

Institution:	Goldsmiths, University of London
Unit of Assessment:	34 – Art and Design: History, Practice and Theory
Title of case study:	Architecture and Human Rights
1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)	

Eyal Weizman’s decade-long programme of research into the relation between architecture and conflict has been formative to the establishment of the new field of “Forensic Architecture”. His research-based books have been the basis for his production of influential human rights reports, several of which have been presented as evidence in international trials and/or have informed policies relating to the Israel/Palestinian conflict. Appointed as the director of the Centre for Research Architecture at Goldsmiths in 2005, in 2011 he was awarded ERC funding of €1.2M for a project [*Forensic Architecture*] on the place of architecture in international humanitarian law: this has generated spatial evidence crucial to legal issues concerning the conflicts in areas of the world including Palestine, Guatemala, Pakistan and the Yemen. His extensive collaboration with international human rights organisations and the UN have meant that his work has achieved very wide reach. His work reached multiple audiences through numerous public lectures and media presentations as well as extensive exhibitions in leading cultural and architectural institutions worldwide.

2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)
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Eyal Weizman, an architect by professional background, is Professor of Spatial and Visual Cultures at Goldsmiths. He took up this full-time appointment in September 2005, when he also founded and became Director of the College’s Centre for Research Architecture. His architectural and spatial research focuses on political and human rights issues associated with armed conflict. Prior to joining Goldsmiths, he had co-published a research-based report (*Land Grab*, 2002)^[1] in association with the Israeli human rights group B’Tselem, which for the first time demonstrated violations of human rights and international humanitarian law (IHL) through the transformation of the built environment. His team’s analysis and synthesis of a large number of drawings, plans and other geographic data gathered through site visits and flyovers, illustrated how transformation of the built environment in the occupied Palestinian territories translated into the violation of human rights and IHL. This pioneering research generated a map made public in May 2002 which has become one of the key tools for advocacy on Palestinian rights issues and is still used as a key reference in political and legal processes, and as the basis for most further maps of the Occupied Palestinian Territories.^[2]

Following his appointment at Goldsmiths he extended his analyses of territorial occupation in geographical, territorial, urban and architectural terms. This work was articulated in his 2007 book *Hollow Land: Israel’s Architecture of Occupation*,^[3] which received highly positive reviews in both academic and professional arenas and has become one of the main references in the field of conflict studies and architecture. Thus for example the Financial Times said: “*Hollow Land is more like an extraordinary new drawing than a conventional piece of architectural literature. It is a document that allows you to see a physical landscape overlaid with politics, sociology, religion and history, as if one were using architectural x-ray specs. It posits the contemporary urban warzone with its cocktail of violence, media, politics and extremism as the ultimate postmodern environment. It is also the most astonishing book on architecture that I have read in years ... Weizman has achieved a rare amalgam of politics, aesthetics, sociology, history and theory. He has produced a book which should be compulsory reading for anyone who thinks architecture has reduced its cultural role to the building of iconic galleries and silly skyscrapers. Rather, as Weizman shows, it remains the most politicised and potentially dangerous of all the arts.*”

In 2011 Weizman was awarded a four-year ERC starting grant of €1.2 million for *Forensic Architecture: The Place of Law in War*,^[4] to map, image, and model sites of violence within the framework of international humanitarian law and human rights. The new field of ‘**forensic architecture**’ refers to the presentation of spatial analysis within contemporary legal and political fora, and provides crucial spatial analysis for organisations promoting IHL and human rights. Weizman has assembled a multidisciplinary team of specialised researchers capable of producing architectural examinations of sites of violence using cutting edge technologies. Research methods

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include site visits, the use and analysis of satellite imagery, ground penetrating radar, GPS data, photography, and the spatial synthesis of eyewitness interviews.

The project is already yielding spatial evidence and technical reports informing international legal processes in relation to events in Libya, Gaza, Guatemala, the Mediterranean Sea, the former Yugoslavia, Pakistan, Yemen and elsewhere. To date, for example, the research has identified human rights abuses in the Guatemalan Civil War; and researchers supervised by Weizman have produced a path-breaking analysis of the high profile “left to die boat”^[5] case in which North African refugees fleeing across the Mediterranean perished.

Weizman has published findings emanating from this project in the books *Mengele's Skull* (2012)^[6] which sets out the complexities associated with forensic testimony in relation to war crimes and crimes against humanity and has been translated into Hebrew and Serbo-Croat; *Forensic Architecture: Notes from Fields and Forums* (2012),^[7] a notebook presenting a philosophical and cultural-critical examination of forensic practices; and *The Least of all Possible Evils: Humanitarian Violence from Arendt to Gaza*,^[8] an exploration of the philosophy underpinning Western humanitarian intervention which shows how military and political intervention acquired a new “humanitarian” acceptability and legality in the late 20th and 21st centuries. These publications have set out the theoretical grounding of forensic architecture and disseminated its findings to many other fields, as reflected in numerous reviews in academic and policy publications.

3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

The international standing of this research is evidenced by the critical acclaim it has received (see e.g. references 3 and 8 below). Reference 6, 7, 8 are all submitted as REF outputs, with details available in REF 2b.

1. Lein Y, Weizman E (2002) *Land Grab: Israel's Settlement Policy in the West Bank*, Jerusalem: B'Tselem. Available [here](#). [human rights report]
2. Weizman E (2002) *Jewish Settlements in the West Bank, Built-up Areas and Land Reserves*, Jerusalem: B'Tselem. http://www.btselem.org/download/settlements_map_eng.pdf
A sample of one of the subsequent maps based on this map: [here](#).
3. Weizman E (2007) *Hollow Land: Israel's Architecture of Occupation*, London: Verso.
The international standing of this research output is evidenced by the large number of positive reviews it received; a compilation is available at <http://roundtable.kein.org/node/655>.
It was submitted as an output in RAE2008. [monograph]
4. Forensic Architecture: The Place of Law in War, ERC Starting Grant, €1.2M [Grant No. 263671, 01/02/11. Details at: <http://www.forensic-architecture.org>
5. Heller C, Pezzani L, and Situ Studio (2012) Report on the “Left-To-Die Boat”. Part of the ERC project “Forensic Architecture”. Centre for Research Architecture, Goldsmiths, University of London. [human rights report]
<http://www.forensic-architecture.org/investigations/forensic-oceanography/>
and <http://www.theguardian.com/science/interactive/2012/apr/11/left-to-die-report>
6. Keenan T and Weizman E (2012) [Mengele's Skull: The Advent of a Forensic Aesthetics](#). Sternberg Press/Portikus. ISBN 978-1-934105-91-7 [co-authored book]
[This is submitted as a REF output; details available in REF 2b].
7. Weizman E (2012) *Forensic Architecture: Notes from Fields and Forums*. [DOCUMENTA 13](#) Notebook. Hatje Cantz. [short book in English and German]
[NB: a REF output relating to Forensic Architecture and including this publication is submitted as a REF output; details available in REF 2b]
8. Weizman, E (2011) *The Least of All Possible Evils: Humanitarian Violence from Arendt to Gaza*. London: Verso. For reviews in academic and policy publications, see <http://www.forensic-architecture.org/publications/the-least-of-all-possible-evils/>
[This is submitted as a REF output; details available in REF 2b].

4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

Weizman's analyses are widely cited in political and human rights contexts. Data for the original map was available online (see reference 2 above) and spurred the creation of a plethora of maps custom-made by advocacy groups, NGOs and human rights organisations. Weizman's research is referred to by almost all studies on planning and human rights in Palestine.^[1]

Hollow Land has been extremely influential among those engaging with the politics of architecture and has been widely reviewed in the mainstream press, and in special documentary programmes in Israel, Germany and the Netherlands.^[2] The '*Mengele's Skull*' project was disseminated to a wider public through an exhibition in the Portikus Gallery in Frankfurt in 2012 and in an article in a special issue of *Cabinet Magazine* on Forensics, edited by Eyal Weizman;^[3] this quarterly arts and culture journal is intended as a sourcebook of ideas for an eclectic international audience of readers, from artists and designers to scientists, philosophers, and historians. Weizman is currently working with Al Jazeera English on a 30 minute documentary about forensic architecture, to be aired in March 2014.

The research has been drawn upon in various legal processes including the 2004 International Court of Justice ruling on the "separation fence", and in UN statements including the 2013 UN HRC Fact Finding Mission on the settlements.^[4] Weizman's expertise was reflected in his invitation to advise the Palestinian Ministry of Planning in Ramallah on the reuse of the evacuated settlements in the occupied territories.^[5]

Findings and reports from the Forensic Architecture project have focused media attention on human rights violations, and have influenced political and legal responses to them. For example:

- Death of Bassem Ibrahim Abu Rahma (17/04/09):^[6] the research team examined the events which led to this protester being struck and killed by a tear gas grenade in Bi'lin, Palestine. The report led to the opening of a special military investigation of this case, and the trial of one of the perpetrators. The case was reported in one of Israel's main TV channels
- Use of drones in counter-terrorism:^[7] On 24/01/13, the UN Special Rapporteur on Counter Terrorism and HR launched an inquiry into the civilian impact and human rights implications of drone use and invited input from the Forensic Architecture team. The resulting research has been reviewed in several media outlets and was presented to the UN General Assembly in October 2013.
- Use of airburst white phosphorus munitions in densely populated areas:^[8] With Human Rights Watch [HRW], Weizman's team researched the use of white phosphorus chemical weapons by the Israel Defence Forces and the US military. In November 2012 the findings were presented to the Human Rights council in Geneva, in the context of a HRW event on incendiary weapons during the meeting of the Convention on Conventional Weapons States Parties. The Forensic Architecture report formed part of a petition to Israel's High Court of Justice calling for the prohibition of the use of these munitions in urban environments. The case was won.

Weizman has delivered many keynote speeches, memorial lectures, and special addresses outside the academic context. These have included the 4th Nelson Mandela Lecture in 2012 "*Walls and wars, rights and ruins: The revelations of forensic architecture*" at the Bob Hawke Prime Ministerial Centre in Adelaide, Australia, to an audience of lawmakers, politicians, academics and the general public.^[9] Subsequent to that, he met and advised policy makers in Australia on issues of space and human rights.^[10]

More generally, his work has created a 'spatial turn' in the approach to human rights violations around the world, spurring the production and distribution of maps by a range of political groups, NGOs and human rights organisations.^[11]

It has been similarly influential in the context of architecture and art, with his work featuring in exhibitions around the world. His early research on the occupied territories led to exhibitions at the Storefront Gallery for Art and Architecture in New York and a major exhibition preceding the present REF period, in 2003 [*Territories*, at Berlin's KW Institute for Contemporary Arts] which was later shown in Rotterdam, Berkley, Malmö, Tel Aviv and Ramallah, accompanied by lectures to specialist and general audiences. Since 2008 it has been shown in the Bozar Expo in Brussels, NGBK in

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Berlin, the Istanbul Biennial, Home Works in Beirut, Tate Modern in London, the Oslo Triennial, Nottingham Contemporary, the James Gallery at CUNY, the Tate gallery in London, The Sharjah Biennale, the Centre Pompidou in Paris and many other places.^[12] These exhibitions have shaped the debate on the use of architectural analysis in human rights, and have had a significant impact in the fields of architecture, art and human rights, as evidenced by his award of the 2010 Prince Claus Prize for Architecture^[13] and the selection of his work by *Art Forum* as one of the 'top ten cultural projects of the decade'.^[14]

Major exhibitions of the forensic architecture research are planned for the House of World Culture (HKW) in Berlin, Portikus Gallery in Frankfurt and Le Bal in Paris. In June 2013 Weizman signed an agreement with HKW to present the research in a major exhibition with funding of €450K from the hauptstadtkulturfonds (Capital Cultural Fund). These exhibitions testify to the cross-disciplinary reach of his work which links, innovatively and fundamentally, the fields of human rights, architecture, and art.^[15]

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

1. Citations of Weizman's research in other reports on human rights issues in the occupied territories are available [here](#) or on request from Goldsmiths Research Office.
For an example see [here](#).
2. Reviews of Hollow Land: Full list available [here](#), and references to the book are available [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#).
3. Mengele's Skull: also see [here](#).
4. UN HRC Fact Finding Mission (2013): [report](#).
5. Advisory role to the Palestinian Ministry of Planning is reported in Chapter 8, pp.221-236, in Weizman, *Hollow Land*. (see reference 3 in section 3 above).
6. The case of Bassem Ibrahim Abu Rahma: [here](#) and (TV report) [here](#).
7. Drone use in counter-terrorism: [here](#) (watch from minute 30)
8. White phosphorus report: [here](#)
9. Nelson Mandela [Lecture](#)
10. Legal judgements and reports citing Weizman's work: available on request from Goldsmiths Research Office.
11. Maps produced by other organisations: Examples of these are available on request from Goldsmiths Research Office, and can also be seen [here](#) and [here](#).
12. Details of these post-2008 exhibitions: Available on request from Goldsmiths Research Office. Examples can be see [here](#) and [here](#) and [here](#) and [here](#).
13. Prince Claus Prize (2010): [here](#).
14. Art Forum [article](#)
15. Forensic Architecture exhibitions: details are [here](#).