As you enter this architectural mumbling, there is no absence of wit at the gates of Wates House. Don is the face of The Bartlett, welcoming coffee-infused constituents through steel turnstiles to the ill-defined spaces and horrifying junctions where the decent grubbiness and indecent graffiti obscure the worst features.

Don’t forget to sign in before entering. Welcome to Wates House; welcome to Lobby.

Lobby is conceived on the eve of the destruction of Wates House as a response to historic and contemporary criticisms. In this foreword by the originators of Lobby: Thomas-Bernard Kenniff, Christian Parreno, Mariana Pestana, David Roberts, and Danielle Willkens, quotes from the Architects’ Journal’s damning review of the building in April 1975 are presented in bold.

The inaugural issue of Lobby, printed nearly forty years after the AJ’s denunciation of Wates House, is composed of work from the socially aggressive students [who] commandeer the carpeted spaces [and the] more passive students left out on the lino. Lobby was founded to revel in the accidents which disgrace the interior of the building, to question the drastic mistake of sharp demarcations within the faculty, to bask under its harsh overall lighting, to challenge claims that work has a lack of rigour, and to celebrate the (un)spectacular of the simple brick box that contains the The Bartlett.