

# Cécile B Evans' new show creates an allegory for the digital infrastructure of our everyday lives

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In a new exhibition currently under install at Glasgow's Tramway, the American-Belgian artist Cécile B Evans examines the role of emotion in contemporary society. On until 17 March, the three-part installation and video work *Amos' World* is conceived as a fictional television series set in a socially progressive housing estate. Influenced by the "massive complexes" erected after the Second World War such as le Corbusier's Unités d'Habitation situated in Marseilles and Berlin and Nantes-Rezé in the west of France, Cécile's new work uses this as a starting point for our contemporary networked existence in *Amos' World*. Though it references brutalism, the work is in fact, an allegorical metaphor that sees Cécile's artistic interpretation brought to life.

Known for his brutalist architecture, the renowned architect Le Corbusier conceived of “a city within a building”. The concept revolves around “the individual existing within a purpose-built community”, states the press release. Not just a block of concrete to inhabit groups of people, the housing blocks also act as “a networked system that aspired to tackle all areas of living and being. Inhabitants of these estates had their individual living spaces interwoven into a larger infrastructure and social system.”

Despite seeming like a “perfect commune”, the “city within a building” almost always failed. In an inevitable end to the utopian dream, the architect’s intentions for a progressive housing unit failed to successfully materialise. “It was often the tenants who took most of the blame, being cited as not having conformed to the behaviours envisaged by the architects.” Consequently, the artist allegorises this scenario for the “networked” age.

Through the exhibition, the artist deconstructs ideas of “person-to-person power dynamics” through technological infrastructures. Utilising the interdisciplinary modes of installation, live action film and animation, the work “alludes to the top down architectural systems” that pervade our digital interactions”. She investigates the unavoidable disconnect between an architect’s design aim and the reality of life within these systems through three episodes that are key to the exhibition.

In the first of three episodes of *Amos’ World*, the character of Amos (who is also the architect of the building) is introduced. He purposely represents the archetypal “troubled white man who exudes an arrogance that belies his self-doubt” and “conflates his ambitions with the reality of their impact.” Throughout the saga, several tenants are introduced to the drama and as the story unfolds, the supposedly “utopian” living situation is revealed to be anything but.