



The American Corner Innsbruck and the Department of American Studies at the University of Innsbruck cordially invite you to a talk by

**Prof. David SPURR**  
**University of Geneva, English Department**

### **The Architectural Turn in Contemporary Literature**

Monday, May 18, 2015, 10.15am

HS 3, Humanities Building

In recent years literature in Europe and North America has manifested a preoccupation with the newly globalized built environment of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. What literature has to offer to our understanding of this environment are its effects on human subjectivity and value. Writers today tend to register the discontinuity and disorientation of subjective consciousness faced with the oppressive continuity embodied in the seamless connections between architecture, media, capital, and consumer products. In this view, the built environment is both the scene of an ontological drift and the concretisation of an absence of metaphysical value. The marginal status of literature in this landscape has enabled these writers to take up a critical stance toward the way our world is literally taking form.



**David Spurr** is Emeritus Professor of English and Comparative Literature at the University of Geneva. He has written several books on the relations between literature and the larger conditions of modernity, of which the most recent, *Architecture and Modern Literature*, was awarded the Scaglione Prize for Comparative Literary Studies by the Modern Language Association of America. He is a trustee of both the Zurich and International James Joyce Foundations, and a curator at the Bodmer Foundation. This semester he is teaching a seminar at Innsbruck on "The Critique of Constructed Modernity."



Univ.-Prof. Dr. Mario Klarer  
Head, Department of American Studies  
Ass.-Prof. Dr. Margaret Davidson  
Director, ACI