollywoodization" of architecture. The question for the architecture student today is how to find one's natural voice in an environment that increasingly demands spectacle?' Oren Safdie

Oren Safdie attended the Graduate School of Architecture at Columbia University before turning his attention to writing. He is a playwright-in-residence at La MaMa E.T.C. in New York and the Interim Artistic Director of the Malibu Stage Co. in L.A. where his play *Private Jokes, Public Places* first debuted before moving off-Broadway. His most recent play, *The Last Word*, opened in Los Angeles in 2005 and will run off-Broadway in February 2007. Other plays produced in New York include *Jews & Jesus*: a musical comedy, *Fiddler Sub-Terrain* (an updated satire of *Fiddler on the Roof*), *Broken Places* and *La Compagnie*. As a screenwriter, Oren scripted the film *You Can Thank Me Later*, which won the grand jury prize at the Newport Film Festival; wrote the English translation for *Gibran, the Prophet*; and is currently developing a film project with 'Red Hour', Ben Stiller's film company. Oren is also a regular contributor to *Metropolis* magazine.

Kieran Long is an independent critic based in London. He has been deputy editor of *Building Design* and *World Architecture* magazines, and was the founding deputy editor of *icon* magazine. His work has been published in journals across Europe and America and he has taught design and history and theory of architecture at London Metropolitan, Bath, Greenwich and Kingston Universities. He is currently working for a variety of magazines and journals, working on a book and curating an exhibition of emerging British architecture that will open at the Aedes gallery in Berlin next year. Kieran teaches in the Architecture Histories and Theories programme at the University of Greenwich, where he will host the Open Lecture Series in 2007, while Teresa Stoppani is on research leave.

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