

New magazine aims to spark architecture debate



An example of old Edinburgh. Picture by Nigel Duncan Media

It was perhaps appropriate that the launch of an architecture magazine should take place in Edinburgh's Lothian Street. On one side sit traditional Edinburgh sandstone buildings housing pubs and flats.

Opposite is the stunning McEwan Hall in Bristo Sqaure, it's circular dome and external stone highlighted by the evening sun.

And to our left is an example of modern architecture in Potterrow.

We're at Paradise Palms, once a traditional pub but now packed with 'palm trees' and totally lacking any shred of sympathy with the surroundings.

And the bi-annual magazine. Well, Crumble hopes to encourage constructive conversation about architecture in the public realm.

The editors claim a meaningful debate has been lacking recently.

Our environment could have sparked a lengthy discussion on its own, but to business.

Crumble is born. The name does not, the six-strong production team stress, signal a view that Scotland's Capital is falling

to bits.

Far from it. However, they hope the publication can provide answers to current political and social issues.

The theme of the first publication is "What is Urgent?" Issues discussed by the team who are students and professionals include the on-going St James' Centre development which they claim is "hauntingly similar to the Caltongate scheme of 2007".

The author said: "As with many huge new urban projects, its reason for being built seems almost entirely in-substantial. The new centre promises four floors of shopping, dining, leisure and entertainment even though Princes Street, George Street and Multrees Walk already offer more than enough – along with the additional gift of fresh air."

Another piece claims that Edinburgh has a city centre manager but the author alleged: "His role seems to be primarily concerned with getting the best deal for city from the promoters of Edinburgh's Hogmanay or making life difficult for buskers".

International issues encountered within its 40 pages include the refugee crisis, whether architecture can be a vehicle for social good and an enlightening piece, the first, incidentally after the editor's page, about the Badjao, a nomadic tribe of sea dwellers travelling with the currents of South East Asia.

Editor-in-chief, Theo Shack, who is originally from Dumfries, said: "The magazine is critical-propositional, so it raises questions about the status quo but also contains answers and ideas for solutions."

It costs £5 and you can find out more at www.crumble.press.